

TERRITORIAL COLLECTIVITIES AND THE PREVENTION OF RADICALISATION

Senate Delegation to Local Authorities and Decentralization

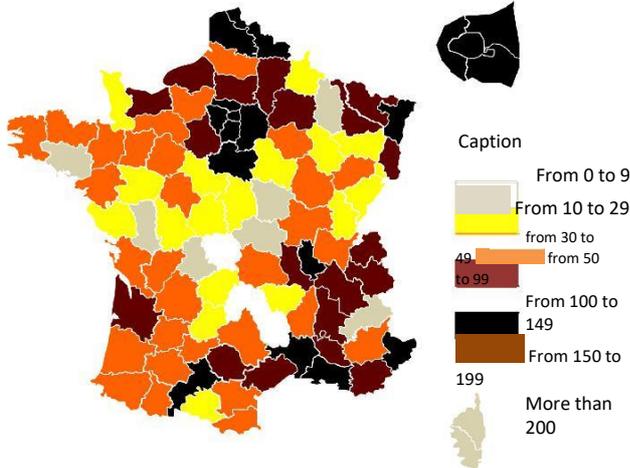
Information report

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THE TERRITORIAL COLLECTIVITIES, ESSENTIAL ACTORS IN THE PREVENTION OF RADICALISATION

The entire territory is affected

In total 17,393 individuals were registered in the Terrorist Radicalisation Prevention Reporting File (FSPRT) on March 1, 2017.



Total distribution of report forms since April 29, 2014. Source: Coordination of Counter-Terrorism Unit (UCLAT)

The national consultation of local elected representatives, organized by the rapporteurs, showed that the most frequently identified concrete elements of radicalisation were environmental breakdown behaviour, particularly with regard to schools or families, (women, elected officials, etc.) and with regard to republican institutions.

Radicalisation, a concept to be clarified

The consultation also showed that **60% of the elected respondents felt that they did not have all the information needed to understand the phenomenon of radicalisation.**

In order to overcome this lack of information, the

first part of the report attempts to clarify the concept of radicalisation by analyzing the links it maintains with violent radicalisation and, on the other hand, with Islamic radicalisation, as well as examining the different explanations of this phenomenon and the mechanisms involved. It shows that the challenge is twofold for the communities: to contribute to the prevention of violent radicalisation, admittedly, but also to fight against a « *communautarisme*¹ » hostile to the Republic which constitutes the breeding ground.

The territorial collectivities are on the front line

The territorial collectivities (hereafter collectivities), and in particular the municipalities, are directly confronted with the pressure of a sometimes exacerbated « *communautarisme* ». They may have to respond to requests for adjustments to schedules or the usage of public services (receptions, swimming pools, etc.). They may also face a desire to control certain social structures (e.g. youth and culture centres, sports and educational associations, etc.). This behaviour implies a tendency to call into question the social pact and may be associated with a drift toward radicalisation.

The collectivities must get involved in the prevention of radicalisation

Initially concentrated in the hands of the prefect, the prevention of radicalisation must now be implemented in the continuity of the "co-production of security" policies, in which the collectivities have acquired solid experience, thanks in particular to local security contracts and local security and crime prevention committees (CLSPD) set up in the 1990s.

¹ The French term « *communautarisme* » refers to the tendency for minority communities to dissociate themselves from the wider society.

These authorities have established a solid relationship of trust and information sharing between the actors concerned (prefects, local elected representatives, police, justice, schools, associations, etc.). This partnership has resulted in a flexible and adaptable system adapted to the needs of the field.

Within this partnership framework, local and regional authorities have the opportunity to mobilize a number of effective tools.

The **municipalities** are involved, for example in the process of learning to "live together", by developing cultural or sports activities, based on communal social action centres, etc.

The **departments** are also concerned because of their competence in the areas of solidarity: child welfare, and maternal and child protection. They are fully associated with the detection of weak radicalisation signals, but are also present in the process of accompanying families, and sometimes radicalised people, in partnership with the departmental follow-up unit under the auspices of the prefect.

