



Crack the code!

– A guide on how public stakeholders and civil society
can work together to prevent violent extremism

I: Information

The first level of participation is information. Information provides the foundation for cooperation, and in this context it is all about the public party – such as the municipality or urban district – providing information on what is happening so that civil society has something to relate to.

C: Consultation

The next level is made up of consultation and is a form of initiative from the public party. The public party requests input on specific issues from various stakeholders in civil society in order to achieve a better foundation for its decisions.

D: Dialogue

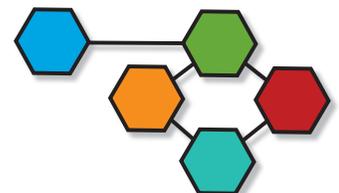
The third level, dialogue, means that the cooperation initiative can be taken by both the public sector and civil society. Dialogue is based on shared interests and an exchange of views.

P: Partnership

Partnership, which is the fourth level, is characterised by joint responsibility for an issue and thus involves close cooperation in which the parties either carry out activities together or responsibility for one or more elements is delegated to civil society (Överenskommelsen 2014).

The cooperation code and the process model

P: Partnership (joint responsibility)		Värmland Crime Prevention Centre (p. 27)		Democracy in Angered, step 2 (p. 34)	AW-support center (p. 39)
				AW-support center (p. 36)	
D: Dialogue (initiative may come from either side)		Coexist Malmö (p. 21)		Democracy in Angered, step 3 (p. 34)	
				Navigator (p. 35)	
C: Consultation (from the public sector to civil society)		Borlänge's situational picture (p. 26)		Democracy in Angered, step 1 (p. 34)	
		Democracy in Angered (p. 34)			
I: Information (from the public sector to civil society)					
					



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Foreword

“Crack the code!” is a guide for local public stakeholders and civil society on how to develop cooperation in the difficult and important task of safeguarding democracy and prevent extremism that takes on violence as a weapon to achieve their goals. It is an important work in an uneasy time in our world. The guide is a result of a government commission to the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society.

To gain power in efforts to safeguard democracy against violent extremism a number of different stakeholders need to work together. If we are to succeed in this, we need cooperation within public administrations at a local level and among public enterprises at various levels, but we also need the cooperation of civil society. In many instances, stakeholders in civil society have completely different opportunities to access new groups in society, whose confidence in the public sector falters. Civil society also has the opportunity to support and raise issues linked with violent extremism in new and other ways than is the case in the public sector.

In order to get vigorous action against violence and undemocratic forces, all parties involved must make efforts that complement each other and moves towards the same goal. Only when everyone work together in collaboration can we have a good and lasting effect. This requires that the local public stakeholder and civil society can cooperate smoothly. But cooperation presents a challenge in itself and raises many questions. Can we rely on one another? Do we have the skills needed? Are we doing the right thing?

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has devised support with regard to how public stakeholders and civil society stakeholders can address this task. We hope that this guide will provide support on how cooperation can be formulated when it comes to safeguarding democracy against violent extremism. A work that needs to be strengthened and is crucial for a safe society.

Lena Nyberg, Director-General,
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society

Introduction

Violent extremism is a serious problem as far as democracy is concerned as the violence used and legitimised by extremist groups or individuals as a political method challenges and threatens democratic society.¹

Sweden has had a National Coordinator against Violent Extremism since June 2014, and its job is to improve cooperation between authorities, municipalities and organisations at national, regional and local levels in order to protect democracy against violent extremism. On 1 January 2018, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention set up a centre against violent extremism which has been tasked with underpinning and developing preventive efforts against violent extremism. This includes developing cooperation with civil society. A number of authorities have been tasked with producing knowledge, support and guidance for specific professional teams with a view to improving efforts to prevent and counter such extremism. Civil society has also produced knowledge and provided examples of how it can help to prevent violent extremism (see, among other things, National Forum for Voluntary Organizations 2017).

This guide is part of this overall support and the results of the Government commission to the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society with a view to produce and distribute a guide on cooperation between municipalities and civil society organisations in efforts to protect democracy against violent extremism.

The purpose of this guide is to visualise and provide support with regard to how public stakeholders at a local level, e.g. municipalities and civil society – or, in common parlance, associations or non-profit organisations – can work together at various phases of efforts to prevent violent extremism (PVE). Essentially, this guide is aimed at officials in local public administration whose public sector work involves helping to protect democracy against violent extremism; but it is also aimed at civil society stakeholders who want to find ways of developing cooperation with local public stakeholders.

The material for the guide is taken from reports by authorities and other stakeholders, and also from interviews with representatives of municipalities and civil society. The municipalities, urban districts and civil society stakeholders used by way of example have

The guide is made up of two parts:

Part 1

The first part enhances knowledge of criteria in civil society, but also provides a perspective on preventive work and the need for cooperation between local public stakeholders and civil society.

Part 2

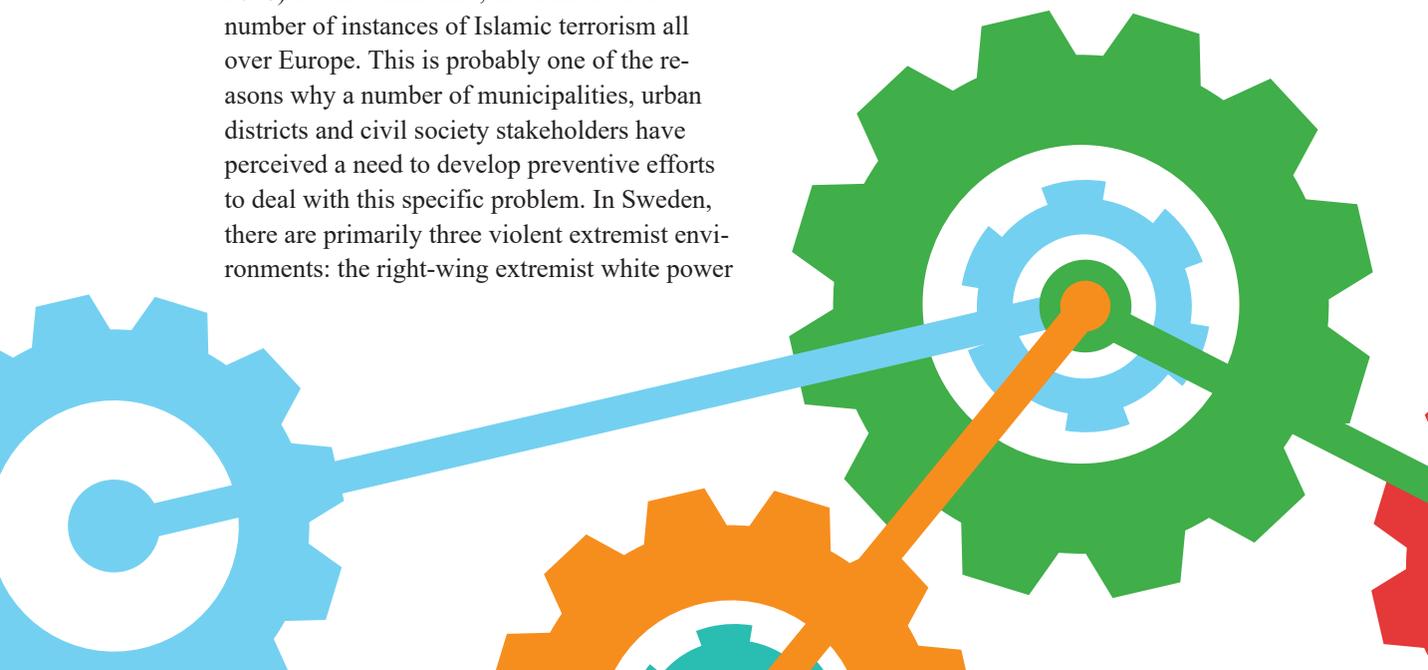
The second part is a specific guide on how local public stakeholders and civil society can cooperate at various phases of preventive work.

been identified by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society in that they have been granted funding by the authority in order to protect democracy against violent extremism, received funding for their activities from the Swedish Inheritance Fund or been identified in consultation with the National Coordinator against Violent Extremism. They have been selected due to the fact that there is some form of cooperation between the municipality or urban district and a civil society stakeholder on efforts to prevent violent extremism. The examples presented focus predominantly on prevention of violent Islamist extremism. This does not mean that cooperation between the municipality and civil society should be isolated to prevention of this form of violent extremism. Nor does it mean that it is less important to prevent the violent right-wing extremist white power environment and the violent left-wing extremist autonomous environment. Instead, it should be understood as a reflection of the prevailing situation in society.

Sweden has seen a relatively large proportion of IS foreign-fighters joining, especially in 2015 (cf. Swedish Security Service 2015, 2016). At the same time, there have been a number of instances of Islamic terrorism all over Europe. This is probably one of the reasons why a number of municipalities, urban districts and civil society stakeholders have perceived a need to develop preventive efforts to deal with this specific problem. In Sweden, there are primarily three violent extremist environments: the right-wing extremist white power

environment, the left-wing extremist autonomous environment and the Islamic extremist environment. It is of the utmost importance to include all three in cohesive local prevention efforts, although the need for input may vary from municipality to municipality. Civil society is an important partner, as in many instances they are able to identify new problems, challenges and needs at an early stage. They have important contacts with the local community and are greatly trusted by various target groups (cf. Amnå 2006, Andersson 2017, Gavelin, Kassman & Engel 2010, Herz 2016, Schütze, Meeuwisse & Johansson 2016). In many instances, civil society is also a force for method development and has greater credibility when it comes to implementing certain measures than is the case in the public sector (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c).

We hope the information and tips, advice and experience presented in this guide will provide support with ongoing efforts to develop ways of preventing violent extremism involving cooperation among public stakeholders and civil society at a local level.



Opportunities in civil society

What is civil society? In simple terms, civil society is the part of society that is not the Government, the business community or individual households (Wijkström & Lundström 2002). Civil society is where people, groups and organisations act together for the common good. In common parlance, this frequently involves associations. This often means non-profit associations that may have employees, but in many instances where much of the work is done on a non-profit basis, i.e. by unpaid volunteers.

Although non-profit associations are the most common type of civil society stakeholder, registered religious communities, most foundations, certain economic associations and cooperative and social enterprises with profit limitation are also part of civil society. One thing they all have in common is the fact that the emphasis is not on interest in profit. Besides established organisations, certain social networks, temporary associations or action groups are also included.

These associations differ on the basis of elements such as driving forces, organisation and leadership and management. Civil society may also be referred to as different things depending on the location and context. We may, perhaps, refer to associations, third sector, the voluntary sector, the non-profit sector, popular movements, voluntary organisations or the social economy.² Although these terms relate to different characteristics, they frequently focus on one and the same consideration; what we refer to as civil society in this guide.

“The term ‘civil society’ is used in the sense of an arena, separate from the Government, the market and individual households, where people, groups and organisations interact for the common good. Civil society involves non-profit associations, foundations and registered religious communities, but also networks, temporary associations and other stakeholders.”

(Government Bill 2009/10:55).

To understand the role of civil society, we also need a fundamental premise based on the fact that civil society has an intrinsic value, i.e. a value for its members and other active participants. This is applicable regardless of how the public sector view civil society in efforts to be promoting the public good (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c). In a study of conditions in civil society with emphasis on non-profit associations in vulnerable areas,³ we can see that non-profit associations in these areas also add value. They conduct regular activities beyond the core scope of the organisation with a view to meeting local needs. Associations in these areas are also better at reaching underrepresented groups to a greater extent than associations in other areas (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d).

If we are to be able to establish a long-term cooperation that works well between the public sector (at national, regional and local level) and civil society, we need to understand and respect

one another's *uniqueness* and *added value*, but we also need to know how we can work together to complement one another and avoid friction. This is important, given the fact that dwindling numbers⁴ of civil society stakeholders consider public sector officials to be helping to promote an open climate of cooperation and mutual discussion (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d). Public stakeholders at a local level need a knowledge of civil society and how it works, but civil society also needs a knowledge of local public stakeholders and what controls their activities. In some cases, confidentiality observed by authorities may present obstacles to discussion and cooperation. In these cases, the public stakeholder must be clear on what cooperation is possible. How this can be achieved is developed in greater detail on the basis of the various stages in *Council of Europe Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process* (Council of Europe www.coe.int/ngo).

