International Exchange of Good Practices:

Preventing right-wing extremism and group hatred

Berlin
6 – 7 December 2017

MEETING SUMMARY

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Content

1. Background of the Exchange

2. Way forward

3. Programme and topics discussed

Annex 1: Programme of the Exchange

1 Background of the Exchange

Since August 2016 **PDCS** (alongside with **six partner organisations**) initiated process of establishing new network/movement (**European Network for Nonviolence and Dialogue - ENND**) of civic actors interested in peaceful interventions in current value based conflicts in Central Europe, parts of Eastern Europe and Germany with a potential to grow and expand to other countries (Austria, Western Balkan countries etc.).

We believe in much stronger voice of joined forces of likeminded individuals and organizations who share European values and **nonviolent approach**. Under the current social developments in Europe, where destructive forces are growing in numbers and strength and becoming increasingly organised and well-funded we want to support the weakened and often fragmented part of the civil society that we consider constructive and progressive. That is the reason why we decided to initiate ENND.

Mapping study: We have conducted a mapping study of social value based conflicts in 7 countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Germany, Poland, Romania, Slovakia), that serves as the main background document, that enables analyses of the current trends of polarisation of the society in the CEE region. The mapping study contains:

A) **Meta-analyses**: Methodology, summary and conclusions,

B) **Conflict analyses**: Identifies the conflicts, its primary, secondary and tertiary actors and discusses potential future scenarios,

C) **Good practices**: What works and what does not as peaceful intervention of the civil society in the above discussed social value based conflicts.

This study will be published towards the end of the year and will be disseminated widely.

1.1 Aims of the Exchange

The **aim** of this **participatory networking event** was to create **cross boundary exchange of good practices** in topic of "Preventing right-wing extremism and group hatred – exchanging good practices from Germany and Central and Eastern Europe" and create **one of the working groups** active in the emerging platform ENND.

Two day exchange of good practices was focused particularly on the **very tangible and reproducible** activities/**strategies** that proved to be working in one or another country. The Exchange themes were grouped around the topic of dialogue enablement and the prevention of right-wing extremism from Germany and Central and Eastern Europe, especially between first-line practitioners.

Another goal of the Exchange was to get participants excited about the idea of ENND and **get them involved in its forming** = inviting other members, spreading the word, signing up to values of ENND "**Manifesto**" (Manifesto is a value foundation / document that is to be used both internally to communicate with potential members of ENND, and externally for public campaign as the basis for introducing ENND).

1.2 Participants

21 individuals from 8 European countries have met in Refugio, Berlin, Germany. Their detailed profiles including photographs are attached as **Annex 2**. The participants were of various backgrounds – from journalists, legal experts to social workers, criminologists but mostly all of them were practitioners/activists in prevention of right-wing extremism related topics (trainers, educators, human rights protectionists, etc.).

There were 5 German participants (including 3 from Cultures Interactives e.v. as the organisers), 4 Romanian participants, 4 representing Poland, 4 Slovak participants (including 2 from PDCS as the organisers) and 1 from Netherlands, UK, Bulgaria and Hungary.

2 Way forward

Below are the main agreements from the two days meeting that the participants agreed on or were informed about.

2.1 Working groups and inviting new members to network: We hope to agree on creation of teams/working groups (**Annex 1**) dealing with various topics (related to right wing extremism, its prevention and interventions), storing of relevant documents and discussions towards the individual activities as well as spreading the information about ENND to other various civic actors in other for them to join ENND.

2.2 ENND Conference (April 26-27th) in Bratislava: PDCS in collaboration with ENND partners will organise an international conference: Civic actors in Conflict IV with focus on "Face to face". Under this conference we want to enable meeting of various civic actors dealing with different value based conflicts to meet together and discuss good practices and functional initiatives in value based conflicts in Europe (with special focus on CEE region but not exclusively). Call for workshop and save the date will be shared by PDCS at beginning of January 2018.

2.3 More International Exchanges: International exchanges are proven tool for networking, getting to know each other well and therefore forming relationships between the civic actors outside of their country. As many issues we deal with are not exclusively national, but international (migration, minorities, geopolitical orientation, environmental issues), cross boundary exchanges of methodologies are highly welcome and supported.

January 2018: Segregated Education of Roma Children – What can be done?, Budapest, Hungary.

