



The Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism

ANNUAL REPORT¹ 2020

*This report summarizes the activity of the institution on the implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, the implementation of the Reintegration Plan, and also presents the monitoring and reporting activity of the institution, as well as on the sub-legal and his administrative framework. In addition to this report, the Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism has drafted an expanded document of its activity, which will be distributed to state institutions, which are obliged by the National Strategy against Violent Extremism.

¹ This report is a summary of the CVE Center's 2020 Annual Report

Content

I.	Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
II.	Implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism	Error! Bookmark not defined.
III.	Implementation of the Reintegration Plan	Error! Bookmark not defined.
IV.	Monitoring and Reporting	Error! Bookmark not defined.
V.	By-Law and Administrative Framework	Error! Bookmark not defined.
VI.	Priorities	9

List of graphs

Graph 1: Data on capacity building efforts.....	4
Graph 2: Data on awareness-raising activities.....	5
Graph 3: Data on reporting within the monitoring	8

List of figures

Figure 1: Priorities set for 2021	10
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I. Introduction

The Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism (hereinafter the CVE Center) is the main public institution for the prevention and suppression of violent extremism established by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 737, dated 13.12.2017, as a public institution under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania. The mission of the Center is to preserve the values of coexistence and religious harmony, protecting the Albanian society from violent extremism and developing the capacities of various actors against violent extremism. Our institution leads and directs the efforts of state institutions to implement the National Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism and the Action Plan, as the most important document to be implemented in this regard.

The CVE Center coordinates at the national and local level the interventions against vulnerable communities in cases of emergence of radicalism and violent extremism, encouraging the interventions of institutions to increase their capacity towards the establishment of functional mechanisms and training of human resources at different levels.

In June 2020, the former director of the institution resigned from this post, to be replaced by Mrs. Lejdi Dervishi. Upon assuming the position of director of the Institution on 01.07.2020, Mrs. Dervishi has continued the work with intensity for the realization of the objectives of the institution, at the same time emphasizing the attention to other objectives important for the field of activity of the CVE Center such as:

- following the process of coordination of all state structures for the rehabilitation and reintegration of returned citizens from conflict areas, while coordinating the work and orienting national and international partners supporting this process, to enable timely financial support;
- prioritizing the issue of strategic communication of the CVE Center, by promoting some new initiatives of the CVE Center itself, but also through other interventions promoted and coordinated with the supporting partners of the institution;
- launching work on the review of the National Strategy against Violent Extremism, in the light of changes and new developments that have occurred in recent years in Albanian society;
- reforming the work of the institution in terms of undertaking new administrative, logistical and financial procedures.

The repatriation of Albanian citizens from the conflict zones in Syria and Iraq at the end of October 2020 (27.10.2020) was a culmination of several months of intensive efforts of our institutions in their reception and rehabilitation in order to successfully reintegrate into community.

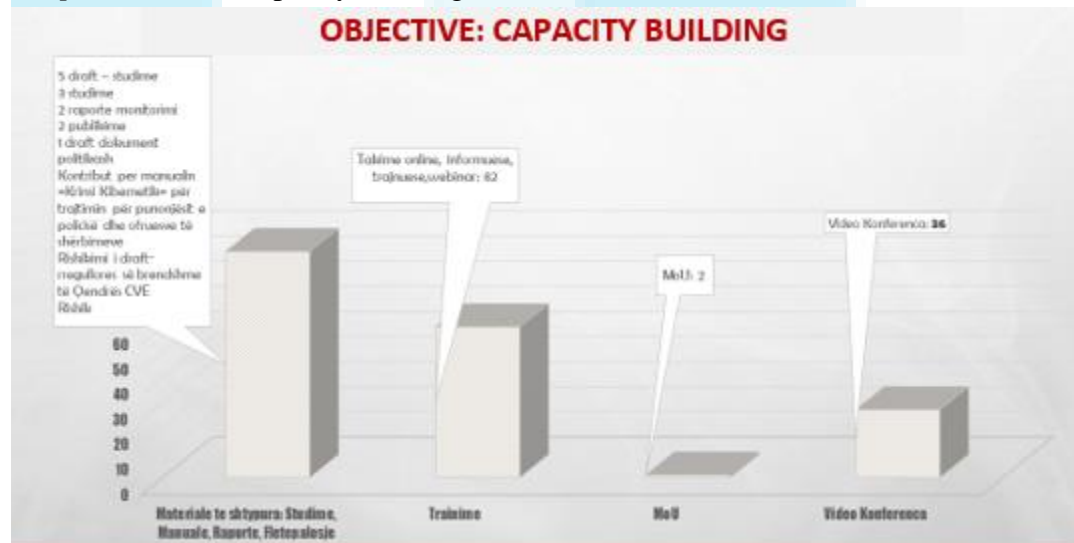
Overall, the activity of the institution during 2020 has been extremely dynamic, in adaptation of the work in accordance with the anti-COVID 19 measures, as well as pushing forward the agenda of the Government of Albania in preventing and combating violent extremism.

