Protect and Secure Worship

PROSECUW
WP2, D2.5
PROSECUW TRANSNATIONAL ECOSYSTEM MAPPING AND RESEARCH REPORT

Protection and Security for places of Worship-PROSECUW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PROSECUW project, funded by the European Commission's Security Fund, has two main aims: to strengthen religious communities in cooperation with security agents and politics the security measures at their places of worship and to sensitise the public for the topic and create awareness for the special needs of the victims of religious motivated hate crimes. Five partners from Cyprus, Greece, Portugal and Germany form the consortium for the project; leading is the Center for Social Innovation (CSI) in Cyprus. It aims to find solutions and prospects for more awareness and more security all over Europe.

This Transnational Report is the result of the first project phase: the desk research and first evaluations what people expect from the project.

The research shows that in all countries the question of protecting places of worship is existing, but that they deal very different with it. If there is one majority religion, it is very hard for others to be heard. If there are negative experiences in the past, some societies are more aware to create security. The big challenge is to create more security without destroying the religious feeling at the places and stop people from going there. What unites the four societies that were examined here: All of them deal with the topic, but the people involved wish for more communication and exchange. This is something that cannot be implemented by law but the people have to live, so the PROSECUW project can hopefully help to find ways to establish such exchange.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Protection and security for places of worship is the topic the PROSECUW project is dealing with. Recent reports and the daily media show that unfortunately places of worship are no longer safe places for contemplation and prayer but under constant pressure from hate crimes and terrorist acts. Those places are not only important in their religious function but they are also important as community centres that support families, older people and people in need. So, creating safe places should be one of the most important challenges not only for religious communities but also for national and local authorities. As this report will show, it is essential to include the community itself in creating security, as they know best where security gaps exist.

The first aim of the project is establishing cooperation between the religious communities, local authorities, national authorities, security agencies and the police. Only by involving all those players, places of worship can become safe places again.

Therefore, this report is the foundation for the future work of the PROSECUW consortium, uniting CSI from Cyprus as leading partner, RESET (Cyprus), CEMES (Greece), Universidade Lusófona (Portugal) and Akademie Klausenhof (Germany). Together we want to accomplish two key objectives:

1. We want to strengthen religious communities and support them building networks with local and national authorities, the police and security guards to make their places of worship safer. This should happen through workshops and trainings as well as in online support. The partners want to empower and mediate the process. At the end of the project, the consortium will collect all best practice ideas on the topic in a handbook that should be available for every community searching for better protection. We thereby focus on the (potential) victims, which is a unique feature as most programs focus on the potential perpetrators and try to stop them from getting radicalised.

2. We want to sensitise the public about the problem. In many countries, especially members of minority religions, do not feel safe at their places of worship. So, it is a phenomenon that a lot of people do not experience at all or only get in touch with when the news report about terrorist attacks. However, for many people the fear is part of their everyday life and by putting attention to this we want to support victims by showing them that they are not alone. We want to strengthen their courage to stand up for one's belief.

Therefore, the aim of the PROSECUW project is to enable communities to strengthen their security measures and to sensitise the public authorities and society about a problem most people just do not see. In this report a closer look to the problem is given. For each country, the partners did desk research on the current situation, answering the "statistical" questions on the topic and taking a closer look on the policy efforts that have already been made.

Next, the partners undertook an online survey to get to know how the believers feel at their place of worship. How do they evaluate the current situation? Which experiences do they have? What are their wishes?

Finally, for the national reports, the partners invited different stakeholders to join two different focus groups in order to have an exchange about the experiences they have and about their needs. By doing so, the different groups from the fields of politics, religion and security were brought together for a first meeting. As it was very hard to get in touch to relevant stakeholders in Germany, there were no focus groups so such report on Germany at this point is missing.

The results from all the different types of research and related experiences concluded in the national reports for each partner country. Additionally, there is a European desk research that summarises the actual European policies and experiences. The most important results and conclusions for the further PROSECUW project can be found in this transnational report that is the foundation for the creation of the workshops and further activities.

The report is divided in five main chapters that are each subdivided into five shorter chapters. Each main chapter deals with research the project partners (desk research, online survey, focus group discussions) did in their country and summarises the results. Each subchapter deals with one country; the last subchapter provides a conclusion and transfers the results on a European level. The last main chapter deals with the expectations the participants of the online survey and the focus group meetings have and gives a prospect for the further PROSECUW-activities.

The consortium knows that they are dealing with very personal information provided by the people taking part. They also are aware that in every country people have strong feelings toward their religions and that they are touching a very sensitive field. Therefore, of course, the PROSECUW-consortium respects all rights given in the European General Data Protection Regulation. Furthermore, the consortium is aware that the language is a very sensitive issue, too. Therefore, they try to find the right words to do justice to all people involved and take care for a language of respect. If this does not work out in particular cases, please be aware that it is a mistake and not by purpose. The consortium is also in a process learning a lot of things during this project and welcomes any feedback.[1]

2. DEFINITIONS

For the report we will be developing within the framework of the PROSECUW project, it is very important to define the examined subjects. We need to define the form of crimes we want to consider in the project. Our focus is on hate crimes and terrorist attacks. However, what is the exact definition? In this chapter, we want to provide conceptual clarity especially as the basis to make the national and EU mapping comparable. During the research on this report the PROSECUW-consortium decided that more terms must be defined. Therefore, during the whole project, a special glossary will be developed, including more terms than the ones presented here, so in the end of the project there will be a complete collection that can be worked with further.

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[1] To contact the PROSECUW-consortium, please visit www.prosecuwproject.eu.

1. PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship can be multifaceted and everyone may have individual ideas about them. Therefore, we have to define places of worship before we take a closer look at them.

Following an online publication of the European Commission on the protection of places of worship, the term "refers to any temple, shrine, site, faith community centre or religious school where worship to any religion is practised."[2] That means we are dealing with public places that are "designed to promote inclusiveness and a feeling of welcoming and openness".[3] Most religious groups consider it important to keep the character of open spaces – so a lot of them do not have any security measures at all and the ones that do have, prefer measures that adjust to the character of the place. Security and protection measures should not dominate the feeling and atmosphere of the places.

This definition does not include private shrines or comparable sites that are not open for the public but only for a private, chosen circle of people.

2. HATE SPEECH AND HATE CRIME

Hate speech and hate crime are very often related, but we have to look at the differences between them, especially if we want to find the best ways to protect believers and places of worship. Let us look on hate speech first. Following Bayer and Bárd in their study on "Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches"[4] hate speech in its everyday meaning covers all expressions and manifestations of racism, xenophobia and homophobia. It is widespread on social media. As the freedom of speech is guaranteed in the EU, it is very difficult to stop hate speech with legal means. This is only possible in cases of criminal hate speech, but the obstacles to its punishment are very high and depend on every state's national law.

