



Deradicalisation and Integration: Legal and Policy Framework

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Glossary and List of Abbreviations

Law Decree (art. 77 Cost.): A law decree is an act having force of law and an act of primary legislation. According to art. 77 of the Italian Constitution “The Government may not, without an enabling act from the Houses, issue a decree having force of law. When the Government, in case of necessity and urgency, adopts under its own responsibility a temporary measure, it shall introduce such measure to Parliament for transposition into law. During dissolution, Parliament shall be convened within five days of such introduction. 20 Such a measure shall lose effect from the beginning if it is not transposed into law by Parliament within sixty days of its publication. Parliament may regulate the legal relations arisen from the rejected measure.”

Legislative Decree (art. 76 Cost.): A legislative decree is an act with the force of law issued by the government and, following the exception to the general rule established by art. 70 of the Constitution, it shall be compliant with all the limits provided by the parliamentary delegation.

Corte Cost.: Constitutional Court

Sent.: Judgement

L.: Law

D. Lgs.: Legislative Decree

D.L.: Law Decree

Ddl: Draft Bill

Cost.: Constitution

Art.: Article

Arts.: Articles

Cass.: Court of Cassation

CVE: Countering Violent Extremism

RAN: Radicalisation Awareness Network

About the Project

D.Rad is a comparative study of radicalisation and polarisation in Europe and beyond. It aims to identify the actors, networks, and wider social contexts driving radicalisation, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. D.Rad conceptualises this through the I-GAP spectrum (injustice-grievance-alienation-polarisation) with the goal of moving towards measurable evaluations of de-radicalisation programmes. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalisation, which include a sense of being victimised; a sense of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures; and coming under the influence of “us vs them” identity formulations.

D.Rad benefits from an exceptional breadth of backgrounds. The project spans national contexts including the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, Austria, and several minority nationalisms. It bridges academic disciplines ranging from political science and cultural studies to social psychology and artificial intelligence. Dissemination methods include D.Rad labs, D.Rad hubs, policy papers, academic workshops, visual outputs and digital galleries. As such, D.Rad establishes a rigorous foundation to test practical interventions geared to prevention, inclusion and de-radicalisation.

With the possibility of capturing the trajectories of seventeen nations and several minority nations, the project will provide a unique evidence base for the comparative analysis of law and policy as nation states adapt to new security challenges. The process of mapping these varieties and their link to national contexts will be crucial in uncovering strengths and weaknesses in existing interventions. Furthermore, D.Rad accounts for the problem that processes of radicalisation often occur in circumstances that escape the control and scrutiny of traditional national frameworks of justice. The participation of AI professionals in modelling, analysing and devising solutions to online radicalisation will be central to the project's aims.

Executive summary

The report aims to investigate the Italian framework on radicalisation and assess responses towards the phenomenon at the formal institutional level and in praxis.

Italy does not devote any specific legislation to (de)radicalisation, instead relying on its counterterrorism agenda and provisions. This approach has led to a repression-oriented response rather than a structured preventive system. Similarly, no policies exist that address extremism or radicalisation through national and governmental plans. Thus, the institutional actors that deal with the phenomenon are the same as those involved in the counterterrorism network. Moreover, the decentralised structure of the state fosters asymmetries vis-à-vis responses and strategies at the subnational and local levels.

Due to the case-by-case action carried out and the fragmented picture on the topic, a substantive role is played by the courts on the one hand and non-institutional actors on the other.

Italy should rethink its whole approach, especially with regard to the need for a general and uniform legal framework, policies and practices.

1. Introduction

The concept of extremism, as well as the notion of terrorism itself, have undergone massive transformations in the last 20 years, both linked to global events and local dynamics. Despite the increasing concern surrounding the issue, clearly expressed at an international and supranational level, as yet Italy lacks a solid agenda on the topic.

As far as the constitutional framework is concerned, several principles are related to the field of radicalisation, that is to say, all the principles protecting fundamental rights as well as those promoting formal and substantive equality. At the legislative level, on the other hand, there is a draft bill – which has never been approved or enacted, however – providing detailed and comprehensive regulations on the main issues related to radicalisation(s). Currently, amendments to criminal law on terrorist associations and organised activities dating back to 1970s constitute the core of the Italian repressive response to the matter. At case law level – with some exceptions – the courts have not been so “creative” as to provide guiding principles to overcome the structural shortcomings. Nevertheless, on some occasions the courts’ activism has proven to be essential and decisive.

Thus, strategies have been fragmented. Neither the theoretical framework and nor the “tools” address the topic in a concrete and effective way, mostly leaving the management of the phenomenon to the final phase of repression and punishment. This is confirmed on one hand by the generally repressive legislation and on the other by the (unofficial) practices developed in prison settings. These focus on specific aspects and depend on each penitentiary environment, and privilege a case-by-case approach rather than a structured system. Additionally, contributions at the regional and sub-national levels appear asymmetrical throughout Italy. Furthermore, more consideration and focused attention are given to violent actions in a jihadist¹ milieu in comparison with other typologies of extremism. This is also confirmed by the concern over guaranteeing freedom of religion and maintaining a firm control over proselytism, which became the privileged lenses for de-radicalisation strategies.

At the same time, other forms of extremism – currently underestimated, but historically significant – have forcefully re-emerged, progressively strengthening their public profile, through polarisation of the political debate and the creation of attractive ideologies, addressing specific targets and sources of grievance. Nonetheless, extremisms in general seem to catalyse new attention and greater awareness, both at the institutional and civil society level.

In the following sections of this report, the socio-economic, political and cultural contexts will be assessed (Sec. 2), as well as the constitutional principles concerning (de)radicalisation in a broader sense and the legislative framework on the topic (Sec. 3). Moreover, the report will provide an overview of the policies and the institutional actors involved in counteractions (Sec. 5). Additionally, two case studies will be analysed in order to highlight programmes or practices that are worthy of

¹ Throughout the report, we assume “jihadism” as a biased term. However, we will nonetheless rely on this concept owing to its appropriation by violent groups, as well as its huge shared meaning among scholars, experts, and institutions. On the point, see Sedgwick, M. (2015) “Jihadism, Narrow and Wide: The Dangers of Loose Use of an Important Term”, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 9, no. 2. In addition, see the clear and valuable picture proposed by Manduchi, P. and Melis N. (eds) (2020) *Ġihād: definizioni e riletture di un termine abusato*, Milan: Mondadori. However, radical Islamists seem to have voluntarily “adopted the stigma” as a counter-discourse in order to nurture the myth of the clash. On the reversed stigma, see, in general, Göle, N. (2003) “The Voluntary Adoption of Islamic Stigma Symbols”, *Social Research*, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 809–828. Similar considerations can be made about the term “Islamism”.

dissemination (Sec. 6). As will be pointed out in the conclusive remarks (Sec. 7), Italy should rethink its whole approach, through focused legislative and regulatory interventions, since the issue is not duly taken into real consideration, especially concerning the need for general and uniform practices which are able to guide, if not yet to standardise, an efficient system of prevention.

Finally, four annexes are provided on the legal and policy framework (no. I), institutional actors (no. II), best practices and policy recommendations (nos. III and IV).

2. The socio-economic, political, and cultural context

Italy has a history of extremism, political violence, and terrorist organisations with diverse ideologies and methodologies, as well as local separatist or independentist movements and groups. It is by no means easy to build a static picture of extremisms in Italy since it is shaped by a complex net of actors and immense dynamism, depending on the historical and political circumstances. Thus, the meanings, definitions, and physiognomy of concepts and categories have changed considerably over time and the Italian legal system has ended up dealing with the different phenomena according to contingencies, as we will see in the following sections of this report.

Since WW2, Italian history has experienced three main strands and patterns of radicalism. The political strand concerns right wing, leftist, and anarchist terrorism; the others relate to independentist movements and radical ecologism.

At the end of the 1950s, Italy was in the midst of intense reconstruction activity, which however failed to tackle unresolved problems such as unemployment and the North-South divide. Henceforth, a long succession of tensions occurred, which heightened between 1968 and 1970. The 1960s to 80s were a crucial moment in Italian history, corresponding to the serious political violence of the well-known Anni di Piombo (Years of Lead). A vivid event in the Italian collective memory is the so-called Piazza Fontana massacre at the end of 1969, in Milan. Several previous minor attacks had been recorded throughout Italy, most of which were attributed to right-wing extremism. Revolutionary leftist groups – for instance the well-known *Brigate Rosse* (BR – Red Brigades) – were born as well, which aimed to strike the bourgeois system through political violence. At the end of the 1990s, there was a new resurgence in political terrorism, which then reappeared sporadically until the early 2000s.

The history of anarchist movements in Italy is quite complex too. We cannot recall the whole development here, but their activity was certainly intense from the 1990s to the end of the 2000s. Many of the attacks were claimed by the *Federazione Anarchica Italiana* (FAI – the Informal Anarchist Federation). An anarchist organisation from the “anonymous” network known as *Solidarietà Internazionale* (International Solidarity) had a leading role in a series of incidents from 1998 to 2000 in the city of Milan.

In addition to political terrorism, the escalation of terrorist attacks linked to criminal organisations such as the Mafia, Camorra, Cosa Nostra, and 'Ndrangheta is sadly an all too well-known part of Italian history. While it is quite a dissimilar phenomenon which requires different investigation, its relevance in the political framework has nevertheless to some extent affected contemporary Italian approaches to countering radicalism, leading to their mainly repressive pattern.

Separatist and independentist claims, varying greatly in their extremist or radical vocation, as well as recently emerging polarisations, are other elements partially linked to social or political transformations within Italian society which deserve attention. As far as the first point is concerned,

throughout Italy, there have been various regional and local movements, with a more or less strong political pattern. A well-known case is that of South Tyrol, whose struggles against the “central” national state, involving the deep-rooted issue of a linguistic minority as well as claims related to particularism and the critique of indiscriminate assimilationism, date back to the 1950s. Similar situations have been seen in Sardinia and Sicily, which suffer from a profound social and economic cleavage from the rest of the peninsula, not just owing to their “physical” and geographical distance from the mainland. This particular element has also become a leading theme in a sort of particularism in reverse, since many northern regions on the contrary perceive the difference between an efficient, industrious, productive, and dynamic North and a lazy, “parasitic”, disadvantaged, and static South, as systemic and irremediable. This stereotypical “us vs them” dichotomy is still far from being overcome, and has indeed become a leitmotif in both some political movements and political party propaganda. The case of Lega Nord is probably the most eminent (and popular) one. This party abundantly spread this rhetoric in its early agenda, with the secessionist goal to set the North free from the other regions’ deficiencies. Obviously, this was not really attainable, whereas a sort of “financial autonomy” could have been. Later, the Lega party abandoned its harsh tones against the system and the South to become one of the most important parties in Italy. Notwithstanding its inclusion in the “establishment”, its propaganda has endured strengthening polarisation narratives vis-à-vis European policies and the increasing presence of Muslim communities in Italy. More recently, it has adopted a strong political campaign against migrants.

As far as radical ecologism is concerned, this report must include the case of the NO-TAV movement in Val di Susa. It was established in the early 1990s to fight against the realisation of a high-speed railway line between Turin and Lyon (TAV) during the same period. It is still very active on the issues of territorial particularism and environmental protection, conceiving the TAV project to be an environmental aberration. Its methods do not gather unanimous consent, since some observers deem the movement to embody a form of eco-extremism, whereas, according to others, they are legitimate in challenging the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources and the landscape for economic and “capitalistic” interests and purposes.

Notwithstanding the portrayed picture, in the recent period, the topic that has produced the most macroscopic polarisation and a very animated dispute within Italian society is forced migrations, despite Italy’s own history of emigration. Additionally, multicultural dynamics differ across the national territory and exchanges with Islam are certainly a core issue, since Islamophobic narratives are not uncommon. Furthermore, a certain tendency to nostalgically hark back to the fascist experience has always been quite visible in far-right milieus. However, there is no doubt that in the last few years, their claims have become more evident and concrete in the public space too: they are starting to play a substantive role in the political forum, though not yet an “institutionalised” one. In actual fact, the increasing narratives on the defence of national sovereignty, identity, and borders are prompted by rather different sources, from the harsh economic crisis to racist public discourse. In the present situation, all of these factors are being used as leverage to further entrench the already severe social fractures via discriminatory and “separatist” propaganda.

