PRIME
Preventing, Interdicting and Mitigating Extremism

D2.6
Context Analysis Report
Public Summary

WP2 - Context Analysis

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1. Introduction

Deliverable 2.6 (Context Analysis Report) presents a description of the range of identified contextual elements which may affect the relevance, adoption, implementation or exploitation of the PRIME Project's final deliverables (counter- and communication measures requirements portfolios), including differences in culture and legislation across Europe, as well as operational (law-enforcement-related and stakeholder-identified) constraints.

Included in the present report are:

- An analysis of existing legal provisions, which identifies the constraints that may affect the implementation of measures seeking to prevent, mitigate and interdict lone actor extremism.

- An exploration of the cultural context in which measures designed to combat lone actor extremism may be implemented.

- An analysis of the problems, constraints and obstacles to the successful and efficient use of operational procedures available for law-enforcement and security agencies and institutions, based on data gathered through our engagement activities with security practitioners.

Each section concludes with a summary list of the constraints identified during the context analysis. It must be stressed that the purpose of this document is to identify principal categories of constraints which stakeholders with a remit to counter lone-actor extremism may encounter in the exercise of this remit, and which may hinder the adoption or implementation of the project's deliverables. These stakeholders are the PRIME project's main target audience and anticipated users of the counter-measures requirements portfolios to be delivered at the end of the research exercise. Many of the identified constraints have emerged out of concerns expressed by the practitioners themselves.

However, the constraints discussed throughout and the lists offered in conclusion should not be construed as prescription of a kind to remove these constraints, or a view that countering lone-actor extremism should take precedence over other considerations embodied in any given category of constraints (e.g. human rights protections or privacy laws). While the PRIME project aims to produce a set of clear requirements for measures to defend against lone actor extremism, it seeks only to *inform* the decision of interested parties as to which, how and when to implement such measures, not to direct it. In making explicit the constraints within which lone-actor counter-terrorism operates, PRIME aims ultimately to help stakeholders and communities to decide how best to address the risk, given their own unique set of circumstances, cultures and values.

2. Methodological Approach

2.1 Overview of the research activities

The methodological approach employed to conduct the Context Analysis aimed to obtain credible and, above all, practical results. Therefore, we aimed for our research to be not only of a theoretical nature but also to reflect real-life situations and problems. Our goal was to obtain information and opinions concerning real problems and difficulties, which may hinder countering the prevention, interdiction and mitigation of lone actor extremism. The employed methodology included a review of the available academic literature, data from open sources and legal queries, as well as interviews, surveys, questionnaires and workshops with practitioners.

2.2 Literature review

During our research, we conducted library queries to familiarize ourselves with the current literature on lone actor extremism and terrorism. We used academic libraries located in the following universities: the University of Warsaw (Poland), University College London (UK), the University of Amsterdam (Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands), Technion: Israel Institute of Technology (Haifa, Israel), Warsaw University of Technology (Poland), Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel) and John Jay College of Criminal Justice (New York, United States).

Some documents which we obtained were acquired from Police libraries and forensic and criminological collections that we had access to (National Police Academy in Szczytno, Central Police Library in Legionowo, Library of the Central Forensic Laboratory of the Police, New York Police Department Library, National Police Academy Library in Hyderabad, India). Our queries were conducted by searching databases and library catalogues with a wide range of keywords related to the subject matter of the research conducted under the Project.

One significant problem was the lack of uniform vocabulary used in the literature to refer to the problem of attacks carried out by perpetrators referred to as "lone actors", as defined within the framework of the PRIME Project. Both in Polish and English language literature, there are various terms that can indicate the designation of this concept. In some cases, authors of outputs avoid the term "lone wolf" altogether. Sometimes the terms "solo terrorist" or "solo attacker" come up. Sometimes we deal with a descriptive formula where the type of perpetrator that we are interested in is defined by one variant of the title "the perpetrator operating separately from a group or structure". Some of the publications containing the concerned information did not have these keywords crucial to our work in their lists of keywords or abstracts. Hence, it was not possible, given the time and resources available, to conduct a systematic review of the lone actor literature. Nevertheless, the review we conducted provided an informative academic foundation for the empirical work to follow.

2.3 Legal queries

We conducted comprehensive legal queries that examined legal regulations and rulings referring to the issues being the subject of interest of the PRIME Project. We investigated relevant legal solutions that arose at the forum of the United Nations, legal actions undertaken by the Council of Europe, and regulations of the European Union concerning countering terrorism. We analysed legal issues related to the exchange of information between law-enforcement agencies, regulations related to migration and the Schengen visa system, and the provisions concerning the financing of terrorism. Based on the conducted legal analysis, we formulated a list of legal limitations and obstacles that could affect the effective prevention and countering of terrorist threats.