The various roles of civil society

Society and its stakeholders operate in a number of different roles, thereby fulfilling a number of important functions in society. The various roles involve different functions that are taken up by civil society in the community and that are important to listen to and work together with to take advantage of (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c, prop. 2009/10:55).

In simplified terms, according to Tobias Harding (2012) it is possible to distinguish five roles that civil society performs or could potentially perform. These are roles that could certainly be filled simultaneously by a single stakeholder. There are no clear boundaries between the different roles: rather, they refer to different functions that are important in a democratic society. If we are familiar with the various roles and their functions, this makes it easier to understand why an organisation acts in a certain way in a specific situation.

Table 1.1 Civil society's five roles or functions

Voice carrier	as a pressure group or special-interest organisation that carries the voice of a group in democratic discussion as a partner to or in protest against the policy.
Service provider	as an alternative or complement to public and profit-making service providers and for assistance within one's own family.
Community	as either a primary function, e.g. in hobbyist associations, or as a parallel function in organisations with other purposes. This helps to promote the well-being of individuals, as well as social cohesion.
School of democracy	as a place where people acquire democratic skills and values that form part of the ethos of the association.
Counterbalance to the Government and the business community	which is a function which in many ways is a consequence of the others, either through open opposition (the voice carrier function) or as an alternative to public and profit-making stakeholders and contexts.

Source: Harding 2012.

The voice carrier role is an important function in democracy where various organisations and associations give a voice to members or the interests, needs and values of supporters. This role is based on the fact that independence from the public sector makes it possible to visualise problems and criticise anything that should be changed in society. Procedures involve – for example – forming opinion, responding to referrals or participating in consultations with decision-makers (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c). The voice carrier role allows civil society to help make clarify a great number of ideas and sections, but also to represent the interests and perceptions of various groups of citizens in public (Harding 2012).

The service provider role may, among other things, involve civil society offering members and the general public services and activities without receiving full remuneration for it, or in fact any remuneration at all. Many of the tasks and needs in society today are being met by associations, organisations and networks. This may, for example, include welfare services in schools, culture and leisure operations, health and medical care or social care (Harding 2012). Within the scope of civil society's service provider role, it is also possible to refer to an *implementer role*, which involves civil society receiving full or partial payment for performing tasks for which the public sector is responsible. This frequently relates to welfare assignments (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c).

The community role can be understood as may be one of the most important functions of civil society, primarily addressing the organisation of leisure activities. Regardless of whether communities such as sports associations, gaming associations or outdoor activity associations are involved, the organisations are united in that they provide an arena in which people can meet up outside the more shielded family sphere or the work community. This also creates a sense of belonging and a context for citizens who otherwise have no points of social contact or natural meeting places in general (Harding 2012).

Civil society may also have an important part to play as a *school of democracy*. Organisations become a place where citizens learn what democracy and democratic society are and how they work. At the same time, we can understand civil society as a place that offers public spaces for participants, thereby expanding their scope for manoeuvre (Harding 2012). We can also see that associations in vulnerable areas view themselves as schools of democracy to a greater extent than other associations (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d). On a general level, the idea is to allow participants in associations to learn how to vote, take part in meetings and give speeches. Together, the role of community and the role of democracy help citizens to meet across social boundaries, which according to researchers is assumed to help increase trust in society (Harding 2012).

Finally, civil society fulfils an important democratic function in its role as a *counter-balance to the Government and the business community*. In its Government Bill *En politik för det civila samhället*, the Government emphasises how important it is to safeguard the principle of independence (Government Bill 2009/10:55). This means that civil society's organisations must be able to formulate their purpose and run their activities on the basis of their own values and independent decisions.

To summarise, we can see that civil society fulfils a number of important roles in society. The various roles may appear to be sprawling and confusing, but they can also be perceived as dynamic structures that provide new opportunities. Civil society exerts pressure on the public sector when so required, it implements services when the public sector is insufficient, and it develops ideas, new methods and helps to bring a sense of community and meaning to the citizens of society.

Tip

Also read Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process.

It can be found at

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/civil-participation>

Tip

More information on civil society can be found at www.mucl.se

Local preconditions vary

The municipalities of Sweden vary enormously. In terms of number of inhabitants, they range from 935,619 residents in the municipality of Stockholm to 2454 residents in the municipality of Bjurholm. In terms of area, there are municipalities such as Sundbyberg with 2729.8 residents per square kilometre, and municipalities such as Arjeplog, with 0.1 resident per square kilometre.⁵ It goes without saying that there are many more factors that distinguish the municipalities of Sweden from one another and that affect their chances of developing efforts to prevent violent extremism, but the point is that the municipalities of Sweden are so different that we are unable to reshape them all along the same lines. What we want to clarify is the fact that the demographic and geographical appearances of the municipalities, along with their organisational content, provide different opportunities for organisation of the work of the municipalities and what they are capable of achieving or need to deliver in the form of preventive efforts against violent extremism. We can assume that the variations we see in Sweden look similar to the conditions in other countries and within other comparable contexts.

Although the preconditions vary widely, it is important for public organisations to develop systematic efforts to prevent violent extremism. However, the structure of this must be shaped on the basis of organisations' own conditions and their own local situations. The interviews carried out with representatives of various communities and civil society organisations show that regional cooperations may be one way of dealing with the situation in

some cases, while operational efforts need to be placed with urban districts in other cases.

But some things are shared between all – the importance of the political will and a clear mandate to work with the issue. If the preventive work does not have the support of local delegates or the various administrations, there is no clear mandate on which to base long-term efforts. Many public stakeholders at a local level have a designated function responsible for the issue, some have shared responsibility, and in other cases the task falls to one individual alone. We are convinced that both the issue and the function need to exist in a single context, a workgroup or team, because preventive efforts often affect a number of different elements of activities in the public sector. That said, how this is to be formulated and who is to be included is up to the public organisation on the basis of local context.



Municipality

Perspective on cooperation on efforts to prevent violent extremism

To be able to discuss cooperation in efforts to prevent violent extremism, we have to be clear about what we mean by ‘preventive efforts’. Preventive efforts can be described using a variety of terms depending on which perspective we select. If we choose to talk about how serious the problem that we wish to prevent has become, we frequently refer to primary, secondary or tertiary prevention (Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2010). If, instead, we choose to talk on the basis of whom initiatives are aimed at, we frequently refer to universal, selective or indicative prevention (Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2010).

In this guide, we will be using the terms universal, selective and indicative prevention as we feel that this division facilitates an understanding of how civil society can act as a cooperating party for public stakeholders

at a local level. The various preventive levels can be illustrated by means of a triangle.

The first level of the triangle is made up of *universal prevention*, initiatives aimed at “everyone”; all residents in a municipality, for example, or all young people at a school. This is the broadest section as the universal initiatives reach the most individuals. In local efforts to prevent violent extremism, for example, this may involve initiatives that create trust and are aimed at all residents in an urban district as in example *Democracy in Angered – cooperation aiming for partnership* as described later on in this guide.

If the initiative is aimed at a group of people who are perceived or judged to be in possession of known risk factors, we refer to *selective prevention*. In local preventive efforts, this may involve the local coordinator helping out with

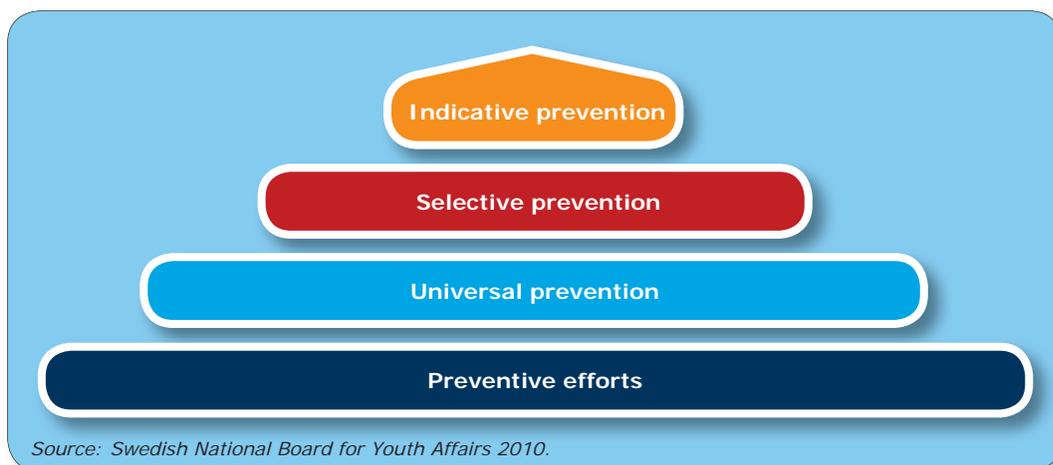


Figure 1.1 Prevention triangle with three preventive levels and one promotion base.

a lecture with a local organisation in order to reach out to its members, as in the example *Navigator – cooperation aiming for discussion*, which we describe later on in this guide.

The third level involves *indicative prevention*. This means initiatives aimed at individuals who have been identified in some way to be at risk or who are demonstrating explicit problem behaviour. The emphasis here is on the individual; unlike selective prevention, which focuses on a specific group of people. Local preventive efforts may involve initiatives aimed at individuals who want to leave a violent environment, as in the example *AW-Support center – cooperation through partnership*, which we describe later on in this guide.

The higher up in the triangle we go, the fewer individuals we reach with our initiatives. But the triangle is not floating in the air, it is resting on a base that consists of promotion work.

"What sets universal preventive initiatives apart from promotion work is that preventive initiatives are based on a specific description of a problem and identified risk factors. Promotion work focuses instead on positive forces and resources, and also on identified protective factors."

(Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2010).

Cohesive preventive efforts at all three preventive levels, no matter how we divide them up, involves many different stakeholders, both within and outside the municipality. This means that we need stakeholders to work towards one and the same target, but if we are to increase our chances of succeeding in our efforts

we also need to bring about cooperation between the various preventive levels and between different stakeholders (cf. Swedish National Defence College 2015, Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016b, Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2010). This will involve cooperation both within the local public organisation, and between the public sector and stakeholders outside, such as civil society.



Risk factors

Identifying risk factors for violent extremism will allow us to gain a perspective on what preventive efforts are needed in our local context, and also which stakeholders are best suited to such prevention. We can use the socio-ecological model in order to help us identify potential risk factors and gain an overall view of how they interact. The socio-ecological model visualizes risk factors based on how individuals relate to those around them and to their broader environment:

In the model, the living environment of the individual is divided into four spheres: individual, relationship, community and societal.

Risk factors may occur in each of the various spheres, which means that preventive efforts should also be implemented in all four life spheres (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016b). The National Coordinator against Violent Extremism emphasises a number of risk factors for violent extremism in its guide in order to produce a local situational picture and an action plan (National Coordinator against Violent Extremism 2017).