Hate crime on the other side is a "criminological concept, an umbrella term that refers to a group of crimes as defined by national crime laws".[5] Considering this, hate crimes can be very different – they range from destroyed property to killing people. The difference between a criminal act and hate crime is the offender's motivation: The victims or crime scenes are chosen because of bias motive, whether it is the race, national/ ethic origin, language, religion, sex, age, disability or sexual orientation. The point is that the offender chooses his or her target

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[2] European Commission: Protection of Places of Worship: https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/pps/items/696367/en (last access 25.02.2022).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Bayer, Judit/ Bárd, Petra: Hate speech and hate crime in the EU and the evaluation of online content regulation approaches, 2020, p. 20, online available: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1e93a1ba-f6fa-11ea-991b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-217088608 (last access 25.02.2022).
[5] Ibid., p. 22.

because of a real or perceived connection to one of the mentioned, extra-protected groups. Only if there is a criminal act under law, Bayer and Bláde call it hate crime.[6]

Hate crime has a great impact on the victim as it is chosen because of characteristics that are "immutable, unchangeable [...], or one that is the core of one's identity".[7] So this kind of crime results in a high feeling of vulnerability, helplessness and hopelessness not only for the direct victim but also for the victim's community and in the end for the whole society as it creates an atmosphere where no one wants to be under attack due to belonging to any minority group.

3. TERRORIST ATTACKS

Defining terrorist attacks is quite a challenge, as everyone uses the term as a common known one, even without any definition. An overview provides a summary written for the members of the European Parliament.[8] For our research, it is important to define the terrorist act also in differentiation to a hate crime that – as we will see – is motivated differently than terrorist attacks.

A council framework decision on combating terrorism made in 2002, is fundamental for the definition of terrorist attacks.[9] Following that decision, terrorist attacks are criminal acts that may seriously damage a country or an international organisation by their nature or context. Furthermore, it intimidates the population or compels a government or international institution to perform or abstain from performing a special act. Terrorists try to destabilise or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structure of the target. Thereby the variety of criminal acts that can be terrorists is quite huge: It ranges from attacks upon a person's life that may even cause death up to extensive destruction to a governmental or public facility. Likely, it can aim to endanger human life or result in major economic loss to interfering with or disrupting the supply of water, power or any fundamental natural resource to endanger human life.[10] While hate crimes are often committed by a single person, terrorist attacks can also by committed by a group of people.

Terrorist attacks can have a bias motive, but unlike hate crimes, they do not have to. The most important difference is that terrorist attacks explicitly target to unsettle the people and shock the basis of a society's framework. Furthermore terrorist attacks do not need to affect the groups filled with prejudices directly but can hit anyone living in the state. The reason can be a bias motive, too, for example the open society that raises the perpetrator's hate.

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[6] Ibid., p. 22.
[7] Ibid., p. 23.
[8] European Parliamentary Research Service/ Patryk Pawlak: At a glance. Understanding definitions of terrorism, 2015.
[9] Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (2002/475/JHA), in: Official Journal of the European Communities, L164/4, 22.06.2002.
[10] Ibid., art. 1.

Both, hate crime and terrorist attacks, can be committed for very different reasons. For the following study, we want to focus on religious motivated attacks as we are dealing with the security of places of worship.

3. ACTUAL POLICIES AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

Although there are some organisations that deal with questions of security at places of worship, they do it just in a very rural way that does not support the communities in their security efforts. The observation area remains within the national states. So it is very hard to find information about what the EU is doing to fight terrorism and hate crimes against places of worship. Thereby, an analysis for the European Union as a whole becomes quite complicated. As you will see in this report, there are only a few programmes and nearly no statistics available for this level.

The European institutions only address this issue when there has been a major attack on a religious place. In that case they all stand in solidarity with the victim and appeal to states to make sure such places become safe. Many times, after a resolution is passed stating these messages, less to nothing happens to prevent such situation at the places in the future. The main responsibility for the protection of places of worship lies with the member states so the European Union can only support them implementing security measures.

Especially the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) are leading in research on the topic on European level.

The FRA describes itself as an "independent centre of reference and excellence for promoting and protecting human rights in the EU".[11] They cover a lot of different fields when it comes to human rights from studies on special issues to the guidance for groups that need support from the local to the European level. For this report, their studies on the experiences of Muslims and Jews in Europe were quite helpful.[12]

The ODIHR is an institution survey of the OSCE and focuses on questions of democracy, human rights, rule of law and tolerance. They do not only provide advice but offer trainings for different stakeholders and institutions, too. They also evaluate the situations in the member states in the mentioned working fields.

The first problem dealing with the protection of places of worship is a lack of a complete overview over the cases of hate crimes against religious communities for the whole European Union. The data available cover different states in the European Union and mostly only attacks against Jews and Muslims but not fully the cases against all religions in the whole EU. Another

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[11] https://fra.europa.eu/en/about-fra (last access 22.02.2022).
[12] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism. Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, Luxembourg 2018; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Muslims – Selected findings, Luxembourg 2017.

challenge is that the national data are not fully comparable as every EU member state has its own laws on and measures of recording crimes. Especially the recording of hate crimes is a special challenge, as hate crime and hate-motivated harassment very often remain invisible in official statistics. Thus, it happens outside of the public consciousness, what again fosters a high underreporting.

On the one hand, while it is very hard to get reliable data on hate crime in the EU and therefore we do not really know how serious the situation is, on the other hand there is also a problem in supporting and helping the victims. Although the need to support the victims is obvious, the lack of information on hate crime in the different countries is quite a big problem – if no one reports if a criminal act has a bias motive, there can be no special support for the victims.

Following the European Commission, there are two growing dangers to places of worship: the radical Islamism and right-wing extremism. Places of worship might be common targets for those kinds of extremists as they are powerful symbols "to send a political message, spread radical ideologies or instil fear."[13] Following the article, those "places of spirituality and contemplation [are] designed to promote inclusiveness and a feeling of welcoming and openness"[14] and therefore often are not equipped with security measures – besides Jewish institutions that have to deal with the topic perpetually. Therefore, places of worship are an "easy and attractive target".[15] The European Commission detect short term and long term consequences in attacks on such places. Of course, short-term consequences are the direct consequences of such attacks like physical injuries to human beings (even the loss of life), physical damage of the places or the damage of artefacts with a high symbolic meaning. Long-term consequences might not be obvious in the first moment, but they are as important as the short-term damages. Lasting traumas and disruptions, economy effects or psychological effects on the whole community triggered by the feeling of insecurity even in religious places are outcomes that only become visible in the weeks or even months after the attack. Therefore, the aim should be to create as much security as possible while "not imping[ing] on the very nature and purpose of the place of worship".[16]

The European Commission emphasises that the risk analysis as well as the protection measures must be revised and updated regularly, as the situation can change every day and due to actual political events.

The research on the European Union level shows that more attempts on protecting places of worship in the European Union are needed, in order to make people feel safer and to give them the feeling, that they can enjoy the stay at their place of worship or other (public) events of their religion. Particularly the situation of Jews and Muslims in the European Union is analysed not only through the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights but also through the OSCE/ ODIHR that took a closer look at those communities. After so many years, the results make one feel contemplative as the communities and believers still face a lot of intolerance and cannot get together without a lot of protection measures or only with people

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[13] European Commission: Protection of Places of Worship.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

they know. Moreover, no one can image what the situation in other religious communities is like when they do not get so much public attention and are not the specific topic of such studies.

As there is this lack of research and information on the topic, the European Commission called for projects to bring the topic forward, in an ISFP-call, where the PROSECUW-project is financed as well. So there are some other projects dealing with questions of security:

- Safer and Stronger Communities in Europe (SASCE)
- Protecting Places of Worship (PROTECTOR)
- Solutions to Enhance Interfaith Protection of Places of Worship from Terrorist Danger (SHIELD)
- Protection System for Large Gatherings of People in Religious Sites (PROSPERES)

As well as the PROSECUW-project they want to find ways to make places of worship safer. During the project period there will be further exchange during the projects.

