COUNTERING TERRORISM OR UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY? LOCATING CIVIL SOCIETY IN EU COUNTER TERRORISM STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Friend, enemy, instrument, or partner? What is the role of civil society in the EU's fight against terrorism? Recently, think tanks, governments, and international institutions have prescribed a strong and active civil society as the ultimate strategy for preventing terrorism and radicalization. Meanwhile, even though scholars have analysed a plethora of possible strategies for preventing and deterring terrorism, this assumed utility of civil society has been largely ignored in academic literature.

To address this question, this study thus seeks to understand the ways in which policymakers working within EU institutions perceive the role of civil society in counter terrorism efforts while engaging civil society in their counterterrorism strategies. Subsequently, this analysis follows these intentions through to the documentation stage of EU counter terrorism initiatives involving civil society actors and organizations. Document analysis informed by in-depth interviews with representatives from EU institutions and the civil society organizations working with the EU is carried out to understand their plans and actions. Writing specifically with evidence-based policies in mind, this paper finds that the most effective role for civil society in counter terrorism is inherent in its purpose and that mobilizing civil society to focus on terrorism has the potential to be counterproductive.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Friend, enemy, instrument, or partner? What is the role of civil society in the EU's fight against terrorism? Recently, think tanks, governments, and international institutions have prescribed a strong and active civil society as the ultimate strategy for preventing terrorism and radicalization (Abrahams 2018; UNODC 2019). Meanwhile, even though scholars have analysed a plethora of possible strategies for preventing and deterring terrorism, this assumed utility of civil society has been largely ignored in academic literature (Gassebner and Luechinger 2011). This leaves an important strain of policy under the umbrella of counter terrorism unsupported by evidence, especially within the EU, which has made a point to engage civil society since the 2004 Madrid attack that inspired their ambitious prevention plan to address terrorist threats (NCTV 2012; Bossong 2014). To make matters worse, the existing literature written on the impact of counter terrorism strategies on civil society only describes situations in which the independence and freedom of civil society has been compromised due to the politics of fear dictating state-civil society relationships throughout The War on Terror (Whitaker 2007; Jude and Howell 2009; Jude and Howell 2010; Njoku 2017; Njoku 2018; Buyse 2018). Thus, this leaves two important questions that must be addressed not only to ensure effective counter terrorism strategies, but also to ensure the health of democracies: is engaging civil society an effective counter terrorism strategy? If so, how should this be done without compromising the freedom of civic spaces for the short-term security of the state?

To address these questions, this study thus seeks to understand the ways in which policymakers working within EU institutions perceive the role of civil society in counter terrorism efforts while engaging civil society in their counterterrorism strategies. Subsequently, this analysis follows these intentions through to the documentation stage of EU counter terrorism initiatives involving civil society

actors and organizations. Document analysis informed by in-depth interviews with representatives from EU institutions and the civil society organizations working with the EU will be carried out to understand their plans and actions. Writing specifically with evidence-based policies in mind, this paper seeks to analyze whether the plans regarding civil society logically correspond to policy recommendations based on academic research. It places policy briefs and government documents in conversation with the literature on effective counter terrorism measures and the potential roles for civil society in preventing terrorism, finding that civil society has the potential to carryout preventative measures when it comes to the root causes of terrorism. However, as previous studies argue, engaging civil society to the extent that its sole purpose is structured around preventing terrorism has serious consequences that undermine the original intention of safeguarding democracy from the threat of terrorism.

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Chapter 2: The Theoretical Frameworks

2.1 Civil Society, Terrorism, and CT as Concepts: Between Theory and Practice

Civil society, terrorism, and counter terrorism are all contested concepts in academic literature. However, before entering the following discussion on previous theories regarding civil society and counter terrorism some clarity must be established. This section will provide an overview of these concepts including current debates surrounding their definitions along with questions raised when operationalizing the concepts to carry out an analysis.

Historically, scholars have been far from reaching an agreement when it comes to theories and definitions related to civil society, creating a contested and ambiguous terrain for the topic. Motivated by this ambiguity, Jean L Cohen and Andrew Arato set out to reconstruct the concept in their analysis of civil society in political theory (1994). In the end they see civil society as "a sphere of social interaction between economy and state" composed of different subsections of civil society: family life, associations (especially voluntary), social movements, and forums of public communication. Their work is presented as contributing to democratic theory with their understanding of civil society maintaining the ability to greatly influence the state and economy through progressing democratic culture. Despite the fact that their categories prove difficult to operationalize, the theoretical subgroups they present are important to understanding the role of civil in counter terrorism in terms of the composition of civil society. For example, civil society organizations are certainly associations, but their mission and activities can largely fall in the domain of social movements that use forums of public communication to carry out their work. Nonetheless their systematic conceptualization built on centuries of work is useful to better understand what is meant by civil society in counter terrorism efforts. Not to mention that through their analysis Cohen and Arato demonstrate the significance of civil society in building and maintain healthy democracies.

Returning to the subgroups of civil society, in practice this will encompass organizations and actors working in the third sector- those theoretically separated from the state or economy. Nonprofit and human rights organizations compose the part of civil society that have been prescribed a role in counter terrorism as well as fit into the academic models, however when it comes to the negative impact of counter terrorism policies on civil society, the consequences have reached all areas of civil society including but not limited to: labor unions, charities, religious organizations and especially human rights organizations opposing the government. Yet, it is important to note that organizations included as part of civil society do not necessarily contribute to the development of civil society. Alan Whaites contradicts the widely accepted opinion, "civil associations are the building blocks of civil society" in his criticism of nonprofit organizations that replace the government in carrying out services in exchange for financial support, which ultimately leaves these entities dependent on the government rather than acting on behalf of grassroot interests and needs (1996). Because of this co-option by the government, Whaites argues that these nonprofits should not be considered part of civil society. From a philosophical perspective, Mary Kaldor comments on the ways in which the majority of policy makers around the globe understand civil society as purely nonprofit organizations within the context of the War on Terror and gives a harsh warning that funding nonprofit organizations is not strengthening civil society (Neumann and Weinberg 2008). Kaldor observes that the rise in nonprofit organizations matches trends in political apathy, which is characterized by the lack of critical thinking and active citizenship. To explain the ways in which civil society is strengthened or harmed she uses the terms "bonding" and "bridging" capital. The former consists of donors funding civil society organizations to carryout projects envisioned by the donor thus creating a top-down relationship while the latter is used for healthier practices in which donors and organizations collaborate to design and implement projects. Ultimately, Kaldor advocates for completely replacing The War on Terror with a robust plan on strengthening civil society because she argues that from a normative standpoint the very essence of civil society is the absence of terror.

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Ann Hudock takes a closer look at how these types of organizations are subject to an unhealthy amount of external control by governments due to their financial situations (1999). She documents the ways in which civil society organizations become vulnerable to the state, which can be their only source of funding, leaving them incapable of voicing grassroot concerns or making demands from the government to act on these concerns. Hudock's advocates for sustainable funding practices from states as well as for civil society organizations to diversify their funding by promoting philanthropy in order to avoid a situation in which organizations are dependent on the government(s). For governments and other donors, Hudock recommends budgeting for "no-strings- attached" aid for organizations to use as they see fit in addition to money for specific projects. These arguments are particularly relevant in the context of counter terrorism and The War on Terror in which states increasingly view civil society as an area to be policed as well as a space equipped with the potential to counter terrorism. In this environment civil society is increasingly placed in close proximity to the state and its agenda which puts the independence of civic space at risk.

Like civil society, scholars and practitioners find little to agree on when defining terrorism. Anthony Richards documents the barriers complicating consensus, acknowledging the subjective nature of employing the term "terrorism" or "terrorist" as one of the main challenges (2014). In an environment when "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" Richards explains that while the application of the word has been over-used and in a myriad of ways because of its rhetorical power, the term terrorism carries significant weight which requires a common definition inside, and out, of academia. Richards argues that such a definition must focus on terrorism as a method of political violence rather than essential to any group or individual's identity- shifting focus from the actor to the act, which overcomes many consequences associated with the subjective element of the debate. Moreover, any definition should include intent to provoke negative psychological effects beyond the immediate target. The relationship between state and civil society is far from exempt from this issue of subjectivity surrounding terrorism. As later explained in this paper, the ways in which civil society is employed or

discriminated against in the name of countering or preventing terrorism relates back to who is defined as a terrorist, or even a suspect. This translates into counter terrorism policies unfairly targeting some organizations over others in the form of surveillance and monitoring, as well as choosing empowering certain civil society partners more so than others due to aspects of their identities or mission and activities.