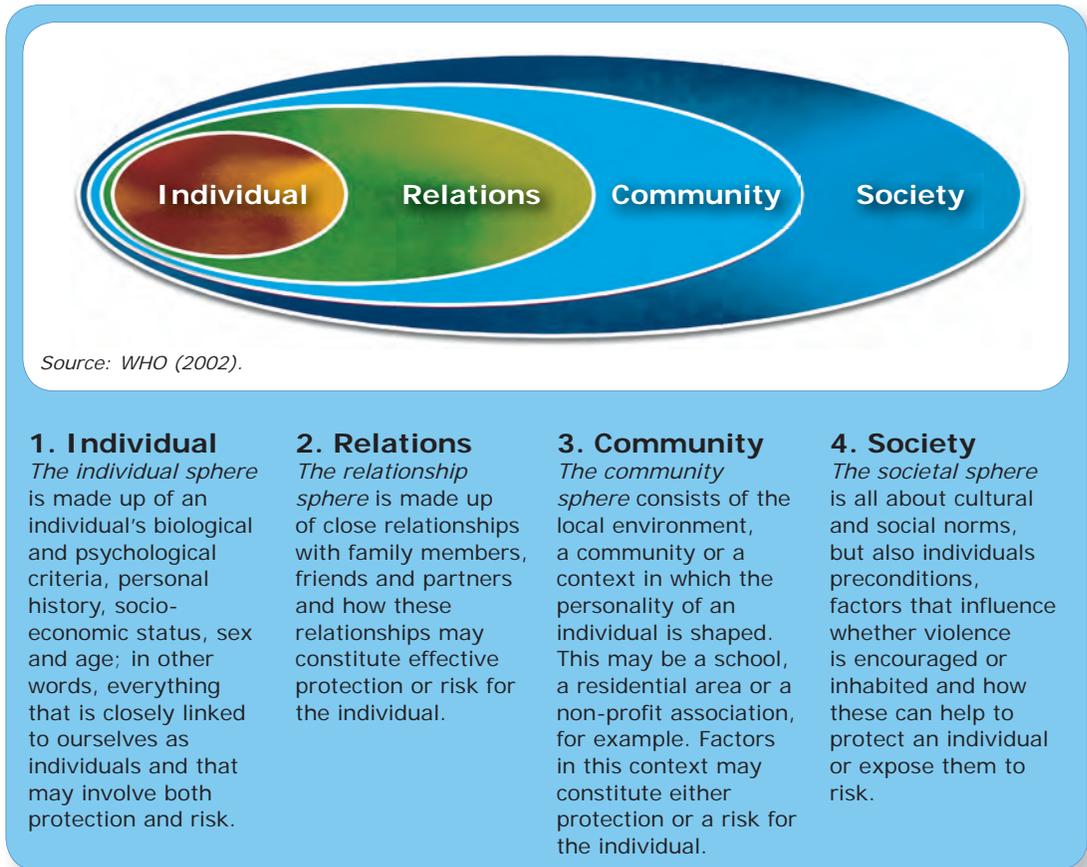


Figure 1.2 Socio-ecological model with four interwoven levels.

If we look more closely at these on the basis of the socio-ecological model, we can, for example, find social risk factors such as *low income* and *overcrowding* in the individual sphere, while other risk factors such as a welfare system that works poorly, increases in *political and ideological temperature*⁶ and *masculine ideals that glorify violence* can be found in the social sphere. A risk factor such as individuals who have *attended training camps or taken part in violence in conflict zones* may be found in the relationship sphere, while a risk factor such as a *disadvantaged areas* may be found in the community sphere.

A risk factor that is primarily identified in one sphere may also occur in and influence other spheres, which means that we need to

look at the big picture to be able to understand the links and work together to formulate effective preventive efforts. For example, *individuals who have attended training camps or taken part in violence in conflict zones* may be a risk factor in the relationship sphere, but it may also occur as a risk factor in the community sphere as it may involve recruiting others or carry out violence at home.

Increases in political and ideological temperature which may constitute a risk in the societal sphere may also occur as a risk factor in the community and takes the form of local actions or attacks by a specific violent group. We also need to bear in mind that a risk factor is not to be regarded as an obvious problem situation: Rather, it has to be regarded as a

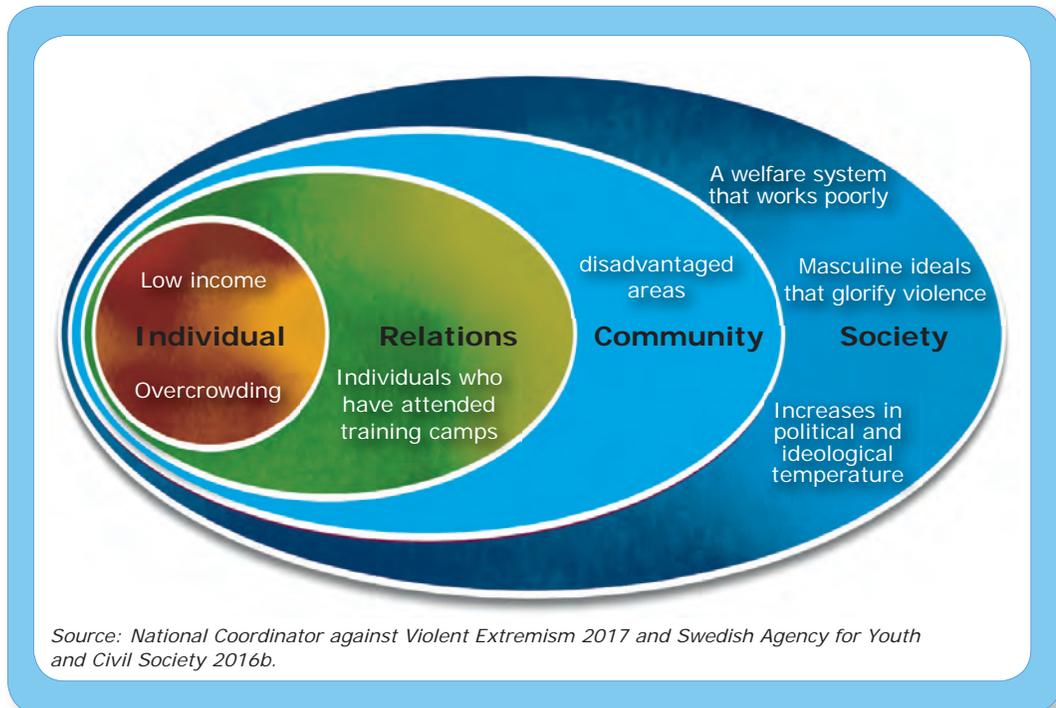


Figure 1.3 The socio-ecological model with risk factors, for violent extremism.

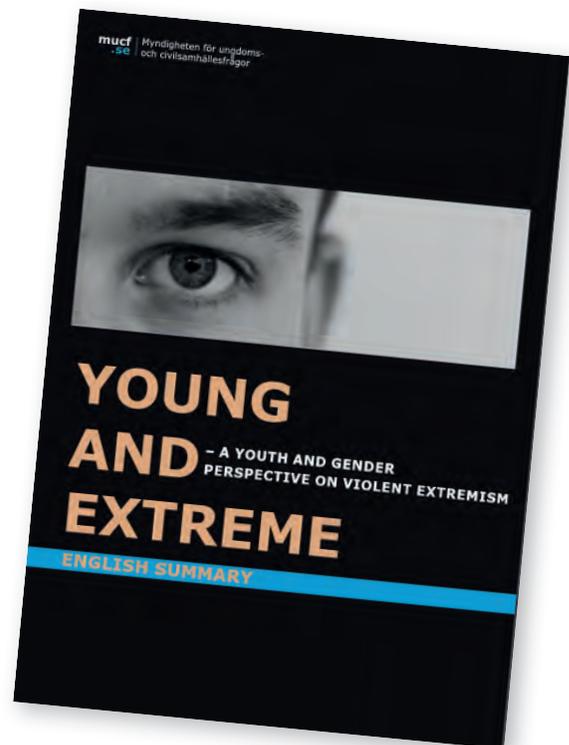
statistical link that may result in a problem outcome in combination with other risk factors. A risk factor for violence does not, therefore, mean that the individual will definitely be violent, but there is a greater statistical likelihood of the individual being violent (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016b).

Initiatives to prevent or counteract violent extremism do not need to be implemented in the sphere in which the risk factor is identified. For example, initiatives to counteract *masculine ideals that glorify violence* occurring in the societal sphere can be prevented and counteracted in both the relationship sphere and the community. By including a gender perspective in our efforts to prevent violent extremism, we can challenge violent masculine ideals that glorify violence with a view to making them less enticing for individuals who come into contact with them (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016).

For initiatives to be implemented in all spheres, it is necessary for them to be implemented by a number of different stakeholders as different stakeholders have different expertise and opportunities. Civil society has different opportunities to local public stakeholders and vice versa, which means that cohesive local prevention work is promoted by cooperation between the two.

Tip

To find out more about young people, gender and violent extremism, see *Young and extreme* by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, which is a summary of the Ung och extrem series of publications. These describe violent right-wing extremism, Islamic extremism and left-wing extremism on the basis of a gender perspective. www.mucof.se/publikationer/young-and-extreme



Protective factors

To understand, prevent and – in the long term – counteract violent extremism, it is wise not only to focus on risk factors, but also to extend our knowledge of protective factors. One way of doing this is by developing social *resilience*. As regards violent extremism, this discussion is primarily linked to theories on how individuals, organisations and societies can become *resilient* (Strandh, Wimelius, Ghazinour, Kinsman & Sundqvist 2017).

Building up resilience against violent extremism does not just involve crime prevention efforts, but also efforts to reinforce democracy and efforts to promote, reinforce and safeguard human rights. Local public stakeholders, civil society, family and friends can be regarded as key stakeholders in these efforts. Crisis management researchers emphasise a range of factors that are crucial to social resilience. These include – for example – trust in authorities, the importance of social safety nets and a sense of solidarity and security in the local community (Strandh et al. 2017).

There are many parallels between the discussions on resilience and the understanding provided by the socio-ecological model. Social resilience requires initiatives from different stakeholders as different stakeholders have different opportunities and expertise. Within the scope of efforts to counter violent extremism, we could understand a resilient society as meaning a society with structured, stable cooperation between decision-making local stakeholders, civil society and other stakeholders operating in the local community with an objective to identifying risks of radicalisation, preventing recruitment and rapidly recovering after any incidents.⁷

The picture of the resilient society could constitute the target image which preventive efforts strive to attain. The route to this target image will vary from place to place, which means that everyone has to work on the basis of their own local conditions. The key issue when it comes to developing effective preventive efforts that work is, therefore: How do we build a society that prevents problems occurring, instead of a society that merely deals with its consequences?



Guide

How can local public stakeholders such as a municipality or urban district work in partnership with civil society on efforts to prevent violent extremism? This section includes a specific guide on how public stakeholders at a local level can cooperate with civil society in various parts of the process. Inspiration for the model presented here is taken from a process known as the quality wheel (Swedish National Agency for Education 2015), but also from the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society's handbook on efforts to prevent violence (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016b).

This model is also related to the National Coordinator against Violent Extremism's recommendations in order to produce a local situational picture and an action plan (National Coordinator against Violent Extremism 2017) and bears similarities with the process described by Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish National Police Board in their handbook on cooperation in local crime prevention efforts (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention 2016).

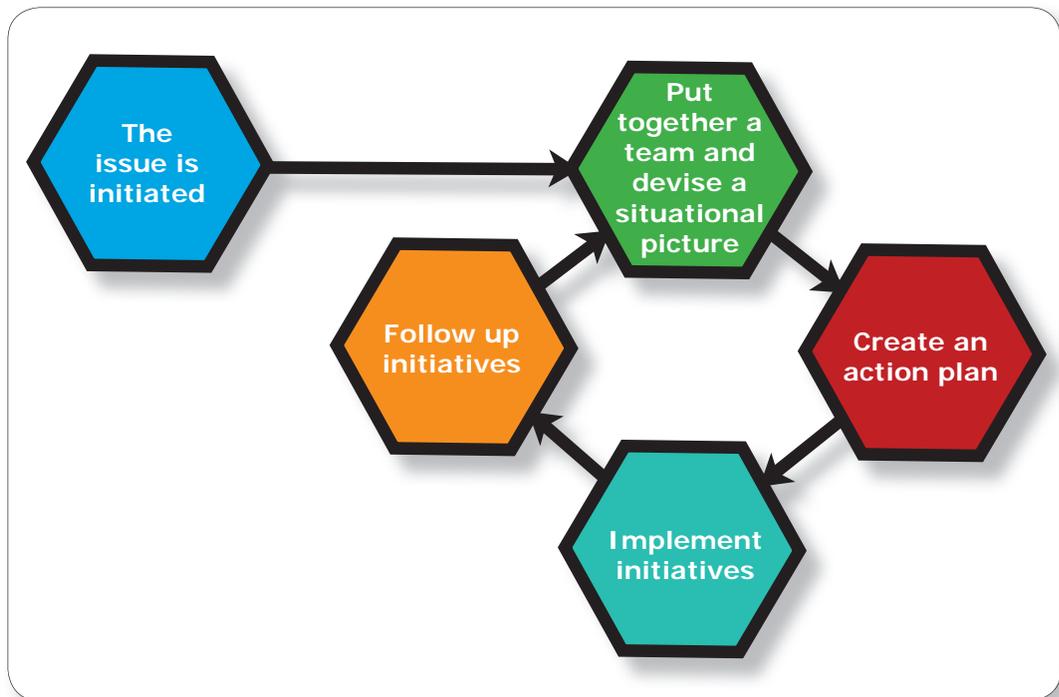


Figure 2.1 Process model for efforts to prevent violent extremism.