Although the European Commission sees a lack of research on the topic, there are two other initiatives dealing with the topic: The Future for Religious Heritage and the RAN networks, both also financial supported by the European Union.

The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)[17] has been existing for more than eleven years and promotes the exchange between people who work in the field of prevention and countering violent extremism in its different forms – including radical believers, e.g. radical Islamists, too. The network is a sub-organization of the European Commission and the members from all over Europe meet in conferences and workshops to keep themselves updated on relevant issues, exchange their experiences and also publishes their experiences. As the members come from all European Union member states, they might be good partners for the work PROSECUW wants to do – although the PROSECUW-project focuses more on potential victims than potential perpetrators.

The other initiative presented here that deals with the protection of places of worship is the Future for Religious Heritage (FRH), a network especially for historic places of worship. They also unite members from all over the EU. The network supports its members with tools and knowledge to "unite the Continent of Europe through engagement in its heritage."[18] The network is independent, not committed to any religion and non-profit. It unites members from religions, governments, universities and other institutions that want to preserve the cultural heritage of places of worship. As experts in the field, the FRH might be a good partner for the future work of the PROSECUW-project.

As one can see, although the European Union is not mainly responsible for the protection of places of worship, they are in touch with the topic and, actually, see the need to strengthen their knowledge and network in the field, as there are some projects dealing with the questions right now. Existing networks might be good partners to spread the project and support the consortium with their knowledge and experience.

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[17] All information on the network can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/about-ran_en (last access 25.03.2022).
[18] Future of Religious Heritage: https://www.frh-europe.org/about-frh/ (last access 25.03.2022).

4. ACTUAL NATIONAL CHALLENGES IN PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP

In this chapter, the focus is on the current situation in the different examined countries. The focus lies on the findings that were made during the desk research. First, there is a closer look on every country and in the final chapter there is an attempt to summarise all findings and to draw conclusions for the situation in these member states of the European Union.

For the desk research, three different kinds of sources were used: scientific literature on the topic, political reviews and informal literature such as newspaper articles or field reports from people who experienced hate crimes. In combination, those three different kinds of sources should give an insight on the current situation in each country on protecting places of worship.

1. CYPRUS

The Cyprus' constitution states, in accord with the Charta of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union, that all religions are equal before the law and that everyone has the right to choose and practice his/ her religion freely.[19] But as in many other countries the religion-related discrimination or hate speech abounds, although it is sometimes hard to distinguish between the expressions of hatred due to ethnicity and those of religion. This is coming from the division of the country, as there is the Republic of Cyprus in the south of the island while the northern part has been occupied by Turkey since 1974. The division is not only between Turkish and between Cypriot, but there is also a religious division between the Muslim north and the south that is dominated by the Church of Cyprus, so it is sometimes hard to classify criminal acts, as they could be either religious or ethnicity motivated. The big conflict between the Greek Cypriots and the Muslim Cypriots overlies the fact that there is also discrimination and unequal treatment towards members of other religions that should be at least mentioned here. For example, the Jewish community still faces discrimination and there are other religions that are treated differently, too, due to religious education, direct financing and family law matters. So, there are traditions that support some religions and beliefs more than others.

The main religious conflict in Cyprus is between Turkish Cypriot Muslims and Greek Cypriot Christians due to the politicization of the conflict. The quite influential conservative Church of Cyprus stimulates the conflict by using anti-Muslim rhetoric while the Turkish Cypriots use hate speech as well. Following the national report there is an atmosphere in which "individuals from all the major religious groups on the island have been subjected to assault, attacks and abuse with anti-religious motives both in the past and in recent years."[20] It is very interesting to see how the Cypriots estimate discrimination due to religious reasons, as 48% think it is a

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[19] All information in this chapter relies on the National Report of Cyprus that was written for the PROSECUW-project.
[20] National Report Cyprus, p. 3.

common phenomenon and an equal percentage thinks it is only a rare phenomenon.[21] The discrimination from members of a religious minority towards members of another religious minority is common, too.

As in most other countries, there is no scientific literature dealing with the questions of protecting places of worship, but it is a topic in Cyprus, again related to the division of the island, that limits the access to some religious places. In the areas that are not under control from the government of the Republic of Cyprus, religious (mostly Christian) monuments are often vandalised and looted by the North's regime and forces. In the southern part of the island, there the question is mostly pestering for the Muslim population. From the about 100 mosques there are only eight open to believers, no matter whether they are Turkish Cypriots or immigrants. Therefore, the protection of places of worship is a topic for quite different organisations that are introduced below.

The first to mention is the Office for Combating Discrimination of the Cyprus Police. Police officers are trained to deal with cases of anti-religious hate crimes in the most sensitive way, so it is a very important national mechanism. Since 2017, they have cooperation with 14 NGOs that deal with the topic, too, and have an easier accessibility to the religious communities. So the Cyprus police itself has a network they can use to prevent and fight hate crimes and terrorist attacks.

The next group to mention is the Office of the Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process (RTCYPP) that is a peace-building initiative bringing together the leaders of the different religions. It was "established to encourage and facilitate productive dialogue among Cyprus' religious leaders and to strengthen the enhancement of religious freedom and peace in Cyprus and to contribute positively and constructively to the Cyprus peace talks."[22]

The last organisation introduced here is the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage (TCCH) that has been protecting places of worship from destruction since 2008 when it was founded "by both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders under auspices of the United Nations".[23] So it protects endangered cultural heritage in Cyprus on both sides of the border and preserves these monuments.

The focus on the different ethnicities and the political tensions of attacks overlie the eventual religious background. So when there are reports of the attacks they very often "highlight the ethnicity or the political views of the perpetrators and not necessarily the victims' sentiments or the support they do or should get from authorities or details on the damage that has been made."[24] The research has shown that there is no room for the victims' point of views, so there

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[21] United States Department of State, 2020 Report on International Religious Freedom: Cyprus, 12 May, 2021, online available: https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/cyprus/ (last access 07.08. 2021).

[22] Office of the RTCYPP [Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process under the Auspices of the Embassy of Sweden] website, 2018, online available: http://www.religioustrack.com/ (last access 07.08.2021).

[23] Europa Nostra website, Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, 25 May 2021, online available: https://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/winners/technical-committee-cultural-heritage/ (last access 10.08.2021).

[24] National Report Cyprus, p. 15.

is still a lot of work to do to sensitise the local and national authorities for the special needs of the victims of religious attacks.