Among these social cleavages, urban and peri-urban contexts are almost totally neglected, but according to the interviewed experts, situations of marginality exacerbate resentment and grievance. The low percentage of violent “events” in Italy has been conventionally linked to the absence of situations comparable to the French *banlieues*, places which recall situations of marginalisation and alienation in the collective imaginary. However, in the experts’ opinion, this social immobility is going through major changes in the Italian case, since dynamics of conflict and grievance are increasingly evident in urban contexts such as Porta Palazzo in Turin or San Siro in Milan, which have demonstrated similar traits to the abovementioned French experiences. Additionally, San Siro has

always recorded a strong “Islamist” presence and the first counteractions against jihadism in Italy took place in that neighbourhood. Recently, the case of 200 teenagers shooting a video clip for a song – in San Siro and during the Covid lockdown – came to light since it sparked urban guerrilla warfare with the police.² As critically explained by the interviewed experts, the event did not necessarily involve religious, cultural, or ethnic minorities. According to one of the interviewees, indeed, it was quite a paradigmatic event, the embryonic phase of a potentially extremist dynamic with nothing “Islamic” about it. Instead, the participants could potentially become part of very well-known roll-back phenomena which embrace extreme ways of claiming and expressing grievances. Contrary to the “lumpen-Islamism” narrative (Roy, 1992), in Italy these topics have become the very core of populist movements and alt-right discourses, gaining centrality in their propaganda, as well as in their agendas. These trends have a massive effect in heightening social and cultural conflicts, and narratives which foster polarisation among the “subalterns” themselves, through an “us and them” rhetoric against foreigners, minorities, and under-represented or targeted groups

On the same premises, we can highlight the underrating of current political phenomena, such as nationalist extremism and white supremacist groups – often linked to the alt-right milieu as well – which are not addressed as “urgencies”, but only as mere distortions or a degeneration of the Italian political discourse in a general sense. In addition, strengthened and fostered by the social media, the public debate on equal fundamental and civil rights is strongly polarised. What is more, there is increasing hate speech based on discrimination on the grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation. In a quite paradigmatic way, the current ongoing Italian political quarrel about the enactment of specific provisions to protect targeted groups (LGBTQI+ and disabled people) from verbal and physical abuse (so-called ddl Zan)³ has not gathered unanimous consent, leading to divisions and further polarisation, also at the political party level.

3. The constitutional organisation of the state and constitutional principles in the field of (de-)radicalisation

The Italian Constitution was issued in 1948, in the aftermath of the fall of the fascist regime, the end of the monarchy, and the establishment of the Italian Republic. It was shaped by ideological compromises between the liberal, social-communist, and Catholic cultures that characterise the whole Italian system.

The Italian form of government is a typical parliamentary system. The government is appointed by the President of the Republic and must gain the confidence of the Parliament (art. 94). The President of the Republic is the head of state. This figure represents national unity (art. 87), embodies balance, and guarantees the constitutional framework as a whole. Powers are separated and the judiciary is independent (Title IV Cost.).

Article 1 to article 12 of the Constitution declare fundamental principles, some of which closely affecting the research topic. The core values of the Constitution are embedded in article 2 in conjunction with article 3: the inviolability of fundamental rights and the provision of solidaristic duties

² <https://www.today.it/cronaca/scontri-polizia-milano-video-rapper-neima-ezza.html>.

³ Amendments to arts. 604-bis and 604-ter of the Criminal Code on violence or discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, sexual or gender identity”, C. 569, <https://documenti.camera.it/leg18/pdl/pdf/leg.18.pdl.camera.569.18PDL0012340.pdf>.

(art. 2), in addition to the principle of formal and substantial equality. Italian citizens – actually implying “everyone”, as the Constitutional Court⁴ ruled – are endowed with equal dignity without discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, or personal or social conditions. Furthermore, the state is held to promote “reverse-discriminations” so that every person may achieve the fullest development and effective participation in the political, economic, and social life.

Article 5 declares the republic to be as one, while still recognising and promoting regions and local (also cultural) identities, through the principles of autonomy and decentralisation. These are also taken up in detail in Title no. V of the Constitution.

Due to several constitutional reforms, legislative authority is *equally* attributed to both the state and the regions in compliance with the constitutional provisions and the constraints deriving from EU legislation and international obligations (art. 117.1). The interactions between regions and all local divisions with respect to the central state should be fair and coordinated, taking into account the overlapping and transversal powers they are vested with (art. 117.2), especially as far as integration processes are concerned. In addition, according to article 116, some regions present specific features⁵ and are entitled to greater autonomy. In addition, the Constitution promotes and protects all linguistic minorities⁶ living in the national territory (art. 6).

As far as freedom of religion is concerned, Italy is a secular state:⁷ article 19 declares that everyone, either alone or in communities, be recognised the right to express his/her belief privately or in public, unless it may offend the common morality. As is well known, though, for historical, cultural, and merely “geographical” reasons, the Catholic Church has always had a privileged role in the relationship with the Italian state. This different interaction is also enshrined at the constitutional level among the fundamental principles in article 7, which declares the mutual independence and sovereignty of the state and the Church regarding their governmental affairs. Nonetheless, article 8 of the Constitution declares that all religions are equally free before the law and that they have the right to set out their interests accordingly, as long as they are compliant with the Italian legal system. Their relationship with the state is regulated by law through specific agreements sealed with each representative of the single faith. Their “institutionalisation”, therefore, depends on an official procedure, but few of them have stipulated any kind of agreement.⁸ The case of the Islamic communities is quite well known. Notwithstanding their huge presence in Italy, the mechanism based on single-voiced interlocutors raises more than one issue, also enhancing “fierce competition among traditions that coexist within a very tight space” (Silvestri, 2010). In particular, the question is how

⁴ Corte Cost. sent. no. 120/67 and no. 104/1969.

⁵ Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige / Südtirol, and Valle d'Aosta / Vallée d'Aoste present particular forms and conditions of autonomy, according to the respective special statutes adopted by constitutional law.

⁶ Currently, there are twelve languages specifically recognised by the state in L. no. 482/1999 (Law on the protection of historical linguistic minorities) and L. no. 38/2001 (Law for the protection of the Slovenian linguistic minority in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region). Indeed, art. 6 of the Italian Constitution protects them as linguistic minorities, but it should be intended in conjunction with art. 9, protecting the historical heritage of the nation in a broader sense, a formula which also encompasses its linguistic specificities. In addition, the aforementioned laws aim to protect linguistic and cultural identity. The linguistic minorities are also protected by criminal law, via art. 23 L. no. 38/2001 and art. 18 bis L. no. 482/99.

⁷ See also Corte Cost. sent. no. 203/1989.

⁸ At the moment, agreements are in force with: Waldensian Table (L. no. 449/1984, amended several times, in 1993 and by L. no. 68/2009); Assemblies of God in Italy – ADI (L. no. 517/1988); Union of Seventh-day Adventist Christian Churches (L. no. 516/1988, amended in 1996 and by L. no. 67/2009); Union of Jewish Communities in Italy – UCEI (L. no. 101/1989, amended in 1996 with L. no. 638); Christian Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy – UCEBI (L. no. 116/1995, L. no. 34/12); Lutheran Evangelical Church in Italy – CELI (L. no. 520/1995); Sacred Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy and Exarchate for Southern Europe (L. no. 126/12); Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints-Mormons (L. no. 127/12); Apostolic Church in Italy (L. no. 128/12); Italian Buddhist Union – UBI (L. no. 245/12); Italian Hindu Union (L. no. 246/12); Italian Buddhist Institute Soka Gakkai – IBISG (L. no.130/2016).

Islam, acephalous by definition and without a dogmatic tradition or hierarchies, at least for Sunni Islam, should – or can – be represented, and by whom.

Personal liberty is inviolable (art. 13). It can only be restricted in two specific circumstances, that is, in the event of a motivated act of the judicial authority and only in cases and ways provided for by the law. Accordingly, any physical and moral violence is prohibited. The right to privacy is (indirectly) enshrined in articles 14 and 15, whereas the following article protects freedom of circulation.

The freedom of assembly and association is undoubtedly involved in the radicalization issue but no particular constitutional restrictions are envisaged. The provisions, however, have counter-authoritarian tones, since articles 17 and 18, respectively, provide citizens with specific “negative” guarantees as well. Specifically, assemblies shall take place freely but peacefully and all forms of weapons are banned; no authorisation is required for associations, but their purposes should not be forbidden by criminal law. Furthermore, secret associations and those pursuing political purposes through military-oriented methods, even indirectly, are banned. Moreover, article 20 prevents the religious character or purpose of an association or institution from becoming the grounds for legislative limitations, taxation, recognition, or activity. According to article 49, all citizens have the right to freely associate in political parties and to democratically participate in the national political life, but some restrictions are addressed to those performing a relevant public role, such as judges, military and police officers, diplomats, and institutional representatives (art. 98). Furthermore, it is explicitly forbidden to reorganise the fascist party (XII Transitional and final provisions).

Similarly, freedom of speech and expression (art. 21 Cost.) is fully granted and the Italian Constitutional Court has considered it as the “cornerstone of a democratic state”.⁹ Exceptions are set for discriminatory, racist, and hate speech, and apology (support) of fascism. The sole constitutional limit to freedom of speech and expression is the prohibition of publications, shows, and all other manifestations contrary to morality, and it is up to (criminal) law to establish adequate and thorough measures to prevent and suppress abuses.

4. The legislative framework in the field of (de-)radicalisation

Basically, the constitutional framework endows Italian citizens and, in some cases, despite the literal formulation, “everybody” with a set of highly protected rights, typical of a pluralist constitutional state. As has been shown, freedom of religion is considered of utmost importance and is strengthened by a “negative” preventive guarantee that it cannot be grounds for discrimination and, at a positive level, by the substantive promotion of an intercultural state.¹⁰ In addition, pluralism reflects the broader picture of the Italian Republic, also reflected in the official promotion of local identities,¹¹ as well as linguistic minorities.

As far as freedom of expression is concerned, its full guarantee is provided for in article 21 of the Constitution, with just a few specific cases listed as exceptions to the general principle. On the topic, however, normative interventions have built up across the years, particularly regarding some exceptions to the general principle. Owing to the lack of a clear definition of “hate speech”, the jurisprudence has addressed individual cases, emphasising the differences in situations,

⁹ Corte Cost. sent. no. 9/1965; no. 84/69; no. 168/1971, no. 126/85.

¹⁰ For a detailed picture, see the previous section and in particular footnote no. 8.

¹¹ For an insight see the previous section, footnotes no. 5 and 6.

circumstances, and relevance of the behaviour per se. In Italy, crimes related to “opinions” are strictly linked to the apology of fascism, instigation, and reiteration of the typical practices of the fascist regime, plus specific provisions aimed at preventing racial, ethnic, and religious discriminations, through the repression of propaganda about the superiority of the race, as well as the incitement to commit violence on racial, ethnic, or religious grounds.¹² These provisions were rendered a criminal offence and an aggravating circumstance (art. 604 bis and ter of the Criminal Code) by D. Lgs no. 21 of 2018. They are listed in the section of the Criminal Code pertaining to crimes against “personality”, making it clear that the state basically aims to protect individuals belonging to a particular group, who could become the target of discrimination or violence.¹³

In addition, in line with the outlined framework, L. no. 115 of 2016 turned holocaust, genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crime negationism into special aggravating circumstances, to counteract increasing anti-Semitic speech.¹⁴ In this case, ideology or ideas are not actually sanctioned in themselves, but some of them can be, if the context and the capacity – in a public place, in a square – to incite civil strife or to foster nostalgic emotions about the fascist regime are taken into account. This interpretation was formulated by the Constitutional Court right at the beginning of the Italian Republic, when it clarified that a certain type of speech which does not appear relevant per se, becomes “offensive” if linked to a precise circumstance and background.¹⁵ Hence, courts engaging in the interpretation, delimitation, and ceaseless balancing of fundamental principles have set out different positions regarding the topic. For example, they have ruled that displaying symbols recalling racist groups or associations is only sanctionable when it can be traced back to a form of organised phenomenon. In the same way, fascist ideology is punishable if it bears some features capable of reconstituting organised – and therefore politically relevant – forms of activism (Cass. no. 11028/2016; Cass. no. 37577/2014). In the same way and following a similar reasoning, ideas linked to discrimination and racial hatred become (criminal and) relevant if they can lead to the risk of persecution or oppression or if they can foster violent actions towards targeted groups. As will become clearer about proselytism or religious propaganda, the criminal threshold is significantly brought forward in this case too, even though the specific behaviour must prove capable of influencing others, result in emulation, and be effective in communicative terms. As the courts’ reasoning is strongly anchored on case-by-case circumstances, sanctions were made, for example, against the speech of an eminent Italian party member whose ideas about the Roma and Sinti communities were considered racist at their very core, rather than the expression of a political ideal(ogy).¹⁶ Basically, in this case, the hate speech was evaluated as a sort of “high value” “state hate speech” (Stradella, 2008).