March 2018: Media and Value Based Conflict Resolution, Belgrade, Serbia.

May 2018: Fake news, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2.4 Public campaign: ENND won´t work or reach out without robust public campaign targeting other civic actors, activist and supporting public. Advisory committee will be formed to choose the best strategy. Timeline: January to July 2018.

2.5 Online platform: PDCS is in process of developing an online platform that will promote the network. It will consist of two parts:
1. Internal part: internal collaboration platform for members of the network and various working groups. This will enable creation of teams, storing of relevant documents and discussions towards the activities. There will also be a design manual for using and downloading the logos of ENND. This system will also enable its users/members to add news/articles/blogs/videos etc. to the external website.
2. External website: will serve for promotion of the network´s initiatives and its members towards general public. "Manifesto" will be a visible part of this website with easy to sign guideline. Through this, members will be able to share their campaigns, petitions, articles, blogs etc.

2.6 Further activities/actions: Further joint actions, even unexpected or not foreseen at the moment may emerge from interactions of the members in the future. That itself is the essence of networking. One of the main aims of the network is for the civil society to be faster in response to emerging social value based conflicts quick firing in any country or larger region. Common campaigns, petitions, workshops, policy formulations, capacity building and other activities may be beneficial for the members and wider public.

3 Programme and topics discussed

The **final program is in Annex 3**. Below are the main topics discussed during the meeting and summary of the key conclusions.

3.1 Introduction, objectives of the meeting

In the first part of the Exchange the **meeting objectives and goals were explained** together with the vision of ENND and the reasons why we the Exchanged is taking place as well as what will happen in next few months in the frame of ENND.

At the beginning we heard welcoming words by Harald Weilnböck from Cultures Interactives e.v. (CI) and his explanation why CI **decided to take part in ENND** – that it is a dialogue enabling network trying to de-polarize society with the **bottom up approach from CEE region** and not an "institutional" one using a new language; talking about value based conflicts.

3.2 Oliver´s presentation on right-wing Extremism

In this part Oliver Kossack from CI gave a presentation on right-wing Extremism in order for the all participants to be on the same page and to frame the later good practice workshops.

Presentation dealt with the topic of right-wing extremism and its prevention in Central and Eastern Europe and with quick comparison of the situation in WE and CEE region. State and civil society usually work together in WE countries, but in CEE countries they are quite opposing.

Main conclusion of the presentation was that there is a process of mainstream parties radicalization in CEE meaning that mainstream political parties included the extremist narrative into their programme (for example as did Fidesz in case of Hungary).

More about presentation: a printed ppt version of presentation was shared with every participant.

3.3 Project market – poster presentation

In this session participants were asked to prepare a poster representing their projects/organisations. Then these posters were pin to the walls and participants could walk around and talk among themselves about their work.

3.4 Presentations of good practice / good practice workshops

This session was dedicated to thorough presentation and discussion of participants´ work and sharing with each other their proven strategies that were working in their countries as an inspiration to others. For sharing Powerpoint presentations please feel free to contact one another.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS:

I) **Addressing attitudes towards asylum seekers and migrants through social understanding and reliable knowledge in the context of schools** by Adam Bulandra, Jakub Kosciolek, Interkulturalni PL (Poland)

This workshop was dedicated to detailed depiction of the current situation in Poland, mainly in relation to migration and migrants and to how media (dis)inform about them and Islam in Poland.

In the interactive part of workshop a role playing simulation has been done (three groups were formed – migrants/asylum seekers themselves, anti-migration group and pro-migration group). This simulation is usually played with school teachers in order to change of educational system to be more towards migrants, asylum seekers and advocating for the better migration policy.

II) **Local Distancing and Deradicalisation – training with young people prone to violent extremism and group hatred** by Judith Schiefelbein, Cultures Interactives, e.v. (Germany)

In this workshop we focused on methodologies used by Cultures Interactives e.v. in radicalisation prevention efforts.

Radicalization does not take place abruptly, but it is a process that is influenced by personal needs, curiosity, meaning and search for effectiveness, the environment as well as opportunity structures (eg youth-cultural interesting right-wing extremist cliques locally). When adolescents start to turn to right-wing extremism, it mostly becomes visible to the outside world. At the early stage of the move to right-wing extremism, there are still good chances to address young people and give them space for a reflection on ideologies, political ideas, realities and forms of interaction through which their lives are shaped by respect and trust, as well as offering alternatives of self-expression and personal development. So far, however, there have been nothing on offer for this target group, which has usually been underage and not yet criminal. There is also a lack of coordinated coordination between the institutions that notice changes and indicate a threat to radicalization. Actors from youth work, school social work, family help, in-patient youth institutions, etc. often act as lone fighters without a specific mission and resources in terms of right-wing extremism, among others. Forms of hateful and derogatory attitudes.