2.4 One-on-one interviews with practitioners

Direct access to officers and representatives of intelligence services (secret service) turned out to be impossible, from a formal point of view, due to security procedures, protection of classified information and other administrative restrictions. Thanks to our direct contacts, we managed to gain the opportunity to meet and talk directly with representatives of the Polish Internal Security Agency (ABW) and Europol (European Police Office) in The Hague. The ABW and Europol were two out of eight institutions that we contacted – the other six were: Polish National Police, Polish Border Guard, Central Bureau of Investigation, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Indian National Police. Due to the fact that we only had the possibility to conduct one joint meeting in The Hague, in order to preserve the clarity of the Report, the description and the conclusions from the three interviews are merged in this report. We also undertook a working visit to CAT ABW – the Counter-Terrorist Centre of the Internal Security Agency in Warsaw.

2.5 Workshops

In October 2014 in London, the UCL research team carried out a workshop during which they engaged with practitioners regarding threats related to LAEEs. Our colleagues conducted structured sessions to elicit information on the practitioners' awareness of research on lone actor extremism, and the constraints that they faced when working towards the prevention, countering, interdiction or mitigation of lone actor radicalization and attacks. Twenty-four UK practitioners took part in this event. The list of organisations that they represent and the findings of the workshop are detailed in section 3.4.2.1 below.

In January 2015, further workshops were conducted at the University of Warsaw. Fifty participants took part in the workshops, including representatives of the Polish Police, Internal Security Agency and Border Guard, as well as scientists (specialists in the field of forensic and investigative sciences and police sciences) and PhD candidates participating in the field of evidence law, forensics and related sciences. The subject of

the workshops was the awareness of threats associated with the phenomenon of lone actor terrorism, as well as the restrictions and problems related to the prevention and countering of extremism, radicalization and attacks and the minimization of the effects of this kind of threat.

2.6 Questionnaires

On top of direct engagement activities, we conducted a questionnaire concerning issues that are the subject of the PRIME Project. When selecting our study group, we focused mainly on practitioners (representatives of law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary) and scientists specializing in crime, forensic sciences and criminology. The first survey covered a group of fifty people and was conducted in Warsaw. The second survey was conducted in India. An opportunity for this project was a training symposium for the Indian Police held at the National Police Academy in Hyderabad in India. For the benefit of this research, the survey was submitted to eighty high-ranking officers representing all 29 States of India (a response was obtained from 54 people). The survey was also sent to a group of 25 officers representing European and non-European Police and Intelligence institutions, but ultimately we only received two responses and consequently made the decision to exclude them from further analysis.

3. Summary of activities and research findings

3.1 Introduction and literature review

At the very beginning of the research devoted to the phenomenon of lone actor extremism and terrorism, we had to face a key problem in any scientific deliberations i.e. the need to define the phenomenon. While the PRIME Project has adopted its own operational definition for the purpose of data collection, there is no widely accepted definitions of terms such as 'lone actor', 'terrorism' or 'radicalization' in the academic or operational field, which made imposing one from the outside for the purpose of our literature review something of an exercise in futility.

In the literature, the term "lone wolf" most often refers to a person detached from the influence of any organization or other persons, who radicalizes him or herself and as a result decides to carry out a terrorist attack[1]. As was noticed however by one of our interviewees, true "lone actors" do not really exist. Only a few individuals may be named at this point, such as Theodore Kaczynski – the so-called "Unabomber" – or Anders Breivik. Our interviewee suggested that the main focus should be put on the problem that really exists, even if it is not fully consistent with strict definitions of a "lone wolf". He recognized one such problem to be the phenomenon of solo terrorists,

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[1] See e.g. Center for Terror Analysis, The threat from solo terrorism and lone wolf terrorism, 5.04.2011, or E. Bakker, B. de Graaf (2011) Preventing Lone Wolf Terrorism: *some CT Approaches Addressed, Perspective on Terrorism, Vol.5, Issues 5-6.*

namely people who act out of the control of an organization (which does not imply that they have never had relations with one). Another critical problem, he indicated, was so-called sleeping terrorists ("sleepers") who can start operating years after the date when their organization deployed them – i.e. sent them on a "mission".

The ambiguity of the notion of a lone actor is indicated by the fact that in the literature and public discourse, this term can encompass various categories of people:

- individuals completely detached from any external structures and organizations, radicalizing themselves on their own, building their beliefs and views without any clear input from people from the outside (namely not subject to indoctrination; not being under the influence of persuasion or suggestions from outside);

- individuals detached from external structures (and not seeking to contact them) but who are under the influence of a radical ideology whose recommendations or instructions they can access e.g. via the Internet (readers of extremist websites, discussion forums, community websites; audience-members of on-line proselytising, identifying with an ideology or a programme of an organization or terrorist group);

- "solo terrorists" (individuals looking for contact with terrorist organizations, which often give them training support, on their own initiative, who at the same time are not members, but only supporters);

- perpetrators-emissaries, associated with a terrorist organization and "delegated" to conduct a lone attack;

- returning fighters (individuals returning from war zones e.g. from Syria or Iraq), who after the contact with real frontline situations return to the country and undertake independent attempts to extend the conflict zone;

- "sleeper" terrorists (individuals connected with terrorist organizations deployed to the West and living in the western society, awaiting the right moment to attack);

- offenders who are defined in criminological and criminal literature as "mass murderers" – e.g. perpetrators of school shootings or individuals deciding to commit a so-called "extended suicide"; they may connect their behaviour with some ideology, beliefs or a specific philosophy, however it is difficult to find more features in their motivation which would be typical of the above categories of terrorists and extremists.

