

Abstract

Reconsidering Early Detection in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) by Local Frontline Professionals [†]

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Abstract: In recent years, the fight against terrorism and political violence has focused more on anticipating the threats that they pose. Therefore, early detection of ideas by local professionals has become an important part of the preventive approach in countering radicalization. Frontline workers who operate in the arteries of society are encouraged to identify processes towards violent behavior at an early stage. To date, however, little is known about how these professionals take on this screening task at their own discretion. Research from the Netherlands suggests that subjective assessment appears to exist. This is due to the absence of a clear norm for preliminary judgments. However, such an approach affects prejudice or administrative arbitrariness, which may cause side effects due to unjustified profiling. The publications about the Dutch case are inspired by the concept of “performativity”, (de Graaf, B., & de Graaff, B. G. J. (2010). Bringing politics back in: The introduction of the ‘performative power’ of counterterrorism. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 3(2), pp. 261–275.) which points to a distinct relationship between the performative power of counterterrorism instruments and the effectiveness of the local approach. Performativity contends that the overall effect of the policy in question is not necessarily determined by the policy measures and their intended results, as such, but more by the way in which they are presented and perceived. This means that, in order to create an equitable approach, governments, whether local or national, should focus more on the actual practice performed by frontline practitioners. The focus on practices is part of a larger project, entitled ‘Gatekeepers of Justice’ (See: <https://www.internationalhu.com/research/access-to-justice>), by the Research Group Access2Justice (Research Centre of Social Innovation at Utrecht University of Applied Science), led by professor Quirine Eijkman, Deputy President of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights.

Keywords: early detection; radicalization; local professional; risk assessment; potential threats

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