III.) **Hacking the policy through arts: the method of creative discourse** by Jane Viola Felber ASA FF eV / Programme "nun" - new undiscovered neighbours (Germany)

This workshop was focused on how arts (especially theatre but not only) can help to reduce the violence in the given community/city. Art can help to create alternative narrative from the mainstream on (for example in case of NSU terrorists the main narrative was focused on the perpetrators, the theatre play writers in contrast interviewed the families of the victims and thus

created a narrative form the victim´s perspective). Important factors of such alternative narrative creationist art are:

- Participation (versus Intervention): getting involved various actors, artist, scientists, majority population
- Multidimensional (vs. Linearity): many different event, methods, plays, discussions
- Windows of opportunities (vs. Finger-Poiting): longer term, many events not just one single

IV.) **How to work where it is needed most** by Karina Andrášiková, Mládež ulice (Slovakia)

Mládež ulice (The Youth of the streets) is a grassroots non-governmental organisation working with young people, families or various socially disadvantaged groups of people. Karin Andrášiková presented their right wing extremism prevention and intervention initiative focused on young people attending football matches. The first step of their program was to conduct observation survey directl among the youth football fans that are prone to violence. For a period of at least 6 months the social workers from Mládež ulice attended the football matches and blended in the crowd. They have observed the behaviour of the young people and talked to them (as random fans - not as official social workers) to understand their thinking. Based on this survey they have split the group that appears to be homogeneous to the outsiders into different categories based on their behaviour and role they play in the crowd. The following categories (expressed through symbols) were identified for simplification of the future intervention design:

1) Exclamation marks (!): People that are the leaders of the group, ideologists, radicals
2) Blue triangles: people that follow the leaders, actively participate in violence, shouting abusive messages,
3) Question marks (?) Bystanders, who are usually not actively participating in violence, but watch the crowds actions and silently think about it,

Then there is also fourth category of people who are not participating in these crowds, not attending matches and are considered as regulars (represented by orange dots).

In the workshop we have discussed following questions in relation to these four groups:

1) What is the role of social worker/youth worker in relation to a particular target group? What should social workers do in order to prevent radicalisation or tackle the radicals from these groups?

2) What factors can influence people from this group or some people from these groups to radicalise?

3) What institutions can/should work with these people in the context of radicalisation?

4) What other question would you ask?

3.5 Mapping study of social value based conflicts in CEE and of conflicts related to right-wing extremism

Prior to Exchange itself an ENND mapping study containing value based conflicts in 7 selected countries was shared with the participants. Mapping study should be published at the end of year 2017. Participants received an introductory part and 2 detailed country mapping studies connected to "post-truth society" in Germany and in Slovakia to the conflict described as the neo-nazi forces being a member of the parliament for having an idea what the Mapping study look like.

Here is a **short summary** of value based conflicts related to right-wing extremism and migration in the Mapping study:

- So called "migration crisis" was chosen by all seven countries as one of the most striking, regardless of whether the country has to deal with real migrants (Germany, Bulgaria), had to deal with them in last years during the "migration crisis" (Hungary, Romania), or it is the country almost untouched by migrants (Slovakia, Poland, Czechia). In 2017 the conflict is no more in its biggest escalation phase however we can expect that it may again become hot easily.
- The **migration crisis was used by extremist, neo-nazi, and anti-systemic groups that consciously spread fear, xenophobia, anti-Islam and anti-European moods among people**.
  - *"During 2014 and 2015 almost daily anti-Islam protests were organized by the initiative´s (We do not want Islam in the Czech Republic) supporters in major cities, which demonstrated the substantial mobilization potential of the initiative. ... This new phenomenon of masked extremism proves the negative discourse against Islam and Muslims became a neutral and common way of expression across society, without being perceived as 'extremist' or connected to extreme right wing."* *(Czechia)*
  - *"The choice of factors allowing for labeling Europe as ´decadent´ shows the set of values important for this segment of society: faith in God (but only Christian one), strong preference for heterosexuality as a sign of health, aversion to individualism, idealization of the past, strong attachment to blood bonds, rivalry of cultures."* *(Poland)*
  - *"This is also a minority vs. majority type of conflict, with the twist that the minority is hardly even present. As there is a lack of actual contact with the object of prejudice people's fears against the unknown and the different are stronger and much more easily manipulated and fomented."* *(Hungary)*
  - *"The two polar oppositions regarding this conflict are those who view (German) society as an inclusive and pluralistic community, often referring to the fact that its members are committed to mutual respect as well as respect for human and constitutional rights. The opposite pole banks on the image (or claim) of a*