Undoubtedly, the approach is quite fragmented: on the one hand, this appears defensible, since the retrogression of fundamental rights, principles, and freedoms must necessarily be strictly, rigorously – but at the same time – individually balanced, avoiding undue sacrifices. In the case of religious extremism, as will be shown in the next section, the primary criterion called into question is “state security”, for which, however, there are no specific constitutional provisions in the Italian legal

¹² In particular, the Scelba Law (L. no. 645 of 1952) implemented the twelfth transitional provision of the Constitution, paving the way for Law no. 654 of 1975 (Reale Law), later amended by the important Law no. 205 of 1993 (Mancino Law).

¹³ On the topic, see Nocera, A. (2018) “Manifestazioni fasciste e apologia del fascismo tra attualità e nuove prospettive incriminatrici”, *Diritto Penale Contemporaneo*, <https://archivioldpc.dirittopenaleuomo.org/d/5987-manifestazioni-fasciste-e-apologia-del-fascismo-tra-attualita-e-nuove-prospettive-incriminatrici>.

¹⁴ Introduction of art. 3 bis to L. no. 645/1952.

¹⁵ For a reconstruction of hate speech in Constitutional Court rulings, according to different “speakers” see Monti, M. (2015) “Libertà di espressione e hate speech razzista: un’analisi mediante le categorie di speakers”, *www.dirittifondamentali.it - Università degli studi di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale*, http://dirittifondamentali.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/articolo_matteo_monti_libert%C3%A0-di-espressione_rev.pdf.

¹⁶ Nocera, A. “Manifestazioni fasciste e apologia del fascismo tra attualità e nuove prospettive incriminatrici”, *Diritto Penale Contemporaneo*, cit.

system. In the case of racist or hate speech, on the other hand, it brings into question the protection of the democratic structure of the state per se (Colaianni, 2019).

Lastly, the legislative framework on privacy is embedded in D. Lgs. no. 196/2003, the so-called Code of Privacy, which was recently amended in compliance with the European GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) by D. Lgs. no. 101/2018. The Ombudsman for the Protection of Personal Data¹⁷ (GPDP, *Garante per la protezione dei dati personali*), an independent authority, had been already created in 1996.¹⁸ In Italy, the right to privacy as well as individual fundamental rights is strongly protected from undue private or public interference, since surveillance is strictly restricted to criminal and judicial investigations. Nonetheless, even in this case, full protection of the individual identity and the data gathered following a criminal investigation is granted, in order to balance all the fundamental principles at stake.¹⁹ Additionally, individual personal data are only made available to public institutions after a judicial authority grants permission to do so.

What is more, concurrently with the need to deal with new threats, in Italy the concept of security has become increasingly crucial, encompassing public order as well.²⁰ Thus, the notion of security has become an umbrella term for legislative drafting techniques (the so-called “Pacchetti” or “Misure di Sicurezza” – security packages or measures), and is overwhelmingly emphasised at a semantical level. Massive use is also made of law decrees to stress the “need” and the “urgency” for measures. Thus, for instance, various laws issued since 2001²¹ – quite “multi-partisan” in nature, since “security” has become a transversal topic among differently oriented political parties – have underlined this aspect.

The national framework legislation on radicalisation and de-radicalisation

Italy has paid specific attention to the repression of violent and extremist behaviours, for historical reasons as well as by political choice. It should be noticed, however, that violent actions motivated by radical religious ideologies are quite a recent issue, and the related legislation develops from the repressive framework outlined to deal with internal political terrorism. Therefore, an “urgency” rhetoric has led to a focus on criminal responses, in addition to some kind of preventive approach, creating a hybrid “preventive criminal law” (Colaianni, 2019) consisting of stratified legislative and case law responses due to the lack of a systematic approach or a coherent structure. Moreover, it should be underlined that judicial activism is not very pervasive, indeed, it is quite an exception in the general Italian trend and in this “age of balancing” (Pino, 2017).

The national framework does not devote any specific legislation to (de)radicalisation. Instead, it consists of a plethora of provisions enacted following escalations in extremism. In several cases, the legislation has been drafted in connection with precise emotional and alarmist waves, on the one hand entailing an emergency structure and, on the other, a quite clear repressive pattern. Hence, the current set of laws mainly focuses on a counterterrorism agenda, with some insights dedicated

¹⁷ <https://www.garanteprivacy.it/>.

¹⁸ L. no. 675/1996.

¹⁹ See, in particular, D. Lgs. no. 51 of 18 May 2018, issued following EU Directive 2016/680, concerning the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by authorities for the prevention, investigation, assessment, and prosecution of crimes or criminal sanctions, as well as the circulation of data regime.

²⁰ See the new formulation of art. 117.2 letter h) of the Constitution.

²¹ L. no. 128/2001 (legislative interventions on the protection of citizens’ *security*); L. no. 125/2008 (conversion into law, with amendments, of Law Decree no. 92 of 23 May 2008, containing urgent measures on public *security*); L. no. 94/2009 (provisions on public *security*); L. no. 48/2017 (conversion into law, with amendments, of D.L. no. 14 of 20 February 2017); L. no. 132/2018 (conversion into law, with amendments, of D.L. no. 113 of 4 October 2018, containing urgent measures on international protection, immigration, and public *security*).

to foreign fighters and the actions of so-called “lone actors”. According to some observers, we are looking at a political criminal law, a criminal law against “the enemy” (Ferrajoli, 2006), stemming from the vulnerability perceived after terrorist attacks in Europe.

In reconstructing the advancements of the legislative background, not surprisingly the first act dates back to 2001. In addition, several reforms have taken place during these two decades of the twenty-first century.

L. no. 438/2001, issued with some urgency following the 9/11 attacks against the Twin Towers in the United States, provided some measures to prevent and contrast international terrorist crimes. Since then, and after attacks in Europe, massive reforms have been carried out: D.L. no. 144/2005 (converted into law by L. no. 155/2005), D.L. no. 7/2015 (converted into law by L. no. 43/2015), and L. no. 153/2016. Thus, looking at the supranational and international framework, new types of offences have been introduced, namely conduct for terrorist purposes, art. 260 sexies of the Criminal Code; enlistment, art. 270 quater of the Criminal Code; training, art. 270 quinquies;²² the organisation of transfers, art. 270 quater.1; financial support, art. 270 quinquies.1; seizures to prevent financial support, art. 270 quinquies.2; and acts of nuclear terrorism, art. 280 ter. In particular, L. no. 43 of 2015, enacted following the attacks in Paris of the same year, focused more on singularities linked to so-called Islamic radicalism, specifically responding to the phenomenon of foreign fighters and lone actors. By providing for preventive measures, the intervention aimed to prohibit leaving the national territory to support the jihadist network, and to ensure, on the contrary, that those suspected of sympathising with the cause left. The more pragmatic provision of the crime of financial support provided by L. no. 153 of 2016²³ was enacted from the same perspective.

Before these reformist seasons, Italian legislation had already shown quite a strong and effective counterterrorist strategy, but it gradually adapted to the new challenges, even though radical religious “intentions” have never turned into violent actions or incidents on Italian soil. According to the interviewed experts, this specific element should be ascribed to an efficient intelligence network in addition to the expertise acquired in dealing with political terrorism, providing Italy with robust tools and strategies to face the threats of violent or extremist actions. Nonetheless, the absence of a well-defined preventive framework at the legislative level is reflected in criminal law-oriented responses, on the one hand enhancing personal preventive measures²⁴ and on the other jeopardising freedom of expression. Furthermore, the provisions enacted during the last decade also involve the preparatory phase of criminal association, greatly anticipating the criminal law thresholds.

This implies that anybody presenting a radical “manner” of proselytism or indoctrination – in an almost pre-Orwellian sense (Colaianni, 2019), underlining the relevance of the “psychological” element (Marino, 2017) – can be put under surveillance. This drafting technique has raised many objections, especially relating to the very legitimacy of this repression. Hence, the jurisprudence has filled the gap to ensure a fair balance between all the fundamental rights at stake. The challenge posed by Islamic radicalism, in particular, on the one hand, stems from the elusive links of the associations – also considering the spread of the radical message through online contexts – and on the other, from understanding how sharing “ideas”, even if close to a conservative conception of the faith, could actually constitute a form of “preparatory” indoctrination for a violent action.

Thus, the case law on the subject, somewhat vague in its *ratio decidendi*, bears witness to the struggle that jurisprudence has had to face, both at a level of definitions and judgement. With regard

²² Amended by L. no. 155/2005 with the aggravating circumstance of the use of IT tools.

²³ The national provisions on the financing of terrorism are enshrined in D. Lgs. no. 109/2007, “Measures to prevent, counter, and suppress the financing of terrorism and the activity of countries that threaten international peace and security”.

²⁴ By L. no. 43/2015.

to Islamic radicalism and the connection with religion, as well as to the features of an organisation or an association for criminal purposes, top Italian judges seem to have considered the action of the Islamic State to be openly inspired by “Islamic jihad” (Cass. no. 24103/2017). In addition, concerning the character of organisations connected to so-called Islamic terrorism the same Court of Cassation has ruled that:

- a form of organisation is inherent in the “cellular” structure and the “fluidity” of its actions
- this structure is able to recruit followers, and influence them through an intense ideology inciting them to commit jihad, through their own autonomous choices, rather than a centralised plan of violent acts notwithstanding the lack of a “static organisational set-up” (no. 51654/2018)
- religion may be a strong enough ideology to create bonds of mutuality – as the sum between ideological-religious relationships and the associative bond in carrying out acts of violence. Indeed, it can constitute a much stronger tie than others (Cass. no. 50189/2017)
- despite the evanescent nature of terrorist networks, as well as the puzzling nature of the organisation, sharing the “message”, through the dissemination of propaganda documents, assistance to members, or training, can become relevant conduct even if there is no evidence that the activity of a certain “cell” or its specific purposes are aimed at international terrorist activities (Cass. no. 46308/2012)
- “participation in a jihadist-type terrorist association” can also be attained and developed through spontaneous membership and *progressive* inclusion in the organisation, which thus becomes a form of structured association by virtue of ideological-religious ties.

Since these are extremely early forms in which criminal repression can be applied, judges have attempted to shape a compromise framework between all the principles entailed. While ideology may appear a relevant factor per se, it was also deemed necessary for the typology of the organisational structure to be actually (and effectively) capable of carrying out violent acts (Cass. no. 48001/2016).

Criminal law is supported by administrative law, especially in the field of immigration which deals with expulsion from the national territory for reasons of public order, state security, and the prevention of terrorism.²⁵ Administrative law is definitely more immediate than criminal law, but, at the same time, it does not share the same formal guarantees (Mazzanti, 2017). It is based on assessment of the threat for state security as well, according to L. no. 152/1975 (art. 18), thus this framework is added to the Consolidated Law (TU) on immigration provisions (Mazzanti, 2017).

Lastly, the first Italian bill on the topic (the Dambruoso-Manciulli bill) deserves a mention. Drafted in 2017, it was specifically devoted to radicalisation, and at the same time aimed to propose solutions regarding de-radicalisation strategies (Provisions for the prevention of radicalization and jihadist extremism).²⁶ The Dambruoso-Manciulli bill openly declares that a repressive approach cannot be an adequate response and provides for preventive strategies, as well as counteraction policies and re-educational goals. Nonetheless, it is based on a “jihadist” extremism approach, which may appear partial, since the terms “radicalization” or “extremism” could have fully encompassed all the different facets of the phenomenon. The draft envisages the creation of coordinated networks of counter-radicalisation centres at a regional level (CCR – Centri di coordinamento regionali sulla radicalizzazione, Regional Centres against Radicalisation and special commissions) and supervision at the national level (CRAD – Centro nazionale sulla radicalizzazione, National Centre against

²⁵Art. 3, L. no. 155/2005.

²⁶C. 3558-A.

Radicalisation). Moreover, it sets out information and awareness campaigns in institutions, schools, and prisons, focusing on counternarratives in order to support the macro-level strategies.

Moreover, the prevention essentially seems to have two guiding principles: the balance between secularism and the protection of freedom of religion, also as a strategy to deal with grievances stemming from exclusion and to avert polarisation through religious stances; and the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, which may be a suitable tool in preventive plans – especially at the counternarrative level – but may be unsatisfactory, for instance, in disengagement and de-radicalisation processes. The creation of an exclusive link with religious extremism can lead to insufficient responses to the specific character of (other) violent discourses. The Dambrosio-Manciulli bill was recently replaced by the Fiano bill.²⁷ While quite similar in its content, so far it has never been thoroughly discussed or approved.

