ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN AND RUSSIAN STRUCTURAL APPROACHES TO MITIGATION OF EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM RISKS

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Abstract

The article analyzes the European and Russian structural approaches to countering the processes of radicalization, as well as the emergence of extremism and terrorism. The results of a survey held among 539 respondents were analyzed to study the Russian practice of countering extremism and terrorism. All the risk mitigation methods should be divided into three levels, according to which countermeasures are ranked from soft to more severe, depending on the degree of radicalization of an individual. Each type of countermeasures is most efficient at its level. The study of the available contribution provides an opportunity to start developing more efficient measures to mitigate the risk of extremism and terrorism and to develop a comprehensive strategy.

Keywords: extremism, terrorism, counteraction programs, EU, Russia

Introduction

Today, the European Union and Russia face manifestations of extremism and terrorism. The threat to public safety is expected to increase in the coming years. The state is particularly concerned with jihadist terrorism. An alarming phenomenon has developed when militants who fought for terrorist organizations are returning from Syria, Iraq and other conflict zones. However, jihadist terrorism is not the only problem; the modern society is also threatened by the growing violence of right-wing and left-wing extremists, as well as single terrorists (Europol, 2016).

These trends increasingly enhance the need for efficient countermeasures. In Russia, as well as throughout Europe, various types of measures, such as new anti-terrorism laws, and increased security controls are being developed and

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implemented in response to the growing threat. Measures are also being taken to prevent and counter radicalization and recruitment by increasing the resilience of individuals and risk groups. The first row of practical experts are being better informed. Extremist narrative is being discredited, "exit" programs for members of extremist and terrorist groups aimed at de-radicalization and disengagement of extremist groups are being implemented (European Commission, 2014).

These types of measures are commonly referred to as countering radicalization and combating violent extremism. While anti-extremist programs are being actively developed in Europe and Russia, the assessment of these preventive measures efficiency is still far behind compared with the forceful response to specific crimes of a terrorist nature. In fact, after more than a decade of anti-radicalization policy and the adoption of the above-mentioned programs, the assessment of their impact seems to be insufficient. The following question is still relevant: "What has actually worked in the fight against violent extremism?"

1. Definitions of violent extremism

The problem of social consciousness radicalization and, as a result, increasing manifestations of an extremist nature, lies, to a greater extent, in its definition. The "radical" initially means striving to get to the root of a social problem and completely solve it with the most decisive measures and as quickly as possible, also resorting to violence. Today, radicalization is defined as a process of developing extremist ideologies and beliefs (Borum, 2011).

Violent extremism and terrorism differ from radicalization as the former relate to certain actions. While radicalization is a process that takes place on the conceptual and ideological levels. Terrorism is different from violent extremism and radicalization in its tactics. This is illegal, politically motivated violence, which is purposefully carried out with the aim of causing harm (including through creating an atmosphere of fear) in a wider section of society than the target group or audience affected by the main attack.

Violent extremism refers to ideologically motivated violence to achieve political goals. The critical difference between violent extremism and terrorism is that the former causes less social harm than terrorism, because it is aimed at specific individuals and groups responsible for the alleged social ills. The boundaries between them are often vague, but the main demarcation line, however, remains. Terrorism is the most socially dangerous *part* of extremism. For example, while terrorism as a whole is an example of extremist violence, not all extremists use terrorist tactics. Table 1 provides additional explanations and examples of the differences between terrorism, extremism and radicalization.

Table 1. Terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization

Level	Notion	Definition	Examples
First level of counteraction	Culture medium	Many indirect factors contributing to the growth of discontent and protest sentiments	- injustice (real and perceived) - social, psychological and economic problems - various kinds of discrimination - partial deprivation
	Vulnerable individuals	Individuals and groups who, for various reasons, are the most exposed to radical ideology	- people exposed to radical ideology and ideological exaltation - refugees - migrants - religious fanatics
Second level of counteraction	Radicalization	The process when an individual develops extremist ideas and ideologies	- fascism - nationalism - Islamic fundamentalism - market (liberal) fundamentalism
Third level of counteraction	Extremism	Using ideologically motivated violence to achieve future political goals	- anti-globalist violence - violence in individual cases, such as demands of environmental protection or control over the circulation of weapons, etc. - violence against migrants
	Terrorism	Unlawful, politically motivated violence, intentional harm (or intimidation) of a wider part of society than that targeted by the attacks	- Terrorist attack on Dubrovka (Nord-Ost siege, 2002) - Terrorist attack in Beslan (2004) - A series of attacks in Paris (November 13, 2015)

1.1. Measures to Prevent Radicalization, Extremism and Terrorism

In the *Russian* scientific literature, activities on the prevention of extremism are divided by their focus into *general social* (general prevention), *special* (special prevention), *individual* (individual prevention) (Galahov *et al*., 2015).

At the *general social* level, this is the solution of major problems in the functioning of society and, as a result, a decrease in the dynamics of extremism development, a change in its structure and the elimination of the causes of crime in general (Chudinov, 2016).

At the *special* level, it is the impact on specific social groups (microenvironment) in which conflict situations take place; preventive measures in relation to the types and forms of extremist behavior; prevention of extremism in certain areas of public life (in other words, criminological prevention).

At the *individual* level, this is a positional change in the value orientations system of a person, overcoming their antisocial views and attitudes; prevention of extremist crimes committed by a specific person who came to the attention of law enforcement agencies (which is also called individual criminological prevention).

If preventive activities at the general social level are carried out in the process of solving large-scale tasks facing the state as a whole, and should be a focus for all state and public structures, then the prevention at the special and individual levels should be conducted exclusively by state bodies and public organizations, whose scope of work includes fighting crime in general and countering extremist activities in particular (Agapov, 2017). The essence of such activities should include organizational and practical measures aimed specifically at preventing extremism and extremist crimes committed by specific individuals.

The traditional presentation of preventive measures as interconnected at different levels but united by a single set of elements (general social, special and individual prevention) largely determines their place in the anti-extremist activity.

