

IMPACT  
EVALUATION  
REPORT

Understanding the Impact and  
Value of Preventing and Countering  
Violent Extremism (P/CVE) Activities  
Implemented in School Setting in  
North Macedonia



Funded by  
the European Union



Hedayah

Countering Extremism  
& Violent Extremism



ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS “NEXUS - CIVIL CONCEPT”  
Skopje, North Macedonia

Understanding the Impact and Value of Preventing and Countering  
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in North Macedonia

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# Foreword and Acknowledgements

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*We as a Team believe that the findings from this analysis will design evidence-based future project activities that could promise a great impact on any upcoming education initiative seeking to prevent and counter extremism as well as violent extremism.*



*Afrodita Musliu,*

*President of NEXUS Civil Concept*

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# Glossary of Acronyms

<b>CSO(s)</b>	Civil Society Organizations(s)
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FTF(s)</b>	Foreign Terrorist Fighter(s)
<b>IPA</b>	Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance
<b>NCCVECT</b>	National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism
<b>MM&amp;E</b>	Monitoring, Measurement and Evaluation
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD
<b>P/CVE</b>	Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism
<b>RFTFs</b>	Returnee Foreign Terrorist Fighter(s)
<b>VE</b>	Violent Extremism

# Executive Summary

Since 2012, North Macedonia has faced challenges related to violent extremism (VE), with 143 citizens departing for conflict zones in Syria and Iraq.<sup>1</sup> The lack of recorded departures in 2022 and 2023<sup>2</sup> suggests a significant decline in travel or movement, potentially linked to amendments to legislation and its enforcement.<sup>3</sup> However, concerns persist regarding the risks associated with the reintegration of returning foreign terrorist fighters (RFTFs) and their families.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, there are uncertainties about the community's capacity to navigate differences and critically engage with extremist narratives. While considerable efforts have been made to support adults in this process, the perspectives of children and educators who are essential in fostering a cohesive society have largely been overlooked.

The newly implemented National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (2023-2027) underscores the importance of educational initiatives in promoting peace, diversity, and tolerance among youth.<sup>5</sup> Within this context, education activities to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) have been conducted to deter young people from embracing violent extremist narratives. Understanding the effects of these initiatives is imperative, especially in contexts where connecting inputs to outcomes proves to be challenging.

In North Macedonia, the lack of comprehensive impact analysis for implemented P/CVE education projects presents a significant gap in knowledge. Although civil society organizations (CSOs) evaluate their individual projects, a holistic understanding of the overall effectiveness identifying what works, what doesn't, and the reasons behind these outcomes remains elusive. This research is an attempt to bridge the gap by assessing the impacts of school-based P/CVE activities in four key localities: Skopje, Kumanovo, Gostivar, and Tetovo. These areas were selected due to their higher vulnerability to VE, as indicated by prior research. The study focused on P/CVE activities targeting school staff and students, initiated since 2018. This coincided with a decline in individuals traveling to conflict zones and a growing focus on repatriation efforts, highlighting the need for resocialization and reintegration.

The impact evaluation framework utilised an adapted version of the OECD-DAC's "seven criteria framework", included Relevance and Quality of Design, Coverage, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence and Connectedness, Sustainability, and Utility/Impact. Each criterion was supported by tailored research questions to gather relevant data, allowing for comparative analysis across respondent groups.

The research was conducted in two phases. Initially, a mapping exercise was undertaken to identify school-based P/CVE activities in the selected localities. Then, primary data from key stakeholders, including implementers and beneficiaries of the identified activities, was

<sup>1</sup> US Department of State (2022) Country Reports on Terrorism 2022: North Macedonia. [online document] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2022/north-macedonia/> [18.09.2024]

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2022). EU Progress Report for North Macedonia, 2022. [online document] Available at: <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/North%20Macedonia%20Report%202022.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Amendments to the Criminal Code from September 2014 included Article 322-a, stipulating that individuals involved in creating, organizing, recruiting, transporting, equipping, training, or preparing others for participation in foreign military, police, paramilitary, or organized groups outside the Republic of North Macedonia shall face a minimum prison sentence of five years.

<sup>4</sup> Shikova, N. and Musliu, A. (2023). Shadow Report on existing strategies and relevant Legal Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Returnees Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their families: For the period 2022 – 2023. Skopje: NEXUS. [online document] Available at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1J2rMrZukrMjC0wnGIUpeGiYgR7rB2w9B> pp. 7. [17.09.2024]

<sup>5</sup> Government of NMR (2023) 2023-2027 National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism. [online document] Available at: [https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng\\_national\\_cve\\_strategy\\_2023-2027.pdf](https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng_national_cve_strategy_2023-2027.pdf) pp.19 [18.09.2024]



gathered. The study employed purposeful sampling to gather comprehensive qualitative data through in-depth interviews with 52 respondents, namely: 20 representatives of CSOs, 12 municipal staff members, three policymakers, and 17 school staff members. Additionally, eight focus group discussions were held with 29 students and 27 parents to gain further insights into the activities' impacts.

The data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis aligned with the evaluation criteria, identifying key themes and issues within the qualitative data. The qualitative findings were subsequently quantified by categorizing responses into four sentiment categories: positive, negative, mixed, and no opinion. This process enabled the transformation of the average sentiment scores for each criterion into a 5-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 to 5, where: 1 = Unclear; 2 = Low Success; 3 = Moderate/Mixed Success; 4 = Generally Successful; 5 = Outstanding.

## ➔ Major Evaluation Criteria Findings

- ➔ **Relevance and Quality of Design:** The criterion for Relevance and Quality of Design of the Activities received a rating of “Generally Successful”, with a strong recognition of their local relevance and responsiveness to diverse target groups. While 96% of respondents acknowledged the activities' sensitivity to local dynamics, perspectives varied among stakeholders. CSOs expressed high confidence, municipal staff had a positive but cautious view, and school staff rated the activities as having “Moderate/Mixed Success”. Concerns arose regarding whether the design fully addressed beneficiary needs, reflecting a disconnect between the activities' relevance and the beneficiaries' understanding of their value. Insufficient engagement with the educational and professional staff at the schools, as well as students and parents, prior to implementation has resulted in many beneficiaries being passive recipients instead of active participants. The design processes, though aligned with national and local priorities, lacked mechanisms for fostering participation.
- ➔ **Coverage:** The criterion for Coverage of the Activities was rated as having a “Moderate/Mixed Success”, indicating uncertainty about the selection methods for geographical areas and schools, as well as the inclusion of school staff in stakeholder groups. Some teachers and municipal staff questioned the relevance of the projects to their local environments, feeling their areas were not particularly vulnerable to radicalization. A significant concern was the limited involvement of educators in assessing local vulnerabilities and project design, leading to a selection bias based more on municipal willingness to participate than on actual community needs. School staff rated the coverage as “Low Success”, reflecting issues such as insufficient training and induction into P/CVE initiatives. This lack of engagement resulted in some localities not perceiving the activities as necessary or understanding their purpose.
- ➔ **Effectiveness:** The criterion received an “Outstanding” rating, primarily reflecting the perceptions of CSOs and municipalities. These activities addressed a broad range of topics to foster resilience. However, it should be noted that while the local stakeholders rated the effectiveness as Outstanding, the national level policymakers scored this as “Generally Successful”. Moreover, concerns were raised about their emphasis on outputs rather than meaningful outcomes. Selection criteria that prioritized top-performing students and budget limitations also prompted questions about overall effectiveness. Many activities struggled to integrate new knowledge into daily practices, and language barriers further complicated efforts. While communication with municipal staff and the expertise of project teams contributed to the success, there was a notable gap in assessing long-term impacts on students and educational practices. Without proper oversight, it was challenging for the evaluation team to determine whether skills learned during training were effectively applied in the classroom or elsewhere. The focus on outputs, such as the number of workshops held,



risked obscuring real-world applicability. Overall, while the activities were perceived as successful, they faced significant challenges related to funding and coordination.

- **Efficiency:** The criterion received a “Moderate/Mixed Success” rating. While most activities faced few major barriers, several issues impacted overall efficiency. There was a consensus among CSOs, municipal staff, and school staff regarding the moderate efficiency achieved. CSOs encountered challenges in motivating teachers, students, and local staff, securing municipal support, and managing logistical and financial constraints. Despite these obstacles, they effectively mitigated risks without significantly hindering project outputs. The low efficiency rating from policymakers highlighted the need for improved coordination, cooperation, and funding to align activities with real-life school practices and broader policy goals.
- **Coherence and Connectedness:** The criterion received a “Low Success” rating, with all stakeholders agreeing on the challenges. The activities struggled to achieve internal and external coherence, compounded by teachers' limited ability to adapt pre-designed activities. This led to a fragmented approach within the same context, with insufficient alignment among various actors and institutional misalignment. Despite the uniqueness of the activities, they failed to integrate with other related efforts. Factors contributing to this lack of coherence included insufficient institutional capacities, politicization, and distrust among governance structures and civil sector actors. Overall, there was ineffective collaboration, limited information sharing, and inadequate networking among educational institutions, policymakers, and CSOs, which impeded the integration of P/CVE topics into formal educational curricula. The lack of cohesion and partnership-building ultimately hindered the potential social impact of the activities.
- **Sustainability:** The criterion received "Low Success" rating, indicating significant concerns about the continuation of P/CVE initiatives. Half the respondents saw some potential for future work in this area, but there was a heavy reliance on external donor funding. Most indicated that activities would likely cease without donor support, highlighting a critical financial dependency that risks sustainability. While some perceived that the effects of the activities would persist beyond their completion, municipal and school staff reported “Very Low Success”. Issues such as a focus on outputs over outcomes and insufficient stakeholder involvement in the design process further undermined the long-term viability. Despite perceived lasting benefits, the strong reliance on external funding and declining motivation for engagement pose significant challenges to the activities' sustainability and impact.
- **Impact/Utility:** The criterion received a “Moderate/Mixed Success” rating, indicating that respondents perceived that the activities effectively addressed the needs of target groups and improved beneficiaries' lives. CSOs rated the impact more favourably, while municipal staff, school staff, and policymakers acknowledged challenges, suggesting a shared recognition of limitations. Despite perceived positive outcomes, many felt the activities were only partially transformative and lacked systemic change. Heavy reliance on external funding highlighted the absence of sustainable financing mechanisms, and a lack of alignment with local resources hindered sustainability. Issues such as educational segregation and insufficient investment in curriculum development further constrained long-term integration and effectiveness. In summary, while the activities generated some impacts, they did not achieve systemic change or deliver lasting outcomes.

## ➤ Key Recommendations

The recommendations for enhancing P/CVE education activities emphasize several key areas of focus to foster sustainable engagement and impact.

- **First, establishing a P/CVE education coordination mechanism is crucial.** This would involve creating a committee comprised of representatives from schools, municipalities, CSOs, and policymakers to facilitate collaboration, share best practices, and ensure efficient resource utilization and the coherence of activities. Funding partners, such as international donors, could participate in the coordination mechanism on an ad hoc basis as well. By promoting regular communication among stakeholders, this mechanism could enhance accountability, mutual understanding among the diverse stakeholders, and alignment in P/CVE education initiatives.
- **Second, the development of an integrated P/CVE education curriculum is essential.** This curriculum should align with existing school programs and involve teachers in its creation to ensure relevance and practicality. It should cover various P/CVE education themes, encourage interactive teaching methods, and be designed for long-term sustainability. An accompanying online platform could provide resources for teachers, promoting innovative strategies that enhance student engagement. A regular review cycle, ideally every three years, would help keep the curriculum updated with new practices. Bottom-up approaches that involve school staff in the design process should be encouraged to ensure initiatives are context-sensitive and flexible.
- **Third, ongoing support and professional development opportunities for teachers are vital for successful curriculum implementation.** Establishing a peer mentoring system and providing mechanisms for professional growth can create a culture of excellence in P/CVE education. Funding initiatives that promote collaboration among schools and recognize teacher contributions will strengthen this community of practice, while student-led projects can empower learners to take the initiative in their communities.
- **Additionally, enhancing the understanding of P/CVE education policies among school staff** through workshops and accessible informational materials will empower teachers to effectively integrate these policies into their practice, creating a supportive school environment.
- **Support for capacity building at both local and national levels is also essential.** Municipal staff should facilitate consultations and workshops to ensure P/CVE education activities are relevant and effectively address local needs. Training resources and digital tools can support better coordination and knowledge management among stakeholders.
- **Exploring sustainable funding models for CSOs is strongly recommended.** By identifying revenue-generating activities and forming partnerships, CSOs can reduce their dependence on external funding. Seed funding and mentorship programs can encourage innovative fundraising strategies, helping to establish financial sustainability. By partnering with local businesses, investing in capacity-building initiatives, and embedding programs within the community's education and development framework, CSOs can enhance resilience and reduce dependency on external donors.
- **The development of guidelines and tools for CSOs to systematically evaluate their programs, quantify successes, and identify areas for improvement, coupled with the use of digital technologies for monitoring, measurement and evaluation,** will further enhance the effectiveness of P/CVE initiatives. Providing accessible training materials and resources through an online platform could help CSOs assess their impact and share valuable insights.
- **Lastly, engaging parents in P/CVE education activities is critical for building a supportive home environment.** Creating an online platform for educational resources and hosting workshops can equip parents to have meaningful conversations about P/CVE topics with their children, fostering coherence between families and schools.

Overall, these recommendations underscore the importance of coordinated efforts, curriculum integration, professional development, and community involvement in strengthening P/CVE education initiatives.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Rationale for the Study

Education is increasingly recognized as a key component of the soft approach to preventing young people from being drawn to violent extremism.<sup>6</sup> Schools and education authorities around the globe have emerged as vital allies to governments, implementing programs specifically designed to (P/CVE).<sup>7</sup> These initiatives often take two forms: direct programs that address the risks associated with radicalization, and indirect approaches that promote values such as anti-racism, citizenship, and value pluralism.<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, education serves as a proactive strategy in the broader agenda of societal resilience, helping to mitigate the factors that can lead to radicalization and promoting a culture of understanding and peace.

While numerous P/CVE education initiatives target various stakeholders in communities and schools, understanding their effects remains a challenge. Impact evaluation of these initiatives is crucial, especially in contexts where establishing causal links between inputs, resources, and outcomes is difficult. Although a lack of future radicalization may suggest success, attributing this outcome to specific activities is challenging, as external factors may also have a significant influence. Nevertheless, systematically learning from past P/CVE education activities is essential for informing and enhancing future initiatives.

In North Macedonia, there is a notable absence of comprehensive impact analysis for implemented P/CVE-education projects. While CSOs conduct evaluations of their individual projects, these are often evaluated in isolation. A broader assessment of the field's approach to P/CVE within the school setting that captures the overall effectiveness of these efforts is lacking. This gap hinders the development of more effective strategies and projects, underscoring the critical need for systematic impact evaluations.

## 1.2 North Macedonia's Experience with Violent Extremism

Since 2012, 143 citizens from North Macedonia (excluding children) have travelled to the conflict zones in Syria and Iraq, including 133 men and 10 women. Among them, 69 have returned to North Macedonia, and 38 were killed within the conflict zones.<sup>9</sup> The majority of FTFs traveling to Syria and Iraq originated from larger urban centres, such as Skopje and Gostivar.<sup>10</sup> Gostivar has been identified as a locality moderately affected by VE.<sup>11</sup> In March 2015, media reports highlighted online recruitment occurring in

<sup>6</sup> Stojkovski, F. & Kalajdziovski, N. (2018) Community Perspectives on the Prevention of Violent Extremism in Macedonia. Country Case Study 1. Berlin/Skopje: Berghof Foundation and Democracy Lab. [online document] Available at: <http://image.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/>. F pp. 2. [17.09.2024]

<sup>7</sup> Radicalisation Awareness Network (2019) Education and radicalization prevention: Different ways governments can support schools and teachers in preventing/countering violent extremism. [online document] Available at: [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/ran-publications/ran-papers-published-2020/ran-edu-different-ways-governments-can-support-schools-and-teachers-preventingcountering-violent\\_en pp.1.](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/ran-publications/ran-papers-published-2020/ran-edu-different-ways-governments-can-support-schools-and-teachers-preventingcountering-violent_en pp.1.) [17.09.2024]

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> US Department of State (2022) Country Reports on Terrorism 2022: North Macedonia. [online document] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2022/north-macedonia/> [18.09.2024]

<sup>10</sup> Vanchoski, A., Shikova, N., Musliu, A. (2020). Improving the understanding of the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF): Challenges for the rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration of returnees and facilitators in the RN Macedonia. NEXUS Civic concept. Available at: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r0xpzlr8NA\\_36AAAdOQQ0EZmuX-6lHdun/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r0xpzlr8NA_36AAAdOQQ0EZmuX-6lHdun/view) [15.09.2024]

<sup>11</sup> Stojkovski, F. & Kalajdziovski, N. (2018). Community Perspectives on the Prevention of Violent Extremism in Macedonia. Country Case Study 1. Berlin/Skopje: Berghof Foundation and Democracy Lab. [online document] Available at: <http://image.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/>. F pp. 3. [17.09.2024]

Kumanovo.<sup>12</sup> Starting in 2015, the number of people traveling to conflict zones began to decline due to their return. No departures to the conflict zones were registered in 2022 and 2023, indicating a significant decline in the prevalence of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) leaving North Macedonia,<sup>13</sup> potentially due to the legal changes and enforcement.<sup>14</sup>

In 2021, four men, five women, and 14 children were repatriated to North Macedonia. The four men were charged with crimes and detained, while the women and children began their rehabilitation and reintegration process in their home communities. This effort is coordinated by the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT).<sup>15</sup> The return of such individuals to their home communities, which has been ongoing since 2018,<sup>16</sup> has necessitated a refocusing of efforts toward resocialization and reintegration, which in turn catalysed the activities of CSOs in this field. The areas of Skopje, Kumanovo, and Gostivar have also seen the return of repatriated children to schools. Consequently, it was expected that P/CVE education efforts would be primarily concentrated in these localities. Additionally, all these areas are ethnically diverse, which means that CSO activities in these localities address multicultural issues and interethnic tolerance as part of the P/CVE education “repertoire.” However, in North Macedonia, there is a prevailing concern that returning FTFs (RFTFs) pose a significant risk to the broader community, and improvements were made in 2023 to the rehabilitation, resocialization, and reintegration processes, compared to previous years.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, challenges remain that must be addressed in order to enhance overall security but also social cohesion.<sup>18</sup>

The Government continues to prioritize the reintegration of RFTFs and their families as a critical aspect of its P/CVE efforts.<sup>19</sup> While significant efforts have focused on supporting adults in the reintegration process, there has been limited attention paid to understanding the perspectives of children and teachers. These individuals play a crucial role in facilitating the reintegration of returnee children into everyday school life and building a cohesive and inclusive society.