The sub-national level

At the regional level, it is worth noticing the Lombardy region L. no. 24/2017.²⁸ Article 1 declares that “in compliance with the constitutional principles established by article 117 of the Constitution, the act is aimed at strengthening the assistance for victims of terrorist acts and at promoting training and research activities to understand and prevent phenomena and processes of violent radicalisation”. The regional aid is addressed to citizens and business owners, whereas the training activities involve schools, universities, and local police officers as well as associations dealing with integration programmes, in order to provide them with concrete and effective tools (art. 2). Paragraph one of article 6 encourages the promotion of initiatives for the prevention of extremism, including “religious” extremism, through legality and respect for differences, with the support of the institutions and the media. Paragraph 3 is concerned with coordinated actions between non-profit entities, associations, and educational and training institutions, to encourage active cooperation between interpreters, local police forces, and stakeholders.

The Friuli Venezia Giulia regional law no. 11/2012, instead, provides “Rules for the support of the rights of the person and the full intellectual, psychological, and moral freedom of the individual” while funding plans for the “Support network against abuses and harassment in groups”.

Other regional interventions are worth mentioning, but they provide general tools to deal with violence and hatred and lay down plans in support of victims suffering from violent actions. In these cases, no reference is made to categories such as “extremism”, “jihadism”, or “radicalisation”, whereas “security” constitutes their common theme.²⁹

In Emilia Romagna and Liguria (L. no. 24/2003 and L. no. 28/2004, respectively), regional provisions have been enacted regarding the promotion of an “integrated security system” and both stress the relevance of social inclusion as a privileged strategy for problematic areas. These interventions are conceived to prevent sexual violence and harassment, exploitation of and violence against minors, violence and discrimination on political, gender, xenophobic, or racist grounds, cultural and ethnic

²⁷ “Provisions for the prevention of radicalisation and violent jihadist extremism”, C.243, <https://www.camera.it/leg18/126?tab=&leg=18&idDocumento=0243>. Deputy Emanuele Fiano has also proposed adding art. 293bis to the Criminal Code (Introduction of the offence of fascist and Nazi-fascist propaganda), AC3343, <https://www.camera.it/leg17/126?pd=3343-A>.

²⁸ http://normelombardia.consiglio.regione.lombardia.it/NormeLombardia/Accessibile/main.aspx?exp_coll=lr00201711060024&view=showdoc&iddoc=lr002017110600024&selnode=lr002017110600024.

²⁹ Regarding security, other regions (for example Campania, Calabria, and Sicily) have combined the focus on legality with the fight against organised crime, probably due to the specific local situations.

conflicts, and to promote preventive actions, reconciliation, and conflict mediation practices, as well as educational programmes. Additionally, the aforementioned regional laws also provide for training activities addressed to public officers and the creation of a collaborative network with local associations and advocacy groups, through support from public institutions.

In Piedmont, regional law no. 23/2007 (enacted in 2009) also relates to regional policies on integrated security. Its main goals are to provide encouragement, training, and updating of specific expertise in the field of cultural mediation and social conflicts and help for victims of violence and crimes based on sexual orientation or racial discrimination, *inter alia*. Among its priorities, the region carries out prevention actions to detect sources of discomfort, grievance, and social exclusion, through the provision of targeted policies (art. 5.2, o). Finally, the cases of Umbria (L. no. 13/2008) and Valle D'Aosta (L. no. 11/2010) deserve a mention. Both envisage initiatives in schools aimed at developing civil, constitutional, and democratic awareness, as well as respect for diversity. In addition, they emphasise the importance of, and support for, social reintegration activities in prison, and the development of prevention and mediation strategies to solve social and cultural conflicts, while also providing psychological assistance, care, and help to those suffering from sexual and racial discriminations.

5. The policy and institutional framework in the field of (de-) radicalisation

In Italy there is no national plan addressing radicalisation or extremism in a broader sense. The management of these issues is attributed to the actors involved in counterterrorism activities, such as governmental departments and security forces. Additionally, as will be further explained, a substantive role is played by the third sector and NGOs, often working in support of the public institutions. As the interviewed experts pointed out, their coordinated actions are implemented at an unofficial level, owing to the lack of a formal legal framework or structured system.

Some efforts devoted to trying to shape an Italian framework on radicalisation deserve a mention. So far, the Italian Government Commission on Jihadism and the Stati Generali dell'Esecuzione Penale (States General on the Execution of Criminal Sentences)³⁰ concerning the prison environment have been the most important panels on the topic held at an official level.

Made up of 19 experts from different disciplinary and professional areas (a sociologist, a political scientist, legal scholars, journalists, and counterterrorism operators) and chaired by Lorenzo Vidino, in 2016 the ad hoc commission on jihadism provided some guidelines on action to fight radicalisation, according to the Italian system. Unsurprisingly, the first bill on the topic was produced in the following year. The guidelines set out at the government level were mentioned by the interviewed experts as a valuable strategy, in terms of both radicalisation and de-radicalisation. The first data to emerge

³⁰ The Ministry of Justice hosted a permanent panel of experts, judges, and penitentiary officers from May 2016 to April 2017, in order to discuss shortcomings and critical issues of the Italian penitentiary system – underlined several times by the EU as well – through thematic work tables, https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/it/mg_2_19_1.page, https://www.giustizia.it/resources/cms/documents/sgep_tavolo7_relazione.pdf. See also a study conducted by the Dipartimento dell'Amministrazione penitenziaria's (DAP – Department of Penitentiary Administration) Istituto Superiore di Studi Penitenziari (ISSP – Higher Institute for Penitentiary Studies), Ministry of Justice, *La radicalizzazione del terrorismo islamico. Elementi per uno studio del fenomeno di proselitismo in carcere*, Quaderni ISSP, no. 9, 2012, https://www.giustizia.it/resources/cms/documents/radicalizzazione_del_terrorismo_islamico.pdf

was about jihadism in Italy: there is no common profile or clear-cut prototype of the “home-grown terrorist”, due to quite diverse social, cultural, personal, and religious backgrounds. A second important finding concerned the peculiarity of the Italian case, as one of the few European countries not to have suffered from jihadist incidents (Vidino, 2017). The commission found that the reasons lie in the demographic characteristics of Italy and the well-established anti-terrorism system, which have proved effective against a “massive recruitment network”. Therefore, two privileged (and “classic”) places able to nurture radicalisation dynamics come back into the picture: the online context, that is, the Internet, and the offline one, that is, prisons, recalling the case of Anis Amri as a paradigmatic evolution of the phenomenon.³¹

The commission underlined, through the experts’ unanimous opinion, the inadequacy of action based solely on repression, adding the widely shared view according to which hard tools – such as arrests and expulsions – must be preceded by policies aimed at preventing radicalisation itself. An Italian CVE strategy should involve a plurality of public and private actors, in a multi- and transdisciplinary system, and encompass, among others, a coherent normative technique, intelligence activity, criminal investigations, schools, social and health services, civil society, associations, and Islamic communities. The guiding principles should emphasise the “safeguarding” phase, dealing with individual processes that lead to extremism, with the aim of safeguarding the individual him/herself, by identifying a “threshold” that must not be overstepped. Other suggested principles are embodied in *transparency* and *territoriality*: in the first case, it is necessary for all of the actors to act transparently and make clear the goals they intend to pursue and the strategy they intend to implement; in the second case, since radicalisation is a phenomenon highly influenced by local factors, varying massively both within the national, but also in the regional sphere and from one city to another, from one district to another. CVE initiatives must necessarily take these variables into account. According to the commission’s outcomes, these strategies can become a way to achieve “threat reduction” but never total “threat elimination”.

Other advice given to frame an Italian policy strategy concerns the prison environment. The recommendations were drafted in occasion of panel no. 7, on foreigners and criminal procedures, of the Stati Generali dell’Esecuzione Penale. Its outcomes suggested some guidelines to be further developed into counter-radicalisation strategies. In the first place, specific emphasis was once again devoted to religion, particularly concerning the imam’s profile and the freedom of religion per se. In this regard, the report shows how in most cases the role of imam is performed by the prisoners themselves and, on the other hand, that it is essential to strengthen the role of cultural mediation in prisons. These elements were also confirmed by the interviewed experts, whose concern about the fact that the decentralisation of authority and supervision functions in prisons can lead to degenerative dynamics was quite evident.

The report suggests strategies already informally implemented by DAP (Penitentiary Administration Department), consisting of the intensification of courses to learn about proselytism and its potential radical twists, addressed to prison staff, department heads, and prison administration officers. These have implied, for instance, encouraging prisoners to engage in counselling activities with educators and social workers, as well as with the professional figures provided for by article 80 of L. no. 354/75, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, experts in clinical criminology, and transcultural therapists. The enhancement of education, school, and professional courses is duly underlined, as well as the involvement of society, that is, volunteer assistants, cultural mediators, and prayer guides (imams). The advice also concerns the creation of permanent technical panels involving local authorities,

³¹ Anis Amri is the “lone wolf” who on 19 December 2016 carried out the attack against the Christmas market in Berlin. His process of radicalisation was traced back to his stay in Sicilian prisons.

public health centres, associations, and Islamic communities, especially regarding the creation of job opportunities. Another suggestion addresses the creation of de-radicalisation models in prisons, with the support of the aforementioned interlocutors. Another aspect worth noticing is the agreement between the Unione delle Comunità Islamiche in Italia (UCOII – Union of Islamic Communities in Italy) and DAP to allow the promotion of suitably trained imams. This can be marked as a very good practice deserving in-depth discussion between local authorities and public administrations, also “from the point of view of easier access to alternative measures to detention”.

The institutional framework reflects the Italian security-oriented approach and the picture clearly shows a counterterrorist pattern as a result of the substantive and concrete transposition of the legislative framework.

The main actors in (de)radicalisation are the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence and the members of the armed forces, with their “special” groups, such as the Raggruppamento Operativo Speciale (ROS – Special Operational Group), and the Ministry of the Interior,³² the police in its broadest sense, including some inner branches such as the Divisione Investigazioni Generali e Operazioni Speciali (DIGOS – General Investigations and Special Operations Division). The Direzione centrale della polizia di prevenzione (DCPP – Central Police Department for Prevention) is given an essential task in countering terrorism, acting at a national and international level against political and cyber terrorism. Of its four inner branches, the Service Agency for the Fight Against Extremism and National Terrorism and the service addressing the same phenomena abroad are of utmost importance, since they deal with leftist, right-wing, and anarchist antagonism, extremism, and radicalism, as well as with international terrorism, international cooperation, radicalisation, and extremist prevention. In this connection, the DCPP is in charge of coordinating DIGOS and Nucleo operativo centrale di sicurezza (NOCS – Central Operational Security Unit) actions. The work of the public security forces is supported by massive intelligence operations, one of the major actors in the Italian counteraction strategy against terrorism and extremism.

Intelligence services have to provide the police criminal investigation departments with all the information and results gathered on facts related to crimes. Accordingly, the police forces have to cooperate with the intelligence services too.³³ Clearly, the judiciary is also directly involved as a pivotal institutional subject in countering radicalisation activities and not surprisingly – as will be shown in Section 6 – it is a major source in framing de-radicalisation strategies and methods too. Additionally, public security authorities and intelligence forces all act at a coordinated level, through a strategic committee called the Comitato di Analisi Strategica Antiterrorismo (CASA – Counterterrorism Strategic Analysis Committee). Chaired by the head of the DCPP, its work encompasses all the issues related to national defence, though it mainly focuses on threats with a terrorist core. It was constituted in 2004 and consists of the preventive and judicial branches of the Criminal Investigation Department, as well as several other security actors, such as the Servizio per le informazioni e la sicurezza democratica (SISDe – Information and Democratic Security Service) and Servizio per le informazioni e la sicurezza militare (SISMil – Military Information and Security Service). CASA is also engaged in monitoring preventive functions and is authorised to conduct specific investigations on suspicious financial activities, as well as to keep check on online extremist propaganda. Its activities are coordinated at both the national and international levels.

³² See also The National Operative Plan for Legality 2014-2020, <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/sicurezza/programma-operativo-nazionale-legalita-2014-2020>.

³³ <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/sicurezza/antiterrorismo>.

Another crucial role is played by abovementioned DAP,³⁴ one of the four branches of the Ministry of Justice, which addresses specific issues and regularly provides policies and guidelines through its circulars.³⁵ Moreover, the Garante nazionale dei diritti delle persone private della libertà personale (National Prisoners' Ombudsman) is a pivotal independent body in charge of detecting vulnerable situations and dealing with all the issues related to prisoners' rights and dignity. In this connection, it constantly provides state-of-the-art reports,³⁶ aiming at strengthening and improving the detainees' mental and physical well-being. Its regional and local divisions can be found throughout Italy.