So if there isn't a definition of terrorism, how do we know how to counter or prevent it? As the title and arguments of Martha Crenshaw and Gary LaFree state, there is "no simple solution" (Crenshaw and LaFree, 2017). Crenshaw and LaFree demonstrate the changing positions of administration in the United States to show the inconsistency in counterterrorism definitions, strategies, and visions of success. Moreover, they illustrate that, despite the relatively low number of mass terrorist attacks, most policies post 9/11 have focused their counterterrorism efforts on this type of threat (2017). Entering a similar conversation, Ronald Crelinsten analyzes counterterrorism strategies as always consisting of a "toolbox" in which political actors have the option to use force. By doing so he interrogates the "September 10th" and "September 12th" analysis framework that often characterizes the former as rooted in domestic law enforcement and the latter seen as a new kind of warfare (2009). Thus, the field of counterterrorism studies has begun to interpret the politics and methods of measurement of counterterrorism, yet much work is left to be done.

Ultimately, building and recognizing effective counter terrorism strategies relies on understanding the causes of terrorism. Therefore, this research evaluates counter terrorism measures involving civil society by analyzing how they relate to the causal chains explaining terrorism developed by political science research. Before turning to these theories, previously existing literature on the intersection between counter terrorism and civil society must be addressed. The following section thus provides an overview of the impact of counter terrorism measures on civil society since the beginning of The War on Terror.

2.2 State-Civil Society Relationships Post-9/11 and the Impact of Counter Terrorism Strategies

Excluding a few exceptions, Public Policy and Development Studies are responsible for most of scholarship on the relationship between civil society and counter terrorism strategies since 9/11. Existing theories in the disciplines explain how counter terrorism laws and policies implemented by governments negatively affect the spaces in which civil society organizations operate. A complicated aspect of the state-society relationship is multiple layers of state actors that affect civil society. To fully understand these relationships, the interactions between national and foreign governments, as well as international organizations, and civil societies must be considered. Thus, these theories include stakeholders at the local, national, and international level to analyze the predominantly Western-led counter terrorism efforts on a global scale.

Through her research on the origins and diffusion of anti-terrorism laws and policies, Beth Whitaker demonstrates the extent to which foreign governments (mainly American) influenced counter terrorism efforts in developing countries (Whitaker 2007). In response to the events of 9/11 the United States government led by the Bush administration acted quickly to pass the "Patriot Act", legislating greater access to surveillance tools for investigators, facilitating information sharing procedures between governmental departments, and increasing the punishment for terrorism related crimes. The US then sought to pressure other states to adopt similar laws and policies. American efforts to promote stronger anti-terrorism legislation were accompanied by UN Security Council policies, which required all member states to adopt such laws. Whitaker's analysis highlights the lead role of the US and UN, showing how these actors quickly established themselves as the authority in the War on Terror. Her framework of analysis therefore consists of the influential foreign governments dictating domestic policies in developing countries, demonstrating the extent to which Western-led strategies influence the state-society relationship.

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Interestingly, Whitaker finds that the diffusion process resulted in various outcomes in new and fragile democracies. While some easily adopted the UN framework, others experience public controversy and objection. In addition, Whitaker argues that under these circumstances, in some cases increasingly authoritarian regimes used anti-terrorism laws and policies to oppress the opposition and in others activists led a backlash against the measures. Civil societies in the former context were silenced and, in the latter, motivated to mobilize against the US government- viewed as the oppressor- as well as their own governments.

Not only were international actors influencing developing countries by imposing laws and policies, but they also affected state-civil society relationships through the policies and practices of foreign aid. Leading scholars on this topic, Jude Howell and Jeremy Lind claim that the dynamics between governments and civil society during The War on Terror transformed significantly because of this structure. They describe the "Long War on Terror" as contributing to the "backlash" against civil society following a period of enthusiasm for, investment in, and empowerment of civil societies beginning in the late 1980s (Howell and Lind 2008). In the pre-9/11 period, they argue that civil society was seen as a key ingredient for democratization. Yet in the post-9/11 period, civil society organizations were increasingly regulated and tamed to adhere to counter terrorism strategies. Changes in the global political climate presented the following dilemma: how is the balance between freedom and security preserved while introducing antiterrorism laws in processes of democratization? Howell and Lind, along with Whitaker, argue that the balance was and still is tipped in the favor of security.

In order to "tame" civil society, the international community called for the reorganization of aid and encouraged donors to coordinate their efforts by distributing the money to national governments and by only designating moderate, well-known, and government-friendly organizations as the donor recipients. This resulted in the branding of civil society organizations as "good" or "bad" partners, and also crippled the growth of civil society because this policy favored funding mainstream, established organizations over newly established and progressive projects (Howell and Lind 2008). Within this theory, Howell and

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Lind's framework of analysis consists of a post- 9/11 structure in which the counter terrorism strategy of international organizations and foreign governments influence civil society through national government, which is similar to Whitaker's interpretation of norm diffusion in the case of anti-terrorism laws and policies.

Ten years after the War on Terror began, the phrase "The Shrinking Space for Civil Society", began to appear in international development circles. This term refers to the environment in which civil society faces increasing restrictions on their activities along with decreasing resources that are becoming more difficult to obtain. Civil society actors have gone to great lengths to spread awareness of this global trend, coming together to advocate for policies that reverse this trend (OCHR 2015; CIVICUS 2016). Scholar Antoine Buyse notes that academia, on the other hand, has not addressed this issue to the same extent. Rather than approaching the state-civil society dynamics from the perspective of counter terrorism laws like the scholars cited above, he focuses on the state of civil society and identifies counter terrorism practices as a main cause of the "shrinking space". He finds that anti-terror measures as part of counter terrorism strategies are being easily transformed into anti-NGO measures in many states (Buyse 2018). From a human rights perspective he shows the ways in which vague and arbitrarily applied registration processes and the monitoring of finances for civil society organizations act as obstacles for organizations to carryout activities- thus limiting the right to organize and freedom of expression. Furthermore, he finds that these practices are taking place not only in authoritarian regimes or new democracies, but also in established democracies (Buyse 2018). The shrinking of civic space does not stop there, however. States are also "co-opting" civil society organizations by enlisting them to carryout projects in line with the state's agenda in exchange for resources (commonly in the form of funding) that are otherwise difficult to obtain.

2.3 The Counter Terrorism Policies and Practices Responsible for "Shrinking" Civic Space

While the above section gives an overview of how academic literature analyzes state-civil society relationships post-9/11, this section looks directly at the practices through which states negatively impact civil society organizations and actors in their attempts to counter terrorism. Scholars have written on three main practices: the application of anti-terror laws to restrict civil society, the manufacturing of civil societies in new democracies, and the reduction of civil society organizations to service-delivery arms of governments in their attempts to prevent terrorism.

1. **Applying Anti-terror Laws Arbitrarily**

Vaguely written and arbitrarily applied anti-terror laws are the most obvious ways in which civil society has been negatively affected by counter terrorism policies. In Buyse's article, "Squeezing Civic Space", he identifies the counter terrorism measures of registration processes and financing policies as two of the most problematic measures. He notes that registration processes often involve fees posing a challenge to smaller organizations, and in some cases the unjustified rejection to a registration application because it is coming from a government-unfriendly associations (Buyse 2018). In addition to Buyse's findings, Nicole Bolleyer and Anika Gauja's article, "Combatting Terrorism by Constraining Charities? Charity and Counter Terrorism legislation before and after 9/11" presents an analytical framework which documents how anti-terror laws affect nonprofit organizations. They map any counter terrorism measures that either overlap, have a direct intersection with civic space, or indirectly intersect with the field of nonprifts. They identify the indirect intersections as the most dangerous because of their vague language that has the potential to apply to civil society organizations.

The extent to which financing regulations are negatively impacting civic space is most comprehensively explained in The Charity and Security Network's report, "Financial Access for U.S. Non-profits (Eckert, Guinine, and Hall 2017). This report investigates how the policies of the Financial Action Task Force, and inter-governmental policy-making and enforcement body in which the EU

Commission participates, affect the work of American NGOs carryout activities both domestically and internationally. The report finds that due to the monitoring of all funding, 37% of organizations have experienced delays in wire transfers up to several months, 26% of organizations face unusual documentation requests, and that international wire transfers are often interrupted despite previous screenings and documentation. All of these issues are a result of the 2001 expanded mandate of the Financial Action Task Force (FAFT), and even though this report focuses on American civil society organizations, it provides insights on civil society in the EU and other member countries because they are subject to the same measures. Moreover, issues with international money transfers greatly impact global civil society as this poses challenges to partner organizations receiving grants from US foundations or organizations, which in some cases can be the only source of funding for civil society in underdeveloped countries.