2. GREECE

Greece is a country that has been facing different crises and challenges since 2012. Beginning with the financial crisis, followed by the great inflow of refugees and immigrants and now it is still facing the Corona-crisis. Along with that, the right-wing party Golden Dawn has become more influential and changes the political discussions. This also touched the different religions existing in Greece, as there is no separation between ethnicity of the Greece and the Orthodox Church. Over centuries, the Orthodox Christian Church with the Church of Greece is the dominant religion. It is quite influential and enjoys some privileges, although all religions have equal rights and co-exist in Greece. Nevertheless, all religions are enjoying the same right, granted by the constitution, and coexist peacefully.[25]

As in most other countries, the attacks on places of worship increased. In 2015 there were 147 cases registered, in 2018 already 591, which is an increase at 300%.[26] In 2018, there was also a terror attack in the centre of Athens. A bomb detonated at the St. Dionysius church and injured two people. The attack is "considered the only terrorist attack aimed at causing deaths among those who wanted to pray."[27]

The dialogue between the different religions in Greece is nothing new, as for example the consortium-partner CEMES in 2018 invited to a conference with the title "The Economic and Refugee Crisis: Political, Religious and Spiritual Dimensions". However, there is still a lot of work to do and many problems keep on existing and challenging the Greek society. Not only the rise of the right-wing party Golden Dawn changes the atmosphere in the country, but also the growing multi-religious environment is a new situation the society has to deal with and is triggering the political parties.

– for example the increase of the Muslim population. The Orthodox Church itself is challenged, too, as it has to find a way to deal with the new developments and the missing influence, too.

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[25] Constitution of Greece'. As revised by the parliamentary resolution of May 27th, 2008, of the VIIIth Revisionary Parliament, 2008, [online] Available at:
https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/UserFiles/f3c70a23-7696-49db-9148-f24dce6a27c8/001-156%20aggliko.pdf.Section II, Article 3.1 (last access 29.08.2021).
[26] See both reports of the Ministry of Education and Religions on violent incidents against places of worship, 2019, [online] Available at:
https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2020/%CE%88%CE%BA%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%B7%202019_opt.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3H488SKPQKOyOFUHzyMpsLFD7qOF71BzyiHVUfZE0gP1M EaW5HE-i8YMM and the one of 2018
https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2019/Ekthesi_2018.pdf (last access 29.08.2021).
[27] www.news247.gr. (n.d.). *Κολωνάκι: Τα καρέ από την έκρηξη βόμβας στον Άγιο Διονύσιο*, [*Kolonaki: The frames from the bomb blast in Agios Dionysios*], [online] Available at:
https://www.news247.gr/koinonia/eglima/kolonaki-kare-apo-ekrixi-vomvas-agio-dionysio.6679920.html (last access 29.08.2021).

However, as a consequence on the increasing hate crimes and attacks against places of worship, the topic "moved up the political agenda of leaders at every level of government".[28] Although there is further attention to the topic, the national report concludes: "[I]t seems that there is very little systematic reporting by competent Greek authorities on security issues at places from worship. [...] It is evident, even from our initial review, that vandalism and violence occur at places of worship both of the religious majority and of minority communities and is a common problem for all religions coexisting in Greece."[29]

3. GERMANY

In Germany, the Bundeskriminalamt, the federal police, collects political motivated crimes every year. The statistics for the year 2020 show that hate crimes against Jews, Muslims and believers of other religions is growing. Especially anti-Semitic hate crimes are rising. In Germany, there were nearly 3000 offences and attacks on people showing their religion or on places of worship, most of them committed by right-wing extremists.[30] Interesting is the fact that Christian churches are attacked, too, so it is not a phenomenon that touches only specific religions.

As questions of religious freedom that is granted in the German constitution, are quite important and in the focus of the national authorities, there are different committees dealing with especially the need of Jews and Muslims and how they can be saved from hate crimes. So it is not astonishing that there are programs supporting especially Jewish communities with the money and police they need to feel safe. Unfortunately, there is still the need for Jews to feel free to live their religious belief in Germany. The money to fund the security measures is spent by the national government and administered through the federal government who know best where to spend it best.[31]

For the other religious communities such programs do not exist, although especially Muslim communities wish they were. At the moment, the security measures of the communities depend on the financial endowment each group has. Nevertheless, the security measures do not stop perpetrators, as the last big attack in Germany has shown – it happened in January 2022.

Besides the official support provided through the government there are also a lot of NGOs supporting victims of anti-religious attacks and hate crimes. The most important one for Muslims and for Jews are presented shortly:

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[28] National Report Greece, p. 8.

[29] Ibid., p. 15.

[30] Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat/ Bundeskriminalamt: Politisch motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2020. Bundesweite Fallzahlen, 04.05.2021,, p. 7.

[31] Frumkina, Natalia: Gesichert und bewacht – meistens, in: tagesschau.de, 10.10.2019, online available: https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/schutz-juedische-einrichtung-101.html, last access 28.09.2021.

One of the most important non-governmental organisations in the field of working against antisemitism is the "Bundesverband der Recherche- und Informationsstellen Anstisemitismus e.V." (Bundesverband RIAS). Although they are a national organisation, they just began their work in each federal state. They collect Anti-Semitic offences and categorise them. They are a growing NGO that is now not only supported by the Ministry for families, the elderly, women and youth but also by federal governments.[32]

For the Muslim community, the NGO Fair International on its platform"#brandeilig" has been collecting attacks on Mosques since 2014 – and comes to the result that they are increasing (without considering the under reporting). Not even half of the cases that #brandeilig collected in 2019, were listed in the official statistics, as they do not only get their information from the police and press but directly from the communities, too. This is the case when the Muslim communities do not trust the officials and prefer to report it just to a NGO that has a Muslim background and supports the victims better.[33]

Due to the German history, society always reacts very sensitive when there is a big anti-religious attack. Especially two attacks from the last years are in the collective memory as they show in a nutshell all the problems that still exist in Germany.

The first to mention is the attack in Halle/ Saale, one of the worst attacks in younger history. On Yom Kippur in 2019 a right-wing motivated perpetrator tried to get in the synagogue in Halle/ Saale to shoot people. He could not get through the made of steel door and shot instead in anger people in a nearby fast food restaurant. The police could arrest the perpetrator afterwards and in a trial he was convicted to life imprisonment with a following preventive custody.[34]

The attack got plenty of attention in the media, even until today, more than two years afterwards. The big newspapers and magazines still have special pages online where they collect all actual information about the topic and the discussions are not over, too. For the government, the attack is quite present, too.

The consequences of the Hanau attack, the second one to mention which is very central for the Muslim community, is present in the official commemorative culture. In contrast to the Halle attack, the perpetrator killed himself afterwards, so there was no trial. However, immediately afterwards started a discussion on the racial background of the attack and many action groups focused on that. Following the international movement #saytheirnames, the initiatives focus

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[32] For further information on the work of RIAS e.V. check the following links: Bundesverband RIAS: Antisemitische Vorfälle in Deutschland 2020, Berlin 2021, online available: , https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/Antisemitische_Vorfaelle_in_Deutschland_Jahresbericht_RIAS_Bund_2020.pdf (last access 28.09.2021) and Ministerium für Kinder, Familien, Flüchtlinge und Integration des Landes NRW: Nordrhein-Westfalen richtet Meldestelle für Antisemitismus ein, 27.09.2021, online available: https://www.land.nrw/de/pressemitteilung/nordrhein-westfalen-richtet-meldestelle-antisemitismus-ein (last access 29.08.2021).
[33] Goldmann, Fabian: Mehr Angriffe auf Moscheen, in: Neues Deutschland, 08.01.2020, online available: https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/schutz-juedische-einrichtung-101.html (last access 28.09.2021).
[34] Frumkina, Natalia: Gesichert und bewacht – meistens, in: tagesschau.de, 10.10.2019, online available: https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/schutz-juedische-einrichtung-101.html, last access 28.09.2021.

on not forgetting the victims of the Hanau perpetrator and keep them in mind. The movement now has reached many large organisations, like NGOs, parties and unions.[35]

4. PORTUGAL

The Constitution of the Portuguese Republic safeguards fundamental rights, religious freedom and conscience, guaranteeing freedom of worship at the various levels of protection.[36] In 2001, the Portuguese Parliament approved the Religious Freedom Law, which complements the Constitution and represents an important step forward in guaranteeing the right to religious freedom in Portugal.[37] In the last twenty years, an interreligious dialogue, initiated by Public Institutions, has been established. For example, coordinated by the High Commission for Migration, the representatives of thirteen of the most significant religious communities based in Portugal meet in a Working Group for Interreligious dialogue where, within the scope of their objectives and established competencies, they discuss matters of interest and organize initiatives, seeking consensus between communities.

