



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION



---

## Activity Overview

### "Deradicalization and resocialization of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) in the Western Balkans - Case studies."

IRC-N1-W-20

RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, Rakitje, Stari hrast 53, HR-10437  
Bestovje, Republic of Croatia  
Info Tel.: + 385 1 333 0 861, Fax: + 385 1 333 0 809, [www.racviac.org](http://www.racviac.org)

**Date** 10 November 2020

**Venue** RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation, Raktije, Stari Hast 53, HR-10437 Bestovje, Zagreb, Republic of Croatia

**Background** Violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism, as well as terrorism itself, are by no means new security challenges. However, in the last decade SEE, and the whole of Europe, has witnessed significantly increased level of these connected security threats. Armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq, and fall of large parts of these states under the effective control of ISIL/*Daesh* and other terrorist organizations boosted attraction of violent extremist and terrorist propaganda, both online and offline, for many people in SEE, mostly young.

While all the countries of the Western Balkans have been affected by the foreign fighter phenomenon, some of them have shown a higher vulnerability to mobilization into jihadi militias. Almost two thirds of known Western Balkans foreign fighters and family members originate from these two countries. As of the beginning of 2020, some 485 nationals of Western Balkan countries had returned home or were repatriated. At least 260 others have been reported killed, although the actual number of combat casualties is likely higher due to underreporting. The Western Balkans contingent remaining in Syria and Iraq is composed of about 475 individuals, and it is dominated by children - including many born in Syria and Iraq - and women. According to official sources over half of those remaining - about 260 individuals - are nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina or their children with legitimate citizenship claims. After ISIS has failed to achieve the goal of establishing a caliphate and after losing territories in Syria and Iraq, more research needs to focus on evolving trends and what remains of ISIS' ideology and online recruitment strategies in the Western Balkans.

**Purpose and objectives** Challenges for Rehabilitation, Resocialization, and Reintegration of FTFs returnees in the Western Balkan are great but not impossible to

overcome. The main purpose of the Seminar is to address the issues of deradicalization and resocialization of FTFs and their family members. The objectives of the on-line seminar are:

- To exchange experience and good practices in dealing with former terrorists and violent extremists (including FTF, but not limited to them) in SEE and in Europe. This exchange should be encouraged and intensified in order to develop programs for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.
- To discuss specific approaches to empower and support local communities, education, and family members as prevention/countering violent extremism actors and to make a recommendation in support of the implementation of a whole of society approach within the framework of overall Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) strategies.
- To find possible recommendations for the action of the relevant national authorities in the region for responses to various aspects of repatriation, deradicalization, and resocialization programs defined by the experts at the Workshop.
- To obtain answers to the questions related to this issue that directly affects the Western Balkan societies while providing an additional overview of the measures taken at the Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo\* examples.

**Participation** The expected participants will be government representatives from the national police services, state attorney/prosecutor's offices, security services, and other relevant government agencies in the field of law enforcement especially.

**Methodology** The Seminar is going to be executed via the on-line platform "Cisco WebEx."

The working language is English

**POC** Mr. Berat JASHARI, IRC Activity Manager, e-mail: [bjashari@racviac.org](mailto:bjashari@racviac.org); tel: +385 1333 0859

---

\* *This Designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence (In accordance with Arrangements regarding representation and cooperation).*