It is worth noting that among the above categories, most of them in fact do have some (larger or smaller) connections to terrorist organizations. It is a kind of paradox, since,

as indicated above, the essence of this phenomenon lies in the absence of such connections. Yet it appears from the literature and our discussions with practitioners that the most significant problem is not the lone actors in the strict sense of that word, but persons acting "like lone actors".

It would seem that the acts of terrorism of lone actors have to also be examined as a strategy knowingly used by leading terrorist organizations. Using this "strategy" is encouraged by both Al-Qaeda – in this context it is worth mentioning the widely propagated "Haemorrhage operation"[2] – and ISIS[3]. The declarations of the Islamic State leaders point, for example, to plans to send terrorists to Europe among the groups of immigrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea; the modus operandi of such terrorists in Europe assumes using the tactics of individually operating agents. This strategy would seem to capitalise on the fact that, though they are sent by an organization, their relationship with the organization may end in the country that they leave; in Europe, they may start functioning as individuals without any connections and attack at an opportune moment.

Some specialists share the view that a lone actor terrorist in the strict sense of the word does not exist, because in almost all cases there is some organization operating in the background of their actions. In Jean-Pierre Filiu's opinion, the goal of the terrorists is to convince the community that is the target of potential attacks that they are threatened by lone actors since this arouses greater fear, and in turn this fear causes more emotional and, as a consequence, less professional actions aimed at preventing and countering this phenomenon[4].

Therefore, considering the above reservations, in this report the phenomenon of the terrorism of lone actors is examined both in the context of lone actors in the strict sense and lone actors in the wider sense (including solo terrorists, terrorists-emissaries, returning fighters and "sleepers"). However, we have left out the phenomenon of mass homicides of school-shooters from our considerations.

Of relevance to the context analysis, the literature devoted to the issue of lone actors draws attention to the potential obstacles to the implementation of prevention and countermeasures against this kind of terrorism. For instance, they include the attackers' ease of mobility afforded by modern transport, communications, security,

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[2] Broadly propagated for instance in no 3 of the Inspire magazine.
[3] Dabiq no. 4 http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/isis-calls-lone-wolf-attacks-uk-iraq-intervention-1469694 (access 06.06.15).
[4] Kapiszewski J. *Filiu: Europę czeka zamach. A dżihadyście chcą, abyśmy uwierzyli w samotne wilki.* http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/opinie/artykuly/489664,arabista-jean-pierre-filiu-o-grozbie-zamachow-w-europie-islamie-dzihadzie-i-wojnie-w-syrii.html) (access 06.06.15).

democratic legal systems, access to arms and vulnerability of targets[5]. Some of these appeared also in the comments of our interviewees; sometimes, however, they also mentioned other aspects hitherto omitted in the literature or mentioned in a slightly different context, as for example so-called weaknesses of the democratic system permitting the perpetrators to promote their ideas widely during court proceedings. Our interviewees mentioned this in relation to what they perceive to be "excessive antidiscrimination policies".

Bearing in mind the need to define the object of our studies, it is also important to point out that the context analysis and the constraints inventoried below relate to the terrorism of lone actors, regardless of whether they represent views that are extreme left- or right-wing or promote the idea of "jihad". However, bearing in mind that many of our interviewees indicated the threat of "jihad"-inspired lone actors as the most urgent problem, in the report we have paid most attention (especially in the part regarding barriers of a cultural nature) to "jihad"-inspired lone actors. In the face of increasing activities of the self-titled Islamic State, the view that "Islamic terrorism is considered as a major political threat [with] far-reaching consequences"[6] is likely to remain prominent.

3.2 Legal analysis

3.2.1 Potential legal limitations to measures to prevent or disrupt lone actors

When designing interventions to prevent or disrupt lone actor radicalisation and attacks, attention must be paid to many external factors, such as relations within given local communities and ethnic minorities (cultural and social constraints), the organizational structure of law-enforcement institutions (organizational constraints), or the technologies available and used in counter-terrorism practice (technological constraints). Equally important are binding legislative frameworks with regard to countering terrorist crimes – when creating a counter-terrorism programmes, it is important to take into account the existing legal conditions (legal constraints) and assess to what extent they may affect the possibility of implementing any given prevention or disruption mechanism.