The key issue is Recommendation 8 of the FAFT's expanded mandate which sees civil society organizations as particularly vulnerable to abuse for the financing of terrorism. Yet, the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, an organization that has been working on this issue since the early 2000s, argues that there is no evidence to support this claim (ECNL 2019). Thus, civil society is greatly restricted across the globe due to these arbitrarily applied measures created without empirical evidence by FAFT.

In the case of these documented restrictions on civil society organizations, civil society is clearly viewed and treated as the enemy- or suspect at best. Civic space is therefore compromised, seriously limiting organizations and actors' deliberative capabilities along with their capacity to carryout checks and balances in democracies as tipping the balance in favor of security over freedom in this context tips the scales in favor of the governments over civil society.

2. **Manufacturing Civil Society**

The theory of foreign governments "manufacturing" local civil society comes from Howell and Lind's case study that describes the state- civil society relationship during the state building process of Afghanistan in the War on Terror context (2009). Due to the precarious security situation in the country

and the impeding War on Terror, the securitization of aid occurred at high levels as the military either accompanied civil society organizations or carried out aid projects directly. The state was largely bypassed in this donor chain, except for a brief period following national elections in 2005. Security interests defined aid, and subsequently, defined civil society. Before 2001 elements of Afghani "modern" civil society existed in subtle ways to make up a proto-civil society. However, the main social fabric consisted of the traditional associations organized by kin and tribal groups through which deliberation on community issues took place. In the state building process, foreign governments largely ignored these traditional structures and instead granted money to and engaged in collaborations with associations led by urban, educated elite. A key part of manufacturing civil society is the absence of civil society actors in policy-making. Throughout the 2000s international civil society organizations were marginal to the political process with invitations to participate in the Bonn Agreement in 2001 and the London Afghanistan Compact in 2006, and the situation for local civil society was even less desirable. This marginalization contributed to the eventual "service delivery" conceptualization of civil society meanwhile the military and foreign diplomatic personnel enjoyed the authority over security and political issues. While the case of manufactured civil societies in Afghanistan mainly concerns US foreign policy, scholars are also critical of the EU's engagement in the Middle East following the Arab Spring. Assem Dandanshley argues that the dominance of the stability-security nexus causes EU institutions to view their democratization efforts as tools to increase border security and to reduce the threat of terrorism (2018). This framework translates into their support for civil society causing donor practices to favor moderately religious groups that do not challenge the status quo of the newly formed government over more conservative partners.

Again, in the case of manufacturing civil societies, security is favored over freedom which has the serious consequence of producing inauthentic civic spaces sculpted by foreign governments in order to promote stability. Howell and Lind note that the consequences manifested in threats against these Western-created organizations as well as many cases of property damage because these initiatives were

seen as purely arms of the West by the local communities they were meant to serve (2009). When civil society is intentionally created in such an environment, its role is that of an instrument and like in the case of anti-terrors laws used to restrict civil society activities, undermines the crucial role civil society is meant to assume in a democracy.

3. Reducing Civil Society to Service-Delivery

Howell and Lind's analysis of Kenya illustrates a different phenomenon occurring between state and civil society (2010). Like Afghanistan, the Kenyan civil society was viewed as an international development assistance tool used to further state security interests by employing the capacity of this space to dismantle terrorist networks. Unlike Afghanistan, Kenya was a stronger state with a vibrant and established civil society. Much of the international development money was channeled through the state, which distributed the funds to "good" organizations. However, in the Kenyan case consists of counter terrorism measures implemented in an increasingly fragmented and divided environment. Throughout the early 2000s counter terrorism policies unequally targeted Muslim groups by excluding them from funding opportunities and through various attempts to impose additional registration policies for their organizations and activities. This motivated Muslim groups, along with human rights activists and lawyers to cultivate a strong, yet unsuccessful, opposition to counter terrorism measures guided by the U.S government and then implemented by the national government. Furthermore, counter terrorism measures were ambiguously implemented outside of legal and policy frameworks through special units sanctioned by the Kenyan government, taking the discussions and formation of policies outside of the public realm of politics to further exclude civil society representatives.

Emeka Thaddues Njoku's case studies of Nigeria maps the process through which the state and security personal confine the capacity of civil society organizations to service delivery through de-legitimizing their political advocacy roles (2018). Despite the acquired expertise of civil society representatives on radicalization and violent extremism, the government strategically excluded them from discussions related to counter terrorism measures. This was aided by a history of the Nigerian government

to prioritize security over human rights. Unlike Kenya, most civil society actors either supported the CTMs or remained silent out of fear of oppression. In similar case study, Njoku describes how CSOs functioned in their roles constructed by the government (2017). He argues that the CSOs agree to furthering state interests in exchange for the government's support, solidifying the role of civil society organizations as subordinate to and dependent on the government. The Nigerian state was reluctant at first to adopt counter terrorism laws and policies imposed on them by foreign governments, but eventually adopted a robust framework for monitoring finances and increasing the powers of the police forces, measures so severe that they prompted criticism from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Thus, whether funding was distributed through the government or given directly to organizations, the government exercised supervision and control of the initiatives. Throughout these studies, Nigeria is described as a stronger state with a history of a vibrant civil society initiated under colonial powers, but one that is increasingly stifled by the current government.

The cases of Kenya and Nigeria ultimately describe a situation in which a relatively active and vibrant civil society is reduced to a service-delivery instrument through counter terrorism measures designed and implemented by foreign and local governments. Like a manufactured civil society, a service-delivery oriented civic space has serious ramifications. Organizations and actors in such an environment cannot choose the issues they would like to confront for fear of prosecution, thus limiting freedom of speech and expression, and in the case that they do attempt to work outside the realm of what was been prescribed by states they are unlikely to obtain the resources to carryout activities.

By analyzing this development studies scholarship through the lens of political science, clear sociopolitical factors present themselves: the strength of the state, the character of civil society, the policy and practices of international donors influenced by the War on Terror, and the extent to which civil society is excluded from the decision making processes. These factors can potential be organized into a causal chain showing that the strength of the state combined with the status of civil society, plus the policy and practices of donors combined with the inclusion or exclusion of civil society. However, the

measurements and concepts of these studies remain largely unclear and therefore this paper's analysis intends to apply the theories and methods of political sciences in order to build from these previous descriptive cases to work towards a concrete theory for the relationships. Rather than focus on the impact of counter terrorism measures, this research aims to understand how and why civil society has been designated as having a "key role" in counter terrorism efforts. The second question addressed is whether this key role can be assumed without compromising the independence and freedom of civil society. The following analysis seeks to open this discussion by evaluating if prominent counter terrorism initiatives carried out by civil society logically address the most recognized reasons for individuals to resort to terrorism.

2.4 The Potential of Civil Society to Prevent and Counter Terrorism

Martha Crenshaw developed the first and most influential framework of analysis for understanding the causes of terrorism (1981). Her model consists of preconditions, which are long-term structural factors enabling terrorist acts, and precipitants, meaning events from which terrorist acts directly follow. Central to this causal chain are grievances held by the actors as well as the opportunity- or lack thereof- for political participation. This understanding ultimately attributes terrorism to political grievances that are unable to be expressed due to political exclusion. Following in Crenshaw's footsteps, many scholars have worked to develop this causal chain into a causal model in order to operationalize variables (Schmid 2005; Newman 2006). This led to the "root causes" theory in which certain conditions of a social environment combined with widespread grievances leads to increased terrorist activity (Newman 2006). Although the theory of root causes is critiqued for its lack of precision and widespread application, its conceptualization of social inequality and exclusion as an enabler or precondition to terrorism is useful in understanding causes behind terrorist acts. Taking these theories into consideration, counter terrorism policies should logically work on increasing political inclusion to effectively counter terrorist activity.