Given these experiences, the new National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (2023-2027) highlights the crucial role of educational initiatives in fostering peace, diversity, and tolerance among youth.<sup>20</sup> Strategic Objective 1.3 emphasizes the measures for strengthened and resilient communities through:

- Promoting dialogue among municipalities, police, social workers, educators, religious communities, CSOs, and other stakeholders to prevent VE, leveraging local prevention councils as effective platforms.

<sup>12</sup> CNA (2015). “Kumanove, 18-vjecarja rekrutohet nga ISIS, prinderit: Eshte ne Irak,” CityNews [news reporting from July 21, 2015]. Available at:

<https://www.cna.al/2015/07/21/kumanove-18-vjecarja-rekrutohet-nga-isis-prinderit-eshte-ne-irak> [12.09.2024]

<sup>13</sup> European Commission (2022). EU Progress Report for North Macedonia, 2022. [online document] Available at: <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/-files/2022-10/North%20Macedonia%20Report%202022.pdf>; Telma TV (2023). Five Macedonian citizens are still participating in the fighting in Syria and Iraq [news reporting from 1.11.2023]. Available at: <https://telma.com.mk/2023/11/01/petmina>

-makedonski-drzhavjani-s%D1%90-ushte-uchestvuvaat-vo-borbite-vo-sirija-i-irak/ [17.09.2024]

<sup>14</sup> Amendments to the Criminal Code from September 2014 included Article 322-a stipulating that individuals involved in creating, organizing, recruiting, transporting, equipping, training, or preparing others for participation in foreign military, police, paramilitary, or organized groups outside the Republic of North Macedonia shall face a minimum prison sentence of five years.

<sup>15</sup> GCERF (NA) North Macedonia. [online] Available at: <https://www.gcerf.org/north-macedonia/>

<sup>16</sup> Shikova, N. and Musliu, A. (NA). The Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in North Macedonia. [online document]. Available at: <https://hedayah.com/ftf-northmacedonia/> [18.09.2024]

<sup>17</sup> Shikova, N. and Musliu, A. (2023). Shadow Report on existing strategies and relevant Legal Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Returnees Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their families: For the period 2022 – 2023. Skopje: NEXUS. [online document] Available at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1J2rMrZukrMjcOwnGIUpeGiYgR7rB2w9B> pp. 7. [17.09.2024]

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Government of NMR (2023) 2023-2027 National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism. [online document] Available at: [https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng\\_national\\_cve\\_strategy\\_2023-2027.pdf](https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng_national_cve_strategy_2023-2027.pdf) pp.19 [18.09.2024]

- Engaging young people through established youth offices and centers.
- Enhancing parental capacity in preventing radicalization that leads to terrorism or violence.
- Utilizing both formal and non-formal education to work with youth.
- Leveraging culture and sports to promote cohesion and prevent radicalization.

This comprehensive approach aims to build trust and resilience within communities, recognizing CSOs as vital partners in achieving these goals. By fostering collaboration among various stakeholders, the strategy seeks to create a united front against radicalization and promote a safer, more inclusive environment for all. The CVE National Strategy (2023-2027) also identifies polarization among diverse groups as a significant risk to society.<sup>21</sup> This community polarization can easily lead to violence. While ethnic and religious divides are still significant, social polarization—manifested through economic disparities and political partisanship has increasingly crossed these boundaries. Addressing these divisions is essential for fostering cohesion and VE.<sup>22</sup> In a context characterized by everyday diversity, it is particularly crucial to equip youth with the skills necessary to navigate and address differences effectively.

Positioning formal and non-formal education at the forefront of the preventive approach outlined in the CVE National Strategy (2023-2027) acknowledges youth as both a vulnerable group and a vital agent of change. Engaging young people as key stakeholders in P/CVE initiatives underscores the importance of equipping teachers and school staff who serve as frontline practitioners<sup>23</sup> with the necessary training to identify early signs of radicalization. Moreover, CSOs play a crucial role as catalysts, promoting practices that enhance critical thinking, social and emotional learning, and non-violent conflict resolution. Local and national authorities are important in fostering an enabling environment for schools to address these needs and develop these skills. Together, these elements create a holistic approach to P/CVE, emphasizing the transformative potential of educational settings in building resilient communities.

Prior research in North Macedonia indicates that P/CVE efforts from a civil society standpoint have often been limited.<sup>24</sup> Some initiatives included the Mother Schools project in Chair, implemented by *Women Without Borders* 2016<sup>25</sup>, and the *Educate2Prevent* program carried out by Center for Research and Policy Making and its partners in 2018.<sup>26</sup> These projects showed how targeted activities can engage young people and parents to foster resilience and critical thinking skills essential for CVE. Despite the growing number of activities in this field in recent years, as evidenced in the mapping exercise of this research, there is currently no comprehensive evaluation of their real-world impact in educational settings.<sup>27</sup> This gap underscores the necessity of systematically assessing the outcomes of P/CVE education activities in schools to ensure they effectively contribute to preventing radicalization and fostering community resilience.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pp. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Parker, D., Lindekilde, L., & Gøtzsche-Astrup, O. (2021). Recognising and responding to radicalisation at the 'frontline': Assessing the capability of school teachers to recognise and respond to radicalization. *Journal of Education and Security*, 12(3), 45-67.; Mattsson, C., & Johansson, T. (2020). Caught between the urgent and the comprehensible: Professionals' understanding of violent extremism. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 13(2), 218-236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2020.1728276>.

<sup>24</sup> Stojkovski, F. & Kalajdziovski, N. (2018). Community Perspectives on the Prevention of Violent Extremism in Macedonia. Country Case Study 1. Berlin/Skopje: Berghof Foundation and Democracy Lab. [online document] Available at: <http://image.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/>. F pp. 5. [17.09.2024]

<sup>25</sup> Women Without Borders: Mother Schools in North Macedonia. [web page] Available at: <https://wwb.org/activity/motherschools-macedonia/> [17.09.2024]

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Both projects were identified in the mapping exercise of this research

<sup>27</sup> Stojkovski, F. & Kalajdziovski, N. (2018). Community Perspectives on the Prevention of Violent Extremism in Macedonia. Country Case Study 1. Berlin/Skopje: Berghof Foundation and Democracy Lab. [online document] Available at: <http://image.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/>. F pp. 5. [17.09.2024]



## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Research Objectives and Questions

The research aimed to understand the impacts of school-based P/CVE activities implemented from 2018 to 2023 in four different localities in North Macedonia: Skopje, Kumanovo, Gostivar, and Tetovo. Specifically, it sought to determine if, how, and why specific changes occurred, as well as the limiting factors on the activities' impacts. The research was guided by the following questions:

- How have P/CVE activities been implemented in schools to build resilience against VE?
- Do these activities aim to enhance critical thinking, evidence-seeking, knowledge of rights, the ability to navigate differences, combat stereotypes and prejudices, and resolve conflicts?
- How well do they align with national priorities in CVE?
- What types of partnerships between public, private, and civic stakeholders are evident in the development, implementation, and funding of school-based P/CVE initiatives?
- What is the level of coordination among stakeholders involved in the development, implementation, and funding of these initiatives?
- What are the gaps and promising practices in the planning, support, implementation, and sustainability of P/CVE initiatives at the school level?
- What evidence-based responses can address the identified gaps?

### 2.2 Research Scope

The areas of Skopje and the municipalities of Kumanovo, Gostivar, and Tetovo were selected for analysis based on prior research indicating higher levels of vulnerability to VE (see Section 1.2 North Macedonia's Experience with Violent Extremism for more information).

The research focused on school-based P/CVE activities implemented from 2018 until 2023. The research examined P/CVE activities that targeted school staff and/or students. The activities included may have taken place within or outside the school setting, but school staff and/or students were required to be the primary beneficiaries. Activities incorporated in this research included stand-alone initiatives specifically targeting school staff and/or students as well as activities that were components of larger projects targeting multiple stakeholders beyond just school staff and/or students or more localities. For instance, policymakers, families of returnees requiring support for resocialization, social services, and municipal staff may also have been included in different activities such as trainings, awareness rising, and community events in these larger projects. The research considered any relevant project if it included an activity involving school staff and/or students within the target contexts and sought to understand that activity in depth.

The research engaged several key stakeholders relevant to P/CVE activities in schools for the following reasons:

- **Teachers and School Staff (Psychologists, Pedagogists, and Special Educators):** These individuals interact directly with students and shape the school environment. Their inclusion is vital for assessing the impact of activities aimed at enhancing their ability to

recognize early signs of radicalization, implement preventive measures, discuss sensitive topics, and integrate P/CVE activities into the school's overall strategy.

- **Students:** As the primary beneficiaries of P/CVE education activities, their perspectives are essential for understanding how activities equip them with critical thinking skills, resilience against extremist ideologies, and conflict resolution strategies. The research also included a small group of students not involved in P/CVE activities to explore motivations for engagement in future activities.
- **Parents:** Their involvement is crucial, as they reinforce the values and skills learned at school, creating a consistent message at home. Engaging parents fosters a community approach to P/CVE, ensuring sustained support beyond the school setting.
- **CSOs:** These organizations provide resources, expertise, and community support to enhance P/CVE activities. They facilitate collaboration between schools and communities, contributing to a comprehensive approach to preventing radicalization.
- **Public Institutions (National and Local Levels):** These institutions shape and implement P/CVE policies. Understanding the alignment of school-based activities with broader governmental efforts is important. They also provide necessary support and funding and learn from assessing the impact of these activities.

The involvement of these stakeholders as respondents is detailed below in section 2.4 “Fieldwork Design.”

## 2.3 Impact Evaluation Framework

The impact evaluation framework was tailored to the needs of this analysis using the OECD-DAC's "Seven Criteria Framework", which is recognized as one of the most comprehensive and complementary sets of criteria for assessing the impact of developmental activities. The research considered and contextualized the following evaluation criteria to meet the needs of the research:

- **Relevance and Quality of the Design:** Evaluating a development activity's relevance involves assessing how well its objectives align with the needs of beneficiaries, priorities, and policies in the relevant context. This analysis considered whether activities were identified inclusively through the involvement of target groups and stakeholders, and whether they responded to evolving local dynamics. Relevance was assessed regarding both the activities' design and implementation, ensuring they effectively addressed intended goals and adapted to changing circumstances.
- **Coverage:** This criterion evaluated the rationale for selecting specific areas and schools for the activities, and whether these schools had opportunities to influence how the activities addressed local vulnerabilities. It aimed to identify which beneficiaries were supported and why, highlighting areas where activities were most effective and regions that may have been neglected and could benefit from additional resources. This criterion aligns with the assessment of Relevance, and Quality of Design as well as Effectiveness, as it allows for corroboration of data from these criteria.
- **Effectiveness:** This criterion assesses whether the activity achieved its intended results. It involves evaluating the outcomes generated and understanding how the activities contributed to these results, identifying both success factors and obstacles. However, due to the absence of baseline data for the specific activities, the assessment relied primarily on stakeholders' perceptions regarding the outcomes of the activities rather than on evidence of effectiveness provided by the implementers. Consequently, this analysis does not determine the extent to which changes can be attributed to the activities versus external



factors; instead, it focuses on the output and outcome levels of achieving objectives based on respondents' perceptions.

- **Efficiency:** This criterion typically measures how effectively resources (such as personnel, funds, and time) translated into results. However, for this research, the focus is on understanding the challenges encountered during implementation, the strategies employed to address these challenges, and whether similar obstacles might affect future projects in this field. Financial data was not requested from the projects to maintain trust and encourage stakeholder engagement, particularly among CSOs who were key implementers. Therefore, this criterion does not assess whether the activities achieved their intended results with optimal resource use or if the same outcomes could have been attained more economically.
- **Coherence and Connectedness:** This criterion is crucial for evaluating impact in development projects, especially those aimed at enhancing human and institutional knowledge, capital, and skills. In this analysis, coherence examines the alignment and consistency of activities within the same implementer, with other actors in the context, and with related policies and projects from various entities. This ensures that activities are integrated and do not conflict with other efforts. Connectedness evaluates whether activities complemented and enhanced each other, fostering synergies and partnerships that contribute to sustained benefits over time. It assesses whether activities supported long-term needs and addressed various topics holistically. Ultimately, Coherence and Connectedness determine if activities are harmonized and contribute to a broader, integrated approach to tackling complex, long-term issues.
- **Sustainability** (both actual and prospective): The cornerstone of this criterion is understanding how the benefits of the activities persist after their completion, emphasizing long-term effects and factors influencing sustainability. In this context, sustainability refers to the lasting impact of the activities rather than to the activities themselves. It assesses the extent to which the outcomes will endure without continued donor support and includes both ongoing and completed activities. While the criterion encompasses various aspects such as financial, institutional, and technological this analysis specifically focuses on whether the activities were transformative and, in the educational context, whether they enabled long-term impacts on traditional education and social dynamics within schools.
- **Utility/Impact:** The core of this criterion is to understand the full range of effects of the activities, including intended and unintended outcomes, as well as positive and negative impacts, and short-term and long-term consequences. Unlike effectiveness, which focuses on whether results were achieved, impact assessment examines the broader effects and consequences of those results. Respondents were encouraged to consider not only whether objectives were met or targets achieved but also any adverse effects on beneficiaries, organizations, or institutions. Assessing impact is inherently challenging, particularly due to the lack of baseline data on unexpected or negative effects and the difficulty in establishing causality.

Each criterion was supported by uniquely designed questions tailored to gather the necessary data relevant to that specific criterion. While the questions were customized for each group of respondents, there were similarities across the groups to enable a comparative analysis. This approach ensured that key themes and outcomes could be effectively compared, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the activities' impacts. This overall design allowed for a nuanced exploration of how different stakeholders perceived and experienced the activities, facilitating insights into both their impact and areas for improvement. Table 1 presents the questions that comprise each evaluation criterion.

**Table 1. Evaluation criterion and corresponding evaluation questions**

<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 1:</i> <b>Relevance and Quality of the Design</b></p>	<p><b>1.1</b> How well the activities were designed to address relevant priorities and needs and were the goals clearly specified?</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Were the activities sensitive and responsive to the local contexts?</p> <p><b>1.3</b> How inclusive were the activities? Did they identify and engage the target groups and relevant stakeholders effectively?</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Are the activities and outputs consistent with the intended impacts and effects?</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Are the activities and outputs consistent with the policies in the field?</p> <p><b>1.6</b> Have the activities generated outputs, results, and impacts positively influenced the agenda on countering radicalization and VE?</p> <p><b>1.7</b> Are the activities done in cooperation with the NCCVECT?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 2:</i> <b>Coverage</b></p>	<p><b>2.1</b> How was the selection of target schools made? Were the geographical areas/target schools appropriate in terms of addressing the vulnerabilities identified?</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Were those schools (teachers, principals, etc.) involved during the identification phase in order to identify the vulnerabilities and design a project accordingly in order to overcome to address those vulnerabilities?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 3:</i> <b>Effectiveness</b></p>	<p><b>3.1</b> To what extent were the objectives achieved?</p> <p><b>3.2</b> What outcomes have the activities generated?</p> <p><b>3.3</b> What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 4:</i> <b>Efficiency</b></p>	<p><b>4.1</b> What challenges or barriers did the activities face and how did they address them?</p> <p><b>4.2</b> To what extent could similar challenges, barriers, or bottlenecks be faced by future activities in this field?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 5:</i> <b>Coherence and Connectedness</b></p>	<p><b>5.1</b> To what extent did activities have interlinkages with other initiatives by the same entity?</p> <p><b>5.2</b> To what extent were the activities coherent with other actors' projects in the same context?</p> <p><b>5.3</b> To what extent are efforts not duplicated in the same context? To what extent are the activities adding value while also avoiding duplication?</p> <p><b>5.4</b> Have the activities in any way complemented and/or enhanced the effect of other related activities, projects and policies?</p> <p><b>5.5</b> Has it brought synergies and partnerships with other related activities, projects and policies?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 6:</i> <b>Sustainability (actual and prospective sustainability)</b></p>	<p><b>6.1</b> What are the prospects of the continuation of this line of work in the future?</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Is there evidence of the continuation of the benefits for stakeholders? Are the benefits likely to continue for the stakeholders in the future?</p> <p><b>6.3</b> To what extent would the benefits of the activities continue if the donor funding ceased?</p> <p><b>6.4</b> What are the potential risks or long-term impacts related to the activities?</p> <p><b>6.5</b> What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the activities?</p>
<p>→</p> <p><i>Criterion 7:</i> <b>Utility/Impact</b></p>	<p><b>7.1</b> Did the activities have impact on the target groups in relation to their needs? What is the impact?</p> <p><b>7.2</b> What are the unanticipated consequences as a result of the activities?</p> <p><b>7.3</b> Have the activities caused a significant change in the lives of the beneficiaries?</p> <p><b>7.4</b> Did the activities create any systematic changes or changes in norms? Were they transformative?</p>

These criteria and their respective questions formed the basis for developing a semi-structured interview guide for in-depth interviews with respondents from the target groups, as well as focus group guides for discussions with students and parents. The fieldwork design is presented in the section below.

## 2.4 Fieldwork Design

The fieldwork in this research was divided into two phases and utilized multiple data sources and qualitative data collection methods.