The first relatively obvious reason for this is that if any proposed solution is to be effectively implemented, it has to be consistent with legal regulations. Secondly, resulting directly from the above observation, some regulations may limit or prevent

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[5] J.-L. Striegher (2013) *Early detection of the lone wolf: advancement of counter-terrorism investigations with an absence or abundance of information and intelligence. Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, 8:1, 35-5.*

[6] R. Haverkamp (2014) The prognosis of terrorist attacks - limits of scientific findings, Crime Law Soc Change (2014) 62:257–268.

the use of some methods or elements of the designed programme to a sufficient extent, in spite of the programme's postulated effectiveness. Thirdly, it is important to consider whether, within existing legal provisions, elements are included which could potentially negatively affect the execution of the objectives.

It is well accepted that in tandem with growing international integration, trans-border crime has been thriving, and not only for crimes of a terrorist nature. Many actions aimed at countering terrorism are of course carried out by particular countries on their own; however, this obligation is also vested in international organizations and institutions that form legal states' cooperation mechanisms aimed at countering and preventing terrorism. Observations indicate that terrorist activities carried out by perpetrators or co-perpetrators are less and less often limited to the territory of one state. Terrorist attacks are increasingly planned, prepared and conducted in places that are remote from each other. Therefore, there is a need for intensive cooperation between states (state agencies responsible for pursuing crimes). This in turn requires an appropriate legal basis.

Bearing in mind the goals of the PRIME project, it is important to consider whether existing legal provisions aimed against the phenomenon of terrorism have relevance with regards to countering the phenomenon of lone actor terrorism. Many legal provisions (included in international contracts or in the acts of the related law of international organizations) were designed for countering organized terrorism, which is apparent in their contents. Certainly, this does not mean that the existing regulations cannot prove useful in countering terrorists operating outside a strict organizational structure (at this point ignoring the issue of the definition of "terrorist organization"). However, it may be that they are not equally suitable for the purpose of countering lone-actor terrorist activities.

When attempting to create effective measures for the detection and prevention of lone actor terrorist crimes, it is important to take into account both provisions adopted worldwide (especially at the forum of the Commission of the United Nations) and regionally (especially within the European Union and the states cooperating with it). This study considered legal provisions having direct or indirect importance for countering terrorism. At the same time it attempts to assess the potential constraints that may arise from such provisions in the context of the implementation of preventive and disruptive measures again lone actor extremist events, of the kind the PRIME project aims to inform. It is not possible to present all legal provisions having potential importance on this matter in such a short study – the multiplicity and decentralization of legal provisions relating to terrorism is a problem in itself, which requires a separate discussion. The findings of the analysis of potential legal limitations to preventing lone actor terrorism are presented below.

3.2.2 Findings

1. Limitations resulting from international public law – the (frequently un-met) necessity of ratification, implementation and application of the available legal regulations.
2. Excessive focus of numerous international regulations on combating *organised* terrorist criminality, as opposed to less organised forms of the threat.
3. Some of the legal standards limit or exclude their own application to the set of casuistically listed (case-based) specific regulations.
4. The necessity of the preservation of human rights and the rules of humanitarian and ethical proceedings.
5. Indefinite, vague and unclear phrases and the lack of precision in formulating the legal requirements to be met by countries.
6. State of regulations concerning data retention (telecommunication and others - for example the periods of data retention in the databases of state authorities, such as criminal records etc.)
7. Lack of uniform methods of preparation/transfer/implementation of the requests for the transfer of digital data between countries.
8. Discretionary power of Member states to define terms (e.g. "competent law-enforcement authorities").
9. Absence of common, supranational databases (with a few exceptions).
10. Requirements for the detention of persons (resulting from the premises of its use, the length of the use etc.).
11. Legal loopholes – absence of common regulations; express policies against persons vulnerable to radicalization or already radicalized.
12. So-called "legislative chaos" – multiplicity of reports, regulations and rules that relate to part of the terrorist problem.

3.3 Socio-cultural analysis

Following the legal context analysis, this section focuses on considerations of a socio-cultural nature relevant to the design, adoption and implementation of counter-measures against lone actor extremism and terrorism. In doing so, we refer to the findings from interviews and workshops conducted by PRIME researchers with stakeholders, and which are discussed in further detail in the next section of this report. As mentioned in the introduction, this data collection exercise was particularly important, as it provided insights into those factors perceived as constraints by the stakeholders who are one of the PRIME Project's target audience.

It should be noted that ongoing data collection activities being carried out to generate the lone actor extremist event scripts may or may not turn out to contradict some of these perceptions, which will be interesting to consider in the final analysis.

The findings from this research centred around a number of themes, including the relationship between communities and law enforcement agencies, in terms of the importance of cooperation and barriers to this; communication factors which affected the level of awareness of the threat of lone actor extremist events amongst both policy-makers and wider society; and political constraints including migration policies and the protection of individual rights. The findings of the analysis of potential socio-cultural limitations to preventing lone actor terrorism are summarised below.