General social prevention is a set of specific socio-economic, ideological, organizational, managerial and other measures, which together are intended to provide:
- qualitative improvement of the crime situation across the whole country and a particular region;
- increased level of protection and personal and property security of individuals and legal entities;
- creation of prerequisites for the stabilization of extremist activity and, in the long term, the reduction of its level and the mitigation of negative consequences;
- laying the foundations of the legal culture among the population and officials, including respect for the rule of law and readiness to assist in its protection;
- adequate conditions for the activities of law enforcement agencies and special services, government agencies and organizations in the area under consideration.

A comprehensive nature of the measures envisaged for general social prevention is one of the fundamental conditions for success in their implementation. They are not aimed at extremism directly, but rather indirectly - through general economic, legal, educational activities among those subject to extremist views, capable of developing into criminal actions.

Special prevention is directly aimed at eliminating the causes and conditions that determine extremist activity. The difference between these measures and the measures of general social prevention lies in the fact that the targeted solution of preventive tasks makes up the bulk of their content.

It is reasonably considered that comprehensive large-scale operational and preventive operations are the most effective measure of special prevention. The success of such operations accounts for their short-term nature, attraction of significant forces and means, specificity of the tasks to be solved during their implementation.

Individual prevention of extremism is recognized as a relatively independent area in preventive activities, having deviant behavior as its object. Individual preventive activity is usually associated with having a preventive impact on a particular person. In the course of such impact, causes and conditions that affect this person negatively are revealed. However, individual preventive activity will only be efficient when it is required, when the behavior of the person at whom the preventive measures are directed demonstrates the possibility of participation in extremist activity.

Amid modern conditions, manifestations of extremism can lead to a significant increase in particularly grave crimes. That is why one of the basic principles of countering extremism is the priority of measures aimed at preventing extremist activities and the inevitability of punishment for their implementation. According to the Federal Law On Countering Extremist Activities, the following main areas relate to countering extremism:
- "the adoption of preventive measures aimed at preventing extremist activities, including the identification and subsequent elimination of the causes and conditions promoting extremist activities;
- identification, prevention and suppression of extremist activities of public and religious associations, other organizations, individuals".

Thus, the prevention of extremism is a purposeful activity on identification and elimination (blocking, neutralization) of the causes, conditions and other factors of extremist crime. The objects of preventive work include determinants of criminal punishable behavior, operating at the general (crime and extremism in general), separate (types of extremist crimes) and individual (separate extremist crime) level.

Although in Russia there are specific practices and programs for de-radicalization and prevention of extremism, a comprehensive system of counteraction has not yet been fully developed. At the same time, the Russian science is focused not on the study of de-radicalization processes and the development of preventive programs, but on the role of forceful opposition to extremist manifestations, which is accounted for by the criminological approach to the problem. Creating a comprehensive anti-extremist system is one of the priorities of the national strategy in countering extremism and terrorism.

2. Anti-extremism programs

In order to develop a new policy to counter violent extremism, it is necessary to consider a number of scientific studies and concepts that focus on the theoretical

foundations of extremism prevention. Some of the scientific studies, as well as assessments of specific anti-extremism programs, provide one of the first important lessons for developing these measures: the efficiency of an extremism prevention program largely depends on how it is interpreted. If specific groups and communities feel a disproportionately big influence and pressure of a targeted anti-extremism strategy, this will reduce its efficiency (Lindekilde, 2012). Research also shows that any form of anti-extremism policy must embrace the causes that lead to radicalization and violent extremism (Bigo *et al.*, 2014). For example, E. Bakker presents the model of Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (Bakker, 2015). This radicalization model is a theory of change, including root causes (political, economic, and cultural), identification processes, network dynamics, relative deprivation, stimulating events, and personal factors (psychological characteristics and personal experiences). Any anti-extremism program should be comprehensive, so it should take into account all these issues. Similar, but less extensive models are also presented by the Youth Justice Board and in the study by D. Bigo (Hirschfield, 2012; Bigo *et al.*, 2014).

The American anti-extremism program, which was evaluated using mixed methods, belongs to the World Organization for Resource Development and Education - the organization of Muslim communities in the United States (Williams *et al.*, 2016). This anti-extremist program consists of three different foundations: education of community members, training of law enforcement officers in Islam and cooperation in social services, as well as volunteering and multicultural programming. The study claims that this is the first evidence-based program to counter extremism in the United States that can be efficient in other municipalities (Williams *et al.*, 2016).

Studying modern anti-extremism policies, Harris-Hogan differentiated three forms of preventive strategies that are based on a public health model (Harris-Hogan *et al.*, 2016).

1) The main anti-extremism initiatives are aimed at preventing radicalization, and also educating people about violent extremism and preventing the emergence of a culture medium for the radicalization of individuals. Also, these measures may include awareness-raising programs for practical experts working in the area of countering extremism.

2) Second-level programs include interfering with individuals who show signs of radicalization because they participate in an extremist social network or openly call for violence.

3) The third-level anti-extremism programs are aimed at working with extremists, facilitating the integration into society of those already considered extremists, helping them to get out of the extremist network and abandon cruel behavior. Such forms of prevention are also recognized as efficient in research papers based on European experience (Williams *et al.*, 2016; Korn, 2016; Cohen, 2016; Selim, 2016; Young, 2016).

