As part of an overall reexamination of terrorism prevention (superseding the programs and activities previously known as countering violent extremism [CVE]) policy, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) asked the Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center (HSOAC) to examine the state of knowledge regarding terrorism prevention organization, coordination, programming, and policy. HSOAC was tasked to examine past CVE and current terrorism prevention efforts by DHS and its interagency partners, and explore options for this policy area going forward.

The appendixes supplement the findings presented in the main report. Appendix A presents international case studies of CVE programs, including a detailed discussion of their selection. Appendix B presents summaries of the lessons learned in each of the U.S. cities visited during the study, and includes a discussion of how the cities were chosen. Appendix C includes a more substantial discussion of measures and metrics for terrorism prevention, and Appendix D provides more detail on the spending calculations discussed in Chapter Nine of the main report.

As with the main report, this research was sponsored by the Office of Policy, DHS, and conducted within the Strategy, Policy, and Operations Program of the HSOAC federally funded research and development center (FFRDC).

About the Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Section 305 of Public Law 107-296, as codified at 6 U.S.C. § 185), authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, to establish one or more FFRDCs to provide independent analysis of homeland security issues. The RAND Corporation operates HSOAC as an FFRDC for DHS under contract HSHQDC-16-D-00007.

The HSOAC FFRDC provides the government with independent and objective analyses and advice in core areas important to the Department in support of policy development, decisionmaking, alternative approaches, and new ideas on issues of significance. The HSOAC FFRDC also works with and supports other federal, state, local, tribal, and public- and private-sector organizations that make up the homeland security system.
security enterprise. The HSOAC FFRDC’s research is undertaken by mutual consent with DHS and is organized as a set of discrete tasks. This report presents the results of research and analysis conducted under Task Order HSHQDC-17-J-00532, titled “Terrorism Prevention Study and Threat Prevention and Security Policy Support.”

The results presented in this report do not necessarily reflect official DHS opinion or policy.

For more information on HSOAC, see www.rand.org/hsoac.
For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RR2647.
Contents

Preface ................................................................................................. iii
Figures ................................................................................................. vii
Tables ................................................................................................. ix

Abbreviations ......................................................................................... xi

APPENDIX A
International Case Studies ................................................................. 1
Rationale for International Case Study Selections .................................. 3
Analytic Approach ................................................................................. 4
Canada ............................................................................................... 5
Australia ........................................................................................... 14
United Kingdom ............................................................................... 24
France ................................................................................................ 33
Belgium ............................................................................................ 40
Germany .......................................................................................... 47
Denmark ........................................................................................... 56
Appendix A References ........................................................................ 64

APPENDIX B
Lessons from U.S. City Visits .............................................................. 77
Boston, Massachusetts ......................................................................... 78
Denver, Colorado .............................................................................. 86
Houston, Texas .................................................................................. 92
Los Angeles, California ..................................................................... 101
Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota ....................................................... 111
Appendix B References ....................................................................... 120
A.1. The CVE Centre’s Government Partners ............................................ 17
A.2. Summary of LST Programs, 2016 .................................................... 22
A.3. Prevent and Channel Process Flow .................................................. 27
A.4. Interagency Collaborations to Prevent Extremism and Radicalization .... 58
A.5. Prevention Pyramid ..................................................................... 59
D.1. National Spending Extrapolations (in millions of U.S. dollars) .......... 142
Tables

A.1. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and Canadian Programs .................. 11
A.2. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and Australian Programs ............... 23
A.3. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and UK Programs ....................... 29
A.4. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and French Programs ................... 38
A.5. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and Belgian Programs .................. 46
A.6. Live Democracy! Active Against Right-Wing Extremism, Violence, and Hate Program ................................................................. 51
A.7. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and German Programs ................. 54
A.8. Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and Danish Programs .................. 62
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>Federal Antidiscrimination Society (Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Australian Federal Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfVT</td>
<td>French Association of Victims of Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMF</td>
<td>Australian Multicultural Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIO</td>
<td>Australian Security Intelligence Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAMF</td>
<td>Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR</td>
<td>Building Community Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIM</td>
<td>Behavioural Indicators Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMBF</td>
<td>Federal Ministry for Education and Research (Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Ministry of the Interior (Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BpB</td>
<td>Federal Agency for Civic Education (Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAB</td>
<td>Community Awareness Briefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMP</td>
<td>Case Assessment Management Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBPR</td>
<td>Community-Based Participatory Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGET</td>
<td>General Commission for Territorial Equality (France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIPDR</td>
<td>Interministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoPPRa</td>
<td>Community Policing and the Prevention of Radicalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRCL</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUTA</td>
<td>Coordination Unit for Threat Assessment (Belgium)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CVE countering violent extremism
DHS U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DOJ U.S. Department of Justice
EU European Union
FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation
FY fiscal year
GETZ Joint Center for Countering Extremism and Terrorism (Germany)
HA Department of Home Affairs (Australia)
HHS U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HSOAC Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center
LST Living Safe Together
NCTC National Counterterrorism Center
NGO nongovernmental organization
NSW New South Wales
OSCT Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (United Kingdom)
OTPP Office of Terrorism Prevention Partnerships
PA Prince Albert
PATHE Providing Alternatives to Hinder Extremism
PET Danish Security and Intelligence Agency
PIRUS Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States
PVE preventing violent extremism
RCMP Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RICU Research Information and Communication Unit
SIRI Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration
START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VPN</td>
<td>Violence Prevention Network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center (HSOAC) team selected and conducted seven international case studies, focusing on Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The objectives in conducting these case studies were to assess how the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS’s) terrorism prevention approach compares with the approaches of foreign partners and to identify any key takeaways and potential best practices from countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts abroad.\(^1\) We selected our international case study countries based on the following factors:

1. **Level of terrorist threat in the country.** First, we sought to identify which countries face the highest levels of threat from terrorism in the post-9/11 period. Our metrics to evaluate the terrorist threat level included the number of executed attacks from 2001 to 2016, the number of documented terrorist plots in the country from 2001 to 2016, and the success rate of attempted attacks.\(^2\) As a more qualitative measure, we also considered which countries have recently been victims of high-profile attacks.

2. **Radicalization intensity in the country.** Next, we sought to ascertain which countries have a high “radicalization intensity,” by which we mean countries in

---

1 The efforts of the case study countries are labeled as CVE rather than terrorism prevention to reflect the terminology still used in most of the other countries we studied.

2 To calculate the number of terrorist incidents in a country, we drew statistics from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START’s) Global Terrorism Database and applied the following filters: only incidents where there is essentially no doubt of terrorism; including successful and unsuccessful attacks. To assess the number of successful attacks, we filtered for: only incidents where there is essentially no doubt of terrorism; including only successful attacks. We calculated the number of terrorist plots in a country as follows:

\[
\text{Number of terrorist incidents} - \text{Number of successfully executed terrorist attacks} = \text{Number of terrorist plots} + \text{Unsuccessful attacks.}
\]

We calculated the success rate of attempted attacks as follows:

\[
\frac{\text{Number of successfully executed terrorist attacks} + \text{Number of terrorist incidents} \times 100}{\text{Percentage of attempted attacks that succeeded.}}
\]
which large numbers of people are discernibly becoming radicalized. Our metrics to evaluate radicalization intensity included the number of foreign fighters (defined, for our purposes, as individuals who left their countries of citizenship to fight in ISIS-fueled conflicts in Iraq or Syria) recruited in a country; the number of foreign fighter returnees (defined as individuals who returned to their home countries after fighting abroad) in a country; and the numbers of outgoing and returning foreign fighters per capita. Although there are many metrics by which to measure levels of threat and radicalization intensity, we focused on terrorist incidents and foreign fighter flows because they have the most quantifiable and available data.

3. **Level of spending on CVE programs in the country.** Third, we considered countries’ CVE spending levels to the extent possible. Based on the available data, we looked for countries that spent the most on CVE-related efforts or that had particularly high-budget CVE programs or activities. We also sought to include countries that had lower CVE budgets while still running major or well-known CVE programs and activities.

4. **Degree of similarity of the country’s CVE programs with U.S. terrorism prevention efforts.** Fourth, we evaluated the extent to which a country’s CVE approach could be comparable to U.S. efforts. To determine the degree of similarity, we examined whether and where foreign countries’ CVE programs overlapped with the four DHS terrorism prevention focus areas: (1) promoting education and community awareness, (2) countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda, (3) providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized and responding to cases of radicalization to violence, and (4) keeping suspects and individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses from returning to violence. We aimed to identify countries whose CVE efforts are analogous enough to U.S. terrorism prevention efforts that there might be lessons learned to apply to the U.S. approach. Furthermore, we sought to identify countries whose work in one or more of these four focus areas was particularly successful or innovative.

5. **Uniqueness of the country’s CVE programs and activities.** Finally, we looked for countries with unique situations and CVE programs that were worthy of attention. We considered whether countries had conducted or were implementing CVE activities that are particularly compelling or innovative. We also sought to include countries that had significant differences in both their CVE framing and experience: episodic to sustained CVE support; persuasive to directive CVE approach; decentralized to centralized CVE implementation; low to high trust in government efforts; low to high law enforcement involvement in CVE; population-level to individually focused programs; and risk-factor reduction or terrorism-specific program focus.
Rationale for International Case Study Selections

After considering numerous countries against the above criteria, we selected seven countries for case studies. Our rationale for selecting each of these countries is explained in the following sections.

Australia
We selected Australia because of its similarities to the United States, particularly the scale of the terrorist and extremist threat it faces and Australia’s decentralized system of states and territories. Australia provides a helpful example of coordination between the national and state or territory levels.

Belgium and France
We selected Belgium and France for similar reasons. First, they have both experienced recent, high-profile, and large-scale terrorist attacks. Both countries contain known networks of extremists and hotbeds of radicalization (e.g., Molenbeek in Belgium), and both have substantial issues with foreign fighter recruitment and radicalization (Belgium has the highest number of outgoing foreign fighters per capita in Europe). Furthermore, both countries are in the Schengen Area and thus have difficulty with border control. Finally, both have major CVE programs with available data and relatively high levels of spending on CVE that appears to be increasing.

Canada
We selected Canada because, like Australia, it bears similarities to the United States in terms of the scale of the terrorist and extremist threat it faces and its decentralized federal-provincial system. Because Canada shares a border and many cultural similarities with the United States, it also provides a useful test case for CVE models that could be relevant in the United States, such as its multistakeholder Prince Albert (PA) Hub approach.

Denmark
Although Denmark has not experienced recent high-profile attacks, we selected it as a case study because it has had severe domestic security issues linked to the Schengen crisis and has the highest number of returning foreign fighters per capita in Europe. Moreover, Denmark has dedicated substantial resources toward CVE and has created innovative CVE programs with available data, including the Aarhus model, the Copenhagen Anti-Radicalization Task Force, and deradicalization programs in prisons.

Germany
We selected Germany because it has experienced recent high-profile terrorist attacks, has been heavily affected by the Schengen crisis, and has difficulty policing its bor-
ders. Germany is also a powerful European country and economy and serves as the de facto leader of the European Union (EU), so it sets the tone for many policy issues. Finally, Germany has major CVE-related programs with available information and years of history, has a high level of spending on CVE-related programs, and has a decentralized CVE implementation approach.

**United Kingdom**

We selected the United Kingdom because, in addition to its linguistic and other similarities to the United States, it has experienced recent high-profile attacks and has a protracted history of more-severe attacks (such as the 7/7 bombings). The United Kingdom also contains known networks of extremists and high-profile individuals who serve as recruiters (e.g., Anjem Choudary) and has very high numbers of outgoing and returning foreign fighters. Although resources are constrained, the United Kingdom has dedicated a significant amount of money and effort toward CVE and has major CVE programs with available data. Finally, the United Kingdom serves as a useful point of comparison to the selected European countries because it is not a member of the Schengen Area and its exit from the EU is pending.

**Analytic Approach**

In the subsequent sections, we analyze aspects of each country’s CVE program, specifically

- the nature of the domestic terrorist threat
- CVE-related approach, strategy, and activities
- degree of overlap with DHS terrorism prevention focus areas
- key takeaways and lessons learned from the country’s experience.

In conducting our case studies, we drew on publicly available policy documents, news articles, academic reports, and other published literature. We also gathered some insights from Washington, D.C.–based interviews with experts from agencies that play a role in international CVE efforts.

---

We included border security as a factor because it is relevant in assessing the level of threat faced by a given country; poor policing or border control can exacerbate preexisting domestic security issues, which in turn can divert resources from domestic CVE efforts. Furthermore, other studies have suggested that returning foreign fighters play a prominent role in boosting radicalization intensity in countries, so enforcing border control could help mitigate some homegrown extremism issues. (See, for instance, Bruce Hoffman, “The Global Terror Threat and Counterterrorism Challenges Facing the Next Administration,” *CTC Sentinel*, November/December 2016, Vol. 9, No. 11; and Fabian Merz, “Dealing with Jihadist Returnees: A Tough Challenge,” *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, June 2017.) Finally, border security is particularly important for countries in the Schengen Area, which experience spillover from any failures to effectively counter or contain domestic terrorism and extremism issues.
Throughout our analyses of the international case studies and in the report as a whole, we endeavored to be consistent with DHS’s nomenclature where appropriate by using the term *terrorism prevention* to refer to U.S. activities occurring after January 2017 and *CVE* for activities occurring before that date. Most European countries use *CVE, PVE* (preventing violent extremism), *counter-radicalization*, or other terms when referring to their programs. Thus, throughout our case studies, we aimed to describe other countries’ activities in accordance with how each country characterizes its efforts in publicly available policy documents and programming materials. We use the term *terrorism prevention* when discussing any post–January 2017 DHS-related program or activity.

**Canada**

Canada is a useful case study in terrorism prevention in part because of the multi-stakeholder PA Hub model for community safety that it is implementing. Terrorism prevention in Canada is largely community-driven: Federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government and law enforcement take an inclusive approach to working with local partners.4

**Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat**

The primary terrorist threat to Canada comes from ISIS and al Qaeda–inspired extremists.5 The country has recently experienced an increase in the use of knife and vehicle tactics, including a September 2017 attack in Edmonton, Alberta, that injured five.6 Canada’s Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (Public Safety Canada) warned in a 2017 report that explosive and automatic weapon attacks also could occur in Canada.7 Over the past two decades, Canadian authorities have thwarted several potentially grave attacks, arrested various terrorist suspects, and disrupted extremist cells operating in Canada.8

---


5 U.S. Department of State, 2016b.


8 Counter Extremism Project, undated(c), pp. 1, 2, 5.
About 180 foreign fighters have left Canada for Iraq and Syria, around 60 of whom have returned. Some who were unable to leave Canada to join conflicts abroad instead conducted attacks at home. The October 2014 car-ramming attack and the shooting on Parliament Hill that same week were perpetrated by individuals who had previously been prevented from leaving Canada to go to Syria. Furthermore, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) reported in 2013 that every global al Qaeda affiliate included Canadian participants.

Right-wing extremism is also an increasing problem in Canada, with much of this activity taking place online. Violence stemming from right-wing ideology has been irregular, but there has nevertheless been a growing number of reports to police about hate-motivated incidents. Major attacks have occurred, such as the January 2017 shooting at the Islamic Cultural Center of Quebec City that killed six and injured 19. The shooting took place on the same weekend that the prime minister announced that Canada would welcome refugees.

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

Canada’s CVE-related approach involves all levels of government and emphasizes local partnerships and community engagement. Prevention is incorporated into Canada’s 2013 counterterrorism strategy, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism*. The strategy consists of four parts: prevent, detect, deny, and respond—with resilience as a key principle throughout. CVE is mainly addressed by the prevent element, desired outcomes of which include improved community resilience to radicalization and extremist violence,

---


11 Counter Extremism Project, undated(c), p. 2.

12 Counter Extremism Project, undated(c), p. 3.


16 Counter Extremism Project, undated(c), p. 3.


establishment of successful counternarratives to violent radical ideology, and reduced risk of individual radicalization.¹⁹

The prevent section of the strategy also describes the need for openness and mutual trust between the population and the government, particularly between communities and law enforcement.²⁰ It emphasizes that community engagement requires police and CSIS to possess cultural knowledge and sensitivity, as well as language skills.²¹ The prevent section also highlights the importance of fostering an inclusive Canadian identity as a counterweight to extremist propaganda and empowering communities to communicate counternarratives.²² This aligns with Canada’s general promotion of multiculturalism and its welcoming approach toward foreigners, including its acceptance of over 40,000 Syrian refugees as of January 2017.²³ It also fits in with Canada’s outlook that “community social capital plays a key role in national security.”²⁴

One key prevention approach is the PA Hub model, which is in harmony with the principles of Canada’s counterterrorism strategy. This model involves early, multidisciplinary interventions by appropriate community agencies to address social problems and risk factors before they manifest themselves in criminal activity or violence.²⁵ The PA Hub was first implemented in Canada as a government-led community safety model in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, after government officials recognized that policing alone could not address the high rates of crime and violence in the province.²⁶ Moreover, the same people who repeatedly required police attention were often overburdening various human services providers.²⁷ The PA Hub was launched in 2011 and was based on a similar approach that implementers had observed in Glasgow, Scotland.²⁸ The PA Hub model has four main steps:

---

¹⁹ Government of Canada, 2013, p. 15. For its part, the detect element mainly deals with intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination, which are outside of the terrorism prevention scope. Nonetheless, detect has a nexus with terrorism prevention in terms of its desired outcomes of timely threat detection and assessment, effective alerting systems, and proactive information-sharing.


²⁴ Smith et al., 2017, p. 51.


²⁷ McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 5.

1. risk detection by individual agencies during the course of their normal operations\(^{29}\)
2. a 90-minute, biweekly forum of local multiagency stakeholders to discuss cases that meet four PA Hub criteria\(^{30}\)
3. provision of a multisector, tailored intervention opportunity for at-risk individuals\(^{31}\)
4. a follow-up forum discussion to determine whether the case has been resolved.\(^{32}\)

Although most PA Hub cases reportedly come from the police, the resulting interventions are infrequently law enforcement–based.\(^{33}\) PA Hub implementers noted that the model has several distinctive aspects, including its methodical management of cases combined with quick action.\(^{34}\) Additionally, the PA Hub protects personal information through a four-tiered privacy-safeguarding process.\(^{35}\) The model also generates data that allow implementers to trace the pattern of risk factors and potential solutions.\(^{36}\) Finally, the PA Hub model is replicable: Since Prince Albert began its program, other jurisdictions have adopted their own versions and plans exist to expand the program to more provinces and cities.\(^{37}\)

The PA Hub model has garnered attention in Canada because it can assist in identifying cases of radicalization and in connecting radicalizing or radicalized individuals to customized services.\(^{38}\) A 2017 report, based in part on interviews with Canadian law enforcement, discusses prevention-related interventions and explains that

[the hub model is envisioned as a multi-faceted and flexible framework that “wraps around” the individual to provide tailored support based on their specific needs and vulnerabilities. This includes surrounding them with a range of integrated

---


\(^{30}\) Nilson, 2016; Taddese, 2017, p. 2. The four PA Hub criteria are “(a) There is significant community interest at stake; (b) There is a clear probability of harm occurring; (c) A severe intensity of harm is predicted; and (d) There is a multi-disciplinary nature to the elevated risk factors” (McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 10).

\(^{31}\) Nilson, 2016.

\(^{32}\) Nilson, 2016. PA Hub case resolution simply means that those involved in high-risk situations have been connected to or informed of services—not that all problems have been eliminated (McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 10).

\(^{33}\) Taddese, 2017, p. 4.

\(^{34}\) McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 9.


\(^{38}\) Smith et al., 2017, p. 51.
support services from social workers, mental health professionals, employment counsellors, housing authorities, religious leaders, teachers, local [nongovernmental organizations], community centre workers and law enforcement.39

Furthermore, Canadian law enforcement officials have suggested that hubs could prove useful not only for preterrorism cases, but also for the reintegration of foreign fighters or as a sentencing and/or prison deradicalization measure.40

Activities

Canada’s activities at the national level primarily involve community outreach and community policing efforts. Canada’s 2016 budget provided for $35 million over five years and $10 million per year thereafter to combat radicalization in the country.41 The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre) coordinates government prevention efforts, which include “activities to support individuals and groups pushing back against violent extremism, addressing terrorist propaganda and recruitment online, and rehabilitating and reintegrating individuals who want to leave violent extremism behind.”42 The Canada Centre emphasizes the importance of personalized prevention, pointing out that such Montreal-based initiatives as the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence and the radicalization prevention team of SHERPA, a Quebec research group, are particularly promising examples of multiagency involvement.43

Multidisciplinary and hub approaches exist in other major cities. For example, the Calgary Police Service operates its multisector ReDirect intervention initiative for cases in which radicalization is a concern, and the Toronto Police Service developed its FOCUS Rexdale Hub—which concentrates on violent ideology—with backing from Public Safety Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).44 The RCMP also has an intervention team as part of its federal policing program that attempts to identify cases that can be resolved in a way other than prosecution, and that “seeks to address both the ideology behind the radicalization to violence as well as other behaviors that are of concern, such as addictions and mental health issues.”45

---

39 Smith et al., 2017, p. 50.
40 Smith et al., 2017, p. 51.
Canada Centre efforts also include the Community Resilience Fund, which supports prevention and counterradicalization programs and research at the local level, with the following priority areas:

- intervention programming
- performance measurement and evaluation tools
- action-oriented research
- youth engagement and the development of alternative narratives.\(^\text{46}\)

In 2016, the U.S. State Department reported that Public Safety Canada was supporting the Community Resilience Fund at $900,000 per year.\(^\text{47}\) Another source subsequently announced that “[t]he July 6, 2017 call for proposals for the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) will have $1.4 million available to fund projects in 2018–19. For 2019–20 and beyond, the CRF will have $7 million available each year for existing and new projects.”\(^\text{48}\)

Additional government initiatives have funded terrorism prevention–related research. For example, the Kanishka Project, a $10 million counterterrorism research program with an emphasis on terrorism prevention, began in 2011 and lasted for five years.\(^\text{49}\) The Kanishka Project supported nearly 70 research projects and provided for various events that convened community stakeholders, scholars, practitioners, and government officials to discuss counterterrorism and CVE-related issues and perspectives.\(^\text{50}\) Another convening opportunity is the Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security, a joint effort of Public Safety Canada and the Canadian Department of Justice that was founded in 2005 with the goal of fostering a long-term exchange of viewpoints between the Canadian government and communities.\(^\text{51}\)

The RCMP also conducts various other engagement and counterradicalization activities, with a focus on ensuring that minority communities’ concerns are addressed.\(^\text{52}\) In particular, the RCMP National Security Community Outreach program aims to develop mutual understanding with diverse communities and build up

\(^{46}\) Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 17.

\(^{47}\) U.S. Department of State, 2016b.

\(^{48}\) Cision Canada, 2017.


\(^{50}\) Public Safety Canada, “Kanishka Project,” webpage, February 9, 2018a.


\(^{52}\) Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 18; Government of Canada, 2013, p. 16.
lines of communication, including through terrorism investigation simulation exercises.\textsuperscript{53} The RCMP’s National Security Youth Outreach program works specifically to engage youth in similar dialogues.\textsuperscript{54}

The RCMP also runs the Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (INSETs) that focus on major metropolitan areas.\textsuperscript{55} INSETs “are specialized, multi-agency investigative units which are co-located at the field level to enhance the Government’s ability to investigate suspected terrorist activity and to respond to terrorism-related incidents.”\textsuperscript{56} In addition to their national security investigation and intelligence responsibilities, INSETs conduct community education, engagement, and trust-building initiatives, including Junior Police Academies and the creation of a Terrorism and Violent Extremism Awareness Guide that aims to educate teachers, other community members, service providers, and police about various types of terrorism.\textsuperscript{57}

**Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas**

Canada’s terrorism prevention–related activities overlap with all four DHS focus areas (see Table A.1), but the intersections are particularly strong in the areas of community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DHS Focus Area</th>
<th>Canadian Programs or Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting education and community awareness</td>
<td>RCMP/INSETs and other outreach, roundtables, and the PA Hub model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda</td>
<td>Community engagement aims to enable communities to do this; the Canada Centre plans to take action and work with partners to counter violent extremism online.\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized and responding to cases of radicalization to violence</td>
<td>PA Hub model; coordination activities of the Canada Centre\textsuperscript{b}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping suspects and individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses from returning to violence</td>
<td>Potential for PA Hub model involvement in this space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{b} Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 19.


\textsuperscript{56} Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{57} Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 18; Smith et al., pp. 50–51.
education and awareness and in response to potential radicalization cases via the PA Hub model and multiagency local approaches.

**Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from Canada’s Experience**

The advantages, complications, and lessons learned from Canada’s PA Hub model provide insights that are applicable to the U.S. context. Specific benefits of the model include increasing efficiency, reducing subjectivity through the use of proven and pre-listed risk factors, incorporating the expertise of an array of service providers, fostering innovative solutions by allowing service providers to think beyond their usual silos, functioning using existing resources, providing positive returns on agencies’ staff time, and promoting a “risk-driven” rather than “incident-driven” approach.58

The model also faces challenges. For example, it requires buy-in from government, participating service providers, and intervention recipients and this buy-in largely derives from the model’s status as an evidence-based approach.59 In other words, the perceived effectiveness of the PA Hub drives its sustainability.60 And, as two initiators of the PA Hub model wrote in 2014, “while the PA Hub may have become noteworthy for its reduction in violent crime (37 percent since 2010), it is doubtful that such numbers can be achieved in jurisdictions with much lower crime and violence indices to begin with.”61 Such a point has particular implications for the terrorism prevention realm, where ambiguity and low incidence could impede prospects for showing dramatic empirical results.

Although the measurability and evaluability of outcomes is reportedly one of the PA Hub model’s strengths, data mainly have come from the service providers themselves, rather than from intervention recipients.62 A 2016 article on the model explained that

Some of the reasons given for the lack of data from client subjects of Hub discussions include a lack of follow-up with clients in the Hub discussion process, as well as limitations in data collection capacity at the local level. Despite these challenges in collecting data from clients, research and evaluation in other fields has demonstrated that gathering data from clients of social interventions is a critical part of understanding the impact, strength, and weakness of that particular intervention.63

---

58 McFee and Taylor, 2014, pp. 8, 15–16; and Nilson, 2016.
60 McFee and Taylor, 2014, pp. 15–16.
62 Nilson, 2016.
63 Nilson, 2016.
Lessons learned regarding what a hub program needs to succeed are also applicable in a U.S. context. Considerations of the Canadian version have pointed out that the process is successful because of its realistic and achievable goals.\textsuperscript{64} However, informing people of services or connecting them with services does not prove that the intervention positively influenced its clients. The program also required skeptics to “suspend disbelief long enough to develop and demonstrate ‘proof of concept’ for such an approach to gain lasting acceptance and support.”\textsuperscript{65} It also depended on the enthusiasm and perseverance of early implementers.\textsuperscript{66}

Other applicable insights from Canada’s experience stem from a study undertaken for Public Safety Canada that sought to understand not only why some Canadian youth radicalize, but also why Canadian diaspora communities overall have been resistant to radicalization.\textsuperscript{67} The study uncovered several trends, leading to the following conclusions:\textsuperscript{68}

First, a generational divide in many of these communities prevents youth from participating in community leadership, which can lead to disillusionment and isolation. . . . Second, foreign conflicts rarely play a central role in radicalization. Instead, psychological and socioeconomic factors such as depression, poverty, feelings of hopelessness, and mistrust of local institutions are key drivers of radicalization. These are the same factors that tend to spur youth into gang membership. Third, most diaspora leaders do not believe that radicalization is the most pressing issue in their communities. They instead see systemic discrimination as a driver of psychological and socioeconomic problems, which in turn lead to radicalization.

These findings could also have relevance in a U.S. context. However, Canada’s ability to tap into community influence is somewhat unique to the country. As a 2008 Canadian study of the United Kingdom’s Prevent model pointed out, Canada’s situation is distinctive because of the country’s emphasis on pluralism and multiculturalism as part of its national identity and immigration policies.\textsuperscript{69} The study found that

While none of this is a guarantee against the kind of radicalization that can lead to terrorism, it does mean that core migrant communities are well-integrated

\textsuperscript{64} McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{65} McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{66} McFee and Taylor, 2014, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{67} Smith et al., 2017, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{68} Geoff Burt and Matt Cohen, “‘Diaspora as Partners’: The Canadian Model of Countering Violent Extremism,” IPI Global Observatory, July 5, 2017.

and committed to a Canadian identity. Therefore, the task facing Canadian law enforcement, in parallel with other government initiatives, is not to counter radical messaging that is entrenched in specific communities. Instead, it is to help to build communities that are resilient to radicalization that could lead to terrorist violence through effective support and prevention programming.

A final lesson from Canada relates to the tendency to downplay right-wing extremism. A 2017 study found that right-wing extremism in the country does not receive sufficient law enforcement attention, even in locations where that activity is prevalent. Affected community members reported that law enforcement was generally both unprepared to confront right-wing extremist activity and uninterested in doing so. As a result, the study pointed out the need to ensure that right-wing extremism has a place on the public agenda by convincing the broader population of the threat that it poses.

Australia

Australia was selected for study because of its similarities to the United States in terms of the scale of the terrorist and violent extremist threat and approaches to CVE and terrorism prevention.

Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat

Like its European counterparts, Australia has faced an increasingly elevated threat of terrorism and violent extremism since the rise of ISIS. In September 2014, the Australian government raised the national terrorism threat level from “medium” to “high” for the first time in 11 years, indicating that an attack was “probable.” Since then, there have been five major terrorist attacks on Australian soil, including the Sydney hostage crisis, in which two hostages were killed and four were injured. Although Australia has experienced some ethno-nationalist, far-right, and issue-oriented violence, the primary domestic terrorist and extremist threat to Australia comes from jihadism. Most terrorist activity in Australia—and in the United States—is homegrown rather than

73 Government of Australia, undated(b).
directly conducted by international terrorist networks.\textsuperscript{75} Australia is one of the largest per capita sources of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria, with at least 165 Australian citizens having left to participate in conflicts in those countries.\textsuperscript{76} Authorities estimate that approximately 40 individuals have returned to Australia from conflict zones.\textsuperscript{77} The effect of these returnees on Australian domestic security is potentially profound, because there is a demonstrated connection between returning foreign fighters and acts of terrorism.\textsuperscript{78} Indeed, a recent review of publicly available court documents suggests that “the number of individuals convicted for terrorism-related offences on Australian soil who had previously fought in an overseas insurgency or attended a jihadist training camp is close to one in four.”\textsuperscript{79} From 2014 to the end of 2016, 57 people were charged in 27 counterterrorism operations in Australia.\textsuperscript{80} As of September 2016, approximately 200 people were being investigated for a range of potentially terrorism-related behaviors, including providing support to individuals and groups in conflict zones through funding and facilitation.\textsuperscript{81} Public opinion polls reflect concern over the relatively high level of terrorist and extremist activity in the country and dissatisfaction with the government’s response; according to one October 2016 poll, “45 percent of Australians were either ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ concerned about either themselves or a family member being the victim of a terrorist attack in Australia, and 56 percent believe[d] the government could do more to prevent terrorism.”\textsuperscript{82}

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

To combat the threat of homegrown violent extremism, Australia has adopted a comprehensive national approach to CVE that includes prevention-focused efforts at the federal, state or territory, and local levels. The goal behind this whole-of-government approach to CVE is to “reduce the risk of home-grown terrorism by strengthening Australia’s resilience to radicalisation and assisting individuals to disengage from violent extremist influences and beliefs.”\textsuperscript{83} In striving for this goal, the Australian govern-

\textsuperscript{75} Harris-Hogan, 2017, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{76} Barrett, 2017.
\textsuperscript{77} Cat Barker, “Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism,” Parliament of Australia, undated.
\textsuperscript{79} Harris-Hogan, 2017, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{81} Barker, undated.
\textsuperscript{82} Counter Extremism Project, undated(a), p. 12.
\textsuperscript{83} Government of Australia, Department of Home Affairs, “Countering Violent Extremism,” undated.
ment’s CVE efforts are intended to support its broader counterterrorism efforts and social inclusion agenda.84

In December 2017, the Australian government consolidated several of its national security, law enforcement, criminal justice, immigration, and emergency management agencies into a new Department of Home Affairs (HA), which serves a similar function as DHS.85 One of the agencies subsumed under the new HA was the Attorney-General’s Department, which had included a CVE unit in charge of national-level CVE efforts. The CVE Centre within the HA is now responsible for coordinating and administering the federal CVE portfolio. The CVE Centre’s strategy is centered on five key areas of activity:

1. **Identification and information-sharing**, which aims to detect extremist ideology in its early stages and enable greater sharing of information and intelligence across the various levels of government
2. **Motivation, recruitment, and containment**, which seeks to understand individuals’ motivations for joining extremist or terrorist groups, the recruitment processes, and ways to contain the influence and appeal of violent extremist ideology
3. **Referral and support, diversion, and rehabilitation**, which establishes referral, support, and diversion mechanisms for individuals susceptible to radicalization, as well as rehabilitation services for radicalized individuals to reintegrate them back into society
4. **Education**, which promotes public awareness and understanding of such CVE-related issues as how to spot signs of radicalization and help individuals disengage from extremist ideologies, as captured in *Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation in Australia*, which the Australian government published in 2015
5. **Communication**, which entails challenging violent extremist ideologies through the creation and broadcasting of counternarratives.86

To implement its strategy, the CVE Centre coordinates and manages a number of domestic partnerships across multiple levels of government.87 Figure A.1 illustrates these partnerships.

---


85 Government of Australia, Department of Home Affairs, undated.


87 For more detail on the partnerships shown in Figure A.1, see Government of Australia, Living Safe Together, “Partners: Government,” webpage, undated(d).
The role of the social policy agencies is to implement policies aimed at promoting social inclusion and preventing marginalization. These policies can also address grievances that may stem from barriers to social and economic participation. Examples of social policies include

- education and training programs
- individual support services
- youth initiatives, such as mentoring and job advice
- family, peer, and community support
- community outreach.

HA now encompasses both the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), which has made it easier for the CVE Centre to collaborate with these law enforcement and intelligence agencies. AFP is actively involved in CVE initiatives, including community engagement, building social cohesion, and increasing resilience within diverse communities. These activities help identify people who may be at risk of radicalization and assist in diverting them from this path. AFP also contributes to whole-of-government initiatives aimed at empowering communities to challenge extremist messages and support individuals in
the nonviolent expression of their views. ASIO conducts a variety of activities to help identify individuals and groups intent on acting on extremist beliefs. These activities include engaging with influential community and religious figures and investigating identified extremists or extremist threats.

The governments of the various Australian states and territories have established policies and programs to foster the development of cooperative relationships with local communities. In addition, representatives of the state and territory governments participate in the CVE subcommittee of the Australia–New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), which is a vehicle for coordination and collaboration between the states and territories and the federal government. Before New Zealand was added to the committee, the body was known as the National Counter-Terrorism Committee (NCTC), which was a “Commonwealth-level stakeholder reference group established in 2011 to provide a consultative forum to discuss opportunities, risks and issues relating to the CVE program. . . . [and] facilitate a whole-of-government approach to CVE.” ANZCTC is meant to serve the same functions, with the added benefit of increasing coordination and cooperation between Australia and New Zealand on CVE issues.

On the local level, the Australian government partners with communities that are best positioned to identify and directly influence the vulnerability of at-risk individuals. These community-based partners include local councils, faith-based groups, sports clubs, and youth groups.

Although the Australian government is active in the CVE area, it has received some criticism from CVE practitioners, academics, and members of the Australian public. The most common criticisms are (1) that, although the Australian CVE strategy is heavily focused on countering radicalization, there is a lack of clarity and consensus on the concept and process of radicalization, and (2) as in many countries, some Muslim community members in Australia report feeling that they are unfairly targeted by CVE measures.

Activities
Australian CVE efforts at the federal, state or territory, and local levels are focused on the following complementary streams of activity:

- building strength in diversity and social participation, which includes initiatives that address societal drivers that can lead to disengagement and isolation.
Such multicultural community initiatives and social policy programs are intended to enhance community harmony, foster dialogue, improve migrant integration, and strengthen economic participation. Several of these activities are administered and funded by the Department of Social Services. This stream of activities also includes the government’s Living Safe Together (LST) website, which provides the public with information and resources about CVE-related issues.

- **targeted work with vulnerable communities and institutions**, which includes activities that provide support for communities to help them identify and prevent people from moving down the path of radicalization to violence. Such activities include the development of community information resources and training packages as well as the creation of rehabilitation programs for former prisoners and programs to prevent radicalization in prisons. The two main prison deradicalization programs are being implemented in New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria, the two states that hold the majority of Australia’s inmates imprisoned for terrorism-related offenses. The prison program in NSW is based on a “proactive integrated support model,” which preventatively targets individuals deemed to be at risk of radicalization. The Community Integration Support Program in Victoria is “a community-led and driven initiative which aims to rehabilitate imprisoned terrorists by offering a holistic approach to rehabilitation, including both pre- and post-release components.”

- **addressing terrorist propaganda online**, which includes efforts to confront online radicalization and challenge terrorist propaganda with the goal of limiting its appeal, removing and reducing access to extremist material online, and empowering community voices to combat extremist narratives. The Combating Terrorist Propaganda in Australia initiative, launched in February 2015, “establish[ed] a social media monitoring and analysis capability” and aimed to reduce extremist material online, develop a portal through which members of the public could report extremist material, and provide assistance to community groups working with vulnerable individuals. The LST website also includes a reporting tool, called “Report Online Extremist Material,” which allows people to report anonymously to the National Security Hotline any online material they believe is extremist in nature or could contribute to radicalization. This stream also includes online diversion initiatives conducted by Google, Facebook, Twitter, and other technology companies in conjunction with the federal government that

---


95 Barker, 2017, p. 3.

seek to “divert Australian online searches for extreme militant and propaganda terrorism-type material towards warnings about radicalisation.”\(^{97}\)

- **diversion and deradicalization**, which includes state- and territory-led early intervention programs to help people move away from violent ideologies and reconnect with their communities.\(^{98}\) These intervention programs “involve developing individually tailored case management plans to connect at-risk individuals with services such as mentoring and coaching, counselling, education and employment support.”\(^{99}\) Any concerned citizen can refer individuals to these programs. AFP leads a National Disruption Group with a Diversion Team that focuses on “alternatives to prosecution [for returning foreign fighters] and ‘acts as the conduit’ between federal authorities and the state-led intervention programs.”\(^{100}\) On a more local level, Australia has successfully initiated interventions in school systems on the early prevention side, specifically in western Sydney. The government is working closely with law enforcement, intelligence agencies (at the national and local levels), and the schools themselves to identify students at risk of radicalization. Such students often are removed from schools and placed in special programs to deal directly with the problem.\(^{101}\) In addition to the intervention programs, this stream includes the LST grants program, which was established in 2014 to support community-based nongovernmental organizations and local government organizations in developing new and innovative services for individuals at risk of violent extremism.\(^{102}\)

The Australian government has also conducted supporting activities in addition to the main streams of CVE activities detailed above. For instance, Australia has amended and passed legislation to fill gaps in previous CVE- and counterterrorism-related laws and enhance the capability of the government, law enforcement, and military to respond to acts of violent extremism.\(^{103}\) The Australian government also has

---

\(^{97}\) Barker, 2017, p. 3.


\(^{99}\) Barker, 2017, p. 3.

\(^{100}\) Barker, 2017, p. 3; AFP, “What We Do: National Efforts,” webpage, undated.

\(^{101}\) Multiple conversations with New South Wales Ministry of Health and Health and Safety Department officials, Sydney, Australia, January 2018.

\(^{102}\) Australian National Audit Office, *The Design of, and Award of Funding Under, the Living Safe Together Grants Programme*, Attorney-General’s Department, September 1, 2016.

\(^{103}\) Government of Australia, Living Safe Together, *Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation in Australia*, Attorney-General’s Department, 2015, p. 3.
commissioned academic research on CVE and supported university projects on CVE-related issues.\textsuperscript{104}

The government also carries out activities at the provisional and local levels, through funding via national-level grants and subnational initiatives. Two examples of such programs are

\begin{itemize}
\item Multicultural New South Wales’ \textit{The Point Magazine}, an online resource for Australian youth (Sydney-based)
\item the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF) Community Awareness Training Manual, a train-the-trainer–focused program to provide key stakeholders with the tools to detect and address radicalization (Melbourne-based).
\end{itemize}

In recent years, the Australian government has bolstered its spending on a wide variety of CVE programs and activities. Although some have criticized the government for spending far more on general counterterrorism measures than on specific CVE measures, Australia consistently has increased its spending on CVE. In 2014, the Abbott government announced that it would invest more than AUD$64 million in measures to help combat homegrown terrorism and deter Australians from engaging in overseas terrorist activities.\textsuperscript{105} The measures Prime Minister Abbott announced included AUD$13.4 million to strengthen community engagement programs in Australia with an emphasis on preventing young Australians from becoming involved with extremist groups. In 2015, this AUD$13.4 million included AUD$1.6 million for the LST grants program,\textsuperscript{106} with an additional AUD$365,122 added to the LST program later the same year.\textsuperscript{107} There are currently 28 programs funded through the LST grant program. Figure A.2 provides an overview of these programs by location and type.

In 2015, AUD$21.7 million was also provided over four years for the Combating Terrorist Propaganda program to fund social media monitoring and analysis capabilities.

In 2016, the Turnbull government announced that it was investing a further AUD$5 million to support communities affected by violent extremism and prevent young people from falling prey to the allure of violent extremists online.\textsuperscript{108} The Turnbull government package included

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{104}Madeleine Nyst, “When Implementation Falls Behind Research: The Case of CVE,” \textit{Interpreter}, February 26, 2018, p. 3.


\textsuperscript{107}Australian National Audit Office, 2016.

\end{flushleft}
• AUD$4 million to enable the NSW helpline to be rolled out across the country to help families and other frontline workers, such as teachers and community leaders, to seek help for young people at risk of online grooming by terrorists
• AUD$1 million for the e-Safety Commissioner to strengthen Australia’s prevention strategies and reach young people before they become vulnerable to terrorism.

Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas
Australia’s CVE programs share several similarities with those of the United States, and overlap with all of DHS’s focus areas (see Table A.2). Both focus on education and community awareness, training, countering terrorist propaganda, early warning mechanisms, and deradicalization. Both countries have a federal-level strategy and a grant program, but follow a decentralized approach that relies on state- and community-based implementation.

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from Australia’s Experience
Although Australia has many CVE programs and has invested heavily in these initiatives, officials have had difficulty evaluating the effects of the CVE programs relative to the national strategy. For some of the programs, it is simply too soon to judge whether they have been effective. In other cases, there have been little or no attempts to establish metrics, monitor progress, and evaluate success. Without good data, it is difficult to strategically allocate funding to the activities that provide the best overall return
on investment. The Australian government has made a concerted effort to improve its evaluation capabilities, and assessment, monitoring, and evaluation language is now entering the lexicon of major service providers. Australian national authorities are starting to communicate the importance of evaluating impact, not only by tracking resources (inputs), but also by requesting data on the outputs and outcomes (impact) of these programs. As a result, several key service providers have taken concrete steps to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities. For example, staff at AMF indicated that they used the Behavioural Indicators Model (BIM) of radicalization developed by Monash University to design their program.109 The idea of BIM is to identify attitudes that signal a shift toward antisocial behaviors that could lead to violent extremism. According to AMF staff, they use 18 of the 30 BIM indicators to assess their program on an ongoing basis. The indicators are used in conjunction with case studies, and participants are asked to assess whether they agree that the indicators represent appropriate warning signs and whether they can suggest others. AMF staff noted that a version of the BIM model is also used by Australian law enforcement and counterterrorism agencies in their own programs.

There are some best practices that can be drawn from Australian CVE programming despite the lack of data from formal evaluations. First, Victoria and NSW both administer their grants through the state-level Ministry of Multicultural Affairs, which is a nonsecurity actor. This helps avoid the stigma associated with an overly securitized or law enforcement–heavy CVE approach.110 Second, the Australian government has tried to promote the use of terms like “social cohesion” and “resilience building” instead of CVE in the context of the LST grants, which helps distance CVE from the federal government and law enforcement, enabling higher levels of trust by some parties that

109 For an example of BIM, please see Government of Australia, 2015, pp. 8–9.

110 Eric Rosand, “When It Comes to CVE, the United States Stands to Learn a Lot from Others. Will It?” Lawfare blog, September 10, 2017.
would otherwise be reluctant or unwilling to participate in CVE efforts. Finally, the Australian government has invested in “national practitioner’s networks to facilitate the sharing of expertise and lessons learned among the small but growing community of practitioners, professionals, and community-based organizations, across a variety of disciplines, involved in a range of efforts related to countering violent extremism and, more broadly, violence prevention.”

Ultimately, the Australian case provides some useful lessons for U.S. terrorism prevention efforts, given the similarities between the two countries and the potential for DHS to adapt some of the Australian initiatives to U.S. programs.

**United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom is a useful case study because it demonstrates a centralized and nationally coordinated approach to terrorism prevention. Prevention has been one of the main areas of the United Kingdom’s national counterterrorism strategy since 2003. Since then, and through government transitions, the United Kingdom’s terrorism prevention policy has evolved and officials have identified lessons learned. The strengths and challenges of the United Kingdom’s intervention program and online counterextremism efforts provide relevant insights.

**Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat**

Compared with its European counterparts, the United Kingdom faces perhaps the most grave and enduring domestic jihadist terrorism threat. From the 1970s through the 1990s, the United Kingdom had encountered domestic attacks stemming from the conflict in Northern Ireland. Since 2000, however, the primary threat has been Islamic terrorism and homegrown radicalization. After the July 7, 2005, bombings in London—which were carried out by radicalized British citizens—the government highlighted that the United Kingdom faced threats from both international and domestic violent extremism. In 2017, the United Kingdom foiled several plots but experienced five attacks—one that targeted Muslims outside a mosque and four with

---

111 Rosand, 2017.
which ISIS claimed a connection.\(^\text{116}\) Additionally, the United Kingdom has a more significant foreign fighter issue than does the United States,\(^\text{117}\) with about 850 foreign fighters having left the United Kingdom for Iraq and Syria and about 425 returnees as of October 2017.\(^\text{118}\) Finally, a 2017 study reported the finding that the United Kingdom is the top location in Europe and the fifth location in the world in terms of the frequency with which jihadist content is accessed online.\(^\text{119}\)

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

The United Kingdom’s CVE strategy, known as Prevent, is one of four strands of the country’s counterterrorism strategy, CONTEST.\(^\text{120}\) Prevent is coordinated by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) within the Home Office, and its budget is estimated to be around £40 million per year.\(^\text{121}\) The 2011 Prevent Strategy indicates that Prevent will address all types of terrorism, but will focus on Islamist terrorism.\(^\text{122}\)

The Prevent Strategy states that a key issue in the relationship between national and local efforts is the extent to which dispersed government funding is subject to central oversight. It explains that, while the government’s goal of localism generally aims to eliminate “ring-fenced” grants so that local recipients can apply funds as they see fit, Prevent is different because it relates to national security and because the quality of its implementation was variable prior to 2011.\(^\text{123}\) As a result, the Prevent Strategy states: \(^\text{124}\)

> Prevent needs to be developed in very close conjunction with central Departments. Prevent will be funded from the Home Office and Other Departments. Grants will be made available for local authority Prevent work. . . . [W]e intend to provide precisely targeted and dedicated funding for Prevent . . . with the aim of ensuring consistency in delivery against the objectives we have set. But we also expect pro-

---


\(^{120}\) CONTEST has existed since 2003, was first publicly released in 2006, and was updated in 2009 and 2011. The other three strands of CONTEST are Pursue, Protect, and Prepare; HM Government, 2006, pp. 1–2.


\(^{123}\) HM Government, 2011b, p. 34.

\(^{124}\) HM Government, 2011b, pp. 24, 34.
posals for funding to be developed locally—by local authority leads in conjunction with other Prevent partners—and we have no intention of micro-managing local projects.

**Activities**

In the United Kingdom, it can be difficult to distinguish among national, local, and individual CVE-related efforts because the government sometimes has been reluctant to reveal program specifics under Prevent, arguing that doing so could hinder the programs’ effectiveness through association with the government. Nevertheless, information is available about some of the major national activities of Prevent, which stem from its three objectives.

The first Prevent objective is “challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it.” The Research Information and Communication Unit (RICU) established within OSCT in 2007 has conducted key activities in this area. RICU communicates UK government messages and creates counternarratives to extremism. In coordination with local authorities and civil society, RICU has provided communications expertise to community groups and to credible commenters who are deemed to be well-positioned to counter terrorist ideology. RICU’s recent domestic and international activities have primarily centered on counter-ISIS strategic communications through social media and other methods, including techniques to promote RICU messages when people search for terms like ISIS. Allegedly, UK government backing of counter-radicalization messages often is not acknowledged.

The second Prevent objective is “protecting vulnerable people.” The major program supporting this goal is Channel, which provides early interventions for people who have been identified as vulnerable to terrorist ideology. Those who are concerned that a family member or friend may be radicalized can raise such concerns

---

125 Counter Extremism Project, undated(g), p. 16.
126 HM Government, 2011b, p. 43.
127 HM Government, 2011b, p. 47.
130 Cobain et al., 2016.
131 Cobain et al., 2016.
through their local authority safeguarding team or through the police for evaluation.\textsuperscript{134} Local authorities, educational institutions, health organizations, police, prisons, and probation authorities have a statutory duty per the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism while performing their regular activities.\textsuperscript{135} This particular policy has provoked concerns that such an obligation might encourage mistrust of Muslim students and communities.\textsuperscript{136} Figure A.3 shows the full process of referral, evaluation, and action through Channel.

\textbf{Figure A.3}
Prevent and Channel Process Flow

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Channel_Process_Flow}
\caption{Prevent and Channel Process Flow}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{134} Home Office, \textit{Individuals Referred to and Supported Through the Prevent Programme, April 2015 to March 2016}, Statistical Bulletin 23/17, November 9, 2017, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{135} Home Office, 2017, p. 5.

During the evaluation process for a referred individual, a vulnerability assessment framework provides guidance. Then, if an individual is deemed suitable for Channel, participation in the program is voluntary. Channel provides a variety of assistance that is tailored to the individual, including educational, professional, mental health, and ideological support. According to recorded statistics released for the period between April 2015 and May 2016:

- Islamist extremism concerns accounted for 65 percent of referrals (4,997 out of 7,631), 76 percent of those discussed at Channel panels (819 out of 1,072), and 69 percent of those supported (264 out of 381).
- Right-wing extremism concerns accounted for 10 percent of referrals (759 out of 7,631), 18 percent of those discussed at Channel panels (189 out of 1,072), and 26 percent of those supported (99 out of 381).

The third Prevent objective is “supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalization.” This objective’s stated priority areas are education, faith, health, criminal justice, and charities. Related activities include government-funded community discussions and forums, sports events, and efforts to build trust between police and Muslim organizations at the local level. The internet is also considered a relevant sector for this objective area. Consequently, the government is spearheading further research, activities, and interactions with technology companies related to the removal of online extremist content. For example, the Home Secretary recently revealed that a machine-learning tool able to automatically detect ISIS propaganda had been developed with government support.

---


142 Counter Extremism Project, undated(g), p. 16. For more on specific programming in this area, see Vidino and Brandon, 2012, pp. 12–14. For more on recent initiatives against far-right extremism (although these are not necessarily supported by the government) see Vidhya Ramalingam, On the Front Line: A Guide to Countering Far-Right Extremism, London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2014, pp. 26, 33, 38, 40. For more on individual and small group–run counterextremism narrative efforts (although these are not necessarily supported by the government), see Henry Tuck and Tanya Silverman, The Counter-Narrative Handbook, London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2016, pp. 18, 34, 61–62; and Vidino and Brandon, 2012, p. 13.


Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas

The United Kingdom’s terrorism prevention efforts correspond strongly with DHS’s emphasis on education and community awareness, countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda, and providing early warning (see Table A.3). As for keeping suspects from returning to violence, while some UK prison programs have operated or planned to act in the deradicalization space, prison counterextremism efforts overall appear to focus more on the prevention stage and/or to have a security rather than a deradicalization focus.145

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from the United Kingdom’s Experience

Because the United Kingdom has been implementing Prevent for more than a decade, officials have noted lessons learned that could be useful for DHS to consider. A 2010 inquiry into Prevent solicited recommendations from partners, government officials, and the general public. “Over 400 written responses were received, and around 600 delegates attended the consultation events.”146 Respondents provided the following conclusions:147

- Prevent needs better implementation guidance at the local level, with clear communication of the strategy and criteria for success.
- A narrow focus “had created the perception that Prevent stigmatised Muslim communities,” so most respondents to the inquiry “supported the idea of expanding the scope of Prevent to include all forms of violent extremism.”

Table A.3
Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and UK Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DHS Focus Area</th>
<th>Examples of Relevant UK Programs or Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting education and community awareness</td>
<td>Trust and awareness-raising activities with communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda</td>
<td>RICU; outreach to internet sector; research and investment in removal of extremist content online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized and responding to cases of radicalization to violence</td>
<td>Prevent case management and Channel support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping suspects and individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses from returning to violence</td>
<td>Counterextremism efforts in prisons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


147 HM Government, 2011a, pp. 8, 10–11.
Comments about Channel generally were favorable, but some pointed out issues, “such as its ‘voluntary’ nature, or difficulties around information sharing,” and some “called for a clearer definition of vulnerability and better risk assessment processes to aid referrals.”

Educational institutions and teachers should be key players in Prevent.

These impressions informed changes in approach detailed in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, which noted several other insights from Prevent’s first few years. A foreword to the strategy by then–Home Secretary Theresa May indicates that Prevent had “confused the delivery of Government policy to promote integration with Government policy to prevent terrorism.”148 For this reason, and because of opposition to Prevent work, local authorities had often directed Prevent grants to broader community cohesion projects rather than to projects explicitly intended to prevent terrorism.149 A 2012 study found that groups without experience in the field of PVE would apply for Prevent funding, raising concerns about the potential credibility of funding applicants.150 Additionally, May’s foreword also states that “in trying to reach those at risk of radicalisation, funding sometimes even reached the very extremist organisations that Prevent should have been confronting.”151 These findings highlight the need to properly vet CVE partners. Finally, the strategy noted the importance of safeguarding personal data and collecting better information on funding usage and program impact.152

Considering the perceptions of and challenges faced by UK terrorism prevention programs can provide key takeaways for DHS, although these programs have varying degrees of applicability to the U.S. context. Although the merits of particular programs are often a matter of opinion, differing opinions help demonstrate the benefits and drawbacks of particular types of CVE projects. For example, some criticize RICU’s domestic countermessaging work as covert propaganda, while others see it as a worthwhile pursuit with the noble intention of stopping terrorist attacks.153 Nevertheless, a similar domestically focused program—if the association with the government was secret—would not be tenable in the U.S. context, nor likely would concealing government affiliation with other types of domestic terrorism prevention programming.

As for the Channel intervention program, a 2017 Washington Institute report declared it a model of “how nationally driven programs with local partners and local programs with national-level support can effectively challenge the space within which

---

149 HM Government, 2011b, p. 28.
152 HM Government, 2011b, pp. 8, 10.
153 Cobain et al., 2016.
ideologically driven extremists operate.”154 A 2016 George Washington University Program on Extremism report noted that the United Kingdom’s experience with Channel demonstrates that improving transparency and inclusion can increase local cooperation in interventions.155 In this report, interviewees from UK law enforcement and local government noted the importance of “identifying appropriate intervention providers, educating local service professionals, recording personal data sensitively, and maintaining clear language around intervention.”156 Moreover, a 2011 study for the Association of Chief Police Officers found that Prevent policing focuses on who community members know as opposed to what they know: “High value social networkers” are key to local buy-in and mobilization.157 The 2011 study also found that community members experienced confusion in having to interface with a variety of police units working in this area, suggesting that a single point of contact would be better.158 The multiple contact points also contributed to community members’ incorrect assumption that if they shared information with one unit, then that information would reach the appropriate parties.159

The UK government defines success in Channel as when there are no longer concerns that a participant will be drawn into terrorism, and it claims that the majority of cases have produced this result.160 Critics, however, respond that such a success rate calls into question whether there had been any legitimate reason to suspect Channel clients of terrorism proclivities in the first place.161 Detractors have also noted that Prevent might seem like a covert spying and intelligence-gathering tool targeting Muslim communities, which could actually cause such communities to become less likely to volunteer useful information.162

156 Bilazarian, 2016, p. 3.
158 Innes et al., 2011, pp. 22, 91.
159 Innes et al., 2011, pp. 22, 91.
Prevent also has received related criticisms from various members of Parliament, the National Union of Teachers, the Muslim Council of Britain, and others, many of whom claim that Prevent can unfairly single out Muslim students in particular, perhaps creating a situation in which radicalization is even more likely.\textsuperscript{163} This point that stigmatization can counterproductively fuel radicalization often surfaces in relation to Prevent. Educators in particular point to Prevent as harming schools’ ability to serve as “safe spaces” for students to express ideas in an environment of mutual trust with their teachers.\textsuperscript{164} Other denunciations include Prevent’s perceived lack of transparency, accountability, and redress.\textsuperscript{165} Finally, extremist internet content removal efforts receive both praise from those who consider them necessary and disapproval from those who find that they are a form of censorship.\textsuperscript{166}

UK terrorism prevention programs also faced challenges related to capacity. Channel faced difficulties because of the increase in potential radicalization cases linked to the sudden rise of ISIS.\textsuperscript{167} Additionally, bad publicity has resulted from mistaken referrals to Prevent—particularly cases in which young children are wrongly reported.\textsuperscript{168} A key Channel challenge is averting over-reporting and false alarms that can make it more difficult to identify legitimate instances of radicalization among a large pool of referrals.\textsuperscript{169}

Finally, false positives are also a problem in the online realm, particularly given the United Kingdom’s efforts in content removal. As noted in a recent article about the UK Home Office’s newly developed artificial intelligence tool to detect terrorist propaganda, even when the false positive rate is extremely low, “the tool could falsely flag (and presumably unfairly block)” many pieces of content because the total number of pieces of content scanned is large. Yet, difficulties aside, the United Kingdom’s level of engagement with industry on these topics is significant.

Overall, considering the pros, cons, concerns, and challenges that the United Kingdom has experienced might assist the United States in developing an approach that attracts partners, challenges detractors, and results in more-productive terrorism prevention programming.

\textsuperscript{165}CAGE Advocacy, Ltd., \textit{Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent}, London, July 6, 2015, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{166}Lomas, 2018.
\textsuperscript{167}Gearson and Rosemont, 2015, p. 1049.
\textsuperscript{168}Counter Extremism Project, undated(g), p. 17.
\textsuperscript{169}Vidino and Brandon, 2012, p. 20.
France

France serves as an important case study given the many terrorist attacks the country has weathered over the last several years. The myriad countermeasures the French government has implemented in an attempt to combat and reduce the domestic terrorist threat provide insights into which kinds of terrorism prevention initiatives may work and which approaches may be less successful.

Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat

France has experienced several high-profile, high-casualty terrorist attacks in recent years—including the Charlie Hebdo attacks of January 2015, the Paris attacks of November 2015, and the Bastille Day attack in July 2016—which have called global attention to France’s domestic terrorism problem.170 Although some nationalist and separatist extremist groups historically have targeted France, the domestic terrorist threat facing it today is primarily from jihadist, Salafist terrorist groups like al Qaeda, ISIS, and their respective franchises.171 A 2017 poll by the Pew Research Center found that 88 percent of French citizens believe that ISIS poses a major threat to France, and the French government has identified “the fight against Islamist terrorism” as its top priority.172

France has the largest Muslim population of any European country (around 5.7 million, or 8.8 percent of the total population), the majority of whom are immigrants rather than French-born citizens.173 France’s homegrown extremism problems are fueled in part by the poor integration of these Muslim communities—which themselves include people from a variety of countries and ethnic backgrounds—into the rest of French society.174 Many French Muslims live in impoverished, crime-ridden, immigrant-dominated neighborhoods on the outskirts of Paris (called the banlieues), and several sources have criticized the government for neglecting these areas.175 This perceived abandonment by the state has fostered a sense of marginalization, disenfran-

---

170 Counter Extremism Project, France: Extremism and Counter-Extremism, undated(e).
171 Counter Extremism Project, undated(e).
172 “Fighting ‘Islamist Terror’ Is France’s Top Priority, Says Macron,” The Local, August 29, 2017; Counter Extremism Project, undated(e).
chisement, and “extreme societal misery” among residents of the banlieues, which has contributed to the evolution of select neighborhoods (e.g., La Grande-Borne estate in Grigny) into what government officials and the media have labeled “hotbeds,” “breeding grounds,” or “factories” for radicalization.176 Even some immigrant communities that fall within the city limits are not well integrated into French society and have experienced problems with extremism—the Charlie Hebdo attackers, for instance, grew up in the 19th arrondissement of Paris rather than in the banlieues.177 The impoverished suburbs of other French cities, like Nice, also have been identified by the government as areas ripe with radicalization that have produced terrorist actors of their own, underscoring the depth of the socioeconomic divide between France’s Muslim and non-Muslim communities.178

Another major driver of radicalization has been the French prison system. As is the case with France’s neighborhoods, there are specific prisons that are notorious for producing radicalized individuals, such as the Fleury-Mérogis prison near Paris, Europe’s largest jail, which has been criticized for forcing its inmates to endure abysmal living conditions.179 To further complicate matters, France has produced the largest number of foreign fighters in Western Europe; some foreign fighter returnees have helped radicalize others and have been directly involved in several of the recent terrorist attacks in France.180 Because France is part of the 26-nation Schengen Area, which has abolished border controls at mutual borders, France has had difficulty securing against threats like returning foreign fighters or international terrorist networks, and has been impacted by spillover from some of its neighbors, particularly Belgium. Indeed, several of the perpetrators of the November 2015 Paris attacks grew up in Molenbeek, a suburb of Brussels that served as a planning center for both the attacks in Paris and the subsequent Brussels attacks in March 2016.181 Since the Paris attacks, France has been pressuring the Belgian government to bolster, toughen, and otherwise improve its counterextremism and counter-radicalization strategies and policies.182


177 Chrisafis, 2015.


180 Counter Extremism Project, undated(e).


CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities

Approach and Strategy

France has proposed three different national action plans to counter and prevent violent extremism and radicalization since 2014, demonstrating its commitment to the cause but also highlighting the great difficulty it has had in formulating sustainable solutions to these issues.\(^{183}\) The first national plan, the *Plan to Combat Violent Radicalization and Terrorist Networks*, was announced by the Minister of the Interior in April 2014 and focused heavily on the foreign fighter threat, bolstering intelligence and surveillance activities, and countering “preachers of hate.”\(^{184}\) In May 2016, the government announced a much-expanded “Action Plan Against Radicalization and Terrorism,” which provided 80 recommendations to various agencies and ministries within the French government. The recommendations included “improving research into the drivers of radicalization, developing reintegration and rehabilitation centers for radicalized individuals, better securing vulnerable sites, and building national resilience to terrorist attacks.”\(^{185}\) To support the implementation of this action plan, the government earmarked an extra $45 million (in addition to funds already allocated for general counterterrorism efforts) to be spent between 2016 and 2018.\(^{186}\)

In February 2018, the French government announced a new national action plan, “Prevent to Protect,” which contains 60 measures aimed at the prevention of radicalization and terrorism.\(^{187}\) The plan seems to build off of the measures proposed in the 2016 plan, but focuses more specifically on the prevention angle. The plan includes new measures for countering radicalization in prisons, training the public to spot signs of radicalization or terrorist activity, regulating religious teachings in schools, reintegrating returning foreign fighters who are minors into French society, and establishing procedures to remove radicalized government officials from service.\(^{188}\)

France implements a highly centralized approach to counter and prevent violent extremism and radicalization, with the French government dictating and enacting the majority of the country’s measures. The body charged with coordinating and implementing the government’s plan of action is the Interministerial Committee for


\(^{188}\) Ganley, 2018.
the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalization (CIPDR), which is a cabinet-level committee.189

Activities
Under the direction of the French government’s CIPDR, several ministries have engaged in various PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization activities. One of France’s most-prominent initiatives in this space has been the counter-messaging campaign conducted through a website called “Stop Djihadisme,” or “Stop Jihadism,” which is run by the Prime Minister’s office.190 The website provides content meant to dissuade prospective jihadi recruits from joining a terrorist or extremist network, such as accounts from ISIS and al Qaeda defectors, as well as content meant to raise public awareness about how to spot signs that someone may have become radicalized. The website also provides the number of a toll-free hotline that people can call to receive assistance if they or someone they know is at risk of being radicalized to violence. Within two years of opening, the hotline received more than 5,000 referrals for individuals who were flagged as needing attention from the authorities or support services.191 Although not specific to PVE/CVE or counter-radicalization efforts, France also established a toll-free hotline as part of Plan Vigipirate, France’s national terrorism alert system, which operates similarly to DHS’s “see something, say something” campaign.192

Another countermessaging initiative is the Association française des Victimes du Terrorisme (AfVT, or the French Association of Victims of Terrorism), which is an EU Commission–funded program that seeks to create a dialogue between victims of terrorist attacks and the general public (particularly youth) to help prevent radicalization and promote a sense of citizenship and camaraderie against terrorism.193 AfVT also provides online diversionary content for search engines like Google to display to individuals seeking extremist content.194

To support France’s intensified PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization efforts, parliament has passed a series of legal measures, including the French “Patriot Act” of 2014, which criminalizes attempts to leave France to engage in terrorist activities abroad, authorizes the government to place a travel ban on suspected terrorists or foreign fighters, and grants the government the authority to censor websites that support terrorism.195 Under the authority of this bill, and in conjunction with its online coun-

189 Boring, 2018.
190 U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 21.
191 U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 21.
192 Maria Lozano, Inventory of the Best Practices on De-Radicalisation from the Different Member States of the EU, Terrorism and Radicalisation (TerRa), undated, p. 29.
193 French Association of Victims of Terrorism, homepage, undated.
194 French Association of Victims of Terrorism, undated.
195 Counter Extremism Project, undated(e), p. 9.
termessaging campaign, the French government has also censored several websites that it deems to be providing terrorist or extremist content.196

The Ministry of the Interior recently undertook efforts to reform France’s Islamic institutions through relaunching the Foundation for the Islam of France, which seeks to promulgate a moderate version of Islam that incorporates French secular values.197 The foundation promotes the vetting and certification of imams to ensure that they will not promote radical ideology, and aims to improve the French-language abilities of imams.198

The Ministry of Justice has led efforts to counter radicalization in French prisons. As part of its deradicalization campaign, France created dedicated prison wings for violent extremist prisoners in select prisons.199 There are generally five prison wings set aside for violent extremists, two of which are dedicated to assessing radicalized inmates (or those suspected of being radicalized) and three of which are dedicated to the management of inmates judged to be violent extremists. Radicalized or at-risk prisoners are first placed in one of the two assessment units and evaluated over the course of four months. High-risk cases are then placed in one of the three violent prisoner units, where they are closely monitored and “face stricter detention policies, including increased isolation, regular searches, frequent cell changes, and limited access to personal belongings.”200 Prisoners deemed to be lower-risk are redistributed among other units of the prison but are required to continue to receive counseling.201 The prison directors, directors of social reintegration services, and the probation service jointly assess a prisoner’s risk level and decide where a prisoner should be placed.202

The French government also oversees some PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization activities at the local level. The General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET) implements France’s national urban policy in select cities and neighborhoods, the goal of which is to mitigate socioeconomic disparities that could contribute to radicalization.203 The French government—with local organizations like Entr’Autres, a family-help organization—has conducted training sessions for educators, social workers,

196 Counter Extremism Project, undated(e), p. 9.
200 U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 21.
201 U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 21.
medical professionals, and law enforcement on how to identify and report signs of radicalization. Some communities in France have started their own initiatives to try to counter radicalization. The French city of Strasbourg, for instance, employs former foreign fighters or former members of terrorist organizations to speak at youth centers to warn at-risk individuals about the consequences of engaging in violent extremist or terrorist activity. Most PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization initiatives, however, are designed and implemented at the national level.

Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas
France’s PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization programs and activities overlap to varying degrees with all four DHS focus areas, although France has focused more on radicalization and extremism prevention efforts and less on rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders (see Table A.4). France’s PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization initiatives correspond most strongly with DHS’s focus on countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda and providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized to violence. The French government has also emphasized the need to promote education and community awareness of the dangers of extremism and radicalization, although this has mostly focused on how to report possibly radicalized individuals rather than how to prevent radicalization in the first place. Finally, although the French government has endeavored to prevent radicalization in prisons, it has mostly taken the approach of trying to quarantine radicalized individuals to make sure their radical ideologies do not “infect” other prisoners. Until the latest action plan was announced in early 2018, there was little attention paid to rehabilitating and reintegrating foreign fighter returnees and ex-offenders who have been released from prison.

Table A.4
Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and French Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DHS Focus Area</th>
<th>Examples of Relevant French Programs or Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting education and community awareness</td>
<td>Nationally coordinated briefings and trainings for educators, law enforcement, and the general public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda</td>
<td>“Stop Jihadism” website, censorship of online extremist or terrorist content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized and responding to cases of radicalization to violence</td>
<td>“Stop Jihadism” hotline, Plan Vigipirate hotline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping suspects and individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses from returning to violence</td>
<td>Deradicalization attempts in prisons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from France’s Experience

Some of France’s PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization initiatives have failed or yielded only marginal success. Still, the French experience provides insights into the kinds of initiatives that might be considered or avoided in the fight against extremism and terrorism. Reviewing some of the ill-fated initiatives undertaken in France provides cautionary tales about program design.

In one example of flawed program design, the French government planned to open 13 regional deradicalization centers for Islamic extremists, called “Centers for Prevention, Integration, and Citizenship,” but ended up opening only one center. The Pontourny center was opened in September 2016 and closed in July 2017, after receiving only nine participants, none of whom completed the ten-month deradicalization curriculum. The deradicalization centers seemingly employed an appropriately multidisciplinary staff—a mix of social workers, special educators, psychologists, and Muslim chaplains—but some state-employed psychologists have suggested that the program failed because it was voluntary and the curriculum was too “aggressively nationalist” in its approach. Essentially, the program sought to supplant individuals’ entire belief systems by promoting French nationalism as an antidote to radical Islamic ideas. This controversial approach, coupled with the lack of an enforcement mechanism since the program was voluntary, set the program up for failure. This experience illustrates the importance of designing programs that are appropriately tailored to the participants, setting realistic goals, and having established mechanisms for accountability.

Some other government-driven initiatives have been similarly criticized for being discriminatory, divisive, and counterproductive, as they purportedly feed into ISIS’s narrative of the West being pitted against Islam. One key issue with the French government’s implementation of PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization programs stems from the fact that France’s strong central authority has enabled the government to easily restrict or encroach on civil liberties in the name of security through actions like surveillance and wiretapping. Although these practices may have enabled success in certain cases, they have drawn criticism, from both French citizens and outside observers.

---

208 Geraghty, 2015.
209 Kristin Archick, Paul Belkin, Christopher M. Blanchard, Carl Ek, and Derek E. Mix, Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL33166,
Another lesson has emerged from France’s deradicalization initiatives in prisons. Although France has aptly identified radicalization in prisons as a pressing threat, its attempts to counter radicalization by isolating extremists in separate prison wings has, in a number of cases, actually served to further radicalize the less extreme inmates by placing them in proximity to the most-radical prisoners and has prompted an increase in attacks on prison guards.210

Furthermore, a recent report by a French parliamentary fact-finding commission on deradicalization alleges that because of the large amounts of attention devoted to PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization efforts at the national level, deradicalization has become an industry of its own in France, wherein several nongovernmental and private-sector entities have competed for and won government contracts to implement deradicalization programs, despite their inexperience in this field.211

Despite these issues in program design and implementation, there have been some signs of success. French Minister of the Interior Bernard Cazeneuve, for instance, maintains that there was a drastic reduction in the number of outgoing foreign fighters in 2016—from 69 to 18 when compared with the same time frame in 2015—which he attributed in part to the government’s myriad PVE/CVE and counter-radicalization efforts.212

The French experience offers many cautionary tales for terrorism prevention programming, but the main takeaway from this case lies in France’s willingness to try to fail in the CVE space. When fighting such a seemingly intractable problem fraught with political complications, the best approach may be to try, fail, and learn from previous mistakes when designing a new approach, as France has done over the past four years. The alternative is inaction, which comes with its own potentially perilous consequences.

Belgium

To address its severe extremist and terrorist threat, Belgium has adopted a locally tailored, community policing–centric approach that provides useful lessons when considering how to design future terrorism prevention programming.

---


Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat

Belgium has been the victim of high-profile terrorist attacks, including the Brussels bombings of March 2016 and the Jewish Museum shooting of May 2014. Belgium has also produced the highest number of outgoing foreign fighters per capita in Europe, some of whom infamously returned to Belgium and orchestrated the terror attacks in both Paris and Brussels. Perhaps unsurprisingly, according to a Gallup poll conducted in 2017, 88 percent of Belgians perceived acts of terrorism committed against Belgium by residents to be “a serious problem.”213 As in most Western European countries, the primary domestic terrorist threat facing Belgium stems from Salafi jihadist groups, namely al Qaeda, ISIS, and associated movements.214 Although Belgium has a smaller Muslim population than France, it has similarly severe problems with immigrant integration, particularly in select neighborhoods. Two neighborhoods alone—Molenbeek and Schaerbeek—have produced more than twice the number of foreign fighters as the entirety of the United States.215 The conditions in Molenbeek, a suburb of Brussels that has become known as a hotbed of radicalization, have become so degraded that one Foreign Policy article termed Molenbeek “the rotten heart of Europe,” while a New York Times piece labeled it “the Islamic State of Molenbeek.”216 About 80 percent of the residents of Molenbeek are Muslim, the community is very insular, and the unemployment rate among youths is 37 percent, which is drastically higher than the rate in the rest of Belgium.217 According to several accounts, radical Muslim clerics and returning foreign fighters permeate this community, fostering radical thought among its citizens and calling for them to wage jihad.218 A number of Molenbeek residents have heeded this call, including the perpetrators of the March 2004 Madrid bombings, the August 2015 Thayls train attack, and the November 2015 Paris attacks.219 Molenbeek is also the site of an illicit weapons market believed to be the source of weapons used in various terrorist attacks across Europe.220 The Belgian government has largely stayed out of crime-heavy, impoverished, immigrant neighborhoods like Molenbeek and Schaerbeek, exacerbating the divide between these communities and the rest of Belgian society. Belgium’s difficulty enforcing domestic security has ramifications for the rest of

213 Counter Extremism Project, Belgium: Extremism and Counter Extremism, undated(b).
214 Emmanuel Dunand, “Paris Attack Probe Turns to Belgium’s ‘Islamist Pit Stop’ of Molenbeek,” France 24, November 11, 2016
218 See, for example, Dunand, 2016.
219 Yourish et al., 2016.
220 Counter Extremism Project, undated(b).
Europe, since, like its neighbor France, Belgium is part of the Schengen Area, wherein lax border control and security enable illicit or terrorist networks to operate across borders largely unencumbered. In the wake of the November 2015 Paris attacks, the French government publicly blamed the Belgian government for its perceived failure to prevent terrorist activity within its borders, and media and academic reports have lambasted Belgium’s shortcomings in this space and underscored the need for Belgium to improve its CVE and counterterrorism capabilities.221

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

Belgium’s first national action plan to prevent and counter radicalization and violent extremism, “Plan Mosques,” was created in 2002 and kept classified by the Crisis Centre of the Belgian government.222 The Ministerial Committee for Intelligence and Security reformed the plan in 2004 and approved it in 2006, producing the “Action Plan against Radicalism” or “Plan R.” Unlike its predecessor, Plan R aims for maximum transparency. Plan R was updated again in 2015, and the new version was approved by the Belgian National Security Council in December 2015. The Coordination Unit for Threat Assessment (CUTA) produced the most recent iteration of Plan R. Belgium established CUTA in 2006 for the purpose of analyzing intelligence gathered by Belgium’s counterterrorism entities in order to assess the level of the terrorist and extremist threat. CUTA serves as a liaison between the judicial and executive components of the country’s counterterrorism program and operates under the authority of the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior. CUTA oversees the National Task Force, which is the strategic policy body in charge of national-level coordination for Plan R and includes several government agencies as well as representatives of the federal and local police.223

According to the authors of the plan,

The Action Plan against Radicalism is a plan of approach striving to restrict as much as possible the development of radicalism and extremism in our society. The method to achieve this goal is an integrated collaboration between various public services, by realising two goals: mapping out the individuals and groups with a radicalising effect on their environment, and reducing the impact of the drivers of radicalisation.224

---


224 Belgian Government, 2016, p. 5.
Plan R’s primary areas of focus are radical websites, radio and television broadcasts, extremist imams and preachers, cultural centers and associations under Belgian law, radical groups, propaganda centers, and prisons.\(^{225}\) Plan R also sets up several permanent working groups on prisons, radio and television, prevention, and communication.\(^{226}\) In addition to the National Task Force, numerous local task forces were created under the national plan to oversee counter-radicalization and CVE activities within various regions.

In implementing Plan R, Belgium follows a largely decentralized approach to counter-radicalization and CVE in which regions and cities are afforded the leeway to design their own programs to supplement and support the national policy. At the federal level, the focus is on bolstering national security and safety; at the regional and local levels, the focus is on counter-radicalization and terrorism prevention as well as building resilience against potential attacks.

**Activities**

Although the Belgian government publicly dismissed France’s criticism related to the Paris attacks, it has toughened its approach to countering radicalization and violent extremism.\(^{227}\) The Belgian government recently revealed several new CVE and counter-radicalization measures in response to the attacks, including putting ankle bracelets on radicalized individuals to monitor them, authorizing night raids (which had previously been banned between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.), and extending detention periods for suspected terrorists from 24 to 72 hours.\(^{228}\) The government announced that an additional $428 million from the 2016 budget would be allocated for bolstering security through recruiting more security personnel and buying new equipment. Belgium has supported its harder approach to CVE and counter-radicalization by passing legislation criminalizing leaving Belgium to become a foreign fighter, revoking Belgian citizenship for convicted terrorists if they hold two passports, and expanding authorities for counterterrorism activities like surveillance.\(^{229}\)

Because Belgium recognizes that there are underlying social grievances driving radicalization in many instances, the Belgian government has spearheaded efforts to reduce social polarization and criminality and to empower community leaders, particularly Muslim religious leaders.\(^{230}\) One such effort is the Community Policing and the Prevention of Radicalisation (CoPPRa) project, which is funded by the EU and the Belgian Federal Police. The project began in 2010 with the goal of “increasing the role

---

\(^{225}\) Lozano, undated, p. 8.


\(^{227}\) Spiegel, 2015.


\(^{229}\) Counter Extremism Project, undated(b), p. 9.

\(^{230}\) U.S. Department of State, 2016a, pp. 10–11.
of front-line police officers in the early detection of violent radicalization.” The project has since expanded to include 15 other EU member states. CoPPrA is based on the premise that local police officers are best suited to help prevent radicalization because they ostensibly have a better understanding of and close ties within their communities. The project has three primary areas of activity. The first component of the project entailed creating a “pocket guide” for police officers, including information on how to engage with the community, identify various violent and extremist groups, and spot signs of radicalization. Second, the project developed a curriculum to train police officers on how to use the manual in their daily work. The final component of the project involved creating a forum for the exchange of best practices to prevent radicalization, to set up train-the-trainers programs, and to design an online training module. The project continues to evolve, and planning is under way for a second phase that would include an online component to disseminate the training materials created through CoPPrA.

In response to the Paris attacks, the Belgian government implemented an initiative called the Canal Plan in February 2016, just weeks before the March 2016 Brussels attacks. The plan entailed sending 50 additional police officers to Molenbeek and establishing a joint task force dedicated to tracking and intercepting foreign fighters. The Canal Plan successfully fostered cooperation and coordination among police, financial investigation units, and other relevant entities to improve the conditions in Molenbeek. In March 2017, an expanded Canal Plan strengthened the police presence in eight municipalities in the Brussels Canal Zone—Vilvoorde, Molenbeek, Schaerbeek, the City of Brussels, Sint-Gillis, Anderlecht, Koelkeberg, and Sint-Joost-ten-Node—with the aim of cracking down on terrorist activity, the drug trade, and weapons trafficking. In each of these municipalities, local authorities and police, federal police, prevention services, and the judiciary have all worked together to reduce crime and improve social conditions. In conjunction with the expanded Canal Plan, the Belgian government also established five new counterterrorism units and announced that it would recruit an additional 1,200 police officers in the next few years. Given the preliminary success of the Canal Plan, the head of the federal police has been advocating for the Canal Plan to be implemented in all 589 of Belgium’s municipalities, although this is unlikely to happen any time soon because of resource constraints.

Belgium, like France, has identified radicalization in prisons as a serious problem. Accordingly, Belgium produced an Action Plan Against Radicalization in Prisons in March 2015, which provides measures both to prevent prisoners from becoming radicalized and to deradicalize prisoners who are already radicalized when they

---

enter the prison system. These measures include counseling, recruiting imams to guide prisoners away from radical ideologies, and, at some prisons, isolating radicalized inmates in different wings of the prison to prevent them from radicalizing others. In 2015, the CoPPRa training material was adapted and included in the basic training for prison guards and staff across Belgium to help them identify signs of radicalization and concerning behavior.

Some organizations have implemented their own CVE and counter-radicalization initiatives at the local level. For instance, in the early 2000s, extremist and terrorist groups started recruiting in the neighborhood by the Royal Atheneum in Antwerp, a secular state school with a large contingent of Muslim students. To prevent students from falling prey to the radical ideologies promoted by these groups, the school implemented a four-year program that included “rigorous intercultural dialogue, projects on identity and citizenship, systematic training for teachers in all subjects, as well as arts projects in which students were able to express delicate issues without having to articulate them verbally.” The program was reportedly successful, and it mitigated the potential cultural schism between Muslim students and students of other faiths. Other local initiatives include training and public awareness programs, helpdesks or toll-free hotlines to provide support or guidance for radicalized individuals or those close to them, and cultural events to promote intercultural dialogue.

The Belgian city Vilvoorde is a member of the Strong Cities Network, a global network of policymakers and practitioners involved in efforts to prevent and counter radicalization and violent extremism. In 2014, Vilvoorde launched its own counter-radicalization plan separate from national efforts, which appears to have stopped more citizens from leaving to become foreign fighters. Vilvoorde’s various projects have focused on building relationships between local police and youth in the city. The city also established a municipal office to oversee these projects and a dedicated PVE/CVE service in charge of implementing the city’s projects. Mechelen, another city near Brussels, has successfully prevented its citizens from leaving to fight in Iraq or Syria. Mechelen has attributed its success to the use of an “integral approach with a strong focus on prevention, in which policing and dialogue go hand in hand.”

234Office of the Minister of Justice, Action Plan Against Radicalization in Prisons, Brussels, March 11, 2015, p. 3.
235U.S. Department of State, 2016a, pp. 10–11.
236United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016, p. 32.
Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas

On the whole, Belgium’s CVE and counter-radicalization programs and initiatives do not align or overlap with all of DHS’s focus areas (see Table A.5). Belgium’s efforts, particularly at the local level, do focus on promoting education and community awareness. However, Belgium has not been very active in combating extremism online, although reports from 2017 suggest that Belgium was planning to invest €6.8 million to obtain “supersoftware” that will theoretically allow the government to automatically detect websites hosting extremist content.²⁴⁰ Additionally, Belgium does not have robust early warning mechanisms for cases of radicalization. Finally, Belgium has been attempting deradicalization initiatives in prisons and reintegration programs for foreign fighters, but these approaches are still being refined, and it is too early to tell whether these strategies have worked.

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from Belgium’s Experience

Belgium’s localized, community policing–oriented approach provides a potential model for cities in the United States. The BRAVE program in Montgomery County, Maryland, purportedly already emulates some elements of Belgium’s police training programs.²⁴¹ However, there are both lessons and cautionary tales to be drawn from the Belgian experience.

Belgium’s decentralized approach has contributed to issues with coordination and communication. The Belgian government has endeavored to foster communication and coordination among relevant entities at the federal and municipal levels, but this has been an area in which Belgium has traditionally struggled. Belgium is a federal state, and there are many layers of bureaucracy that can complicate national-

Table A.5
Overlap Between DHS Focus Areas and Belgian Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DHS Focus Area</th>
<th>Examples of Relevant Belgian Programs or Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting education and community awareness</td>
<td>Training at the local and federal level; CoPPRa project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda</td>
<td>No active programs or initiatives (according to publicly available documents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing early warning of individuals who have radicalized and responding to cases of radicalization to violence</td>
<td>Select community hotlines; CoPPRa project attempts to train people how to spot radicalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping suspects and individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses from returning to violence</td>
<td>Deradicalization programs in prison; reintegration programs for foreign fighters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁴⁰ “Belgium to Invest 7 Billion Euros to Counter Extremist Content Online,” Business Standard, June 27, 2017.
level coordination. The various municipal, regional, and federal organizations generally do not coordinate well—particularly across French and Flemish regions—resulting in some gaps in intelligence and programming across the country.242 The language barrier between French- and Dutch-speaking police has exacerbated coordination and information-sharing issues. By way of example, these coordination issues affected the implementation of the Canal Plan. Although the Canal Plan has yielded overall success, some regional and municipal officials have complained that the amount of funding and resources they received from the federal government was inadequate to effect the kind of change expected of their police forces, and that resources were not awarded relative to the population size of these areas.243 The United States would not have to contend with the language barrier issue, but there are certainly different dynamics in each state that could contribute to difficulties coordinating and aligning efforts.

Belgium’s CVE and counter-radicalization regime also has been criticized for failing to adequately incorporate non—law enforcement strategies into its overall approach.244 Because of resource and personnel constraints, law enforcement strategies in Belgium have been largely reactive rather than preventive, which has stymied CVE-related efforts. Belgian responses to terrorism have traditionally been limited to criminal investigation efforts conducted by the federal police, rather than leveraging other agencies to implement programs geared toward preventing crime and terrorist activity.

However, Belgium’s shift to a community-oriented policing approach has the potential to help rectify some of the identified issues. This new approach has been well received thus far, and reflects the idea that terrorism prevention-related efforts must be tailored to specific communities rather than applied nationally as a blanket approach.

Germany

Germany serves as an informative case study because it demonstrates a very well-resourced but decentralized extremism prevention approach. Federal power in Germany is subject to various restraints, and the 16 states have a degree of autonomy with respect to the Ministry of the Interior (BMI).245 Consequently, extremism prevention efforts often emanate from the state level and differ across states.246 Moreover, both the

244 Renard, 2016, p. 27.
national and state governments have historically focused more on funding and coordination than on implementation, so extremism prevention initiatives in Germany represent a particularly diverse array of nongovernmental, civil society–driven efforts. Nevertheless, the federal government has recently attempted to take a more active commissioning and synchronization role in preventing extremism. Germany also has learned from prior deradicalization efforts related to far-right and political extremism.

**Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat**

Germany faces right-wing, Islamist, and left-wing terrorism threats, as well as foreign non-Islamist extremism. Currently, Islamist-inspired violence represents a key threat to the country. In the past decade, Germany has experienced multiple such attacks, including a 2011 airport shooting that killed two American soldiers, the 2016 Christmas market truck-ramming attack, and a series of stabbing incidents. Al Qaeda and ISIS also have produced German-language propaganda in various media, including exhortations to conduct lone-wolf attacks in Germany. German security forces have prevented other attacks, disrupted al Qaeda cells, and arrested ISIS suspects. Germany has one of the highest numbers of foreign fighters in Europe, with about 915 foreign fighters having left Germany to Iraq and Syria and about 300 returnees as of October 2017. Additionally, a refugee influx from the Middle East has led to increased concerns about refugees’ vulnerability to radicalization and about the potential presence of extremists among refugees. Furthermore, Germany’s Schengen Area membership complicates its border security.

Right-wing extremism also remains a grave issue in Germany. Notably, the National Socialist Underground (NSU), a neo-Nazi group, carried out a series of murders in the 2000s that targeted victims who had immigrant backgrounds. According to a German government report produced by the BMI in 2016, the right-wing extrem-

---

247 Korn, 2016, p. 190.

248 Foreign non-Islamist extremism in Germany includes, for example, that of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). “For the very most part, the political agitation of the extremist organisations of foreigners as well as their respective level of militancy depend on the political developments in their home countries.” Federal Ministry of the Interior, *Brief Summary 2016 Report on the Protection of the Constitution: Facts and Trends*, Berlin, 2016, p. 27.


250 Counter Extremism Project, undated(f), p. 5.


252 Counter Extremism Project, undated(f), pp. 2, 5.


ist following in Germany in that year was 23,100, of which 12,100 were violence-oriented.256 Attacks against refugee shelters and foreigners have increased since the influx, and so have their intensity.257 Regarding these attacks, the BMI report states that “persons without a right-wing extremist background participate as well, which means that anti-asylum radicalization is taking place also beyond the organized right-wing extremist scene.”258

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

Germany’s extremism prevention includes both federal and state-supported efforts, with the actual activities driven mostly by civil society and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Daniel Koehler, director of the German Institute on Radicalization and De-radicalization Studies, explains:

> One peculiarity of the German situation is the complex and difficult role the federal government takes in funding civil society actors. Forbidden from providing large-scale institutional funding, only short-term pilot and model projects can be supported through federal resources, albeit with a slow shift in recent years with the identification of nationally relevant NGOs in that field and the goal of establishing a long-term support base. One additional consequence of this is the strong competitive nature of German civil society in CVE.259

> The federal government claims that it works “with almost 700 civil society organizations and subsidy recipients throughout Germany on the prevention of extremism and the promotion of democracy and diversity.”260 Since 2011, democracy centers in each of the 16 states have administered state resources related to matters of right-wing extremism (and for Islamist extremism since 2015) to increase coordination of the multitude of existing extremism prevention efforts.261

Germany’s federal government has released two CVE-related strategies. The first is the 2016 National Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy, which states: “For sustainability reasons, the Federal Government attaches great importance to a networked approach, especially networking with corresponding programmes and

---

261 Korn, 2016, p. 190.
regulatory structures and local authority and regional level [authorities].” The strategy is based on the following action areas:

- political education, intercultural learning, and democracy work
- participation in civil society
- counseling, monitoring, and intervention
- media and internet
- research
- international cooperation.

The document takes a broad focus, extending to topics of general civic education and dialogue, social integration and cohesion, and overall democracy promotion and tolerance.

The second strategy is the National Programme to Prevent Islamist Extremism, which encompasses five key elements:

1. places of prevention (e.g., schools, families, mosque communities)
2. prevention on the internet (e.g., media literacy education, dialogue with platform operators and providers, content monitoring, countering hate crime)
3. prevention through integration (e.g., increasing employment opportunities, language courses, sports and leisure activities, and working with Muslim associations)
4. prevention and deradicalization in prisons and probation assistance (e.g., supporting state measures and work by some states to have Muslim chaplaincy in prisons)
5. increased effectiveness (e.g., expanding research into radicalization causes and dynamics as well as evaluation methods and quality assurance for anti-extremism programs).

**Activities**

Germany’s anti-extremism activities span broad federal efforts, state initiatives, and individual nongovernmental programs. On the federal side, the major extremism prevention initiative is the Federal Ministry of Families, Women, Senior Citizens, and Youths (BMFSFJ)’s “Live Democracy!” program, whose budget doubled to €100 mil-

---

265 European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, “National Programme to Prevent Islamist Extremism,” Brussels, undated.
lion for 2017. The program runs from 2015 to 2019. Table A.6 depicts the program’s structure and key local, state, and national-level activities.

The BMI’s budget for CVE projects also increased in 2016, doubling to €12 million. The major BMI anti-extremism program is “Cohesion Through Participation,” which targets problem locations—particularly rural ones—where extremism proclivities are determined to be increasing. The program trains those who work or volunteer at clubs and associations as well as other civil-society actors to become democracy advisers.