3.3.1 Findings

1. Obstacles to cooperation between communities and law enforcement agencies (e.g. segregation, distrust, prior negative experiences, cultural disapproval of cooperation)
2. Insufficient knowledge of the culture of specific communities, i.e. the culture codes of particular groups, their language, values, etc.
3. The need for law-enforcement agencies and security services to undertake actions in environments that were not assessed, infiltrated or studied at an earlier stage.
4. Lack of awareness and perception of the lone actor threat in policy-making circles
5. Lack of awareness and perception of the lone actor threat by society
6. State of migration policies and the migration political debate
7. Political imperatives to preserve individual rights

3.4 Law Enforcement and Security Practices

3.4.1. Background

This section of the context analysis focuses more specifically on the current challenges and constraints experienced by security practitioners with a remit to prevent, interdict or mitigate the threat of lone actor terrorism, with an emphasis on eliciting what these practitioners perceive as "the real problems" in their day-to-day practice. Rather than duplicate the secondary literature on security and police work, we decided, despite the challenges posed by access to the security community, to obtain information directly from the source. We conducted semi-structured interviews with practitioners, organized semi-structured and informal workshops, and administered a survey tailored towards our target group. While some of the responses we received informed the findings of the previous section, we offer a more thorough description of this empirical data below.

Several difficulties affected the collection of the aforementioned data, in particular with regard to issues related to researching operational problems. A fundamental problem was gaining access to sources, which in the overwhelming majority of cases are covert (secret or confidential). This applies to the most important parameters

concerning the tactics and techniques of performance of services by departments and institutions, which we wanted to initially examine for the needs of the Context Analysis. We were able to directly contact practitioners dealing with issues of terrorism (including threats from "lone actors"), but, understandingly, all of them agreed to talk to us only upon the reservation of the right to complete anonymity. During the interviews, they did not disclose any classified information, but gave us an invaluable perspective into the so-called "kitchen work"' of the law-enforcement and security services.

3.4.2 Workshops

3.4.2.1 University College London PRIME workshop. Oct. 2014.

This workshop aimed to introduce the PRIME project to an end-user audience and provide practitioners with the opportunity (through semi-structure discussions) to inform on-going and future project outputs. The primary aim of the activity was to elicit knowledge and requirements from end-users regarding perceived deficiencies in lone-actor terrorism research to date and the constraints that end-users engaged in the prevention, disruption, or mitigation of lone-actor terrorism operate under. The longer-term aim of the workshop was to inform the conduct of the PRIME project, aiding in the engineering of a policy-relevant product, fit-for-requirement within the counter-terrorism practitioner community. The invitation to take part in the workshop clearly outlined these objectives.

Individuals who hold a role in a range of policing, intelligence, and counter-terrorism organisations were identified and invited to attend the workshop. The agencies and programmes represented a broad spectrum of practitioners who deal with the threat of lone actors, and included: Channel (a national programme that aims to support individuals identified as being at risk of being drawn into extremist activity)[7]; Prevent (the work strand of the UK CONTEST Strategy responsible for the prevention of radicalisation and engagement in terrorism and extremism)[8]; National Crime Agency (both cyber and organised crime divisions); National Probation Service; Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorism Unit; Ministry of Defence; Her Majesty's Prison Service; North West Counter Terrorism Unit; The Home Office; National Offender Management Service; Defence Science and Technology Laboratory; and the Association of Chief of Police Officers.

In the workshop, practitioners were invited to participate in semi-structured conversations, held in four small groups. Each discussion lasted approximately one

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[7] See: https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/115/channel-process
[8] See: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

hour, and encouraged the practitioners to give their own opinions and experiences. The discussions consisted of up to seven main questions, each with smaller, more open-ended questions, designed to probe further into the initial responses.

Questions covered the following concerns regarding lone-actor terrorism:

- The usefulness, accessibility, and applicability of current research concerning lone-actors
- Knowledge and application gaps in current practice
- Perception of the scope of the lone-actor threat
- Potential areas for prevention and mitigation of lone-actor threats
- Current interventions used for prevention and mitigation, and the gaps/obstacles in knowledge/application
- Constraints and other obstacles to the fulfilment of their remit and duties

Findings

In summary, our participants perceived lone actor terrorists to be a major threat to UK security. They also felt that this should not come at the cost of ignoring the threat from other potential terrorist events fomented by group-based actors. No consensus could be reached with regards to what stage of a lone-actor event offered the best opportunity for successful counter terrorism initiatives (radicalisation, attack preparation, or attack stage), as practitioners saw merit in intervening at each stage, depending on their background experiences.

The workshop highlighted suggestions for improving collaboration between agencies. Training, funding, data sharing, knowledge building, and inter-agency and community relations were all repeatedly identified as areas of constraint. Practitioners were well aware of limitations in their current positions, in terms of how much change they could effect. However, they felt that improving communication across partner agencies would be a positive outcome of this kind of exercise.