Figure 1. **Three-level anti-extremism model**
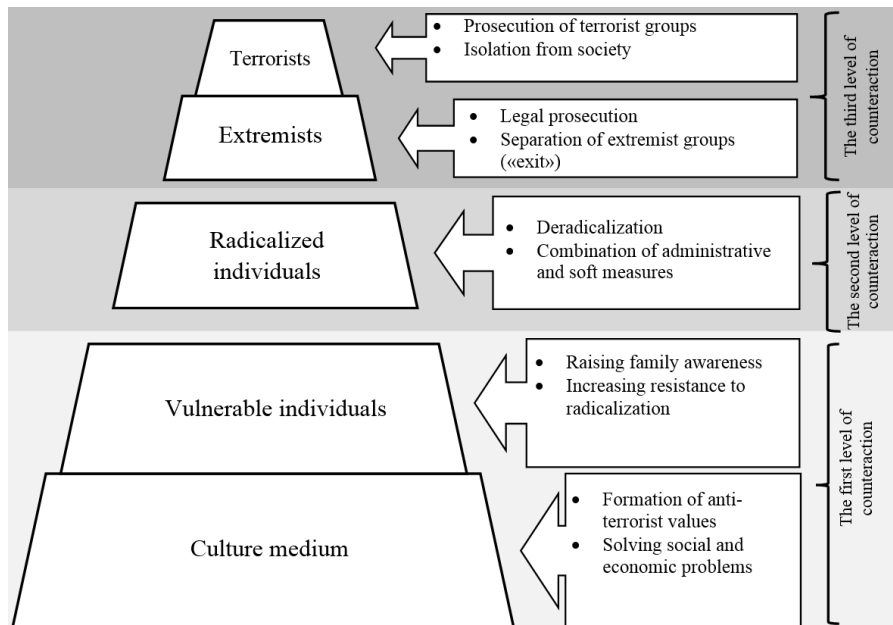
Dutch programs of primary and secondary prevention of extremism implemented in the Netherlands and Europe were studied by scientist V. Lub, who assessed such measures (socio-ecological prevention, peer mediation, increasing self-esteem and intergroup contact prevention) in various areas (Lub, 2013) . For example, these were areas of criminal behavior, education, or drug/alcohol abuse. He concludes that the scientific basis for developing mediation and improving the self-esteem of vulnerable individuals is currently weak, and the basis for a social ecological approach is also extremely insignificant. Thus, intergroup contact, on average, reduces prejudices against other groups, but the impact is usually little, and there is no evidence of its long-term effect.

2.1. Building resilience

Most studies on countering extremism discuss the concept of "increasing resilience" to extremist ideology and illustrate how this can be achieved. According to the model for the prevention of extremism, Stevan Weine developed in his study a public health-oriented approach (Weine, 2012). It also recognizes various target audiences: vulnerable persons, vulnerable subgroups, groups and communities. This study is mostly interesting for a brief summary of facts that have been already discovered by scientists about resilience and fight against extremism:

a) you can have resilience to some risks, but not to others;
b) resilience is formed both at an individual and a social level;

c) the family is the strongest buffer in preventing the development of the violent extremism risk;

d) in communities and groups, resilience is shaped by a combination of country experiences, refugee camps and core values of the country of residence.

The latest study emphasizes the importance of mental health professionals and community participation in anti-extremist initiatives. S. Weine argues that a multidisciplinary team should evaluate those at risk and provide them with support and treatment. At the community level, they must provide awareness-building and anti-extremist education (Weine, 2017).

An assessment of the British experience of increasing resilience at the individual level, including the use of mentoring programs for people considered vulnerable to various forms of violent extremism, was carried out in a study by B. Spalek and L. Davies (Spalek and Davies, 2012). The findings suggest that anti-extremist mentoring programs use universal concepts such as relationships, trust and confidentiality. However, these concepts take on a new meaning when faced with deeply rooted radical opinions and very different logics, as is the case with people who have adopted extremist views. This study also emphasizes that political and cultural contexts should be taken into account in mentoring programs.

The experience of Diamant, Dutch training on resistance to extremism, aimed at preventing radicalization provides valuable insights to increase the resilience of vulnerable groups (Feddes, 2015). Research shows that increasing empathy plays an important role in reducing support for the ideology of violence. This resilience training is considered a promising tool to combat violent radicalization. However, it has not yet been investigated whether Diamant training can be efficient not only for the secondary school, but also for de-radicalization of real extremists.

Schools are considered an important place in which young people's resilience to extremist ideology can be improved (Ghosh, 2016). However, European scientists argue about the best way to achieve this goal. For example, the educational strategy for the prevention of extremism in the UK is based on the promotion of British values, which, however, is often criticized. Some studies focus on improving resilience and recommend how to counter extremist messages and what alternatives can be implemented. McDonald shows that one should not try to resist dichotomies, such as "we"/"they" or "the West is at war with Islam", but rather promote the concepts of loyalty, belonging and duty (McDonald, 2011). A qualitative assessment of the results by Liht and Savage shows that such an approach can be efficient. The target group of their program was exposed to extremist discourse. Their theory is based on the concept of "value of complexity", in which extremist "values" compete and are even openly discussed in terms of their results. It was initially concluded that increasing the complexity of meaning is more efficient than promoting one-dimensional or secular values (Liht and Savage, 2013).

Aly conducted a qualitative assessment of the educational extremism prevention impact entitled "Beyond Bali Education Resource" (Aly, 2014). He

applied the theory of „moral liberation" to develop a preventive effect. Moral liberation is how people justify violence, dehumanize victims, ignore the harmful effects of violence, and free themselves from guilt. The program is specifically designed to build social and cognitive resistance to violent extremism by participating in sanctions and preparing students to challenge the ideology of violent extremism, which could lead, in the opinion of the authors and translators of this ideology, to moral liberation.

The study shows that the programs have achieved some success in building resilience by:
- attracting participants with the experience of violent extremism, as being unfair and inhumane;
- simulating a situation of empathy for the victims of violent extremism;
- developing a model of self-efficacy in countering the effects of violent extremism;
- responding to radical impacts in positive, productive ways, given the devastating effects of violent extremism.

Most studies focus on community participation in building resilience. In particular, studies on the negative outcomes and side effects of extremism claim that community participation programs led to the isolation of Muslim communities, stigmatization, polarization, and increased suspicion. Analyzing the results of these studies, one would think that community participation is an inefficient approach to the prevention of extremism, which should be abandoned. However, such conclusions should be considered premature (Briggs, 2010).
- First, communities can act as an early warning system for police and intelligence services.
- Secondly, communities can protect young people from the influence of violent extremist ideologies.
- Thirdly, communities can provide fast intervention that can solve real and perceived problems of young people.
- Fourthly, participation and agreement within the community helps prevent and overcome some of the negative side effects of more stringent measures aimed at individual members of the community.

Lamb discusses how communities participate in anti-extremist practices and uses a theory of change regarding community participation based on the concept of "three cups of tea", namely 1) police cooperation with communities, institutions and local people; 2) gaining the trust of these communities, institutions and local residents; 3) carrying out actual communication with communities about terrorism, extremism and radicalization (Lamb, 2013). Moreover, using the practical experience of three European countries, F. Vermeulen illustrates the subtle differences in community participation programs (Vermeulen, 2014). Thus, the initiative to engage the Muslim community in interacting with the police was rated as successful (Dunn et al., 2016). In surveys, community members indicated that they consider the initiative successful because it led to direct contact, was publicly

available and included deep partnerships. However, even in this case, criticism was expressed against the "suspect" community.