In the following material you can find reflected the work activity carried out by our institution, divided into several categories such as: awareness; capacity building; strategic communication; collaborations with partners at national or international level; the monitoring process or even the reporting of the institution, as a direct contribution to the reporting of the country regarding the process of integration of the country in the European Union, but not only; as well as the legal and administrative framework of the functioning of the institution, as a necessity for the smooth running of its work.

II. Implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism

National Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism ² (hereinafter National Strategy) is the main document that guides the work of the CVE Center since its inception. As in previous years ³, even during this year the center worked on the implementation of the Action Plan of this strategy, a plan which is detailed by the CVE Center in concrete activities in cooperation with each line ministry or other institution involved.

Graph 1: Data on capacity building efforts



Source: The CVE Center, 2020

More specifically, during this year, initiatives have been undertaken and realized with state institutions and other actors, 120 information and awareness sessions with the participation of 1255

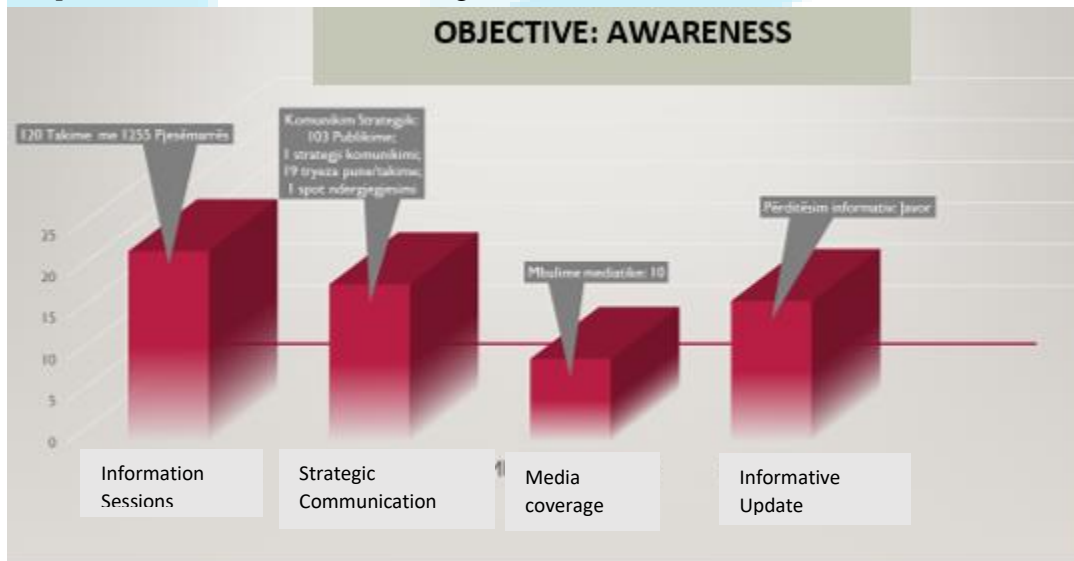
²Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 930, dated 18.11.2015 “On the approval of the National Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism and the Action Plan”.

³ The center was established by DCM no. 737, dated 13.12.2017, and became fully operational in September 2018.

individuals, with inter-institutional and cross-sectoral access, 82 trainings and 26 video-conferences have been realized which contribute in capacity building with front-line actors, 222 video-conferences at regional and international level with international and regional actors, work has been done to strengthen the existing referral mechanisms at central and local level by holding periodic meetings with local representatives, members of Local Public Safety Councils (PSCs) and central government representatives at the local level, and work has been done to improve the strategic approach to communicating with the public, as well as to develop or establish the Center's networks⁴. In addition, other important partnerships have been established for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration (R&R) process. The established partnerships with international organizations have been further developed, as well as.

The following is a more specific explanation of the activities carried out by our institution, in fulfillment of the obligations for the implementation of the National Strategy and its Action Plan. This activity, CVE Center has realized by coordinating the work and orienting the ministries in charge of implementing the Strategy, namely the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MESY), the Ministry of Interior (MI), Ministry of Justice (MJ), Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE), Ministry of Defense (MD) and Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEFA). Other state structures involved in the activity carried out are also local government bodies and state agencies.⁵ It is worth mentioning the financial support of the Center's partners, it has played a role in the realization of this activity.