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Counter terrorism strategies at the level of civil society are carried out mainly in the name of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and take the shape of educational programming or community building initiatives promoting social mobility and presenting opportunities for engaging in the local community. Haris Hogan et al attempt to develop a typology and cases study of CVE programs in Australia, but unfortunately find the catch-all nature of CVE problematic. They argue that some CVE programs are effective in reaching target populations with beneficial activities to help disadvantaged communities in conflict areas find employment and education (Harris- Hogan et al 2016)- which is a productive start to addressing the causes of terrorism. Specifically, if these programs are working towards social inequality this could translate into increased political participation and inclusion because greater social equality facilitates political activity (Solt 2008). However, Hagan et al are concerned that these are only a small factor of programs due to disorganized and underdeveloped policies. Additionally, these programs are largely organized and implemented by western countries targeting a specific community. Yet, their specific communities are usually large segments of populations, which can result in the stigmatization of parts of the population. If segments of the population are stigmatized this only increases social and political exclusion. Aly et al confirm these concerns arguing that the Muslim community in Australia suffers from stigmatization and conclude by calling for a reorganization of the CVE paradigm that includes reconceptualization political culture (Aly et al 2015). From these case studies it appears as though rather than countering terrorism through civil society initiatives, governments may be contributing to the causes.

There is another problematic element to CVE as a counter terrorism strategy. In their analysis of electoral systems and terrorism, Deniz Aksoy and David Carter find that while proportional electoral systems experience less terrorism, it is terrorism from what they consider to be committed by "within-group" actors (Aksoy and Carter 2014). These actors hold grievances that the current political system can accommodate. On the contrary, the "anti-system" groups act on grievances that are directly against and

thus theoretically strategies focused on social and political inclusion are not able to counter this type of terrorism.

Another potential role in which civil society could be an effective terrorism partner is the creation of counter narratives to terrorist propaganda online and within communities. As Rahma Osman and Rahma Mekki explain in their study of civil society's involvement in countering radicalization in Malaysia, the counter narrative strategy can be founded in a cultural-critical approach to understanding the causes of radicalization (2017). Contrary to Crenshaw's model, this approach is rooted in critical reflection and uses constructivist methods to understand the causes and possible strategies to prevent terrorism. In the context of Malaysia, NGOs aim to de-legitimize terrorist narratives by providing alternative interpretations of religion that draw on Sufi traditions shaping Islamic practices within the country. Taking this case as an example, Osman and Abdullah argue that every author crafting counter narratives must carefully sculpt their message to the context in which they work in order to de-legitimize the call for conflict and violence. In the case of Europe, counter narratives should include different arguments as compared to Muslim-majority countries, and even within Muslim-majority countries counter narratives should differ because of the variety of traditions and understandings. Kurt Braddock and John Horgan approach the art of counter narratives from a literary standpoint and stress that the construction of counter narratives should be informed by narrative theory to achieve persuasion (2017).

Dipak K. Gupta offers an integrated model for the diffusion of ideas that weaves the constructivist theories of Osman, Mekki, Braddock and Horgan into the positivist models built by Crenshaw, Schmid, and Newman (Gupta 2011). His model is influenced by David Rapoport's Wave Theory of Terrorism, which identifies patterns of four separate waves of terrorism- each lasting roughly 40 years and influenced by a different ideology. Gupta is most interested in the third tenant of the theory relating to the "common predominant energy" that shapes the motivation behind each wave of terrorism. The model explains how "inspiration" of terrorism transpires into action through "opportunity", by

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emphasizing the role of messengers, the message and the receivers along with the social environments of the receivers. The social environments closely relate to Crenshaw's preconditions and the messengers and message are described to either act as a precipitant or highlight a precipitant. On the other hand, rhetoric and narrative are present in the way that the messengers introduce the precipitant. Central to this theory is identity politics as Gupta concludes with *Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities,* stating that grievances of terrorist actors tend not to be ideological, but rather they are looking for a social identity that allows for meaningful inclusion in public life. Again, the issue here is social inclusion which unites the constructivist and positivist thinking in terms of the causes of terrorism. This means that while counter narratives obviously should denounce violence, it is more important that they advocate for tolerance and inclusion within society. Furthermore, counter narratives should not only be targeted towards groups with grievances, but on a broader scale to better facilitate social inclusion.

Through their emphasis on social inclusion, these theoretical understandings of the causes for terrorism and recruitment provide strong arguments for the utility of civil society. After all, most theories regarding the normative purpose of civil society acknowledge the community building aspect of civic space that should facilitate connecting members of society across divides to promote cohesion (Cohen and Arato 1994; Whaites 1996). Focusing on the practical perspective, Nick Sitter and Tom Parker argue that human rights organizations should speak out against terrorism in the form of counter narratives because it is part of their mission to denounce violence (2013). Yet again this a theoretical argument and there is no empirical evidence to shed light on if civil-society led counter narratives are effective. Sitter and Parker do argue that civil society organizations could have an advantage over the state when it comes to speaking out against terrorism because they act on behalf of communities and in that respect assume a third-party mediating role.

Surprisingly, the increasing trend to focus on vulnerable individuals who are at risk to be inspired to commit terrorist attacks through terrorist propaganda has found little justification nor consensus in academic literature. In her attempt to seek a scholarly foundation and empirical evidence for this

phenomenon, "Violent Radicalization in Europe: What We Know and What We Do Not

Know" Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen describes three schools of thought behind this concept: the sociological

perspective attributing radicalization to globalization and weakening community ties, scholars of network

and social movement theory emphasizing the spreading of ideas, and empiricists who focus on the

diversity of causes driving individuals to radicalize (2009). Despite these catch-all

explanations, Dalgaard-Nielsen does not lose faith in the concept of radicalization and instead calls for

individuals who have been de-radicalized to help inform counter narrative efforts.

Anthony Richards explains that the buzz words inundating policy circles, like countering violent

extremism, preventing violent extremism, radicalization, and counter radicalization, are detracting from

the real issues at stake when countering terrorism (2011). In his research, he finds that there is little

consensus as to what any of these terms mean and that all these concepts take agency away from terrorist

actions because they do not acknowledge the rationality of the actors. Moreover, although he supports the

root theory in identifying the causes of terrorism, he recognizes the same issue as Aly et al, which is the

fact that countering violent extremism programs are counterproductive in most applications because they

further stigmatize historically excluded groups. This leads him to expressively encourage counter

terrorism strategies to abandon these wide-range programs that are concerned with the ways in which

people think to refocus on the individuals directly involved in financing and carrying out terrorist attacks.

Mark Sedgwick article, "The Concept of Radicalization as a Source of Confusion" makes similar

claims to Richards' concerns about radicalization and is crucial to the debate because Sedgwick maps the

exact process through which subgroups are stigmatized within Europe through the conceptualization and

application of this term (2010). Sedgwick notes that the root of the issue is the fact that this term has been

appropriated by security, integration, and foreign policy contexts in which the distinction between radical

and moderate thinking and behavior is entirely subjective. This results in group and identity

characteristics labeled as radical, which is then picked up and employed in political rhetoric to aid neo-

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nationalist agendas. As a consequence, these groups and identifying individuals are excluded from the "normal public" and even political processes and rights.

Due to this shaky academic ground on which civil society has been mobilized in recent years to counter terrorism under the name of extremism, radicalization, or counter terrorism, the most logical approach is to return to Crenshaw's model and the root causes that stress the rationality of actors. These theories show that simply empowering and strengthening civil society to be active and vocal on the issues that they have previously identified as important has a great potential to counter terrorism. More importantly, it has the great potential without the danger of stigmatizing and excluded subgroups of society- which according to the model contributes to terrorism rather than counter terrorism. The arguments make a strong case for abandoning the buzzwords and any attempt to mobilize civil society with an over emphasis on preventing terrorism or providing counter narratives and instead reorient policies and practices to correct the harm done to civic space during the War on Terror with the guidance of scholars who have written on this topic.