As far as counteractions against financial support for terrorist activities are concerned, a Comitato di Sicurezza Finanziaria (Financial Security Committee) has been working at the Ministry of Economy and Finance since 2001 and an Unità di Informazione Finanziaria (UIF – Financial Intelligence Unit) was set up in 2008 at the Bank of Italy. A major role in detecting illegal funding for terrorism purposes is played by the Guardia di Finanza (financial police),³⁷ who are authorized to make investigations in support of other public security forces. In particular, the financial police help the latter in prevention strategies against terrorism, by freezing financial and economic resources and keeping check on suspected financial activities *inter alia*, in compliance with the judicial authorities. They also take part in the national coordination envisaged through the CASA committee.

Notwithstanding the effectiveness of the Italian strategy, a systemic approach to the topic is needed. The policy framework lacks specific counteractions exclusively focused on radicalisation phenomena and a legal basis for the coordinated activities, beyond the counterterrorism agenda. In addition, the institutional responses should provide for preventive tools as well, in order to promote an alternative paradigm to deal with all kinds of extremism. A security-oriented pattern, strongly affected by counterterrorism policies, may prove to be insufficient in the absence of a structured strategy encompassing all the facets of radicalisation. All of the above surely requires a formal and official framework, able to guide all the actors involved at the substantive level.

The sub-national level

At the regional level, a good policy frame can be found in the convention between the Lombardy region and the regional education office, for implementation of the project to provide “education on differences to fight all forms of violent extremism”³⁸ (2019-2020-2021, Regional Law no. 24/2017, art. 6, paragraph 4). The project provides specific guidelines and promotes special programmes in several schools in the region (in Como, Milan, and Bergamo). First and foremost, they envisage in-depth teaching staff training, but they are also addressed to students and their parents, in order to help boost their knowledge about phenomena of violent extremism in general. This goal is pursued through a multi-agency approach and “integrated” methodologies. For instance, it has involved the creation of interactive and conceptual mapping strategies, the definition of a vocabulary about key concepts of violent extremism, and the search for similarities in contexts and situations, to “cognitively” create a common understanding of words and their meanings. The programme guidelines consider it pivotal to pay attention to specific skills in the school framework and beyond, and also within families, in order to prevent the onset of extremism through shared intervention strategies (pt. 2). Other goals consist of teacher training, with the development of intercultural skills

³⁴ L. no. 395/1990.

³⁵ For an updated list of all the DAP interventions see <http://www.ristretti.it/areestudio/giuridici/circolari/>.

³⁶ <https://www.garantenazionaleprivatiliberta.it/gnpl/it/rapporti.page>. On prisoners at risk of radicalisation see, for instance, the Liguria region report <https://www.garantenazionaleprivatiliberta.it/gnpl/resources/cms/documents/fa303d27bc12d77fcf5b02003ac0c1bd.pdf>.

³⁷ <https://www.gdf.gov.it/chi-siamo/organizzazione/compiti-istituzionali/antiterrorismo>.

³⁸ <https://usr.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/2018/6/?cat=42>; https://usr.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/m_pi.AOODRLO.REGISTRO-UFFICIALEU.0010066.24-05-2019-1.pdf; http://www.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/protolo_15787_16_settembre_2016/.

in educational work, the chance to arrange courses regarding non-violent lexicon, and management strategies in working with intercultural groups, in addition to prevention-oriented activities aimed at the students (for instance, the development of “digital citizenship” skills and media education and “reflexivity” in the use of technology). The project is also concerned with improving knowledge about different religions and cultures, fostering the creation of conditions of well-being in schools, meant as an effective “prevention strategy to deal with any form of discomfort”. An aspect worthy of dissemination is its implementation of methodologies to obtain interpretative tools and to select cases by assessing “alarm bells” that may point to potential extremist attitudes (pt. d.1 and d.2). At the same time, the activation of local support networks and the creation of regulatory tools to encourage the construction of prevention strategies are also considered an agenda priority (pt. e-f).

Similar policies have also been implemented in the regions of Emilia Romagna, Lazio, Tuscany, and Umbria, while the case of the Marche region³⁹ deserves attention to some further details, thus becoming a case study on its own (see Sec. no. 6.2).

The local level

At the local level, the city of Turin (Piedmont) is quite an interesting and “proactive” reality, having issued “guidelines for the establishment of a multi-agency panel for the prevention of violent extremism”.⁴⁰ The Turin city council, via the Commission on Legality, approved a resolution in September 2020 which drew up strategies to implement the guidelines, also in collaboration with the RAN networks. The goal is to share useful information and skills for prevention purposes, to offer support in disengagement processes, and to render civil society resilient to the phenomenon. The approach is one of safety, rather than security, through collective and multi-agency action. The project is fundamentally based on multiple agency, in addition to well-defined procedures and action plans, relying on good and effective communication between the social and political actors. The plan itself, moreover, is based on “rigorous analysis”, as literally declared in the document, and linked to the development of a prevention strategy at a local level, stemming from empirical data and not “social alarms fed by political parties or the media”. Similarly, the panel focuses its attention on the use of a common language and a strong counternarrative, via social media promotion campaigns. The guidelines provide for a holistic approach, to be accomplished through the creation of smaller groups based on expertise and skills, with a fair proportion of need- and stakeholders, even with “potentially divergent interests and needs”, such as prison departments and the prisoners’ ombudsman. They also involve the establishment of “priority areas” and services, helplines, and mentoring activities, as well as specific support for child refugees and reintegration plans for prisoners.

Due consideration is attributed to the role of case-reporting, focusing on family backgrounds and the potential detection of dysfunctional relationships, to be assessed through the careful activity of a professional network. Turin intends to create a protocol for action as well, in collaboration with other public authorities, in order to construct an effective response in the event of terrorist attacks, severe hate crimes, or actions linked to violent extremisms, to be dealt with by shared emergency interventions and methodologies. With its efficient and unbiased approach, it is undoubtedly a leading example of good policy-framing, since it is the first reality, in Italy, to create de-radicalisation programmes as well.⁴¹ This plan for the prevention of extremism becomes the “fourth pillar” among

³⁹https://www.usrmarche.it/moodle/pluginfile.php?file=%2F1517%2Fmod_resource%2Fcontent%2F1%2Fm_pi.AOODRM.A.REGISTRO%20UFFICIALE%28U%29.0004572.08-03-2019.pdf.

⁴⁰<http://www.comune.torino.it/cittagora/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Linee-guida-istituzione-tavolo.pdf>;
<http://www.comune.torino.it/cittagora/in-breve/a-torino-un-tavolo-di-lavoro-per-la-prevenzione-degli-estremismi-violenti.html>.

⁴¹ C4C, TRIVALENT, PACTESUR, see the following paragraph.

other previous initiatives: guidelines for policies concerning interculturality,⁴² a plan to deal with violence against women, a local action plan against racist hate crimes – which at the same time declared “anti-racism” as a “common good”⁴³ – and a protocol to facilitate and foster religious pluralism in prisons.⁴⁴ So far, we cannot predict the effectiveness of these measures, but they undoubtedly reflect a good policy framework worthy of dissemination and circulation.

The role of associations, NGOs, and the third sector

In the end, a huge amount of (informal) work is carried out by the third sector, associations, NGOs, and advocacy groups, which, notwithstanding the lack of official institutional coordination, also play an essential role in support of the former, which rely massively on their “day-to-day” practices and advice. Indeed, they are perceived as fundamental actors in framing an effective preventive strategy in Italy and, despite the unofficial nature of their activity, they cooperate with the institutions, through the organisation of panels, commissions, and committees, in which they take part as privileged interlocutors. In the interviewed experts’ opinion, the provision of a legal basis for their actions, as well as a mechanism for their institutionalisation would constitute a decisive step in the advancement of a preventive framework, as will be further shown in the conclusive remarks and in the Policies Annex (IV) of this report.

Important and active support comes from several Islamic associations, which are involved in projects, programmes, and meetings, creating a prototype for institutional collaboration in drafting protocols and action plans. Worth noting is the Patto nazionale per un Islam italiano (National Pact for an Italian Islam),⁴⁵ sealed in 2017 between the Ministry of the Interior’s Consiglio per le relazioni con l’Islam italiano (Council for Relations with Italian Islam) and representatives from many Islamic associations. Similar agreements have been formulated at the regional and subnational level as well.⁴⁶ However, they are not legal agreements in a strict sense as envisaged by article 8 of the Constitution (see Sec. 3). In this framework, an important activity is performed by the Confederazione Islamica Italiana⁴⁷ (CII – Italian Islamic Confederation) and the UCOII. Among the various associations and NGOs, remarkable local experiences involving foundations and organisations with different advocational aims can be reported in addition to the major role played by transnational and international realities such as Amnesty Italia and Action Aid.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the main research of two important institutes focuses on the topic of radicalisation and de-radicalisation: Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (ISPI – Institute for International Political Studies),⁴⁹ which devotes several monographic reports and an in-depth analysis to the issue and Centro Studi Internazionali (CeSI – Centre of International Studies).⁵⁰ As far as the dissemination of in-depth information is

⁴² <http://www.comune.torino.it/ucstampa/cartellestampa/bm~doc/la-politica-interculturale-della-citt-di-torino.pdf>.

⁴³ http://www.comune.torino.it/ucstampa/2020/article_152.shtml.

⁴⁴ http://www.comune.torino.it/giunta_comune/intracom/htdocs/2018/2018_05625.pdf.

⁴⁵ The exact name in English is the “National Pact for an Italian Islam, Expression of an Open and Integrated Community, Adhering to the Values and Principles of the Italian Legal System”. See the English version at https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/patto_nazionale_per_un_islam_italiano_en_1.2.2017.pdf.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, the Interfaith Committee in Turin, now a permanent body, which was created for the twentieth Olympic Games in 2006 and the Patto di condivisione from 2016, <http://www.interculturatorino.it/approfondimenti/comitato-interfedi-della-citta-di-torino/>; http://www.comune.torino.it/ucstampa/2016/article_47.shtml. The city of Florence also drafted a Patto di cittadinanza in 2016, <https://ucoii.org/tag/patto-di-cittadinanza/>.

⁴⁷ <http://www.conf-islamica.it/confederazione-islamica-italiana/>.

⁴⁸ See, among others, the Fondazione Internazionale Oasis for interreligious dialogue (<https://www.oasiscenter.eu/it/chi-siamo>); Centro Studi Sereno Regis (<https://serenoregis.org/>); Un Ponte Per (<https://www.unponteper.it/it/>); Laici Terzo Mondo (<http://www.ltmong.org/>); Antigone (<https://www.antigone.it/>); and Cooperativa Sociale Odissea (<http://www.cooperativaodissea.org/>).

⁴⁹ <https://www.ispionline.it/>.

⁵⁰ <http://www.cesi-italia.org/>.

concerned, the activity of the Osservatorio sul Radicalismo e il Contrasto al Terrorismo (ReACT – Observatory on Radicalism and the Fight Against Terrorism),⁵¹ should be mentioned.

Last summer, the first national network dealing with hate speech and hate phenomena was born;⁵² the founders and involved organisations come from the world of advocacy and associations.⁵³ Their goals consist of “contributing to the monitoring and prevention of hate speech and phenomena and fighting them, as well as counteractions against disinformation as their pre-eminent source”. The network also aims to create and promote counternarratives and alternative narratives to hate phenomena and speeches, thus providing complementary and/or additional activities to those carried out individually by each member of the network itself (art. 2).⁵⁴ The network is also concerned with explaining how effective counternarratives⁵⁵ should be framed – suggestions that can be circulated in any counter-information campaign against any type of extremism – by presenting good practices that can be disseminated in order to reach a diverse public. In addition, the national network has drafted some guidelines about how to recognise and deal with hate speech online through effective tools.⁵⁶

(De-)radicalization programmes

Notwithstanding the lack of a national plan to deal with radicalism and structured de-radicalisation counteractions, some programmes have been implemented through the collaboration and coordinated activities of several actors. Among them, the most relevant are:

- **C4C** is the first programme ever tested in Italy (in 2013). The Counternarration for Counterterrorism,⁵⁷ mainly carried out in schools, stems from previous experiences, for instance, by the Associazione Italiana Vittime del Terrorismo (AIVITER – Italian Association of Victims of Terrorism) and Memoria Futura (Future Memory), in order to develop their own good practices.⁵⁸ With the active participation of Ce.Se.Di, the metropolitan city of Turin’s education services centre, it aims to train and inform students about issues generally neglected by classical teaching, and hence boost their knowledge. C4C investigates all the facets of extremism and its manifestations, with an innovative focus on disengagement. Hence, it deals with sensitive, hotly debated, contemporary issues, such as “humanitarian wars”, or the violation of human rights in Guantánamo. Not surprisingly, the programme was led by the good practices envisaged by RAN, and it is considered a model worthy of

⁵¹ www.osservatorioreact.it/category/radicalizzazione/.

⁵² <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/>.