Additional federal efforts include further democracy and tolerance promotion work by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB) and the Federal Antidiscrimination Society (ADS). The Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) runs a competition for youth and schools aimed at encouraging democratic behavior and culture. It also aids projects to strengthen cultural and religious understanding among students and teachers at various education levels. The Joint Counterterrorism

Table A.6
Live Democracy! Active Against Right-Wing Extremism, Violence, and Hate Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable Structures</th>
<th>Local Authorities</th>
<th>Federal Laender</th>
<th>National Level</th>
<th>Pilot Projects</th>
<th>Pilot projects to prevent radicalization:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships for democracy with local coordination points and specialist departments</td>
<td>Democracy centres with national coordination, networking and mobile, victim and exit strategy counseling</td>
<td>Support in the structural development of nationwide NGOs</td>
<td>Pilot projects for selected phenomena of group-related hate and for strengthening democracy in rural areas:</td>
<td>• antisemitism</td>
<td>• right-wing extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• antiziganism</td>
<td>• violent extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Islamophobia/ hatred of Muslims</td>
<td>• left-wing militancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• homophobia and transphobia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• racism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• early prevention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementation and further programme partners
Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions, German Youth Institute, Specialist Forum


266 U.S. Department of State, 2016a.
267 U.S. Department of State, 2016a.
Center (GTAZ) established a working group in 2009 to gather best practices and information about federal and state efforts to prevent Islamist extremism.\textsuperscript{273} Other national working groups have addressed issues related to right-wing and Islamist extremism.\textsuperscript{274} Additionally, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) established an advisory network to connect state and nonstate actors working on radicalization prevention, thereby attempting to transfer knowledge gained from countering right-wing extremism and apply it to preventing Islamist extremism.\textsuperscript{275} Finally, the Joint Center for Countering Extremism and Terrorism (GETZ) was established in 2012 to organize cooperation among police, intelligence services, and federal and state governments.\textsuperscript{276}

Many individual anti-extremism programs are run by NGOs with federal and state support. The primary right-wing disengagement program is run through EXIT. EXIT is an NGO founded in 2000 that helps right-wing extremists leave their movements and start new lives, with former right-wing extremists assisting in these efforts.\textsuperscript{277} The program has received various awards and the German government and the European Commission/European Social Fund, among other organizations, have noted EXIT’s success.\textsuperscript{278} According to EXIT’s website, “[a] comparative study by the German government between EXIT-Germany and the de-radicalisation program of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution . . . found that EXIT-Germany achieved a far better success rate (lower recidivism) and an almost four times higher overall number of received and handled cases.”\textsuperscript{279} In 2011, an organization called Hayat began providing services similar to those of EXIT to Islamic extremists, radicalizing individuals, and foreign fighters.\textsuperscript{280}

Additional programs include deradicalization and counseling initiatives. A major NGO in these areas is the Violence Prevention Network (VPN), which was founded

\textsuperscript{273}Hellmuth, 2013, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{274}Daniel Köhler, \textit{Structural Quality Standards for Work to Intervene with and Counter Violent Extremism}, Ministry for Interior Affairs, Digitalisation and Integration, Baden-Württemberg and German Institute on Radicalisation and De-radicalization Studies (GIRDS), November 2016, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{275}Köhler, 2016, pp. 8, 11.

\textsuperscript{276}German Domestic Intelligence Service (BfV), “The Gemeinsames Extremismus—und Terrorismusabwehrzentrum (GETZ) for Countering Right-Wing Extremism/Terrorism, Left-Wing Extremism/Terrorism, Extremism/Terrorism of Foreigners and Espionage/Proliferation,” webpage, undated.

\textsuperscript{277}Counter Extremism Project, undated(f), p. 12. For more on EXIT-Germany’s origins, specific successful initiatives, and its concept of former right-wing extremists helping others leave the movement, see EXIT Deutschland, “EXIT-Germany: We Provide Ways Out of Extremism,” webpage, undated; European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, “Exit Germany—Nazis Against Nazis,” webpage, May 2018a.

\textsuperscript{278}EXIT Deutschland, undated.

\textsuperscript{279}EXIT Deutschland, undated.

\textsuperscript{280}HAYAT-Germany, “Counseling Deradicalization Network,” webpage, undated.
in Germany in 2004. VPN has implemented counseling for radicalized or radicalizing persons and their families in various states, as well as deradicalization programs in prisons for those convicted of violent crimes. Since 2011, VPN has conducted deradicalization related to Islamist-inspired extremism. VPN’s prison work reportedly consists of a small group program during incarceration, one year’s assistance after leaving prison, and family support. VPN also has worked on a program in multiple states that aimed to prevent people from becoming foreign fighters.

Another important program area consists of hotline initiatives. For example, in 2012, the Federal Office for Immigration and Refugee Affairs sought to improve early intervention counseling and launched a nationwide counseling hotline and network for relatives of jihadist extremists. Koehler describes this hotline and subsequent developments:

Based on a public-private partnership between the government and four NGOs, intake was handled by government officials and case management by local civil society partners. As this approach was widely seen to be successful in reaching the target group and meeting strong demand, a number of German states launched their own ‘prevention networks’—essentially, local versions of the counseling network at the federal level—to create additional counseling capacity connected to the nationwide structure.

Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas
German anti-extremism endeavors overlap with all four of DHS’s terrorism prevention focus areas (see Table A.7). Particularly strong are Germany’s programs that respond to radicalization and seek to prevent a return to violence.

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from Germany’s Experience
The decentralized nature of Germany’s extremism prevention programming creates both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, programs are often implemented by NGOs, which lends potentially increased legitimacy, credibility, and an atmosphere of trust to programs that might have been hindered if they had come directly from the

---

281 Korn, 2016.
282 U.S. Department of State, 2016a; Korn, 2016.
283 Korn, 2016; European Values and Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, Existing Measures Against Islamic Extremism, November 21, 2017.
284 European Values and Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, 2017.
Moreover, decentralization provides the many existing programs with the ability to use a variety of methods and creative approaches. On the other hand, individual program results, experiences, and lessons learned are not necessarily communicated and shared. Because of the deficiency of information exchange among numerous and diverse existing initiatives, Germany has faced difficulties in assessing programs, identifying best practices, and enacting beneficial changes and improvements. Issues also stem from a lack of program transparency related to competition for funding. Indefinite project objectives and excessively broad approaches also affect project quality and evaluable.

The experiences of Germany’s EXIT program in particular provide other insights into the complexity of CVE program assessment. EXIT-Germany’s website claims that since 2000, the program has successfully completed more than 500 individual cases and has yielded about a 3-percent recidivism rate. However, EXIT’s website also notes that the program is meant to help those who want to leave right-wing extremism behind. Accordingly—if program participants have already decided to leave the movement—low recidivism rates could be expected. Also, because EXIT tailors its support to the individual and provides assistance proportional to the need, the organization sometimes has very minimal contact with participants, depending on the

288Korn, 2016.
289Hellmuth, 2013.
290Köhler, 2016, pp. 19, 42.
291Köhler, 2016, p. 43.
293EXIT Deutschland, undated.
Consequently, it is difficult for blanket evaluations to properly capture program outcomes. Moreover, a government examination of EXIT noted that the program was generally successful in its deradicalization efforts despite high dropout rates, which were likely to do with the fact that the program was voluntary. In other words, evaluating voluntary programs based on sustained participation rates may not reveal program impact. Additionally, EXIT noted the following challenges to their program and to the evaluation process:

- NGOs have inadequate resources to support the evaluation process
- Building trust between clients and EXIT staff takes time
- The process of deradicalization is not linear.

Finally, Koehler points out that exit and deradicalization programs in Germany are quite different from one another in terms of target audiences, goals, duration, and other factors, so assessment of such programs should not be based on blanket metrics.

Other valuable information for DHS from Germany relates to how the CVE discussion is conducted and who is included in it. One of the primary exchange forums between the German government and Muslims in Germany is the German Islamic Conference (DIK). However, in 2013, critics of the DIK alleged that the BMI focused excessively on security issues instead of on integration. More-recent debates have centered on Muslim representation at the DIK. Currently, only representatives of organized associations can participate. However, some argue that individuals as well as organizations should be welcome at the discussions, because associations may not be representative of all Muslim perspectives. At the same time, previous inclusion of individuals at the DIK led to internal disputes among those with varied beliefs and backgrounds. Thus, in the event that community members are interested in par-

---

301 Hasselbach, 2016.
302 Hasselbach, 2016.
303 Hasselbach, 2016.
participating in dialogue with the government on terrorism prevention–related matters, sensitivity to intergroup diversity in terms of identity and opinion is a necessary factor.

**Denmark**

Denmark was selected for study because of the innovative nature of its programs to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization—including the model implemented in the Danish city of Aarhus and Denmark’s prison deradicalization programs—and the similarities in the scale of the terrorist threat facing Denmark and the United States.

**Nature of the Domestic Terrorist Threat**

Although Denmark has experienced only seven terrorist incidents since 2001, it has been heavily affected by foreign fighter flows, and has one of the highest numbers of outgoing foreign fighters and the highest number of returnees per capita in Europe as of 2017. Denmark’s national strategy seeks to combat all forms of extremism, but in recent years the threat has been overwhelmingly jihadist in nature. Most domestic terrorist attacks in Denmark have been perpetrated by lone wolves inspired by al Qaeda or ISIS, although there are also clusters of radicalized militants operating in certain Danish neighborhoods, such as the notorious Gellerupparken ghetto in Aarhus. Although Muslims make up only 3.7 percent of Denmark’s total population, the Danish government and the public have grown increasingly concerned about the cultural divide between the ethnic Danish and Muslim communities, which the government believes to be a major contributing factor to radicalization. Similar to the United States, although the scale of the domestic radicalization and extremism problem is relatively small compared with some other countries, the Danish government has identified counterterrorism and counterextremism as national priorities.

**CVE-Related Approach, Strategy, and Activities**

**Approach and Strategy**

The Danish government released its national strategy, *Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalisation: National Action Plan*, in October 2016. The Danish strategy is built on two core tenets: (1) protecting the Danish state and people against terrorist attacks, and (2) promoting individuals’ well-being and preventing them from

---

304 Statistics are drawn from Barrett, 2017, and are accurate as of October 2017.
305 Counter Extremism Project, *Denmark: Extremism and Counter-Extremism*, undated(d), p. 3.
306 Vidino and Brandon, 2012.
engaging in self-harming behavior, consistent with the responsibility of the welfare state. Implementation of this strategy is based on “interagency collaborations across a wide range of sectors, involving both local and national authorities employing different types of interventions to address various target groups.” This multiagency approach to countering extremism and radicalization leverages the country’s preexisting crime prevention framework.

On the national level, there are myriad agencies whose primary purpose is to guide and support local efforts by providing local authorities and implementers with the necessary knowledge (e.g., intervention methodology) and tools (e.g., financial resources and counterterrorism legislation) to implement their programs. These agencies include the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI), the Danish Security and Intelligence Agency (PET), the Danish Police’s National Crime Prevention Centre (NFC), the Danish Prison and Probation Service (KF), the National Organisation for Knowledge and Specialist Consultancy in relation to social affairs and special education (VISO), and the National Agency for Education and Quality (STUK).

Denmark is divided into five regions. Each regional government is responsible for its own hospital and health care sector. These sectors are tasked with identifying signs of mental health issues that could lead to radicalization or extremism. These five regions are further divided into 98 Danish municipalities, each of which conducts counterextremism and deradicalization efforts at the local level. Additionally, the Danish National Police has 12 districts that focus on general crime prevention in their respective jurisdictions. The police districts have regional info-houses that are jointly run by the municipalities and the police. The info-houses serve as forums for discussion about extremism and radicalization issues, enable the exchange of information between agencies, and “function as a framework for the collaboration between the police and the municipalities in reviewing and managing concrete cases.” Beyond the info-houses, there are three primary forms of collaboration among entities at the national, regional, and local levels: “SSP,” which is a partnership between schools, the social services, and the police; “PSP,” a partnership between the psychiatric services, the social services, and the police; and “KSP,” a partnership between the Danish Prison and Probation Service, the social services, and the police. Figure A.4 depicts the collaboration between entities at the national, regional, and local levels.

These various entities at the national, regional, and local levels work together to conduct different types of interventions targeting different parts of society. The Danish model emulates the “prevention pyramid” approach used in public health models. This model includes preventive interventions aimed at the general public, anticipatory interventions for specific populations vulnerable to radicalization, and direct or targeted interventions for individuals who have already been radicalized or have engaged in violent extremism (or are on the cusp of doing so). Figure A.5 depicts the prevention pyramid approach.

Denmark distinguishes its counterextremism and deradicalization strategy from its counterterrorism strategy by “designating beliefs as the exclusive purview of its [national] action plan, while the security services respond only to actions taken by radicals who break the law.” Accordingly, Denmark’s programs to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization do not attempt to change participants’ ideology, but rather aim to dissuade them from acting violently based on their beliefs. These programs generally seek to reduce the incentives for radicalization by rectifying socioeconomic grievances rather than directly challenging radical ideologies.

---

313 European Commission, 2016, p. 16.
314 Rabasa et al., 2010, p. 152.
315 Rabasa et al., 2010, p. 155.
Activities

Although it is difficult to extract a precise figure for Denmark’s counterextremism and deradicalization budget from its overall counterterrorism budget, the Danish government committed to spending 970 million kroner ($148 million) from 2015 to 2019 on counterterrorism initiatives that include activities provided for in the national action plan.\footnote{“Denmark’s ‘Soft’ Model for Converting Jihadists,” \textit{The Local}, November 23, 2015.}

One such activity is deradicalization in prisons. In 2011, the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration and the Danish Prison and Probation Service collaborated to launch a program called “Back on Track.” Back on Track began as a three-year program designed to deradicalize inmates who adopted extremist ideologies. In support of this initiative, the PET released a handbook designed to train prison officials to identify signs of radicalization among inmates.\footnote{Counter Extremism Project, undated(d), p. 6.} The EU funded the program for its first three years, but it is now part of the Prison Service’s general initiatives. The program provides inmates with mentors who help redirect them to a noncriminal or nonterrorist lifestyle by sharing personal experiences, involving the inmates’ support.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{prevention-pyramid}
\caption{Prevention Pyramid}
\end{figure}
network of family and friends, and assisting with post-release reintegration efforts, such as finding a job or a place to live.\footnote{European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, \textit{Aarhus Model: Prevention of Radicalisation and Discrimination in Aarhus}, Aarhus, Denmark, May 9, 2018b.}

The Danish government has authorized several other counterextremism-related measures through legislation, including the 2015 installation of a national-level internet filter designed to block terrorist or extremist content online.\footnote{U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 18.} In 2016, Denmark criminalized travel to certain areas of Iraq and Syria without prior permission from Danish authorities.\footnote{EUROPOL, \textit{European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report}, The Hague, Netherlands: European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2017, p. 57.}

Finally, perhaps the most notable initiative in Denmark is the deradicalization and targeted intervention program in Aarhus, Denmark’s second-largest city. Allan Aarslev, the police superintendent who started the Aarhus program, believes that one of the major drivers behind radicalization is the perception on the part of minority youth that they are being discriminated against and do not belong in mainstream society. Thus, the Aarhus model, as this program has come to be known, aims to integrate minority youth who are at risk of being radicalized into Danish society. The program is a collaboration between social workers and law enforcement, and includes such partners as the University of Aarhus, Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Danish Intelligence and Security Service. The process begins when any member of the community, including family members, friends, police, or social workers, refers an individual—whether he or she is an at-risk youth or a returning foreign fighter—to the Aarhus program. The referred individual is then invited to an interview with program staff and offered mentorship and assistance with finding a job, pursuing an education, or other identified needs. The program is entirely voluntary, and a substantial percentage of those referred to the program have declined to participate. For instance, ten of the 16 foreign fighter returnees in 2014 refused counseling.\footnote{Andrew Higgins, “For Jihadists, Denmark Tries Rehabilitation,” \textit{The New York Times}, December 13, 2014.}

Another component of the Aarhus model is continuous dialogue with mosques, cultural organizations, and key members of the community. City officials and the police have engaged in dialogue with the leadership of Grimhojvej mosque—a mosque known to have spawned numerous radicals and foreign fighters—and have set up monthly meetings to discuss issues like Danish law, freedom of speech, and religious ideology, as well as ways for the mosque to help counter radicalization. Despite these meetings, the mosque’s radical ideology has not changed, and it continues to champion such principles as the quest for an Islamic caliphate and refuses to denounce ISIS.\footnote{Anthony Faiola and Souad Mekhennet, “Denmark Tries a Soft-Handed Approach to Returned Islamist Fighters,” \textit{Washington Post}, October 19, 2014.}
However, mosque leadership now publicly states that Danish Muslims should stay in Denmark rather than travel to Iraq and Syria to join the fight.

Based on anecdotal evidence, Danish officials maintain that the Aarhus program has been a success, citing significantly decreasing numbers of outgoing foreign fighters each year since the program began. Because of this success, the program has garnered attention from other countries. Representatives from a reported 33 countries visited Aarhus in 2015 to learn about the model, and it seems that at least a few European countries have adopted similar models focused on prevention. However, the program has also been criticized for its “soft” approach to extremism, and some have argued that it uses taxpayer dollars to seemingly reward rather than punish returning foreign fighters and would-be terrorists. Nonetheless, the 2014 National Action Plan adopted the Aarhus model as a key component of its overall Danish strategy, using it to inform how targeted intervention programs should be implemented on the national and local levels.

Degree of Overlap with DHS Terrorism Prevention Focus Areas

Denmark’s model to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization is particularly applicable to U.S. domestic terrorism prevention efforts because Denmark is one of the only other countries apart from the United States that follows “a coordinated and staffed approach towards preventative services.” Moreover, Denmark’s programs and activities overlap with all four DHS focus areas (see Table A.8). As part of its targeted interventions conducted through interagency collaboration on the national and local levels, Denmark specifically includes briefings and workshops designed to educate the community on issues of radicalization and extremism and to promote general awareness of these issues. In recent legislation, Denmark has focused on countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda online, as it has identified this as a primary platform for radicalization. Denmark uses its intelligence services to detect early signs of radicalization among the general population, but it also relies on members of the community to refer these individuals to the deradicalization program. Finally, Denmark focuses on reducing recidivism through its Back on Track deradicalization program in prisons.

Key Takeaways and Lessons Learned from Denmark’s Experience

Denmark’s counterextremism and deradicalization strategy and approach provide some best practices for DHS to consider. Notably, in Denmark there is a high level of interagency collaboration between agencies across multiple sectors. The Danish approach involves all government entities with a stake in CVE—including law enforcement,


324 Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 23.

325 Khader, 2014.
social services, and the education and justice divisions—as well as entities in other sectors that play a role in CVE. To facilitate coordination and cooperation, Danish security and law enforcement agencies exchange such information as status reports, threat assessments, and lessons learned through the Center for Terror Analysis (CTA). The CTA is administered by the PET, and serves as the Danish government’s intelligence fusion center. In this role, the CTA “constitutes the focal point for reporting from the Danish National Police, PET, Danish Defence Intelligence Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Danish Emergency Management Agency.”

Second, Denmark takes a comprehensive approach—involving strong collaboration across the national and local levels—to conducting different types of interventions for various levels of threat and targeted groups, and at different stages in the prevention process. A gap in DHS programming—and U.S. terrorism prevention programming writ large—is the absence of significant deradicalization programs in prisons or rehabilitation programs for ex-offenders, which Denmark currently addresses through its Back on Track program.

Although the Aarhus model appears to prevent the recruitment of additional foreign fighters, there is not enough data beyond anecdotal evidence to gauge the program’s success. There are other viable explanations that could contribute to the reasons potential foreign fighters decided against leaving Denmark—e.g., the declining appeal of ISIS or the blocking of online extremist content—and there have not been many foreign fighters who have returned and participated in the program. Such a program also requires the political will to use taxpayer money to fund initiatives like education for returning foreign fighters. The Aarhus model is also easier to implement in Denmark than in the United States because Denmark is a much more uniform, smaller society with identifiable regions that face higher risks of radicalization than others.

Additionally, while Danish interagency coordination is generally well executed, there is one aspect in which it falls short. Interagency coordination in Denmark is

---

326 U.S. Department of State, 2016a, p. 18.
enabled by Section 115 of the Danish Administration Justice Act, which allows for sharing of information about an individual if it is “necessary to cooperation in crime prevention or to cooperation between the police, the social services and social psychiatry and mental health authorities in their efforts to help socially vulnerable individuals,” but cautions that “information may not . . . be shared for the purposes of criminal investigations.”327 This inability to share information that could assist with criminal investigations has hampered the ability of Danish authorities to prosecute suspected terrorists and returning foreign fighters, despite Denmark’s recent legislation criminalizing travel to Iraq and Syria. While the Aarhus model and Danish approaches to counterextremism and deradicalization may not translate directly to the U.S. context, they provide some valuable lessons and ideas for terrorism prevention approaches and programming.

327 Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 15.
Appendix A References


AFP—See Australian Federal Police.


Cobain, Ian, Alice Ross, Rob Evans, and Mona Mahmood, “Inside Ricu, the Shadowy Propaganda Unit Inspired by the Cold War,” The Guardian, May 2, 2016. As of March 9, 2018: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/02/inside-ricu-the-shadowy-propaganda-unit-inspired-by-the-cold-war


———, *Denmark: Extremism and Counter Extremism*, undated(d), p. 3. As of March 5, 2018: https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/denmark


———, *United Kingdom: Extremism and Counter Extremism*, undated(g). As of August 18, 2018: https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/united-kingdom


“Denmark’s ‘Soft’ Model for Converting Jihadists,” *The Local*, November 23, 2015. As of March 5, 2018: https://www.thelocal.dk/20151123/denmarks-soft-model-for-de-radicalizing-jihadists


“France to Seal Off 1,500 Radicalized Inmates in Prisons,” *The Local*, February 23, 2018. As of March 12, 2018:

“France’s Emmanuel Macron Blames State for Fueling Extremism, Vows Solutions,” *Deutsche Welle News*, November 15, 2017. As of August 18, 2018:

French Association of Victims of Terrorism, homepage, undated. As of August 21, 2018:
https://www.afvt.org/

le-plan-de-lutte-contre-la-radicalisation-violente-et-les-fi

https://www.senat.fr/controle/dossier/2015/6921.html

https://www.thelocal.fr/20180116/seven-french-prison-guards-attacked-by-radicalized-inmate

france-unveils-broad-new-plan-to-tackle-radicalization


https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/12/16/
the-perils-of-french-islam-frances-misguided-response-to-the-paris-attacks/

German Domestic Intelligence Service (BfV), “The Gemeinsames Extremismus—und Terrorismusabwehrzentrum (GETZ) for Countering Right-Wing Extremism/Terrorism, Left-Wing Extremism/Terrorism, Extremism/Terrorism of Foreigners and Espionage/Proliferation,” webpage, undated. As of March 23, 2018:

German Islamic Conference, “What Is the DIK?” webpage, May 17, 2010. As of March 23, 2018:

Government of Australia, “Australian National Security: Australia–New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee,” webpage, undated(a). As of August 9, 2018:

———, “Australia’s Security Environment and Outlook,” webpage, undated(b). As of August 9, 2018:


RCMP—See Royal Canadian Mounted Police.


Spiegel, Peter. “Paris Attacks: Belgium Cries Foul over French Blame Game,” Financial Times, November 19, 2015. As of August 21, 2018: https://www.ft.com/content/8bc30533-8e57-11e5-a549-b89a1dfede9b


For this project, HSOAC selected five U.S. cities for visits to learn about local programming related to terrorism prevention and CVE: Boston, Mass.; Denver, Colo.; Houston, Tex.; Los Angeles, Calif.; and Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minn. HSOAC teams visited all five cities (and their greater metropolitan areas) and conducted over 50 interviews with former or current members of law enforcement agencies, community-based organizations, academic institutions, and federal and local government entities. The cities were selected based on four specific factors:

- history of engagement with CVE
- DHS ties
- geographic diversity
- intensity of past threat and available data on known radicalization incidents.

“History of engagement” largely entailed whether the city was one of those included in the CVE pilot program announced by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in September 2014 as well as whether it was a member of the Strong Cities Network, an international confederation of cities founded in September 2015 dedicated to “building social cohesion and community resilience to counter violent extremism in all its forms.”

“DHS ties” included whether any organizations in the city received CVE grants in June 2017. HSOAC gave weight to the number of organizations in a city that applied for CVE grants and to entities that were awarded grants in the initial January 2017 announcement.

“Geographic diversity” referred to the project team’s desire to ensure that in totality, the five selected cities represented a diverse array of regions within the country.

Lastly, HSOAC considered the “intensity of the threat” of each area based on the competing drivers that (1) locations with more cases of radicalization may have more programming and more-nuanced insight into the effectiveness of their past CVE

---

efforts, and (2) locations with a range of exposure to radicalization could gain insights from locations that might be at earlier stages of terrorism prevention implementation efforts. To do so, HSOAC relied on the Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS) dataset from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START).2

The five cities were chosen based on a holistic assessment of these criteria. HSOAC then extensively researched local organizations and programs, some of which specifically related to terrorism prevention–type activities and others that had unrelated programming that the research team believed might hold relevant lessons for considering future terrorism prevention activities. Each organization’s activity was correlated to one or more of the four DHS lines of effort to ensure that each city featured entities that focused on at least three DHS lines of effort, regardless of whether programming was designed to address terrorism concerns.3 All five cities fit this last criterion. The identified organizations served as our initial set of prospective interviews, which was then supplemented with suggestions by others as outreach to set up discussions progressed.

All interviewees were promised nonattribution, so the report lists the names of the organizations with which HSOAC spoke, and only those organizations that were comfortable with being listed. In an effort to preserve anonymity, all interview notes in a given city were comingled. Each paragraph in our notes was labeled as originating from an academic, community group, government, or law enforcement interviewee. As such, in our analysis, quotes or specific points raised by interviewees are attributed to these general categorizations.

**Boston, Massachusetts**

Boston was chosen for a site visit because of its legacy affiliation with CVE efforts. The U.S. Justice Department included Boston as one of three cities selected for a CVE pilot program in 2014, in part because of the 2013 Boston Marathon attack, which was one of the most high-profile terrorist attacks in the United States since September 11, 2001. In 2017, the city received two DHS CVE grants, one of which was aimed at preventing recidivism.4 (Notably, it was the only winning proposal nationally to focus on recidivism, which is now a defined line of effort within DHS’s terrorism prevention programs.) According to PIRUS, Massachusetts is ranked 17th nationally in incidents of radicalization, indicating only a moderate level of radicalization concern. Boston is our only case study in the Northeast.

---

2 START, “Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS),” dataset, undated.

3 Countering terrorist recruitment and propaganda was lacking in all cities under consideration, given that this activity is conducted primarily on the national or even international level, rather than the local level.

Nature of the Local Environment

Despite Massachusetts’s relatively low ranking in terms of radicalization intensity, the Boston area has an unfortunate history with jihadi-inspired extremism, prompting the Boston Globe to ask in a 2015 headline, “Are Boston Terrorism Cases a Trend?”5 The most infamous cases were the twin bombings at the Boston Marathon and the subsequent shootings in April 2013 that killed four people, injured more than 260 others, and continues to shape the city’s response to terrorist threats.6 In the pre-ISIS era, a number of Boston-based individuals were associated with al Qaeda–affiliated and other terrorist plots.7 However, since 2013, there has been only one incident: A group of three individuals intended to kill police officers in the name of ISIS.8

There are well defined immigrant communities in Boston, like in other cities visited during our study. Like Minneapolis, Boston has a Somali diaspora community of about 8,000 individuals. It is “one of the newest immigrant groups” in the area and, therefore, is relatively poor and unintegrated.9 As we discuss in the Minneapolis case study, when two dozen Minnesota Somali youth were reported to have traveled abroad to join terrorist groups, it brought consternation and law enforcement scrutiny to the Boston Somali community.10 Although there have been no reported instances of individuals from the local community being involved in terrorism, a proposal from the Police Foundation, Boston Police Department, and two local nonprofits won a DHS CVE grant in June 2017 on “Developing Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Boston Somali Community.”11

---

7 Shane, 2015.
8 One of the three individuals was killed after attempting to stab approaching officers. The other two were tried and convicted. DOJ, “Massachusetts Man Sentenced to 28 Years in Prison for Supporting ISIS and Conspiring to Murder U.S. Citizens,” press release, December 19, 2017b.
10 One community group organizer stated: “We saw that kids were impacted by the stereotypes of Somalis as terrorists.” After the news of an American-born suicide bomber in Somalia, another organizer said, “We had a community discussion. We were the forefront pushing people to talk about these issues.” Interviews with community organization leaders in the Boston area, June 2018.
Relevance of Boston’s Programs to DHS
*Key Takeaways from Boston’s Experience*

Focus on youth. The conventional wisdom is that violent extremism is generally perpetuated by young men who are typically in their 20s. However, interviewees stressed the importance of focusing on school-aged youth and delivering terrorism prevention programming when it can be most beneficial rather than focusing on the age when individuals attempt attacks. As one interviewee stated, “CVE for us is not about [counterterrorism] but [is about] helping kids.” One local law enforcement interviewee argued that “it’s the juveniles we’re having the most problems with,” and therefore, their organization has a mental health intervention program that works with youth ages 6 to 24. Similarly, one of Boston’s NGO-affiliated multipartner intervention groups takes referrals for adolescents up to age 24. A local nonprofit aimed at bridging American and Muslim cultures around the world recognizes that youth programming is the key to fulfilling this mission, and does so by empowering youth to launch campaigns in their respective home countries and make positive change on issues that impact them directly.

Interviewees indicated that a youth-focused approach requires comprehensive programming and broad focus. In multiple cities in the Greater Boston area, law enforcement agencies partner with community groups to provide social services, mentorships, internships, and “robust afterschool program[s]” for youth. Law enforcement agencies have concerns about potential violence risk but are reluctant to prosecute these youth. Law enforcement agencies also partner with school systems for violence prevention programs, in which violent extremism is one of several areas of focus. Programs are designed this way because interviewees indicated that targeting one community or providing social services only to one community could be isolating to other communities and ultimately prove counterproductive. As such, “instead of a siloed line of work

---

13 This person elaborated on their relationship with law enforcement, commenting, “We have the same objective and goal—keeping kids safe.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
14 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Boston area, April 2018.
15 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
16 As the leader said, “I didn’t want the kids going home saying they are going to take on ISIS. But they encounter problems in their daily lives, whether it’s bullying or [ending early childhood marriage], and design a campaign or [solution to their] issues. Most of the people who are recruited to acts of violence feel alone, so if you can create an environment where these kids feel less alone, we think you can [stop that].” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
17 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
18 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Boston area, April 2018. As one practitioner said, “There is concern about CVE programs, so if you focus it on a Somali community you might put them at risk. If you’d like to do a program to reduce risks, you [have to] move it out of the Somali community so it’s not seen as just about Muslims.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits

around violent extremism,” terrorism prevention activities fall “under the umbrella of other initiatives that are out there.”

Work with communities. Community buy-in is essential, especially when dealing with youth. Local police interviewees placed a priority on “engag[ing] the community,” emphasizing that “it’s about relationship building.” These interviewees noted that officers require proper cultural and bias training and forums with community leaders so they can better understand the communities with which they interact.

Yet, one interviewee cautioned that community policing as a term is “poorly understood” and too ambiguous, with different stakeholders interpreting it differently. As such, community relations may be a more useful term, framing the strategy in terms of partnership.