2.5 The Challenges to Evidence-based Policy Making

Even if empirical evidence was confirmed, however, it would not directly affect counter terrorism policies. To start, the relationship between governments and academics in most western countries is strained. Arthur Lupia describes this tense relationship in his lecture, "What is the value of Social Science?" (2013). In response to the National Science Foundation's forecast to cut funding for social sciences, Lupia makes the case that social science research should be respected than other sources of information (such as think tanks or research institutes in the private sector) due to the rigor and of research methods, along with scholar's willingness to publish their results. He highlights the need for social science academics to better communicate their findings to public audiences in order to promote accessibility. Lupia also gives the important counter point that although evidence provided by social science research may not be

able to change the views of policy makers or the public when it comes to political issues, it is still particularly adept at providing background information that can "clarify the future implications of current actions" (2013). Paul C. Avey and Micheal C. Desch weigh in on this strained relationship in their article, "What do Policy Makers Want from Us?". Avey and Desch's concern is the consensus that the gap between academia and the general public (including government) has widened in recent years. To understand the causes they surveyed senior level and former policy makers and find that while most policy makers appreciated theoretical perspectives and in fact seek out academic knowledge, they find the studies cumbersome to read because of academic jargon, length of pieces, and the scholarship at large difficult to related to the issues they currently face on a daily basis (Avey and Desch 2014). Another concern of Avey and Desch is investigating the "trickle down" theory of academic research, which argues that scholarly findings eventually flow into public knowledge over time, rather than through structured interaction between policy makers and academia. Ultimately their findings contradict this theory as they discover from survey results that policy makers appreciate the expertise of academics and welcome direct contributions. Avery and Desch give the important policy recommendation for academics to publish shorter summaries of their research in addition to their traditional forms to maintain the sophistication of scholarship while increasing its utility for policy makers.

In his article on the key issues and challenges behind evidence-based policy making, Brian W. Head characterizes our era as the "Evidence Based Policy Making Movement", which refers to the motivation and demands for policy making to move away from ideological or faith-based decision making practices to more legitimate decision making practices with concrete evidence (2017). The Evidence Based Policy Making Movement, Head argues, has proved to be a double-edged sword for academia and the social sciences in particular as this phenomenon motivates the government to fund

academic research, but only to the extent that the projects immediately benefit from their findings. To remedy the issues present in the relationship between academics and policy makers, Head advocates for more trainings for public officials to increase their capabilities to digest academic literature, as well as more structured forums in which academics and policymakers can discuss current issues with academic input.

Unfortunately, evidence does not necessarily influence previously held ideas, beliefs, or agendas. As Amelia Sharman and John Holmes have found in their article "Evidence-based Policy or Policy-based Evidence Gathering? Biofuels, the EU and the 10% Target" that when long standing interests are in place it can lead to a situation in which policy makers publicize and advocate for research that furthers these interests rather than presenting academic findings that are contradictory to their preferred policies (2010). In this study, Sharman and Holmes investigate the EU Commission's 2002 guidelines On the Collection and Use of Expertise through their case study of biofuels and the 10% target and conclude that due to time constraints, scientific and academic complexity, and political motivation these guidelines and intentions are rarely effective. To overcome these issues their study recommends that policy makers acknowledge their conflict of interests when gathering and presenting expert advice in the form of a signed agreement or that these individuals with strong conflicts of interest abstain from leading the collection of expert advice. Furthermore, Sharman and Holmes stress the need for specificity and transparency when policy makers reference evidence to justify their policy plans. The documents, names, and affiliations of their "experts" should be made available to their colleagues and the public upon request.

In the end, the debates surrounding evidence-based policy making and the relationship between academics and policy makers are crucial to understanding the dynamics in which civil society-based counter terrorism approaches are prescribed and implemented. These debates will inform the document analysis as well as the policy recommendations of this thesis. While previous theories and scholarship allow us to assume the logic and decision-making process of governments enlisting civil society as a

counter terrorism instrument, they do not offer the necessary evidence to confirm these assumptions. To begin to address this gap the following section of this paper consists of an empirical analysis of EU Counter Terrorism Policies and strategies.

Chapter 3: Empirical Analysis: The role of Civil Society in EU Counter Terrorism Strategies

3.1 The Counter Terrorism Strategies of the EU and Member States

Following the 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid, the EU decided to take a more proactive approach to countering terrorism by introducing preventative measures. Amidst the development of this strategy, the terrorist attacks on London further reinforced their intentions to create a more robust and comprehensive plan to counter terrorism. Despite two major attacks, the EU has the reputation of carrying out more thoughtful and conscious policies compared to the US (Bossong 2014). Representatives from the Netherlands and UK were highly influential during this process, contributing their experiences and skills gained from extensive counter terrorism programs implemented within the two countries (Kaunert et al 2015). Between 2006 and 2012, the UK presidency of the EU had a large part in the institutional culture of developing the EU's efforts to counter terrorism by way of focusing on prevention. In addition to a new strategy, the Office of the Counter Terrorism Coordinator was created to facilitate EU counter terrorism efforts between EU institutions as well as internationally. Academic analysis has characterized the 2005 strategy as prioritizing breadth over depth and point to criminal legislation and security measures as the only concrete policies implemented by the EU (Bossong 2014). However, when considering the fact that the EU acts as a supranational body in this realm of policymaking, the analysis of individual member states' strategies to counter terrorism theoretically have the capacity to make up for the lack of the EU's direct involvement in the region. The following paragraphs are an analysis of both the EU's and member states' official counter terrorism and prevention strategies. Specifically, special attention is paid to how the role of civil society is articulated in the documents as well as how each government understands the causes of terrorism and radicalization.

In this research's analysis of the EU and its member states counter terrorism and prevention strategies the most up-to-date documents that are available to the public are used except it the case of the

EU strategies in which all past strategies and revisions are also analyzed. For some states documents related to counter terrorism strategies are unavailable, and for a few cases documents are only available in the member state's official language. While evaluating documents written in languages other than English or French, online translation software was used to read and analyze the content. The primary focus of the analysis is the role of civil society and this is assessed by documenting the number of references to civil society explicitly in the main body of the text excluding references in tables of contents or citation and also documenting the context in which civil society is mentioned to understand how civil society is involved in the subsections of the strategies in which they are mentioned. The roles documented in this analysis are stated exactly as they are articulated in the counter terrorism strategies. Apart from the explicit role of civil society, if a strategy contains unique tactics or interpretations of terrorism or counter terrorism that will also be discussed in this section.

The EU, like many other political bodies, does not provide an explicit definition for terrorism but it does provide a definition for terrorist offences: "acts committed with the aim of 'seriously intimidating a population', 'unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act', or 'seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization" (EU Parliament 2015). The EU criminalizes these acts along with being recruited for terrorism, receiving training to commit terrorist attacks, traveling to another state to commit terrorist acts, and providing or raising funds for travel related to terrorist activity. This was signed into law the EU President on October 22nd of 2015 (EU Parliament 2015). The European Parliament thus works to prevent or counter the above activities in their counter terrorism strategies. The official EU definition for civil society includes, "all forms of social action carried out by individuals or groups who are neither connected to, nor managed by, the State," and identifies a civil society organization as, "an organizational structure whose members serve the general interest through a democratic process, and which plays the role of mediator between public authorities

and citizens (EUR-Lex 2019). In the following official documents authored by EU institutions and instruments this will be the expected definition of civil society and civil society organizations.

In 2005 the European Union developed and adopted a collective counter terrorism strategy setting the guidelines for all EU institutions to carryout activities under the pillars of prevent, protect, pursue, and respond (EU Council 2005). Notably, this document invests authority in coordinating counter terrorism in the EU commission but recognizes the sovereignty of individual member states to oversee and carry out national, regional, and local counter terrorism and counter radicalization strategies. Countering radicalization and recruitment are at core of the "prevent" pillar. With respect to the causes of radicalization, the document notes that "there are a range of conditions in society that may create an environment in which individuals can become more easily radicalized. These conditions include poor or autocratic governance; rapid but unmanaged modernization; lack of political and economic prospects or educational opportunities", which describes the "root causes" of terrorism theory without a direct reference. Human rights, good governance, democracy, economic prosperity, and education are the prescribed solutions along with targeting discrimination and promoting intercultural dialogue and "long term integration where appropriate". In essence, the 2005 "prevent" strategy revolves around resolving political and social inequalities.

Civil society is not referenced in this strategy but cooperating with international organizations and the UN is mentioned. The emphasis on narratives and counter narratives in this strategy is important. Item 10 states "the core of the issue is propaganda which distorts conflicts as supposed proof of a clash between the West and Islam", and continues by calling for counter narratives which change the perception of national and EU policies.