Despite Portugal today has a general legal framework for religious freedom and a good relationship between religions, the State and Religious leaders, there are some concerns regarding the perception of Portuguese society and the acceptance of other religions. 30% believe that Portuguese society is not very tolerant towards other religions, 63,9% consider that the law of religious freedom is not effective and 35.1% declared that Portuguese society will not welcome the increase of Muslim refugees in the country. It is important to mention that the Catholic Church represents 81% of all believers in Portugal. Other religious groups, like Non-evangelical Protestants, Muslims, Eastern Orthodox Church, Church of Jesus Christ, Christian groups and Jewish, are very small. Even though the dialogue has been established in the last twenty years, the religious diversity in Portugal hasn't many representatives, since it is very small according to statistics, and small religious groups with the objective of not losing their rights, intervene mainly in social work and accept the privileges that Catholic Universe still prevails privileges in Portuguese society.[38]

The situation experienced in Portugal is very special when compared, to the European context, either in terms of the number of attacks or threats against religious spaces, or in its violence. The climate of significant freedom and respect for difference, even if the individual perception varies, corresponds to a place of almost absence in the main international reports that list and analyse attacks on Religious Freedom. The Annual Internal Security Report, for example, does not even have a category of crime that includes attacks or threats against religious spaces. In

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[35] Tagesschau.de: Was über den Anschlag in Hanau bekannt ist, 20.02.2020, online available: https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/faq-hanau-101.html, last access 29.09.2021.

[36] Gouveia, Jorge Bacelar. 2008. Religious Liberty and Rule of Law in Constitutional State: the Portuguese Experience. Available: http://www.clr.mj.pt/sections/agenda/representacao-da-clr-no/representacao-da-clr-no/downloadFile/file/Religious_Liberty_and_Rule_of_Law_-_the_portuguese_experience.pdf?nocache=1268737957.04

[37] Lei de Liberdade Religiosa. 2001. Available: https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/106639383/202108221726/73413172/diplomaExpandido?p_p_state=maximized

[38] Pinto, P.M. (2017), Definitions and Practices of Religious Minorities in their Relationship with the Portuguese State: Ways of Instrumentalization by the Majority, Último Andar, 30, pp. 332-337.

the media, only two situations were reported, as they were attacks on religious spaces in use, in the recent years. Portugal has registered, since 2003, a very positive evolution, both in the scope of policies and in the practices towards worship places protection and prevention of violent events. Different religious communities reported that they feel safe and have a sense of general peace between all religious confessions and believers.

Nevertheless, according to the 2020 National Security report, violent cases of radicalization increased in Portugal, in particular radical right-wing movements that spread propaganda and digital disinformation contents, intending to increase their social bases of support, galvanize anti-system sentiments and reinforce xenophobic-based radicalization, using an appealing discourse of violence and hate, at a time when Portuguese society is also confronted with phenomena of ideological polarization. Considering right-wing movements and digital disinformation contents with radical speech, it is important to understand the changes regarding these topics in Portuguese society in a way to prevent violent behaviours with other religious communities. The insufficient data regarding this subject creates a difficulty in the development of prevention methods but also the lack of education with the Portuguese in general about other religions than Catholic is a red flag in this research.

As already mentioned, the protection of legal framework for Religious Freedom in Portugal as well as places of worship is a topic for quite different institutions and organisations that should be introduced here shortly.

The first to mention is The Constitution of the Portuguese Republic (CRP). "The State shall cooperate with churches and religious communities based in Portugal, taking into account their representativeness, with a view namely to the promotion of human rights, the integral development of each person and the values of peace, freedom, solidarity, and tolerance".[39]

The second to mention is the Religious Freedom Commission (CLR). Created under Religious Freedom Law (LLR)[40], it is an independent consultative commission of the Portuguese Parliament and the government. The Commission has no legal enforcement power, but among its obligations is that it must consider complaints and act to resolve possible disputes, thus ensuring the identification of acts that oppose and threaten religious freedom in Portuguese territory.

The High Commission for Migration (ACM, I.P.) has a regulatory obligation to defend religious tolerance, including the "promotion of dialogue, innovation and intercultural and interreligious education" as well as the "fight against all forms of discrimination based on color, nationality, ethnic origin or religion".[41]

The Working Group for Interreligious Dialogue (GT DIR)[42] was constituted as a working group with a mission to contribute to more complete information and better clarification of the various cultural and religious matters of the communities residing in Portugal, seeking the

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[39]Lei de Liberdade Religiosa. 2001. Available: https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/106639383/202108221726/73413172/diplomaExpandido?p_p_state=maximized
[40] Ibid.

[41] https://www.acm.gov.pt/-/o-que-fazemos.
[42] https://www.acm.gov.pt/-/acm-promove-grupo-de-trabalho-inter-religioso?inheritRedirect=true

recognition and appreciation of cultural and religious diversity and bringing together the leaders of the main religious communities in Portugal.

5. CONCLUSION

The desk research has shown that the partners' of the PROSECUW consortium have to face quite different challenges due to the situations in their countries. In Cyprus, the division is the formative conflict influencing everything touching religion, ethnicity and politics. In Greece, there is the very dominant and powerful Orthodox Church of Greece that has to face the challenges of modernisation and a society that is getting more plural, also in religious context. In Portugal, the Catholic Church is dominating but questions of security are not a bit discussed and do not seem to be a topic. In Germany, no religion is the dominant but the protection of places of worship is a topic that the national and federal authorities deal with every day and on which they spend a lot of money and efforts.

The development of the political landscape also influences questions of security as the different crises of the last years in a lot of countries led to the rise of right-wing extremist parties that try to riot against immigrants and most times Muslims and Jews as they are blamed for the development or seen as a danger for the existing societies. Therefore, this is an important fact that must be considered during the project dealing with national authorities.

This already shows how difficult it is to find solutions that fit to all member states of the European Union as they all have to face different challenges. Nevertheless, the consortium can develop a model kit with different measures that can be used in the different countries.

5. EVALUATION OF CURRENT MEASURES IN THE MEMBER STATES

This chapter examines the evaluation on current security measures for places of worship. An online survey that each partner run, asked particularly for this field. The most important results are shown below. During the survey, the participants had the chance to write down their wishes for further PROSECUW actions. The wishes are summarised in chapter 7. The full online survey can be found in Annex 1 to get a complete idea of the design and the entire questions asked. Again, in a first step, each partner country is mentioned and in the last chapter there is a conclusion and an overview over the findings for the European level.