homogenous, exclusive society based on common (often undefined "Judeo-Christian") traditions and German ethnicity." (Germany)

- o *"There is also an information conflict related to this issue. For example, there is a misinformation that all migrants are Muslim or that they are illegal immigrants. However, there is also a long history of collaboration between Muslims and Romanians, but the media fuels fear. The media very rarely mentions the many cases of mixed marriages between Romanians and citizens from Middle Eastern countries, or the well-integrated communities of Muslims, especially from the south-east region (Dobrogea) of Romania and in the capital, Bucharest." (Romania)*

- In all countries except Germany, the migration issue has a strong anti-EU undertone nurtured by many national politicians standing against the "EU dictate" on accepting refugees and at the same time criticising inability of EU to deal with the problem effectively.

3.6 What would help us in our work? How can ENND help us? How can we help ENND?

Participants brainstormed ideas on what would **help them in their work** and later on **how can ENND help them with those work needs.** They reached the following conclusions.

ENND can help **for sure** with:
- Networking: online, offline
- Meet people from other countries and be empowered
- Monitoring and sharing of funding possibilities
- Access to Good Practices (know-how and tools – practical, step by step instructions, results, methodology)
- Project Partnership (broker project management)
- Sharing of research
- Long term education (not just one meeting, but long term, advocacy trainings)
- Not sharing just good practice but also mistakes
- Combining different fields of expertise

"Side effects" of networking in ENND:
- Time to reflect and sharing/transmitting knowledge in organisations
- Safe space to be reinforced, solidarity
- Seeing new perspectives
- Networking as a source of inspiration and new energy

ENND **cannot solve**:
- Funding itself

3.7 Feedback

At the end of the Exchange there was a short feedback from the participants and organisers of the whole Exchange from which specific recommendation have risen – a focus for future activities should be really put on very **tangible and reproducible activities/strategies and not that much on theory.**

Annex 1: Programme of the meeting

Wednesday, 6th December

09:30 – 09:45h Arrival and registration

09:45 – 10:20h Welcome & getting to know each other

10:20 – 11:00h Presentation of ENND by Lukáš Zorád and Monika Náglová, PDCS, Slovakia

11:00 – 11:30h Input: "Right-wing extremism and its prevention in Europe –

an overview" by Oliver Kossack, Cultures Interactive e.V., Germany

11:30 – 11:45h Coffee break

11:45 – 12:45h Project market: poster presentations by the participants

12:45 – 13:45h Lunch

13:45 – 15:15h Good practice workshops I

Workshop 1: "Addressing attitudes towards asylum seekers and migrants through social understanding and reliable knowledge in the context of schools" by Adam Bulandra and Jakub Kościółek, Interkulturalni PL, Poland

Workshop 2: "Local Distancing and Deradicalisation – training with young people prone to violent extremism and group hatred" by Judith Schiefelbein, Cultures Interactive e.V., Germany

15:15 – 15:45h Coffee break

15:45 – 17:15h Good practice workshops I (continued)

17:15 – 17:30h Wrap-up

19:00h Joint dinner (optional)

Thursday, 7th December

9:00 – 9:15h Intro/warm-up

9:15 – 11:15h Good practice workshops II

Workshop 1: "Hacking the Policy Cycle through Arts: The Method of Creative Discourse Transformation" by Jane Viola Felber, Project Undiscovered Neighbours, Germany

Workshop 2: "Youth work – How to work where it is needed most" by Karina Andrášiková, Mládež Ulice, Slovakia

11:15 – 11:30h Coffee break

11:30 – 12:45h Group work: What would help us in our own work?

12:45 – 13:00h Conclusion

13:00h Lunch and departure