In 2014 the EU Council presented "The Revised Strategy for Combatting Radicalization and Recruitment" in order to better respond to new trends in terrorism and the use of social media in recruitment and radicalization (EU 2014). In the revised strategy civil society is referenced 11 times in the context of supporting civil society to build resilience, collaborating with civil society to carry out the

prevent strategy, recognizing civil society as a stakeholder in counter terrorism efforts and empowering civil society to promote critical thinking and combatting inequality and discrimination. For the most part the language surrounding the role of civil society is vague and lacks specific tasks for actors and organizations. However, the intention of "cooperating" and recognition of civil society as a stakeholder in counter terrorism indicates that the EU theoretically sees civil society as a partner rather than an instrument or tool through which terrorism can be prevented or countered. With respects to counter narratives, the document stresses the need to "emphasize the voice of majority which favours modernization and rejects recourse to violence" and notes "the direct involvement of civil society in promoting a moderate response".

Item 16 of the revised strategy sheds light on the EU's understanding of the causes of terrorism at the time.

"Factors that may be conducive to radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism can include perceptions of diverse nature, among them inequality, marginalisation, social exclusion, and a difficult access to quality education. Those factors do not necessarily lead to radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism by themselves, but may make the extremist narrative which supports or is linked to terrorism more appealing"

The noncommittal language of the 2005 strategy is carried over into the 2014 document, yet the resemblance of a causal chain appears. In other words, the EU sees root causes as having the potential to produce radicalization but attributes more significance to extremist narratives that are made more receptive by the root causes.

Document	Source	References to civil society	Prescribed roles for civil society	Possible causes of terrorism
EU Counter Terrorism Strategy (2005)	EU Council	None	None	Root causes and extremist narratives.
The Revised Strategy for Combatting Radicalization and Recruitment (2014)	EU Council	11	Partner, stakeholder, counter narrative source, partner in combatting inequality and discrimination	Root causes combined with extremist narratives. Political and social inequality

Table 1: The Role of Civil Society in EU Counter Terrorism Strategies.

As explained above, the EU Strategy is not binding for member states and the EU does not take responsibility for preventing and countering radicalization and recruitment (EU council 2005, EU Council 2014). Instead, the EU commits to guiding and supporting member states with their counter terrorism efforts by providing resources and channels of cooperation. Thus, each member state develops and implements their own counter terrorism strategies (Table 2).

Member States	Document	References to Civil Society	Prescribe Roles for Civil Society
Austria	The Austrian Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (2018)	20	Participants of policy-making, stakeholder, partner in promoting democracy, facilitators of social cohesion and inclusion, supplement to formal education systems, research consultants, promoters of gender equality
Belgium	Stratégie de prévention du radicalisme violent en Communauté germanophone de Belgique (2016- 2020)	1	Target of terrorist violence
Bulgaria	Strategy for Countering Radicalization and Terrorism /SCRT	Not available to the public.	Uknown
Croatia	Decision on the adoption of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism (2015)	3	Partners in promoting tolerance, human rights, the rule of law, democracy, good governance and inter-religious dialogue. Responsible for countering narratives online.
Cyprus	National Counterterrorism Strategy (Prevent, Protect, Pursue, Respond)	Not available to the public.	Uknown
Czech Republic	Strategy of the Czech Republic for the Fight Against Terrorism (2013)	None	Uknown
Denmark	Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalization: National Action Plan (2016)	16	Promote positive environment online and in local communities, collaborate with police force and local governments, and help to carryout counter radicalization programs and counter narratives.
Estonia	Estonia Fundamentals of Counter-Terrorism in Estonia (2013)	1	Receive training and resources to prevent radicalization.
Finland	Finland National Counter Terrorism Strategy (2018-2021)	2	Cooperate with police force and provide information related to terrorist activity. Communicate counter narratives online.

France	Plan national de prévention de la radicalisation (2018)	1	Contribute practical experience to implement the strategy.
Germany	Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismusprävention und Demokratieförderung	90	Protect against extremism and promote democracy and diversity with the government (Cohesion through Participation Program). Network with local governments and contribute to dialogues. Contribute to countering racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and related intolerance. Facilitate political education. Participate in media projects concerning counter narratives. Cooperate with police.
Greece	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Hungary	National Security Strategy (2018)	1	Help to develop democratic institutions.
Ireland	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Italy	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Latvia	National Counter Terrorism Plan (2015)	Not available to the public.	Uknown
Lithuania	Public Security Development programme (2015-2025)	None	Uknown
Luxembourg	Action Plan to prevent and counter radicalisation (2014)	Unavailable to the public.	Uknown
Malta	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Netherlands	National Counter Terrorism Strategy for 2016-2020	6	Work with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to address polarization and social tensions. Undermine extremist and terrorist propaganda.
Poland	National Counter-Terrorism Programme 2015-2019 (2014)	Not available to the public	Uknown
Portugal	National Strategy to combat terrorism (2015)	2	Implement strategies related to social inclusion. Help to produce counter narratives online
Romania	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Slovakia	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Slovenia	Unavailable	Uknown	Uknown
Spain	National Plan to Fight Violent Radicalisation (2015)	None	Uknown
Sweden	Actions to Make Society More Resilient to Violent Extremism (2015)	41	Stakeholder, collaborate with government and local authorities, advise the National Coordinator for counter terrorism, tackle racism, facilitate de-radicalization
United Kingdom	The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism (2018)	23	Deliver projects to reduce vulnerability to radicalization. Challenge terrorist narratives online. Contribute to the development of policies.

Table 2: The Role of Civil Society in Member States' Counter Terrorism Strategies.

Overall 15 out of 29 of the member states have published their national counter terrorism, or specific counter radicalisation strategies (The UK will be considered in this analysis despite the recent termination of their membership). Of the 15 strategies available, 13 articulate a role for civil society and- and albeit to various degrees- emphasize its involvement in counter terrorism These include participating as stakeholders and in local networks with governments and police forces, assuming advisory roles and contributing practical knowledge gained from experience in policymaking, promoting democracy, tolerance and social cohesion, combating inequalities, and countering terrorist narratives online and within the community. Seven of the countries enlist civil society organizations and actors in their efforts to counter terrorist narratives and content online, and Croatia charges civil society with the responsibility to do so. The lack of uniformity in the prescribed roles for civil society raises concerns and questions the extent to which the office EU Counter Terrorism Strategies influence counter terrorism with regards to civil society within the individual member states. The geographical distribution of the available strategies that prescribe a role for civil society in which civil society is welcomed to cooperate with states and influence policy making is unequally centered in North-western Europe with many of the post-Soviet member states either not willing to make their strategies public or having insignificant and subordinate roles for civil society.

The Czech, Spanish, Lithuanian, Belgian, Swedish, and German strategies proved unusual with regards to the role of civil society. Documents from the governments of the Czech Republic, Spain, and Lithuania do not mention civil society. In the case of Belgium, civil society is only referenced as a target of terrorist activity and the strategy instead focuses rather on police and intelligence officers to counter violent extremism. The ministries of Sweden noted several times that they are worried about how much responsibility has been placed on civil society in previous years and thus their strategy is conscious of balancing tasks between government ministries and civil society. Lastly, the German strategy references civil society the most times by far compared to other member states and poses a strategy to counter

radicalisation in which citizens are expected to participate in civil society in order to ensure social cohesion and tolerance.

3.2 EU Counter Terrorism Programs Involving Civil Society

Although member states have the responsibility to develop and implement their national counter terrorism strategies, the EU has developed transnational counter terrorism networks of sub-actors for researchers and practitioners which scholars have argued are more effective in coordinating and supporting prevention efforts than other channels (Bossong 2014). In 2011 the EU Commission established Radical Awareness Network (RAN) to facilitate cooperation between organizations and "networks of local actors in preventing radicalization to terrorism and violent extremism" (RAN 2011). Among the frontline practitioners, civil society is included as part of the local networks. RAN has worked with over 5,000 frontline practitioners in the field of countering radicalization and the EU Commission made the decision to continue this large-scale network and training instrument by allocating 25 million euros to the program from 2020 to 2024 (EU Security Union 2019).

The primary activity of RAN was to facilitate working groups for experts and practitioners of countering radicalisation to exchange information. The topics of the working groups include Communication and Narratives, Education, EXIT (de-radicalisation), Youth Families & Communities, Local Authorities, Prison and Probation, Police and Law Enforcement, Remembrance of the Victims of Terrorism, and Health and Social Care (RAN 2019). In 2015 the Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs launched the EU Internet Forum to counter terrorist content online. Under this umbrella network, a Civil Society Empowerment Program was created and supported by RAN (RAN 2019). In 2017 28 trainings were carried out across the EU for participants in the programs that involved workshops on creating an effective counter narrative and reaching the target audience. Overall, the activities on RAN suggest that the project maintains a delicate balance between involving civil society actors in the creation of policies and practices and as partners who carryout tasks related to the EU counter terrorism strategy. This balance is maintained by their working groups, which invite representatives from civil society to

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participate in forums that carry over into policymaking procedures while simultaneously training and providing resources for civil society organizations to carryout tasks concerning countering terrorist narratives.