1. CYPRUS

In Cyprus, 51 persons took part in the online survey and filled the questionnaire. 61% of them are male, 39% are female. 96% of the participants live in urban settings, only 4% live in an agrarian region. Nearly two-thirds of the participants are between 30 and 49 years old. Half of them are law enforcement agents, the others are religious leaders or members of a religious

community (27.5%) or policy-makers (21.6%). More than 82 % of the participants are Orthodox Christians something that goes along with the religious situation in Cyprus.

The survey shows that most people (60%) consider it very safe to show their religion, which is not surprising as most of the participants belong to the majority religion. 98 % feel safe at their place of worship and only 2% have security worries. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that there might be a need for more security measures especially for minority religions as they are "the most vulnerable and […] subjected to prejudice and bias and there should be extra protection for them."[43]

When asked about the biggest dilemmas in creating safe places of worship, their answers express the concern for the protection of privacy and personal data during the enforcement of security measures and the dilemma between better protection through police and security agents and the fear of not feeling free at such places. Many participants also criticise the lack of information they get on the topic and miss information on the interaction between involved authorities in this field.

Interestingly, most participants are not able to name good practices in protecting places of worship. Only a few mentioned actions in places of worship in Cyprus while others referred to actions from Scandinavia and other northern European states, the USA and the United Kingdom.

2. GREECE

In Greece 50 people took part in the online survey. 45 of them live in cities, 20 are female and 82% are members of the Orthodox Church, a big majority like in the whole Greek society. Along with that, 80% of the participants feel safe to express their religious beliefs. Nearly 60% feel very safe at their places of worship; the rest of the participants feel quite safe. Due to the high security feeling it is not wondering that a lot of participants do not see the need for 'hard' measures like building actions or security guards to feel more safe, but wishes for a better understanding of the different religions and their views (68%), better communication with the involved people (34%), and less than a quarter wishes for better controls in entrance.

Nearly half of the participants (46%) answered, that different religions need different security measures, which is a good message, as it shows the high sensitivity the Greek society has for the needs of special minority religions.

As the online survey also gave the chance for free responses, especially two should be mentioned here, as they might represent the big challenges the Greek society has to face in the process of making places of worship safer. The first one shows "the concern about the balance between the access to worship places for the public, including with different beliefs, and their

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[43] National Report Cyprus, p. 19.

protection."[44]As in Cyprus, here one can see that there is the fear places of worship might become strongholds and no longer be open to everyone searching for help and contemplation.

Another concern was expressed in regards to the role of the Orthodox Church and the government. It stated that "pastoral care and the mission of the Church in the setting of big cities constitute a dilemma."[45] At another point of the report, the role of the Orthodox Church was scrutinized, too, as it is very traditional and has problems to find its place in a changing, modern society.

One can see that in the Greek discussion questions on the security of places of worship are present, but most participants think that communication and exchange are the best means to reach a better understanding and prevention from hate crimes and attacks rather than 'hard' measures like guarding or technical or building actions.

3. GERMANY

In Germany, it was very hard to get in touch with religious communities that are interested in cooperating for a project on security issues. It was not possible to find out why, but during the work on the German report, one insight is that there is a larger interest on the topic in smaller communities than in bigger ones, so the focus is on them now.

Nevertheless, due to the problems in the beginning, the German online evaluation could only collect eight answers, that are of course not representative. Most of the people who took part are leaders in their community and are Alevis. They live in large cities, are mostly female and are between 20 and 59 years old. Except one, the participants think that it is safe to show in Germany that one is religious (7-10 on the scale). Asked whether they feel safe at their place of worship, the feelings change. Only half of the participants feel safe there (8 or higher), while the other half does not feel that safe (4 to 6 on the scale).

Asked for differences between the religions, one fourth of the participants does not see any differences. The other answers very much deal with the differences between religious minority and majority groups. Common sense is that minority religions, especially if there is a migrant background, need more protection measures than other ones. The participants see differences in the religions and criticise that, as they think, every religious group should be protected irrespective of how big or small it is.

Asked for the biggest challenges in creating more security the answers show the stress ratio between the need for more security and the wish to have an open community. The dilemma is that they need the places to feel safe and protected but that the measures lead to a missing openness towards the community, for example by only letting people they know in. Another point is the support from public authorities. Especially in minor religious communities, the support is missing. This is seen as one reason why the sufferers do not report the crimes they experience and instead keep silent – a vicious circle. Another important issue is the lack of

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[44] National Report Greece, p. 20.
[45] Ibid., p. 21.

tolerance and crimes from other migrant organisations, for example Turkish right-wing extremists in Germany.

Therefore, the survey at least shows that there is a need for more support especially for smaller groups and the PROSECUW project in Germany might focus on them as they might benefit most.

4. PORTUGAL[46]

In Portugal, 23 persons took part in the online survey and filled the questionnaire. 20 participants are male and three are female. 21 of them live in cities, two in rural areas. Most of them are religious leaders. Others are CSO researchers, policy makers, law enforcement leaders or academics. Nearly 75% of the people participating in the survey consider themselves religious and 21 are members of a religion. Almost all respondents think it is from safe to very safe to show their religion freely in Portugal. Only one person thinks it is not safe. So 22 people also feel from safe to very safe in their places of worship. Only one person does not feel safe.

When asked what it would take to make religious places safer, eight of the respondents answered that it would take more technical support. Five think it needs more communication and exchange with the people involved. Other considerations are extra building measures and security guards as well as special trainings to understand the different points of view. The needs for more tolerance and respect have also been mentioned. It is striking that technical support and exchange with other stakeholders in particular are seen as important for the protection of places of worship.

Just two persons think that there are differences between the religions. It is therefore not surprising that no necessity is seen here with regard to the need for different security and protection measures for different religions.

Asked for the greatest challenge and the biggest dilemmas in creating safe places of worship, the answers express the question of how to communicate security issues and threatening situations.

As a corollary to the previously mentioned, most of the respondents see better communication and better technical support as the best ways to make places of worship safer.

5. CONCLUSION

The dominant concern in the online survey was the question of creating as much protection as possible but not making places of worship a stronghold were only some people get access to. Besides, the measures should not disturb the spirituality of the places so they should be discreet and at its best not visible – guarding for example was seen critically. The German and

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[46] All information in this chapter is based on the Portuguese National Report and on the online survey in Portugal prepared for the PROSECUW project.

Portuguese participants also wished for 'hard' measures like use of technology or building actions to make places safer, probably because of good experiences some communities had with it in the country.

Most people agreed that the different religions need specialised measures as in all countries there are differences between majority and minority religions. Especially the smaller groups should get more attention and help to protect their places of worship. It is striking that most of the respondents in Portugal do not see any differences between the religions and consequently do not see any need for specific security and protection measures.

Seeing that most participants from different countries agree in general lines, one might suggest that these lines are common throughout the whole European Union.

6. MEASURES FOR BETTER PROTECTION

The basis of this chapter are the results from the focus groups. Each partner has invited different stakeholders to build two focus groups, in which they talk about dealing with their experiences. The aim was to bring together people from different religions, policy makers and law enforcement agencies to monitor how they interact and to figure out where they might see similarities or differences.

The focus groups had a second important purpose, which was to strengthen the network for the PROSECUW project, as well as to involve key stakeholders in the project from the beginning.