Thus, most community engagement programs fighting against extremism are criticized, since Muslim communities are usually closed and isolated. The success of prevention lies rather in the application of feedback and interaction with as many diverse organizations as possible (Mirahmadi, 2016).

2.2. Exit programs

Studies highlight that exit programs are a trick to changing radical beliefs (de-radicalization), stopping violence (disengagement), socially reintegrating people who are potentially prone to extremism and rehabilitating violent extremists (Horgan and Braddock, 2010).

H. El-Said evaluated several exit programs around the world (El-Said, 2012). He gives an idea of the different contexts and forms of the "exit" results:
- prevention of further radicalization;
- rehabilitation and counseling for those who are already radicalized (government or individual initiatives);
- collective de-radicalization in prison or outside.
In terms of lessons learned, this study emphasizes:
- role of public support in combination with charismatic political leadership;
- role of families and civil society;
- role and quality of participating religious experts.

The political and creative power of the state is important. Finally, no single formula can address all cases of violent extremism, even within the same region. The fight against radicalization and de-radicalization must be adapted and take into account the culture, customs, traditions, history, norms and position of each country.

The importance of the context is also emphasized by F. Demant and B. de Graaf, but in a different way (Demant and Graaf, 2010). They believe that any de-radicalization policy implemented by the government should be properly understood, and anti-extremist discourse can have a profound effect on de-radicalization processes. Based on Turkish case studies, M. Bastug and U. Evlek illustrate how changes in public policy (from soft to hard measures) can affect disengagement and de-radicalization programs (Bastug and Evlek, 2016).

B. Schuurman and E. Bakker conduct a small assessment of extremism prevention, considering one specific target audience for an "exit": the reintegration of extremists from among former prisoners (Schuurman and Bakker, 2016). This study is particularly useful because it illustrates the most important factors that influence the efficiency of the "exit" program, such as managerial support for testing service staff and improving cooperation with other stakeholders, such as municipalities. It also emphasizes that disagreements between stakeholders about program theory ("mechanisms") can lead to the wrong choice of a program implementation direction, for example, with too strong emphasis on behavioral

aspects (disengagement) instead of applying cognitive preventive measures (de-radicalization).

Similar studies were also conducted by F. Demant, but already in combination with a theoretically oriented approach (Demant, 2008). T. Bjørgo and J. Horgan distinguish between "pushing" and "pulling" factors to get out of violent extremist organizations (Bjørgo and Horgan, 2008). "Pushing" factors are group dissatisfaction (for example, negative experiences, loss of faith in ideology or politics, etc.). "Pulling" factors consist of positive alternatives (for example, longing for a normal life and family obligations).

F. Demant prefers classifying factors leading to de-radicalization or disengagement based on *content* rather than *direction* (pushing/pulling) (Demant, 2008). He distinguishes between three factors:

- "normative" (ideological) referring to the failure of the adopted ideology. For example, the realization that the desired future is unattainable;
- "affective" (social) include dissatisfaction with a group or a subculture connected with it;
- "permanent" (practical) represent the impact on life circumstances, such as condemnation, external pressure and isolation.

Both studies reveal possible barriers to disengagement, such as socio-psychological dependence on the group and fear of legal sanctions. Alternatively, individual decisions to exit an extremist group can be facilitated by initiating encouraging events by others who prevent violence. In general, these studies are based on empirical data on voluntary withdrawal and provide an understanding of what opportunities and barriers should be taken into account when developing programs to counter extremism. Similar conclusions were also made in the study of Ferguson (Ferguson, 2016).

Based on interviews with former extremists, Demant also stresses the importance of an integrated approach to de-radicalization and disengagement (Demant, 2008). In his opinion, reactionary (based on a stimulus-response reaction) exit programs are too much focused on solving practical circumstances, while the ideological (normative) component is ignored. Programs for extremist Muslims, on the other hand, also focus too much on normative factors, concentrating on ideology and losing sight of affective factors. In general, these studies state that *European* and *Russian* programs for the prevention of extremism will benefit from a broader approach in which regulatory, affective and permanent factors will be considered in a combined way.

2.3. Family role, social and professional community support

The previously mentioned studies highlighted the importance of the family to increase resistance to extremist behavior (Weine, 2017). Moreover, El-Said emphasized the importance of the family for the de-radicalization process (El-Said, 2012). A. Gielen in his study discusses the importance of family support across the

spectrum of countering violent extremism (Gielen, 2015). In the early stages, family support can be provided to those at risk by solving their problems and maintaining a favorable family environment in which extremist ideas are discussed and alternatives are proposed.

If radical or extremist ideas lead to a departure to a foreign conflict zone, for example, Syria or Iraq, family support may be aimed at maintaining contacts with their children or relatives and creating favorable conditions for the relative's return home. Families can provide support while their relatives are in custody. They can then support the reintegration and rehabilitation process, since families are also a decisive factor in de-radicalization and disengagement. Moreover, family members of the dead militants constitute a risk group for violent extremism, since they are often exposed to propaganda while in a vulnerable state.

A family and a wider anti-extremist professional community (for example, school teachers) should allow experts to take action if they receive early warning signals and prevent the radicalization of other members or peers. Such measures can be quite efficient, since the death of violent extremists causes a lot of grief, anxiety, despair and frustration in families.

Research suggests that the focus of counter-extremism measures should be concentrated not only on families, but also on peers who are in a better position to notice early signs of radicalization and extremism (Williams *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, these results show that peers are reluctant to turn to certain anti-extremist networks (for example, family members or experts), because they fear possible negative consequences. This study also discusses the potential creation of a fact- and evidence-based, anonymous, text-based anti-extremist hotline.

Williams assessed Muslim programs to counter the spread of extremism which included the training of peers, "gatekeepers" (Williams *et al.*, 2016). High school students were trained to recognize manifestations of radicalization and help peers who feel isolated, have experienced a personal crisis or cyber-bullying. The study concludes that "gatekeeper" experts are likely to intervene when the situation becomes serious, therefore collective training of "gatekeepers" is recommended as part of a scientifically based anti-extremism policy development.

