

1. Prevention and early intervention

- Youth radicalisation should primarily be addressed through early intervention before it takes root. The Conference has demonstrated that radicalisation pathways are complex and evolving. We need to understand these pathways. We need to map them out and identify specific risks and protective factors for different age groups in order to help our member states structure early interventions effectively and better inform their application.
- Terrorists use sophisticated tactics to target youth online, similar to methods used for child sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The cross-pollination of approaches and experiences from these other domains should be considered to reinforce the existing mechanisms against terrorist exploitation of young people. Using methods that have produced positive results, such as criminalising grooming, should be contemplated to combat terrorist recruitment.
- Children and young people spend significant time online, where intense exposure to harmful material amplified by algorithms accelerates radicalisation pathways. Some recommendations were made for what platforms could be doing better, including stronger safety interventions, better detection of escalation pathways, safer-by-design algorithms for minors and improved accountability. The creation of frameworks to develop age-appropriate digital content and tools should also support ongoing efforts with the private sector to limit children's access to extremist and violent stimulus.
- Discussions have focused on existing multi-stakeholder initiatives to prevent vulnerable youth from being drawn into violent extremism and terrorism, but such measures, including educational interventions, are not systematically implemented. Yet, education is essential to free those young people from the grip of online predators. Introducing structured critical thinking and digital literacy programmes is necessary to enhance youth resilience to harmful narratives. Where associated to prevention efforts, families and educators should receive support and guidance.

2. Prosecution and rehabilitation

- The number of children involved in terrorism-related cases has rapidly and exponentially grown. While there is no single profile of children drawn into terrorism, participants have underlined their increasingly young age and existing vulnerabilities. These children are, first and foremost, victims, whose protection requires systematic inclusion in disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, in addition to prosecution where

appropriate. Mapping out what each programme stage should entail and how it should be implemented could lead to defining common juvenile justice approaches centred on safeguarding the rights of the child.

- Presentations have highlighted a shift towards child-friendly justice in counter-terrorism cases involving minors but also missed opportunities of early intervention for victims of online terrorist grooming. Introducing systemic diversion measures in criminal justice systems could support the social reintegration of children at risk. Where possible, diverting youth earlier in investigations and prosecutions to programmes that provide community services and using community-based alternatives to detention could prevent further radicalisation.

3. Disengagement and reintegration

- The conference has emphasised the vital role that community and civil society play in disengagement and reintegration processes by providing education, a non-institutional perspective on specific issues, opportunities for positive engagement and social support to those affected. Increasing community and civil society involvement in those processes could allow a wider audience to be reached by fostering trust and make youth resilience to re-radicalisation more likely.
- The dedicated session also underscored the efforts made to date to assist children and young people leave the radicalisation path. A key lesson is that affected youth are more likely to listen to their peers. Good practices could be shared in view of identifying modalities of youth participation and engagement in countering violent extremism and terrorism, particularly in producing counter-narratives appealing to younger generations and fostering democratic digital participation.

4. Next steps

An important recommendation has been that the Council of Europe is the right platform to align standards across member States. Going forward, the CDCT will reflect on the conclusions of the Conference and the best ways of addressing the challenges highlighted by our speakers, while protecting human rights, democratic values and the rule of law. The CDCT will ensure that all future initiatives are co-ordinated with other Council of Europe bodies, especially under the next Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and will submit concrete proposals to the Committee of Ministers for practical implementation.