The regions can act through their competence in ongoing vocational training and work-linked training. The integration of young people in difficulty plays an important role in this area.

WHAT TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF RADICALISATION?

The involvement of local and regional authorities in the prevention of radicalisation is recent. However, they benefit from the experience gained during twenty years of partnership with the State in the related field of crime prevention.

It is against this dynamic backdrop that the rapporteurs of the delegation to local and regional authorities have identified a large number of good practices, which they wish to bring to the attention of local elected representatives.

Examples of good practices

- in **Sarcelles**, a three-prong approach « raising awareness-informing-training » is at the heart of a comprehensive prevention program. The city wants to set up a centre of competences of national dimension;

- in **Colmar**, a program for the care of persons drifting into radicalisation and intended for persons who have committed a criminal offense, has been set up under the impetus of the public prosecutor's office as an alternative to prosecution or in the event of prosecution;

- in **Chalon-sur-Saône**, a municipal exchange cell on radicalisation has recently become operational. It aims to participate in the detection of weak signals;

- in **Vilvoorde, Belgium**, a local anti-radicalisation administrative structure has been created and follows about 130 young people;

- the **department of Alpes-Maritimes** has set up an program for the secondary schools of the department, with film screenings followed by debates based on a pedagogical kit;

- the **department of Val-de-Marne** works since 2015 on the evaluation of reported juveniles, notably from the Orly airport area.

More generally, **the commitment of the departments to the care of children returning from combat zones is an essential issue;**

- the **city of Orléans** has put in place an individualized follow-up program for radicalised young people. In addition, parents can benefit from a support group allowing them to share their concerns and realise that they are not alone;

- **Strasbourg**, the first city to designate a deputy in charge of the prevention of radicalisation, has drawn up a five-axis plan, including the setting up of multidisciplinary territorial networks, enabling all the players in a neighbourhood to discuss and cross-reference their information on a young person's school, social, sporting or emotional disengagement;

- the **departmental council of the Ardennes** has put in place an internal procedure to better prepare the examination of people's files by the departmental cell. It is a question of centralizing, in the same file, all the information available to the various services of the department.

Local initiatives generally include three main types of action:

- **Awareness raising and training of local agents and community partners;**
- **Detection of weak signals and identification of individuals concerned ;**
- **Supervising persons under watch.**

There is an urgent need to conduct a national evaluation of local initiatives and to start a reflection on how to disseminate those which appear to be the most promising. The existence of an evaluation component of local actions could be a criterion for the allocation of an Inter-ministerial Fund for Crime Prevention (FIPD) grant.

The area of prevention

Communities have a role to play in ensuring primary prevention, aimed at influencing many socio-economic factors (education, employment, housing, leisure, etc.), which can be decisive. In this field, measures to prevent radicalisation would benefit from those which relate to the prevention of delinquency, insofar as they are largely congruent.

As in the case of the city of Vilvoorde, local authorities can also put in place elements of secondary prevention, aimed at groups or populations with a particular risk of radicalisation and those in the process of radicalisation.

Finally, in a specific framework and in partnership with the State authorities, local authorities may take part in programs of **tertiary prevention** intended for persons already radicalised and/or having committed violent acts, whose prime contractor is the judicial authority. For example, the community can provide space, funding, opportunities for on-the-job training, etc.

THE NEED FOR A CLEAR DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROLES AND OF A REINFORCED PARTNERSHIP

The prerequisite for the State-community partnership to work satisfactorily is the existence of a close and lasting relationship of trust between the various actors.

The basis of this trust itself depends on the clarity of the respective fields of competence and the balance in the relationship between the territorial communities and the State.