The cooperation code

The purpose of this guide is to show how cooperation between the local public stakeholder and civil society can be structured in its various phases, but before we start we must clarify what we mean by cooperation. Cooperation between public stakeholders and civil society has emerged over the past few years as a recurring solution to complex social problems. For instance, in Sweden the importance of cooperation was emphasised in the emergency initiatives involving reception of refugees in the autumn of 2015, when non-profit forces were quick to mobilise (SOU 2017:12).

We often believe we know what we mean by cooperation, but when we dig a little more deeply we encounter a more multifaceted view of its implication (cf. Andersson 2017). Our first thought when we hear the word ‘cooperation’ is two stakeholders doing something together, and that is correct; but we have to look more closely at what we actually do when we cooperate. By using *Council of Europe Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process*,⁸ referred to below as *the cooperation code*, we can depict different levels of cooperation and differing degrees of reciprocity.

I: Information

The first level of participation is *information*. Information provides the foundation for cooperation, and in this context it is all about the public party – such as the municipality or urban district – providing information on what is happening so that civil society has something to relate to.

C: Consultation

The next level is made up of *consultation* and is a form of initiative from the public party. The public party requests input on specific issues from various stakeholders in civil society in order to achieve a better foundation for its decisions.

D: Dialogue

The third level, *dialogue*, means that the cooperation initiative can be taken by both the public sector and civil society. *Dialogue* is based on shared interests and an exchange of views.

P: Partnership

Partnership, which is the fourth level, is characterised by joint responsibility for an issue and thus involves close cooperation in which the parties either carry out activities together or responsibility for one or more elements is delegated to civil society (Överenskommelsen 2014).

The cooperation code is based on a political process reminiscent of the model that we present in this guide. If we combine the various levels of the cooperation code with the process described in this guide, this gives us the matrix in table 2.2:

Table: 2.2 The cooperation code and the process model for efforts to prevent violent extremism

P: Partnership (joint responsibility)					
D: Dialogue (initiative may come from either side)					
C: Consultation (from the public sector to civil society)					
I: Information (from the public sector to civil society)					
					

By combining the levels of participation in the cooperation code with the process model in the guide, it becomes clear that cooperation does not need to mean the same thing at all stages of the work. It is also clear that cooperation with civil society in the local public stakeholder’s efforts to prevent violent extremism can take place in many different phases of the work. Of course, the initiative for cooperation and challenges identified may come from civil society, but in this guide we have opted to work on the basis of a public perspective.

We focus on how local public stakeholders can develop their cooperation with civil society in their preventive efforts. Cooperation may

have different purposes and differing degrees of reciprocity in various phases of the work. The cooperation code may thus constitute a strategic tool for planning and following up cooperation between the public sector and civil society, but it may also provide support when it comes to meeting up and working together with civil society in its various roles.⁹ There is no intrinsic value in climbing up through the levels of the cooperation code and achieving partnership in all situations. The various levels are presented in order to make it clear that cooperation is possible in different ways at different stages of the work. We will be looking at this in the examples presented in this guide.



The issue is initiated

Cohesive preventive efforts involving cooperation with civil society are easiest to establish when things are calm: we can call this ‘the normal situation’. On the other hand, it is common for new issues to appear on the agenda as a result of emergencies. Civil society stakeholders are often quick to pay heed to the new challenge. Do not wait until an emergency arises before getting in touch with civil society: instead, focus on establishing good cooperation with civil society when the situation is normal.

“[We] belong to the municipalities that were affected most at the start of all this business with IS and people travelling to Syria. Some of them were young Somalis who lived in [the same residential area]. This created a great deal of anxiety among parents and led to tensions between Muslims as well. Parents suddenly started to view the mosque and religious leaders in a bad light. After all, how come a young lad just decides to head off to Syria? Where does he get the money from? Who recruited him? All these questions started to be asked. [...] Who was doing the wrong thing? Where were the parents? People started to find fault with one another and there was no real communication, so the association created a crisis group that organised meetings for members so that they could speak up and tell people what they thought.”

(Civil society representative)

“We [...] started working with this in 2001 after 9/11. At that time, we were hearing our young people saying that the US had it coming and Israel had it coming, that they were behind everything – there were all kinds of conspiracy theories flying around. People talked, young people talked, about jihad, and that now there’d been a real jihad in the US by blowing up the Twin Towers, and that was when we started actively talking to young people to change their attitudes and reasoning. [...] We’ve been working since then at a preventive level, and we’ve also worked with individuals who don’t support democracy, whose thoughts were extremely radical.”

(Civil society representative)

“In 2012, people had travelled from [urban district] to join terror groups in Syria. We were blind to the problem initially, and nobody adopted a collective approach to comprehend and attend the information. The Swedish National Defence College got in touch and asked how people were working on this in the urban district. The answer was that social services were not working on this issue, and that we’d heard a few things but didn’t really understand. The issue and the need to do something were then escalated to the managers of individual officers, but initially we were told that the managers didn’t feel this was an issue for social services to deal with. But when the question was asked: How can we stop more people from travelling, like the ones who headed to al-Shabaab? It became clearer that the issue was bigger than just a question of terrorism.”

(Urban district representative)



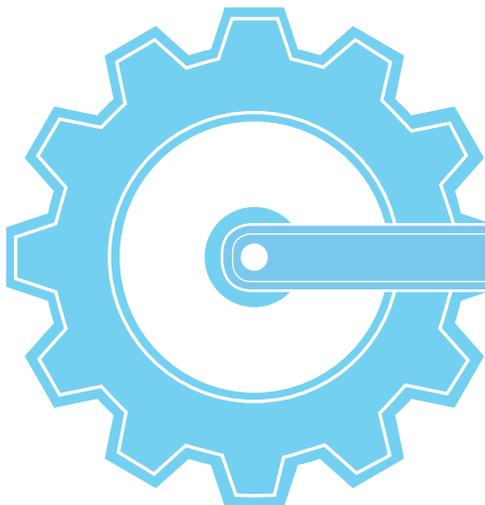
The three examples indicate that a problem or pattern can manifest itself in different ways. All three examples relate to violent Islamic extremism. Sweden is also facing challenges with the violent right-wing extremist white power environment and the violent left-wing extremist autonomous environment. These environments have existed in Sweden for quite a long time¹⁰, while violent Islamic extremism is a more recent phenomenon in Sweden. Examples show – among other things – that there is a need for established and clear contact pathways between public stakeholders at a local level and civil society on a day-to-day basis.

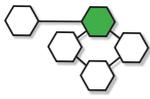
So how do we do that? To enhance awareness of how civil society can escalate the issue of violent extremism to public stakeholders, we can use the first level of the cooperation code, *information from the public sector to civil society*. This may, for example, involve public stakeholders notifying civil society that there is a local coordinator who is responsible for local efforts against violent extremism. The local coordinator can receive information and answer questions on the work of the public sector to prevent violent extremism at a local level.

Information on how society can escalate challenges and observations to public stakeholders should be shared in the first instance via the channels to civil society that already exist. For example, this can take place by providing information via funding administrators, a website aimed at associations or information in existing cooperation structures, e.g. local agreements or fora between the public sector and civil society.

Consider the following issues in order to structure the dialogue with civil society concerning new observations and challenges as regards issues relating to violent extremism:

- What existing fora exist to intercept the challenges identified by civil society?
- How is civil society made aware of public sector efforts against violent extremism at a local level? How can they contact public stakeholders? What approaches are available?
- How do you work on making the most of civil society's knowledge and experience?





Put together an appropriate team and devise a local situational picture

The first step when it comes to developing the public sector's local efforts to prevent violent extremism in cooperation with civil society is to acquire a clear mandate. In a best-case scenario, the directive comes from the local public executive and is supported by various elements of the administration until it arrives at the responsible function. In other cases, the issue needs to be escalated from below via the administration to the local public executive. If there is a clear assignment, a mandate and resources to work with the issue, work may commence. If this is not available, we should go back to the commissioning body instead and ask for clearer criteria so that we can get the work done. To find inroads to civil society, we should start with the existing structures at local level.

What channels to civil society already exist, and can these help us in our work?

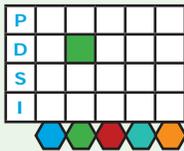
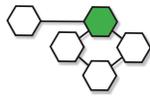
Tip

Are there any people working with mobilisation of civil society or handling applications for funding? These people are highly likely to be sitting on useful information and often existing civil society networks as well, which can make them important stakeholders to link with the team or cooperate with.

The experiences of different civil society stakeholders show that public officials at local, regional and national level are often unaware of which civil society stakeholders are present in the local area, within the town or within a scope of practice, and what they can contribute (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017b). It is therefore important to create an inventory of what knowledge is available within your own local organisation. However, avoid building new structures for cooperation with civil society unless this is necessary.

Instead, work on the basis of existing forms of cooperation – where they exist – and raise the issue of violent extremism there. Start by examining whether there is a local agreement, a union council, a religious community council or similar. This cooperation has probably already earned confidence and a certain degree of mutual awareness that may make it easier to start talking about an issue such as violent extremism.

This in turn may lead to us identifying stakeholders with whom developing further cooperation would be relevant, or stakeholders whom we could include in the cooperation team. Cooperating with religious communities presents a challenge when it comes to assessing which religious orientations, views and people contacted are represented. This requires a knowledge of how different religious communities are organised. The Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities (SST) can assist with information in this regard, but such information largely needs to be obtained by the municipality and local religious communities getting to know one another.



Example:

Coexist Malmö – cooperation through dialogue

There was a need in Malmö to build up a basic cooperation between religious communities and the city that could be deployed in times of crisis. A number of religious communities met on two occasions in October 2012 to discuss how they perceived everyday life in Malmö. Participants then chose to carry on meeting in order to increase security in the city. The network that started to take shape chose to appoint a person from the city as a coordinator, and it took the name Coexist.

Coexist does not focus on violent extremism, but on meeting up in order to work together to build the society its participants want to see. Just after work on Coexist began in Malmö, Nämnanden för statens stöd till trossamfundet (SST), nowadays known as the Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities, received a Government mandate which involved devising support in order to establish cooperation between municipalities and religious communities with regard to emergency response efforts in times of crisis. This led to cooperation between SST and the city of Malmö.

“I was so pleased when SST called me and said they wanted to help out and support cooperation between the city and the communities linked to SST in Malmö,” explains the informant from the city of Malmö.

Coexist was all about building everyday cooperation with religious communities that could be intensified in times of crisis. In those days, as now, they aimed to build a safe, secure city in respect of freedom of religion. The Coexist network spent a lot of time on the initial efforts to formulate criteria for inclusion in the cooperation. A collective declaration of intent was produced on the basis of the criteria, and this was signed by every association’s representative and chairman. The declaration of intent was also signed by the representative of the city who was appointed to coordinate the network. SST’s advice to the city of Malmö was to lobby for all organisations that are to be included in the network to be linked to SST at a national level, as this provides a link to a national organisation that is entitled to Government funding.

“SST’s support for establishing cooperation on emergency response efforts in times of crisis helped us in our efforts to devise criteria for participation in the interreligious Coexist council,” explains the informant from the city of Malmö.

One criterion for participation in Coexist was that the local association or community ought to have a link with religious communities on a national level that receive Government funding. By enhancing security and creating

good encounters across religious boundaries, increasing understanding and cooperation with one another and reinforcing the positive force of religion in society, participants are striving to bring about the society in which they want to live. It was important for the issues discussed initially within Coexist not to be loaded or to risk discouraging the willingness of associations and communities to participate.