Graph 2: Data on awareness-raising activities



Source: The CVE Center, 2020

⁴ The Center has established and developed the Network of Civil Society Organizations, the Network of Religious Communities and the Media Network, while work has begun on the establishment of the Women's Network, the Youth Network, the Researchers Network, and the Business Community Network.

⁵ Such as SHISH, AKSHI, AKCESK, DSIK, AMA etj.

The CVE Center has given special emphasis to excellent cooperation with national, regional and international partners such as the US, the European Union, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Hedayah, the Council of Europe, GCERF, UNICEF, IOM, Terre des Hommes, Albanian Helsinki Committee, SHIS, IDM, AHS, Counseling Line for Women and Girls, as well as many other valuable partners⁶. Thanks to this cooperation, the institutional support and increase of the capacities of the CVE Center has been enabled, the implementation of the two rehabilitation and reintegration programs has been financially covered⁷. A number of interventions have also been undertaken to raise the awareness of state structures and other actors in the society, under the approach of engaging the whole society in preventing and countering violent extremism.

Regarding the development of Strategic Communication, an important objective for the work of the CVE Center, for the realization of which a number of activities have been carried out and a number of results have been achieved, among which we can mention the drafting of a "Communication Strategy". in reference to the situation of repatriation of returnees from conflict zones; conducting 19 (nineteen) coordination meetings on the drafting of the "Initial Report" to conduct research on the implementation of P / CVE messages, conducted in cooperation with the Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance (CSDG). During the second half of the year, the institutional communication with the public on the activities carried out has significantly improved, through the public appearance of the director of the CVE Center in several TV shows, as well as through the opening and operation of official online platforms such as Youtube and Twitter⁸.

III. Implementation of the Reintegration Plan

It is worth mentioning all the coordination, monitoring and facilitation activity that the CVE Center has undertaken during the implementation of DCM 826, dated 26.10.2020 "*For the provision of services on the reception and accommodation of unaccompanied children returning from Syria and Iraq*", in the framework of the operation for repatriation of citizens from conflict areas, as we have a multiple intensification of the institution's engagement in all stages of the process, while ensuring its progress in every direction.

The CVE Center, in cooperation with the line ministries, has developed a substantial preparatory work which has consisted of drafting action plans and coordinating steps between all actors involved for the rehabilitation part but also for their successful reintegration in the community.

Immediately after the preliminary health assessment of the returned citizens, they were escorted and accommodated in the Reception Treatment Center, a structure of the Ministry of Defense,

⁶ For more other partners, visit the site <https://cve.gov.al/partners/>

⁷ For more information, see point III.

⁸ More information on this issue can be found on the official channels of the institution: www.cve.gov.al, <https://twitter.com/CenterCVE>.

where they stayed until they were placed in apartments in order to be finally resettled in the community.

Pursuant to DCM no. 826, dated 26.10.2020, a Reception Center for the Treatment of Returned Cases from Syria and Iraq (Reception Center) has been set up, under the auspices of the State Social Service, which is working in the first line with returned citizens, from the first day and on-going on addressing the needs for food, housing, health and psycho-social care and assistance, legal assistance, education, rehabilitation and reintegration activities.

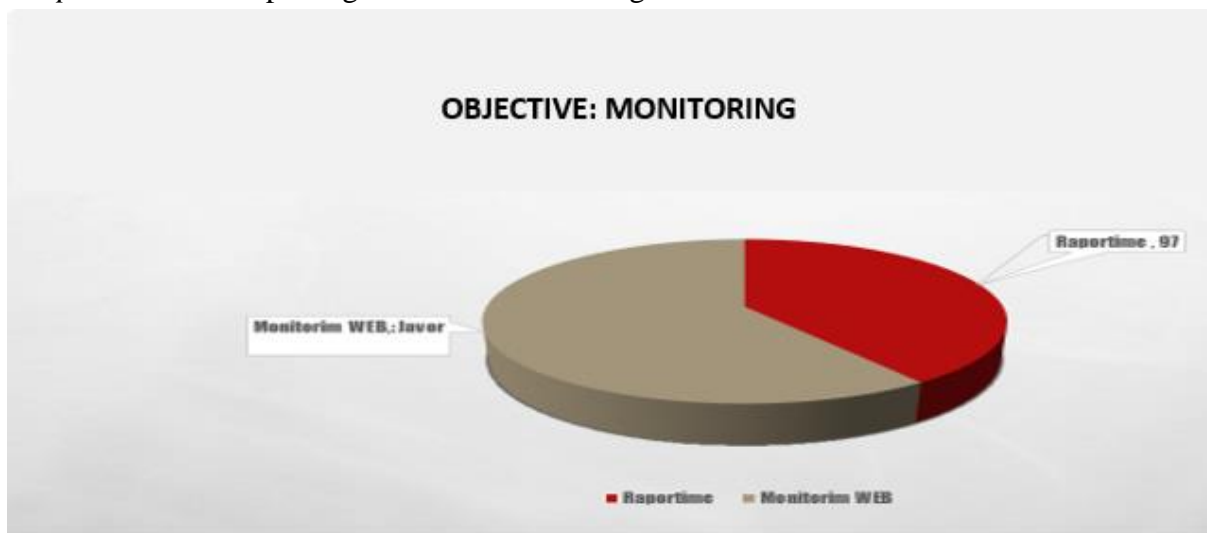
This process has been coordinated in every step by the CVE Center in collaboration with other actors such as IOM, Terre des hommes, and UNICEF. The CVE Center beyond coordination, is continuously monitoring the entire process and its implementation in terms of rehabilitation and reintegration.