Moffett and Sgro (2016) also confirm the benefit of the peer participation method describing the Peer to Peer: Challenging Extremism initiative. The main idea of this initiative is that students around the world oppose extremism among their peers and in their communities by developing and implementing social or digital initiatives, products or tools designed to empower their peers and oppose hatred.

2.4. Counter-narrative communication

Steven and Neumann (2009) in their study emphasize that counter-communication can take various forms, such as online counter-communication or radio programming. D. Aldrich's (2012) research shows how expanding access to radio programs promotes tolerance and civic participation, and, as a result, many

citizens criticize the use of violence by Al-Qaeda and motivate people to see the EU and the United States fighting against terrorism rather than Islam. However, this data is highly context dependent, for example, which is illustrated by different results for men and women. Moreover, these studies confirm the findings of other programs in Africa, such as reconciliation, peace and tolerance programs: they cannot change higher, abstract beliefs, but they can change both norms and behavior.

Therefore, one should not focus only on the availability of online extremist content (for example, implement prohibitive measures on the Internet). Approaches that will deter producers of extremist materials, encouraging the Internet community to self-regulate, which will reduce the attractiveness of extremist messages and encourage positive messages are needed.

Recently, the narrative approach has been widely criticized. There is little evidence that the impact of violent extremist content also leads to participation in violent extremist activities (Ferguson, 2016). The assumption that extremist narrative can be countered by providing an alternative or counter-narration remains unproven. Davies researched the content of six online anti-extremism programs and concluded that these programs do not have a theoretical basis and do not affect the mechanisms underlying the radicalization process, such as contextual factors or personality problems (Davies *et al*., 2016).

3. Survey findings

In this regard, it is quite interesting how Russian society reacts to a certain set of measures to counter extremism and terrorism. To achieve the objectives of the study, the authors conducted a sociological survey on the ideas of the Russian youth about the features and efficiency of the antiterrorist policy in the Russian Federation. The survey was conducted in the form of an online survey in VKontakte social network and in three forums in September-October 2018. The survey involved 539 persons. Gender composition of respondents: 53% are men and 47% are women. The age of the respondents ranged from 15 to 30 years, the weighted average age was 26.03 years. Age groups of the respondents: 1) 15-19 years old - 24%; 2) 20-24 years old - 33%; 3) 25-30 years - 43%.

Perception of the anti-terrorism policy main characteristics. Based on the studied social perception of the Russian anti-terrorism policy main characteristics (Figure 2), it can be concluded that the most efficient and strong side of Russian anti-terrorism policy, according to young people, is the "pro-activity" of its implementation (60%). At the same time, the weakest side is the low positive perception of the policy "adaptability" (27%), i.e. its flexibility and ability to adapt to changing situations.

At the same time, the main characteristics that have significant potential and the possibility for improvement are social ideas about: justice (50%), legality (50%) and efficiency (49%) of the Russian anti-terrorism policy. As can be seen,

almost half of the respondents consider the parties represented to be quite efficient at the moment.

The main threats to positive perception in public consciousness are such fundamental characteristics as the "consistency" in counteraction against extremism and terrorism (43%) and the "unity of the counteraction system" (39%).

Apart from that, 58% of the respondents described the main focus of the existing Russian antiterrorist measures as "forceful." At the same time, only a little less than a quarter (22%) said that Russian countermeasures are "soft" (or not forceful) while 20% of the respondents think that the current anti-terrorism policy is balanced, i.e. simultaneously combines these two directions.

Perception of terrorism prevention efficiency. It is worth noting that, according to the social perceptions of young people, this area of antiterrorist policy is the least efficient among those presented. It should be particularly noted that in the prevention of terrorism ideology, the government effectively cooperates only with the mass media (53% - figure 2). At the same time, cooperation with religious organizations (38%) and civil society (35%) has the below-average efficiency.

Also, according to respondents, the situation with countering the spread of extremist ideology (37%) and eliminating the causes of its occurrence (33%) is not resolved very efficiently. The existing preventive measures are also not highly efficient (34%).

Figure 2. Perception of the Russian anti-terrorism policy main characteristics
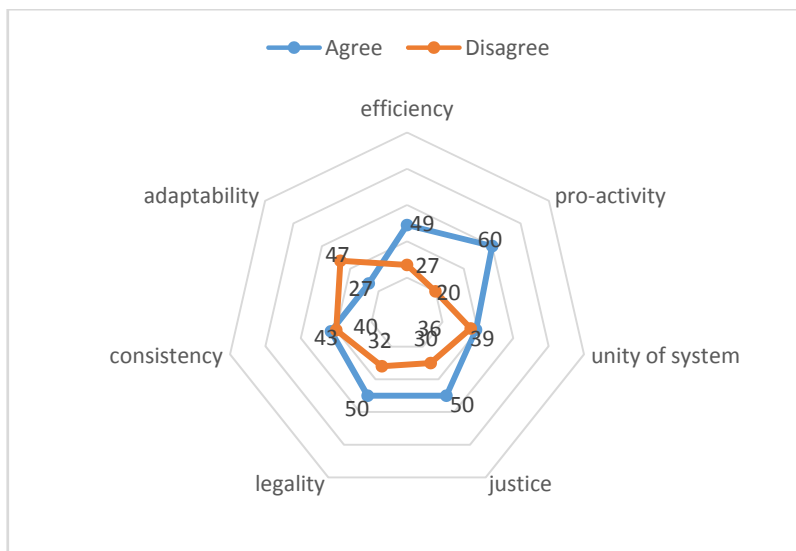
Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018

The respondents disagreed mostly with the statement that the state is striving to carry out the prevention of terrorism by improving the socio-economic situation in the country and regions (24%). This social perception is the most significant threat to the positive perception by young people of the goals, objectives and priorities of the Russian anti-terrorism policy and requires efforts to change it.