Distinguishing three levels in the prevention of crime

- **the national impetus:** this is the role of the Ministry of the Interior (Home Office), which manages, in particular *via* the Anti-Terrorist Coordination Unit (UCLAT), the national alert platform, as well as the General Secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalisation (SG-ICPDR);
- **the decentralised element:** the prefect is the pivotal point of prevention at the departmental level, by means of detection/support cells. Local and regional authorities must be associated with these cells, in particular with regard to the care and monitoring (social and psychological) of the less radicalised individuals;
- **the local element:** the mayor, actor at the grassroots level, responsible for the animation of the crime prevention policy, is also, in this capacity, in charge of the local prevention of radicalisation. **The mobilization of the local and inter-municipal councils on the issue of preventing delinquency provides an opportunity to reinvigorate and adapt them.**

The question of inter-municipality

The prevention of radicalisation is probably an area in which the inter-municipalities have a privileged role to play in order to:

- Allow the mayor and municipal teams to keep a certain distance from problems that can be very sensitive;
- Pool the available resources;
- Take account of the fact that radicalisation often goes beyond the municipal framework;
- Respond to the difficulty for the prefects to associate an excessive number of communes with the monitoring cell.

Reinforcing the sharing of information

The effort to inform elected officials must be strengthened: the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalisation (SG-CIPDR) has made a major effort to inform elected officials, but much remains to be done, as the results of the national consultation of local elected representatives show.

In particular, the State must ensure reciprocity in the exchange of the information necessary for the performance of the tasks of the collectivities: elected officials often regret that the flow of information is one-way towards the State. In particular, three needs of local elected representatives must be met:

1) Facilitate the assessment of the overall situation of radicalisation in their territory;

2) Facilitate the prevention of risk situations in their areas of responsibility, which in particular involves securing local recruitment, but this does not require the communication of 'S cards'. In this respect, the report identifies several levels of responses:

- 1st response - the automated national judicial database of perpetrators of terrorist acts (FIJAIT), which is little known as yet, is accessible to the mayors via the prefectures. It does not, however, fully meet their needs, because it contains only the names of individuals who have been convicted of a criminal offense and does not cover all offenses related to terrorism;

- 2nd response: **to capitalize on the achievements, with regard to the sharing of nominative information in the field of crime prevention ;**

- a perspective: **to go beyond the FIJAIT and to initiate a reflection on the screening of profiles for the benefit of the local authorities, so as to enable them, when recruiting, to request an opinion from the prefectural administration;**

3) Transmit the information needed in a timely manner to manage the local emotion. The mayors are indeed on the front line when a troubling event worries or shocks the population.



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Supporting communities in practice in the field

1) The State must accompany the territorial collectivities in the face of the pressure of « *communautarisme* »: the elected official, if confronted with difficulties of this type, must rapidly contact the services of the State which must give their full support to face the pressure or rectify a situation already in jeopardy.

2) The State must carry out its duties properly, particularly with regard to the often insufficient control of compulsory school attendance and the operation of private educational institutions.

3) The financing of radicalisation measures: the amounts allocated to the fight against radicalisation have increased sharply, reaching 47.5 million euros in 2017. However, the increase in appropriations devoted to the prevention of radicalisation proper is not commensurate with that of the appropriations devoted to the fight against terrorism and radicalisation in general. The Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalisation (CIPDR) now wishes to concentrate the funds of the Interdepartmental Fund for the Prevention of Crime (FIPD) on actions at the intersection of the prevention of delinquency and radicalisation. An evaluation of this new approach will be required.

In addition, the Interdepartmental Fund for the Prevention of Crime (FIPD) is a '*seed fund*'. The community then finds itself **alone financially to continue its actions in the longer term.** It is also important to ensure the co-financing of anti-radicalisation actions by the FIPD, at minimum in the medium term, in order to enable local authorities to carry out their activities in a context marked by severe budgetary constraints.

The delegation's proposals are aimed at facilitating the effective mobilization of the above-mentioned opportunities and thus enabling local and regional authorities to play their full role in the prevention of radicalisation.