“I knew there were a number of things that I needed to avoid initially in my work. For instance, it’s good for the first encounter not to look at anything controversial, but to choose a subject that people find it easy to agree on. Nobody should need to monitor ‘territory’ of any kind, and everybody should be allowed to really contribute what they know. It was also important for the municipality not to ‘order’ anything,” explains the informant from the city of Malmö.

When Coexist began, there was major enthusiasm among organisations which quickly turned into a desire to add more stakeholders. The city was clear about the fact that this was possible, but that stakeholders needed to be linked with a national association. This became an important foundation from which the cooperation could be developed later.



The example shows that well thought-out criteria provide security and clarity for everyone involved and increase the chances of efforts becoming long-term. At the same time, it is important to indicate clearly what mandate the stakeholders have and the conditions under which the cooperation is to take place. If this is discussed among the participating stakeholders, this minimises the risk of unnecessary friction and conflicts due to misunderstandings or a lack of clarity. This is every bit as important whether the matter involves an interreligious council such as Coexist, a union council or a multicultural council. If the stakeholders build a clear, stable basic cooperation, this improves the chances of being able to raise and discuss an issue like violent extremism.

Tip

The Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities offers online support on how the public sector can develop cooperation with religious communities both on an everyday basis and in times of crisis:

www.sstkrishandledning.se

If there are no inroads to civil society at a local level, the public stakeholder must adopt a broad approach and start its own mapping efforts in order to identify relevant stakeholders with which to make contact. However, accept the assistance of local funding administrators for this work. Sweden has the Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities, which can provide support as they are aware of which religious communities are in receipt

of Government grants and can also provide an overview of local religious communities.

However, start off with the stakeholders that are interested in meeting up with regard to the issue and continue building on the basis of these. Remember to view organisation in itself as valuable. This is why a broad invitation can present unforeseen opportunities from stakeholders that at first glance did not seem to be linked with the issue at all. For instance, we know that associations in vulnerable areas do more than the name implies. Maintaining continuous contact with civil society stakeholders shows that they frequently do a lot of good beyond their actual core activities (cf. Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d). However, one challenge is the fact that

Tip

Do not forget young civil society. In many instances, public stakeholders are good at inviting parent organisations and presume that these represent the youth organisations as well. This is not the case. The youth organisations are independent stakeholders that contribute vital and unique knowledge on various issues. It may be a good idea to contact a national umbrella organisation for youth organisations in order to identify local youth organisations. In Sweden LSU, the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations, may be of assistance. See www.lsu.se for more information.



cooperation with the public sector is frequently linked with individuals (Herz 2016). This is why it is important to formalise the cooperation we establish so that it is not invalidated by organisation changes or personnel changes.

The first step in establishing cooperation involves ensuring that the local public stakeholder and civil society are able to talk about violent extremism as a problem linked with the local context. This may involve cooperation in the form of consultation or dialogue. This is also dependent on whether there are existing structures in which both civil society stakeholders and the public stakeholder can raise the issue, or whether we start from the beginning, i.e. public stakeholders turn to civil society for their perspective on an identified challenge or an issue.

The important thing at this stage is to consider how we word things when we seek contact with civil society for the first time. Inviting to consultation on the issue of violent extremism as a public representative may come across as repellent or accusatory. Instead, it may be a good idea to select a different approach such as social sustainability, efforts to create security, involvement in the community or local trust and democracy (cf. Andersson 2017).

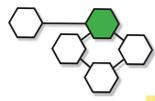
If we frame the issue in another way without diminishing or masking it, this may therefore facilitate efforts to initiate cooperation with stakeholders from civil society. We also need to consider how we can present the issue of violent extremism in the discussion. The cooperation will be more successful if we present violent extremism as a problem linked with the local context in which both public stakeholders and civil society are active. This will make the problem a collective

“Don’t tread on the minefield if you come from the public sector and think you’re going to order anything. And don’t think everyone will want to cooperate, either. Don’t come up with a complete solution. Ideally, present a problem that you need help with. Don’t dismiss money-related issues too quickly. Whatever you do, don’t forget that this is another sector in society that you want to work with, don’t make it municipal. Civil society’s specific knowledge is rapidly forgotten when one enters into cooperations.”

(Municipal representative)

challenge that we can examine together and identify various supplementary perspectives.

Cooperation may appear to be vulnerable as the boundary between consensus and conflict is sometimes paper-thin. We need to be aware that civil society risks losing its distinctive nature, losing its option of acting independently and the option of retaining its role as a voice carrier when it becomes too closely intertwined with public activities (Herz 2016). This is particularly true of civil society organisations in vulnerable areas as these – unlike civil society in other areas – state that they are strongly dependent on public funding in order to survive. (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d). It is important to have this knowledge, as just as described in the quotation above, there is a risk of public officials forgetting that cooperation is being sought with a completely different sector.



Tip

Start cooperation with reference to a broader issue and then approach the issue of violent extremism. When you know one another sufficiently well, introduce the issue of violent extremism and raise all three violent environments in cooperation with civil society. This will facilitate cooperation: excessively one-sided emphasis on one of the environments may present an obstruction or be counter-productive. A broader approach to the issue may also provide an understanding of how the three violent environments interact with one another.

The next step involves including civil society stakeholders in the team or linking them with the team, but it also involves defining criteria for the cooperation. Different civil society stakeholders can take on different roles in the work of the team. Stakeholders may be important as voice carriers, with support from grassroots level in the local community. Others may work on the basis of their role as service providers as they implement initiatives as a complement or alternative to public activities.

A number of issues may arise when we have decided to work together with one another. Can we rely on one another? Do we need to support everything the other party represents and does? And so forth. We can facilitate such discussions by working together when the cooperation is at an early stage to clarify the

role of the civil society stakeholder in the cooperation and the applicable criteria. Clear criteria linked with the relevant level of cooperation (information, consultation, dialogue or partnership) can eliminate any unclear points or stresses and provide a greater sense of security in the work.

Forming an appropriate team which involves cooperation with civil society needs to be allowed to take time as it means that the parties have to get to know one another. It also means that the parties will probably be at different levels of cooperation while they get to know one another. Cooperation may perhaps begin as a consultation where representatives of the public sector present a challenge, before then making the transition to dialogue on the basis of jointly identified interests. Finally, the cooperation may end up as a partnership where the parties have together devised criteria that are to apply to the cooperation team.

Before we embark upon cooperation, having a clear view of our own opportunities and criteria will facilitate matters. Therefore, discuss the following questions internally within the local public enterprise:

- As a public stakeholder, what do you need from the cooperation with civil society as regards the issue of violent extremism?
- What do you want to get out of the cooperation?
- Do you have any existing forms of cooperation with civil society that are relevant? Is there any specific cooperation with religious communities?
- What issues may provide good inroads for a discussion on violent extremism?
- Do you keep an eye on young civil society? And how do you include youth organisations in your work?



When you have identified interesting civil society stakeholders to include in or link with the team, discuss the following questions together:

- What roles can civil society stakeholders play in the work of the team?
- What type of cooperation does the work of the team involve – information, consultation, dialogue or partnership?
- What criteria can you formulate together for this cooperation?
- What resources does this require from the civil society organisations? What do public enterprises have to contribute?

“In civil society, we frequently succeed in working ‘between the gaps’ in all these authorities from the prison and probation service, the police, social services and administrations, which do not always communicate as effectively as possible. ... We feel we have an enormous amount of knowledge on how things are in the town and are working on this issue, but we also feel that we personally have contacts at grassroots level thanks to our entire network. After 20 years, we have an enormous network within the municipality.”

(Civil society representative)

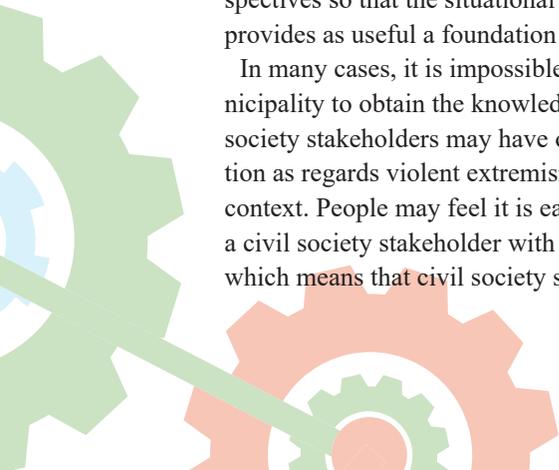
Situational picture

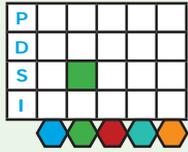
A local situational picture is all about gaining awareness of actual problems with violent extremism and the risks inherent in violent extremism (National Coordinator against Violent Extremism 2017). We will now focus on the role civil society can play in work on devising a situational picture. Earlier in this text, we emphasised the various roles of civil society. Civil society can work on the basis of all five roles to develop awareness of how its members and residents in the local community perceive, encounter and think about violent extremism. It is important to include these perspectives so that the situational picture devised provides as useful a foundation as possible.

In many cases, it is impossible for the municipality to obtain the knowledge that civil society stakeholders may have on the situation as regards violent extremism in a local context. People may feel it is easier to consult a civil society stakeholder with a problem, which means that civil society stakeholders

and the public sector frequently see different sides of the residents of the local community. One added value that is sometimes ascribed to civil society is the fact that they have greater reputational capital among certain groups of citizens and fulfil a vital function in social activities for individuals that the public sector is unable to reach for a variety of reasons (cf. Amnå 2006, Andersson 2017, Gavelin et al. 2010, Herz 2016, Schütze et al. 2016).

This means that civil society’s perspectives may provide important complements to the view of violent extremism that local public stakeholders and the police may obtain. Experiences of violent extremism may mean a number of things to civil society. On the one hand, they may be aware of the situation in the local community thanks to their local knowledge, and on the other hand they themselves may be vulnerable to violent extremist statements. It is important to include both these perspectives in the cooperation with civil society with regard to the local situational picture.





Example:

Borlänge’s situational picture

– cooperation through consultation and dialogue

Borlänge started work on devising a local situational picture by means of its risk and vulnerability analysis, available statistics and information that the police had available to share.

“We discovered fairly early on that the information emerging was insufficient and we needed to add to this picture,” explains the informant from Borlänge.

The people responsible for the work identified various key stakeholders from civil society contacted in order to fill the gaps in knowledge. The coordinators adopted a broad approach and met all kinds of people, from sports associations and educational associations to foundations with cutting-edge expertise on the issue. It was considered important to get in touch with both old and new associations so that different voices could be heard. The coordinators also chose to meet certain

individuals with good local knowledge, students, school personnel and teachers. The discussions with the civil society stakeholders took the form of in-depth interviews.

“Our aim was to gain as comprehensive a view as possible of the problem, and in order to get that we were forced to adopt a broad approach and include a large selection of individuals and organisations in our information-gathering initiative,” explains the informant from Borlänge.

The situational picture that emerged included information on social unrest, racism and mental ill-health. The coordinators talked about all three violent environments in their discussions with the civil society stakeholders. As a result of this procedure, they avoided the risk of the civil society stakeholders feeling they were being singled out or stigmatised. This procedure paved the way for

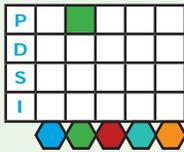
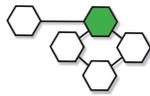
good discussions that provided relevant information. The broad situational picture received by the municipality provided a good foundation and support for discussing what role the municipality should play in efforts to prevent violent extremism.

The discussions with civil society provided more than just contributions and information for the situational picture. They also helped to clarify the preventive efforts that were already being pursued by civil society and forge contacts between the municipality and the civil society stakeholders.

“There are now developed contact pathways which mean that civil society stakeholders get in touch with us to provide us with information about new incidents, which means that our situational picture is always changing and altering,” explains the informant from Borlänge.

In Borlänge, violent right-wing extremism and white power environments are the primary cause of problems, but the town’s preventive efforts are focused on all three environments. As we can see from the example, interviews with broad representation from civil society were important in order to acquire the knowledge that the coordinators felt was necessary. Information was gathered from both individuals and representatives of various organisations. Discussions with individuals can provide important perspectives, but remember that these individuals merely represent themselves in the description that they contribute and they cannot be deemed to hold a mandate to speak for an entire group of people.