- **Phase One** involved a mapping exercise aimed at identifying school-based P/CVE activities in the selected four localities. This initial desktop secondary research collected publicly available data about the activities and, in some cases, involved direct contact with the implementers. The focus was on gathering information related to the objectives of the activities, main thematic areas, target beneficiaries, total number of beneficiaries reached, types of activities implemented, outputs, achieved results, challenges, and lessons learned. Only activities that involved school staff and/or students as the primary beneficiaries were considered. The mapping exercise identified 24 school-based P/CVE activities implemented by 16 CSOs in the targeted localities, Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar, from 2018 to 2023. One mapped activity was implemented by a municipality in collaboration with local CSOs. These activities were part of 18 projects.
- **Phase Two** of the fieldwork involved gathering primary data from respondents in the research target groups, including both implementers and beneficiaries of the mapped activities in the selected four localities. The data generation process utilized purposeful (non-random) sampling appropriate for qualitative research. In-depth interviews with CSOs, municipal staff, school staff, and policymakers were conducted as well as focus group discussions organized with students and parents. The in-depth interviews were conducted with municipal staff from the selected localities, school staff who have been beneficiaries of the P/CVE activities, and policymakers working on the interrelation of P/CVE and education with the intention to corroborate the data gathered from the CSOs and provide nuanced insights into the impact of the activities. The interviews were carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire guide available in both Macedonian and Albanian.

Three out of the 16 CSOs identified in the mapping exercise declined to participate in the second phase of the research. Using a snowball technique during the interviewing phase, seven additional CSOs implementing relevant P/CVE education activities with target groups in the selected localities were identified and included in the interview sample. Therefore, in total, 20 CSOs participated during the interviewing phase, representing 13 out of the 16 CSOs identified via the mapping exercise plus the seven additionally identified throughout the interviewing process.

The interview sample included 52 respondents: 20 representatives from 20 CSOs, 12 municipal staff members working in the educational sector, three policymakers from the NCCVECT with expertise in education policies, and 17 school staff members from primary and secondary schools who were beneficiaries of the P/CVE activities. In total, staff from five primary and six secondary schools were included. Among the school staff, there were eight teachers, four psychologists, two special educators for professional rehabilitators, one pedagogist, and two school principals. Given that most activities involved CSOs based in Skopje, it was appropriate to schedule more interviews with stakeholders in this locality.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the sample by city and stakeholders' roles, and Figure 2 highlights the gender breakdown of the interviewees (28 women and 24 men).

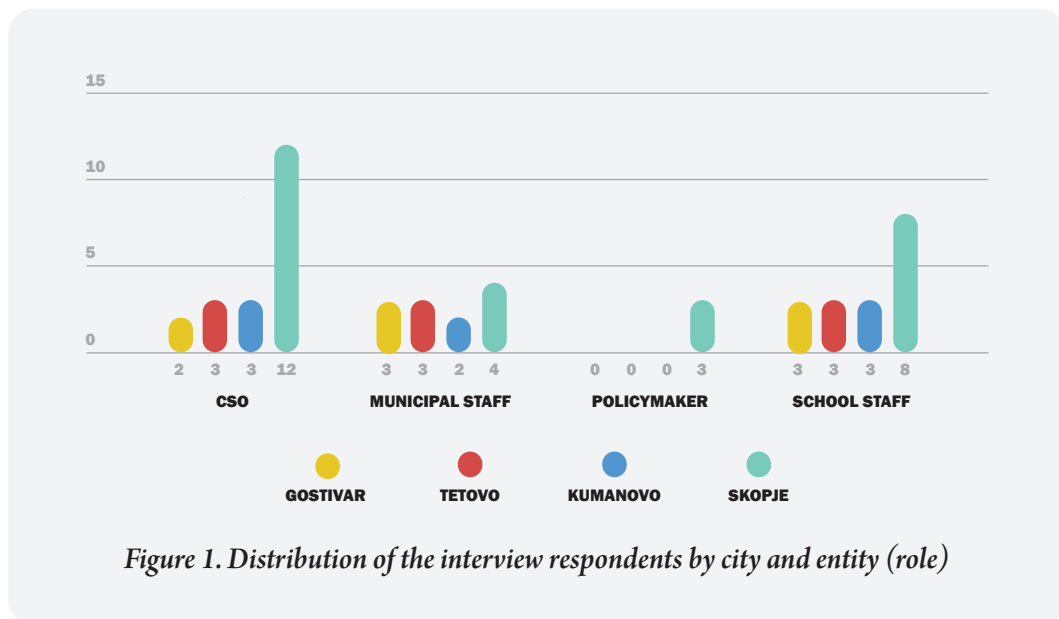


Figure 1. Distribution of the interview respondents by city and entity (role)

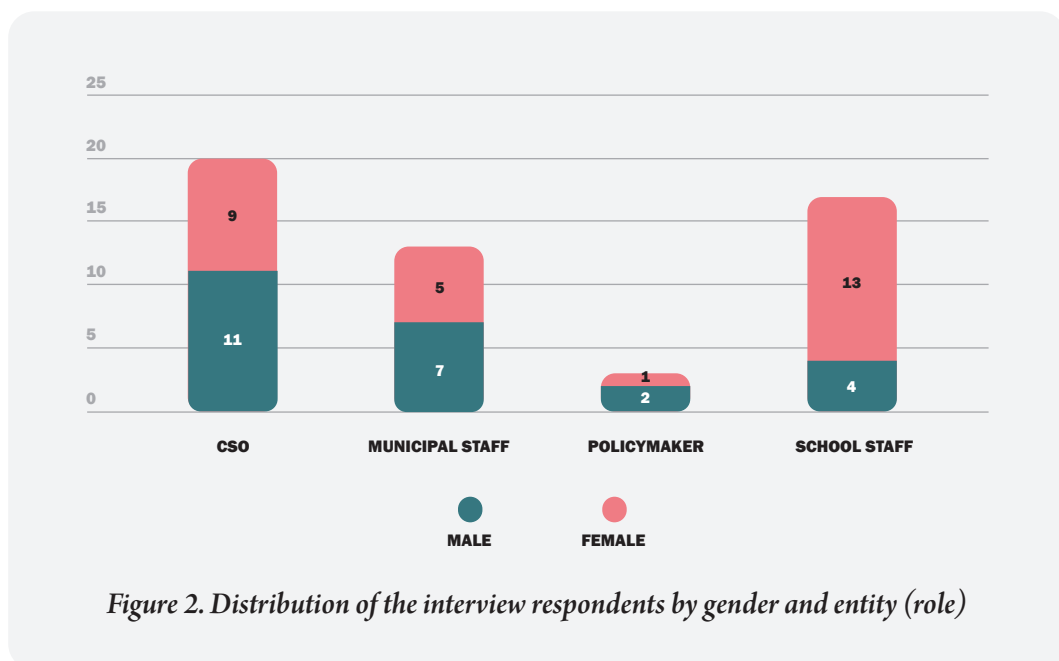
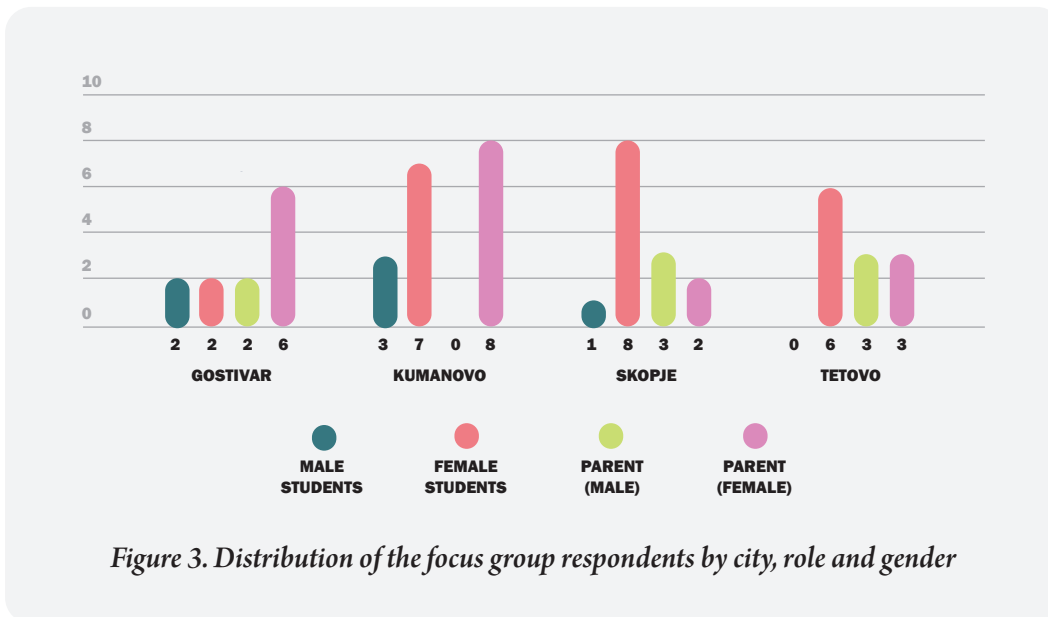


Figure 2. Distribution of the interview respondents by gender and entity (role)

A fundamental premise of this evaluation was the active participation of targeted stakeholders to obtain comprehensive insights. This was successfully achieved during the data collection phase, with an 81.25% response rate from the CSOs in the mapping exercise (13 out of 16 organizations agreed to participate in phase two).

Eight focus group discussions were also organized to gain a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of activities on students as well as perceived benefits from the parents' perspective. The sessions also included three non-participating students to gauge their interest and perspectives on future participation in P/CVE activities. A total of 56 participants were involved, with two sessions held in each locality—one focus group for students and another for parents. There were 29 students (23 female students and 6 male students) and 27 parents (19 female parents and 8 male parents). The sessions were facilitated by experienced

moderators who introduced the topic, guided discussions based on a pre-developed guide, and encouraged participants to reflect on the questions. The distribution of participants in the focus group discussions is presented in Figure 3.



There was an 82.35% participation rate in the focus groups (56 out of the planned 68 participants took part). Limitations encountered in the data generation process are explained at the end of the methodology section.

## 2.5 Analytical Framework

The data analysis process involved both thematic analysis and the transformation of qualitative data into quantitative form. Initially, a thematic analysis corresponding to the evaluation criteria was conducted to identify and distil key themes and issues within the data. Responses to each question were carefully reviewed to identify keywords and phrases that indicated sentiment. Each response was then classified into one of the predetermined categories: i) positive sentiment; ii) negative sentiment; iii) mixed opinion; and iv) no opinion. A narrative explanation was assigned to a specific category only if the respondent clearly articulated their sentiment regarding the P/CVE education activities. This approach enabled the research team to quantify trends and patterns in perceptions across the various evaluation criteria and target groups, providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of school-based P/CVE activities.

Based on the categorization of sentiments, a data matrix was developed to summarize the average scores for each criterion and each stakeholder category. The average rating for each criterion was determined by calculating the rate of positive responses (positive sentiment) to all questions within that criterion. Exceptions to this approach included the criteria of Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability. Notably, the Effectiveness criterion excluded scores from question 3.3 (“What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes?”) as it was deemed to provide reflections on the catalysing and limiting factors affecting the activities. The Efficiency criterion included reverse coding for question 4.2 (“To what extent similar challenges, barriers or bottlenecks could be faced by future activities in this field?”), as a higher score indicated that there were no challenges or

barriers affecting the activity. The Sustainability criterion excluded scores for question 6.4 (“Are there potential risks or longer term impacts related to the activity?”), as this question on risks was considered to provide insights into the specific types of risks involved. For more information, see the corresponding criteria sub-sections in Section 3. Evaluation Findings.

To standardize the average scores, they were mapped to a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5, where: 1 = Unclear; 2 = Low Success; 3 = Moderate/Mixed Success; 4 = Generally Successful; 5 = Outstanding. To determine the percentage range for each scale point, the following guidelines were used: 1 (Very Low Success): 0% - 20%; 2 (Low Success): 21% - 40%; 3 (Moderate/Mixed Success): 41% - 60%; 4 (Generally Successful): 61% - 80%; 5 (Outstanding): 81% - 100%. These calculations allowed for a clear numerical representation of the data, facilitating easier comparison across different criteria and stakeholder groups.

Qualitative explanations were incorporated throughout the report to complement the quantitative scores, providing deeper insights into the respondents’ perceptions, experiences, and opinions. This integrated approach enriched the analysis, ensuring that numerical data was contextualized within the broader narrative of stakeholder perspectives.

## 2.6 Ethical Considerations

Identified respondents in the interviewing process were selected either through a mapping exercise or based on the initial interviews with CSOs and municipalities. Respondents were informed about the research objectives, the type of data to be gathered, and the procedures for data utilization and storage. All respondents in the interviewing process signed consent forms. Participants in the focus group discussions were identified through the school staff involved in the mapped P/CVE activities. Students aged 15-19 were invited to participate, with school staff obtaining parental permission. Parents also signed consent forms for their children to be involved in the research. Due to the fieldwork occurring during the summer break, focus group discussions were conducted in a non-school environment, and alternative locations were identified that provided a safe and comfortable space for the participants. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process, including by ensuring confidentiality and anonymity for all participants, particularly minors, to protect their identities. Additionally, the research team adhered to child safeguarding principles, ensuring that participation was voluntary and that students felt safe and comfortable during discussions.

## 2.7 Limitations of the Research

The evaluation team encountered several limitations while organizing the fieldwork:

1. **Limited Online Information:** Insufficient online information hindered the initial mapping exercise and made it challenging to identify relevant stakeholders for interviews. The lack of documentation and online presentation of activities implemented by CSOs, municipalities, and schools contributed to these difficulties. Although this limitation initially affected the comprehensiveness of stakeholder engagement, the team managed to overcome this barrier and gather the necessary data through direct communication with stakeholders requesting submission of data on their activities.
2. **Lack of Baseline Data:** The absence of comprehensive P/CVE-education projects/activities baseline data presented challenges. Despite having measurable objectives and intended results of the activities, the lack of baseline data complicated the accurate assessment of progress. To address this issue, some data had to be reconstructed using available evidence, such as interviews with key stakeholders and oral-history techniques.

3. **No Access to Logframe:** The team did not require access to the logical frameworks (logframes) for the activities implemented by the CSOs. While logframes are essential for linking objectives to the evaluation criteria, requiring them may have affected the willingness and trust of CSOs in this research process. As a result, the assessment of the activities' effectiveness had to be adapted to rely on data obtained from interviews instead of comparing planned and achieved outcomes as outlined in the logframes.
4. **Non-Response from Some CSOs:** Three CSOs identified in the mapping exercise did not respond to engagement requests. This non-response limited the range of perspectives and data collected, impacting in part the inclusivity and depth of the analysis.
5. **External Factors:** The data generation process was organized during a politically sensitive period and at the end of the school year. The national elections created a sensitive atmosphere in the country. Municipal staff, policymakers from ministries, and schools were reluctant to discuss the issue. Institutions withheld permission to access schools and organize focus groups and interviews within them. As a result, the team conducted all events outside of the schools. While this did not affect the quality of the data received, it impacted the outreach to parents and students in the focus groups (56 out of the planned 68 participants). The change in the governing party eventually extended permission to access schools. However, this permission was granted only at the end of the data generation process, leaving no time for the team to address the gaps.



## 3. Evaluation Findings

### 3.1 Mapping Exercise Findings

The mapping exercise identified 24 school-based P/CVE activities implemented by 16 CSOs in the targeted localities, Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar, from 2018 to 2023. These activities were part of 18 projects. Five activities were also implemented outside the targeted localities, for example, in the municipalities of Struga and Kichevo, which prior research has also indicated to be origin localities for individuals traveling to fight in the overseas conflict zones since 2015. Struga and Kichevo were not the primary focus of this research due to resource constraints and the specific strategic objectives of the targeted localities to concentrate P/CVE efforts at the local level. Among the implementers, one CSO was based in Kumanovo and another in Tetovo, while the remaining CSOs were based in Skopje. One mapped activity was implemented by a municipality in collaboration with local CSOs. The implementers operated either in consortium with others (11 activities) or as sole implementers (13 activities). The full list of mapped activities is presented in Annex 1.

**The mapped P/CVE activities in schools covered a broad spectrum of critical topics aimed at fostering resilience and mitigating the risks of extremism.** The most frequently addressed topic in the mapped P/CVE activities in schools was building resilience and understanding online radicalization, hate speech, VE and the pathways to extremism, with ten activities focusing on these themes. The activities can be clustered into the following main themes:

- **Theme 1: Tolerance Building and Navigating Differences:** Activities aimed to enhance students' capacity to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives and cultures, thereby aiming towards a more inclusive school environment (five mapped activities: Mapped Activities 1, 8, 9, 16 and 17).
- **Theme 2: Combating Stereotypes and Prejudices:** Activities in schools with students that aimed to challenge and dismantle harmful stereotypes and prejudices that contribute to divisions and radicalization (four mapped activities: Mapped Activities 3, 4, 13 and 14).
- **Theme 3: Strengthening Critical Thinking:** Activities aimed at developing individuals' ability to assess information objectively, and make informed decisions (two mapped activities: Mapped Activities 5 and 7).
- **Theme 4: Strengthening the Capacity in Identification and Guidance of Vulnerable Youth:** Activities with teachers and municipal staff aimed at recognizing signs of vulnerability among youth and providing appropriate guidance and support (three mapped activities: Mapped Activity 2, 12 and 22).
- **Theme 5: Building Resilience, Understanding Online Radicalization, Hate Speech, and VE, Prevention of Peer Violence, and Learning about Pathways to Extremism:** Activities with students, teachers, professional school staff, and municipal staff aimed at understanding online radicalization, hate speech, and VE and exploring the routes through which individuals become radicalized and ways these actors can offer solutions for prevention and support (nine mapped activities: Mapped Activities 6, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 23).

Two mapped activities (20 and 24) lacked information on the main theme.

**The mapped P/CVE activities were multifaceted, and the key format of activities included:**

- **Trainings:** Primarily for school and municipal staff, covering topics such as radicalization, early warning signs, online radicalization, stereotypes, prejudices, hate speech, and violence. It was estimated that since 2018, approximately 541 teachers and 86 municipal

staff from Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo, and Gostivar have participated in such activities.

- **Workshops:** Informative meetings and thematic workshops with approximately 200 parents on recognizing early-warning signs of radicalization, and workshops with students on diverse topics such as understanding pathways to radicalization, online radicalization, hate speech, VE, stereotypes and prejudices, and media literacy. These activities engaged approximately 4,261 students in both primary and secondary schools in Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo, and Gostivar.
- **Publications:** Development of guidebooks including: a resource for frontline practitioners, such as educational and professional staff in schools, focusing on understanding radicalization and VE, addressing trauma, and the necessary responses from schools and teachers, guide on cyber security and an action plan for local P/CVE efforts in the municipality of Gostivar.
- **Awareness-Raising Events:** Activities aimed at increasing understanding of P/CVE topics targeting both youth and their parents. The mapping exercise estimated that since 2018, approximately 50,000 young people have been reached through the promotion of a security-related agenda.
- **Community Events:** Collaborative community projects between schools on valuing diversity, human rights and multiculturalism, art projects, and activity-enabling space for students to express and experience diversity. These activities engaged approximately 198 students from 26 primary schools in Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar.
- **Less frequently mentioned activities** included forum theatre and art exhibitions of works done by students, which was only included in one activity.