⁵³ Action Aid Italia Onlus; Amnesty International Italia; ARCI; ASGI; Associazione Carta di Roma; Associazione Giulia Giornaliste; Associazione Lunaria; Centro per le Scienze Religiose – Fondazione Bruno Kessler; Centro per le Tecnologie dell’Informazione e della Comunicazione – Fondazione Bruno Kessler; Cestudir – Centro studi sui diritti umani; CNR Palermo; Consiglio Nazionale Forense; Cospe Onlus; Dipartimento di Diritto Pubblico Italiano e Sovranazionale – Università Statale di Milano; Dipartimento di Psicologia dello Sviluppo e della Socializzazione – Università di Padova; Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Sociali – Università di Firenze; Dipartimento di Scienze Umane – Università di Verona; Dipartimento di Sociologia e Diritto dell’Economia – Università di Bologna; Alessandra Vitullo, Dipartimento di Sociologia e Scienze Sociali – Università di Milano Bicocca; Dipartimento di Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale – Università di Trento; Federico Faloppa, Department of Languages and Cultures – University of Reading, UK; Avv. Monica Gazzola, Foro di Venezia; Pierluigi Musarò, Dipartimento di Sociologia e Diritto dell’Economia, Università di Bologna; No Hate Speech Movement Italia; Osservatorio di Pavia; Pangea Onlus; Avvocatura per i diritti LGBTI – Rete Lenford; Vox – Osservatorio Italiano sui Diritti.

⁵⁴ <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/protocollo-d-intesa/>.

⁵⁵ <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/contronarrazioni/>.

⁵⁶ <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/linee-guida/>.

⁵⁷ <http://www.congress-intercultural.eu/it/initiative/196-progetto---%EF%BF%BDcontro-narrativa-per-la-lotta-al-terrorismo-%EF%BF%BD--c4c-.html>.

⁵⁸ <http://www.congress-intercultural.eu/it/theme/7-buone-prassi.html>.

circulation and dissemination, especially for the development of critical analysis tools, already at school level.

- **PACTESUR** Protect Allied Cities against Terrorism in Securing Urban aReas.⁵⁹ Once again, this project involves the city of Turin with the collaboration of Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani (ANCI – National Association of Italian Municipalities), the cities of Nice and Liège, and local and other EU member state police officers. Started in 2019, it aims to create general action guidelines and to assess the best way to achieve “fair” communicative standards, which can guide the activities of all local and regional authorities, in order to provide beneficial and uniform tools in the field of public safety, beyond a mere security-oriented approach.
- **TRIVALENT** Terrorism pRevention via rAdicalisation countER-NarraTive.⁶⁰ This project (2017–2020) is also funded by the EU and can count on the collaboration between Italian academics, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, and police officers from other member states. Once again, the Italian city at the centre of the project is Turin. Its goal is to develop counterviolence measures at a cultural and communication level. It is worth noting the awareness-raising and training of public security agents, who are called to participate and are directly involved in the work carried out by national, local, and territorial civil society structures, consequently providing their action with specific guidelines.
- **YEIP**, Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project⁶¹ (2017–2020). This project raises awareness among the young generations about the consequences and risks of radicalisation, through a full preventive approach. This project is also grounded on transnational networks, from Italy involving the Liguria region, research centres, and the Anziani E Non Solo cooperative from Carpi (Emilia-Romagna region). Supported by regional and national institutions, it is partnered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, with which it signed a protocol for action. Some meetings and initiatives – which disseminated good practices especially aimed at schools and teaching staff – were also officially supported by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR).
- **FAIR** (2017-2019), Fighting Against Inmates’ Radicalisation.⁶² This project was coordinated by the Nuovo Villaggio del Fanciullo foundation⁶³ based in the city of Ravenna (Emilia-Romagna) and the InEuropa association, with the support of European partners. The main purpose was to train prison staff, in particular to gain appropriate tools and methodologies to support the most vulnerable or marginalised inmates within the prison community, while learning to cope with vulnerabilities and the attractiveness of extremist narratives. An additional project goal was to make a critical assessment of prison environments in general and alternatives to prison, while framing individualised paths to deal with disengagement and de-radicalisation that encompassed strategies and models of reintegration into the socio-political sphere.

6. Case Studies

The selected case studies show two examples of well-shaped programmes stemming from different sources. Case study 1 concerns two examples of case law, in which the rehabilitation aim of criminal

⁵⁹ <https://www.pactesur.eu/the-project/>; <https://www.anci.piemonte.it/workshop-pactesur-il-16-maggio-a-torino/>.

⁶⁰ <https://trivalent-project.eu/>.

⁶¹ <https://www.regione.liguria.it/homepage/salute-e-sociale/cooperazione-allo-sviluppo/programmazione/progetto-yeip-coop-svil.html>.

⁶² <http://fair-project.eu/it/>.

⁶³ <https://www.villaggiofanciullo.org/progetti/progetti-europei/progetto-fair>.

law was achieved through a new kind of response. They envisaged ad hoc de-radicalisation programmes, tailored according to individual specificities using quite different methodologies. Case study 2 relates to an experimental project carried out in schools in the Marche region, addressing radicalisation through the support of experts and specialists, in order to raise awareness on the topic among teachers and the young generations, especially with relation to the online context. The first cases were chosen for the effective response provided by the courts, which implemented a multi-agency approach – strongly recommended by the interviewed experts as well – as an efficient counter-radicalisation strategy. The second case is considered worthy of dissemination owing to its advanced focus on all kinds of extremism, and ability to detect all its different facets, through a quite innovative approach in comparison with “traditional” educational programmes in schools.

Case Study 1

The juvenile court of Trieste and the tribunal of Bari: two different (judicial) counternarrative and disengagement methods

It is no coincidence that one of the selected case studies involves case law. Due to the lack of coherent guidelines and policies at the national and regional level, each place deals with its challenges according to its specific requirements. Beyond the legislation framework briefly recalled in Section 4, with its strong repressive and urgency-oriented pattern, the courts have developed different and non-standardised criteria, evaluating each background and *modus operandi* in a (necessarily) heterogeneous way. These cases are a good example of how the courts sometimes provide a more prompt and effective response vis-à-vis the normative vacuum in Italy as well. Indeed, in Italy the “juristocracy” (Hirschl, 2004) has been performing an increasing remedial role.

These examples of case law were selected, on the one hand, for their heterogeneity, which enables us to appreciate the intersection between different layers of analysis, and on the other – quite paradoxically – for their intrinsic comparability, as they are both examples of *ius praetorium*, provided by the courts’ (pro)activism. They also share the same basic rationale, largely focusing on the “reintegration” process, whereas the implemented methodologies and strategies diverge in many crucial aspects. Despite sharing common ground and similar solutions, that is, the creation of individualised programmes, their guiding principles appear quite the opposite regarding:

- a) Methodology: Case 1.1) sets out a path aimed at disengagement through a religious-oriented counternarrative,⁶⁴ case 1.2) tailors a “constitutionally compliant” (Martucci, 2017) solution within the secular spectrum and the “rule of law”;
- b) Personal background: Case 1.1) involves a foreign minor, case 1.2) an Italian man.
- c) Local area: Case 1.1) concerns a court based in the north-east, case 1.2) a court based in southern Italy.

Indeed, as is often observed, courts are places in which fundamental rights are effectively “granted” by definition. In case law 1.1), due to the involvement of a minor, this becomes even more significant, on the one hand for the re-educational perspective – meant as reintegration into the social and political environment – and on the other, for the greater discretionary power and tools the juvenile courts are provided with, in balancing best interests with the wider protection of public security.

⁶⁴ For a focus on this case study, see also Lanzetti, A. “Le strategie di contrasto alla radicalizzazione violenta: il caso studio” <https://www.startinsight.eu/react2021-caso-studio-lanzetti-it/>. Some newspapers reported the case as well, https://www.corriere.it/esteri/18_aprile_07/minorenne-faceva-propaganda-isis-telegram-sara-deradicalizzto-0eb0369a-3a24-11e8-a94c-7c30e3109c4d.shtml.

The case law concerns B.A., an Algerian boy who was just fourteen years old when placed under supervision by security officers. He came under investigation on suspicion of instigating terrorist actions (art. 414 Criminal Code) through the use of “virtual” means – an aggravating circumstance – due to a connection with the Islamic State via Telegram channels. The intelligence activities and CASA investigations considered the sharing of jihadist propaganda, instructions for home-made weapons, and logistic support for the jihadist cause a well-founded terrorist threat and not just radical ideas coming from a young boy. In here, we find all the “traditional” elements of the mainstream narrative: an introverted foreign boy, the Islamic State’s fascinating propaganda, the plan to become a lone wolf against a school. B.A.’s personal situation was described as one of “discomfort, loneliness, and emotional vacuum”, thus, during the preliminary judiciary investigations, it was decided to directly assign the case to the juvenile social services and to envisage a clear-cut programme for his “rehabilitation” and social reintegration.

The case is interesting since the juvenile court implemented an approach that is strongly recommended by the experts: individualisation of the programme content by the juvenile social services, in collaboration with psychologists, and an institutional and public-oriented vision of the whole framework, as well as the involvement of institutions and civil society actors (Caparesi and Tamborini, 2019). It is an approach that can be considered holistic, capable of conveying different professional skills, each as a part of the patchwork solution to address the individual critical aspects and all the vulnerabilities concerned in the particular situation. Hence, in addition to psychological support, a “spiritual” guide was also designated to address the boy’s lack of empathy and the absence of emotions towards the consequences of such an action. The boy’s job was to engage in a discussion about Islam and theological scholarships, to learn to detect the abuse of the teachings of Islam perpetrated by violent groups, and to subvert the mystification provided by Takfirist narratives. This is undoubtedly the most interesting part, which also marks the main difference from case 1.2), because of the choice of a religion-oriented approach, although of a hybrid or mixed kind, owing to the presence of a civil mentor and a psychological counsellor as well. Aware of the insufficiency of a partial vision, the court order managed to achieve effective and substantial inclusion via equal participation in civil society. The boy was kept offline all the time and performed activities in favour of disabled people, victims of violence, with quite different social and cultural backgrounds. The aim was to give him an active and concrete experience and interaction with intercultural dynamics in everyday life, rather than to implement a simple disengagement action.

There is more than one lesson to be learned. It can definitively be deemed a strategy worthy of dissemination, both owing to its extreme attention towards the individual and the “biographic” elements that can often make the difference (Orsini, 2017), even in the progressive development of more “radical” attitudes (Dambrosio and Caringella, 2018), and to the solution, via empirical tools, of the aspects that a problematic background had exacerbated. Quite important, in addition, is the close, focused, and constant work coordinated by the juvenile court, in which the role of intelligence was just a small part of the action, before it was handed over to civil society and its public and private actors. That is to say, “security” was just a part of the answer and not the only answer per se. Moreover, the proactive and brilliant solution provided by an Italian court prevented the conviction of a young boy – who had never denied his responsibility – and enabled his concrete interaction, rather than mere integration, into the same society he wanted to fight, creating new bonds of mutuality and civil commitments. At the end of the programme, which lasted until May 2020, the judge ruled that the offence was extinct.

Case law 1.2)⁶⁵ stems from the legislative framework concerning criminal preventive measures against “socially dangerous” individuals.⁶⁶ Preventive measures can address individuals who, according to preliminary judicial investigations, are considered “dangerous” for society and its safety, in order to prevent the commission of unlawful actions. Thus, they are issued at the *ante-delictum* stage. They can also be “atypical” in their content, and hence able to respond effectively to new challenges or to the specificities of each case. The pragmatic role played by “criminal preventive measures” is quite symptomatic of the urgency to intervene already at an early stage.

This case is quite different from the previous one, pertaining to an Italian man under “special” surveillance, after an investigation conducted by DIGOS for suspected international terrorism and apology of terrorism. In case law 1.2), we again find progressive “indoctrination” via online propaganda, thus confirming the well-known role this virtual context can play. However, another element was marked as highly significant: the conversion to Islam. While irrelevant in itself, it was considered the first stage of a progressively strong extremist attitude, especially in connection with a harsh critique towards the Italian state and its institutions.

Moreover, the court evaluated that limiting his freedom of circulation or merely imposing “good-behaviour” obligations would prove insufficient. Hence, a sort of “on-the-case” re-educational programme was put together by the General Prosecutor. Once again, a multi-agency approach was chosen, but with a social, cultural, and “constitutional” design and a secular-oriented counternarrative. The General Prosecutor of Bari himself – as authorised by the judge of preliminary investigation – tailored its content while taking into account the specific features of the situation, in collaboration with the University of Bari, which would draw up all the guidelines regarding the de-radicalisation process, together with the support of a mediator and not a religious mentor. Indeed, a mediator was considered more suitable in and for a secular legal framework, on the assumption that a programme based on dissertations about Islamic theology would paradoxically result in a violation of the freedom of religion (Martucci, 2017), through an imposed “version” selected by the public institutions, also considering that Islam does not have a single voice. This “neutral” approach was considered more compliant with the secular pattern of the Italian system and when balancing all the fundamental principles at stake “religion” was left out of the picture.