Social service providers highlighted “Community-Based Participatory Research” (CBPR) as a model for thinking about how to design terrorism prevention efforts. In CBPR, scholastic research in marginalized communities is tied “back to something useful for people,” rather than merely for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and projects are designed with community input and focus on problems that the community finds important. In Boston, researchers found that “discrimination and trauma were major issues for the adjustment of refugee kids,” and relatedly, “trauma and social connection” were linked to a number of concerns in the community, including potential issues with violent extremism. Accordingly, researchers designed an intervention program to respond to the community’s concerns and to “broadly address different types of violence” affecting youth with a “focus on connection to services, religion, and communities.” The program is a mechanism for government agencies and community providers from a range of sectors to meet regularly and address these issues in a multidisciplinary way.

Both law enforcement and community providers recognize that, in working with communities, relationships and trust require a considerable investment of time in order to succeed. One law enforcement–affiliated program took five years between conception and launch, and required even more time for the community to buy in to the services that the program offered. Researchers involved in an NGO-affiliated intervention program noted that their ability to work with the community on issues as sensitive

19 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
20 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Boston area, April 2018.
21 This interviewee explained that some officers have stated that they believe “community policing” involves cultivating “relationships to get information and intelligence,” which might not sit well with the actual community. Interview with a government official in the Boston area, April 2018.
22 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
23 As one interviewee said, “We got our buy in but it’s taken a long time. We’ve presented it in a lot of places but we warn other communities that this takes time. We can just give out our process map and tell you to execute it.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
and potentially stigmatizing as youth and ideological violence was supported by more than a decade of involvement and collaboration.\footnote{Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.}

**Embrace the naysayers.** Boston, like many other cities in our case study, faced a degree of anti-CVE pushback early on. Interviewees described attempting to bring critical groups and audiences along, and even providing a forum for discussion and debate regarding concerns about the city’s CVE efforts. During the CVE pilot process, when Boston held a series of workshops culminating in its *Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies*, interviewees noted that “one of the unique things” about the effort was that “everyone was around the table.” One local Muslim group, which “did not support CVE,” participated in every meeting and, at the conclusion of the process, was given the opportunity to publicly disagree. As a result of the personal relationships established in the process, the group members “felt comfortable enough to come and write their disagreement and put their name to it,” which enhanced the credibility of the process.\footnote{Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.}

**Prevention over enforcement.** Although at the federal level, “law enforcement often sees prevention and enforcement as the same,” interviewees indicated that local police increasingly embrace precrime intervention as part of violence prevention from all sources.\footnote{Interview with a government official in the Boston area, April 2018. As one community group leader stated, “The police were involved very quickly with the goal of preventing students’ involvement in the criminal justice system.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.} Multiple law enforcement agencies in the Greater Boston area have youth violence prevention or diversion programs wherein cases of potential violent extremism can be treated alongside more-common modes of violence (e.g., gangs, threats to schools). Although—as was the case in other cities—interviewees drew distinctions between local and federal approaches, they also indicated increasing cooperation and collaboration between federal entities and local prevention efforts and programs.\footnote{Interview with a law enforcement official and a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.}

Implementing a successful “prevention over punishment” framework requires acknowledgment of the sensitivities on both sides. Community group interviewees praised the government’s ability to recognize when programs should remain separate from direct criminal justice involvement. Likewise, a community group interviewee also acknowledged that law enforcement has needs as well, and that cultural sensitivity is a two-way street: “Law enforcement has a culture too.” Therefore, communities must “approach law enforcement the same way [they’d] approach other groups” and listen to concerns regarding intervention programs and what law enforcement would need in order to trust those programs.\footnote{Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.} A criminal justice interviewee noted that community-run intervention programs need to reach a certain standard before law
Lessons from U.S. City Visits

Enforcement could have sufficient trust in programming to make referrals. Factors that could increase law enforcement confidence in programs to manage risk include extensive field experience, recognition from peer professional associations, and sponsorship from reputable organizations that lend credence and legitimacy to the programs.29

Insight from assisting individuals disengaging from cult participation. While the vast majority of interviewees—whether government or nonprofit—across all case studies emphasized that violent extremism should be placed in a context of public health, mental health, and/or general violence prevention, there is certainly an ideological component to violent extremism in at least some circumstances. Therefore, it stands to reason that counterideological programming may be necessary in the terrorism prevention space, regardless of government participation or sponsorship in this area.30

Perhaps surprisingly, one group researching counter-ideological programming found a significant overlap with responding to issues with individuals seeking to leave cults or other such groups. As can be the case with individuals who are drawn to cults, violent extremist radicalization is “in many ways . . . a process of identity formation gone wrong,” and both therefore require the involvement of a person’s “natural ecosystem”—i.e., family, friends, community—in a “healthy” redirection process. Given that cults typically operate in a purely ideological (rather than criminal) space, practitioners in this area have experience intervening appropriately in First Amendment–protected activities, which might be similar to intervening in extremist radicalization before individuals have perpetrated violence. This group is adapting research on how people join cults and methodologies on the means to safely help them leave the groups for use in terrorism prevention. And, much as CVE programs have leveraged the voices of former extremists, this group is exploring how to make use of counselors and former cult members to inform its terrorism prevention programming.31

Lessons Learned for the Federal Government

Funding is essential. A common refrain was the need for funding for successful CVE program implementation locally.32 The Greater Boston collaborative group that produced the CVE framework was never able to substantially implement its proposals

29 One official said that “structure is what gives us comfort,” making the point that having a program with credentialed staff from an established organization versus from a small grassroots community organization is more credible to law enforcement. Interview with a government official in the Boston area, April 2018.

30 As one community group leader said, “If you’re trying to prevent violent extremism because violent crime is illegal, then why have a whole program around prevention or countering this specific form of violence? Government does have an interest in countering ideologies that contribute to divisions in society. That doesn’t mean that it should [engage in this kind of activity], but it can.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.

31 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.

32 Interviews with law enforcement officials and community organization leaders in the Boston area, April 2018.
and, in the words of one interviewee, the “whole thing never really materialized into a project” because of lack of funding. Given DOJ’s sponsorship of the program, local stakeholders expected strong financial support behind it. Those assumptions proved to be incorrect.33

Furthermore, some argued that the available funding was misdirected. In contrast to messages heard elsewhere that more evaluation efforts are needed for CVE or future terrorism prevention initiatives, in the Boston case, one interviewee questioned the relative investment in evaluation versus in the programming itself. Others expressed frustration at the amount of CVE- and terrorism prevention–specific funding directed at law enforcement, when so many other DOJ funding streams (e.g., National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Community Oriented Policing Services) already support innovative law enforcement research and programming. There was the perception that the federal government, whether because of anti-CVE pushback or lack of resolve, chose “the easy out” by “giving more dollars to law enforcement” rather than focusing on community-based methods to combat radicalization.34

Federal legal and operational provisions are insufficient. The language shift from CVE to terrorism prevention indicates a prioritization on “terrorism.” Without passing judgment on the name change, interviewees stressed that there needs to be a definition of terrorism that legally or administratively incorporates domestic ideological violence or terrorism (the African Methodist Episcopal Church shooting in Charleston in 2016 was cited as an example). Others argued for broader inclusivity in terrorism prevention programs to include incidents like school or public mass shootings (e.g., Las Vegas shooting, Parkland) given that “kids are being terrorized by school shooters too.”35

Second, interviewees argued that unresolved legal liability concerns keep “people who care [on] the sidelines.”36 When one community group brought up liability and insurance issues in discussions with the CVE Task Force in 2016, they were informed that, until that point, “it wasn’t discussed much” within the federal government.37 Interviewees indicated that, even with public safety exceptions, concerns about Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) regulations render some social ser-

---

33 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
34 Interviews with community organization leaders in the Boston area, April 2018.
35 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
36 This was particularly frustrating to one community leader, who said, “It’s concerning to me if those issues hold us back. You still have to figure out if you can help this kid.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
37 This problem is somewhat unique to the United States, which, aside from having a particularly litigious society, does not have extensive direct government-sponsored CVE or terrorism prevention intervention programming, unlike Prevent in the United Kingdom, wherein the government is liable politically but has sovereign immunity from litigation. Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
vice providers too cautious to enter the field. Relatively, other interviewees expressed frustration that “duty to warn” requirements were insufficient—or at least insufficiently clear—in CVE and terrorism prevention, given that exploration of an ISIS website might merit extra scrutiny but does not meet the “duty to warn” threshold. In that instance, one government official asked, “What is [a] school’s duty? . . . There [is] not a great set of nationally accepted guidelines for school response to someone of major concern.”

Focus on preventing recidivism. Boston is unique in that it has a DHS CVE grant focused on preventing recidivism of convicted and imprisoned offenders. The local program, which is run by the state Department of Corrections, provides counseling to soon-to-be-released maximum-security prisoners. Like other CVE programs in the cities we visited, the initiative does not focus on a specific type of violence, ideologically motivated or otherwise, but rather on those who present a “security threat.” The program provides group and individual cognitive-based therapy focused on positive identity formation both before and after release. It also provides participants with a slate of community resources to use after release and works with the inmate’s family and parole and/or probation officers to ensure smooth reintegration into the civilian world.

Interestingly, a common criticism of past CVE efforts (and, by extension, terrorism prevention)—that such programs involve “government surveillance of communities”—is not applicable to this line of programming. Because the enrollees are already under government control and supervision, it is not controversial that such programing would include government involvement (even post-release, as is standard for probation and parole). As such, it might ultimately prove less controversial than other elements of terrorism prevention.

Alternative metrics of success. As in other cities, many interviewees in Boston found it difficult to frame measures of success for past CVE efforts in terms that government auditors typically find useful (for example, effect per dollar spent). This is the case for early-stage programming aimed at community resilience and broader types of effects in particular. As a result, when we explored the issue of measurement during our discussions about those types of programs, the individuals involved often framed their own metrics. For one, it was assessing the mechanisms in place that “reduce the risk of violence,” such as “social connection, service engagement, [and other] things at the individual level.” For another, it was establishing solid “intergroup relations and group-

---

38 Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
39 Interviews with a government official and a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.
40 Interview with a government official in the Boston area, April 2018.
41 Interview with a government official in the Boston area, April 2018.
government relations.” A third interviewee made the distinction between “outputs and outcomes,” noting that “outcomes are too far down the road” and therefore, the group must rely on outputs: “If we can get 100 schools to participate, [that’s] 10,000 students. . . . Out of those 10,000, if 100 sign up to take the message further, that’s a metric” of success. These types of responses were consistent with much broader challenges in devising metrics for terrorism prevention and emphasized the fact that any federal effort likely will be required to consider a range of ways to assess the outputs and outcomes of initiatives.

**Denver, Colorado**

There are several reasons Denver was chosen as one of our candidate cities. Denver was an original member city of the Strong Cities Network when the network was founded in September 2015 and remains a member, now joined by nearby Aurora. Seven organizations in the Greater Denver area applied for DHS CVE grants and one received funding in June 2017. Despite a number of high-profile mass-casualty attacks and ISIS-related cases, Colorado is only 27th nationally in incidents of radicalization, according to PIRUS, which indicates a comparatively low level of radicalization concern. Denver is the only city in this study in the Mountain States.

**Nature of the Local Environment**

The Denver metropolitan area has an unfortunate history of mass-casualty violent attacks. The tragic school shooting at Columbine High School in April 1999 shaped perceptions about school violence in the United States. More recently, the 2012 mass shooting at a movie theater in Aurora highlighted individuals with mental health

42 Interviews with community organization leaders in the Boston area, April 2018.

43 The community organization leader elaborated: “My philosophy with young people is creating a critical mass . . . to bring everyone into one room to engage and motivate them to go out and do something. You have to bring them together to create that mutual energy and excitement.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Boston area, April 2018.


45 DHS, 2018; DHS, “DHS Grant Program Scores,” spreadsheet, undated. For the sake of brevity, all future references to “Denver” in this appendix refer to the Greater Denver area.

issues as potential sources of violence and the role of mental health services in violence
prevention.47

The state of Colorado also recently has suffered from violent extremism. In
2015, an individual violently opposed to abortion shot and killed police and civilians
at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs.48 Not two years later, Joshua
Cummings—a recent convert to Islam who had pledged fealty to ISIS—killed a
regional transit officer at a Denver train station.49 The latter incident was mentioned
by a number of interviewees because Cummings was flagged by some members of the
Muslim community as troubled and in need of intervention before the attack took
place, but his actions did not reach a criminal threshold prior to the shooting.50 Other
notable ISIS-related cases include Shannon Conley and a group of three teenage girls
who all attempted to travel to Syria in 2014. Before her attempted departure, Conley,
another Muslim convert, was interviewed multiple times by the Federal Bureau of
Investigation (FBI), which sought to connect her with religious counseling services to
deter her from traveling. In the latter case, the U.S. Attorney’s Office declined to pro-
secute and instead used this overture as an opportunity to build stronger community
relations and awareness of the ISIS threat.51

These incidents provided Denver and the state of Colorado with some of the
impetus to pursue terrorism prevention programming as a means to intervene more
effectively in potential instances of violent extremism.52 Given the presence of a sig-
nificant level of antigovernment extremism—epitomized, according to multiple inter-
viewees, by the Colorado secession initiative in 2013—administrators have concluded
that such programming should be applied across the state and should be focused on all
forms of violent extremism.53

Relevance of Denver’s Programs to DHS

Key Takeaways from Denver’s Experience

Awareness briefings are valuable. A central element of Denver’s past CVE program-
ning is a series of briefings provided to different audiences by a variety of stakeholders

47 Matthew Nussbaum, “Theater Shooting Trial Leads to Concerns About Mental Illness, Stigma,” Denver Post,
June 28, 2015.

48 Laura Wagner, “Accused Planned Parenthood Shooter: ‘I’m a Warrior for the Babies,’” NPR, December 9,
2015.

26, 2018.

50 Interviews with government officials and community organization leaders in the Denver area, April 2018.

51 Interviews with government officials, law enforcement, and community organization leaders in the Denver
area, April 2018.

52 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

53 Interviews with a government official and an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018.
to raise awareness on specific issues. The most common are Community Awareness Briefings (CABs), which are provided by government entities and law enforcement to community groups; new Law Enforcement Awareness Briefings (LABs), which are provided by government entities to law enforcement; and a terrorism indicators briefing, which is provided by a community group (with DHS certification) to government administrators, law enforcement, and community groups. Federal government agencies also provided “Train the Trainer” briefings to local law enforcement as a force multiplier.54 The CAB was originally provided by the Office for Community Partnerships (OCP; it has since been renamed the Office of Terrorism Prevention Partnerships [OTPP]) and other federal agencies as part of community engagement efforts. Some local stakeholders told the research team that they found the presentation more valuable than their own materials, and, in an effort to increase its dissemination and relevance, began to customize and adapt the briefing to specific local concerns and audiences.55

These presentations were intended to provide an understanding of how audiences could “protect themselves from extremism”—i.e., how to not become victims, rather than narrowly framed to raise awareness for communities vulnerable to radicalization in their midst.56 In some cases, presenters found it useful to offer a variety of briefing options with topics covering a range of issues and threats (e.g., cyberbullying, internet predation, hate crimes), and, by meeting community needs on those topics, also got opportunities to raise awareness of CVE issues. Having made the investment in building relationships, these interviewees indicated that audiences subsequently asked to be briefed on extremism issues, whether it be jihadism, the sovereign citizen movement, or white supremacy.57 Despite their ubiquity, the presentations remain popular. One community group, which was created to provide interventions and referrals for at-risk youth, reported that most requests are for CVE and terrorism prevention–related workshops.58 Some of the local presentations have proven so effective that they have been rolled out to multiple states.59

54 Interviews with government officials, law enforcement officials, and community organization leaders in the Denver area, April 2018.
55 “The [local DHS representative] introduced us to the community briefing. . . . It was very helpful that they could take a package off the shelf covering a wide variety of terrorist activity and we could really use it in our community.” This law enforcement official continued, “[We] started developing our own version . . . . We have three audiences: students, school administrators, and cops. So we came up with three different versions.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.
56 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.
57 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
58 Interview with an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018.
59 Interview with a community organization leader in the Denver area, April 2018.
Focus on immigrant integration. Like in other cities, stakeholders in Denver specifically talked about their focus on “immigrant integration.”\textsuperscript{60} As one interviewee stated, “Immigrants and refugees are an important segment of our population. Everything [we do] is trying to engage and develop trust and a strong relationship with our local immigrant and refugee community.” Therefore, should a negative incident occur, the government can “dispel misinformation and fear [and] make them feel like they belong here and are valued.”\textsuperscript{61}

Unlike some other cities in our case studies, the immigrant and refugee community in Denver is not tied to any specific diaspora and does not fall into any one socioeconomic group. Instead, the community is “very diverse. Some are highly educated, [with] different levels of income, [and all are from] different countries and backgrounds.” As such, public servants use a variety of focused tools to reach out to these multiple constituencies. One program is the recruitment of “community navigators,” or volunteers who help newer arrivals “navigate the system in their own language in their own communities,” informing them of available resources or referring them to the proper resources for a given issue.

One program specifically for youth is a law enforcement academy where young people can work with and learn from local police officers to gain an appreciation for law enforcement while having fun.\textsuperscript{62} Although the program is not specifically about terrorism risk, it nevertheless plays a role in building communities that are resilient to violent extremism. Efforts at immigrant integration aim to provide a welcoming atmosphere such that should “any potential incident or crisis” arise, community members or navigators feel comfortable reaching out to authorities for assistance. Similarly, the youth programs, while focusing on a range of issues, discuss “how to avoid being recruited by potential” violent extremist groups.\textsuperscript{63}

A unified CVE intervention and academic research program. Denver is unique in that its primary community-based CVE intervention program is jointly administered with an academic research program. The program, which is housed at a local university, is composed of three subgroups. The first is an advisory council consisting of community, government, and social service stakeholders that meets monthly

\textsuperscript{60} The city of Aurora devised a “immigrant integration plan” with a government office specifically dedicated to the task. The city of Denver offers “new arrival academies” with presentations from a range of government social service and public safety agencies explaining their respective roles and services. Interviews with a government official and a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.

\textsuperscript{61} Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

\textsuperscript{62} Originally, Denver featured two different law enforcement academies: one for immigrant populations and one for nonimmigrants. However, following community feedback and in the true spirit of integration, these programs were combined, with the add-on effect of building relationships between natural-born and immigrant Americans. Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

\textsuperscript{63} Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
and fosters local partnerships. The second subgroup is a research collective consisting of researchers from seven different disciplines “looking at key themes that might be driving local radicalization.” The last is a psychosocial group that provides clinical consultation and referrals for mental health counseling for individuals identified as being at risk of violent extremism. The latter group also provides clinician workshops and “Identity-Based Violence 101” awareness trainings.

The initiative was deliberately conceived by government and community stakeholders to be “owned and operated” by the community to make it easier to maintain trust. Although the initiative is constituted by a variety of local entities, the founding stakeholders sought a “culturally competent . . . backbone organization” that would enable the program to be “community-led, sustainable, inter-disciplinary, with a strong mental health component and [the ability to] do outreach to the community”—a set of requirements that a university system fulfilled. The research and referral components were housed under the same initiative to their mutual benefit: Research informs intervention methodologies as interventions provide potential case studies for research.

The initiative sought stakeholder—and particularly, community—input on how to frame its scope of work. Rather than “countering violent extremism” or any terminology including reference to terrorism, administrators found that the most effective descriptor was “identity-based violence” (IBV), which clearly indicates that people can be targeted for violence for who they are as a person and not because of what they have done. Administrators focused on four identity types (race/ethnicity, ideology, faith, and nationality) and eight “particular grievance types” (e.g., antigovernment, anti-immigrant) to scope their research and the types of cases accepted for intervention.

**Lessons Learned for the Federal Government**

**A nuanced role for federal government locally.** In the words of some of our interviewees, Colorado is a “strong frontier state,” where residents are wary of federal government intrusion. As such, a “heavy-handed government approach” or federal gov-

---

64 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

65 Interview with an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018.

66 Interview with a government official and an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018. As one interviewee said, “There’s no question in my mind that [an effort like the university initiative] has to be done by a non-governmental organization. There is no way Joshua Cummings would have talked to anyone who worked for the state, the Feds, the city, the police department, anything like that. And it seemed like the [university] was by far the best option.” Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

67 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

68 Interview with an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018.

69 As one interviewee said, “People think locally, not federally, here.” Interviewees indicated that similar views existed in local government: “You’re going to have rural sheriffs and police chiefs who are much more politically in line with their voters in terms of being anti-federal government” and therefore more open to local initiatives than federally driven ones. Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
ernment–imposed terrorism prevention programming was viewed as something that would not generally be welcomed. This is not to suggest that local sentiment completely precludes government involvement; as long as the programming is “locally led,” interviewees reported that the leading stakeholders could be from the local government or law enforcement. As one interviewee said, “the beauty of local government [is that] we know our neighbors and they know us.” Some noted that local government is perceived as more open and responsive to local needs and public safety concerns, and therefore is viewed as less menacing.

In Denver, this meant that a cooperative relationship with the federal government evolved: Local public servants, even though they acknowledged their lack of expertise on CVE specifically, were viewed as “more credible” voices. As a result, local government officials were receptive to training from the federal government on CVE issues, and they retained the ability to adapt those presentations to the local context. Perceptions are complicated, however: Local interviewees also reported believing that delivering training “branded by federal agencies” lent them an air of expertise that they would not have had otherwise. Likewise, representatives of federal government agencies could foster better participation from local stakeholders who might otherwise feel able to ignore similar requests from local agencies.

**Value of a DHS representative embedded locally.** The situation in Denver also demonstrates the value of locally placed federal representatives for building relationships and trust. The representative’s duties could include providing federal government presentations as resources for local stakeholders, offering guidance on local versions

---

70 One interviewee flagged an exception to this characterization for marginalized minority communities, which—in the interviewee’s view—“push towards trying to find allies in the government,” whether federal or local. Interview with a community organization leader in the Denver area, April 2018.

71 This interviewee elaborated, “Within our state agencies we have connections to local communities that have already [been] built.” Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.

72 One interviewee noted, “Just as important is listening to . . . their experiences. What are the community’s main public safety concerns? . . . It’s not us coming to lecture. People appreciate being heard and having their experiences validated and knowing that we care.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.

73 Interviews with government officials in the Denver area, April 2018.

74 As one interviewee said, “They provide the framework. We provide the rest.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.

75 In the words of one local police official, “When the federal government endorses what I do, that’s way more credible. It doesn’t sound like something I just made up. . . . If I can walk in with a PowerPoint that says NCTC [National Counterterrorism Center] and DHS on it, it’s more credible.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.

76 “More coordination at the federal level to help local agencies get the word out amongst different community groups [would be helpful]. Because if someone comes in and says they are from DHS, more ears perk up than someone” calling from local law enforcement. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Denver area, April 2018.
of those presentations, giving “ideas and suggestions” on how to improve local programming, facilitating “national and international networking” for local partners, and establishing rapport with community groups who may be wary of federal or local law enforcement. Given that all local partners have primary responsibilities beyond CVE or terrorism prevention and lack the personnel resources to dedicate solely to the topic, federal field staff can help maintain salience of these initiatives.

As indicated above, the full-time presence of field staff allows officials to “institutionalize a culture of prevention.” Local staff also help to expand initiatives beyond major urban areas, whereas staff visiting periodically from Washington, D.C., would tend to spend the majority of their time in the cities. Field staff in long-term engagements build credibility with local personnel through lasting and trusted relationships. Interviewees lamented that too often in federal agencies, deployments are limited to one or two years, and “as soon as [liaisons] learn the lay of the land, they’re gone.” This was viewed as a particular problem for past CVE and future terrorism prevention efforts, where so much of the work is about collaboration and person-to-person connections.

**More-concerted federal effort.** Dedicating a full-time liaison to multiple states and communities across the country requires a large commitment of resources. Therefore, stakeholders argued that terrorism prevention efforts required more-substantial support and commitment from the federal government, including dedication to the mission, funding, and staffing. In addition to supporting efforts, interviewees argued for more-substantial and -integrated federal activities to make initiatives like an expanded field staff possible.

**Houston, Texas**

As we were considering candidate cities for study discussions, the Houston area distinguished itself for its early and inclusive approach to terrorism prevention. Although Houston was not one of the original CVE pilot program cities, law enforcement partnered with a local group to conduct workshops with communitywide stakeholders on “Building a Resilient Community to Counter Violent Extremism” as early as June 2014. In June 2017, DHS awarded two CVE grants to entities in the Houston area,

---

77 Interviews with a law enforcement official and a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
78 Interviews with government officials in the Denver area, April 2018.
79 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
80 Interview with an academic researcher in the Denver area, April 2018.
81 Interview with a government official in the Denver area, April 2018.
82 The final report was published in February 2015, contemporaneously with the White House CVE Summit and the three-pilot-city Framework documents. Mustafa Tameez and Wardah Khalid, *Building a Resilient Com-*
each award focusing on a distinct line of effort.\textsuperscript{83} Notably, both grant winners were multiple-partner consortiums, including a “Houston Regional CVE Steering Committee” convened by the Mayor’s Office with elements from the public, nonprofit, and academic sectors. A third public-private partnership was the recipient of a recent Federal Emergency Management Agency grant focusing on CVE interventions.\textsuperscript{84} Texas is ranked the fifth-highest state in the United States for incidents of radicalization, according to PIRUS data, indicating a high degree of radicalization concern. Finally, the selection of a city in the American South contributed to the study’s geographic diversity.

\textbf{Nature of the Local Environment}

Despite Texas’s higher level of radicalization incidents, the Houston area is relatively unaffected. Houstonians describe their city as “the most diverse” in the country or even worldwide.\textsuperscript{85} Houston is the fourth-largest city in the United States and is “home to nearly 6.5 million people of different races, backgrounds, ideologies, and perspectives,” with more than 145 languages spoken.\textsuperscript{86} Texas leads the country in refugee resettlement, with approximately 2,500 refugees resettled in Houston annually. As one interviewee stated, given the city’s diversity, no one race or ethnicity is predominant.\textsuperscript{87} In a city as diverse as Houston, there have been no notable incidents of terrorist attacks or ideologically motivated violence.\textsuperscript{88} Local law enforcement officials pride themselves on the fact that even contentious protests—such as anti-police protests that turned violent in Dallas in 2016—are handled peacefully and with full coordination between police and the community.\textsuperscript{89}

Nevertheless, it was in recognition of the “increasing threat” from “homegrown, lone wolf” violent extremism to the country and the attendant “rising concern [to] law enforcement and communities of all backgrounds,” that prompted the sheriff’s office


\textsuperscript{84} Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\textsuperscript{85} City of Houston, “Houston CVE Training and Engagement Initiative,” proposal, August 2016; interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

\textsuperscript{86} City of Houston, 2016.

\textsuperscript{87} Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

\textsuperscript{88} There has been only one ISIS-related arrest in Houston: An individual aspiring to travel abroad to join the group was arrested in December 2017 (DOJ, “Houston Man Taken Into Custody on Charges of Terrorism,” press release, December 11, 2017a). And, like in any metropolitan area in the country, there have been anecdotal reports of Islamophobic incidents, such as arson and the placement of a pig outside a mosque. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

\textsuperscript{89} Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.
to partner with a community-oriented consulting firm to produce the community plan referenced above.90 Similarly, in 2016, the Mayor’s Office asserted that “Houstonians have demonstrated a commitment to preventing violent extremism” and, citing the White House’s 2011 CVE strategy to “Empower Local Partners,” the mayor’s administration chose to prioritize CVE in its public safety strategic plan to “build on increased attention to CVE in [local public safety] departments, encourage coordination between local and federal officials, and complement the efforts led in other community sectors.”91

Relevance of Houston’s Programs to DHS

Key Takeaways from Houston’s Experience

Building community resilience through social services. A number of interviewees in Houston stated that the overall CVE focus locally has been on “building community resilience,” or directing efforts at isolated, typically new immigrant communities and providing social services for “emotional support and community-based counseling and infrastructure.” An important component of this work is fostering both interfaith and intrafaith programming to strengthen societal bonds and build intergroup goodwill so that if a violent extremist incident occurs, communities could support, rather than label or vilify, one another.92

Ultimately, efforts are concentrated at the individual level, ensuring that those at risk of social alienation are provided with a “sense of belonging” that otherwise might have been filled by violent extremist groups.93 “Community resilience” therefore extends beyond potential violent extremism to address such topics as bullying; discrimination; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) identity, all in an effort to address “emotional trauma.” In this framework, the goal is to prevent the violence that could result from personal crisis, of which violent extremism is one possible manifestation. Therefore, the city’s goal is to “redirect people when they’re in crisis” or, ideally, “avoid that crisis . . . that’s got them on that path” to extremism via a “Recognize, Respond, and Refer” intervention model.94

91 City of Houston, 2016, pp. 2–3.
92 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.
93 Outside of the realm of CVE or terrorism prevention, that sense of belonging might have been filled by gangs. Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.
94 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018. As one law enforcement official stated, “We want to catch it in the early stages. . . . if we can get out in front of this early,” before an individual commits to ISIS or starts buying bomb-making materials, then law enforcement can intervene in a non-prosecutorial manner before any crime is committed. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.
Interestingly, social service providers—from family therapists to youth group organizers—who may be reluctant to think of themselves as working in the counterterrorism space are nevertheless critical to building community resilience. Accordingly, interviewees noted that it is not necessarily beneficial to make this connection explicit, given that some providers may be reluctant to engage in or be seen as supporting “political” or controversial activities.

Interviewees reported believing that community resilience–building related to social services should have only limited law enforcement and government involvement, depending on the nature of the activity. In providing these services, such as the ACT NOW hotline, which aims to help isolated immigrant or Muslim youth, community organizers emphasized that caller confidentiality is a priority and law enforcement is notified only in extreme circumstances, paralleling practices used by crisis or individual assistance hotlines.

Mental health framework for potential violent extremists. Law enforcement officials in Houston echoed community organizers’ focus on emotional crisis as a key factor and similarly avoided focusing on violent extremism in isolation: “Crisis comes in many forms—a person suffering from schizophrenia or individuals who are on their way to radicalization [are both] tilting towards something that will bring them or someone else harm and they need help.”

Local police standard operating procedure is to intervene directly once such an individual is identified and offer to assist or connect them with services. Accordingly, local police cadets receive intensive intervention and crisis response training. Furthermore, police recruited mental health clinicians who often deploy with officers.

Law enforcement interviewees categorized their approach as “risk management,” looking not only at the stated threat, but also at the individual’s actual capability for

---

95 As one community group leader stated, “I think people are engaged in this work without knowing about it . . . but I don’t think it is necessarily useful for these people” to think of themselves as preventing extremism. Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

96 One community group leader explained, “Law enforcement is brought into the fold when there is a clear ‘about to pull the trigger’ situation. Very transparently we say, ‘The only time police will be called in is when there is a clear and present danger.’” Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

97 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

98 As one law enforcement official said, “Unless we have a crime, the next step might be a conversation. . . . We always bring an angle of, ‘How can we help you, what is your concern? Let’s listen to what your beef is and see if we can redirect.’” This is in sharp contrast to typical counterterrorism-oriented law enforcement behavior, which emphasizes investigations without the subject’s knowledge and potential insertion of confidential informants or undercover officers. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

99 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.
violence. Of course, in situations where the risk is deemed sufficient, local police might bring in partner agencies in federal law enforcement, but even in those circumstances, they will still maintain involvement “on the mental health side.”