Skopje served as the primary target locality for the P/CVE education initiatives, with 19 activities primarily targeting the municipalities of Chair, Butel, and Gazi Baba. These efforts also extended to neighbouring rural municipalities, particularly those gravitating toward Kumanovo. Kumanovo was the recipient of 13 activities, highlighting its significant role in the P/CVE landscape. Meanwhile, Tetovo hosted 10 activities, indicating a noteworthy presence of P/CVE initiatives in that area. Additionally, Gostivar was targeted by seven activities, further underscoring its importance in the context of community-based interventions.






**The activities targeted up to 55 elementary and secondary schools in the selected localities.** It was observed that most of these schools are located in Skopje, specifically in the municipalities of Chair, Gazi Baba and Butel, which aligns with the residences of the majority of RFTFs. However, the exact number of schools was difficult to determine due to the lack of clearly identified school names for some activities. In general, the following distribution of schools by locality was noted:

- Elementary schools in Skopje (Chair, Gazi Baba, Studenicani, Saraj) (between seven and 13 entities).
- Elementary schools in Tetovo (between four and six entities).
- Elementary schools in Kumanovo (between 15 and 18 entities).
- Secondary schools from Skopje from municipalities of Chair, Gazi Baba and Butel (in total seven entities) but also schools located in other municipalities in Skopje (in total three entities), including one private elementary school in Skopje.
- Secondary schools in Kumanovo (in total five entities).
- Two religious schools in Skopje.

Some schools involved in the activities were located outside the research areas, including elementary schools in the municipalities of Petrovec, Struga, Shtip, Kavadarci, Ohrid, Bitola, Plasnica, Kichevo, and Chucher Sandevo. This indicates that P/CVE activities were not exclusively implemented in locations associated with FTFs/RFTFs.

The intended outcomes of the activities are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Intended outcome and achieved outputs from the mapped P/CVE activities**

Intended Outcomes	Outputs
 <b>1: Tolerance Building and Enhancing Capacity to Navigate Differences</b>	Promotional video material was prepared and nine community events were organized (Mapped Activity 1)
	Workshops conducted with 343 students aged 14-18 from Skopje, Tetovo, and Kumanovo (Mapped Activity 8)
	More than 120 events organized, engaging over 2,000 students in primary and secondary schools were on topics such as lifelong learning skills, anti-discrimination, xenophobia, stigmatization, P/CVE, hate speech, radicalization, VE, and cultural differences (Mapped Activity 9)
	Peer-to-peer mentoring initiatives on interfaith dialogue and countering religious radicalization for 50 students (Mapped Activity 17)
 <b>2: Combating Stereotypes and Prejudices</b>	A comprehensive training and mentorship program was implemented for secondary students from municipalities of Chair, Gazi Baba and Butel (all in Skopje), consisting of one module on multiculturalism, one module on creative toolkits addressing multiculturalism, one module for the prevention of radicalization, one module for creative toolkits addressing radicalization prevention, one module for mentorship, one video on P/CVE produced targeting youth, and handcrafts and paintings created by 258 secondary school students from Skopje being part of the thematic modules. In addition, two community engagement events involving 54 secondary school students from Skopje (Mapped Activities 3 and 4)
 <b>3: Strengthening Critical Thinking on P/CVE</b>	An integrated training curriculum consisting of six modules and twelve capacity-building daily workshops were organized for 249 secondary school students from Skopje and Kumanovo, with two workshops specifically focused on radicalization and violent extremism (Mapped Activity 5)
	Developed online P/CVE and youth platform consisting of 30 youth CSOs and 200 youth (Mapped Activity 7)
 <b>4: Capacitation in Identifying and Guiding Vulnerable Youth</b>	A comprehensive training curriculum was developed, and five thematic capacity-building workshops, each lasting for three days were organized for 241 teachers from elementary schools in Skopje (in total 7), Tetovo (in total 4) and Kumanovo (in total 15) (Mapped Activity 2)
 <b>5: Understanding Concepts and Topics in the Wider Field of P/CVE</b>	A digital “Serious Game” was produced as an educational and training tool for teachers, youth workers, and youth to address social and economic issues, including radicalization and online radicalization (Mapped Activity 19)
	A baseline assessment for awareness-raising and capacity-building aimed at using education to prevent youth online radicalization was conducted; a Guide on Cyber Security and a Policy Paper on Responding to Online Radicalization: Towards Online Safety Education Policy were prepared (Mapped Activity 21)

**The mapping exercise identified key challenges encountered during the implementation of the activities,** which can be summarized as follows:

- **Access Issues:** Limited access to the target group, particularly children of RFTFs in the community events coupled with fear of cooperation and societal stigmatization.
- **Knowledge Discrepancies:** Varying levels of knowledge among the target group hindered effective participation.
- **Low Motivation and Interest:** Students showed a low level of motivation to sign up for the workshops as well as showed insufficient interest for active and committed engagement in activities.
- **Funding Limitations:** Insufficient funds and frequent changes in institutional representatives affected the stability and long-term sustainability of the activities.
- **Language Barriers:** Language barriers between different ethnic groups persist, complicating communication and engagement efforts.

**The main lessons learned by implementers of the activities,** as identified in the mapping exercise, were:

- **Regular Involvement of Target Group:** A need for greater and more frequent involvement of the target group in similar activities is essential as opposed to one-time involvement.
- **Widening the Scope of Schools:** Capacity-building initiatives should be implemented in all elementary and secondary schools within the targeted municipalities, rather than only in those that express interest.
- **Enhanced Social Media Engagement:** Increased engagement across social media platforms is necessary to reach a wider audience.
- **Innovative Approaches:** Workshops, trainings and community events should adopt innovative and tailored approaches to attract participants.
- **Holistic and Systematic Approach:** A holistic approach is required, focusing on end results rather than just partial solutions. There is a need for systematic solutions to address underlying P/CVE issues effectively.
- **Targeted Outreach Strategies:** The development of targeted outreach strategies such as understanding the target group and crafting messages that resonate with them was seen as crucial for effective engagement.
- **Improved Coordination with School Staff:** Students should be selected in coordination with school staff to ensure better alignment with the needs.
- **Follow-Up Coordination:** Improved coordination for follow-up activities such as translating training into school practice and providing mentoring to facilitate this process is essential for ensuring sustainability and maximizing impact.

These challenges and lessons emphasize the importance of strategic planning, collaboration between actors in the P/CVE field, coherence of activities, proper selection of locations and beneficiaries and innovative approaches to effectively implementing P/CVE activities.

### 3.2 Findings from the Corresponding Evaluation Questions

This section summarizes the key findings from the evaluation and addresses the corresponding evaluation questions. Each sub-section begins with a figure displaying the primary data related to the questions, followed by relevant supporting information and a detailed analysis of the issues.

## Criterion 1: Relevance and Quality of the Design of the Activities



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.



Figure 4. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 1: Relevance and Quality of the Design (in %, N=52)

**Respondents in the interviews generally found the implemented activities relevant and appropriate to their needs, and their goals were clearly communicated to the beneficiaries.** While the needs of the various target groups may have differed for example, the perspective of policymakers on what should be done in the field versus the needs of schools or municipalities it is generally expected that these needs complement each other. Overall, 88% of respondents answered positively when asked whether the P/CVE activities designed for the school setting align well with local needs, were tailored to those needs, and fostered a sense of ownership among participants (see Figure 4). However, there was a slight difference in how favorably this aspect of relevance was perceived among the CSOs, the municipal staff, school staff, and the policymakers. All representatives of CSOs, as the main implementers of the activities, exclusively evaluated their activities as reflective of local needs (100% reporting a positive sentiment). In contrast, 83% of municipal staff, 82% of school staff, and 67% of policymakers shared this view (see Figure 5).

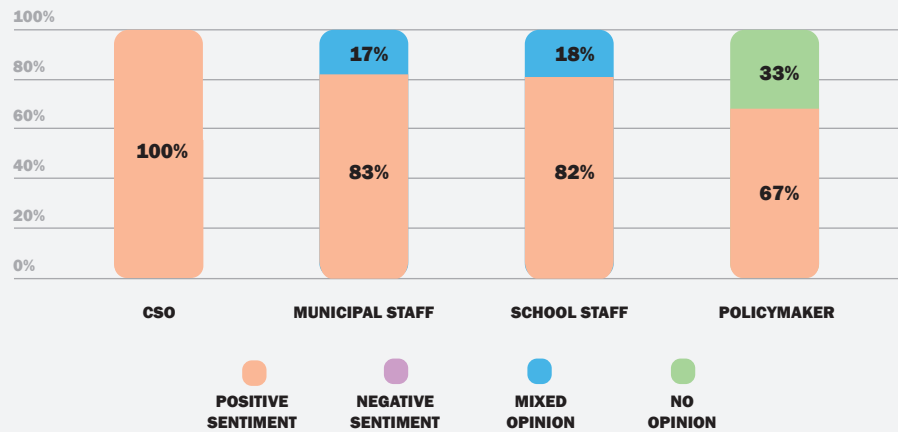


Figure 5. Respondents' answers to whether activities were designed to address relevant priorities and needs and whether the goals were clearly specified (in %, N=52)

Additionally, 96% of respondents answered positively that the activities were sensitive and responsive to evolving local dynamics during implementation. This perception was affirmed by all interviewed CSOs and municipal staff, as well as by 94% of school staff and 67% of policymakers (see Figure 6).

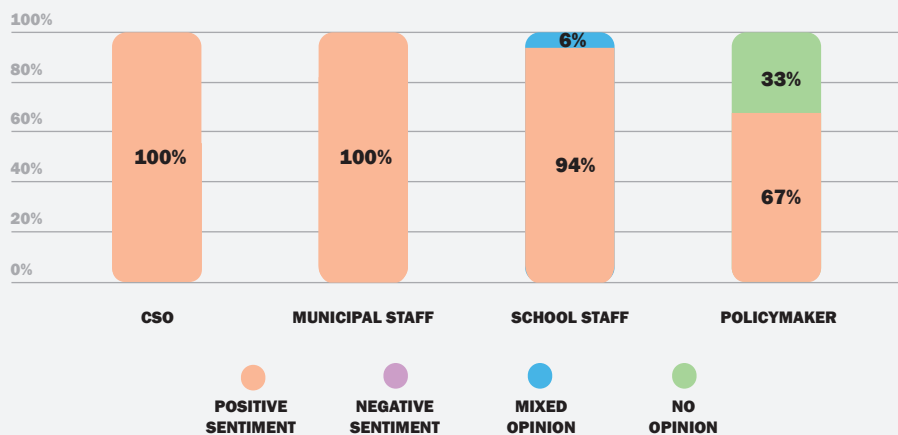
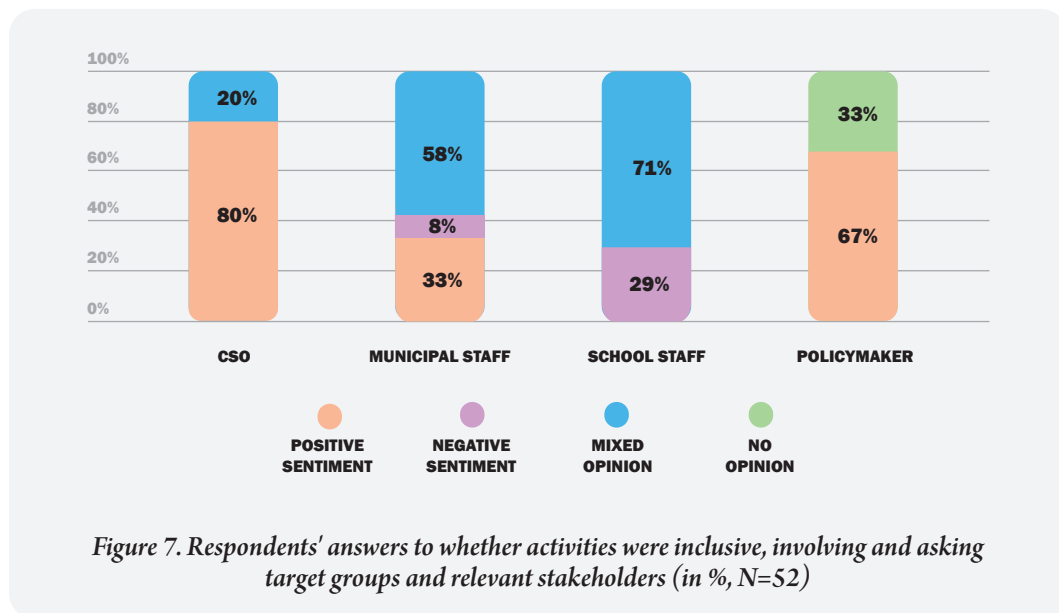


Figure 6. Respondents' answers to whether the activities were sensitive and responsive to the local contexts (in %, N=52)



**Within the design stage, these activities showed less inclusiveness.** Only 42% of respondents felt the activities were inclusively identified by involving target groups and relevant stakeholders, while 44% saw participation as partially enabled (see Figure 4). CSOs reported higher levels of inclusiveness, with 80% agreeing that the design was inclusive and 20% considering it partly inclusive. In contrast, school staff showed lower agreement, with 71% seeing partial inclusiveness and 29% disagreeing. Municipal staff also reported less inclusiveness, with 33% agreeing, 58% seeing it as partly inclusive, and 8% disagreeing (see Figure 7). Teachers frequently reported that CSOs provided ready-made proposals and had specific roles within the projects, often serving as trainees or, in some cases, trained teachers served as multipliers of knowledge by organizing workshops with students on topics such as violence, stereotypes, exclusion, radicalization, and online radicalization.



Although the evaluation team did not require access to the logframe results chain for the activities, 92% of respondents perceived that there was a logical connection between the activities and their outputs with the intended impacts and effects. A teacher from Skopje (respondent 41) emphasized the relevance of these activities, stating, “Yes, the activity was relevant. And not only in my school. Even if there was no such student or family in my school, this must happen in all schools. All schools should be involved; tomorrow is unpredictable. Today there may be none, but tomorrow there could be a student in need.”

**Generally, the activities were perceived as aligned with field policies.** However, only 58% of respondents positively answered that the activities and their outputs were consistent with the policies (see Figure 4). 75% of the municipal staff, 67% of the policymakers and 65% of the CSO representatives answered positively compared to 35% of the school staff (see Figure 8). Notably, only two CSOs reported implementing school activities on P/CVE without aligning with the existing policies. **School staff frequently struggled to connect activities with policies.** Six schools staff members were able to provide clear information on this alignment, while five were only partly sure about how well activities aligned with policies. Additionally, 70% of those familiar with the policies agreed that there was alignment, 26% noted partial alignment, and 5% disagreed. It is also worth noting that 17% of the respondents reported being unfamiliar with the policies.



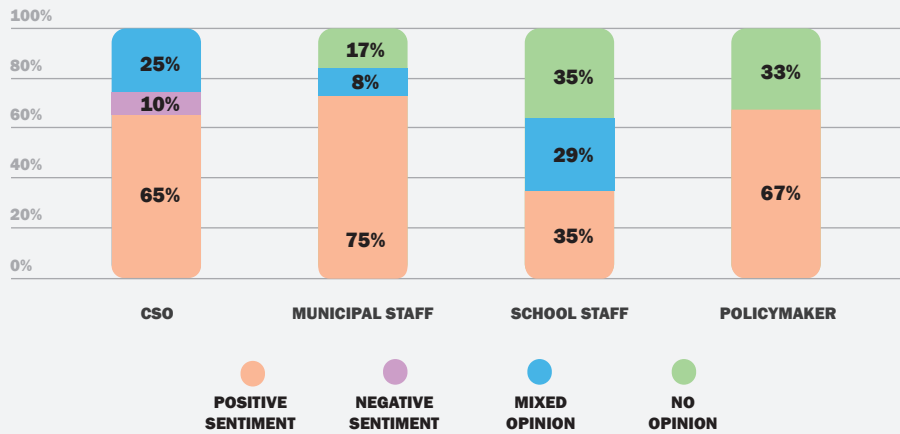


Figure 8. Respondents' answers to whether activities and outputs of the activities were consistent with the policies in the field (in %, N=52)

Approximately 63% of respondents answered positively when asked if the activities produced outputs, results, and impacts that positively influenced the agenda on P/CVE (see Figure 4). 80% of the CSOs, 67% of the policymakers, 58% of the municipal staff, and 47% of the school staff reported that the activities had a positive impact on the policy agenda for countering radicalization and VE. Notably, three CSOs reported having no influence on the agenda. School staff often struggled to connect the activities to their influence on countering radicalization, with 24% reporting partial information and 29% having no information at all (see Figure 9).

**Both the results on alignment and influence over policy underscore the need for improved information sharing between implementers and beneficiaries.** It is crucial to ensure that beneficiaries understand how P/CVE activities in schools align with national priorities and CVE efforts, and how these activities produce outputs, results, and impacts that positively influence the agenda on cP/CVE. Additionally, enhanced information sharing between implementers and policymakers is necessary to achieve better alignment between policies and field practices.