As such, the case of the Tribunal of Bari appears quite an exception to the general Italian trend since it emphasises “other” elements in certain unlawful behaviours, commonly (and instrumentally) linked to a static concept of “religion”. Therefore, “a civil constitutional ethics based on rights, aimed at establishing a just and democratic society”⁶⁷ was chosen as a guiding principle. It embodied a fair and effective strategy regardless of the kind of extremism, since it was able to adapt to its different aspects and to adjust its responses according to the different facets. The Court of Bari overturned (and “overruled”) quite a strong set of prejudices and biases. Not only did this strategy undermine the religion/foreigner, foreigner/terrorist, and disengagement as the sole detachment from “religion” equations, but, by overcoming several stereotypes, it proved capable of providing effective and

⁶⁵ On the topic, see Valente, V. (2017) “Misure di prevenzione e de-radicalizzazione religiosa alla prova della laicità (a margine di taluni provvedimenti del Tribunale di Bari)”, *Stato, Chiese e Pluralismo Confessionale*, no.37; Martucci, L.S: (2018) “Laicità e diritti nei programmi di deradicalizzazione dal terrorismo religioso”, *Dirittifondamentali.it*, no.2, <http://dirittifondamentali.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Martucci-Laicit%C3%A0-e-diritti-nei-programmi-di-deradicalizzazione.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Category referred to lett. d), art. 4, Legislative Decree no. 159/11 (as recently amended by L. no. 161/2017), those “who, operating in groups or individually, carry out preparatory, relevant, direct acts (...) to the commission of crimes with terrorist purposes, including international ones, or to take part in a conflict in foreign territory in support of an organisation that pursues the terrorist purposes as referred in art.270 sexies of the Criminal Code”.

⁶⁷ Martucci, L.S. “Laicità e diritti nei programmi di deradicalizzazione dal terrorismo religioso”, cit., p.11.

individualised responses within the legal framework and its own fundamental principles, thus achieving a fair, proportional, and non-discriminatory balance between them.

Case Study 2

The school programme against radicalisation in the Marche region

This programme, considered “a further improvement” of other regional experiences mentioned in Section 5, has been carried out since February 2020 through collaboration between the regional office for education and the Exit cooperative based in Udine. It was supervised by Dr Cristina Caparesi, a psychologist with several years of expertise in the field of sectarianism, extremism, and radicalization. According to Dr Caparesi, who was interviewed for this report, schools can – and do – play a crucial role in primary prevention, since they are able to “educate” everyone who attends them. Thus, this programme aims to provide teachers with a basic sensitiveness in order to prevent radicalisation by focusing on recurrent features, and to teach more about monitoring strategies. In addition, in Dr Caparesi’s opinion, schools can provide for secondary prevention as well, particularly in early approaches, since teachers are able to detect at-risk situations and can offer specific “on-the-case” support, especially in situations in which extremist views can turn into radicalised ones.

Thus, also modelled on a multi-agency approach – with the involvement of social and clinical psychologists, political and intercultural pedagogues – the programme aims to develop teachers’ general knowledge on the topic and improve basic skills in order to organise preventive activities and *ad hoc* interventions. The programme is structured at two main levels, depending on the school staff it is addressed to and the degree of assessment of different kinds of extremism.⁶⁸ The first one provides essential tools to manage the emergence of “radical” behaviours which deserve attention, while focusing on analogies and differences between different kinds of extremism. Additionally, it pays close attention to radicalisation and its ideological core, while leaving aside mainstream narratives and stereotypes about culture and religion. At the second level, the acquired knowledge becomes more technical, since attention is paid to the increase in often underestimated dynamics, such as conspiracy theories and Shoah negationist trends. However, both levels aim to increase pluralist methods to develop non-violent and non-conflictual communication, through supervised discussion on controversial and polarising issues. Furthermore, the programme raises awareness on prevention and the contrastive methodologies already activated in European systems, with quite an innovative “comparative” attitude which should also be implemented in school education. Additionally, it duly analyses and acknowledges online and offline recruitment mechanisms (grooming), detects risks, and protects vulnerable students, by learning to identify the role played by radical narratives and trying to manage sensitive and polarising topics for debate in the classroom in “peaceful way”. Among the abovementioned objects, the programme helps teachers select sensitive topics and provide students with practical exercises and activities to prevent online radicalisation, to be modulated according to each individual teaching methodology.

The programme has led to the elaboration of an “observation” grid, the so-called “GREG-4D model” based on a “quantitative and qualitative” assessment of specific radicalisation “indicators”. This tool gives a privileged point of view on “what” has to be monitored, “how” and for “how long” a certain extremist behaviour occurs. As far as teenagers and young people are concerned, these markers involve:

1. Vulnerabilities and general risk *factors*
2. Polarisation factors and “dichotomic” *thinking*

⁶⁸ The first level is aimed at teachers, whereas the second one is for head teachers.

3. Mobilisation factors that can lead to violent *actions*
4. *Protective* factors which can help support cases at risk of radicalisation, while focusing on positive elements in the individual background, instead of on the dangerous behaviour per se.

The programme was implemented in Emilia-Romagna in 2021 as well. Its effectiveness, the proposed innovative pattern, and the multidisciplinary environment have led to a successful model that deserves dissemination.

7. Conclusion

The Italian approach in shaping de-radicalisation responses is undoubtedly still under construction. The tendency to reshape the existent criminal law framework to face new challenges has led to a fragmented picture. On the one hand, the political pattern in extremism is almost neglected, on the other, the role of religion seems overemphasised. Consequently, freedom of religion is given privileged focus as a self-sufficient strategy, especially in the prison's context, showing a partial vision that fails to consider political (or other different) data as the other side of the coin. Hence, normative choices focused on emergency and security measures, and the build-up of different kinds of regulations at all levels, fail to give a systemic response to all the facets of the issue, revealing the shortcomings of a fragmented legislative technique. Even though the parliamentary debate seems inert on the topic at the national level, this does not necessarily mean that the phenomenon is unknown. More simply and more likely, it is probably perceived as complex – as the multidisciplinary panels with experts testify – and seen more as an “urgency”, rather than a real *priority*. At the subnational level, the background appears quite similar: widespread regional autonomy often leads to extremely diversified local policies, making for a fuzzy picture. In some cases, we see quite advanced policy-framing strategies, as well as good efforts to formulate structured programmes, but in others it is difficult to collect data, due to the lack of any form of regional action, or its lack of publicity. Much of the work is assigned to civil society, the third sector, associations, and solidaristic cooperation between citizens. In this connection, at the macro level, the Dambruoso Manciuilli bill has certainly proved “far-sighted” in providing a coordinated system which links the regional and local levels to the national scale. All the interviewed experts highly recommend developing this point further.

Additionally, situations able to foster an escalation in violence have not gone completely unnoticed, such as football or other sports matches, or particular public events. This form of awareness, however, only grasps the macroscopic level of the phenomenon, when extremist ideologies or ideas have already turned into a concrete threat. According to one of our interviewees, indeed, any kind of environment can be the ideal milieu for the spread of extremism: football supporters clubs, fast food restaurants, meeting points, migrants' detention centres, mosques, and so on. Quite a striking recurrent narrative is that the latter are no longer the cornerstone of “religious radicalisation” dynamics, as they perhaps were twenty years ago. While cases of imams being expelled from Italy are still reported, due to their propaganda or radical ideas, more attention should be paid to the enlarged space of metropolitan cities and their social segmentations.

Indeed, according to the interviewed experts, in urban and peri-urban spaces some social conflicts already experienced in other European countries are becoming increasingly evident in Italy as well. Nonetheless, the causal link between radicalisation, marginalisation, and integration issues, as well

as the equation with indigence or situations of hardship, have been critically assessed as “weak”.⁶⁹ This necessarily requires additional investigations, since the alienation-grievance paradigm cannot be used to sum up such a complex phenomenon and it can also prove to be inconsistent with specific experiences and local dynamics, fostering the urgency for further research.

Then, as far as the role of the courts is concerned, they definitely have provided interesting and proactive solutions, at both top and local jurisdiction levels. However, the implication is that each forum can choose its own “parameters”. This seems quite inevitable, since the judicial response *has to be* different, depending on the circumstances and features of each case. The pathological aspect, though, is grounded on the fact that the good action prototypes come from case law, urging the question of whether a remedial perspective can become a sustainable long-term model. Similar remarks concern the prisons context. Here a more individualised approach is needed, since the mere promotion of freedom of religion per se is considered by experts quite a naïve way to deal with disengagement and envisage de-radicalisation programmes. Furthermore, as will be further suggested in the policies annex, the penitentiary environment needs specific interventions, both in terms of staff training and criteria concerning allocation choices, since the latter are still partially affected by overcrowding.⁷⁰ Undeniably, the allocation and so-called preliminary “triage” deserve greater attention (Delvecchio, 2017), since an individual assessment of the general background of prisoners involving different actors and expertise takes place at this early stage.⁷¹

To conclude, right-wing extremism, and white and national supremacism seem to be the main phenomena requiring monitoring in the current Italian scenario, in addition to “conspiracy theories” and the spread of misleading fake news that can increase polarisation on debated issues.⁷² These micro-dynamics are often neglected, however. In addition, how certain narratives can generate more and more conflictual counternarratives is also ignored. This trend can be found in very different realities in the European context, and in the USA too. Extremist trends show dynamic and ever-changing geographies. During the Covid–19 pandemic, some polarisations seemed quite close to breaking out,⁷³ due to the fiery public debate and the contestation of “public opinion”, but also in clear, open, and violent dissent vis-à-vis governmental policies.

⁶⁹See, for instance, *Youth, Wealth and Education Found to be Risk Factors for Violent Radicalisation*, https://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2014-03/qmuo-ywa031714.php.

⁷⁰ See, on the topic, the well-known *Torreggiani and Others v Italy* 43517/09 (ECHR, 8 January 2013).

⁷¹ For a comprehensive analysis, see F. Delvecchio, *il Detenuto a rischio radicalizzazione e i rimedi della prevenzione terziaria: triage iniziale, scelta allocativa e ruolo degli operatori penitenziari*, *Diritto Penale Contemporaneo*, 6/2017, <https://archiviodpc.dirittopenaleuomo.org/upload/9718-delvecchio617.pdf>. This procedure presents some caveats as well (art. 14 Law on the penitentiary system and art. 24 Regulation on the penitentiary system). Indeed, as the author underlines, it is not just the fulfilment of a bureaucratic requirement, but a precise choice that can greatly affect the prisoner’s whole prison experience, also considering that this choice undergoes no review.

⁷² B. Lucini (2020), *Extremist Avantgarde and Fake News in Time of Pandemic*, <https://www.itstime.it/w/extremist-avantgarde-and-fake-news-in-time-of-pandemic1-by-barbara-lucini/>. The misleading narratives about migrants as jihadists, or in current times, as being responsible for the spread of Covid–19 are emblematic, see <https://www.amnesty.it/migranti-casi-dimportazione-e-covid-19-si-evitino-stigma-e-discriminazione/>. The Italian Carta di Roma association was specifically created to debunk this fake news: <https://www.cartadiroma.org/>. Its name recalls the Ethics Protocol for Correct Information on Immigration Issues document (Charter of Rome), signed by the Consiglio nazionale dell’Ordine dei Giornalisti (CNOG – National Council of Journalists) and the Federazione Nazionale della Stampa Italiana (FNSI – National Federation of the Italian Press) in June 2008, <https://www.unhcr.org/it/risorse/carta-di-roma/>.

⁷³ “Estrema destra ed estrema sinistra in tempi pandemici: alcune riflessioni”, <https://www.startinsight.eu/react2021-destra-sinistra-lucini-it/>.