It is worth noting that the treatment of these citizens is beginning to give the right results, which is confirmed by the staff of the Reception Center, that all citizens have begun to react positively to the daily rehabilitation programs that are being implemented there. Importantly, all actors involved in the reception and rehabilitation of these citizens have been trained by the CVE Center on the phenomenon of radicalism and violent extremism leading to terrorism, specifically on the prevention and rehabilitation / reintegration process.

IV. Monitoring and Reporting

The CVE Center in the framework of its monitoring role of central and local institutions in terms of policies and activities in the field of prevention of radicalism and violent extremism has created an online platform for monitoring Action Plans with Line Ministries, through the creation of a special program , created specifically and according to the specifications required by the institution. Due to its uniqueness, this program is being improved, specifying its elements that serve to effectively carry out the necessary monitoring.

Graph 3: Data on reporting within the monitoring



Source: The CVE Center, 2020

The CVE Center has also drafted the monitoring report, for the period 27 October - 30 December, of all activities carried out within the rehabilitation and reintegration process of the first 5 (five) repatriates that is being carried out in the Reception Treatment Center and has sent it to the Cabinet of the Prime Minister.

In the context of the commitments for the European Integration process, the Director of the CVE Center participated in the 11th meeting of the Stabilization and Association Committee of the European Union - Albania as well as in the 12th meeting of the Sub-Committee on "Justice, Freedom and Security Between the EU and Albania. A culminating moment was the contribution of the CVE Center in the framework of the implementation of the Joint Action Plan for the Fight against Terrorism EU - Albania, which reported mainly on the implementation of objective no. 2 of this plan, which deals with the Prevention and rehabilitation and reintegration of the Albanian citizens from conflict areas.

Also, the CVE Center has been part of the working group for the drafting of the Inter-sectoral Community Security Strategy 2021-2026 and the Action Plan 2021-2023 as well as the Inter-sectoral Strategy for the Fight against Terrorism 2021-2025 and the Action Plan 2021-2023. Both of these documents are of special importance in the context of the smooth running of the CVE Center and the development of activities for prevention, awareness and rehabilitation / reintegration.

V. By-Law and Administrative Framework

Thanks to the reform of the administrative procedures in the CVE Center, new steps have been taken in several directions related to regulatory acts, which directly contribute to the proper functioning and well-being of its work and activity.

Also, the CVE Center has foreseen the drafting of the new Strategy for the Fight against Violent Extremism, a document that is foreseen in the Annual Plan of Draft Acts for 2021. This document aims to summarize all the experience gained by the CVE Center during these 3 years of its operation and the inclusion of new components for strengthening the referral mechanism (KVSP), capacity building for front line professionals, development of protocols unified implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration programs for radicalized and returnee citizens in cooperation with local actors.

The CVE Center during 2020, also focused on drafting the Medium Term Budget Plan (MTBP) of the institution and for the first time, started public procurement practices with the procedure "Small value purchases" for logistical facilities needed by the CVE Center for the progress of its work and in the realization of inter-institutional activity.

VI. Priorities

The CVE Center, during 2021, considers as important priorities of its work, interventions towards the implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration programs that are being offered to Albanian citizens returning from conflict areas, as a first activity of its kind in place. Also, work will be done to implement the already planned activities of the P / CVE Action Plan, with a priority approach towards the strategic communication that should be undertaken in this regard.

The drafting of the new P / CVE strategy is another important priority of the institution, which will require increased attention, in terms of undertaking and advancing this process, which requires extensive cooperation of relevant institutions.

Figure 1: Priorities set for 2021



Source: The CVE Center, 2020

DIRECTOR
LEJDI DERVISHI