3.4.2.2 University of Warsaw PRIME workshop, Jan. 2015.

We made the decision to organize a broad meeting to bring together a large group of practitioners and experts as this approach turned out to be more expedient for the institutions with which we had established contact. Due to logistical considerations, the most convenient option for us was to link the workshop to a doctoral seminar held at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warsaw. Members of the following institutions participated: Internal Security Agency; Counter-Terrorism Centre of the Internal Security Agency; Governmental Computer Emergency Response Team; Crime Analysis Department, Cyber-Crime Department and Counter-Terrorism Operations Bureau of the Polish National Police Headquarters; Central Investigation

Bureau of the Police; and the Operations-Investigation Management Office of the Border Guard Headquarters.

Discussions within the workshop included the following topics:

- An assessment as to whether 'lone-wolf' terrorism was a serious problem for Europe and Poland;
- Attempt at determining at which stage a successful intervention was possible (stages: Radicalization, Attack Preparation and Attack);
- Definition of the most important problems and difficulties attendant on undertaking counter-terrorist activities;
- Determination of possible actions that could deepen the knowledge of 'lone-wolf' terrorism and facilitate the successful counteraction of such threats.

Subsequently, the participants were divided into smaller teams in which a moderated discussion was held based on the key subjects outlined above, along the same approach that was taken at the earlier workshop in London, though this time around some attempt was made to quantify answers.

<u>Findings</u>
From the discussions, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Terrorism is deemed to be one of the main threats to security on the international and local scale, and lone-actor terrorism is deemed to be more dangerous than average, both at the European and the national (Polish) level.
- There is a need to provide a uniform definition of lone-actor terrorism, facilitating the subsequent information exchange about threats and translating this into a more successful determination of risk areas.
- Lone-actor extremists and terrorists pose a substantial challenge to law enforcement and intelligence services, due to their lack of connection with recognized terrorist organizations and structures (often being 'off the radar').
- An increase in the terrorist threat (including 'lone actors') is possible in connection with the influx of refugees and migrants, as well as 'foreign fighters' returning from conflict zones.
- The Internet and the modern technologies associated with it were seen as very significant factors in radicalization, growth of extremism and increase in terrorism.
- With regard to the possibility of a successful anti-terrorist intervention, it was decided that the most appropriate time was the Radicalization stage. The most difficult stage was thought to be the transition from the Attack Preparation stage to the Attack stage.
- The most significant obstacles to having a successful anti-terrorism policy in place were found to be legal barriers and restrictions (so-called 'legislative chaos'), as well as a lack of specialist training calibrated to the threat of lone-actor attacks.

- Other significant obstacles to successful anti-terrorism action against lone wolves were the lack of societal awareness of the danger posed by them, as well as insufficient funding and lack of co-operation from local communities.
- The fear of being accused of 'Islamophobia' and a perception of prevailing "political-correctness" led to problems with the implementation of successful solutions by law enforcement agencies, government services and scholars dealing with terrorism issues.
- A need for intensification of research into the use of the Internet and associated modern technologies by radicals, extremists and terrorists was suggested.
- The need to unify the provisions and improve the procedures relating to the counteraction of terrorist threats was emphasized.
- Attention was called to the need to create supranational databases of operational data used to prevent and counteract terrorism and facilitate information exchange (including digital and biometric data) between states. The problem of the relatively short retention periods for sensitive data was also highlighted.

3.4.3 One-on-one interviews

3.4.3.1 Interviews conducted at Europol

At the beginning of January 2015, we were successful in obtaining approval for an interview with police officers accredited at Europol (European Police Office) in The Hague. We were put in touch with Europol liaison officers, who agreed to share a discussion with us. Our interviewees' limited time availability made it impossible to hold personal (individual) interviews. Two researchers from the University of Warsaw and three Europol officers attended the meeting. All of our interviewees had many years' police-work experience in their countries of origin.

The Europol officers agreed to share non-classified information with us, on condition of strict anonymity. The interviewees roles were as a 'Crime Analyst' (core occupation: operational analysis and strategic analysis), a 'Terrorism Analyst' (core occupation: counter-terrorism), and a 'Finance Analyst' (core occupation: financing of organized crime). Audio recording was not allowed at the meeting; we were only allowed to take handwritten notes.

3.4.3.2 Summary of the Results.

From this interview the following conclusions were drawn, many of which echo the conclusions of the practitioner workshops:

- In the opinion of practitioners, special services in Europe are currently primarily focused on dismantling groups and terrorist organizations. The problem of "lone actors" is extremely important, but still poorly understood and recognized.