**Sensitivity in dealing with immigrant communities.** As we mentioned above, many local resilience-building efforts are focused on communities of recent arrivals. Organizers emphasized the care they take when approaching these communities, especially on sensitive and stigmatized issues, such as mental health, violence, or homosexuality. They deliberately seek “culturally competent” therapists and medical providers and partner with “culturally specific” groups when dealing with such issues as domestic violence, refugee assistance, or community health. Similarly, a group may need to reframe social services as “religious education” rather than “counseling” to make it more palatable to the recipient or their family.

By discussing these issues, albeit in culturally sensitive ways and with individuals who are familiar with the cultural milieus of their audiences, organizers strive to remove any stigma and encourage more-open conversation. In fact, one interviewee affiliated with the ACT NOW hotline stated that the real metric of success is not “how many calls [we got] or how many people [we prevented] from becoming” terrorists, but rather “creating a conversation in the community” about such topics.

Law enforcement similarly recognized the careful approach needed to work in such communities. They therefore instituted mandatory community engagement and cultural sensitivity training to increase awareness of their constituents’ cultures and

---

100 In the words of one law enforcement official, “Everything is an evaluation of: What true risk do we see here?” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

101 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

102 As one community leader stated, “Mental health is a difficult issue for everybody. Within an ethnic community, it’s an even more difficult issue.” The community leader said, with regard to fundraising efforts, “People think, ‘If I give money, will people think that someone in my family is crazy or that I’m crazy?’ So there’s a stigma to it. And the stigma won’t come off until we work towards it.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

103 Counselors might need to recommend social-service providers outside the community if an individual is fearful of dealing with an issue within it. Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

104 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

105 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

106 One interviewee suggested that police departments, which already are familiar with community-oriented policing models for such issues as gang violence prevention, approach policing in immigrant communities (whose youth face similar social isolation) similarly: “If we look at this like the gang problem, then it’s relatable to cops. . . the language is already in their minds. So instead of seeing it as, ‘This is a dangerous community,’ you can see it as, ‘How can we be of assistance to vulnerable people?’” Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits    97

religions. Law enforcement agencies have made efforts to go beyond such common community engagement tactics as youth athletic leagues or citizen academies (which “serve people who were . . . always pro-[law enforcement]”) by “go[ing] into the communities,” to places of worship or schools, to meet with “people who aren’t necessarily so supportive of our police.” Organizations also leveraged ethnic fraternal police organizations to reach out to communities and promote new social programs.

Open lines of communication for public safety. Law enforcement interviewees stressed the importance of communicating with ethnic and religious community groups and keeping them informed of developments, whether local, national, or international. Around 2009, local law enforcement officials representing a variety of city, county, and federal agencies launched an “Incident Response Forum” with community groups that eventually evolved into a more open platform for sharing information and airing concerns. The forum later included tabletop exercises wherein public safety situations were presented to the community and law enforcement explained its procedures in such circumstances.

Both community and law enforcement interviewees praised the initiative. Local police viewed their role as “ambassadors” between the community and federal law enforcement, whose presence might otherwise have been perceived as alienating.

Ubiquitous and thorough outreach. Organizers reported feeling the need to spread their message widely and continuously to overcome the hurdles of launching a “community resilience” program in an already hard-to-penetrate community. As one interviewee stated, “To be effective, it has to be ubiquitous. People have to see it everywhere.” For example, groups affiliated with the local crisis hotline followed a three-pronged strategy—“students, community leaders, and parents”—and reached out to nearly 50 community-based organizations that work “primarily with Muslim or immigrant and refugee populations.” These groups conducted awareness campaigns

---

107 High-profile incidents of perceived insensitivity by officers drove the implementation of this training (e.g., officers detained a Sikh family that had called in a potential robbery). Interview with a law enforcement official in Houston, March 2018; Lindsay Wise, “Sikh Family Accuses Sheriff’s Deputies of Abuse, Taunts,” Houston Chronicle, December 6, 2008.

108 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

109 For example, during incidents of Islamophobic hostility (e.g., Quran burning in Florida), law enforcement would inquire whether the community faced any similar incidents and assured them that resources would be available if needed. Similarly, during Ramadan, community groups informed law enforcement that a disproportionate number of youth would be walking around and entering restaurants late at night to head off any potential fears or reports. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

110 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

111 As one local law enforcement official said, “Whenever we would engage, I would always tell the community who was on the call. I never tried to hide that we had the [federal law enforcement] in the room.” He recalled that community leaders would repeatedly tell him, “You know how to talk to us,” whereas some federal law enforcement officials would often ask “very pointed questions about terrorism,” alienating the community in the process. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.
in public schools, universities, places of worship, English-as-a-second-language classes, and through local TV news and ethnic media. They also launched social media campaigns, with the use of hashtags and frequent posts on different forums advertising their services.\(^\text{112}\)

The messaging was “tailored to the community,” which reduced pushback.\(^\text{113}\) Using the right “tone and approach” in explaining that such programs are about building “resilient communities” and are not “investigatory” or about “weeding out terrorists . . . really ma[de] a difference.” In fact, organizers stated that, because of their thorough and culturally sensitive engagement, partner groups that were “initially very opposed to CVE” agreed to join after organizers’ efforts to speak with them—one group, in fact, became one of the “signature partners in this effort.”\(^\text{114}\)

**Lessons Learned for the Federal Government**

**The messages (and the messenger) matter.** CVE practitioners in Houston have been cognizant of how they discuss their program, trying to “make sure [they] don’t create language that pushes people away.”\(^\text{115}\) While remaining candid that this work falls under CVE (or now terrorism prevention), they indicated that they “tailor the message” so “it’s more palatable at the same time.”\(^\text{116}\) Interestingly, interviewees argued that while “words matter,” the “messengers are also critically important.” If the latter have credibility with the audience (i.e., “a lot of trust and access within the community”), then they “can be very direct in their language.” However, outsiders must step lightly and use “softer language” when discussing such topics as radicalization.\(^\text{117}\)

One person noted that at “the federal level,” officials “can be somewhat insensitive about the language.”\(^\text{118}\) The federal government’s framing of a “terrorism approach” to CVE (and now to terrorism prevention) rather than a “community-based” one “opens up a Pandora’s box” and undermines the trust that has been built at the local level. Notably, the rebranding from CVE to terrorism prevention “hasn’t trickled down yet to the communities” and is therefore not an issue for local practitioners.\(^\text{119}\) The interviewees’ views regarding DHS as a messenger were that the department “doesn’t have a

---

\(^{112}\) Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{113}\) For example, human images, which are forbidden in conservative Muslim circles, were replaced with illustrated figures in advertising the hotline to these constituencies. Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{114}\) Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{115}\) Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{116}\) A primary example of this is emphasizing the term “building community resilience.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{117}\) Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

\(^{118}\) Interview with a government official in the Houston area, April 2018.

\(^{119}\) Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.
bad brand, because it has lots of brands,” each of which is tied to an agency and a particular community’s relationship to that agency. In Houston, DHS’s Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) was described as “quite effective” and its presentations were held in high regard. According to one community leader, CRCL approached the community “with a level of sincerity” that exemplified the message-messenger dialectic described above.

Even discontinued federal initiatives can have lasting benefits. Law enforcement and community leaders positively referenced the bilateral communication forum described above. They attributed its inception to a DHS effort to host such teleconference calls nationally, which was modeled at the local level after Houston-based groups saw the benefit in open communication. Even though the federal “Incident Response Forum” ended, its legacy remains. As one community organizer described it: “It’s one example of [federal] thought leadership that trickled down at a local level and became an effective tool for local partners.”

Similarly, participants in DHS’s “Peer2Peer: Challenging Extremism” competition describe the long-term benefits of the program. It engaged those previously unfamiliar with or not confident in this field, provided them an opportunity to convert “theories in communication and strategic engagement” to real-world practice, and built long-term networks between the university and local community groups. Although the Houston-based “ME to WE” campaign was discontinued after the competition ended, the team was able to brief local, state, and federal government administrators to spread the lessons learned from the project and promote its implementation. One interviewee noted that the effort was relatively inexpensive and that the “great honor and prestige” associated with the competition was motivation enough for students.

A local focal point is necessary. Unlike the other four case study cities, Houston did not have a clearly identified federal government official—at either DHS or the U.S. Attorney’s Office—who coordinated, convened, or liaised with local partners for past CVE or future terrorism prevention programming. Instead, one community group serves as a point of contact between other community groups and government officials, given its experience and reputation in the field. The Mayor’s Office is planning for a

---

120 For example, “[Immigration and Customs Enforcement] is a bad brand in the Hispanic community, but it’s not necessarily [true] in conservative rural America.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

121 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

122 Interview with an academic researcher in the Houston area, March 2018.

123 In the absence of a federal focal point, HSOAC interviewers noted that different community groups interacted with a wide variety of local, state, and federal agencies in this space without any real degree of centralization. Interviews with community organization leaders and a government official in the Houston area, March and April 2018.
multipartner “Regional CVE Steering Committee” administered by an official in the city government’s Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security, but that effort is still in its initial phases. Locals understood the need for a central hub, not only to coordinate ongoing activities, but also to serve as a “sounding board” for new entrants or new programs in this space. Interviewees still want to maintain “a community-based” rather than a government-mandated approach to terrorism prevention, but argue that for it to succeed, DHS should make a “long-term investment,” rather than depending on the attitudes of successive administrations.

**Resources and direction from DHS.** Interviewees identified a range of federal resources that would improve their ability to engage in terrorism prevention programming, especially funding and training. Law enforcement officials reported feeling that officers required more training, either in DHS-provided modules or in certification courses at out-of-state training centers. They also saw the benefit in information-sharing platforms that would allow them to “communicate between agencies.” Officials cited the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) and the Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) process as effective information-sharing mechanisms, but lamented the unavailability of platforms (and the legal barriers) to securely share information on potential threats with other government entities.

Notably, DHS CVE grant applicants and awardees praised DHS’s responsiveness and flexibility in working with recipients on project implementation. One community leader praised the direct person-to-person communication with DHS and found that the department’s response to questions or concerns was “very helpful in this process,” especially when compared with experience with other federal agencies. Nevertheless, interviewees desired more purpose-driven DHS programming, commending such efforts as CRCL presentations, but asking, “Where does it lead? We convene and meet with them but to what end? . . . That element has to be developed.” One community group leader suggested that DHS devise more programmatic entrenchment so that these efforts “live beyond the individual people” attending or implementing them.

---

125 Interview with a government official in the Houston area, April 2018.

126 As one community leader stated: “This has to be part of DHS’s 50-year plan. It has to live on beyond a secretary and president.” For this reason, the community viewed the FBI as inappropriate partners for past CVE efforts and terrorism prevention going forward, given that special agents in charge rotate out every 18 months, rendering it difficult to build lasting communal ties. Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.

127 Interviews with community organization leaders and law enforcement officials in the Houston area, March 2018.

128 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Houston area, March 2018.

129 Interviews with community organization leaders in the Houston area, March 2018.

130 Interview with a community organization leader in the Houston area, March 2018.
Los Angeles, California

When we considered Los Angeles as a candidate city, we were aware that it had focused on building police-community and intercommunal group relations as a form of violence reduction for decades, unfortunately out of historical necessity. Unsurprisingly, it was one of the cities chosen for DOJ’s CVE pilot program and is currently a member of the Strong Cities Network.131 DHS initially awarded three CVE grants to local applicants in January 2017, although only one grantee was chosen in the June 2017 revised announcement.132 Based on data from the PIRUS database, California enjoys the dubious distinction of being the state with the most incidents of radicalization in the country. Lastly, Los Angeles represents a West Coast case study.

Nature of the Local Environment

As long as jihadi extremism has been a problem in the United States, California has been in its scope. Several of the 9/11 attackers were based in southern California and a number of al Qaeda plots targeted Los Angeles, including those against the international airport (the “Millennium Plot”) and a downtown skyscraper.133 Since the rise of ISIS, more than a dozen Californians traveled or attempted to travel abroad to join the group.134 Furthermore, one of the deadliest ISIS-related terrorist attacks in the United States occurred in San Bernardino in December 2015.135 There are also documented instances of pro-Hezbollah criminal activity and violent extremism.136

California also has a history of domestic violent extremism within its borders, from groups across the ideological spectrum. Despite its reputation as a liberal state, right-wing groups have been active there, from the white supremacist Aryan Nations to

131 DOJ, 2014; Strong Cities Network, undated(b).

Subsequent to completion of the data gathering for this study, the Mayor’s Office in Los Angeles made the decision to decline the grant award as a result of delay caused by intense local debate surrounding the issue (Emily Alpert Reyes, “L.A. Turns Away Federal Grant to Combat Extremism Amid Concerns of Unfairly Targeting Muslims,” Los Angeles Times, August 16, 2018).


the anti-immigrant Minutemen militia and, more recently, to violent incidents driven by the so-called “Alt-Right.” On the extreme left, California is the birthplace of the Black Panther Party, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and Earth First. In 2017, Antifa “black bloc” protesters in California repeatedly engaged in acts of violence on college campuses and at rallies.

Although Los Angeles has largely been spared successful terrorist attacks or extremist violence, officials nevertheless demonstrated an early commitment to CVE. According to the May 2015 *Los Angeles Framework for Countering Violent Extremism*, “initial collaborative CVE efforts in the greater Los Angeles area began in 2008.” Through these efforts, DHS partnered with the City of Los Angeles to establish the first DHS Office for Strategic Engagement to “assist in expanding engagement initiatives.” One year before the formal CVE pilot was launched, local efforts already were formalized under an “Interagency Coordination Group,” which coordinated government, law enforcement, and nonprofit CVE activities at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels.

**Relevance of Los Angeles’s Programs to DHS**

**Key Takeaways from Los Angeles’s Experience**

**Focus on changing behavior, not ideology.** In 2016, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) unveiled its strategy to address violent extremism concerns: Providing Alternatives to Hinder Extremism (PATHE). According to one official, the focus of PATHE is on identifying the behaviors that an individual who is influenced by violent extremism is exhibiting, rather than the person’s ideology or beliefs. Law enforcement recognized that the threat indicators in cases of violent extremism were similar to those in other types of violence, including “stalkers, threats against local elected officials, workplace violence, [and] school violence.” As in the latter cases, in PATHE, individuals of concern are first screened by mental health professionals, because, though

---


141 Lolita Lopez and Philip Drechsler, “LAPD Program Prevents Acts of Extremism,” *NBC Los Angeles*, October 13, 2017. The original name of the program was “Recognizing Extremist Network Early Warnings” (RENEW), but the name was changed in 2017. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

142 As one official put it, “If you focus on ISIS and [al Qaeda], you miss a whole lot of people, like the guy who shot up a church in Texas” in November 2017, killing 26 people. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
“not everyone who shares an ideology with terrorists is mentally ill . . . almost all have had some kind of mental crisis going on in their lives.” The program also is therefore grounded in the area’s broader response to concerns about targeted violence from all sources, and leverages existing mental health referral and other infrastructure.

According to interviewees, the goal for law enforcement in this approach is “prevention before punishment”—i.e., intervening in a case where an individual is exhibiting troubling behavior before a crime is committed. Law enforcement can prevent “further deterioration” by providing potential such individuals with mental health services and therefore prevent the crime itself. Interviewees argued that operating in this “pre-crime space” is a capability unique to local authorities. However, federal law enforcement, working with local partners in Joint Terrorism Task Forces, can refer cases to locals “that can’t go anywhere arrest-wise” but where individuals are viewed as posing a significant threat. In fact, in several instances, local officials reportedly were able to intervene with individuals who had raised concerns for federal agencies because the local agencies had capabilities and programs in place to respond.

Non–law enforcement interviewees framed PATHE as part of a broader local “continuum strategy,” straddling the “gray area between the social domain and justice space.” Other local efforts, which take a community-focused public health approach and are thus separate from PATHE, concentrate on the “social domain,” providing alternatives to law enforcement–centered approaches. This approach could limit the need for more-aggressive—and controversial—investigative methods, such as “intelligence gathering and surveillance.”

**A multidisciplinary and multijurisdictional approach.** Given the local focus on mental and public health in CVE, interviewees stressed the importance of a “multi-layered and multi-dimensional” strategy, for example, bringing in professionals from different fields to work together to address the problem. Accordingly, the Mayor’s Office–convened Community Advisory Group is composed of multidisciplinary experts, and PATHE began with a multiagency working group representing counter-terrorism, mental health, and social service professionals. As one interviewee stated,

143 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

144 Interviewees specifically cited cases like that of Esteban Santiago, who, after warning the FBI that voices in his head were urging him to commit acts of terrorism, perpetrated a shooting at a Florida airport in January 2017. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

145 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

146 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

147 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018. One law enforcement official similarly noted: “I think if you get law enforcement, a psychologist, a community person, and an analyst and put them together, there will be a lot of natural synergy.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

148 City of Los Angeles Mayor’s Office, “Notification of Application and Request for Authority to Accept Grant Award for Fiscal Year 2016 Countering Violent Extremism Grant Program,” memorandum to City Council
“the more we find ways [to] understand the roles and what everyone brings to the table to address the various complex dimensions,” the easier it is to develop a viable program.149

This collaboration means that Los Angeles police officers are often colocated and codeployed with mental health evaluators, which facilitates quicker service provision to ensure public safety.150 Similarly, these partnered teams develop “relationships with providers, families, [and] caregivers,” so that individuals of concern are properly cared for, obviating a need for further law enforcement involvement.151

This concept of partnership extends beyond disciplines to jurisdictions. In Los Angeles, county and city law enforcement work closely together in this space, relying on each other’s resources in recognition that “this needs to be a regional approach. . . . these individuals don’t stick within city boundaries, within regional boundaries.” In turn, these agencies partner with the local fusion center, which covers more countries across southern California.152

For this system to work, communication was cited as key by our interviewees: for example, ensuring that administrators have access to mental health records as students move from public school to universities or that patrol officers have access to prior mental health or police reports when confronting an individual who might be in the system already.153 Although cross-agency information-sharing mechanisms are in place for some violence-prevention programs in Los Angeles, they were viewed as underdeveloped by some interviewees regarding local CVE-related activities. As new service providers and referral systems are launched, practitioners repeatedly mentioned in interviews that issues remain regarding “sharing client information with law enforcement.”154 Even among agencies with past local CVE experience, there were still “very different understandings of what the rules were” for health (HIPAA) or educa-

Members, October 25, 2017; interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

149 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.


151 In the words of a law enforcement official, “Our job in law enforcement is not to determine [whether an] individual needs psychiatric treatment or a mentor. Our job is to assess for dangerousness and link to services. . . . Once they’ve gone through the mental evaluation-driven assessment phase and moved on to services, that’s where they are—they’re no longer involved with law enforcement.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

152 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

153 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

154 Interview with a community organization leader in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits

Incorporating terrorism prevention or CVE into a broader mental and/or public health framework means that administrators must dedicate considerable resources to address public-safety concerns that extend beyond violent extremism. One law enforcement interviewee stated that their agency receives about 2,000 mental health referrals per month. Initial assessments for justified cases require home and school visits as well as meetings with family members and school officials. An individualized case plan often is devised for each subject, and multiple government agencies might need to collaborate on a treatment plan. Law enforcement officials readily conceded that, in seeking to avoid arresting individuals, subjects’ cases have “no time limit,” individuals “come in and out” of case management, and clinicians can “follow them for months, [or even] years.” Likewise, as the threat such individuals pose extends from adolescence into adulthood, PATHE-coordinated programs, such as Los Angeles’s School Threat Assessment Response Team (START), are seeking to expand “beyond school campuses.”

In order to manage this caseload, LAPD dedicates 110 police officers and 50 clinicians to mental health. There is a standing “triage desk” staffed with mental health professionals that any patrol officer can call at any time of the day or week and use as a resource when interacting with an individual who is exhibiting signs of distress or mental illness. All front-line officers are trained in crisis intervention and clinicians are trained to recognize extremist behavior.

---

155 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018. Another interviewee elaborated: “You could run into the same problems that the Parkland case had where there was mental health and law enforcement cases at some point[s] but the information was never shared.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

156 Some interviewees argued that resource constraints made it necessary to take suboptimal approaches to these issues. One researcher paraphrased government reticence to approach extremism as a public health issue: “[We said that] you can only deal with this as a public health issue. . . . You have to generally treat society. But [the] response I felt I got was, ‘Well we don’t have the funds to treat mental health issues as an issue of national security, so we’ll keep focusing on this one community predominantly.’” Interview with an academic researcher in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

157 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

158 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

159 As one interviewee put it, “We’ve had people who we’re fixated on for 15 years.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.


161 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Naturally, for entities with fewer resources, such an undertaking can be a challenge. Although city police have a strong partnership with the local government mental health department, other law enforcement organizations reportedly are still in the process of building such a collaboration, and resource constraints can be a limitation. Interviewees expressed a desire for more-available funding and are looking to "diversify [y] funding streams." One option identified by interviewees is to make it easier to use existing funding streams, notably the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) for terrorism prevention programs. Such programs were viewed as focusing more on acquiring equipment and being difficult to use to sustain programs that will need consistent support over long periods in order to be effective. Lastly, officials recognize that large-scale and resource-intensive approaches might only be needed for major cities, whereas "most of the state is rural." As such, officials are working on providing "different models" that could help "translate this to an under-resourced small municipal locality."

**Leverage preexisting programs.** Interviewees recommended that, to conserve time, effort, and resources, terrorism prevention programs leverage "existing capabilities" and do not seek to "recreate the wheel." Especially when introducing a new program to a bureaucratic entity, interviewees argued that it is easier to "co-opt what exists" rather than "give [staff] new" procedures they need to learn. Accordingly, the PATHE program "evolved from pre-existing collaboration" between law enforcement and mental health workers, building on the foundation provided by START and the Case Assessment Management Program (CAMP) to respond to instances of potential violent extremism. Whereas the FBI was "trying to come up with this new matrix and system for persons of concern" for its "off-ramping programs" (which the interviewees said ultimately failed to materialize), local officers realized that "we already have that . . . we’ve been doing this for 20 years," and adjusted their systems to take advantage of existing infrastructure.

---

162 Interviews with government and law enforcement officials in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

163 The interviewee elaborated: "There needs to be a specific line item in UASI that focuses outside of the lanes of law enforcement and [that] is program-based." Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

164 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

165 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

166 As one interviewee said, "A lot of agencies fail if they try to create something totally new." Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

167 As one law enforcement official put it, "The mental evaluation side of it has been in existence, we’re just leveraging it [for] these purposes. . . . All we did was create a new checkbox" on the case referral form to include violent extremism. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

168 When local law enforcement shared these programs, "the FBI was blown away." Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Similarly, the Mayor’s Office intends to build its “Building Healthy Communities” program as part of the 211 platform, rather than creating a separate entity, enabling the city to accomplish more with less resource investment. Given the scale of their ambitions to “build referral systems in a way that can be sustainable, accessible, [and] culturally appropriate,” with the potential to expand beyond Los Angeles “regionally and even nationally,” administrators recognized that using a preexisting social services call-in line was the most beneficial option.169

**Key role for evaluators in terrorism prevention initiatives.** Lastly, given how new CVE and now terrorism prevention programming is in the United States, there is a relative lack of expertise in the field and a concurrent need for program evaluation to ensure that effective models are being implemented. Unfortunately, as one government administrator put it, “everybody wants it done,” but monitoring (as part of evaluation efforts) is so labor intensive and expensive, that “nobody really want[s] to pay” for it.170 One interviewee praised DHS Science and Technology Directorate for seeing the “value of getting the academic community with the practitioner community.” But although “DHS has done a good job of interfacing [between researchers] in the U.S. with the Europeans and the Canadians,” there needs to be more interfacing between “the practice and policy community and the research community” within the United States itself.171

As academic researchers are brought in as evaluators of initiatives, they may find themselves in the unconventional role of assisting in program design as well. Although involving an evaluator in the program design itself could limit their ability to judge a program objectively, it could increase the likelihood of program success. In the Los Angeles experience, interviewees described a collaboration that evolved over time among individuals who were brought on board as evaluators, but that also contributed to refining the design of programming in the course of implementation. Evaluators from outside practitioners or research organizations can act as network nodes to link efforts to broader sources of expertise, given that arguments for multidisciplinary involvement are critical to the success of terrorism prevention efforts. An alternative approach would be to incorporate separate program design and implementation support to help practitioners in the early phases of program design.172

---

169 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018; City of Los Angeles, Mayor’s Office of Public Safety, “Building Healthy Communities in Los Angeles,” Grant Application EMW-2016-CA-APP-00294, September 2, 2016.

170 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

171 This interviewee elaborated: “The only time I’m in a room with other researchers and [CVE practitioners in Los Angeles] is when DHS brings us together. . . . The NCTC conference was never really that place.” Interview with an academic researcher in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

172 Interview with an academic researcher in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Lessons Learned for the Federal Government

Consider expansion of the focus of terrorism prevention to all types of targeted violence and communities. The PATHE program, in its design to focus on behavioral indicators, emphasizes not countering “violent extremism” but “mass targeted violence.”173 Given the controversy over CVE and, by extension, terrorism prevention, there is a “constant debate within prevention circles about scope.” By broadening the scope to “mass targeted violence,” PATHE incorporates other forms of high-casualty attacks, such as mass shootings, and allows law enforcement to move away from “some of the politicization of CVE.”174 The range of violent threats covered under this program extends from hate crimes and sovereign citizens to gangs and lone individuals without well defined ideological or criminal motivation.175

Similarly, the Mayor’s Office’s “Building Healthy Communities” program is focused on engaging the “general public” in violence prevention rather than on any specific community.176 Through an online platform, the program will provide services to all communities to address “drivers that will reduce targeted violence down the road.” The program is not defined by concepts like “terrorism” or “violent extremism,” but it still incorporates CVE or terrorism prevention–related resources (e.g., CABs, social media briefings), broadening the scope to serve a range of communities affected by different types of violence and related concerns.177

Health agencies should have a greater role in addressing violence prevention related to ideologically motivated violence. Given the city’s efforts to reframe CVE and, by extension, terrorism prevention into a broader context of violence prevention by addressing mental and public health needs, stakeholders reported that more substantial involvement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is needed. Interviewees cited some involvement by HHS and even by the U.S. Department of Education in violence prevention programming nationally and viewed that as a way to reduce the role of law enforcement in this line of work.178

In Los Angeles, some community groups still hold the view that CVE (and, therefore, terrorism prevention) is a “surveillance program” and that those associated with

---

173 In the words of one law enforcement official, “Since this is behavior-based, we’ll be careful with the lexicon not to use words like ‘terrorism’ and ‘radicalization.’ We looked at about 15 different studies on radicalization, and it’s pretty much the same as these suspects in workplace and school-place violence.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

174 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

175 Interview with government and law enforcement officials in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

176 City of Los Angeles Mayor’s Office, 2017. As one official put it, “You have to work on outreach to all communities to [have an] impact.” Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

177 One government official said it plainly: “If we build a model that addresses CVE before gangs, that would be a non-starter.” Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.

178 Interviews with community organization leaders in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits

Federal agencies’ national reputations matter. The national perception of a federal agency can affect local communities’—and therefore, local governments’—willingness to work with that agency, regardless of events on the ground in the local jurisdiction. In Los Angeles, community groups repeatedly cited examples of federal officials’ use of controversial tactics, which they described as using “sting operations” that entrap “the whole community,” hiring “people who are promoting anti-Islamic narratives” as counterterrorism trainers, and engaging in rhetoric that yields a “narrative that America is at war with Islam.” A law enforcement official argued that a single federal action anywhere in the country could undermine years of trust-building efforts for local law enforcement, given the power of such actions to shape community perceptions. Community groups stated that they can “begin to engage in serious trust-building exercises as a community” with law enforcement only when they perceive that these grievances are addressed.

Importantly, this potential exists regardless of the willingness and receptiveness of local federal staff or law enforcement personnel to partner with locals. Local law enforcement emphasized that frequently “the Feds . . . turn to us” to intervene and provide services to individuals at risk of engaging in ideological violence rather than pursue an arrest. Although these instances are a result of mutual trust between individual agents and officers, rather than a formal system to manage collaboration, there is a sense that this approach is becoming more institutionalized over time.

A federal terrorism prevention campaign should be fully resourced, with local flexibility. The previous administration made CVE a key component of its domestic counterterrorism efforts, launching a CVE strategy and strategic implemen-

179 Interview with government officials and community organization leaders in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
180 See, for example, #StopCVE Coalition Los Angeles, homepage, undated.
181 Interview with a community organization leader in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
182 Interview with a community organization leader in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
183 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
184 Interview with a community organization leader in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
185 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
186 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
tation plan in 2011 (which was revised in 2016), the DOJ pilot program in 2014, and a White House summit in 2015. Yet, from the viewpoint of local partners, the campaign was not nearly as coordinated or effective as may have been assumed in Washington. From the perspective of Los Angeles–based stakeholders, and similar to feedback from interviewees in other cities, when the strategy was first released, it was as if the administration “just threw it out there” without providing a clear sense of “what CVE is, what are we trying to achieve, who is going to do what, and how it is going to help.”

And then, with the release of the implementation plan, there “were no resources or funding attached to it,” rendering actual program implementation difficult.

More importantly, following the CVE summit—in which many interviewees participated—there was real excitement that “now we’re going to have this strategy.” But, surprisingly, there was an unexpected “gap where nothing happened.” As the government “failed by not following up,” local community groups stepped into the “quietness gap” and were able to shape the narrative, attacking CVE so effectively that “it became toxic” and preventing local partners from engaging in any CVE activity for months.

Although interviewees across sectors argued that local communities must be able to tailor CVE or terrorism prevention programming to their needs, they acknowledged that a concerted and properly messaged effort by the federal government “with clear direction” would be useful. Federal activities could include “develop[ing] a cadre . . . of experts in different fields” to develop best practices, offering a training program for locals on how to develop and implement such practices, connecting local government and community practitioners across the country to foster partnerships, and serving as a single point of contact for practitioners as questions or concerns arise. Interviewees added that these efforts should come with commensurate funding, opportunities for local entities to “give input,” and good-faith efforts to incorporate local feedback into programs and policy.

---

187 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
188 Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
189 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018. As another interviewee stated:

What has been most problematic [was] when they announced the three pilot CVE cities. . . . It was just announced that there were these programs, but there were no programs. [So] what happened at the local levels was: What spying programs are there now? That essentially propelled . . . the CVE battle that ensued. The other thing [was when] DOJ announced it, we had FBI come out and say, ‘We’re doing CVE,’ and cemented the notion that they were going to surveil and criminalize. . . . These optics were so harmful to everything that we were doing at the local level. Interview with a government official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
190 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Los Angeles area, March 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits

Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota

The Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn., were selected as a case study for a variety of reasons. Foremost among these reasons was its status as one of the three areas included in the DOJ CVE pilot program, as well as Minneapolis’s standing as one of the original members of the Strong Cities Network.191 DHS awarded CVE grants to two local entities in June 2017.192 Lastly, Minnesota was the third-highest state in the country in total incidence of radicalization, according to PIRUS data, indicating a high degree of radicalization. Notably, the Twin Cities was the only local area where organizations could be identified via open-source research that had programming (some terrorism-specific and some focused more broadly) across all four of DHS’s defined lines of effort for terrorism prevention. It also represents our only city in the Midwest.