In the example from Borlänge, there is cooperation on the basis of the cooperation code’s consultation level before then switching to *dialogue* in ongoing efforts to adjust the local situational picture. If the cooperation with civil society is developed on the basis of efforts to devise a local situational picture, remember to formalise it so that this relationship does not become linked with an individual. This will pave the way for a sustainable, long-term cooperation. The civil society stakeholders have an important part to play as voice carriers in Borlänge’s efforts to devise a situational picture, and they are used as such. Civil society may also play the role of service provider in efforts to devise a situational picture, as we will see in the following example from Värmland.



Example:

Värmland Crime Prevention Centre – cooperation in partnership

The non-profit association Värmland Crime Prevention Centre operates in Värmland, helping to prevent violent extremism at a county level. All municipalities in the county are members of the association, and they help to influence the work of the association by electing a board. Värmland Crime Prevention Centre had spent a long time discussing whether they should start a criminal defector enterprise in the

county, but first they wanted to examine the actual need for this before starting work.

Värmland Crime Prevention Centre worked in partnership with Victim Support Sweden to order a report from Karlstad University on the need for a criminal defector enterprise in the county. This report showed that there was no immediate need for a criminal defector enterprise, but that there was a major need for knowledge of violent

extremism. This report ended becoming a situational picture of the situation in the county, while also constituting a foundation for the ongoing efforts of the association on the Värna Värmland mot våldsbejakande extremism [Protect Värmland from violent extremism] project, on which they are currently cooperating with 12 of the county's 16 municipalities.

The mapping ordered by Värmland Crime Prevention Centre showed that above all, violent right-wing extremism and white power environments were active in the county and that this situation remained much the same over time (Johansson 2015). The *Värna Värmland mot våldsbejakande extremism* project, on the other hand, focuses on preventing all three environments.

Värmland Crime Prevention Centre is operating on the basis of its role as a service provider in its efforts to devise a regional situational picture for the municipalities in the county. If we use the levels of the cooperation code, we can see that the cooperation established can be viewed as *partnership*. The municipalities are members of Värmland Crime Prevention Centre and receive firm support when producing a local situational picture and an action

plan, and also in their ongoing efforts to protect democracy against violent extremism.

Discuss the following questions together with the stakeholders within or linked to the team:

- From which civil society stakeholders is it relevant to obtain information when working on the situational picture?
- How can we reach them? Are there any existing structures in the local public organisation that you can use?
- Are there any groups in the local community that you are not reaching via the channels that you have to civil society? How can you reach these?
- Do you include civil society stakeholders beyond the large, established ones? Are youth organisations represented?

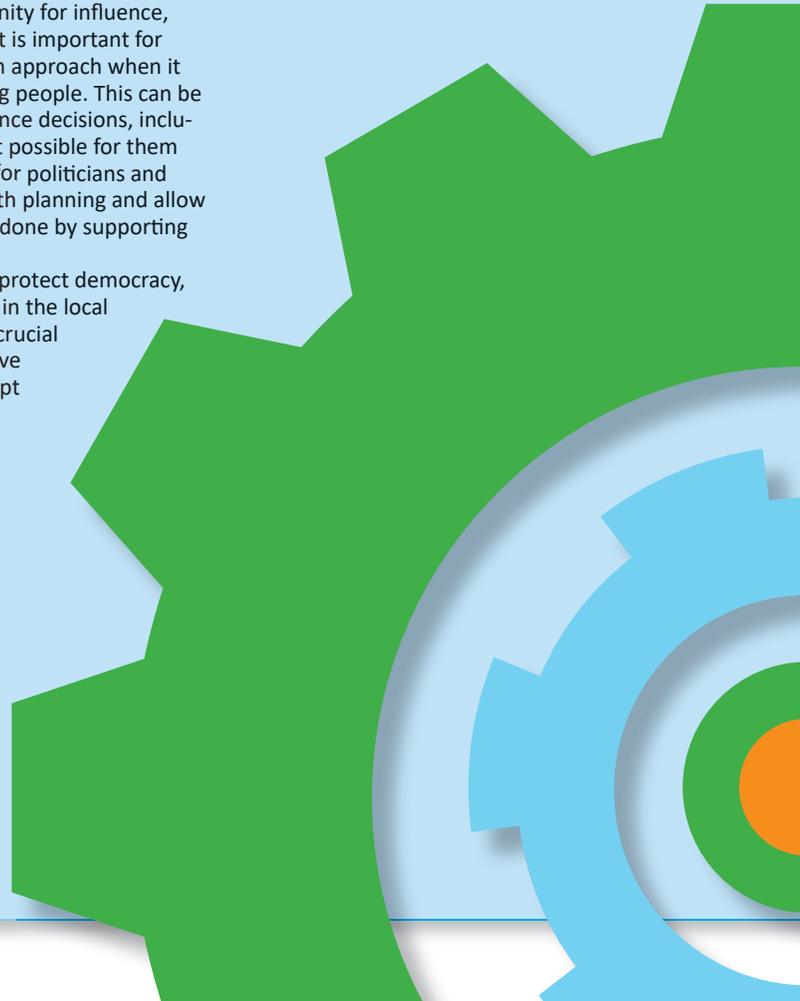


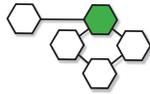
THE YOUTH PERSPECTIVE AND UN RESOLUTION 2250

Thanks to UN resolution 2250, which was adopted by the United Nations Security Council in December 2015, the member states have committed to strengthening the youth perspective when working with peace and security. This resolution requires authorities at local, regional and national level to increase young people's participation in decision-making and support the commitment of young people to activities aimed at preventing violence (United Nations 2015). In other words, with resolution 2250 we have gained international support for working with a youth perspective on issues relating to peace and security, such as efforts to protect democracy against violent extremism. Practising a youth perspective essentially involves two things: incorporating a knowledge of young people, and listening to young people's voices (Government Bill 2013/14:191).

Young people need to be given the opportunity for influence, participation and independence. This is why it is important for local public stakeholders to adopt a long-term approach when it comes to reinforcing social inclusion for young people. This can be done by allowing young people to help influence decisions, including them in political processes and making it possible for them to become independent. It is also important for politicians and officials to allow young people to help out with planning and allow them to take part in local efforts. This can be done by supporting young people's own organisation.

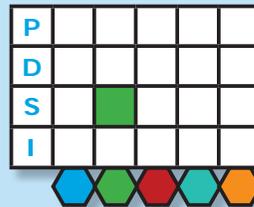
In efforts to prevent violent extremism and protect democracy, acquiring a knowledge of what young people in the local community think of these issues is a directly crucial factor which will allow us to formulate effective promotion and prevention initiatives and adapt them to specific target groups.





“We met young people on the youth council and asked whether anyone knew anyone who’d gone off to fight with IS – they all said they did. We asked whether anyone knew anyone who’d come back – they all said they did. We asked whether anyone knew anyone who’d died – they all said they did. We asked whether anyone knew anyone who was thinking of heading out there – they all said they did. The follow-up question was: Who do you talk to about this? The answer? ‘Nobody. ‘We’re not bloody rats’.”

(Urban district representative)



The young people who were representatives from the urban district talked about their thoughts and feelings about which they did not talk to anyone. From these discussions, a lack of trust in society was identified as a key issue in efforts to prevent violent extremism. The cooperation between the urban district and the youth council took place at *consultation level* as representatives from the urban district came up with a question and wanted to know the young people’s thoughts on this.

The Youth Policy Bill (Government Bill 2013/14:191) states that a youth perspective involves regarding young people as a great variety of individuals. This means we have to ask ourselves the question: Whose voices do we listen to? Some groups of young people are easier to reach and themselves seek to participate, while other groups of young people are more difficult to reach; yet it is every bit as important to hear their voices. This means that efforts to include young people in efforts to prevent violent extremism may need to start at a different point to where we were initially planning to start, e.g. by building trust between the public sector and certain groups of young people. A youth perspective also involves taking note of what young people know. This may involve research, surveys or authorities’ reports as a complement to local voices.





Action plan

Public local, regional and national stakeholders and civil society stakeholders have different skills and functions. They can operate at different preventive levels and complement one another's perspectives and efforts. One way of cooperating with civil society on efforts to devise an action plan to prevent violent extremism may involve inviting relevant civil society representatives to *consultation* on the local situational picture. This allows us to provide civil society stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute their perspectives on issues that it may be relevant to approach. As a result, we safeguard the independence of civil society while avoiding defining their role in advance. Such a cooperation may clarify initiatives already being implemented by civil society, or initiatives that they are planning to implement, but it may also clarify initiatives that we could implement together, in cooperation.

Project funding may be one way of financing or partially financing an activity or initiative. However, it is important to give some thought to how to go about guaranteeing that the temporary project's knowledge can persist and assist with long-term efforts.

If public stakeholders and civil society plan to implement initiatives of activities in cooperation at a local level, the level of cooperation involved should be concretised. Does this involve *information, consultation, dialogue or*

partnership? The parties should also jointly discuss the criteria that are to apply to the cooperation in question and link these to the role held by the civil society stakeholder. The discussion on criteria is necessary as it clarifies what values are important for the parties involved and what they can expect from one another.

If an initiative is to be implemented in *partnership*, it is extremely important for the public stakeholder to ensure that the civil society stakeholder helps to maintain the fundamental values of the community. What this actually means and involves may need to be specified so that it is clear to both parties.

For a civil society stakeholder that cooperates with the municipality by means of *dialogue*, it may be important to have criteria that ensure that the independence of the civil society stakeholder is not restricted in its role as a voice carrier. It is also important to consider confidentiality in cooperation from the time of the discussion on the criteria. Certain legislation may set limits which influence what the public stakeholder is able to do and how it can cooperate with civil society. Ongoing efforts may be facilitated if the parties discuss at an early stage any restrictions imposed by confidentiality legislation.



There are a number of factors that can assist with discussion on criteria for cooperation on initiatives, including:

- **Relevance** – ensuring that the cooperation is based on something that is relevant to all parties and that the work is a societal challenge which all parties feel is important
- **Transparency** – ensuring that communication is clear influences both expectations and the understanding of what is happening
- **Support** – ensuring that participating stakeholders know about the cooperation and that the purpose of the cooperation is clear. Also discuss the cooperation with other stakeholders
- **Trust** – it is important for cooperation processes to take time, this demonstrates a sensitivity for other parties
- **Consolidation** – it is important for cooperation to be given priority and decided upon by the executives of each party to the cooperation.

In a best-case scenario, the discussion on criteria will clarify what is important and in what regard, but it will also clarify how public stakeholders and civil society stakeholders can cooperate, and on what.

To include civil society in work on the action plan, discuss the following questions with civil society:

- What issues are relevant to work with on the basis of the local situational picture?
- What issues may be of relevance for cooperation between the public stakeholder and civil society?
- What level of cooperation does this involve (information, consultation, dialogue or partnership)?
- What criteria must be in place for this cooperation?

We can state that an action plan devised in cooperation with civil society can have two functions. On the one hand, this clarifies what the stakeholders involved are doing together in order to prevent violent extremism. It also reinforces the individual initiatives as in a best-case scenario, cooperation leads to enhanced awareness of each stakeholder's activities and criteria. If a civil society stakeholder gains a better understanding of how – for example – social services and the police are working on an issue, this also increases the chances of more effective work. The civil society stakeholder is made aware of whom they can contact and gains a greater understanding of what local public enterprises or the police are working with.



Implement initiatives

When civil society implements initiatives or cooperates with public stakeholders on joint initiatives, it is important to clarify the role of civil society in this work. Are they voice carriers or service providers, or perhaps both? Do they offer a community in the first instance, do they take on a role as a school of democracy, or do they act as a counterbalance to the Government and business community? A single stakeholder may be in possession of several of these roles at the same time. Precisely this ambiguity is a strength and part of civil society's added value and distinctive character.