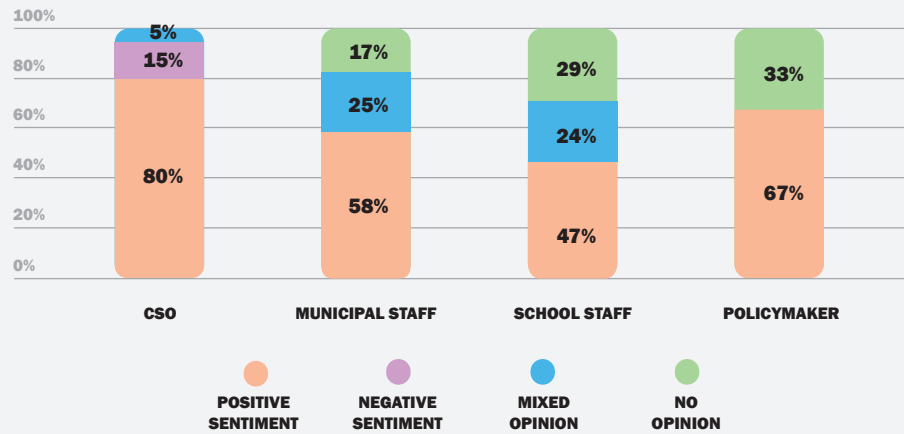


Figure 9. Respondents' answers to whether the activities produced outputs, results, and impacts that positively influenced the agenda on countering radicalization and violent extremism (in %, N=52)

Additionally, only 37% of respondents reported collaboration between the activities and the NCCVECT (see Figure 4). Among them, 65% of the CSOs and 33% of the municipal staff reported having established cooperation with the committee during the activities. Most policymakers (67%) were aware of formal cooperation between school activities and the committee (see Figure 10). This collaboration ranged from providing fact-sheet information to the committee to actively involving them in project activities and capacity-building efforts. However, no school staff had information about any cooperation with the committee, which amplifies the information sharing gap.

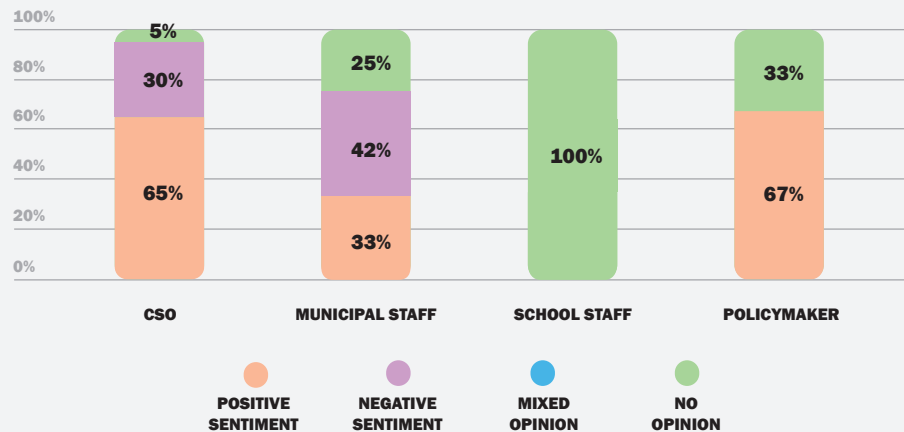


Figure 10. Respondents' answers to whether there was cooperation between activities and NCCVECT (in %, N=52)

**One reason for the disconnect between the relevance of the activities and the target groups' understanding of the value of the activities may be attributed to the lack of shared knowledge about the policies in the field, the motivations behind the activities, the logic of the activities, and the value of broad and active stakeholder participation.** Most activities were designed and implemented by CSOs, primarily in collaboration with municipalities, since access to schools and students requires municipal approval. Although the Ministry of Education and Science and the Bureau for Development of Education play a crucial role in approving content for school staff and students, many activities bypass these institutions. Instead, they relied on partnerships with municipal and school managerial staff. A policymaker from the education sector noted (Respondent 50), “At a time when our authorities are not doing enough in this area, the support from the CSO sector directly working with primary schools is significant. We often lack information because the CSO work with municipalities through Memoranda of Cooperation, leaving us and the Bureau out of the loop when it comes to ground-level activities.” This approach primarily sidelined the teachers as beneficiaries of the activities. Teachers experienced limited engagement in the design process, which resulted in an information gap and the absence of effective feedback mechanisms where they could voice concerns or ask questions about the activities.

*In summary, the activities generally aligned with the existing needs of stakeholders and the priorities and policies at both national and local levels. They effectively addressed the need for schools to build resilience against VE. However, the projects fell short in fostering active participation from beneficiaries, who were often limited to passive recipients of knowledge or services. As the understanding, capacity, and institutional responses to P/CVE have advanced, traditional training-focused approaches have been deemed outdated and inadequate. To enhance future activities, it is crucial to incorporate stakeholder recommendations and leverage previous experiences. There is potential for replication or expansion of successful activities, with a focus on innovation and increasing stakeholder ownership of goals, activities, and outcomes.*

*The general rating of this criterion is 67.2%, indicating a perception of "Generally Successful". However, this success is viewed differently across various stakeholders. CSOs rated the criterion particularly high, reflecting a strong confidence in the relevance and the quality of design of their initiatives. In contrast, municipal staff rated the activities as "Generally Successful". This suggests a positive view, though slightly more reserved compared to the CSOs. School staff, however, expressed more skepticism, placing their perspective at "Moderate/Mixed success". This discrepancy highlights potential gaps in how these activities are perceived by the beneficiaries within educational settings. Finally, policymakers rated the criterion as "Generally Successful".*

## Criterion 2: Coverage of the Activities



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

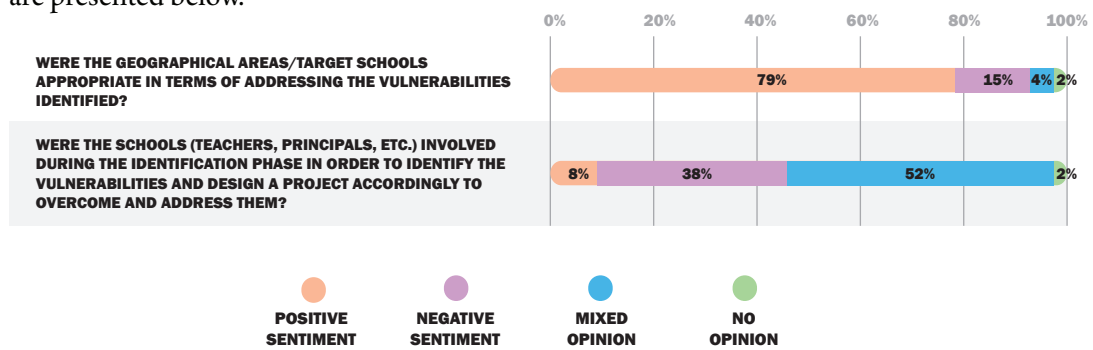


Figure 11. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 2: Coverage of the Activities (in %, N=52)

**Overall, 79% of respondents positively answered that the selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities** (see Figure 11). All CSO representatives, 67% of the municipal staff, 65% of the school staff, and 67% of policymakers perceived that the schools selected for the P/CVE activities were appropriate. However, six school staff members (35%) and two municipal staff members (17%) questioned the need for such projects in their local environments, as they did not perceive their areas as particularly vulnerable to radicalization and VE (see Figure 12).

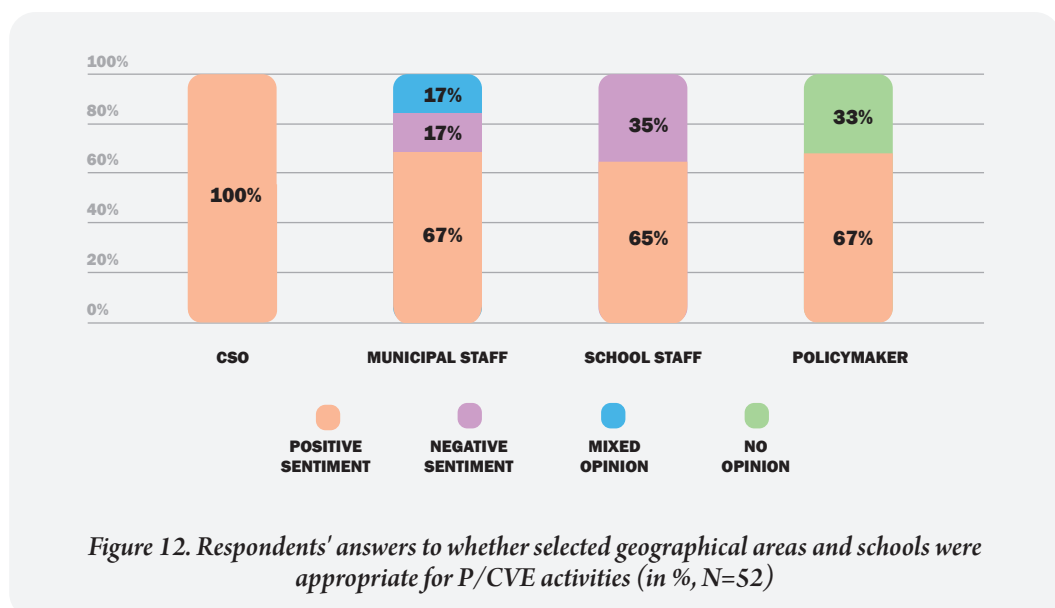


Figure 12. Respondents' answers to whether selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities (in %, N=52)

The perceived appropriateness of the selected schools was not equally distributed among the cities and target groups of CSOs plus school and municipal staff. In Gostivar, although all CSOs expressed a positive sentiment about the selected schools, 67% of the municipal staff and all interviewed school staff members disagreed, noting that the selected schools did not adequately address the vulnerabilities intended to be tackled by the P/CVE activities (see Figure 13).

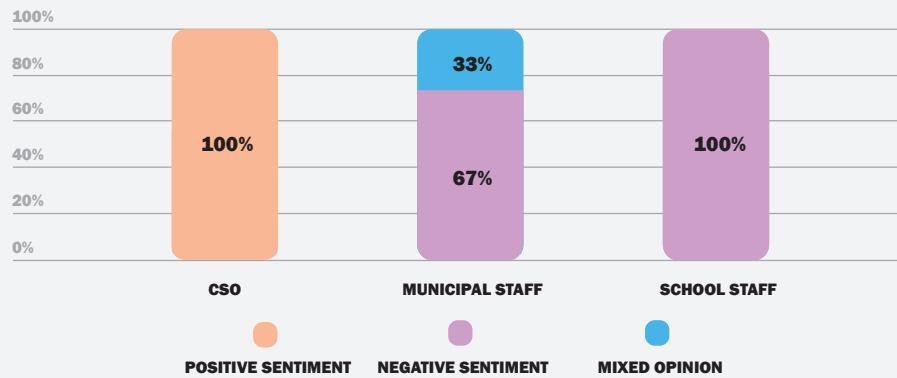


Figure 13. Gostivar respondents' answers to whether selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities (in %, N=52)

The situation in Kumanovo reflected opposing opinions between municipal and CSO staff on one side, and teachers on the other. While all municipal staff and CSOs expressed a positive sentiment about the selected schools, all the teachers felt that the selected schools did not adequately address the vulnerabilities intended to be tackled by the P/CVE activities (see Figure 14).

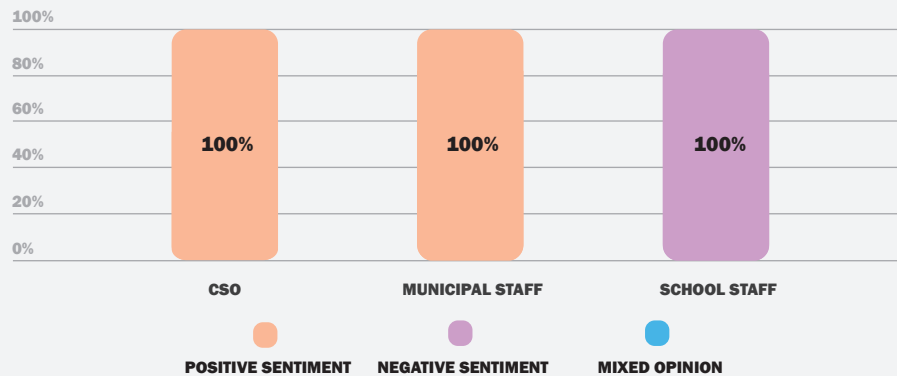


Figure 14. Kumanovo respondents' answers to whether selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities (in %, N=52)

Respondents in Skopje and Tetovo shared more consistent views on whether the selected schools were appropriate and reflected local vulnerabilities. In Skopje, all CSOs, municipal and school staff positively assessed the appropriateness of the selected schools (see Figure 15). Similarly, in Tetovo, all CSOs and school staff positively evaluated the appropriateness of the selected schools, whereas 67% of the municipal staff shared this positive view (see Figure 16).

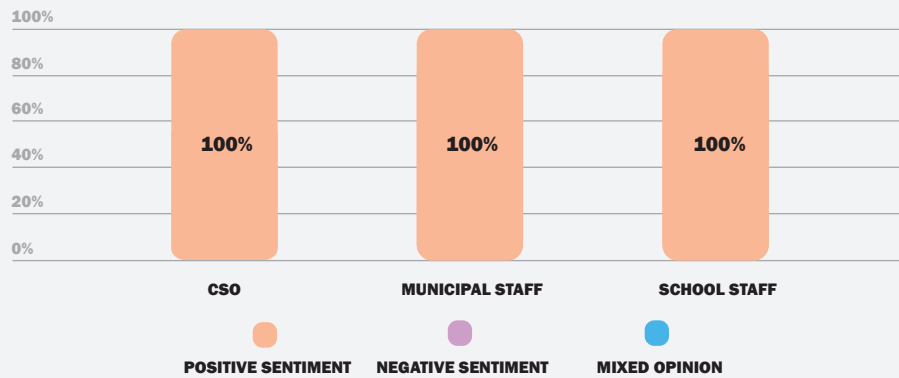


Figure 15. Skopje respondents' answers to whether selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities (in %, N=52)

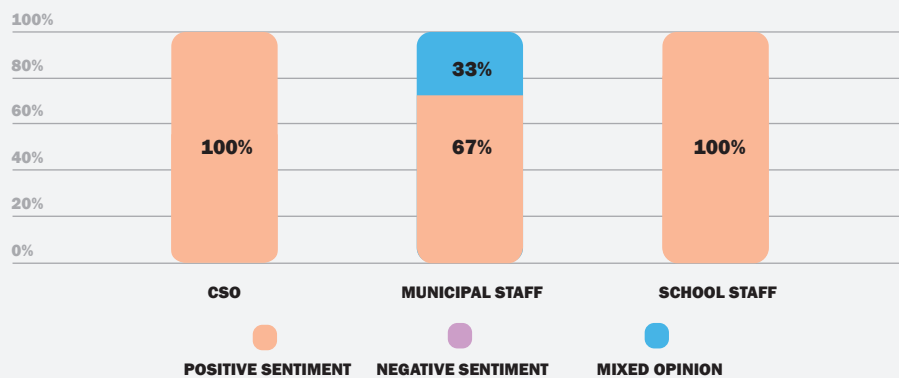


Figure 16. Tetovo respondents' answers to whether selected geographical areas and schools were appropriate for P/CVE activities (in %, N=52)

Additionally, most of respondents felt that teachers, principals, and other school staff were either only partly (52%) or not at all (38%) involved during the identification phase to assess vulnerabilities and design suitable projects (see Figure 11). The insufficient involvement of local stakeholders in the rationale behind the activities was confirmed by CSOs, who had mixed observations regarding the involvement of teachers in shaping the activities. Of the 20 respondents, 90% felt that teachers were only partially involved, while two CSOs disconfirmed any involvement of teachers and principals. CSOs reported that they communicated the activities to municipal staff, who then provided feedback and approval for the planned activities in local schools. Negative sentiment was predominant among school staff, with 82% expressing negative views and 18% having mixed sentiments about their involvement in identifying vulnerabilities within the school. None of the school staff reported being actively involved in shaping the activities to reflect these vulnerabilities. Only 17% of the municipal staff shared positive sentiments about the involvement of teachers in the identification phase, which is crucial for addressing vulnerabilities and designing activities accordingly (see Figure 17).

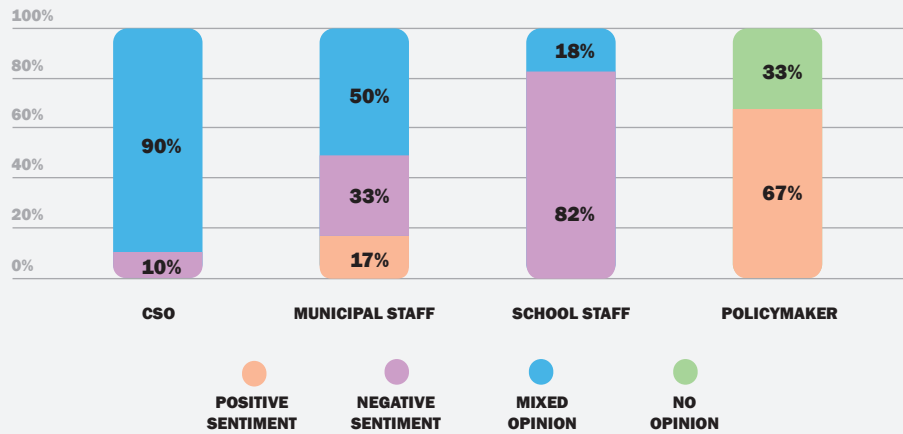


Figure 17. Respondents' answers to whether schools were involved during the identification phase to identify the vulnerabilities and design a project accordingly to overcome to address those vulnerabilities (in %, N=52)

Interviewed respondents from Tetovo and Gostivar expressed the most negative sentiments regarding the involvement of teachers and principals in the identification phase for addressing vulnerabilities and designing activities. All respondents from Tetovo shared this sentiment, compared to 75% in Gostivar, 41% in Skopje, and 38% in Kumanovo (see Figure 18). Interestingly, Tetovo had high positive sentiments about the appropriateness of the selected schools, including among teachers, but reflected negative views on their direct involvement in shaping the activities. Similarly, in Skopje, despite general agreement on the appropriateness of the selected schools, there was a lack of direct involvement of teachers and principals in determining the activities to be implemented.