Annexes

Annex I: Overview of the legal framework on radicalisation & de-radicalisation

Legislation title (original and English) and number	Date	Type of law	Object/summary of legal issues related to radicalization	Link
Legge sull'ordinamento penitenziario (Law on the penitentiary system) 354/1975	26.07.1975	Statute	Penitentiary system	link
Regolamento sull'ordinamento penitenziario (Decree of the President of the Republic n. 230/2000, Regulation on the penitentiary system and privative measures of liberty) 230/2000	30.06.2000	Regulation	Penitentiary system	link
Disposizioni urgenti per contrastare il terrorismo internazionale (Urgent Provisions to Counter International Terrorism) 438/2001	15.12.2001	Statute	Counter-terrorism agenda	link
Disposizioni urgenti per contrastare il terrorismo internazionale (Urgent Provisions to Counter International Terrorism 155/2005)	31.07.2005	Statute	Counter-terrorism agenda	link
Disposizioni urgenti per contrastare il terrorismo internazionale (Urgent Provisions to Counter International Terrorism 43/2015)	21.04.2015	Statute	Counter-terrorism agenda	link
Norme per il contrasto al terrorismo (Counter-terrorism law) 153/2016	28.07.2016	Statute	Counter-terrorism agenda	link
Modifiche al titolo V della parte seconda della Costituzione (Amendments to the Title V of the Constitution 3/2001)	18.10.2001	Constitutional Law	Decentralization, State and sub-national levels	link

NATIONAL CASE LAW

Case number	Date	Name of the court	Object/summary of legal issues related to radicalization	Link
1146	1988	Constitutional Court	Fundamental Principles (1-12 Cost.) cannot be amended in any case, since they are the very core of the Italian Republic	link
24103	2017	Court of Cassation	Islamic State and Jihad. Proselytism	link
51654	2018	Court of Cassation	International Terrorist associations and local cells	link
50189	2017	Court of Cassation	Definition of criminal offence and participation in terrorist association	link
46308	2012	Court of Cassation	Jihadist Ideology and criminal offence	link
48001	2016	Court of Cassation	Indoctrination and criminal offence	link

OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES

	Constitutional provisions	Statutory law (statutes, rules, regulations etc.)	Important case law	Comments/issues relevant to radicalization
Freedom of religion and belief	arts. 8, 19, 20 Cost.			
Minority rights	arts. 3, 6 Cost.	I. n. 482/1999, Law on the protection of <i>historical</i> linguistic minorities) I. n. 38/2001 Norme a tutela della minoranza linguistica slovena nella regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Law for the protection of the Slovenian linguistic minority in the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia).		
Freedom of expression	arts. 21 Cost.	I. n. 645/1952 Introduction of the criminal offence of apology for fascism		
Freedom of assembly	art. 17 Cost.			
Freedom of association/political parties etc.	arts. 18,49, XII transitional and final provision Cost.		Constitutional Court sent. n. 203/1975	Political Participation

Hate speech/ crime	arts. 2, 3, 21 Cost.	d.lgs. n. 21/2018 Introduction of art. 604 bis "Propaganda and incitement to crime on the grounds of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination" and 604 ter of the Criminal Code as an aggravating circumstance l. n. 115/2016 Introduction of the aggravating circumstance of Holocaust, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes negationism		
Church and state relations	arts. 8, 19 Cost	Lateran Treaty l. 810/1929) Villa Madama Agreement 121/1985	Constitutional Court, sent 203/1988	Italian secularism
Surveillance laws	art. 117.2 let. d) and h)	New organization of the Public Security Administration l. 121/81.		
Right to privacy	arts. 14, 15 Cost.	d. lgs. n. 196/2003 Privacy Code, as amended by d. lgs 101/2018		

Annex II: List of Institutions dealing with radicalisation & de-radicalisation

Authority (English and original name)	Tier of government (national, regional, local)	Type of organization	Area of competence in the field of radicalization & deradicalization	Link
Ministry of Justice Ministero della Giustizia	National	Ministry	Department of Penitentiary Administration	link link
Ministry of Defense Ministero della Difesa	National	Ministry	Armed Forces ROS (Special operational group, Raggruppamento Operativo Speciale) Prevention, Investigations	link link link
Ministry of the Interior, Ministero dell'Interno	National	Ministry	Department of public security Prevention and counteractions Police, DIGOS (General Investigations and Special Operations Division, Divisione Investigazioni Generali e Operazioni Speciali) Department of the civil liberties and immigration Integration strategies	link link link link
Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche sociali	National	Ministry	Inclusion, National Plan of social policies	link
Ministry for Education, University and Research Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca	National	Ministry	Integration of foreign students, support for project in schools, support for programs	link
Bureau for the promotion of equal treatment and the removal of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin, Ufficio per la promozione della parità di trattamento e la rimozione delle discriminazioni fondate sulla razza o	National	Independent authority (Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers)	Improving social inclusion, counter actions against discrimination	link

sull'origine etnica, UNAR				
Observatory for security against discriminatory action, Osservatorio per la sicurezza contro gli atti discriminatori, OSCAD	National	Ministry of the Interior		link
National Prisoners' Ombudsman, Garante nazionale dei diritti delle persone private della libertà personale	National	Independent body	Protection of prisoners' rights and dignity, guarantee of the detainees' phyco-physic well-being	link
Counter-terrorism Strategic Analysis Committee, Comitato di Analisi Strategica Antiterrorismo, C.A.S.A	National	Committee	Preventive, security, special investigation on financial activities, monitoring the propaganda on the web, coordination with international level	link
Information system for the Republic security Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della Repubblica	National	Bodies and Authorities	Intelligence, prevention	link
Council for the relationships with Italian Islam	National	Council (Ministry of the Interior)	Inter-cultural and interreligious dialogue, integration, drafting of agreement and protocols	link
Italian Islamic Confederation, Confederazione Islamica Italiana, CII	National	Association, third sector	Intercultural and Interreligious dialogue, integration, advocacy, participation in projects and programs, counternarrative, arrangement of project	link
Union of the Islamic communities and organizations in Italy, Unione delle comunità e organizzazioni islamiche in Italia, UCOII	National	Association, third sector	Promotion of interreligious dialogue, counternarratives, Drafting of protocols and agreement at a local level	link
Antigone	National	Association, third sector	Advocacy and promotion of prisoners' rights and dignity	link
National Network against hatred, Rete nazionale contro l'odio	National	Association, third sector	Guidelines drafting, advocacy, counternarrative against hate speech, discrimination and polarizing fake news	https://www.retecontrotolodio.org

Carta di Roma Association, Associazione Carta di Roma	National	Association, third sector	Counternarratives and debunking of fake news and misleading discourses against migrants, monitoring of national press, deontology and ethics in journalism and reporting	https://www.cartadiroma.org
Institute for International Political Studies, Istituto per gli Studi Internazionali, ISPI	National		Research and analysis, is a privileged interlocutor as one of the most important study centres in Italy	link
Centre of International Studies, Centro di Studi Internazionali, Ce.si	National		Research and reporting	link
Observatory on Radicalism and the Fight against Terrorism, Osservatorio sul radicalism e il contrasto al terrorismo, ReACT	National		Information and updates	link

Annex III: Best Practices/Interventions/Programmes

National level

	Institution(s)	Aim	Source	Evidence of effectiveness / literature
1. Juvenile Court of Trieste	Judiciary	Young foreign boy disengagement, through religious counternarrative and social activities in a multicultural environment	link link link	Extinction of the criminal offence, through the effectiveness of the individualized program, carried out with a multi-agency approach and taking into consideration specific biographical aspects that led to radicalization through Isis Telegram channels
2. Tribunal of Bari, decree n. 71/17	Judiciary	Italian man disengagement through an individual program, in addition to a special preventive measure as a socially dangerous person	link link link	Individual program carried out through a civil mentoring and a mediator, in order to strengthen Italian constitutional values and trust towards democracy, rather than relying on a religious counternarrative, chosen by institution, as a tool non-compliant with the secular Italian legal system
TRIVALENT, "Terrorism pRevention via rAdicalisation countER-NarraTive"	EU, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, police offices of other member states, Turin Metropolitan City and Italian academics	Develop counterviolence measures at a cultural and communication level. Awareness-raising and training of public security agents, in order to provide them with guidelines for a common action	link	

Sub-national/Regional level

	Institution(s)	Aim	Source	Evidence of effectiveness / literature
1. Training and research activities to understand and prevent the phenomena and processes of violent radicalization , l. n. 24/2017	Lombardy Region	Promotion of initiatives for the prevention involving schools, universities, local police officers as well as associations dealing with integration programs of extremisms, including the 'religious' one, through legality and respect for differences, with the support of institutions and media	http://normelombardia.consiglio.regione.lombardia.it/NormeLombardia/Accessibile/main.aspx?exp_coll=lr002017110600024&view=showdoc&iddoc=lr002017110600024&selnode=lr002017110600024	
2. Convention between the Lombardy region and the regional education office for the implementation of the project "education to differences to fight all forms of violent extremism	Lombardy Region and regional education office	In-depth teaching staff training, also addressed to students and their parents, in order to help them in advancing their knowledge about phenomena of violent extremism in general	http://www.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/protolo15787_16_settembre_2016/ https://usr.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/2018/6/?cat=422 https://usr.istruzione.lombardia.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/m_pi.AOODRLO.REGISTRO-UFFICIALEU.0010066.24-05-2019-1.pdf	
3. Marche Region	Region	Development of a general knowledge on the topic and at the improvement of essential basic skills to arrange preventive activities and <i>ad hoc</i> interventions	https://www.usrmarche.it/moodle/pluginfile.php?file=%2F1517%2Fmod_resource%2Fcontent%2F1%2Fm_pi.AOODRMA.REGISTRO%20UFFICIALE%28U%29.0004572.08-03-2019.pdf	
YEIP, "Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project"	Liguria Region and the cooperative "Anziani E Non Solo" from Carpi (Emilia Romagna) with the partnership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies	Raise awareness among new generations about the consequences and risks of radicalization, through a full preventive approach	link	

Local level

	Institution(s)	Aim	Source	Evidence of effectiveness / literature
1. Turin preventive strategy, guidelines for the establishment of a multi-agency panel for the prevention of violent extremism	Turin Metropolitan City	Local strategy also in collaboration with the RAN network, in order to share useful information and skills for prevention purposes, to offer support in disengagement processes and to render civil society resilient to the phenomenon. The approach is that of safety, rather than security, through a collective and a multi-agency activity	http://www.comune.torino.it/cittagora/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Linee-guida-istituzione-tavolo.pdf	
2. C4C, first program ever tested in Italy: "Counternarrative for counterterrorism"	Turin Metropolitan City	Carried out in schools, , it aims at training and informing students about all the facets of extremism and its manifestations, also dealing with sensitive, debated, contemporary issues	link	
3. PACTESUR	Turin Metropolitan City and Anci (National Association of Italian Municipalities), in collaboration with City of Nice and Liege	Addressed to local and other member state police officers, it was aimed at creating general guidelines for actions and to assess the best way in getting 'fair' communicative standards, which could lead the activities of all local and territorial authorities	link	
FAIR, "Fighting Against Inmates Radicalization"	"Nuovo Villaggio del Fanciullo" foundation based in the city of Ravenna (Emilia-Romagna) and the "InEuropa" association with the support of European partners	Train the prison staff, especially in gaining appropriate tools and methodology to support the most vulnerable or marginalized inmates within the prison community, learning to cope with vulnerabilities exposed to the attraction of an extremist message	link	

Annex IV: Policy recommendations

- Three essential soft skills are needed: community policies – detecting sources of grievance or specific at-risk cases – a multi-agency approach – accredited experts from different professional areas – and community intelligence – a preventive strategy that has proven to be effective.
- A *holistic* approach, which takes into account every single aspect of extremism, should be implemented in combination with a *mixed* legal approach which has uniform premises and guidelines for action but is flexible and can be adapted according to the cases and circumstances; however, it must not result in a fragmentation of responses.
- Soft programmes able to support intelligence and anti-terrorism networks should be envisaged, since a hard approach does not suit the Italian case. To this end, the experts highly recommend setting up special centres and facilities.
- It is highly recommended to create legal grounds for the action: that is, so that all the actors involved can work freely and professionally in activities that deal with community “safety”, while determining responsibilities and solving the problem of “accountability”.
- A coordinated institutional network should be created between all the actors who already deal with the issue in informal ways. The current Italian situation still allows a case-by-case approach, but experts recommend creating an official institutional network, so that solutions do not have to be found from scratch each and every time. This prevents the circulation of good practices, since most cases are confidential due to fact that they typically pertain to criminal investigations and procedures or are related to sensitive cases. The current projects are mostly developed thanks to European support and funding, and enable monitoring activities to be carried out. Nevertheless, research centres and stakeholders sporadically meet to discuss and share ideas.
- Training courses should be arranged to develop specific expertise and professional roles with a multidisciplinary background: they should be permanently on offer in prefectures at the local level, in order to respond to the critical issues in each territory, and provide the first level of coordination between the local and the regional, and, then, the national tier of government.
- The CCR and CRAD network set out in the Dambrosio-Manciulli bill establishes a “rational, replicable, and logical action” compliant with an effective counteraction against any kind of extremism.
- The penitentiary environment needs specific interventions, both in terms of staff training and criteria concerning allocation choices. The so-called preliminary “triage” deserves greater attention. The advice is not to draft static and inflexible principles and guidelines – mostly based on stereotypical parameters such as a person’s appearance: clothes, a long beard, lukewarm or conservative beliefs – but to ensure fair allocation procedures, with an individualised rationale.

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