Nature of the Local Environment

The Minneapolis–St. Paul area has had the highest number of per capita terrorism prosecutions in the United States since 9/11, almost exclusively because of recruitment by foreign terrorist organizations among the Somali diaspora community.193 The Somali-American community in Minnesota is the largest diaspora community from that country in the United States, and was estimated to be about 32,000 people in 2011.194

As early as 2008, several Somali-Americans from Minnesota traveled to Somalia to fight with al-Shabaab, an al Qaeda affiliate.195 Between 2009 and 2013, more than 20 individuals from the community were charged for joining, or attempting to join, al-Shabaab. With the rise of ISIS in 2013, more individuals from the community traveled to Iraq and Syria to fight with the terror group, notably a “cluster” of men with close familial and personal ties to one another.196 According to a government official, there have been 54 jihadist terrorism cases, including more than 40 actual or attempted

191 DOJ, 2014; Jennifer Fermino, “New York Joins Terror-Busting Network ‘Strong’ Cities as Activists Fear Program Will Target Muslims,” New York Daily News, September 30, 2015; Strong Cities Network, undated(a). However, as of May 2018, Minneapolis no longer appears to be a member city (Strong Cities Network, undated[b]).

192 DHS, 2017b.


travelers and 30 sentencings in the past decade.\textsuperscript{197} Sentences have ranged widely, from 36 months of probation or time served to 240 years in prison. Several individuals convicted of terrorism charges already have been released, prompting authorities to devise post-release supervision and antirecidivism programs.\textsuperscript{198}

Notably, none of the terrorism prosecutions included violent plots aimed within the United States.\textsuperscript{199} In fact, the Somali community has been a victim of violence after a bombing at a local mosque in August 2017, which the governor labeled “an act of terrorism.”\textsuperscript{200}

Relevance of Minneapolis’s Programs to DHS

Key Takeaways from Minneapolis’s Experience

Community leadership. In February 2015, as part of the CVE pilot program, the U.S. Attorney–led group in Minneapolis released an outline of its program, “Building Community Resilience” (BCR). Importantly, the subheading read, “A Community-Led Local Framework.” Interviewees consistently stressed the need for the effort to be led by the community—not by the local government or by officials based in Washington, D.C. To that end, Minneapolis–St. Paul was the first of the three pilot cities to change the name of its program from CVE (in this case, to BCR) and it did so at the behest of community leaders.\textsuperscript{201} (Indeed, a central driver for federal government involvement in CVE work locally was community-driven concern about individuals traveling abroad to join foreign terrorist organizations.\textsuperscript{202}) As part of the local effort, the U.S. Attorney’s Office launched a Somali-American Task Force in May 2015 to shape the direction of the effort and later signed a cooperative agreement with a community group in September 2015 to implement the program as a whole. This was in response to community concerns and to the controversy surrounding CVE, and the Task Force sought to separate the implementation of programming from government

\textsuperscript{197} Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

\textsuperscript{198} As of March 2018, there were 21 extremists on supervised release in Minnesota (12 jihadists and nine white supremacists) with four more to be released in the next year. This is the highest number of extremists in any state. Farrah Fazal, “Federal Probation Officer, Judge Discuss Integrating Extremists Back into Society in Minnesota,” \textit{ABC News}, March 14, 2018.

\textsuperscript{199} One possible exception is the September 2016 knife attack perpetrated by a Somali-American at a shopping mall in St. Cloud, Minn., 65 miles outside of the Twin Cities. Although ISIS claimed the attacker as one of its own, the FBI has not definitively concluded what motivated the attacker, who was killed during the incident. Amy Forliti, “Thornton: FBI Still Investigating Minnesota Mall Stabbing,” \textit{Associated Press}, February 17, 2017.


\textsuperscript{201} Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018. Boston later changed the name of its program to “Promoting Engagement, Acceptance and Community Empowerment” (PEACE) and Los Angeles changed its program to “Building Healthy Communities.”

\textsuperscript{202} Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
in general and the U.S. Attorney’s Office in particular. Community organizations we interviewed argued that it was a good decision, suggesting that investigative or prosecutorial agencies are “not a logical choice to house these efforts.”

Federal funding for CVE activities was sparse in spite of the national focus on the issue (which was a problem for multiple case study cities), but Minneapolis was the central example of how local commitment could result in local (and state) funding of activities. The U.S. Attorney’s Office reached out to corporate and philanthropic organizations, such as the Mall of America and the Carlson Family Foundation, to support its community-based programming.

**Fragility of trust and collaboration.** Although community involvement and buy-in was initially strong in Minneapolis, such buy-in can be fragile, particularly in the face of internal and external pressures. Soon after the pilot initiative was announced, national advocacy groups began what proved to be an effective campaign to frame BCR as an intelligence effort aimed at Muslim communities. Although local groups with similar missions had been a part of the planning in the Minneapolis program, the pressure from the outside—which included media efforts and a letter-writing campaign to BCR’s sponsors—eventually succeeded in creating a stigma associated with participation in CVE-labeled activities. BCR was hampered further by conflicts that arose in the wake of the White House CVE Summit in February 2015 and from limitations in funding opportunities for launching or continuing local programs. Multiple interviewees also pointed out that electoral politics complicated the sustainability of local efforts: Some individuals who had been involved with BCR subsequently ran for office, and their views then reflected the negative opinion of CVE that was prevalent among their constituents. As one government official stated, “politics and ideology” can too easily “get in the way of . . . what needs to be done.”

---

203 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

204 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.


206 Multiple interviews with government and law enforcement officials and community organization leaders in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

207 The stigma is so prevalent, that, in the words of one researcher, “As soon as you say ‘CVE,’ you’re finished.” In HSOAC’s outreach efforts, the effect of this stigma was readily observable in the way that organizations responded to interview requests and characterized the goals of their efforts and programming. Interviews with an academic researcher and others in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

208 Although interviewees indicated that CVE activities are more limited than they were during the period of the pilot effort as a result of the increase in local opposition, effects of those activities do remain. Even interviewees who were pessimistic about terrorism prevention’s future prospects in the area cited sustained successes: the creation of several new organizations and programs that continue today, despite the controversy, as well as the maturing of pre-BCR organizations, which built lasting ties with the corporate community, improved capacity, and gained understanding of government grant cycles. Interview with government officials and an academic researcher in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
Desirability of early-phase terrorism prevention. Another key takeaway is the value of “upstream” programming with a broader focus, rather than explicit and narrow emphasis on terrorism and radicalization.209 Examples from the Twin Cities include parent and civic engagement groups, new immigrant integration, and youth programming to “promote their roles in society.”210 For an area like Minneapolis–St. Paul, interviewees argued that terrorism prevention programming should be viewed as adjunct to community-building, and should help create “a civic infrastructure” for a relatively poor refugee community with few roots in the country.211 This view was not held only by interviewees outside of government: One government official described CVE and terrorism prevention work as similar to community-building efforts in anti-gang strategies (e.g., trying to get “targeted resources to communities in need,” disrupting negative “peer-to-peer” networks). This official suggested that reframing terrorism prevention in a similar way and orienting programming along these lines might address some of the controversy, although they conceded that this policy area is correlated with “the stigma of race and religion” in a way that gang work is not, and would therefore be harder to reframe.212

Interfaith dialogue and alliance-building were seen as valuable tools for increasing community resilience and as a productive way to broaden focus beyond specific ethnic or immigrant communities.213 As one community leader stated, “most Americans can get behind” a conversation about violence, “whether it’s domestic violence or child abuse. . . . there’s a more broadly based approach” where people can relate “without stigma or [being put] on the defensive.”214 For many community groups, these efforts are part of a broader civic or youth engagement program: Although they might contribute to achieving the goals of terrorism prevention, neither the organizations nor the people they serve necessarily see what they do as having anything to do with terrorism. Interviewees viewed this as valuable, noting that it reduces the risk that such programs would be overwhelmed by national controversy about radicalization. This is especially true given that the community prioritizes a range of resilience-related

209 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
210 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
211 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018. In the words of one community organization leader, “Other cities have giant wealthy diverse Muslim communities supporting various structures. So if a refugee population comes in, the framework to support them is there. We never had that here.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
212 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
213 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
214 Another community leader stated similarly: “Part of it is we don’t talk about terrorism. We frame it in different ways.” Interview with community organization leaders in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
Lessons from U.S. City Visits 115

issues—from gang recruitment to incidents of Islamophobia—of which radicalization is a small part.215

However, a belief in the value of upstream programming should not obscure the need for more-focused work on those who definitively have been radicalized. Several interviewees emphasized the need to involve family, especially mothers, in the process and to strengthen family and community bonds as a means of rehabilitation. Furthermore, both community and government officials stated that there is a need to address ideology in efforts to sway radicalized individuals away from al-Shabaab or ISIS’s ideological programming (the involvement of religious scholars was sometimes driven by the request of individuals in rehabilitation programming).216 One interviewee emphasized that they avoid the term deradicalization to describe their programming—“it made it seem like there was a magic pill to get someone to deradicalize”—and refer to disengagement and rehabilitation instead.217

Value of law enforcement in terrorism prevention and community engagement. The view of community-focused interviewees was that direct law enforcement involvement in upstream programming should be minimized or eliminated: “People need jobs, homework help, mentors—they don’t ask for help with radicalization” and “once you bring law enforcement into that conversation, people will think . . . it’s a set-up.”218 This sensitivity to law enforcement involvement—a common phenomenon in police-community relations, even outside of CVE or terrorism prevention—varied across interviewees and groups, and is a challenge for the implementation of programming where there could be a need for police involvement.

Although law enforcement’s role in some types of community programming might be limited by design, police certainly do play a role in community engagement. Law enforcement agencies we interviewed stressed their community engagement efforts as a means to build trust with the community, especially with refugee populations who are distrustful of such entities based on negative experiences in their

215 Although it is true that the largest cluster of foreign terrorist organization recruitment in the country is in this community, there were only four dozen or so participants in a community of at least 32,000. As a result, multiple interviewees emphasized that it was unfair to label an entire population because of the actions of a few people. In the words of one law enforcement official, “We do face these issues [i.e., terrorism] but on a smaller scale than the population thinks. One of the community’s biggest gripes is that they are looked at as terrorists.” Fortunately, now that national attention has moved away from CVE, one community organization leader says that they can safely relaunch efforts to discuss hate and violence with less stigma than they would have faced a short time ago. Interviews with a law enforcement official and a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

216 Whether there is enough funding for this type of work was questioned, however. One community leader expressed frustration that donors are “scared” to fund programs combating jihadist ideology and would much rather focus on youth-building activities. Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

217 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

218 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
countries of origin. Several agencies hired “community engagement specialists” who are civilian employees rather than uniformed officers. These specialists are recruited to work in their respective ethnic or special-interest communities and help citizens navigate police or government services. Similarly, police departments have put an emphasis on recruiting officers from diverse communities to better reflect local demographics, devising “junior police academies” and revisiting recruitment requirements to ensure that specific communities are not “inadvertently weed[ed] out.” As was the case for some community programming, these law enforcement activities are not specific to (or even explicitly addressing) terrorism, but can still contribute significantly to achieving the goals of terrorism prevention. With this foundation, one interviewee said, local law enforcement could serve as a bridge between federal law enforcement and skeptical locals, providing forums for agencies like the FBI to explain their procedures and reduce mistrust.

**Lessons Learned for the Federal Government**

**Words matter.** Interviewees across sectors and roles strongly emphasized that the words used at the federal level on this topic can have outsized effects on the viability of efforts at the local level. Given how toxic the term CVE had become, there was an openness to the change in terminology to terrorism prevention. However, interviewees stressed the need for clarity about what was included in “terrorism” and that it should include all forms of ideological violence, including “anti-Semitism, white supremacy, [and] militias.” Interviewees noted that the lack of clarity both before and after the 2015 CVE Summit as to what was meant by “countering violent extremism” made it

---

219 In the words of one law enforcement official, “The new word I like is trust. It’s on our business cards. Building on that trust—anything you deal with in this country comes back to trust.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

220 As one law enforcement official said, “We remove the uniform because it’s easier to go to someone who looks like you and speaks like you.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

221 One law enforcement official emphasized that civilians could deploy faster than uniformed personnel in non-emergency situations, which is important, given that quick response times build community trust in law enforcement. Interview with a law enforcement official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

222 Such activities are best practices associated with community policing and maintaining police-community trust in general.

223 Interviews with law enforcement officials in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

224 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018. Admittedly, this is difficult, given that there are legal statutes for “international terrorism” (e.g., al Qaeda, ISIS) but not domestic violent ideological causes. As one community organization leader stated, “It’s divisive because you’re labeling some people as terrorists and not others. I’ve had to explain that legal definition to some because it’s not well understood. For 15 years now, our government has done a poor job of making those distinctions and looking at trends more broadly about crimes committed and what that feels like to a community.” Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
possible for opponents to persuade citizens that the program’s goal was surveillance of Muslim communities. Furthermore, the nature of the current political environment surrounding immigration and travel from designated countries (including Somalia) has resulted in organizations formally stepping away from any effort associated with violent extremism in general and federal terrorism prevention efforts in particular.

**A local role for federal involvement.** Although the consensus view in Minnesota was that the community needed to be the public lead for terrorism prevention efforts, the federal government—and, particularly, local district offices—still plays a critical role, serving as a bridge that connects all government and nongovernmental stakeholders. Similarly, all government agencies (city, state, and federal) in the area need to participate in the program and work collectively to address community concerns regarding their respective roles, responsibilities, and operating procedures in order for the program to succeed.225 Several local law enforcement agencies stressed that, given the opaque nature of governmental operations, the actions or policies of one agency can undermine trust in another.226 To be effective, federal agencies need to do a better job of communicating (i.e., undertaking community engagement of their own) and demonstrating a consistent presence in an area.227 Relatedly, although federal government buy-in is essential, there was strong agreement that local programming cannot be defined by or run out of Washington D.C., and both local government officials and locally based federal representatives need to have the flexibility to experiment and tailor programs to fit the needs of their particular communities.

**Liability is a concern.** One key component of the CVE pilot program across all cities was a desire to develop the capacity for intervention (also referred to as “off-ramping”) for individuals identified as potential violent extremists before they committed a crime. This was raised as a priority for the U.S. Attorney’s Office by commu-

---

225In the words of one law enforcement official, “All of city government has to be supportive. It starts from the top.” For instance, in an effort to better understand the U.S. district court and the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s position on terrorist suspect rehabilitation, the local public defender’s office traveled to Europe to learn about different violent extremism rehabilitation models. Similarly, federal officials who received complaints about perceived discrimination in the airport convened meetings between the Transportation Security Administration and U.S. Customs and Border Protection and local Somali community leaders to discuss these concerns. Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

226In the words of one law enforcement interviewee: “When they see us, they see [Immigration and Customs Enforcement], FBI. . . . For the most part, if you’re wearing a badge, you’re under the same umbrella” regardless of your agency or law enforcement duties. One interviewee described efforts their organization had to take to distance themselves from federal policies and actions that were problematic for local populations. Interview with law enforcement officials in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

227As one government official said, “You can’t fly in and out. This requires a lot of time and attention and trust building.” Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018. HSOAC heard a complementary perspective from interviewees regarding federal representatives who were not locally grounded: “When I’ve worked with federal agencies, they don’t seem to know how to engage in local communities. . . . We have engagements with them for law enforcement purposes, but they are never in the community.” Interview with a law enforcement official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
nity leaders early in the process, but ultimately failed to materialize in any significant way. Two types of liability concerns were raised to explain the serious challenges to building such capacity in the Twin Cities: civil liability and potential criminal exposure (being prosecuted for foreign terrorist organization material support) should one of those “off-ramped” individuals engage in terrorist activity. As one community group leader stated: “There’s no support—no legal support. No one has your back. . . . we kept asking about it but there was no cover.” One government interviewee suggested that the “duty to report” obligations that exist in a number of professions (and coexist with regulatory protections like HIPAA) could address some of the concerns regarding legal exposure. This interviewee cited an example where intervention efforts had embedded legal counsel both as a source of advice and as an intermediary between the program staff and law enforcement when reporting was required. Interviewees requested clear federal guidelines and “broad interagency involvement” at all stages of intervention, without necessarily dictating the specifics of what an “off-ramp” program should entail.

Innovation in recidivism-focused programming. In Minnesota, the federal district court and federal officers have been innovative with regard to pretrial release and probation/parole programming because of the comparatively large numbers of terrorism-related cases in the federal system. Many individuals charged with terrorism-related offenses pose a particular challenge for pretrial risk assessment because available tools measure characteristics on which these individuals, despite their extremist views and potential commitment to violence, score as low risk, given their lack of prior criminal records, sometimes advanced education, and community ties. Local officials, seeking to balance goals of rehabilitation and punishment, devised specific release conditions for terrorism and extremism cases that include such measures as periodic polygraphs, internet restrictions, mental health counseling, and confinement to a halfway house. In addition, officials have developed programs based on European models that involve identity-building; cognitive-behavioral therapy; voluntary religious education; and mentorships in a variety of civic, educational, and public health fields. Treatment is tailored to the individual, based on the severity of their crimes and the assessed risk that she or he poses, and the conditions of their release are amended on a “trust and verify” basis. A small number of individuals convicted of terrorism-

---

228 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
229 Interview with a community organization leader in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
230 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
231 Officials involved in these programs stressed that their efforts were separate from BCR, including the latter’s exploration into prearrest interventions. Interview with government officials in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
232 Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
related offenses are currently under supervision, with positive results to date, according to interviewees.233

**Measurement is a challenge.** Lastly, interviewees that had been involved in CVE efforts in Minneapolis characterized measuring their effectiveness as particularly difficult for two reasons. First, many efforts focused on community engagement and relationship-building, which defy short-term results; in the words of one law enforcement official, “What we do tomorrow, it will not bear fruit for years to come.”234 Interviewees also raised a separate challenge, which is tied to CVE opponents’ concerns about surveillance. Although evaluation data can be collected separately from program delivery, their collection can nonetheless seem to confirm suspicions that programs are carrying out surveillance or intelligence-gathering. As a result, in some cases, officials and community groups explicitly agreed not to collect any data from their programs. This stipulation limited evaluation to a reliance on anecdotal evidence, which, although damaging for evaluation, was seen as necessary for programming to even have the opportunity to be successful.235

---

233 Of all the people in the program, only one person’s release was revoked. Officials described an additional benefit of the program: The tools and resources acquired to address jihadi extremism have been valuable in treating white supremacist and other extremist behavior. Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

234 Interview with a law enforcement official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.

235 As one government official stated, “We were careful in the cooperative agreement to ensure [that] there was no data collection. . . . Any other evaluation could look like surveillance.” Interview with a government official in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area, April 2018.
Appendix B References


DOJ—See U.S. Department of Justice.


Lessons from U.S. City Visits


Thornton:-FBI-still-investigating-Minnesota-mall-stabbing


Murphy, Shelley, and Peter Schworm, “Are Boston Terrorism Cases a Trend?” Boston Globe, June 7, 2015. As of August 20, 2018: https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/06/06/are-boston-terrorism-cases-trend/QYww9mhOags9f91qd5MILJ/story.html


START—See National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. #StopCVE Coalition Los Angeles, homepage, undated. As of August 20, 2018: http://www.stopcve.com/la.html

———, “Member Cities,” webpage, undated(b). As of June 20, 2018: http://strongcitiesnetwork.org/strong-cities/member-cities


An early requirement in many policy areas is the development of measures and metrics to assess whether programs that spend taxpayer dollars are accomplishing their goals. Indeed, good governance and stewardship of public funds can be supported by developing measures and metrics. However, it is also the case that deciding what should be measured to assess progress can help define the goals of programs in the first place: Although it is often easy to express what a program is trying to do in general terms, delving into detail about what can be tracked and what is worth measuring often forces a much clearer definition of “what success looks like” that can assist in program decisions and implementation more broadly.

Since efforts focused on terrorism prevention and responding to violent extremism became a focus in federal-level policy, there have been recurring concerns about whether investments in policies and programs are achieving their intended goals. Think tanks and other organizations that are focused on federal initiatives in this area also have described the need for measures and metrics, and many have flagged the development and validation of metrics as a valuable federal role even for prevention efforts at the state and local levels or outside of government.


In our research, interviewees expressed a desire for solid measures and metrics that reached beyond concerns about good government and assessing what taxpayer investments were achieving. Given the ideal of a whole-of-society approach to this policy problem—combining the efforts of federal, state, local, private-sector, philanthropic, and NGOs—solid metrics also were flagged as critical to making the “business case” for terrorism prevention efforts to private-sector and philanthropic organizations.

It is worth noting that, beyond a general consensus around the need for metrics, some interviewees cautioned that it was important to “do metrics right” in terrorism prevention in order to avoid pitfalls that have affected the drive toward measurement in other policy areas. Interviewees noted concerns about the ease of measuring some variables rather than others (e.g., arrests associated with enforcement-focused counter-terrorism versus successful cooperation with communities in the course of terrorism prevention). They also noted that the design of metrics could limit innovation and flexibility in designing new prevention efforts. Given the importance of developing new approaches to address terrorism concerns and meeting the needs of very different communities, such an effect could distort programs and unintentionally risk their effectiveness.

### Measuring National Terrorism Prevention Efforts

The ultimate desired outcome of terrorism prevention efforts is clear: fewer, or, ideally, no terrorist attacks. Anchoring measurement and program evaluation to that final outcome is difficult, however, because of the fortunate fact that there have been relatively few individuals radicalized in the United States. For example,

- a recent RAND report, which focused only on individuals who have plotted jihadist terrorist attacks in the United States identified 178 plotters since 9/11, or approximately 11 individuals per year nationwide.
- between 2000 and 2016, the database of radicalized individuals maintained by START included more than 1,000 individuals radicalized across ideologies, for an average of 56 individuals per year nationwide.

---


4 START PIRUS’s dataset for this period is not restricted to individuals who have attempted an attack, resulting in a total number larger than 1,004. Ideologies captured in the data include Islamist (444 individuals), far-right
number of cases in the period was for California, with 102 total or an average of between five and six cases per year.

Although the fact that the incidence rate is relatively low is fortunate, the low rate of incidents over time means that it is difficult to distinguish the effect of a policy from simple variation over time—particularly a policy implemented in one local area rather than across the entire country. The low base rates mean that it is difficult to see effects in most evaluation designs, like pre-post comparisons and even in attempts to track control groups to compare with program participants. This requires stepping back from attempting to measure success with respect to the desired end outcome and instead measuring how an effort affects factors related to the outcome, quantifying the outputs that programs produce, and assessing the process to produce those outputs.

In thinking about measuring the effects of terrorism prevention efforts writ large, it is useful to think from the bottom up—moving from considering the problem of metrics for individual programs or initiatives to the national level. This is the case because terrorism prevention, as reflected in the different lines of effort defined by DHS, potentially includes varied policies and programs. These efforts range from early-stage activities that focus on communication, persuasion, and capacity building (e.g., public education and messaging) to very focused intervention and service-delivery efforts designed to respond to individuals or youth at risk of supporting or committing crime. Because the ways in which programs try to affect the threat of terrorism differ, approaches to measure whether they are succeeding will differ as well. This is often done through logic modeling, where program’s actions and products are related to either desired outcomes or factors related to outcomes. Logic modeling has been applied to terrorism prevention activities with a focus on helping individual programs or initiatives build out measures and metrics to assess their activities.

Programs that address the risk of terrorism and radicalization may be terrorism-specific or may be aimed at broader community issues (e.g., violence prevention, other interventions), which can add complexity to assessment. Even some of the relatively well understood desired intermediate outcomes—like increasing the strength of the far-left (101), and single-issue (91). START, “Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS),” dataset, undated.

5 This measurement and evaluation challenge is not unique to terrorism. For example, programs that seek to reduce suicide have been cautioned not to rely solely on measuring reductions in rates of completed suicides, given their low incidence, particularly for interventions focused on individual communities (World Health Organization, Western Pacific Region, Towards Evidence-Based Suicide Prevention Programmes, Geneva, Switzerland, 2010, p. 12).

6 The early stage of prevention would also include broad efforts aimed at addressing risk factors in communities (e.g., employment, civic engagement) that, while potentially reducing risk (i.e., are terrorism prevention—relevant) are not specific to terrorism prevention and therefore are not included here (see discussion in Levitt, 2017).

7 Helmus et al., 2017.
relationship between communities and government, or increasing willingness to seek out help for someone who may be radicalizing—are very difficult to measure. This challenge is not unique to terrorism prevention: Efforts to measure the effect of community policing have faced these challenges for years and implementers have had to develop measurement strategies in response. However, assessments at the program level are bounded by the population they aim to serve: Although this population could be national or global in scope (e.g., for some countermessaging efforts), it is more likely to be a smaller, local population.

Although bottom-up, project-level measurement is necessary in order to reflect the differences in types of terrorism prevention programs, measurement and metrics at the DHS, federal (e.g., assessing value across a set of federal programs or initiatives), or broader national levels are a different type of challenge. There is some overlap; for example, when the federal government spends money on an initiative at the state and local levels, program-level measurement is needed to assess whether that investment bears fruit. When federal expenditures are devoted to building capacity to implement programs in this area (e.g., an investment to strengthen relationships between NGOs and law enforcement), it is important to measure what the recipients use that capacity to achieve. Indeed, one way to think about assessing federal investment activities is to measure the effects of many individual programs and add them together to produce a measure of the performance of the portfolio. But this approach is limited, and does not fully address the fundamental policy goals that terrorism prevention efforts are trying to achieve.

Assessment at the federal or national level must focus on the overall national capacity for terrorism prevention to reflect the end goals of the policy. In this respect, assessment from the top down is less likely to have clear boundaries and will demand a much wider scope. Thus, the question becomes how to measure whether what is being done in the different facets of terrorism prevention at a given time is achieving risk reduction and other goals. Although this question is related to whether individual programs aimed at this policy issue “are working or not,” it is a bigger question—and the answer is shaped by how state and local terrorism- and nonterrorism-specific programs are being leveraged to address issues related to radicalization and risk of ideological

---


9 OTPP’s current grant evaluation measures include elements focused on capacity building within community organizations. Although an increase in capacity would be an intermediate output of federal investment at the local level, understanding the effect of that investment would require measurement of whether the increase in capacity led to increases in programming and the effect of that programming.

10 OTPP has developed an extensive set of metrics for the current portfolio of grants from the fiscal year (FY) 2016 CVE grant program, which we outline in our discussions of specific terrorism prevention efforts.
violence and whether the activities of different organizations or agencies in or outside of government are reinforcing or interfering with one another. The national-level answer has a geographic component: Although the nature of the threat differs considerably (in amount and type) across the country, available data show that there have been incidents of radicalization in almost every state.\footnote{START, undated.} As a result, assessment from the national level must capture how the capacity to respond to radicalization might vary from place to place. From the top-down perspective, other considerations could shape evaluation and measurement, such as the extent to which efforts in different areas are connected or collaborate to build a more uniform national effort with the potential to share knowledge and innovate.

**Measurement of Terrorism Prevention Options**

In order to measure the effects of interventions and programs across the terrorism prevention lines of effort, a complete assessment at the DHS or national level must address both the bottom-up question of whether specific programs are achieving goals related to terrorism prevention and the top-down question of how programming and activity across the country is “covering” the threat. According to our review of the literature and information provided by DHS (e.g., regarding evaluation planning for awards in the fiscal year [FY] 2016 CVE grant program), more-substantial work has been done regarding the first question than the second. In the following sections, we discuss measures and metrics issues for different classes of terrorism prevention activities. Because this effort is national in scope, and because the focus is on the actions of DHS and other federal actors in particular, we start from the top down and draw on (though we do not fully summarize) program-level insights from the literature on program evaluation as well as insights from related programs and fields (e.g., policing, public health).

**Early-Phase Terrorism Prevention**

Early-stage terrorism prevention efforts primarily focus on messaging and persuasion in an effort to reduce the risk of radicalization before it takes hold. These activities touch on two DHS lines of effort: promoting education and community awareness and countering recruitment and terrorist propaganda. Early-stage efforts include getting messages out to communities and individuals who might radicalize either on their own or under the influence of extremist propaganda (“immunizing” them to radicalization) and figuratively “disinfecting” the environment by taking on messaging and propaganda directly (by seeking its removal or otherwise countering it). As a result, the key outcome questions are:
• Do we have confidence that these activities are having an effect on the threat messaging environment by either shrinking it or reducing its potency?
• Do we have confidence that activities aimed at community education or individual messaging are reducing vulnerability to radicalization?

Ideally, answering the first question would start with a measure of the intensity and scope of the threat messaging environment. Because the main concern is online, this is an issue of characterizing the content space relevant to different facets of violent extremism and the intensity of activity around that content.\textsuperscript{12} Against this backdrop of “the problem to be solved,” we would measure individual programs or the national effort by how much they reduced that threat, either by reducing the prevalence of extremist messages or by neutralizing their potency through countermessaging (e.g., delivering context and educational content to searchers for propaganda). It is important to capture effects on the availability of content and its potency simultaneously: One interviewee during the study put forward the hypothesis that content removal could have a perverse effect for some audiences by making remaining extremist content more compelling (e.g., if takedowns result in similar sites moving to the dark web).

Those who have worked on interventions to remove extremist content—primarily the owners and operators of social media and related information infrastructures—have measured outputs in numbers of sites taken down or user accounts disabled. Whether such activities result in significant displacement is an open question, meaning that assessment of such actions must be broad enough to reflect displacement if it occurs.\textsuperscript{13} Because the goal in reducing the intensity of the message environment is to reduce the potential for domestic radicalization, an alternative way to measure the effects of these interventions is by looking at user interaction with content in areas of concern (e.g., sharing it on public social media) and measuring whether removal of sites or users affects the rate of content diffusion.\textsuperscript{14}

Interventions designed to reduce the potency of or neutralize extremist material (e.g., Jigsaw’s Redirect Method) are more complex to assess, because their effectiveness is driven by the relative persuasiveness of the extremist and contextual content to individual users.\textsuperscript{15} In the online space, reach of the countermessage content and whether

\textsuperscript{12} For example, a website, no matter how extreme or violence-inspiring, would be a small concern if it was never viewed or visited by anyone. Thus, the intensity of activity is an important factor in determining the content space.

\textsuperscript{13} This issue is similar to assessing geographic-based interventions to fight crime (e.g., installing lights or closed-circuit television [CCTV] cameras in public areas), which was hampered by the potential for crime to move to other locations. In this case, the geography involved is virtual.

\textsuperscript{14} Tamar Mitts, “Do Community Engagement Efforts Reduce Extremist Rhetoric on Social Media?” Social Science Research Network, March 24, 2017.