Perception of forceful anti-terrorism measures efficiency. According to Russian youth, the forceful fight against terrorism is being implemented with insufficient degree of efficiency. At the same time, there is a very positive perception that the number of arrested and convicted terrorists has increased significantly in the past few years (55% - figure 3). At the same time, only 41% of the respondents consider toughening of criminal penalties for terrorism and extremism as highly efficient, against half of those who consider such a measure to be ineffective and incorrect (48%). The result obtained is somehow inconsistent with the Public Opinion Foundation survey as of 2016 (62% of Russians consider this measure to be efficient against 29%), since this study deals with the population as a whole, without identifying young people as a separate population group (Public Opinion Foundation, 2016).

However, only 32% of young people consider the existing anti-terrorism legislation efficient. Moreover, more than half (53%) speak of its current inefficiency. This fact can have serious negative consequences for a potential improvement of the perception of the Russian anti-terrorism policy legality and fairness.

Also, only 27% of the respondents believe that a fairly common and proven to be reasonable (in Russia and the European Union) measure that allows mitigation or abolition of punishment to people who have voluntarily confessed having assisted terrorists, but have not committed serious crimes, is efficient.

At the same time, half of the young people (49%) consider such a measure to be extremely inefficient; therefore, it once again confirms the negative attitude towards the mitigation of anti-terrorism policy. This fact can adversely affect public support for preventive measures and the real efficiency of countering and preventing terrorism.

At the same time, only 22% consider the introduction of punishments for relatives of terrorists to be efficient, and 65% of the respondents consider such a measure to be extremely inefficient and unacceptable. This fact can generally have a positive impact on the perception of the legality and fairness of the Russian anti-extremism practice.

**Figure 3.** Perception of terrorism prevention efficiency
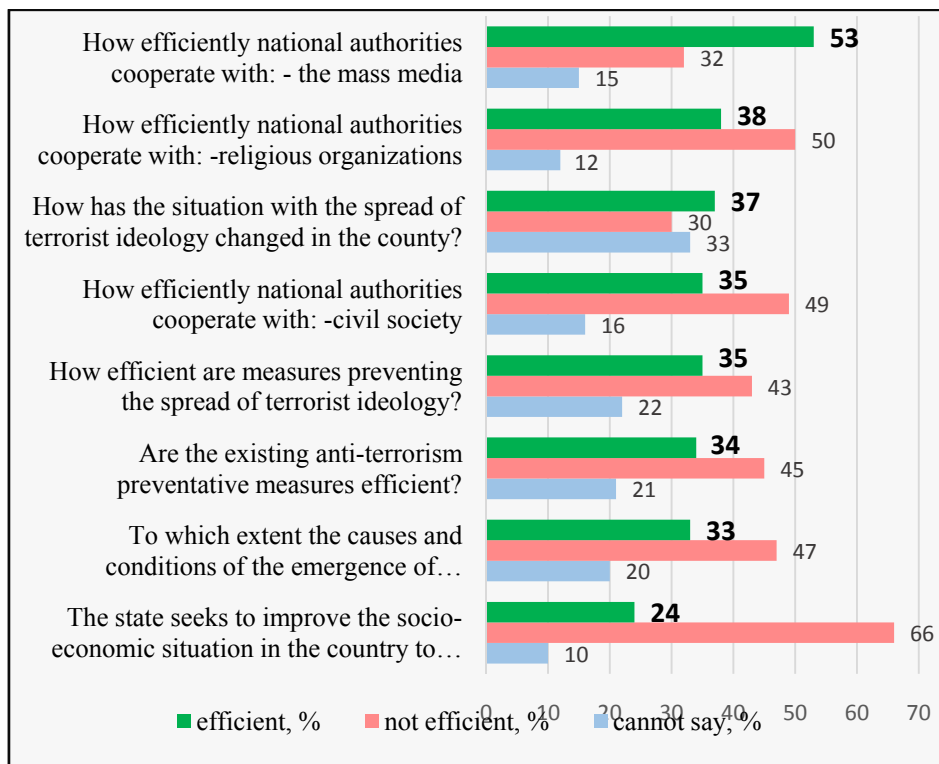
Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018

Perception of threat. It turned out that only a quarter (23%) of the young people perceive terrorism as a direct threat to their lives (Figure 4). At the same time, almost half (46%) of the respondents say that terrorism does not directly threaten them. 71% said that in the near future, minor terrorist attacks may be repeated, and 48% said that major attacks could be expected in Russia. Thus, although young people understand the significance of the terrorist threat and the possibility of new terrorist attacks, the overwhelming majority do not believe that this could affect their lives personally.

Moreover, regarding their attitude to civil rights, only 39% of the respondents supported the opinion that the worst judicial error is the "condemnation an innocent person for terrorism" while half (48%) are more likely to allow a situation in which the worst judicial error would be to "release the perpetrator of terrorism". According to a study on the attitude to anti-terrorism measures of Norwegian citizens, the answer to this question can serve to reveal not only a personal stance regarding civil rights, but also as an indicator in the dichotomous system of a "liberal - conservative" orientation with respect to shared political values (Rykkja *et al.*, 2011).

Thus, in public opinion, half of Russian young people demonstrate a clear tendency to support measures that restrict individual rights in countering the terrorist threat, for the sake of not leaving chances for terrorists to escape punishment. This trend can have a very negative impact on the perception of justice and the legality of Russian anti-terrorism policy in the long term. Moreover, following this social notion, the role of forceful counteraction to terrorism and the support of forceful measures, instead of prevention, increase significantly.