Therefore, there is some point to specifying the strength or strengths to be applied by the civil society stakeholder in the cooperation. If there is clarity with regard to the roles and criteria that are applicable to the cooperation, along with clarity on what civil society is to report back to the public sector and how this is to be achieved, their efforts will be resting on firm ground.

Civil society is often dependent on financial support. This is particularly true of organisations that are active in vulnerable areas (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d). Project funding and organisation funding are common forms of support from the public sector, but there are other forms of cooperation that provide financial support as well. Financial support brings with it an opportunity and an obligation for the public

sector to follow up on the work of civil society. This is a good thing, of course, but there is also a risk that control and follow-up may result in a major administrative burden for civil society stakeholders, instead stealing resources from their actual efforts. This is why it is important to find a reasonable level as to what is to be followed up (cf. Herz 2016).

"... they're so afraid of making mistakes in the municipality, officials and politicians, that this control is completely exaggerated and takes up a lot of energy and focus. At a meeting, I want to see the yield from this work, and instead it may be all about control over something or other. It takes the sting out of it a little bit, and it can be a good thing as well. ... We need increased confidence when it counts, i.e. they have to have confidence in us, but as a municipality you always think control is best so as not to end up in the shit. And they might be right about that, in some respects, but it does affect our cooperation."

(Civil society representative)

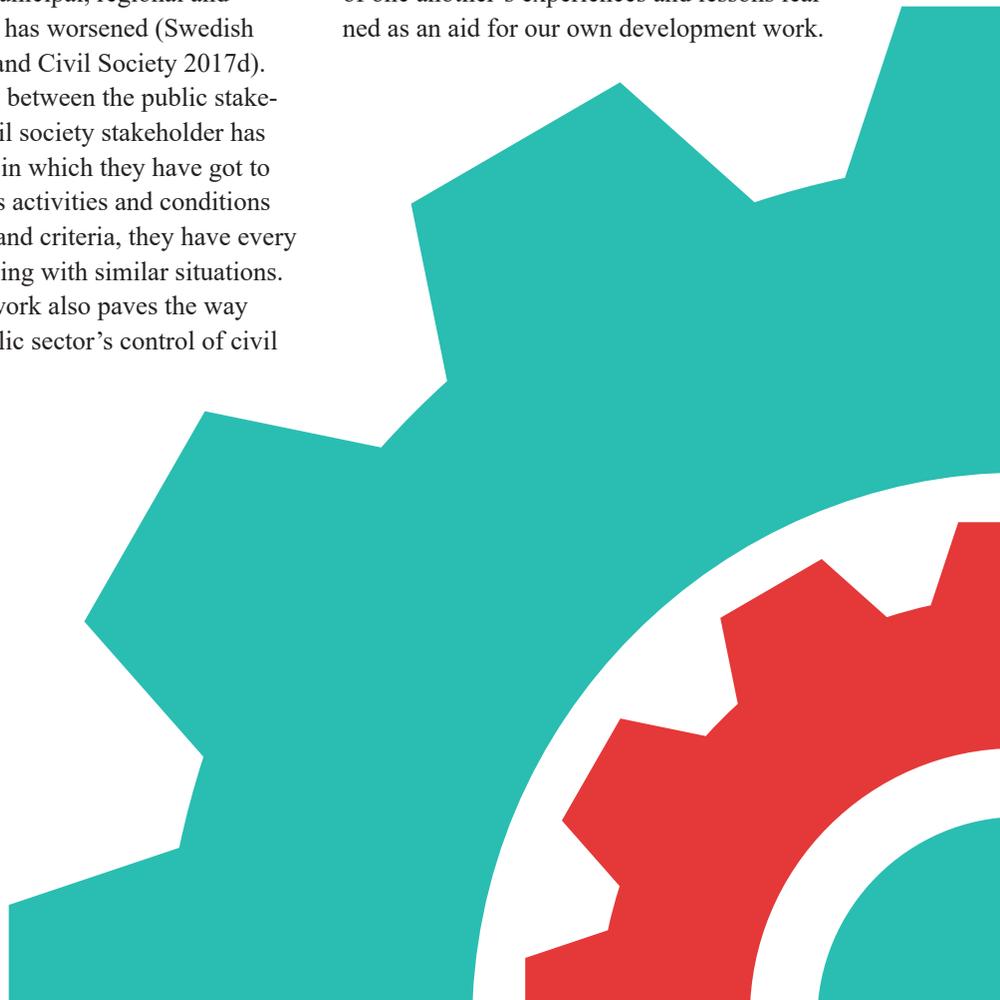


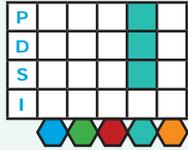
As the quotation above shows, control and follow-up are issues for which there are no simple solutions. It is necessary and important, it may also result in consequences that affect preventive efforts and the cooperation. Occasionally, civil society stakeholders are questioned about their actual motives or agendas. In some cases, this has resulted in authorities and municipalities also being questioned about being on good terms with the organisation in question. We have seen since 2012 that the climate of cooperation between civil society and municipal, regional and Government levels has worsened (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d).

If the cooperation between the public stakeholders and the civil society stakeholder has involved a process in which they have got to know one another's activities and conditions and clarified roles and criteria, they have every opportunity of dealing with similar situations. Such preliminary work also paves the way for placing the public sector's control of civil

society's activities at a reasonable level and hopefully influencing the climate of cooperation in a positive way. Thus cooperation needs to be based on a combination of criteria and trust, while at the same time certain things have to be followed up regularly.

We will be looking more closely at three examples of cooperation between municipalities and civil society on efforts to prevent violent extremism. The various examples are linked with various levels in the cooperation code. The purpose of these examples is to make use of one another's experiences and lessons learned as an aid for our own development work.





Example:

Democracy in Angered

– cooperation with partnership as an objective

The *Demokrati i Angered* [Democracy in Angered] project is a cooperation project between the urban district administration and civil society in which the parties are striving to achieve cooperation at partnership level.

“The idea is to create a workgroup for the project which includes civil society so that we can share the issue of violent extremism together and, above all, talk to civil society instead of talking about civil society,” explains the responsible official at the urban district administration in Angered.

The first step was to get people more interested in long-term efforts by creating a steering committee made up of managers at the administration. In parallel with this, work began on a cooperation involving more than 30 different religious communities, looking at how the urban district administration and religious communities could reach one another. The aim was to increase confidence among the various religious communities and between the urban district and the religious communities, and also to persuade the stakeholders to view one another as resources.

“We invited everyone to an enormous meeting, and every community was able to bring two representatives. We met up in the evening and sat with one official at each table and held discussions, provided information and talked about how we’d like to con-

tinue our cooperation,” explains the official. And continues:

“People were afraid of one another, but they also had a desire to do things together in respect of school issues and issues relating to security. Violent extremism is one part of this, but they were also concerned about health issues and social unrest.

Involving civil society in the configuration means the project is a co-creation project between the urban district administration and civil society. The emphasis is on influencing risk factors such as distrust and exclusion. The project owners want to increase residents’ trust in society’s institutions, but also to increase officials’ trust in civil society and their ability to view civil society as a resource, with the clear aim of making it easier to talk about issues such as violent extremism.

However, it should also be easier to talk about young people who are at risk of becoming involved in violent extremism. The project also aims to increase democratic participation so that more residents in the urban district feel they have a part to play and that they have the opportunity to make their voices heard on issues that affect them. Therefore, one sub-aim is to increase participation in elections and counter antidemocratic statements such as violent extremism by working in close cooperation with civil society.

“There is trust and knowledge within their own groups, but nobody talks to other groups. But if we increase this trust between residents and municipal officials, they’ll find it easier to talk about difficult things,” reckons the official from the urban district administration.

Reduced participation in society contributes to polarisation and division into “us and them”. This is another risk factor as regards violent extremism that has been identified by the urban district.

“This is an issue relating to democracy and equal treatment for all,” reckon urban district officials.

This is why some of the project’s work involves improving contact and contact pathways between the urban district administration and civil society stakeholders.

“We want organisations to feel that they can phone urban district officials and arrange to meet up with them in order to talk about the support the urban district has to offer, and we want to build bridges for individual residents. It should go without saying that officials will know and have the phone numbers of residents, and if necessary they can phone and ask them for help. At the same time, we hope that this will also result in urban district officials understanding the situations of residents so as to increase trust between them in that way,” explains the official.



This example shows that the objective of cooperation within the project is to reach *partnership level*, where the urban district and civil society share responsibility for the issue of countering antidemocratic statements such as violent extremism. However, cooperation starts at *consultation level*, when the urban district administration invites civil society stakeholders to a meeting. During this mee-

ting, they approach *partnership* by working together on configuration of the project.

The result that they are hoping to achieve is that organisations in the urban district will feel secure in getting in touch with officials in order to talk about the support the urban district has to offer. This will involve cooperation between the urban district administration and civil society at *dialogue level*.

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Example: Navigator

– cooperation with dialogue as an objective

The Somali Association of Sweden has worked via the Navigator project, a three-year Inheritance Fund project, and together with local member societies to initiate cooperation between local member societies and the municipality on efforts to prevent violent extremism. Initially, the project looks mainly at how the Somali community could “break the silence” and talk about violent extremism despite the sensitivity of the subject.

“The initial step for us was to make sure the associations dared to acknowledge the fact that violent extremism was a problem within the Somali community. This provided a foundation that allowed us to start discussing the issue internally,” explains a representative of the organisation.

The next step taken by the organisation involved seeking cooperation with the municipality, where there was a local member society that wanted to work with the issue. The project is made up of meetings for information to parents, youth seminars and lectures aimed at the general public. The purpose is to provide knowledge, create opportunities for discussion and provide positive reinforcement for both parents and young people. One sub-aim is also to create cooperation between the municipality and the local member society.

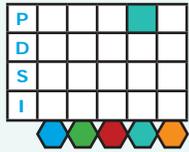
“We have worked hard on establishing local contacts with regard to the issue of violent extremism within our local associations,” explains the informant from the organisation.

The local associations are encouraged by the national organisation to invite external individuals such as representatives of the municipality to attend the meetings for information to parents. In some cases, this has led to more regular contact. In Örebro, the local Afrikas Horn Kulturcenter association invited the local coordinator against violent extremism to attend the association’s meetings for information to parents and youth meetings. The aim was to allow the local association to establish contact with the municipality, and in the long term to be able to find ways of cooperating and build up trust in cooperation on a local level on efforts to prevent violent extremism.



In the previous example (Navigator), we can see that the objective is to achieve the *dialogue* level of cooperation. In this instance, the initiative for cooperation came from civil society on the basis of an ambition for regular meetings to be held between the local association and

the municipality, based on a mutual interest. Long-term cooperation at dialogue level is facilitated if the cooperation is formalised; both in order to clarify the criteria applicable to the parties involved, and to avoid the cooperation becoming too dependent on one individual.



Example:

AW-support center

– cooperation through partnership

In Gothenburg, the municipal executive had a desire for the city to formulate activities aimed at criminal defectors. When the needs were examined, it became clear that early motivating initiatives, open individual support, social support to the target group and support to relatives needed to be developed.

“Earlier experiences showed us that organisations working with social economy, which have experience of situations in which the target group is involved, have greater chances of reaching individuals at an earlier stage,” explains a municipal official. These organisations can also provide support on a different scale, based on their own experiences of leaving behind a life of crime and ways forward in order to find new social contexts,” the official continues.

The social resource administration realise that the support requested would not be linked to demands for investigation and assistance assessment. They also felt that it was difficult to monitor which urban districts

the individuals using the support came from. This meant that the municipality made a decision that collective central funding would be preferable. The administration suggested that the parties should conclude an IOP in order to fund the work of one of the stakeholders. This includes rapidly being able to offer the target group more extensive open initiatives and paving the way for the cooperation organisations to develop their activities for the target group.

“We came up with the idea that an IOP was a possible way of structuring our cooperation with En annan sida av Sverige (EASAS) [Another Side of Sweden], while also being able to meet the needs that we identified. EASAS had been successful in reaching the target group with targeted initiatives, and they have key expertise that we did not have but needed within the municipality,” explains the official.