- The European system lacks a set of uniform and generally accepted definitions and terminology relating to the present issue. Some "lone actors" are not "lone wolves" in the strict sense of the word, i.e. they are "solo terrorists" who received a task from a terrorist organization, and so-called "sleepers".
- From the perspective of Europol, an extremely important problem is the phenomenon of returning foreign fighters, i.e. those returning from the conflict zones in Iraq and Syria.
- With regard to the possibility effective counterterrorist interventions, it was considered that the most appropriate moment is the stage immediately following Radicalization.
- Introduction of a category of "mini-attacks" was suggested, which could take place between the stage of Radicalization and Attack Preparation. In the opinion of Europol officers, it can be a helpful factor in designing tactical methods of countering the terrorism of "lone actors".
- The Internet and modern technologies related to it are a very important element in radicalization and development of extremism, and in the growth of threats of terrorism.
- Attention was drawn to the high importance of close cooperation with the circles from which radicals come and with local communities. Personal sources of information from these circles are of vital importance in the evaluation and analysis of the risk.
- A key obstacle to effectively combatting terrorism is the unrealistically short period of retention of operational data, which does not allow for strategic planning of the operation. Similar problems are the rules on the protection of personal data that are perceived as maladapted to the current threats.
- Databases are not compatible and there are technological problems associated with the development of ICT infrastructure in some European countries.
- Insufficiently strong cooperation between the institutions of justice and law enforcement was considered to be a significant problem, as well as the issues of competition or rivalry between the services.
- Excessive bureaucracy is felt to be paralyzing the work of the police at the operational level.
- Attention was drawn to the need to use financial analysis in recognizing occurrences of an extremist and terrorist nature, with attendant need for adequate tools.
- The interviewees stressed the need for more research concerning the potential and directions of development in the use of the Internet and related new technologies by radicals, extremists and terrorists.

3.4.4 Questionnaires and Surveys

When identifying the study population for our surveys, we concentrated on practitioners (representatives of law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary). The first

survey included a group of 50 persons and was conducted in Warsaw. The second survey was conducted in India, for the purpose of comparison of opinions on threats connected with the radicalization of, and attacks by, "lone actors". Questionnaires were handed over to 80 officers of the highest rank representing all 29 States of India (with a response rate of 54 persons). We also sent the same questions to 25 Police and Intelligence officers in Europe and North America, but received a very low response rate; therefore, we decided to exclude them from further analysis.

3.4.4.1 January 2015 Warsaw Questionnaire

The survey was given to, and completed by, 50 people. The respondents represented the broad sector of law-enforcement, security and the criminal justice system. Among them 30 persons were officers of the following services: the Police, The Internal Security Agency and the Border Guard. The remaining participants were law practitioners (judges, prosecutors and attorneys) as well as scientists and PhD candidates specializing in issues of evidence law, forensics and related sciences (i.e. subject matter experts). Due to the nature of the work of the surveyed individuals who are officers of the law-enforcement and security services, the surveys were developed in such a way as to make it impossible to identify respondents and ensure their confidentiality (especially Subject Matter Experts). Therefore, the surveys did not include demographic questions or questions about the institution in which the given person was employed. To reiterate, this was not a random sample of individuals from these institutions, but an opportunity sample from a range of practitioners with expertise in preventing terrorism, who had had previous interaction with the researchers, and shown interest in the project. Therefore, the results shown below should not be taken to be generalizable of the population of counter-terrorism practitioners in Poland as a whole, but merely representative of this small sample.

<u>Results</u>

The answers provided in the questionnaires were generally in agreement with the results received during the discussion workshop conducted at the University of Warsaw. In the opinion of the Polish respondents, the threat from "lone-actor" perpetrators is above average within the territory of Europe. The risk of the occurrence of terrorist attacks by lone actors is rated as low or ordinary for Poland. When comparing the seriousness of the threat of attacks by "lone actors" to other forms of terrorism, the majority of respondents recognized it as comparable or higher.

The opinion of respondents asked to rank the threats from different forms of terrorism according to the criterion of their significance proved especially interesting. Based on the results of the discussion conducted during the workshops (when it was indicated that the term "lone actors" can be understood in various ways) we assumed the detailed division of "lone actors" into the suggested subgroups. While the control

category of perpetrators acting within terrorist organizations received the highest individual percentage of votes (32%), all the remaining categories (each of them being a subtype of "lone actors") received a total of 68% of votes. Thus, we can assume that these respondents consider one of the forms of "lone-wolf terrorism" as more dangerous than the "traditional" group terrorism form.

With regard to the possibility of undertaking an efficient intervention during one of the stages assumed in the PRIME Project (Radicalization, Attack Preparation, Attack), the vast majority of respondents decided that in relation to those who have already been radicalised and moving on to the action phase, actual intervention at any stage is difficult, very difficult or simply impossible. A total of 22% of respondents indicated that undertaking effective intervention at the stage of Radicalization had some chance of success.

A similar response was observed in the answers to the question in which the respondents were asked to compare between the probabilities of undertaking efficient intervention. Respondents were in a way "forced" to decide on some hierarchy of values of the chances of efficient intervention, and decided that the easiest intervention seemed to be at the stage of Radicalization (64% of respondents). A total of 68% of the respondents recognized the Attack Preparation phase as the stage of average difficulty with regard to undertaking the intervention. The Attack phase was clearly recognized as the most difficult in terms of prevention (72% of answers).