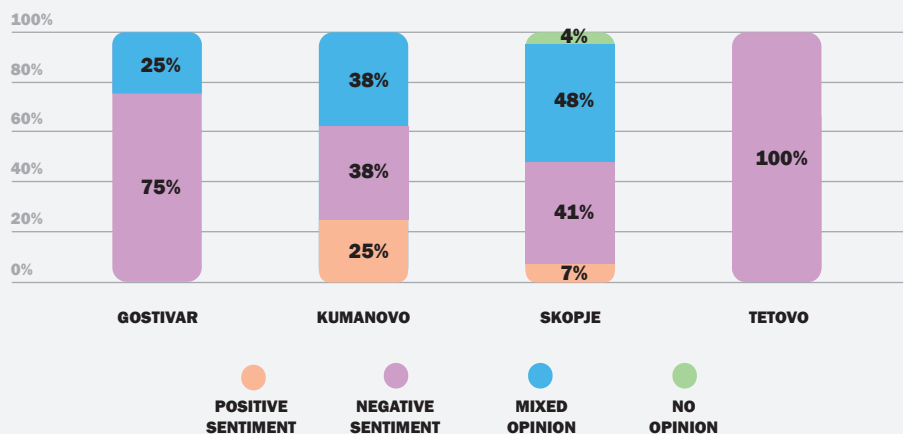


Figure 18. Distribution of respondents' answers to whether schools were involved during the identification phase to identify the vulnerabilities and design a project accordingly to overcome to address those vulnerabilities across cities (in %, N=52)



**Overall, there appeared to be an inclusion bias, with the primary criterion for selecting beneficiaries being the municipality's willingness to engage with the project, rather than the actual need for the activity.** Prior research suggests that the majority of RFTFs in North Macedonia were in their 20s and 30s and originally lived in larger urban centers such as Skopje, Gostivar, and Kichevo<sup>28</sup>, and returned to their communities after being repatriated and serving prison sentences.<sup>29</sup> The mapping exercise of P/CVE activities revealed a concentrated distribution across specific cities (see Sub-section 3.1 Mapping Exercise Findings for more information):

- Skopje was the focal point, with 19 activities primarily targeting the municipalities of Chair, Butel, and Gazi Baba, while extending to neighboring rural municipalities, including those gravitating toward Kumanovo.
- Kumanovo received 13 activities, indicating its significant role in the P/CVE landscape.
- Tetovo was the site of 10 activities, reflecting a noteworthy presence of P/CVE initiatives.
- Gostivar was targeted by seven activities, underscoring its relevance in the context of community-based interventions.

This distribution reflects an awareness of urban centers with higher concentrations of individuals previously involved in radicalization, while also recognizing the importance of addressing the broader community dynamics in these areas. However, future selection criteria should better balance the willingness of municipalities with an assessment of the actual needs and vulnerabilities within these communities in the process of selection of target areas and beneficiaries.

It appears that most activities targeted Skopje, Kumanovo, and Tetovo, where most FTFs originated from. In these locations, the target groups generally expressed positive sentiments regarding the appropriateness of the P/CVE activities organized in schools, despite the varying degrees of perceived direct involvement of teachers in identifying local vulnerabilities. In contrast, Gostivar was infrequently targeted, and both municipal and school staff there felt that the selected schools did not adequately present the vulnerabilities intended to be tackled by the P/CVE activities. As a result, some target groups or localities perceived either a lack of need for the activity or a limited understanding of its necessity.

Policymakers confirmed that the selected municipalities were appropriate targets for the activities, given their identified vulnerability to violent extremism. They also validated the focus on young people within these activities. One policymaker from the National Committee (Respondent 51) noted, “We are concentrating on these three municipalities [Skopje, Gostivar, and Kumanovo] for understandable reasons, but there should be a broader approach. Preventive activities need to extend across the entire country and include all ethnic communities to build greater resilience.”

Nevertheless, CSOs noted that the inclusion of beneficiaries was largely driven by the municipalities' readiness to participate. Typically, the first contact point for CSOs implementing activities is the municipality and the education sector, usually after the project is granted. However, since many implementers are local CSOs, they are perceived to already possess local knowledge of needs and priorities, which allows them to tailor services and activities within the community. As a municipal staff member from Skopje (Respondent 45) noted, “We were contacted by a CSO for inclusion in the project and, at an early stage, we supported it, believing that the topics covered were relevant for the participants and the schools.”

<sup>28</sup> Kichevo was not included as a targeted locality in this research. Only two of the mapped activities involved school/s or the municipality of Kichevo.

<sup>29</sup> Vanchoski, A., Shikova, N., Musliu, A. (2020). Improving the understanding of the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF): Challenges for the rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration of returnees and facilitators in the RN Macedonia. Skopje: NEXUS Civic concept. [online document] Available at: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r0xpzlr8NA\\_36AAdOQQQEZmuX-6lHdun/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r0xpzlr8NA_36AAdOQQQEZmuX-6lHdun/view) [15.09.2024]

A student from Tetovo also argued – “These topics are rarely addressed in schools. I think that only two or three of my classmates have had the opportunity to work on these terms through projects.” This reflects a consensus on the need for future more strategic selection of municipalities based on identified vulnerabilities while also highlighting the need for a more inclusive and widespread implementation of preventive measures across diverse localities and topics into the scope of P/CVE education activities.

*In summary, the activities generally succeeded in selecting areas based on local vulnerabilities. However, there were disparities in the selection of schools with identified vulnerabilities and in the involvement of teachers in designing activities to address those vulnerabilities. Skopje, Tetovo, and Kumanovo appeared to be the primary focus of the activities, while stakeholders in Gostivar seemed to be sidelined in terms of communication and effective transformation of local vulnerabilities into P/CVE education activities. Consequently, when main beneficiaries were not adequately informed about identified vulnerabilities or consulted on how to address local issues, teachers and municipal staff expressed greater hesitation and uncertainty about how the activities fit and aligned with their local context.*

*The general rating of this criterion indicated a perception of "Moderate/Mixed success". This suggests a prevailing sense of uncertainty about the appropriateness of the selection method of the geographical areas and schools as well as on the inclusion of school staff across various stakeholder groups. CSOs and Municipal Staff rated this criterion as "Moderate/Mixed Success", reflecting a recognition of significant misalignment between the projects and the local needs. School staff generally held a perspective of "Low Success". This lower rating may point to specific concerns within educational settings regarding inadequate selection of schools and teachers, as well as their proper induction, which hinders the perceived appropriate coverage of locations and schools within P/CVE education activities. Interestingly, policymakers offered a more positive assessment, with a "Generally Successful". This divergence in perspectives emphasizes the need for further dialogue among stakeholders on the selection process and the involvement, particularly from the viewpoint of those directly involved in education.*

### Criterion 3: Effectiveness of the Activities



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

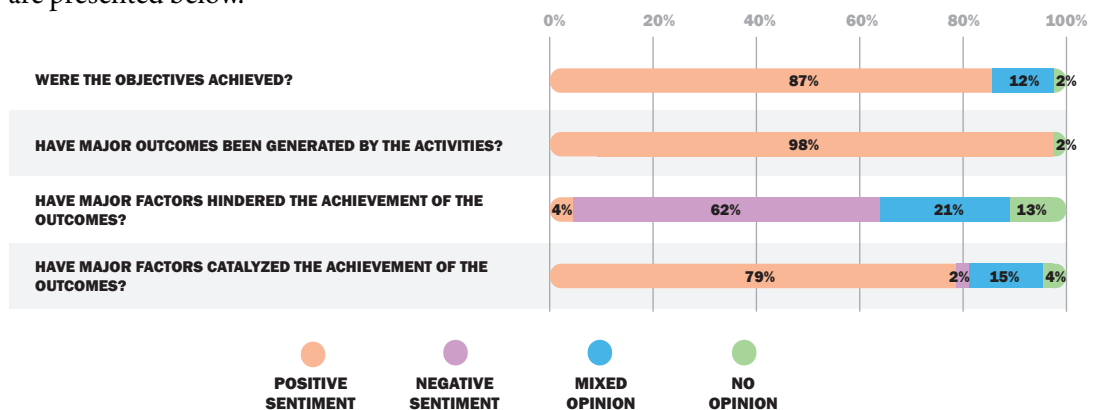


Figure 19. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 3: Effectiveness of the Activities (in %, N=52)

The majority of respondents interviewed (87%) perceived that the activities had achieved their intended objectives and major outcomes were generated (98%) (see Figure 19). Based on interviews with the school staff, it was observed that activities focused on teacher capacity building were deemed effective when they incorporated interactive methods, practical strategies, case studies, and role-playing exercises. These approaches enabled teachers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic and apply concepts in real classroom scenarios. The involvement of psychologists and field experts as trainers reportedly provided valuable insights and broadened teachers' understanding of the larger context. Resource materials, such as guides, lesson plans, and case studies, further facilitated the integration of these concepts into daily school routines. Among the most valuable aspects of the activities, as noted by the interviewed school staff, were opportunities for peer learning and mentorship, which supported the transition from training to classroom application. One school staff member from a secondary school in Gostivar (Respondent 17) remarked, "Although we didn't have a direct approach to the topics since students would withdraw right away, opening the topic indirectly made it more accepted. The project, though presented as a ready-made package, allowed us to choose themes like tolerance, prejudices, stereotypes, and conflicts. This led to a more aware citizenry, addressing the despair and disillusionment among youth. The project was successful, with participants now emerging as leaders in youth forums and organizations, contributing to greater stability." A municipal staff member from Skopje (Respondent 45) noted, "While some participants, students and teachers have heard about the topic, it was for the first time that they worked up-close and enhanced their understanding and capacities to address the topic. There is a clear interest among the

target groups to explore this subject more deeply. As a municipality, we recognize the importance of this dialogue and are committed to working on this issue collaboratively". Moving forward, there is a need for ongoing professional development, continuous mentoring support, and access to a network of experts to help teachers stay current and effectively address evolving challenges. Students who participated in the focus groups reported engaging with P/CVE on topics such as radicalization, early warning signs, online radicalization, stereotypes, prejudices, hate speech, and violence through various school activities. These included sociology and ethics classes, student parliament debates, and thematic workshops. In their view, these activities were designed to educate students on broader P/CVE concepts and raise awareness through role-playing, scenario-based activities, real-life examples, and discussions. Such methods allowed students to experience and discuss real-life situations related to extremism, helping them develop practical problem-solving skills. Additionally, students created materials such as brochures, posters, and photos, contributing to awareness campaigns and educational content. 80% of the students who participated in the focus groups shared that their engagement with these topics has significantly enhanced their understanding of radicalization, resilience and VE. They recognised the importance and relevance of these issues. They appreciated the structured approach, which included educational sessions and open discussions designed to challenge prejudices and stereotypes and to promote understanding and mutual respect. Also, they felt more confident in discussing these topics after the activities. Overall, students expressed a desire for bigger use of digital media and gamification to make complex topics more accessible and engaging. A particularly valued activity was training students to become peer educators, as reported by a CSO representative. These peer educators were equipped to lead discussions and workshops for their classmates. While the human resources are in place, it remains to be seen how effectively they can be utilized within the school setting.

**The interviewees underscored the connection between radicalization and other significant issues such as bullying, intolerance, and hate speech.** School staff often reported that these crucial topics are inadequately addressed in the formal curriculum, making additional workshops or extracurricular activities essential for facilitating meaningful discussions and imparting expert knowledge. However, the perceived effectiveness of these activities is contrasted with the observation shared by teachers and municipal staff that **many activities focused primarily on achieving immediate output-level results, with insufficient follow-up to ensure long-term impact** (more on outputs and outcomes is presented in Section 3.1 Mapping Exercise Findings). It is worth noting that although 98% of all respondents perceived the outcomes from the activities positively, 76% of the school staff indicated they would not engage further in such work (see Criteria 6: Sustainability for more information).

**The involvement of parents was also reported by interviewees to be a factor that enhanced the effectiveness of projects in this field, with at least two mapped activities having engaged parents.** Participation in P/CVE activities helped parents identify radical behaviours, understand pathways to extremism, and address stereotypes. During the focus group discussion, a parent from Gostivar noted: "There were several lectures on extremism and radicalism, exploring how societies can reach high levels of extremism. These sessions were primarily focused on providing general information. While we often hear these terms daily, we rarely understand their full implications. Thus, the lectures were mainly informative and aimed at prevention." About 60% of participating parents engaged in discussions about radicalization within their families and communities. Some activities initially did not target parents, but awareness grew through their children's involvement, leading to unexpected benefits. Parents felt more comfortable seeking guidance on discussing these issues, and a CSO representative (Respondent 28) noted increased communication with parents seeking advice.

Despite these activities, parents often remained unaware of ongoing school or municipal programs addressing VE. Many felt their involvement was limited by logistical constraints and a lack of opportunities for broader participation.

In alignment with the highly perceived effectiveness of the activities in achieving their intended objectives, **most respondents (61%) reported that they did not encounter significant factors jeopardizing the activities or their intended outcomes (see Figure 19). However, several key challenges were noted.** CSO representatives emphasized that insufficient budgets and a lack of donor interest are major constraints that limit the inclusion of target groups and hinder the achievement of lasting results. Municipalities, with their limited human resources and finances, struggled to fully engage in the activities. Additionally, school staff reported that many activities did not require trainees to apply or disseminate their new knowledge, resulting in gaps in integrating this knowledge into daily school routines and reaching a broader student base. There were also issues related to administrative barriers, with some school leaders reluctant to release teachers from classes to participate in training, fearing disruptions to the curriculum.

**Teachers raised concerns about bias in the selection of participating students. They noted that activities often focused on high-achieving students or those who showed motivation, which sometimes overlooked vulnerable students who needed support.** As municipal staff from Gostivar (Respondent 12) pointed out, “We tend to work with the best students, which might not always be the most efficient approach in targeting vulnerable kids.” CSO representative from Tetovo (Respondent 2) also argued against the latter. “This issue seemed to be a recurring theme. Moving forward, the approach should evolve to include a broader range of participants. Specifically, it would be beneficial to engage young people who are not actively involved in the educational process and to involve various organizations. By doing so, we could potentially overcome similar barriers and create a more inclusive and effective activity strategy,” noted a CSO representative from Tetovo (Respondent 9). Additionally, a school representative from Kumanovo (Respondent 22) highlighted the need for greater parental involvement, particularly regarding internet use, noting, “Parents often lack awareness of what their children are doing online, and there should be more emphasis on raising parental control and involvement.”

**Teachers also expressed concerns about their preparedness to act if they identify issues related to extremism.** “We are not trained on how to respond to a vulnerable child but only we are trained on how to work to prevent it. If we identify concerning signs, we are supposed to contact the police but accommodating the needs of the vulnerable child in the school setting has placed an undue burden on teachers to be first responders with minimal training,” said one teacher from Tetovo (Respondent 6). Additionally, some teachers faced a lack of cooperation from colleagues regarding knowledge sharing. “There is reluctance from my work colleagues to engage with the knowledge I gained from the training, showing disinterest or neutrality towards these issues,” noted a teacher from Skopje (Respondent 36).

**Challenges also emerged from the institutional setting,** where students instructed in different languages (Macedonian and Albanian) rarely interacted in formal curricula. Attempts to organize joint classes to address these cross-cutting issues faced significant difficulties. The sensitivity of the topic and the need for nuanced discussion often led to barriers to participation. “People's indecision or shyness, as well as skepticism about participation, was a significant barrier,” noted a CSO representative from Gostivar (Respondent 10), a sentiment echoed by another CSO representative from Gostivar (Respondent 11) who highlighted resistance by the municipal staff and the community to acknowledge the existence of the problem of VE.



**Overall, the perceptions were that the activities achieved immediate results.** Effective communication and collaboration between municipal staff, school directors staff, the expertise of project teams and trainers, employment of a targeted approach with well-defined rules of engagement, a clear design and sequence of activities, and methods that suited the target groups were crucial for achieving immediate results. A teacher from Gostivar (Respondent 15) emphasized, “The cohesion between education, local self-government, and central government was essential; without it, the efforts would have been in vain. If teachers did not address these topics regularly, the work of the local government would also be ineffective.” Similarly, a teacher from Tetovo (Respondent 8) stated, “Real cooperation among the director, pedagogical service, municipality, and parents was the key factor to having positive outcomes.” Another school staff member from Tetovo (Respondent 6) added, “Success depended on well-thought-out networking, a clear program, and effective feedback mechanisms.” **However, the motivation of students emerged as a particularly significant factor.** “The unity and enthusiasm of young people were pivotal. While there was resistance in some areas, the support from parents and the continuous engagement with youth motivated us. We’ve learned that young people can drive societal change,” noted a CSO representative from Tetovo (Respondent 9). “Activities that combined education with play and were conducted outside of the classroom were particularly effective,” noted a municipal representative from Skopje (Respondent 29). Additionally, a municipal staff member from Skopje (Respondent 35) highlighted that “the interactive nature of the activities, the students’ readiness to learn new things, and the appropriate duration made a significant difference.”

**However, inadequate coordination among system actors and a lack of funding for future initiatives may hinder their long-term impact.** “There is no monitoring system in place after project completion, nor a framework to support ongoing activities and assess the evolving needs of target groups, which undermines the sustainability of the projects,” noted a school representative from Kumanovo (Respondent 23). “Greater coordination from the municipality is needed to engage teachers and other stakeholders in continuing and expanding these activities. Schools typically operate without donor aid, making it even more challenging for associations to sustain such initiatives. Our students remain very interested in these topics,” noted further the school representative. Similarly, a CSO representative from Skopje (Respondent 49) emphasized, “There is no institutional memory or system for upgrading and maintaining these efforts.” “I think it should be continued to reach all students and teachers, as they are not trained to recognize these issues. We shared our knowledge with others, but if there’s no obligation to pass it on, the impact is uncertain,” noted a school representative from Tetovo (Respondent 6). Another school staff member from Gostivar (Respondent 17) added, “We lack sufficient support from principals or heads of schools. They don’t allow teachers to attend training, which affects lesson continuity. School leaders themselves need to be more prepared and recognize the importance of these projects”.