The municipality felt that it was difficult to maintain a high level of skills aimed at the target

group in each urban district, because so few people apply for support each year. Entering into a partnership with a stakeholder that has developed special expertise and also has other ways of reaching the target group at an early stage was considered to be a better solution. An IOP assumes the existence of an exchange between the parties, that they ascribe more expertise to the issue as a result of the cooperation than would have been the case if they had worked individually. In this case, the municipality’s obligation was to follow up and support EASAS’ activities with knowledge and fora benefiting their work and the target group, and to develop support for the target group so that they can find out about the municipality’s efforts.

IOP involves a support centre comprising a number of different initiatives. These initiatives aimed to motivate and support individuals wishing to leave a life of crime behind.



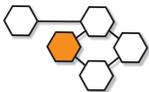
The cooperation in the example from Gothenburg relates to individuals wishing to leave a criminal lifestyle, but the target group also includes individuals in violent extremist environments. This cooperation has been formalised in an IOP which applies to early and motivational initiatives based on a collective description of needs, and the cooperation takes the form of a *partnership*. It is important for cooperation at this level to include clear criteria for both the municipality and the civil society stakeholder. It may, for example, relate to fundamental values on which the parties have to agree, what is to be followed up and who is to do what, linked with the challenges identified. These are issues that are important to discuss before establishing the cooperation at *partnership level*.

We can state that the level for cooperation can be linked to the needs identified and the willingness of the parties involved. The project owners for Demokrati i Angered realised that there was a need to increase trust between residents, civil society and the urban district administration. As a result, they strove to achieve a *partnership level* within the project in order to build the way forward together with civil society. The objective is for this work to lead to a long-term cooperation between the urban district administration and civil society at *dialogue level*. In the example involving AW-stödcenter, the civil society stakeholder had expertise, experience and opportunities to reach the target group. Moreover, the city sought open, motivational initiatives that required

no assistance assessment. As a result of this, the city of Gothenburg chose, via an IOP, to formalise its cooperation with the civil society stakeholder at *partnership level*. The Navigator project wishes to achieve reciprocity and long-term cooperation between the public sector and the organisation, and their efforts are focused on achieving cooperation at *dialogue level*.

Although all three examples are at *partnership* and *dialogue level*, climbing up through the cooperation code's model is not an objective. Cooperation between civil society and the public sector on efforts to prevent violent extremism may just as well take place at the *information* and *consultation levels*. Focus on what need there is for initiatives in the local community, work on the basis of the challenges identified and then initiate the cooperation on the basis of the opportunities perceived by the parties.





peration. We do not want to end up with the cooperation being run on the basis of a list of requirements compiled right from the outset.

The overall accompaniment to this guide is that cooperation with civil society on efforts to prevent violent extremism must be viewed as a process in which projects, initiatives and stakeholders are linked together. Cooperation with civil society is not a localised initiative. This work needs to take place constantly, be reflected on and followed up. We need to keep track of where various stakeholders have got to in their work and must not be afraid of making progress, but at the same time we must not be afraid to stop in our tracks and evaluate what we are doing (cf. Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2010).

The cooperation with civil society built upon the basis of a common desire to develop cohesive local efforts against violent extremism must not be regarded as isolated to this issue alone. A local public stakeholder or urban district establishing a long-term cooperation with stakeholders from civil society with regard to efforts to prevent violent extremism will benefit from relationships that are also built up as part of work on other social issues.

When following up cooperation, there are a number of questions that are relevant to consider: What has worked? What challenges have we faced? How have we handled them, and what can we learn from this? The answers to these questions provide experiences that we need to share with one another in order to enhance our knowledge and advance our positions. It is to be hoped that following up on the cooperation process will give us new ideas on how we can develop our work still further.

At the same time, it gives us the opportunity to reflect on whether the cooperation team that has taken shape needs to be changed or supplemented with other civil society stakeholders.

The issues below provide a good foundation for discussion both internally within the organisation and together with the various civil society stakeholders with whom you have cooperated. They provide support for following up on cooperation on local efforts to prevent violent extremism:

- What levels of cooperation have you encountered with your partners throughout the various phases of the work?
- What cooperation ambitions between the public sector and civil society stakeholders were there as part of the action plan's various initiatives (partnership, dialogue, consultation, information)?
- At what level did cooperation take place on various initiatives?
- Did the results differ from what you wrote in the action plan? Why was that?
- What lessons can we learn?
- How can we improve cooperation on efforts to prevent violent extremism on the basis of this knowledge?

If we bring about stable, clear cooperation at a local level between public organisations and civil society on efforts to prevent violent extremism, we will have more chance of succeeding in building a resilient and safe society with room for us all.

Follow up on cooperation with the cooperation code

The link below will take you to a blank matrix for the cooperation code and the process model used in the guide. You can fill it in as it is, or copy it. The aim is for you to work together within your team to use the matrix to clarify the structure of your cooperation while work has been in progress. The public stakeholder organisation can add its own participation to the blank matrix: you can choose to go with internal evaluation, carry out evaluation together with the stakeholders pursuing the cooperation, or both.

Start by going through the *The issue is initiated stage*: what was the structure of the cooperation like during this phase? Did you cooperate at different levels, with different stakeholders? Or did a cooperation with a stakeholder change direction from one level to another? Discuss the structure of the cooperation, but remember that the coopera-

tion may have taken place at a number of levels during the same stage of the work.

When you have finished with the first stage, carry on with *Put together an appropriate team*, and then continue until you have worked through all stages in the process model. The purpose of the evaluation is to make it clear to everyone involved how contacts have actually been structured, what has worked well and what has worked less well. It is not unusual for public stakeholders to convene meetings for dialogue, but in actual fact these meetings have involved information as there were few or no opportunities for civil society to contribute perspectives (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016c). Reviewing oneself and the cooperation process in retrospect paves the way for doing a better job next time.

Take me to the digital matrix:
www.mucf.se/matrix



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National Agency for Public Procurement
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www.overenskommelsen.se

Notes

¹ Democratic society refers to the following: “human rights and democratic principles as established in the Instrument of Government (regeringsformen, RF) and international agreements on human rights constitute the basic values of society.” (pub. 2014/15:144).

² Social economy is an umbrella term referring to “organised enterprises for primarily social purposes, based on democratic values and independent of the public sector in terms of organisation”. This term is not entirely consistent with the term civil society, although the two terms do overlap to a large extent (Levander 2011).

³ To be regarded as vulnerable, a constituency should meet the following two criteria: The proportion of people in gainful employment was less than 60 per cent. The proportion of people who left Year 9 of school with complete grades *or* the proportion of people eligible to vote and who chose to vote in the latest municipal election was lower than 70 per cent (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2017d).

⁴ This is a comparison over time, with points of impact in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

⁵ Population of Sweden, comparative

municipal figures, 31 December 2016, and number of residents per square kilometre, 31 December 2016 compared with 31 December 2015. <http://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/befolkning/befolkningens-sammansattning/befolkningsstatistik/> downloaded on 5 April 2017.

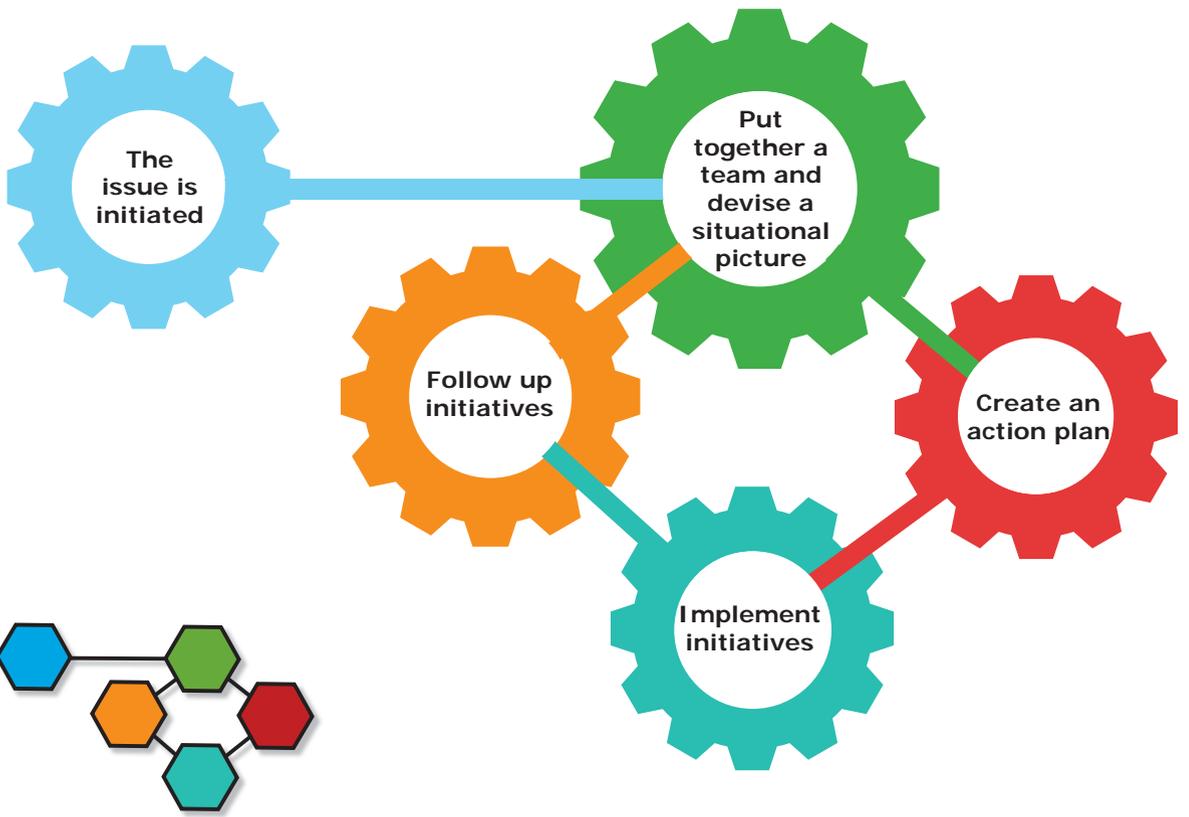
⁶ Increases in political or ideological temperature may, for example, involve increases in activities in extremist environments in the event of general elections, high-profile summits and politically sensitive visits and events, and as a consequence of the demonstrations or actions of the opposing side. In addition to this, there are also other incidents and phenomena such as the refugee situation, the drawings of Mohammed or things that are happening in conflict zones abroad.

⁷ Freely interpreted from Dalgaard-Nielsen and Schack’s (2016) definition in Strandh et al. 2017.

⁸ *Council of Europe Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process* has been devised by representatives of civil society and was adopted by the Council of Europe’s INGO conference in 2009 (<https://rm.coe.int/16802eed5c>).

⁹ The different roles of civil society can be described as the voice carrier, the service provider, community, school of democracy and counterbalance to the Government and business community. These roles are described in the first part of the guide.

¹⁰ See, among others, Lööw (2004) *Nazismen i Sverige 1924–1979: pionjärerna, partierna, propagandan*, Jämte & Söderbom (2016) *Why did it not happen here? The Gradual Radicalization of the Anarchist Movement in Sweden 1980–90*, Lodenius (2006) *Gatans parlament: om politiska våldsverkare i Sverige*.



 **Fold out for the Matrix!**

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Crack the code!

A guide on how public stakeholders and civil society can work together to prevent violent extremism

In Sweden, there are primarily three violent extremist environments: the right-wing extremist white power environment, the left-wing extremist autonomous environment and the Islamic extremist environment. In order to prevent and counteract people from being tempted to join such environments, it is essential that local public stakeholders establish long-term efforts in working with this issue. Associations, faith-communities and other actors that constitute civil society can be a resource in different stages of the preventive work.

The guide Crack the code! is a resource for how local public stakeholders and civil society can cooperate in the preventive work of safeguarding democracy against violent extremism. It consist of two parts: the first part enhances knowledge about civil society and the shifting conditions for local public stakeholders, but also provides perspectives on preventive work and need of cooperation between local public stakeholders and civil society. The second part is a specific guide on how local public stakeholders and civil society can cooperate at various phases of preventive work.