In addition to the EU engaging civil society in a seemingly balanced manner, it has a program dedicated to the "Shrinking Space for Civil Society" that involves funding research conducted by think tanks as well as hosting forums to discuss the issue. In the EU's response to the ongoing restrictions and defunding of civil society, like Buyse, the Director General for External Policies highlights the security-terrorism dynamic that contributes to the shrinking space. The general claims that the EU is conscious of this issue more so than countries applying heavy restrictions including France, Spain, the UK, the United States of America (USA). Yet it must be stressed that three of the previous countries are part of the EU which could be controversial at times. Moreover, the EU employing the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and is taking the lead in negotiating with authoritarian governments, such as Egypt, to put an end to oppressive measures in exchange for increased aid packages (EU Parliament 2017). Other policies tools currently in use to safeguard civic space include the European Endowment for Democracy and the EU Neighbourhood Policy. The analysis of the EU's response hints that the EU and its policy instruments are more involved in empowering civil society in developing countries rather than pressuring its member states to address this problem within the region.

3.3 The Role of Civil Society in EU Counter Terrorism Strategies Abroad

Although the Office of EU Counter Terrorism has been criticized as largely ineffective in terms of influencing domestic policies and practices, the office has been recognized on the international stage for carrying out programs outside of the Union- particularly in developing countries (Mackenzie et al 2013). In the 2014 EU strategy for countering radicalisation states its intentions to "promote good governance, rule of law, human rights, democracy, education, economic development, security sector reform, and stability by means of political dialogues and via our assistance programmes." (EU Council

2014). This strategy also includes plans to execute their online counter narrative program outside of the EU, and the relatively large numbers of organizations that are included in the RAN network testify to these commitments. The turn towards focusing on preventing terrorism outside of the EU is also confirmed by the Council in their February 2015 Conclusions on Counter Terrorism and the June 2017 Conclusions on EU External Action on Counter Terrorism (EU Council 2015; EU Council 2017). Similarly, the 2015 Review of the Neighbourhood Program focused on the MENA region states, "[i]nvolving civil society, especially youth organisations, in preventing radicalisation will be crucial." (EU Commission 2015). Included in this document is the need increase efforts from security sector reform programs to focus on preventing violent extremism.

In 2015 the council commits to promoting "intellectual exchanges" among experts in the middle east to analyse communication strategies of terrorists for recruitment purposes. In the 2017 report, "Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Counter-terrorism", the General Secretariat emphasizes EU activities undertaken in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa concerning youth employment and education. They commit to using developmental and security instruments to prevent radicalization. In her analysis *Security Beyond the State,* Paula Pospieza documents the ways in which the EU has traditionally worked through local civil society organizations to promote democracy and human rights, like those stated above in the 2014 strategy (2018). The "Guidelines for Preparing and Implementing EU Financed Actions to Counter Terrorism in Third Countries" confirms that this is the case for the current EU projects as it is recommended that actions are implemented by way of local organization to increase legitimacy, which gives civil society outside of the EU an important role (EU Commission 2017). This is evident in two substantive EU funded programs currently underway: EU Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism (STRIVE) Program and the Maghreb Pilot Program in partnership with the UNICIR (Table 3). In addition to these two programs, several smaller initiatives carried out by the EU will be analysed below through information provided directly through the EU information service, "EU Direct" in a request made specific to this research because the information

available for external EU programs is quite sparse compared to domestic counter terrorism efforts

involving civil society.

Program	EU Supporting Instrument	Location of Implementation	Role of Civil Society
STRIVE (2015- 2019)	European Union's Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)	MENA Region, Western Balkans, Horn of Africa	Stakeholder, cooperate with law enforcement, receive capacity building workshops, carryout educational and community building activities.
Pilot Project on Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism in the Sahel-Maghreb region (2015-2019)	European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)	Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger	Carryout activities that spread democratic culture.
La jeunesse sahraouie, acteur central de la résolution pacifique du conflit - Algérie, Tindouf, civil society (2016- 2018)	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)	Algeria	Received extensive security reinforcements to carryout activities.
Youth Advancement for a Peaceful and Productive Tomorrow (2016- 2018)	European Union's Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)	Jordan	Support vulnerable youth by providing activities on stress management and relationship building.
Strengthening Community Resilience to Radicalisation and Recruitment – MENA (2015- 2021)	European Union's Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)	Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon	Launch, implement, and evaluate innovative countering violent extremism programs.
Majalat (2018- present)	EU Commission	Southern Mediterranean CSOs	Participate in dialogue with EU representatives once a year
Civil Society Dialogue Network (2010- present)	European Union's Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP),	EU CSOs, network of CSOs committed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention globally	Meet regularly with EU representatives from the EU Commission, EEAS, IcSP,

Table 3: EU external programs for countering radicalization, extremism, and terrorism.

The STRIVE program is hosted in the UAE at the Hedayah Institute, established in 2011 by the

Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), with a starting budget of 5 million euros for 2015- 2019.

STRIVE aims to build the capacity of state and non-state actors in the MENA Region and Western Balkans to counter the threat of radicalization through non-coercive means and thus focuses on preserving the balance between freedom and security in counter terrorism measures (Hedayah 2015). Civil society is clearly identified as a stakeholder in preventing extremism and the program aims to develop its resilience while facilitating dialogue and cooperation between governments and civil society organizations in the region. Like RAN, Hedayah conducts research on CVE and radicalization while simultaneously implementing programs in order to produce evidence-based policies. However, other than a reference to the cooperation between state and non-state actors, STRIVE's programs engage civil society to the extent that they provide technical and analytical skills to better implement programs with funds received by the EU (Hedayah 2019). There is no mention of inviting representatives from civil society to participate in policy-making processes, putting these organizations at risk to be reduced to service-delivery. The "STRIVE Evaluation Report" conducted in 2017 also lacks any reference to civil society's role in policy development and creation, and instead writes extensively on building trust between civil society and law enforcement in the Horn of Africa.

The Pilot Project on Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism in the Maghreb-Sahel region (2015-2019) directly funds grassroots civil society organizations to carryout programs that spread democratic culture (EU Neighbours 2017). This includes programs in schools, encouraging participating in the arts, promoting inter-religious dialogue, and supporting the development of journalism. Like the STRIVE program this Pilot Project has a budget of 5 million euros and does not include civil society in policy making or planning activities. No reports on this pilot program have been published yet so the de facto role of civil society in this context cannot be analysed beyond the proposal stage. Like this pilot program, two other EU projects have been carried out the MENA region: Youth Advancement for a Peaceful and Productive Tomorrow in Jordan and Strengthening Community Resilience to Radicalization and Recruitment-MENA. Both programs involve identifying vulnerable youth and providing educational programming to better connect and support youth. Neither of the programs focus on including civil

society actors in dialogue with governments or policymakers. A unique counter extremism program was carried out in Algeria from 2016 to 2018 that involved ensuring the safety and security of civil society organizations and actors but does not mention capacity building activities beyond basic security (EU Direct 2019).

On a broader scale the EU External Action Service (EEAS), which is responsible for relations and activities with third countries, actively supports the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (EEAS 2019). The 2014 UN strategy references counter terrorism 4 times: in the context of committing to fostering civil society and including representatives in projects related to biotechnology and the use of weapons by terrorists- which presumably means collaboration with OPCW (UNSC 2014).

Compared to EU domestic strategies for preventing and countering terrorism, strategies and plans for third countries do not include efforts to facilitate dialogue between policy makers or experts and civil society actors. At best, they state intentions to increase cooperation between local governments, law enforcement, and civil society but still fail to include civil society representatives in decision making. It could be argued that the EU does not have the authority to require the host country to include civil society in these processes, but the EU could facilitate dialogue between their representatives and local civil society actors in order to ensure that their policies do not create situations in which civil society is manufactured or reduced to service delivery. From the information received from EU Direct, it is clear that the role of civil society in counter terrorism strategies abroad is largely that of implementing programs designed and implemented by EU instruments with the extent to which local actors are involved is unknown.