3.4.4.2 May 2015 National Police Academy, Hyderabad, India Questionnaire

Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the participation of one member of the PRIME Consortium research team in a training visit to India (co-leading the course in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad, India), we conducted a survey concerning the issue of lone-actor terrorism there. The surveys were shortened to take into account the limited time available to the participants. Questions and protocols were developed in such a way as to make it impossible to identify the particular respondents and ensure their confidentiality. Therefore the surveys did not include demographic questions or questions concerning the institution in which the given person was employed. Questionnaires were given to 80 persons and responses were received from 54 persons. Before the start of the survey, the participants were informed about the purposes and tasks of the PRIME Project.

Results

From the above answers to closed-ended questions, it appears that there is a high awareness of threats from lone-actor terrorism among our sample of senior officers of the Indian Police. The majority of the surveyed persons deal with the problem of the

threat connected with extremism and terrorism (including "lone-actor" type) in their work (74% of respondents).

The Indian Police officers consider lone-wolf terrorism as a very serious danger in the world (92% of respondents) and in India (89% respondents). Comparing lone-actor terrorism to other forms of terrorism, the vast majority of the surveyed persons consider lone actor terrorism to be a more dangerous phenomenon (70% of respondents). The majority of respondents (74%) agreed with the statement that detecting the lone-actor threat early is a "needle in a haystack".

With regard to the possibility of undertaking an efficient intervention at one of the stages assumed in the PRIME Project (Radicalization, Attack Preparation, Attack), 44% of the surveyed persons decided that effective intervention can be undertaken at the Radicalization stage and as many as 56% persons recognized that effective intervention actions are possible at the Attack Preparation stage. None of them believed that this intervention was possible at the Attack stage.

Respondents were also asked about the obstacles that they are coming across when commissioning, designing or implementing interventions that address lone-actor terrorist or extremist threats. Unfortunately, not all of the respondents answered; the most common answers given by almost all of the surveyed persons who decided to complete this part of the surveys were around the areas of: legal constraints; lack of understanding of the threat; lack of interagency co-operation; and a lack of co-operation from communities.

3.4.5 Findings from law enforcement and security practices

Summarising the findings from the practitioner interviews, workshops, surveys and questionnaires, the following conclusions can be drawn as to the difficulties faced within law enforcement and security services when tackling lone actor terrorism:

1. The absence of a commonly accepted definition of lone-actor terrorism.

2. The risk posed by overstating or over-focusing upon any given threat (e.g. Islamic terrorism) at any given time, with regards to neglecting other threats.

3. The nature of the lone-actor population, who tend to constitute an offender population which is "off the radar", in comparison to group actors, meaning that many existing tools, procedures, policies and practices already in place to combat terrorism are not adapted to this aspect of the problem.

4. Continued shortcomings of the existing knowledge-base on radicalisation generally and lone actors specifically, and of effective prevention messaging.

5. Data-sharing and broader restrictions to collaboration between security agencies and academia.

6. The increasing complexity introduced by new technologies, with regards to the radicalisation and offending behaviour of lone actors, in terms of keeping up with developments (technological proficiency, academic research results, training, resources, and so on).

7. The lack of specialist training for threats caused by attacks by "lone actors".

8. The so-called "legislative chaos", which impacts upon the operational context, making the standardization of regulations and improvement of procedures connected with combating the terrorist threats difficult.

9. Barriers to inter-agency cooperation and dominance of law enforcement agencies in the criminal justice system's dealings in the domains of extremism and terrorism control.

10. The lack of legal provisions that would make the long-term and strategic use of operational tools possible. The use of these instruments is, according to security practitioners, hampered by restrictive legal provisions.

11. The possible impact of the influx of refugees and migrants, as well as of "foreign fighters", arriving or returning from conflict zones, which ties in to cultural issues regarding the familiarity and understanding (or lack thereof) of communities from which lone actors might emerge.

12. Absence of what our interviewees thought of as a sound immigration policy addressing what they perceive to be real dangers, notably in the context of an unprecedented influx of refugees to Europe.

13. The under-financing of special services which are necessary to keep up with the increased expenses of operational activity associated with a significant influx of refugees, and the lack of recourses and means for the tasks associated with the phenomenon.

14. The lack of familiarity and trust with certain communities of refugees and migrants, which law-enforcement agencies and security services worry could become "nurseries" for lone actors.

15. Barriers to communication and cooperation between security agencies and communities more generally.

16. Problems related to so-called "political correctness", which, as perceived by some of our interviewees, hinders the effective design and implementation of measures to counter terrorist threats.

17. The regulations concerning personal data protection, which are perceived by our interviewees to be maladapted to current threats.

18. Insufficiencies of supra-national operational databases used for preventing and combating terrorism and enabling information exchange (including digital and biometric data) between countries, and the incompatibility of these databases.

19. Noticeable problems in the tele-information structure (especially in terms of providing data transmission security) in some European countries.

20. The unrealistically short period, as assessed by participants, of operational data retention, which does not allow the strategic (long-term) planning of law-enforcement actions.

21. Excessive bureaucracy and political interference hindering operational police work.

22. Insufficient attention paid to the potential of financial analysis in relations to the phenomena of an extremist and terrorist nature, with implications for training and resources available to undertake this kind of work.