The most important results are summarised for each country and in the last chapter, there will be a summary and findings for the EU-level, once more.

1. CYPRUS

There were two focus groups in Cyprus where stakeholders from religions, representatives from NGOs, policy makers and the field of security took part.

The stakeholders underlined that "religious issues in Cyprus are related to political problems, the interplay of nationalism with religion and the division of the island that prevails and to an extant undermines some of the religious minorities that exist on the island but are not officially recognised as Buddhists".[47] Those complex "interplay is also involved in expressions of religious hate and fundamentalism".[48] The representatives of the minority religions also criticised that they are only considered as a religious community and not an ethnicity that

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[47] National Report Cyprus, p. 24.
[48] Ibid., p. 24.

limits their rights, as there is no elected representation for them. They wish for a change in legalisation so they are allowed to have an elected, official representative, too.

Asked how they estimate the current measures to protect places of worship the participants agreed that they should change to "become more holistic adjusting to violent conditions as the latter unfold."[49] Furthermore, they pronounced that more attention should be paid to the victims of such attacks and that their needs should be taken into account.

2. GREECE

The focus groups supported the findings of the survey. In the first focus group, eight stakeholders came together, in the second group there were five persons who interacted online.

The participants agreed that the situation in Greece is "generally manageable, at least compared with other European countries."[50]Nevertheless, the participants are sceptic whether this is still possible if there is a future outbreak of some kind that would lead to the deterioration of the situation. The state's government as well as the religious leaders are not prepared for such a situation so it might get out of control easily.

The problem is that in fact, there are good relations between the government and especially the Orthodox Church of Greece, but they have no cooperation on "issues of crisis or in our case in situations of religious intolerance, hate speech or hate crimes."[51] Along with that, it is interesting that there are national Annual Reports on hate crimes that the Church of Greece does not even know "that such a thing exists, nor is it of course possible to read a 200-page report, which comes with a long delay."[52]

Again, the most important measure to make places of worship safe is the communication and dialogue. All groups involved in the process should be brought together, a new interfaith dialogue should be established in Greece to understand each other and their special needs better. But especially the participation of law enforcement agencies and the police is not supported by all participants because they think believers should feel safe at their place of worship anytime and not only when there is police patrolling. Furthermore, the believers do not think that they visit a safe place when they see the guards so they could be scared off.

Therefore, the focus group agree that more communication and dialogue is needed to make places of worship safer and establish a new culture of exchange between the different actors and the different religions.

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[49] Ibid., p. 22.
[50] National Report Greece, p. 28.
[51] Ibid., p. 24.
[52] Ibid., p. 24.

3. PORTUGAL[53]

In Portugal there are several religious communities, local associations and foundations that cooperate to prevent radicalization processes and violent extremism, and actively include them in the design of a truly effective and comprehensive policy, under Government and Municipalities, that we found to be key to foster a political dialogue and promote learning and exchanges on this topic for local and regional authorities. Furthermore, the country enhances collaboration between national government, law enforcement agencies, local authorities and civil society engaged in the complex and long-term process of fostering integration and mutual trust between different religious communities, producing very interesting results and in fact Portugal is currently one peaceful and safe country with very good practices in this field. There is a kind of multi-stakeholder partnership, including all parties playing a role in this field that we found to be highly important because the local level plays a key role. Such organizations help to truly prevent risky situations and share conceptual and practical tools to secure worship places and religious communities.

The working group with experts, religious leaders and stakeholders in general about the protection and security of worship places and religious communities showed that most feel safe. Nevertheless some participants have internal measures that they have learned to apply in times of attack. Others want exactly such training. Furthermore, they pronounced that more attention should be paid to public relations and access to digital data about potential threats.

4. CONCLUSION

The different focus groups' from the different partner countries agree that cooperation between religious and national authorities are quite important. Only if they work together and have a regular exchange it will be possible to find good solutions. In Portugal the exchange between religious leaders, national authorities, and other partners involved works well. In other countries the cooperation works but they do not deal with questions of security. For example in Greece, there are good connections between the Church of Greece and the government but the participants of the focus groups do not think they are able to handle critical situations.

So the meetings of the focus groups have shown that the communication between the different institutions involved in protecting places of worship needs to improve and institutionalised to get to know each other better and be able to act coordinated in the worst case.

7. EXPECTATIONS ON THE PROSECUW PROJECT

Both in the online survey and during the meetings of the focus groups the participants had the chance to express their expectations on the PROSECUW project. What actions might help them to make places of worship safer? What actions might sensitise the society for the

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[53] All information in this chapter is based on the Portuguese National Report and on the online survey in Portugal prepared for the PROSECUW project.

problem? In this chapter, the expectations are summarised first for each country, in the end for the EU level, as of course the PROSECUW project should be a role model for other member states, too.

1. CYPRUS

The online survey as well as the focus groups came to the same results asked which actions are needed to make places of worship in Cyprus safer.

One important measure is better communication and a better training of the people that are involved in making places of worship safer. The security guards, police, politicians and members of the religious groups should better inform each other what and why some measures are needed and listen to each other to safeguard the character of those places of worship best. It is also encouraged to involve people from different professions, for example teachers, journalists or architects to have different perspectives included.

Security guards and technological support are also seen as important measures but they should preserve the atmosphere and openness of the places and not make the believers feel like they are in a stronghold.

Another important measure is education. The participants think that it is quite important to involve the whole society and find ways of informal education to promote a peaceful and friendly together of the different religions. 'Official' education, for example in schools, is not seen as the best working mechanism as informal education can reach more young people and address especially their concerns. Here the awareness rising activities should also be mentioned as discussed to get to a better cooperation – not only within the involved stakeholders but to reach more sympathy for special measures in the whole population.

Special 'hard' measures as security guards or the use of technology are seen as necessary until the measures of training, education and communication unfold their impact and supersede the 'hard' measures.

2. GREECE

The online evaluation and the meetings of the two focus groups gave insights on how to reach more security at places of worship in Greece. For the participants it was important that there is as less guarding as possible as they want to preserve the openness of the places for everyone. Technical or building actions are not seen as an enduring solution for the problems as well, so the participants advise to raise the awareness for the topic through means of education and information.

Especially young people are in the participants' focus, as they should be addressed in special ways. One suggested there should be more exchange between young people of different religions; another one suggested they should be empowered to fight acts of hate crime and

stand up to fight against attacks on places of worship or other religious traditions. The hope is to change the situation in the next generation.

However, it is not only the youth but also the whole society that needs more knowledge exchange and discussions on the topic. Especially interfaith dialogue and events should help change the atmosphere. 78% percent of the participants of the online evaluation think that better information is needed to change the situation, 70% think better communication is needed, too, so that is exactly what the PROSECUW project wants to initiate. Especially the interfaith exchange is a point that was mentioned by some attendants, so there should be a focus on this topic, too.

3. GERMANY

For Germany, the answers on the question what can be done to reach more security can only be given from the online evaluation and the talks the German partner led with different institutions and NGOs.

Unlike in most other countries, in Germany the participants pleaded for more technical and building measures. Maybe this is linked especially to the attack on a synagogue in Halle, where exactly the technical and building support stopped the perpetrator. A big majority also wished for better communication and exchange between the actors involved and awareness rising activities in the society that might have a preventive character.

For the continuation of the PROSECUW project in Germany that means that in trainings and workshops the 'hard' measures should be considered, too.