The programs Majalat and may be an attempt to remedy the imbalanced state-civil society relationship in EU external programming. Majalat is a fairly new program launched in 2018 that invites civil society representatives from the Arab World to a civic forum to debate issues relevant to the region with representatives from the EU Commission and the European Neighbourhood Instrument. However, the participation is restricted to the following organizations: Arab NGO Network for Development

(ANND), Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC), EuroMed Network France (REF), EuroMed Rights, Forum for Alternatives Morocco (FMAS), SOLIDAR, Arab Campaign for Education for All, Arab Network for Human Rights Information, Disabled People International, Maghreb Observatory on Migration Transparency International and Syrian Citizens' League (Euro-Med 2018). Thus, this forum does not include the majority of grassroots organizations the EU directly works with in their programs in the region which undermines any effort to provide for a role in which civil society is an active and equal partner in countering or preventing terrorism. Furthermore, this forum is scheduled to happen only once a year, which would be insufficient for substantive dialogue considering that there are multiple programs occurring simultaneously in the region in several countries.

The second program, the Civil Society Dialogue Network is mainly comprised of European civil society organizations with an international scope working to prevent and mitigate conflict. This program is established and holds regular meetings, but again fails to present an opportunity for local, grassroots organizations in third countries who are implementing EU projects to engage in policymaking discussions. Instead, the international organizations take on this role and local organizations are seemingly reduced to service-delivery.

Overall, these findings are largely a result of document analysis supported by off-the-record interviews. However, these confidential conversations contributed to the findings by guiding the document selection and analysis A challenging limitation throughout this study has been discussing the subject with stakeholders because the freedom-security balance in the field of counter terrorism has been a highly controversial issue and an issue that all countries still face. Also, since this research is focused on prevention and counter strategies, the data and documents publicly available is limited to protect the stakeholders involved as well as to ensure the effectiveness of the strategies.

Chapter 4: Discussion and Conclusions

Theoretically speaking, the political science models for understanding the causes of terrorism along with literature on civil society identify the inclusion of civil society in counter terrorism efforts as a great match. Scholarship on preventing terrorism revolves around promoting social and political inclusion, which is essence of civil society according to normative and theoretical frameworks. However, this means simply empowering and strengthening civil society without mobilizing its capacity to specifically counter terrorism would prevent terrorism in theory to avoid the documented danger of stigmatization that is actually countering counter terrorism efforts. Contributions from development and public policy academics have shown that the ways in which civil society has been included post 9/11 has negatively affected civil space to a great extent as. Going back to the models, this undermines both counter terrorism efforts and the strength of civil society due to the politics of fear driven by The War on Terror in which the intentions of increasing short-term security of democratic states have compromised the long-term health of democracies. Thus, now that the question dealing with the role of civil society has been answered by academic literature and empirical analysis on countering violent extremism projects and radicalization, greater emphasis must be placed on how civil society is included in counter terrorism strategies to establish this role in an extremely sensitive environment.

To address this issue, this research has conducted a systematic analysis of the EU Counter Terrorism Strategies involving civil society both domestically and for third member countries. The above documents show that while the EU sees the role of civil society as important in their counter terrorism strategies, it is not always a role that comes with agency or freedom. Moreover, EU and member states' strategies are overwhelmed by the buzzword references to extremism and radicalization. This overflows into the rolls prescribed for civil society, and from what is known from the literature paves the way for disorganization and stigmatization. The various strategies developed by individual member states adds a layer of complication to their roles as the EU has limited authority in engaging with civil society

internally via RAN and the Empowerment Program. In the case of member states who prescribe a service-delivery role or none at all for civil society, these states are at risk of compromising the deliberative aspect of civil society that is essential for facilitating social inclusion. The situation is seemingly worse for EU sponsored counter terrorism programs involving civil society outside of Europe as these programs do not include civil society actors in the policy making or planning discussions for the programs they implement. They are simply expected to implement programs designed and funded by the EU.

In terms of evidence-based policy making trends, the EU does not explicitly support one theory as the cause of terrorism and does not recognize one counter terror mechanism as proven to be effective, however, as noted in the analysis of the 2014 strategy they do base their action plans on the existence of root causes exacerbated by terrorist propaganda. Their counter radicalization plans reflect this thinking as they aim to resolve social and political inequality along with investing funds and expertise into countering terrorist narratives online. Many of the member states strategies also mirror this approach to counter terrorism and stress the role of civil society in producing online content that promotes tolerance and condemns violence. Yet, these measures are still not openly and explicitly communicated as evidence-based. While considering RAN, STRIVE, the Pilot Program, and Majalat- which are all initiatives that conduct research or facilitate dialogue on counter radicalization and extremism programs- the EU positions itself as very self-aware of the lack of evidence they have to support their policies and invests a great deal of resources in research as well as dialogues between stakeholders in order to hopefully reach a point at which they feel confident that they are carryout evidence-based initiatives. But these informal transnational networks running on a project-by-project basis are not enough to ensure evidence-based policymaking for counter terrorism measures. Including academics as well as representatives from civil society must be institutionalized within the EU framework through formal and long-lasting practices to facilitate evidence-based policy making as well as to ensure the healthy role of civil society in counter terrorism efforts. Positions or academics and civil society representatives should be reserved in meetings held by the EU Counter Terrorism Office and EU commission as well as other EU instruments working

on the issue. Furthermore, permanent positions for academics in these offices and political institutions could be a catalyst for policy makers to better make use of cutting-edge scholarship as they would have a scholar who is better equipped at seeking out, digesting, and communicating the findings of academia throughout the policy making process.

Although still more needs to be done to remedy the role of civil society in EU counter terrorism strategies in third countries. Strategies and policies coming out of the office of the Counter Terrorism Coordinator and the EU External Action Service must be revised in order to include civil society representatives from third countries in decision making processes as well as project design rather than leaving their involvement to the implementation stage. The existing forums of Majalat and the Civil Society Dialogue Network need to increase the frequencies of meetings and must make an effort to include representatives from the grassroots civil society organizations. To do so, funding must be increased and travel stipends should be offered to these local actors who cannot afford to travel to Brussels to participate.

The scope of this study consists of opening the discussion on the capacity of civil society to counter terrorism at the theoretical level and through the intentions and strategies of European Union. However further research must be conducted to confirm the ability of civil society to counter terrorism through empirical evidence. Appropriate concepts, measurements, and data must be generated to assess civil-society based counter terrorism strategies beyond the planning stage to determine their level of effectiveness. Additionally, to better understand the effects of counter terrorism policies and laws on civil society in cases where the EU involves civil society in their efforts systematic case studies must be conducted to evaluate whether the ambitiously prescribed roles set out for civil society in most cases provide for balanced state-civil society relationships, or if these intentions stop at official documents leaving civil society subject to restrictive and reduced roles that threaten civic space. To do so the ways in which governments interact with civil society actors must be the central focus of further research,

including but not limited to surveying and interviewing civil society actors and organizations to gather information about their experiences with EU counter terrorism projects.

With regards to the effectiveness of civil society-based counter terrorism initiatives, the research conducted by RAN, STRIVE, and the Maghreb-Sahel program should involve academics in their evaluation of the programs to begin to close the gap between academic research and policy procedures. Including academics in these programs would make for a mutually beneficial relationship as they would be able to contribute to policy discussions while gaining access to a wealth of data for their scholarly research from the civil society-based projects currently implemented within these programs.

Lastly, the EU, its member states, and its institutions need to take a step back from their emphasis on radicalization and extremism in their strategies, plans, and implementation of activities. The terms should be avoided in strategies, reports, documents, and discussions until they are clarified and countering extremism programs are better researched and organized in their implementation stages. Moreover, these terms should not be attached to capacity building programs for civil society nor should they preface EU funded programs for educational or community building initiatives. The EU should also re-direct its emphasis and some of the vast resources it has dedicated to counter narratives to these capacity building programs unless ground-breaking research is published that de-legitimizes the scholarly scepticism of radicalization and provides a strong foundational evidence for the phenomenon.

If further research is not conducted and the current policies and practices are not revised, a popular policy trend will continue at the expense of wasted resources, and as suggested by the previous research written about the impact of The War on Terror on civil society, at the expense of the ability of civil society to maintain its independent, deliberate roll in democratic societies. As the title of this paper suggests, this will result in the obvious consequence of ineffective counter terrorism measures and the serious danger of undermining democratic institutions that will ultimately produce an even greater threat to democracy.

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