Figure 4. Perception of anti-extremism and anti-terrorism measures efficiency
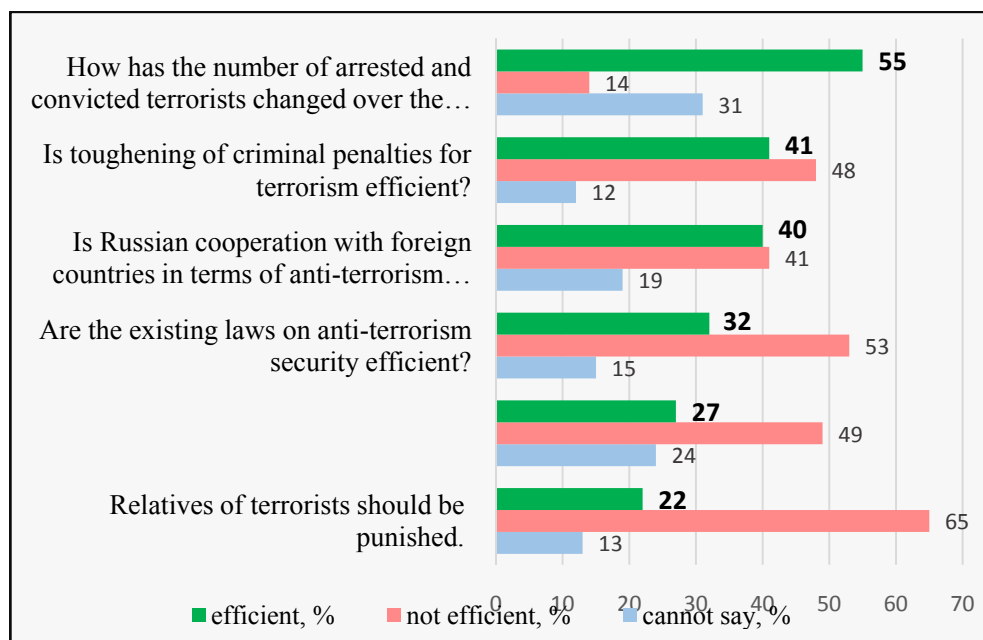
Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018

Support. A relatively high general support for Russian anti-terrorism policy among young people is worth mentioning. Almost half of young Russians support it (48%). However, a very large group of young people (35%) do not demonstrate such support.

The current policy is mostly supported by the older age group of young people (63%), while 30% support in the first and 39% support in the second age group. The largest number of those who do not support the policy is observed among the younger age group - 49% of young people aged 15 to 19 years old (p <0.001). Thus, we can conclude that the older the respondents, the more they generally support the ongoing anti-terrorism policy of Russia.

Regarding the support of anti-terrorism *measures that restrict personal rights and freedoms*, measures that did not affect a person directly were most popular (Figure 5). Such measures as: tightening the procedure for providing

information on the income of non-profit and foreign agencies, religious organizations (75%); restrictions associated with the tightening of the counterterrorist operation regime (71%); as well as the random check of things in transport and in crowded places (62%) were mostly supported by young people. It is also worth noting that with regards to expanding the authority of law enforcement agencies, the number of supporters and non-supporters of this measure was divided equally (41% and 40% respectively).

As was expected, the least support was given to measures (especially preventive measures) that directly affect private life. Measures related to restriction of freedoms on the Internet (25%), the right to check personal calls and correspondence (30% and 27%), as well as a measure that directly violated the rights of terror suspects (29%), were not supported by the majority of respondents.

Thus, more than half of restrictive measures have a relatively low level of support among young people. Perhaps this fact is explained by a negative public reaction to the Yarovaya Law. In this case, it is particularly necessary to conduct a separate informational-political campaign, aimed at increasing the popularity and public approval of truly efficient government measures and necessary bills.

Figure 5. Perception of the existing terrorist threat by young people
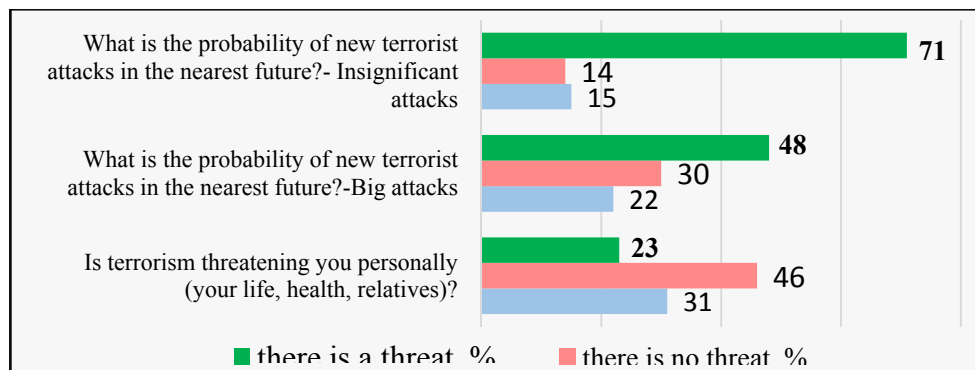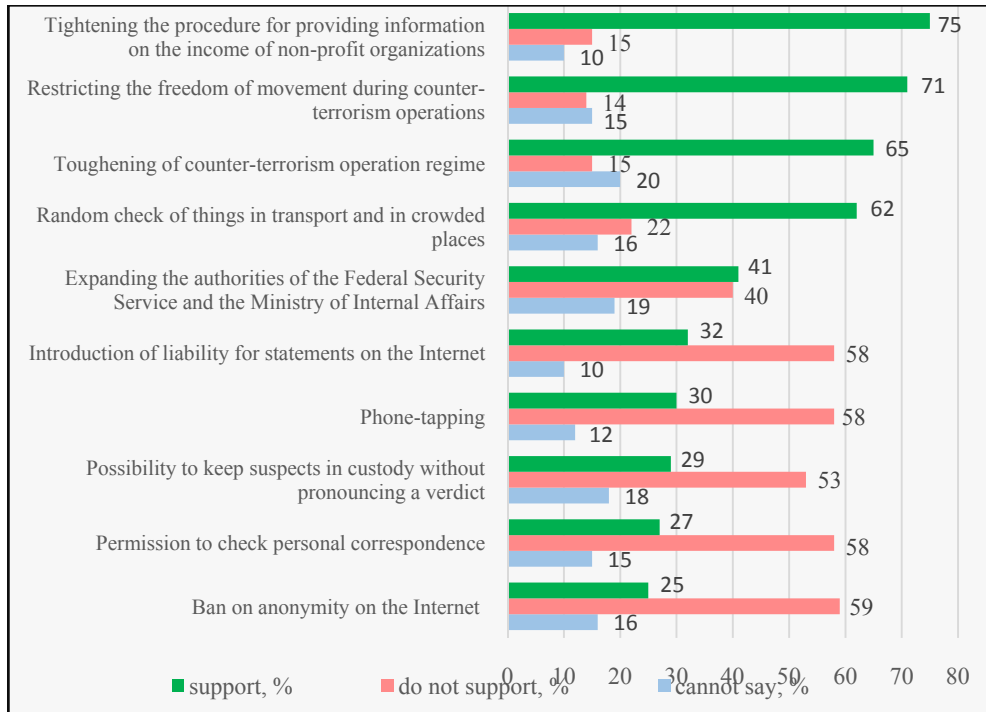

Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018.