4. PORTUGAL[54]

Central aspects of the focus groups are mentioned here.

In order to make places of worship safer, society must become aware of the issue. The actors involved must become more present and a public discourse must take place. Statistics and data on potential threats must be made available to faith communities. Some participants mentioned they should also be protected by a special police authority. Finally, extensive training for members of faith communities would be desirable.

5. EU-LEVEL AND CONCLUSION

All national reports came to the same conclusion when they examined how more security can be reached and what the PROSECUW project can do. The most demanded measures were a better exchange on information and a better communication between the groups involved in the process. It might be suggested that this is transferable to other European states. The

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[54] All information in this chapter relies on the National Report of Portugal that was written for the PROSECUW project.

consortium's aim is exactly to initiate such ways of communication and exchange and to collect best practices to protect places of worship in a handbook that should be open to every religious community in every member state.

8. CONCLUSION

This Transnational Report examines the state of the art of actual discussions and measures in creating safe places of worship in the four different project-countries Cyprus, Greece, Germany and Portugal as well as the actual efforts and policies of the European Union on the topic.

The research has shown that in the European Union, the need to deal with the topic is evident, but as it currently is the responsibility of the member states, the European boards only have restricted possibilities to influence the policies. The situation in the member states is quite different as they all look back to different histories and individual relationships between the religious communities and the national governments. The PROSECUW project is taking place in a time that brings a lot of changes to the European Union: Many immigrants came and are still coming to the European Union bringing their own religions. In many states right-wing parties are on the rise, shifting the political discussions to the right and firing especially anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish discussions and actions. At the same time, the Corona-pandemic lead to new conspiracy theories that divide the society.

Following those developments it is not astonishing that the people who engage in the religious community demand for more information, education and exchange on questions of security. Especially young people should be addressed to prevent the birth of prejudice and to avoid that the next generation grows up in disinformation and carries on the hate. The participants see non-formal education and events, and the commitment for religious freedom and protection of places of worship as the most efficient measures so far.

However, not only the youth should be addressed, but the whole society, too. With awareness rising activities the problem should enter the centre of attention and the victims of the attacks should get a voice. At the moment, a lot of projects try to avoid that young people become perpetrators, but nearly no project tries to support the victims. So the PROSECUW project can give an important insight in the topic and point out the special needs of the (possible) victims.

'Hard' protection measures did not play a big role in the discussions so far, as the participants are afraid that they destroy the spirit of the places and disturb the places of contemplation. Only in Germany, some people mentioned them as important means to create more security, so they should be considered, too, in the following steps of the project.

All those findings go along with the ideas of the PROSECUW project that want to create more security by four big measures: training activities, awareness raising activities, a video documentary and the sharing of good practices in the whole EU.

What should happen next in PROSECUW? After finishing the report, the next working packages are going to start, namely the development of trainings and workshops for the stakeholders from religious communities and official authorities that should end in a strong

network on local and national level to make places of worship safe. Besides, the partners will develop tools for training activities that can be easily adapted in existing programs to raise awareness of the problem and strengthen the responsible actors to deal with the topic. Furthermore, PROSECUW hubs should be designed to implement a steady exchange of information between relevant stakeholders on local level that should be interdisciplinary and inter-sectional, so people can benefit from the awareness rising activities even if they do not have a close contact to any religious community.

The project consortium will continue to increase their networks and to win new partners for the project and in the end present the results and experiences from the different measures in a big public conference.

With the PROSECUW project, the consortium wants to contribute to the right of religious freedom and the right for safe places of worship that are granted in the Charta of Fundamental Rights in the European Union and set new stimuli for united societies all over Europe.

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10. ANNEX 1: ONLINE-QUESTIONNAIRE

Please use the following questions for the questionnaire. You can add maximum three more questions concerning the current situation in your country or the religions you focus on. You can use the template of your organisation or any (online) tool you prefer.

1. Dealing with the security and protection of places of worship, which role do you have?
   a. Religious leader
   b. Law enforcement leader
   c. Policy maker
   d. Other: _____

2. Age: <20 years   20-29   30-39   40-49   50-59   60-69   70-79   >80 years

3. Where do you live?
   i. Rural area   city

4. Gender: male   female   divers

5. Do you consider yourself religious?   Yes   no

6. Are you member of a religion?   No   Yes,:
   _____

7. How safe do you think it is in your country to show that you are religious?
   a. 1 very unsafe   10 very safe

8. How safe do you feel in your place of worship?
   a. 1 very unsafe   10 very safe

9. What do you need for higher protection at places of worship? (multiple answers possible)
   a. More security guards
   b. More technical support
   c. More building measures
   d. More communication/ exchange with the people involved
   e. More special trainings to understand the different points of view

f. More admission controls

g. _____
_____

10. Do you see differences between the religions? Do they need different security and
    protection measures?

    a. Yes   No

    b. If yes: Please describe the differences you see:

_____

_____

11. What are the greatest challenges in your work on the protection of places of worship?

    a. _____
_____

    b. _____
_____

12. What are the greatest dilemmas in your work on the protection of places of worship?

    a. _____
_____

    b. _____
_____

13. PROSECUW has the aim to find ways to make places of worship safer. What do you
    think: Which measures do help in reaching that aim? (multiple answers possible)

    a. Better communication

    b. More security guards

    c. Better trainings of the involved groups

    d. Better technical support

    e. Building activities

    f. Other:

_____
_____

14. Do you know places of worship with a protection plan that can be a best practice?
    Please tell us where it is, which religion is concerned and why it is so good:

_____

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

15. I would like to receive updates about other related projects and services

   Yes; e-mail: _____   No

16. I would like to receive updates about PROSECUW project's upcoming activities and other news

   Yes; e-mail: _____   No

11.   ANNEX 2: QUESTIONS FOR THE FOCUS GROUPS

FOCUS GROUP 1 (STAKEHOLDERS):

1. Current situation:

- Are there any current measures in order to face potential hate crimes and terrorist attacks in your country?
- How do the stakeholders estimate the current measures? Do they help to avoid hate crime and terrorist attacks?
- How do the stakeholders estimate the current threat potential? Are they prepared to deal with it?
- Do they see differences between the different religions?
- What is the biggest challenge in keeping places of worship safe?

2. Expectations:

- Do the stakeholders see any needs to change security measures?
- Do they see any weak points they do not have a solution for?
- Do they see a change in the attacks on places of worship they need to react on?
- How do the different stakeholders handle the mental load of the situation?

3. Suggestions:

- Which upcoming events would help the stakeholders work better together?
- Do they need more exchange and sympathy for each other's needs?
- How could the PROSECUW project help them come together better?

FOCUS GROUP 2 (END BENEFICIARIES):

1. Current situation: How do you feel with the current situation?

- Do you feel safe at your place of worship?
- Do you think the current measures help to avoid attacks on places of worship?
- Did you have to stop an attack or did you even become a victim?
- How do the people close to you feel about the situation? How did you deal with it?

2. Expectations:

- What do you need to feel safe at your place of worship?
- What do you think can be more effective in making those places safe?
- What is the greatest challenge in your work? Are there dilemmas?

3. Suggestions:

- Which upcoming events would help to make your everyday work better?
- Which digital resources/ trainings would help to improve the situation?
- How can the PROSECUW project support you?