\textsuperscript{15} Jigsaw, \textit{The Redirect Method: A Blueprint for Bypassing Extremism}, undated.
users who encounter it share it are measures of the effort’s outputs. However, analysts, including some interviewed in our work, caution against relying only on such measures since the variable of greatest concern is whether the content affects the people who are exposed to it. Measures of these efforts also must be designed to capture unintended consequences (e.g., whether poor contextualizing content increases the potency of propaganda). In the online space, publicly available data on individuals’ social networks or activities could provide a means to infer effects or determine whether such content links individuals to other sources of information, but methods designed to explore individuals’ views directly (e.g., surveys or focus groups) might be necessary. Measurement that focuses on the program level—for example, examining the effects on only those who “received treatment” from a countermessaging intervention compared with those who did not—is advantageous in terms of detecting effects. However, from the national perspective, capturing how many people received treatment (or could in a scaled-up effort) is necessary as well: The benefit of an intervention on reducing threat is related to both the potency of its effects and the number of people who receive it.

Regarding the second outcome question, whether community education or interaction efforts are effective in immunizing individuals against radicalization has much in common with evaluating the effectiveness of any messaging effort. Process or output measures that describe message transmission (e.g., meetings or trainings held, material distributed, engagement with content) are a starting point, but they do not necessarily reflect whether those messages were received by the audiences or whether they had an effect. Similar challenges have been identified in interventions targeting other types of social problems, where the existing body of knowledge can inform efforts to design tools for measurement (e.g., participant surveys, broader community surveys in areas where programs are implemented). The literature on assessments of interventions designed to counter extremism has captured a range of factors that could be used in survey instruments to measure receptivity to different types of extremist messages.

Assessing the effects of messaging or educational interventions aimed at the broader, national-level requires measurement beyond the participants in a program or the individuals directly affected. Surveys of community views and engagement—which often are used to both inform and evaluate community policing activities or other intervention efforts—try to measure broader population views and perceptions. Analogous surveys could be a component of evaluations of messaging and other early-stage interventions and could be implemented at the federal level, because the data

---

16 Current OTPP draft measures include the presence and reach of alternative messaging.

17 In discussions about the role of metrics in the terrorism prevention policy space, a number of our interviewees cautioned that relying on process and output measures was insufficient, particularly in terms of communicating the value of these initiatives to skeptical funders and external audiences.

18 For example, Helmus, et al., 2017. In the current draft metrics for the OTPP grant program, several of the metrics include both process measures (e.g., numbers of events held or tools developed) and measures of immediate effect (e.g., increased knowledge).
collection involved in such efforts is sufficiently expensive that localities or individual programs cannot afford it.  

### Middle-Phase Terrorism Prevention

This stage of terrorism prevention includes programs designed to intervene with individuals where there is concern about radicalization to violence before those concerns force the criminal justice system to prosecute. This stage captures two distinct types of interventions:

- **pre–criminal justice interventions** are programs that intervene before formal justice system involvement. Law enforcement might be involved, but social services or NGOs might fully manage the intervention. The goal of such programs is to keep individuals out of the criminal justice system.

- **diversion programs** are efforts managed within the criminal justice system that are designed to provide an alternative to prosecuting every individual for whom there is concern that radicalization will lead to violence.

The goals of intervention initiatives are to provide a broader range of options for responding to the risk of radicalization; increase the willingness of citizens and communities to participate (e.g., by referring at-risk individuals), given issues of public–police and broader government distrust; and conserve resources, given the expense associated with criminal justice–only responses.

Those who aim to measure the effects of programs in this space must be cognizant of (and, ideally, develop measurement approaches that are appropriate across) the range of different models for intervention, including law enforcement–centric approaches, public health–driven efforts, emergency preparedness framing of prevention, and community- and non–governmentally driven models.

The key outcome questions in this area are:

- Do we have confidence that an individual at risk of radicalization to violent action will be identified and referred, whether to nongovernment intervention effort, to social services agencies, or to law enforcement?

- Do we have confidence that the intervention programs they are referred to will successfully respond?

To unpack the first question, the issue is essentially the probability of detection of an individual at risk for radicalization to violence. Whatever path an individual takes toward ideological violence, there will be no opportunity to intervene—either supportively or coercively—if no one becomes concerned about their behavior and reaches out.

---

19 For example, although community surveys are viewed as useful for police management, their costs mean that many local law enforcement departments can field them only periodically, if at all.
for help. In a government- or law enforcement–centric prevention model, an intervention would be constrained by the likelihood of government officials becoming aware of the risk on their own. In a broader, multidisciplinary, or community-involved model, the number of individuals or organizations that can augment that detection probability is increased, although only if there is sufficient trust that they are willing to share their concerns. Furthermore, the effective referral of at-risk individuals supports another goal of intervention efforts that was raised by a law enforcement interviewee—selectivity, i.e., the idea that terrorism prevention and intervention activities in particular should be “laser-focused” to avoid stigmatizing entire communities, whether those communities are defined by religion (e.g., Muslim communities) or identity (e.g., communities where white Nationalist extremism is present).

Referrals of at-risk individuals could come from professionals (e.g., school staff, medical or mental health practitioners), members of the community, or even by the individuals themselves via online or telephone helplines. In models that rely primarily on law enforcement and less on public involvement, detection depends on the application of investigative and other techniques. The ideal measure of this effect would be the percentage of radicalized individuals at risk of violence in an area who are identified for assistance, although, based on historical data, the number of individuals of concern in any given area will always be very low. Analyses of past terrorist plots have shown significant levels of public involvement in detecting individuals of concern, along with law enforcement activity at different levels of government.

Multiple interviewees highlighted the willingness of community members to refer at-risk individuals to programs as a key measure at this stage, because such referrals reflect both a high level of trust in intervention efforts and confidence in their performance. The willingness of family members to refer individuals (versus referrals coming from institutions, like schools or medical facilities) was highlighted as a particularly valuable measure. Programs aimed at this stage of intervention also have included communication and education components to encourage referral of individuals in need and teach signs of concern. For such efforts, the fundamental measure of success is whether what is done (e.g., implementation of technology, community education, professional outreach, or initiatives designed to build trust between communities and government) affects the likelihood of referral or—in the absence of cases in

---

20 The effectiveness of online referral transitioning to offline assistance (where more-substantial programming might be delivered) is included in the current OTPP grant measure set.

21 Interviewees for this study made the point that there is a trade-off in detection probability between greater application of some law enforcement techniques (notably, the use of informants and confidential sources) that are of concern to communities and reduced willingness of those communities to collaborate in terrorism prevention efforts (which leads to a reduction in community contributions to detecting at-risk individuals).

many areas—the reported intent to refer in participant or broader community surveys. Community surveys also can capture whether policies affect community trust, which might strengthen or undermine willingness to refer individuals of concern.

With regard to measures to assess the effectiveness of intervention efforts, and particularly, the issue of intervention from the national perspective, the second question above can be broken into three sequential questions: the first and most basic of which is whether there are available intervention programs at all. Interviewees across levels of government and outside it flagged the availability of intervention programs—both outside of the justice system and diversion programs within the system—as extremely limited. Assessing intervention capacity is further complicated by the fact that not all programs that could respond to someone at risk of radicalization to violence necessarily will be labeled as such. Indeed, an area without any specific terrorism prevention programs could have significant capacity to respond to at-risk individuals, given the commonality in the types of interventions needed across a range of social problems—from gang recruitment to interpersonal violence. Multiple interviewees suggested that the tendency to build intervention related to terrorism into other general programs reflected both the low incidence of radicalization (i.e., stand-alone programs would be difficult to justify and sustain) and the fact that addressing terrorism issues in the context of other issues was more acceptable to the public.23

If programs are available, the main difference between intervention inside and outside the justice system is whether participation is voluntary or compulsory. For voluntary programs, the second question is whether individuals (and their families, in the case of juveniles) are willing to participate in and complete programs.24 Participation, like referral behavior, will be affected by trust in the organizations managing the program and opinions of likely success.

The final question, even in cases for which there are programs with willing participants, is whether the programming actually does what it is intended to do. On this issue, there has been substantial analytic effort aimed at identifying different metrics (e.g., from surveying participants about their support for violence to tracking whether they return to criminal or terrorist behavior) that can be applied at the program level. Our interviewees suggested that sustained involvement of participants (e.g., former extremists who have passed through a program and stayed on as counselors) was also

---

23 Communities might create this situation intentionally, even when seeking to address terrorism or extremism risk. For example, in a description of their framework, the City of Boston suggested: “Rather than create a program specifically labeled Countering Violent Extremism, a more effective approach might be to expand the capacity and resources of agencies and organizations to ensure that they are able to enhance the work that they are already doing as well as leverage existing successful programs to help address violent extremism” (U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of Massachusetts, A Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies: Incorporating Violent Extremism into Violence Prevention Efforts, Boston, Mass., February 2015).

24 An interviewee noted that this was an important factor to consider, drawing on the example of European voluntary deradicalization programs.
a measure of effectiveness. The issue of sustainment is also relevant in considering the effects of programs for participants; meaning that the timeline of evaluation matters. In an ideal world, a change in views about violence reflected in a participant’s exit survey from an intervention program would be sustained over the long term (i.e., the participant would be at least as opposed to violence six months or a year in the future). Transient effects would be less valuable, but evaluations must be practical and realistic. One example cited by an interviewee was the potential role of exogenous events: Something that happens six months later might shift the participant’s view in ways the intervention program could not be expected to prevent.25

Interventions outside the criminal justice system in particular must also take into account the reality that there may be law enforcement activity (e.g., arrests to address immediate threat) that are separate from non-coercive intervention efforts. Just as is the case for community policing activities more generally, the need for such enforcement action can complicate efforts to maintain trust and collaborative relationships with community groups. As a result, another goal of initiatives in this space is managing the reality of enforcement actions “interrupting” otherwise sustained alternative intervention efforts. Capturing programmatic resilience to such events should therefore also be a facet of measurement and evaluation, as part of assessment of likely program sustainability.

From the national perspective, however, broader assessment must take geography into account, i.e., the depth of capability to intervene—whether terrorism-specific or not—that is available across the country to address at-risk individuals before they progress to the point where the only option is prosecution and incarceration.26

Late-Phase Terrorism Prevention

While some individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses will spend the rest of their lives in prison, there will be individuals convicted under either federal or state law for offenses related to terrorist activity who will be released after they have completed their sentences. Although separating them from society will address any threat they pose during their period of incarceration, that threat will return if they remain radicalized and violent when they are released. Imprisonment, absent other programming, has been found to be criminogenic for crime in general; if a similar situation exists for individuals incarcerated for either material support or charges related to terrorist activ-

---

25 This specific hypothetical example was used: We would be unlikely to consider a mental health counselor a failure if he cured a patient’s depression for a period of six months, only to have the patient revert to depression after the death of a close friend. However, substituting radicalization for depression might lead to a different assessment.

26 Understanding the full scope of programming in an area is also important for individual evaluation design. E.g., if an area has substantial intervention capability already for general violence prevention, the incremental effect of creating a new terrorism focused intervention program might reasonably be expected to be less than if it was done in an area with no capability of any kind.
ity, then an even more troubling outcome is possible—individuals could leave prison more radicalized than when they entered it. To the extent that individuals who have been radicalized to violence share their views with others during incarceration, others could leave prison posing terrorist threats that they did not when they were initially sentenced. Community corrections (i.e., probation and parole) monitoring and programming is one component to address this post-release threat, but it can serve that function only if sufficient capacity exists and programs are designed to address concerns related to terrorism and extremism.

As a result, the key outcomes questions are:

• Do we have confidence that individuals’ experiences in the criminal justice system will, at the minimum, do no harm (that is, it will not result in individuals being more radicalized or radicalizing others)?
• More fundamentally, do we have confidence that the programming and interventions received by individuals convicted of terrorism-related activities will reduce the chances of their involvement in violence in the future?

Because individuals who have been incarcerated for terrorism-related offenses are a well-defined (and relatively small) group, assessing national efforts in this area is less complex than assessing broader types of interventions. Individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses may be in either the federal or state prison systems because of the legal regimes surrounding domestic activities related to international terrorist organizations versus other motivations. As for pre–justice system interventions, the first question is whether programming intended to address radicalization and the risk of violence exists in correctional institutions or community corrections systems.

In the correctional context, programs might not be voluntary, so participation rates may not be meaningful. However, assessing the success of these programs is similar to measuring the success of other correctional programs, based on the life course and subsequent offending of participants. Although assessing corrections programs that focus on everyday crime is sometimes complex and controversial (e.g., how to define recidivism most appropriately), it does provide a set of approaches and examples for evaluation design. As was the case for earlier stages, prevention efforts in this area must be considered geographically to understand the national-level situation. In this case, however, the relevant geography is the correctional systems managing individuals of concern.

**Conclusions: Measuring What Matters**

Measures and metrics are not ends in themselves: They are developed and implemented to inform decisions. At the program level, assessment helps to justify devoting scarce
resources to a specific activity and to guide implementation and improvement over time. Although there was a time when evaluation effort in this policy area was rare and data to support assessment of program effectiveness were nearly nonexistent, there is now a growing body of literature and ongoing effort at the program level focused on measuring the effects of programs to address violent extremist threats. Evaluation work funded by DHS is examining or has examined programs in the pilot cities, and one component of the ongoing grant management and implementation efforts in OTPP is the development and refinement of metrics and evaluation structures for current grant-funded programs. Researchers in several countries are focused on improving assessment of these programs and have produced toolkits and best practices to help others do the same. In spite of real progress, however, program evaluation is not a solved problem. There is still a need for innovation to make it possible to measure both the intended and unintended outputs and outcomes of efforts to prevent terrorism, and multiple interviewees for this project—often just after flagging ongoing challenges in measuring the effects of specific types of programs—mentioned continuing work on measurement and metric development as a key federal role. An alternative federal role could be to provide broad "measurement infrastructure": in analyses of terrorism prevention efforts in the United Kingdom, analysts could draw on national surveys with questions about the level of trust and confidence in police that could be disaggregated geographically and for different populations, which was beneficial in assessing the effects of the United Kingdom's Prevent strategy.

However, the question at the federal level is national in scope. Although one goal of measurement is to make sure that the portfolio of programs implemented by the government or others through grant mechanisms are producing benefits, the more fundamental question is whether the country has the capabilities in place to respond to individuals at risk of radicalization to violence effectively, efficiently, and rationally. As a result, in our consideration, we explicitly focused on the national perspective. Taking a national view of measurement has a number of advantages, and doing so addresses concerns that have been raised about terrorism prevention in the past. First, the national view addresses a concern raised by multiple interviewees that metrics of success in single programs or parts of the national terrorism prevention effort can be in conflict with other parts of that same effort. The most frequently cited example

---

27 One example is IMPACT Europe, “IMPACT Europe: An Evaluation Toolkit for Professionals Working in the Counter Violent Extremism Field,” undated.

28 For example, the Crime Survey for England and Wales covers both individuals who have been victims of crime and those who have not (Office for National Statistics, “Crime Survey for England and Wales: About the Survey,” webpage, undated). The analogous U.S. survey (the National Crime Victimization Survey) asks questions regarding reporting crimes to police where some responses could be used to assess level of trust, but is limited to individuals who have been victims of crimes (Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Data Collection: National Crime Victimization Survey,” data set, undated). Martin Innes, Colin Roberts, Helen Innes, Trudy Lowe, and Suraj Lakhani, Assessing the Effects of Prevent Policing: A Report to the Association of Chief Police Officers, Cardiff, Wales: Cardiff University, Universities’ Police Science Institute, March 2011.
was the tension between metrics viewed as reflecting successful enforcement action (e.g., arrests, prosecutions, and incarcerations disrupting detected threats) and success in earlier intervention. For a national effort that seeks to use intervention programs to turn individuals away from violence and reduce the need for prosecution, an arrest is a negative rather than a positive indicator—and to the extent that law enforcement manages to maximize arrests rather than more-inclusive measures, the broader terrorism prevention effort may be distorted. Second, measurement of variables like community trust also addresses a concern raised by some skeptics of efforts focused on violent extremism in particular: the risk of measures not capturing unintended consequences.29 This is similar to points that have been made regarding policing more broadly (including by RAND), where regular measurement of factors like levels of community trust in the police can make it possible to have a more complete picture of the effects of different policing tactics and approaches.30

29 For example, see Faiza Patel and Meghan Koushik, Countering Violent Extremism, New York: Brennan Center for Justice, 2017, p. 39.

30 For example, see Brian A. Jackson, Respect and Legitimacy—A Two-Way Street: Strengthening Trust Between Police and the Public in an Era of Increasing Transparency, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, PE-154-RC, 2015.
Appendix C References

Bipartisan Policy Center, National Security Preparedness Group, Preventing Violent Radicalization in America, Washington, D.C., June 2011. As of August 21, 2018:

https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&tid=245


https://www.heritage.org/defense/event/
defending-the-homeland-the-future-us-countering-violent-extremism-policy

IMPACT Europe, “IMPACT Europe: An Evaluation Toolkit for Professionals Working in the Counter Violent Extremism Field,” undated. As of August 21, 2018:
http://www.impact.itti.com.pl/index#/home

Innes, Martin, Colin Roberts, Helen Innes, Trudy Lowe, and Suraj Lakhani, Assessing the Effects of Prevent Policing: A Report to the Association of Chief Police Officers, Cardiff, Wales: Cardiff University, Universities’ Police Science Institute, March 2011. As of May 16, 2018:
PREVENT%20Innes%200311%20Final%20send%202.pdf


Jenkins, Brian Michael, The Origins of America’s Jihadists, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, PE-251-RC, 2017. As of August 21, 2018:
https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE251.html

Jigsaw, The Redirect Method: A Blueprint for Bypassing Extremism, undated. As of August 21, 2018:
https://redirectmethod.org/


National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, “Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS),” dataset, undated. As of August 21, 2018: http://www.start.umd.edu/pirus


START—See National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.


As we describe in the main report, HSOAC carried out a set of analyses to examine levels of spending on CVE activities in other nations as a point of comparison for the United States and break even–type approaches to determine (in the absence of outcome data on CVE or terrorism prevention efforts) “how effective terrorism prevention efforts would have to be” to justify different levels of expenditure. In this appendix, we present additional detail on these analyses.

Cross-National Comparison

HSOAC collected publicly available spending data for other Western democracies for the most-recent years available and calculated average estimates. Our results are shown in Table 9.1 in Chapter Nine of the main report. We determined that the most relevant parameters to use to compare different nations were terrorist attacks experienced (between 2001 and 2016) as a measure of threat and total 2017 population (in millions) as a measure of implementation requirement (Table 9.2 in the main report). Spending data with varying levels of quality were available for Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and France.

We plotted these values to estimate what a comparable value would be for the United States and fit a line to the available points in two ways: (1) forcing the line to a value of zero spending at zero threat or population, and (2) calculating a nonzero value at zero threat or population. The first case is reasonable based on the fact that, with no threat, no terrorism prevention efforts would be needed. The second case makes sense from the perspective that there may be some fixed cost associated with having these activities, irrespective of threat or population level. As a result, we took both values and used them to define the ends of the ranges reported in the text.

The plots for each calculation are shown in Figure D.1, which clearly demonstrates the relatively loose relationships in the data, and the therefore highly approximate nature of these estimates. The top two graphs show the extrapolation based on threat, and the bottom two graphs show the calculation by population. The graphs in the right column illustrate case 1, where spending is forced to zero at zero threat or zero
Figure D.1
National Spending Extrapolations (in millions of U.S. dollars)

Calculating a Nonzero Value at Zero Threat or Population

Spending Forced to Zero at Zero Threat or Population

RAND RR2647-D.1
population, and the left column is case 2. The X shows the point on each graph that corresponds to the level of incidents in the United States (interpolated among the comparison countries) or population (extrapolated far beyond the comparison countries).

Taking the two points from the left and right sets of graphs as defining the ends of a range, the results are between $30 million and $55 million for the United States based on threat and between $343 million and $451 million based on population. As we discuss in the main report, Germany is somewhat of an outlier, and total funding drives the total estimates upward significantly. Without Germany, the ranges are from $23 million to $33 million for the United States based on threat and between $148 million and $212 million based on population.

In the main report, we included the broadest combination of these ranges and rounded to fewer significant digits, from $20 million to $50 million based on threat and $150 million to $450 million based on population.

Terrorism Prevention Break-Even via Criminal Justice Cost Avoidance

In the absence of terrorism prevention capabilities to provide alternatives to traditional law enforcement approaches, intervening with any individual viewed as at risk of committing ideological violence will result in some criminal justice costs. Criminal justice costs would increase to the extent that efforts to improve risk reduction by increasing the number of referrals or reports of suspicious activity are successful—e.g., the referral promotion activities described in Chapter Six of the main report—without putting intervention or other capabilities in place. For a given individual, the costs of a primarily law enforcement approach could range from very abbreviated investigative activity (e.g., following up on the lead), to more-extensive investigation, to prosecution and incarceration. Reasonable estimates of the cost of managing individuals through law enforcement and criminal-justice mechanisms could help to calibrate thinking about spending on noncoercive prevention efforts.

Magnitude Estimates of Different Criminal Justice Costs

For the purposes of this estimate, we divide costs into three categories: investigation, prosecution, and incarceration.

Investigation

Using the FBI as the example (although some analogous, and probably less extensive, process likely exists at state and local law enforcement agencies), investigation of a potential threat breaks down into three sequential processes: assessments, preliminary investigations, and full investigations. We describe each in more detail below.
• **Assessments** are intended to be short initial looks, with some requiring higher-level approval to continue beyond 30 days. More-extensive assessments are possible and can extend for longer periods of time, but are limited in objectives.\(^1\)

• **Preliminary investigations** are predicated investigations that are longer than assessments. They “must be concluded within six months of [their] opening but may be extended for up to six months.”\(^2\)

• **Full investigations** are also predicated investigations, and are not time-limited.\(^3\)

At the time of this writing, the best available information indicates that the FBI carries out large numbers of assessments and investigations focused on the threat of terrorism each year. In 2011, media reports cited a total of approximately 43,000 assessments in a two-year period related to terrorism or foreign intelligence, which led to approximately 2,000 preliminary or full investigations.\(^4\) A 2016 article stated, “In recent years, the F.B.I. has averaged 10,000 assessments annually, and 7,000 to 10,000 preliminary or full investigations involving international terrorism. In addition, the F.B.I. receives tens of thousands of terrorism tips.”\(^5\) FBI testimony on Capitol Hill in September 2017 cited a total of approximately 2,000 open investigations for a “subset” of total open investigations (1,000 focused on individuals connected to international terrorist organizations and 1,000 domestic terrorism investigations); presumably, these numbers refer to full investigations.\(^6\)

In considering how to estimate the costs for different levels of investigation, staff time is likely a central driver, so we used it to anchor rough estimates. Of the methods available, physical surveillance (where up to 35 personnel might be needed to keep one person under 24-hour watch for an extended period of time\(^7\)) is potentially the most expensive and can be used to anchor the upper end of the range. Methods involving database searching, other technical approaches, and more-basic investigations would be less expensive.

---

6. In later press reporting, Director Wray was quoted citing a total of “more than 3,000 open investigations . . . divided about equally among suspected ISIS-directed threats, suspected homegrown violent extremists inspired by global jihadist organizations, and cases of suspected domestic terrorism.” Pete Williams, “FBI Chief on Biggest Threats: China Spies, Terror, Rise in Violent Crime,” *NBC News*, March 21, 2018.
For our rough cost estimates, we simplified to two types of activity: short assessments and longer investigations. Discussions with individuals with experience in law enforcement indicated that there can be extremely wide ranges in the amount of time and effort devoted to specific cases in either category, with additional variability across the country and in different organizations, based on resources available. Some assessments can be wrapped up with a few database searches, but others can take much more staff time to pursue information in the field. Some investigations can be wrapped up in days or weeks, while particularly complex or high-profile cases can extend for years. A single agent can be responsible for multiple full investigations, but may be supported by other agents and support staff. For realistic but conservative midrange estimates, we use

- assessment: 30 labor hours for a single individual, or 3.75 labor days
- investigation: nine-month (270-day) duration, with a 0.25 full-time equivalent from one or more individuals, or 67.5 labor days.

For a labor rate (including both salary and benefits costs), we use $165,000 per year, which corresponds to an average hourly rate of $79.06. This produces corresponding costs of $2,400 for each assessment and $43,000 for each investigation.

For large numbers of assessments (where reported numbers vary from 10,000 to 20,000 per year, but values for reported “tips” are much higher) and investigations, we use a range of total cost estimates for these “pre-incident investigative activities”:

- low: $165 million for 15,000 assessments and 3,000 investigations
- high: $526 million for 40,000 assessments and 10,000 investigations.

In comparison, the FBI’s 2016 enacted budget for Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence was $3,436 million.

---

8 FBI budget documents report a cost of $297.8 million for 1,770 physical surveillance positions (including a mix of agents and other staff) for an average cost per physical surveillance staff member of approximately $165,000 (DOJ, “Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] FY 2017 Budget Request at a Glance,” undated). Because this value averages agent and other staff costs, we use it as a generic personnel cost value. The full cost of an agent (i.e., including both salary and benefits) would be higher, but would be lower for support staff.


10 Efforts that increased the number of referrals to law enforcement would increase these numbers—e.g., in the United Kingdom, in a one-year period bridging 2015–2016, there were more than 7,600 referrals to their reporting tip line of individuals of concern. If that total scaled with population, the proportional figure for the United States would be almost 38,000 people for whom follow up would be required. Home Office, Individuals Referred to and Supported Through the Prevent Programme, April 2015 to March 2016, London: National Archives, Statistical Bulletin 23/17, November 9, 2017.
These estimates do not include the likely higher cost—both for the FBI and for other law enforcement agencies—associated with investigating a completed act of terrorism. Even state and local costs for incident investigation can reach into the millions (based on publicly reported figures associated with supplemental federal grants to reimburse local areas after specific incidents).\textsuperscript{11}

\textit{Prosecution}

In the absence of diversion mechanisms, addressing individuals in the process of radicalizing to violence may require prosecution (e.g., for material support). As a result, there will be costs associated with that justice process.

Using reported data from the U.S. Attorney’s Office, expenditures for Terrorism/Terrorist-Related program activity were $51 million in FY 2016.\textsuperscript{12} In the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s FY 2016 annual statistical report, there were between 272 and 291 defendants for Terrorism/National Security Critical Infrastructure, leading to an average expenditure per defendant of between $175,000 and $188,000.\textsuperscript{13} RAND colleagues made an estimate of variable costs per type of crime for legal expenditures and estimated a national average value of $22,000 to $44,000 for homicide (in 2010 dollars).\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{As a conservative estimate of court system costs associated with a material support—type terrorism case (i.e., not a prosecution for a completed attack), we use the average of approximately $100,000.}

\textit{Incarceration}

We take the material support statute and its enumerated penalties as the basis for our estimate for the length of incarceration:\textsuperscript{15}

Section 2339A convictions carry a sentence of imprisonment for not more than 15 years (for any period of years or for life if death results from commission of the offense) and/or a fine of not more than $250,000 (not more than $500,000 for an organizational defendant). (p. 9)

\\textsuperscript{11} For example, to reimburse overtime expenses associated with the October 1, 2017, mass shooting in Las Vegas, the federal government provided $2 million to state and local departments. Gary Martin, “Feds Will Reimburse Nevada $2M for Las Vegas Shooting Costs,” Las Vegas Review-Journal, June 25, 2018.


Conviction for a violation of Section 2339B is punishable by imprisonment for not more than 20 years (for any period of years or for life if death results from commission of the offense) and/or a fine of not more than $250,000 (not more than $500,000 for an organizational defendant). (p. 20)

Taking 15 years as the upper-end sentence and an average cost per year of incarceration at the federal level of $31,977.65 for FY 2015\textsuperscript{16} would correspond to approximately $33,000 in 2017 costs, so we estimate the cost of incarceration as

- \$495,000 for a 15-year sentence
- \$165,000 for a five-year sentence.

**Post-Release Supervision**
Annual costs associated with the supervision of an offender after release are published by the federal Probation and Pretrial Services component of the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts. In 2017, reported annual costs were

- \$29,280 for supervision in a residential reentry center (“halfway house”)
- \$4,392 for supervision in the community.\textsuperscript{17}

Because conditions for the supervision of released terrorism offenders fall on the high end of supervision intensity, we use the higher number for residential supervision.\textsuperscript{18} Estimating the same length of time for supervision as our two cases of incarceration (which are likely underestimates), the resulting rounded estimated costs would be

- \$440,000 for 15 years of supervision
- \$145,000 for five years of supervision.

**Total Estimates**
For a single individual taken through the process from beginning to end—i.e., from assessment through post-release supervision, the resulting cost estimates would be

- \$1,080,400 (rounded to \$1,000,000) for a 15-year sentence and period of supervision
- \$455,400 (rounded to \$450,000) for a five-year sentence and period of supervision.


\textsuperscript{17} U.S. Courts, “Incarceration Costs Significantly More than Supervision,” webpage, August 17, 2017.

\textsuperscript{18} Interview with federal representative, 2018.
However, as described above, law enforcement carries out a much larger number of assessments and investigations than result in arrests and incarceration of individuals on terrorism-related charges. As a result, if terrorism prevention effort benefits for law enforcement were proportional to the different numbers of activities at each stage—i.e., if they avoided the need for multiple assessments or investigations in addition to avoiding the arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of a smaller number of individuals—then their value would be much greater.

In the main report, we explored this idea by assuming that every arrest had an associated number of investigations and assessments proportional to the totals for each effort that have been publicly reported. We used an average estimate of 150 arrests using both reported recent-year numbers and past-year data from the PIRUS dataset and rounded totals from public sources for ongoing full investigations (approximately 2,500), preliminary investigations (approximately 5,000), and assessments (approximately 10,000). Because we simplified the numbers in our estimates above and did not distinguish between preliminary and full investigations, we add these numbers together. This produced a ratio of arrests to investigations to assessments of 150 to 7,500 to 10,000, or 1 to 50 to 67.

The idea was to consider the case where terrorism prevention essentially “carved off slices” of the total required counterterrorism effort, where each “slice” was made up of one case from investigation and arrest to post-release supervision plus 50 investigations plus 67 preliminary assessments. The cost savings for each slice would therefore be the sum of the numbers from the previous section with the cost of the larger number of earlier-stage activities. The resulting calculated costs are:

- For a long incarceration (15 years), costs would be
  $1,080,400 for one case from investigation through arrest to supervision +
  $43,000 × 50 per investigation +
  $2,400 × 67 per assessment =
  a rounded total of $3,390,000 “per-unit proportional cost reduction.”

- For a short incarceration (five years), costs would be
  $455,400 for one case from investigation through arrest to supervision +
  $43,000 × 50 per investigation +
  $2,400 × 67 per assessment =
  a rounded total of $2,770,000 “per-unit proportional cost reduction.”

Figure 9.4 in Chapter Nine of the main text shows the resulting cost reductions of carving off successive slices of criminal justice activity as a result of effective terrorism prevention programming.
Appendix D References

DOJ—See U.S. Department of Justice.


FBI—See Federal Bureau of Investigation.