It is worth noting that the overwhelming majority of possible actions of a citizen, which can ensure the efficiency of anti-terrorism policies and reduce the threat of terrorism, were extremely highly supported (Figure 6). High support for actions on interaction with law enforcement agencies can be explained not only by trust in their actions to combat terrorism, but by the enrooted prosocial behavior that is transmitted to society through educational organizations and the mass media. For example, high willingness to report suspicious things and people in public transport can be explained by constant alerts in public transport, subways, trains, at the airport, bus- and railway stations to pay attention to suspicious persons and objects.

The lowest support was given to such socio-political actions as: providing material assistance to charitable foundations helping victims of terrorist attacks (29%); the possibility of joining anti-terrorism public organizations (25%). Also, the lowest support among all the measures presented was given to the possibility of raising taxes for strengthening of the counteraction system (12%).

Figure 6. Support of restrictive measures for enhanced security

Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018.

Thus, in terms of personal contribution to countering the terrorist threat, the overwhelming majority of socially useful actions have an extremely high level of public support. Although it is really difficult to determine which of these actions will be performed by an individual, it is obvious that in most cases the mass media information policy implemented in this area is very efficient. At the same time, Russian charitable foundations, NGOs and social and political anti-terrorist organizations need to influence public opinion among young people on this issue more actively through a wide coverage of their activities and achievements.

Figure 7. Support of general anti-terrorist measures
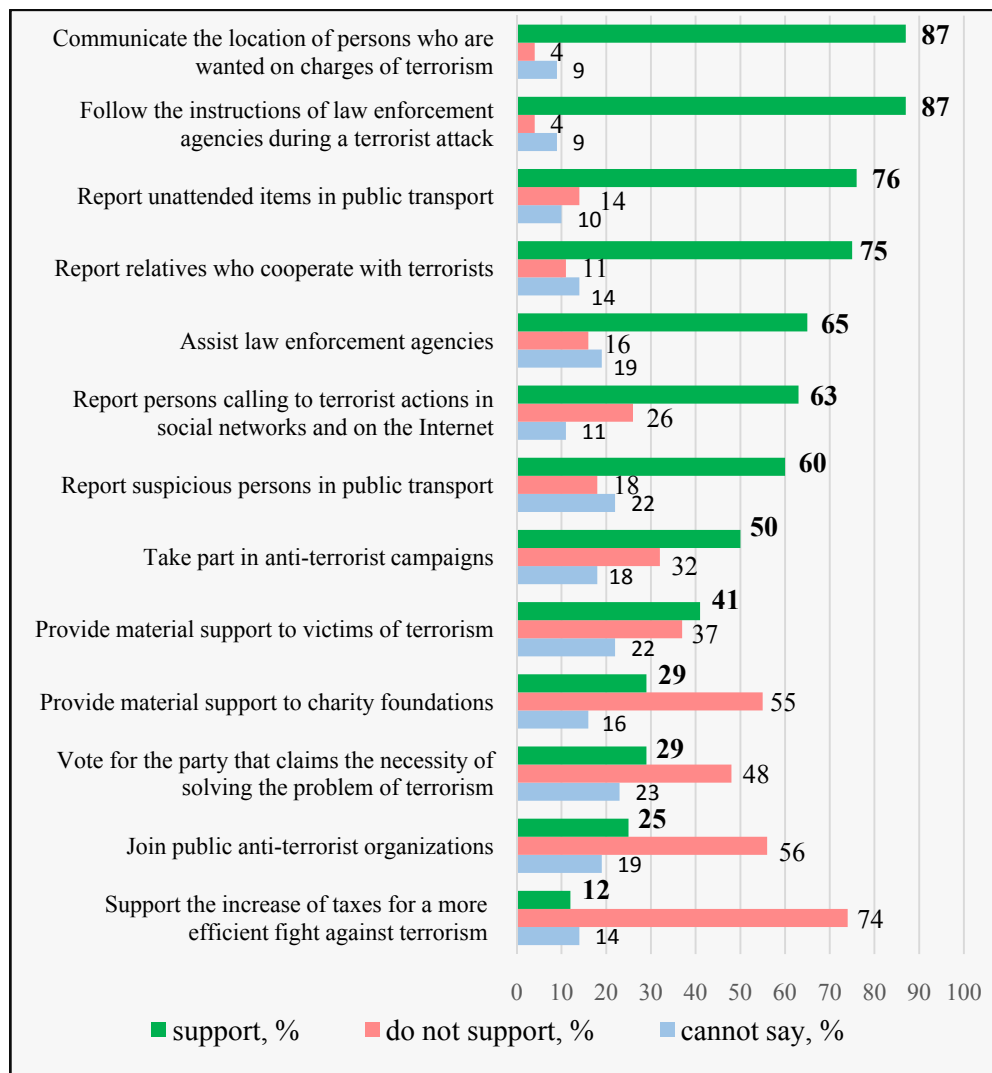
Source: Authors' calculations based on own survey conducted on 28 September 2018.

Conclusion

Russian and European scientific thought in the research of extremism is differentiated through the prism of evaluating the efficiency of measures and programs aimed at reducing the risk of extremism and terrorism. The study of the available theoretical contribution makes it possible to start developing more efficient measures to counter extremism (preventive, operational, administrative, judicial, etc.) and draft a comprehensive strategy. The set of methods for reducing

risk should be divided into three main levels, which are ranked from soft to more stringent countermeasures, depending on the degree of radicalization of an individual. Each type of countermeasures is most efficient at its level.

In general, reducing the risk of extremism and terrorism in the context under consideration is an activity aimed at preventing crimes by identifying, eliminating or neutralizing the causes, conditions and circumstances promoting extremist activity, providing preventive impact on individuals who are expected to commit crimes. In carrying out such activities, the subjects of the opposition, the law enforcement agencies in particular, face the task of carrying out comprehensive preventive measures aimed at eliminating the causes and conditions promoting the commission of crimes, and the preventive effect on those prone to their commission.

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