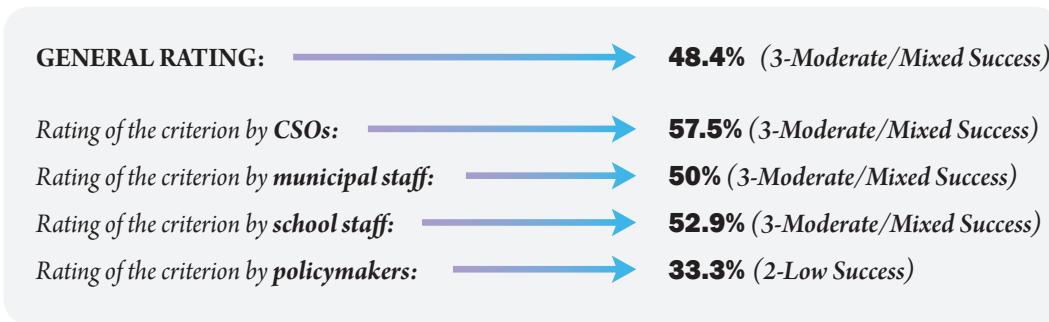
**Students from the focus group discussions suggested that the format of work could be improved.** They expressed a desire for more practical, case-based learning and interactive methods to maintain engagement, as they found traditional lectures less effective in sustaining interest. The current approach, which involved a mix of presentations and hands-on activities, was useful but could benefit from incorporating more concrete examples and interactive elements. Also, students voiced a need for safe spaces where they can engage in open and constructive discussions about these topics. They acknowledged the crucial role of the school but observed that some teachers and staff lacked the necessary skills and motivation. They recommended that teachers become more engaged and supportive. Additionally, students agreed that discussions about these topics should start at home, as parents play a crucial role in early education and prevention and felt that parents should be more actively involved and better informed about these issues.



Overall, the activities were perceived as effective in strengthening local capacities, establishing working and communication models between students, school staff, municipalities, CSOs, and laying a foundation for ongoing P/CVE efforts in the country. Parental involvement strengthened the achievement of activity goals. However, this occurred within a challenging local and national context, characterized by the undermining impact of VE on the community and a lack of funding. Recognizing the local context, addressing relevant topics in the P/CVE field for the target groups, emphasizing human capital development, involving local CSOs, fostering partnerships with stakeholders, and ensuring a clear design for activities all contributed to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the initiatives. Yet, initiatives focused more on output-level results rather than on creating an enabling environment for lasting effects. A lack of transfer from training to the classroom, insufficient networking, mentoring, and support for teachers, along with repetitive formats for teachers and students, were noted as issues that undermined the achievement of the goals.

Criterion 3, Effectiveness of the Activities, was categorized it as "Outstanding". Notably, CSOs provided a perfect score of 100%, indicating a strong alignment with the objectives. Municipal staff also reflected a high level of perceived effectiveness, reinforcing the positive reception of the initiatives. School staff further underscored the activity effectiveness. However, policymakers rated the criteria slightly lower, as "Generally Successful". Despite the high scores indicating the effectiveness of the activities, there remains a critical concern regarding their focus on outputs rather than meaningful outcomes. While the data reflects a strong perception of success among stakeholders, this perception often emphasized the completion of activities and immediate results rather than the long-term effectiveness on students and educational practices. Teachers pointed out a significant lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to assess how these activities translated into the school curricula. Without proper oversight, it is challenging to determine whether the skills and knowledge imparted during training sessions were being effectively integrated into everyday teaching practices. This gap means that the benefits of the activities may not reach students in a meaningful way. Additionally, focusing solely on outputs, such as the number of workshops conducted or produced guides, does not address the deeper issues of behavioural change and resilience-building among students. Without a concerted effort to monitor, evaluate, and adapt these activities within the school system, the impressive ratings may ultimately mask the limitations of their real-world applicability and impact.

## Criterion 4: Efficiency of the Activities



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

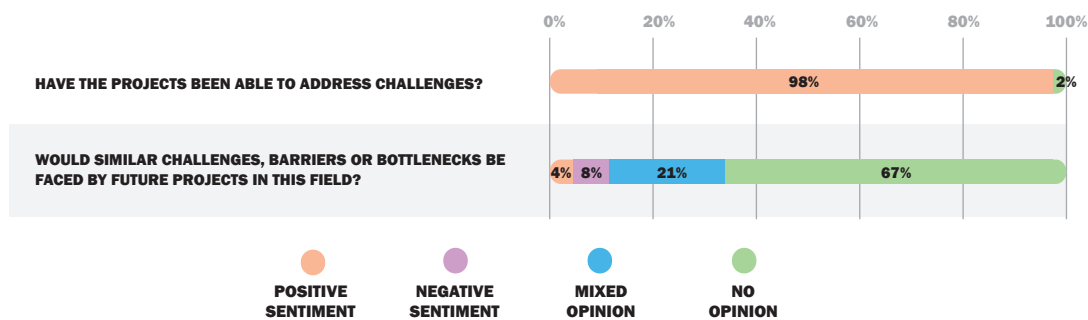
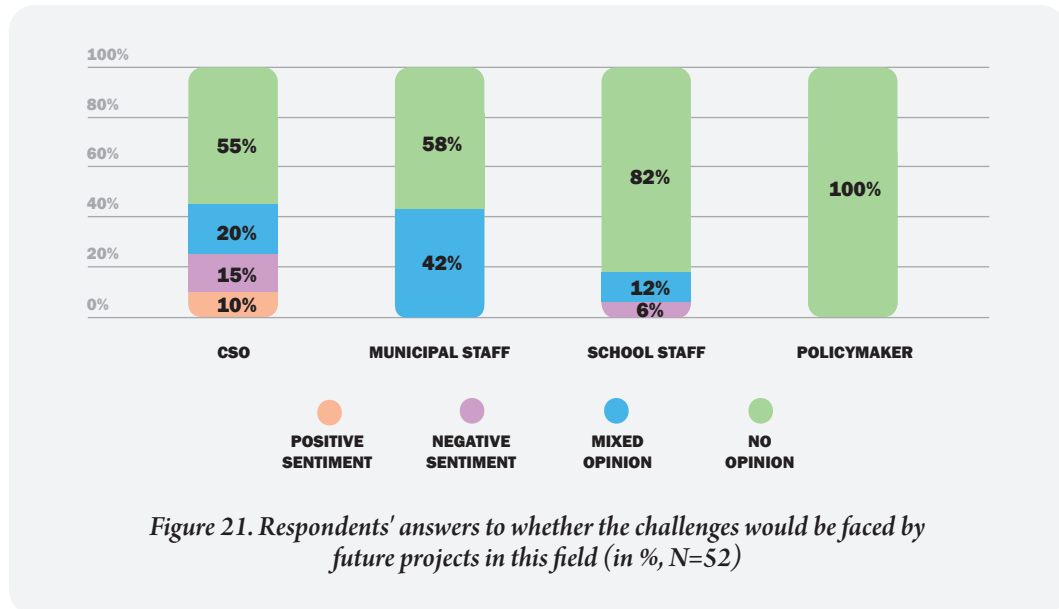


Figure 20. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 4: Efficiency of the Activities (in %, N=52)

The activities were generally able to address challenges during their implementation, with 98% of respondents agreeing on this point (see Figure 20). CSOs reported difficulties in motivating teachers, students, and local staff, securing and maintaining municipal support, and managing logistic and financial constraints. Shifts in political governance on national and local levels produced changes in local power dynamics or a lack of alignment and institutional coordination between the authorities. Students sometimes found it difficult to openly discuss issues of VE, radicalization in the activities due to a lack of trust and preparation. Counterstrategies employed by the CSOs included mentoring to help teachers apply new knowledge in the classroom (one mapped activity), building partnerships with municipal officials, and communicating how project goals aligned with their priorities (all mapped activities). They also demonstrated how activities supported community development and showcased the benefits and outcomes through community events, success stories, and data (two mapped activities). For example, they highlighted the positive impact of training on addressing child trauma, as seen with a headmaster of a school with a child from a returnee family. CSOs also invested in building trust and safe spaces for the students to interact, learn and work together (all mapped activities), prepared the students for discussions via the capacitated school staff (four mapped activities that targeted both students and teachers), employed interactive methods and promoted peer learning (all mapped activities).

Additionally, most respondents (67%) were uncertain about the future persistence of these challenges. Only a small percentage of respondents (4%) were confident that the challenges would continue, while 8% believed the situation would improve. A modest percentage (21%) were of a mixed opinion that some of these constraints would persist (see Figure 20).

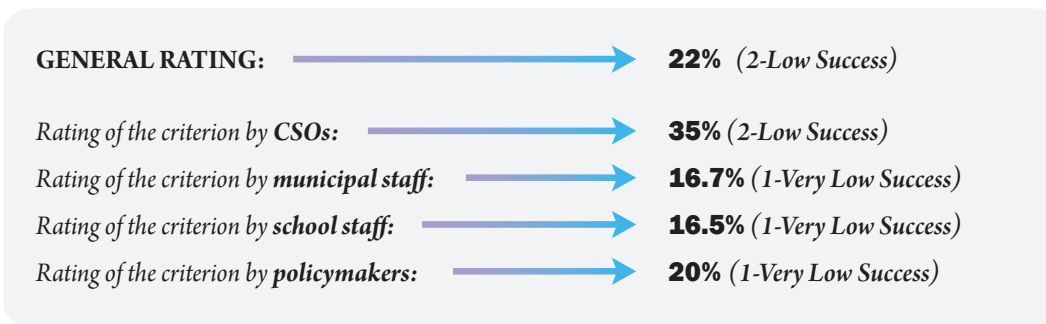
Across all target groups, there was widespread uncertainty about the future challenges of P/CVE activities. The majority of CSO staff (55%), municipal staff (58%), school staff (82%), and policymakers (100%) have no opinion on whether challenges would be faced in the future. Only 10% of CSOs were certain that the challenges would persist, while 15% of CSOs and 6% of school staff assessed that the challenges would not be met by future projects (see Figure 21).



In summary, CSOs were generally able to address challenges during their implementation of P/CVE activities in school and implemented several counterstrategies. Dealing with some persistent challenges in the system on local and national levels could affect the efficiency of future projects. However, in general, respondents were uncertain regarding how these challenges may impact future efforts.

The Efficiency of the Activities was categorized as having "Moderate/Mixed Success". CSOs, municipal, and school staff indicated a consensus on the moderate efficiency achieved. However, policymakers categorized the activities as Low. This disparity suggests a critical need for a better ecosystem of coordination, cooperation, partnership building, funding, and transferability between the activities and real-life school practices, as well as the broader strategic goals of the policies.

## Criterion 5: Coherence and Connectedness of the Activities



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

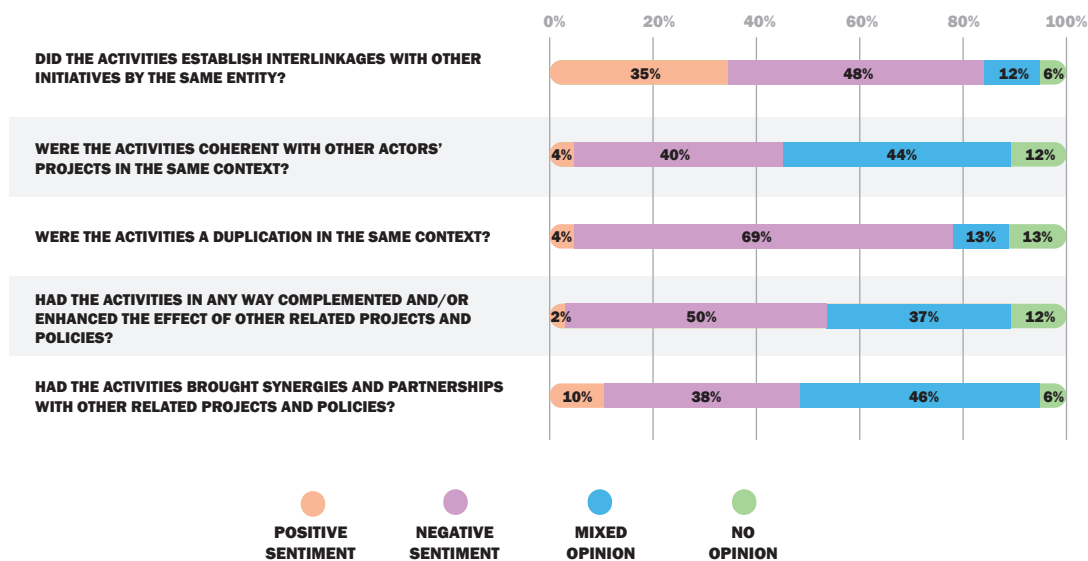
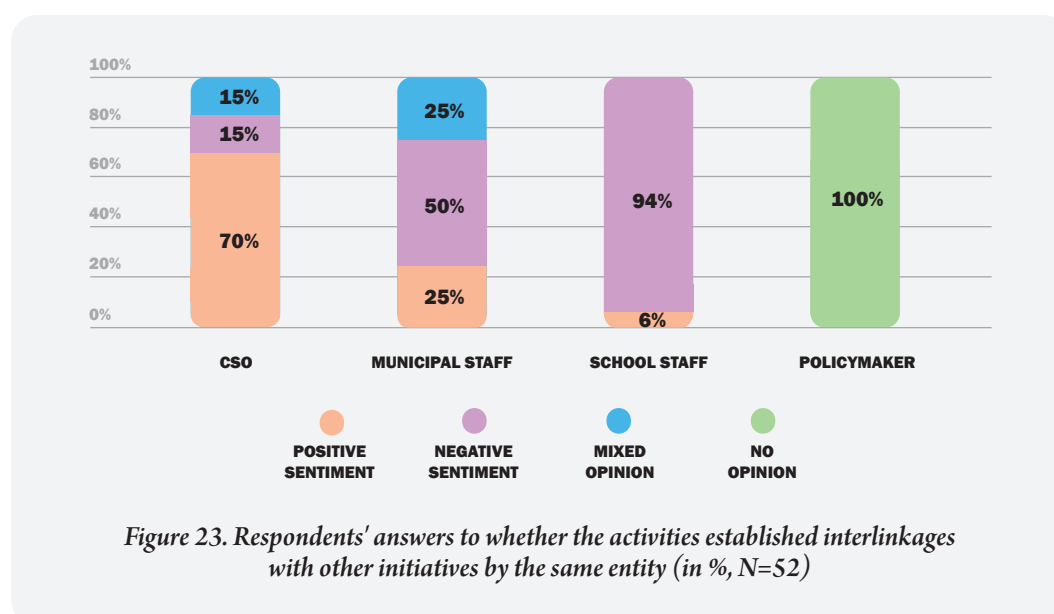


Figure 22. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 5: Coherence and Connectedness of the Activities (in %, N=52)

**Activities exhibited a lack of connectedness within their own entity.** Approximately 48% of respondents indicated that the project did not establish interlinkages with other initiatives by the same entity, while 35% believed that connections were present (see Figure 22). This perception of inadequate connectedness was particularly prevalent among school staff, with 94% of them asserting that activities within their schools were not interconnected. This situation underscores earlier observations regarding the influence of municipal decisions on which projects receive support, as well as the role of teachers who often find themselves engaged in pre-designed activities with limited ability to effect change. In contrast, CSO representatives had a more favourable view, with 70% believing that the activities on this topic within the same entity were interrelated. It is notable that all interviewed policymakers (two from the educational sector and one former member of the CT/CVE National Committee) were unable to comment on how the activities aligned with the strategic orientation of the implementing entities. This lack of insight underscores the inadequate cooperation between entities operating in the field and the NCCVECT, as well as the absence of both vertical and horizontal institutional coordination (see Figure 23).



Such observations are not surprising, given the data from other criteria showing that mostly schools but also often municipalities had limited knowledge about how the activities were developed. These key stakeholders were neither involved in designing or planning the activities nor in identifying the vulnerabilities the activities aimed to address. This lack of involvement has limited the schools' influence on aligning the projects with their own ongoing initiatives.

**Overall, respondents also highlighted a lack of coherence between activities and other projects within the same context.** Specifically, 40% of respondents noted that there was no alignment between their activities and those of other actors, while 44% felt that activities were partly coherent with others (see Figure 22). Even CSOs expressed criticism, with 80% noting that their activities were only partially aligned with other ongoing efforts (see Figure 24). Municipal and school staff also reported a lack of local-level coherence, with 50% and 65% respectively, acknowledging this issue. Interestingly, policymakers were generally positive about the issue, with 67% reporting coherence between the different actors. A policymaker from the educational field noted "I would rate the coherence among the involved actors as satisfactory. While most activities occur at the local level, they align with the national strategy and action plan" (Respondent 52). This positive sentiment may be largely attributed to their broader understanding of how different projects fit into the larger landscape of P/CVE. **This suggests a significant challenge in achieving coherence between different actors, exacerbated by institutional misalignment and insufficient communication between actors about local-level activities.**

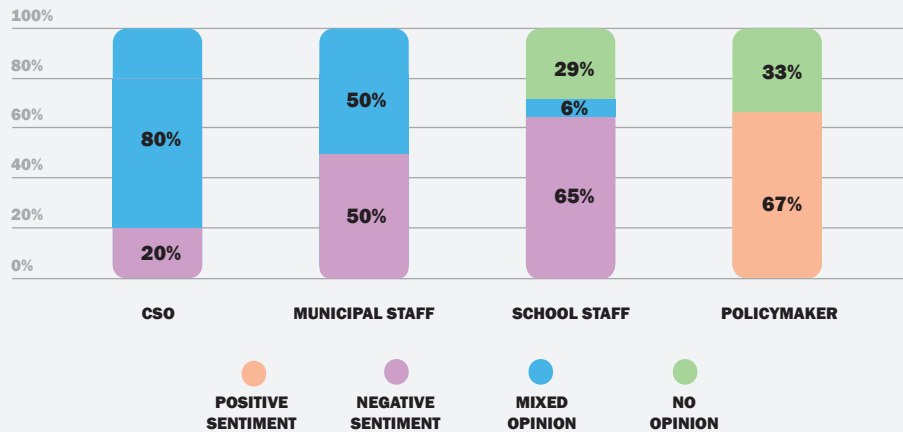


Figure 24. Respondents' answers to whether the activities were coherent with other actors' projects in the same context (in %, N=52)

**In general, the activities were perceived as unique and distinct, with each contributing value without duplicating efforts.** A substantial 69% of respondents indicated that the activities did not overlap with one another, while 13% acknowledged some instances of duplicated efforts. Meanwhile, 13% of respondents could not provide an opinion due to insufficient information about broader activities in the local context or the specific topic at hand (see Figure 22). The mapping of P/CVE activities in the four targeted locations revealed instances of activity replication across different sites. For example, workshops on pathways to radicalization were implemented in both Skopje and Kumanovo as part of a broader project. Additionally, there were multiple trainings and workshops for the same target group (teachers and parents) addressing radicalization topics, such as pathways to radicalization and early warning signs. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether this replication or duplication of methods had solely negative effects, such as inefficient use of funds and human resources or is also adding value to the target groups and the communities.

**The efforts to foster partnerships and enhance the impact of related projects and policies were viewed critically.** 50% of respondents believed that the activities did not complement each other, while 37% shared mixed opinions on the issue (see Figure 22). Notably, only one CSO respondent reported that their activity effectively complemented the outcomes of other projects and policies. Consistent with this view, a significant proportion of school (71%) and municipal staff (67%) expressed skepticism about the degree of complementarity among the activities (see Figure 25).



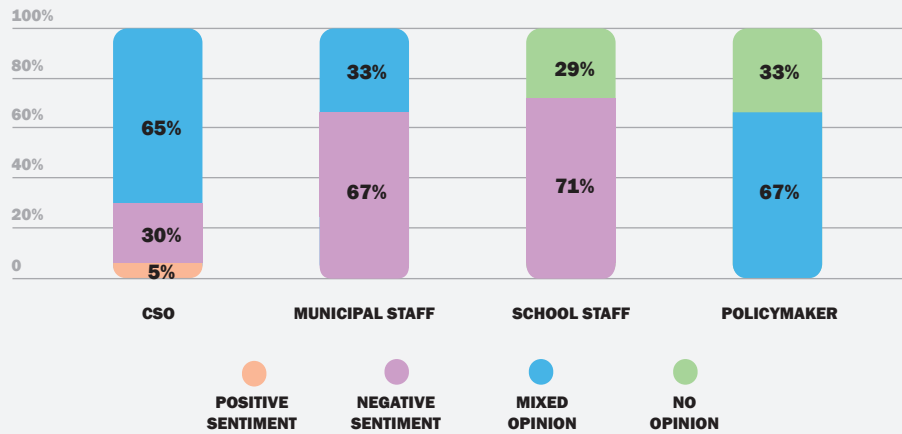


Figure 25. Respondents' answers to whether the activities had complemented and/or enhanced the effect of other related projects and policies (in %, N=52)

Additionally, only 10% of respondents felt that the activities successfully created synergies and partnerships with other related projects. Meanwhile, nearly half (46%) had a mixed opinion on whether collaborations occurred during the activities (see Figure 22). While 24% of school staff reported benefits in fostering synergies and partnerships, in contrast, 71% of school staff reported negatively on this topic. Whereas only 5% of CSOs reported similar benefits from the activities (see Figure 26). The partnerships that fostered synergies with other actors primarily emerged from participation in training sessions, which facilitated the expansion of professional networks. These collaborations were further supported by opportunities to work with schools that they might not have otherwise interacted with and were reinforced through various community events.

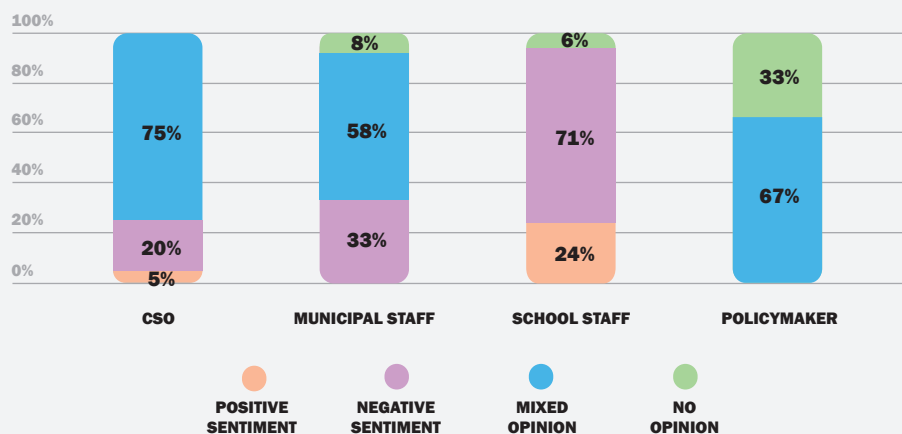


Figure 26. Respondents' answers to whether the activities brought synergies and partnerships with other related projects and policies (in %, N=52)

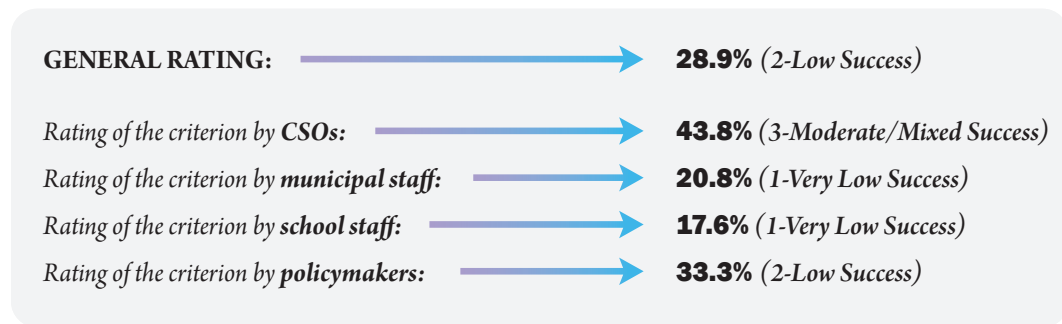
**In general, while local capacity on the topic was reportedly developed, more structural relations and cooperation frameworks between actors were not significantly instigated.** As noted by a school staff member from Kumanovo (Respondent 21), "Coherence is largely absent at the institutional level for basic educational aspects, and for this context in general, I do not think that it will appear by itself. We actually have a serious problem with coherence in practice."

**The developed local knowledge capacity of teachers, students, municipal staff and CSOs remains isolated and receives minimal attention from institutional entities.** A policymaker from the CVE/CT National Committee (Respondent 51) observed, "It is unreasonable to say that the cooperation is excellent; on a scale of one to five, the grade is three. The civil sector should work on animating the public and the actors to improve the quality and make the offer versatile. Cooperation can be enhanced by building trust and expanding the horizons of cooperation. In terms of coherence, it exists to a certain extent, but it must be improved, above all in communication and coordination with local authorities." Similarly, a school staff member from Skopje (Respondent 34) expressed a desire for more proactive engagement: "I see passivity; I would like to see more will and cooperation between different entities [municipalities, CSOs, schools, policymakers] on the local and national scene working on this topic."

*Overall, there is an absence of coherence, partnerships, and synergies built among actors. Institutions in the field did not function as cohesive, coordinated bodies where information related to P/CVE activities in the local school setting could be integrated effectively. Factors such as a lack of institutional capacities, politicization, and distrust between structures at both national and local levels, as well as among different actors in the civil sector, have contributed to this incoherence. As a result, the potential for achieving a larger social impact is partially undermined by an emphasis on the quantity of activities and the number of participants, rather than on building stronger alliances and mobilizing actors to address these issues more effectively.*

*The overall ratings of Criterion 5 on Coherence and Connectedness of the Activities indicated "Low Success", with a general consensus among all stakeholders. CSOs rated the activities as having low coherence and connectedness, while municipal and school staff provided even lower scores, categorizing the success as "Very Low". Policymakers echoed this sentiment, reflecting significant concerns regarding the coherence and connectedness of the initiatives. This collective feedback highlighted a troubling gap in achieving the desired coherence among different implementers. It underscores the need to overcome the fragmented approach, establish stronger engagement with beneficiaries in the community, and facilitate the sharing of information among implementers.*

## Criterion 6: Sustainability (actual and prospective sustainability)



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

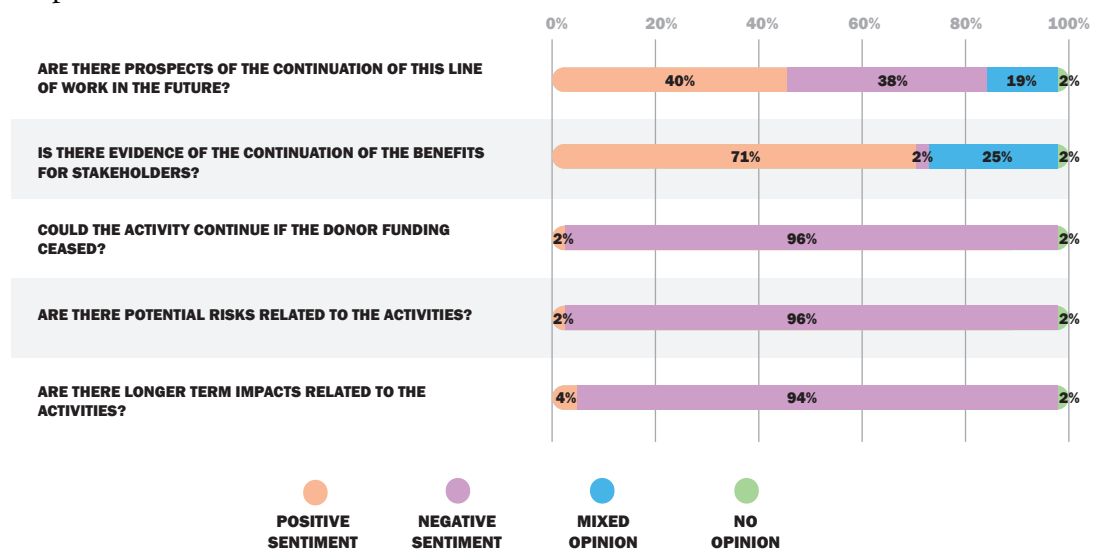


Figure 27. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 6: Sustainability of the Activities (in %, N=52)

**Sustainability largely hinges on national and local policy priorities, as well as the demonstrated motivation and ownership within the activities. Half the respondents expressed some prospects for continuing work in the P/CVE area in the future, with 40% indicating a positive sentiment toward the idea and 19% having a mixed opinion on the prospects of continuing this kind of work (see Figure 27).** Responses also revealed a mixed perspective among the different stakeholders, with the majority (80%) of CSOs being positive about continuing to work in this thematic area. While 15% indicated they see no prospects of continuing this line of work. Additionally, half of the municipal staff (50%) expressed mixed opinions about the prospects of continuing such work in their municipality. The most striking statistic was among school staff, with only 6% being positive towards the prospects of continuing to work on this topic, 18% had mixed opinions, and a substantial 76% indicated that there are no prospects that such work will be continued in the school (see Figure 28). This uncertain outlook is attributed to several factors, including limited funding, lack of coordination among stakeholders, and insufficient evidence of long-term impact, which contribute to a generally gloomy picture regarding the future of P/CVE initiatives. School staff expressed that despite participating in several training sessions on P/CVE, the lack of diverse learning formats and the evolving nature of the topic often inadequately reflected in how the subject is presented in the activities make it challenging to apply the concepts effectively in the classroom. Additionally, the activities were not flexible enough to

integrate feedback from school staff as noted in the answers to relevance. Some respondents noted that issues such as exclusion, hate speech, and online bullying require more immediate attention from schools and policymakers. However, the critical question remains how to effectively address these issues through engaging teaching formats, peer learning, and peer mentoring support for students and teachers that would not be one-time events.

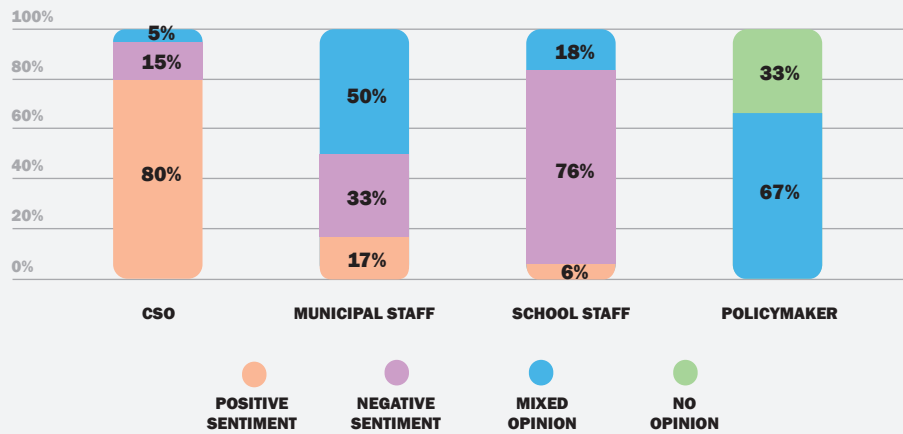


Figure 28. Respondents' answers to whether the entity is continuing P/CVE work in the future (in %, N=52)

Despite a noted uncertain outlook to continue P/CVE work in the schools, 71% of respondents assert that the effects of the P/CVE activities endure beyond the project's completion (see Figure 27). Stakeholders generally agreed that the benefits of participating in the activities extend beyond the duration of the activities themselves. Specifically, 80% of CSOs, 67% of municipal staff, 65% of school staff, and 67% of policymakers answered positively on sustained benefits for participants in P/CVE activities (see Figure 29). However, while CSOs have conducted evaluations (usually output based) highlighting these benefits, municipal and school staff and policymakers, noted that the reported benefits are often more anecdotal than systematically measured.

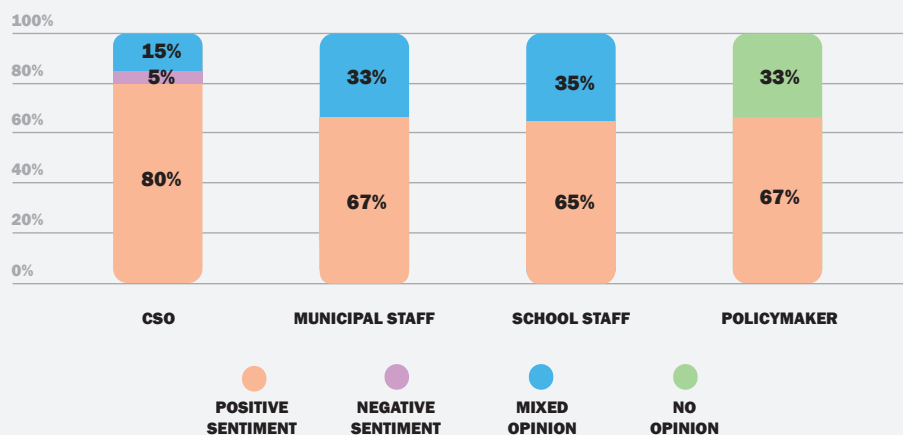


Figure 29. Respondents' answers to whether there was a continuation of the benefits for stakeholders after the activities (in %, N=52)

CSOs, municipal and school staff during the interviews acknowledged the following:

- Schools in Skopje, Kumanovo, Gostivar, and Tetovo benefited from workshops and training sessions, which facilitated inter-ethnic communication, improved relationships between students from diverse backgrounds, and enhanced collaboration among school staff. This was affirmed by CSOs and their activity evaluations, and feedback from interviewed teachers and students participating in focus groups.
- Students who participated in workshops and summer camps demonstrated improved abilities to critically analyze information, rely on verified sources, and challenge misinformation. This was confirmed by CSOs and their activity evaluations, as well as feedback from students participating in focus groups.
- Students who took part in workshops, summer camps, and awareness-raising events showed increased knowledge about VE and a better understanding of effective responses to online radicalization and hate speech. This was affirmed by CSOs and their activity evaluations, as well as feedback from students participating in focus groups.
- Students and teachers involved in advocacy and awareness campaigns expanded their knowledge of human rights issues, including principles of equality and the right to education in a safe, non-discriminatory, and inclusive environment. This was particularly important for children of returnees and was affirmed by CSOs and their activity evaluations, as well as feedback from interviewed teachers and students participating in focus groups.
- At least 48 schools were equipped with competent staff and support mechanisms (such as guides, research, lesson plans, etc.) for both vulnerable youth and their parents, as noted in the mapping of P/CVE activities.
- However, none of the CSOs, municipal or school staff reported participation in long-term follow-ups or evaluations indicating long-term impacts. For some CSOs, this was due to the short duration of the activities, while others faced challenges such as the mobility of school staff or difficulty in tracking students after they finished school. Only one teacher from Gostivar mentioned observing trained students taking on leadership roles in the community.

**Thus, it seems that the P/CVE activities have worked to achieve lasting benefits for the stakeholders by fostering intercultural understanding, reducing biases, enhancing critical thinking, and capacitating stakeholders via different activities, learning formats and engagement levels.** A student from Gostivar noted: “The primary impact came from our focus on critical issues such as radicalism and extreme violence, which in itself is a significant benefit. By addressing these concerns seriously, rather than dismissing them, we are committed to finding solutions whenever they arise in our community.” Student from Tetovo remarked: “When I reflect on the project, the most significant takeaway for me is the friendships and connections I established with others. The project profoundly impacted me by giving me foundational knowledge on the covered topics. I now have a deeper understanding of these concepts and their relevance to our daily lives.”

**Yet, these perceived benefits could potentially have an enhanced impact if ongoing support and resources for their continuation are ensured.** Many teachers noted that the activities were short-term and one-off events. They pointed out a lack of peer learning and mentoring to help integrate new concepts into the classroom. Concerns were raised about the lack of ongoing activities or follow-up, with suggestions for regular reinforcement of training and activities. A teacher from Skopje emphasized the need for biannual sessions to prevent knowledge loss. This feedback underscores the necessity of maintaining continuity and regularity in activities to reinforce and sustain their impact. A teacher from Tetovo highlighted difficulties in knowledge transfer and the influence of external factors, such as political campaigns, which may exacerbate negative behaviors among students.

This points to the importance of integrating activities with broader educational strategies and addressing external influences that might undermine their sustainability. Parents also called for the continuity of such programs and their integration into the school curriculum. Additionally, there was no reported systematic measurement of the effects, aside from the general observations by municipal staff and policymakers who mentioned that they are not aware of any young people from their communities being radicalized. Furthermore, there is a gap in enabling space for student-led activities in schools, which limits the application of the knowledge gained from these activities.

**In addition to the above, the majority of the respondents (96%) indicated that the activities would likely cease if donor funding were to end** (see Figure 27). This highlights a critical dependency on external financial support to continue of these projects. Only 2% of respondents were confident that the activity would persist without donor funding, citing the municipality had a dedicated budget for such activities. Such perceived dependency suggests that the activities lack financial sustainability and resilience to funding fluctuations.

Overall, 96% of the respondents reported no significant risks posed by the activities (see Figure 27), suggesting a general perception of the activities being safely implemented without immediate or obvious negative consequences for those involved or the community. However, 94% of respondents felt the activities had only partial long-term impacts. This indicates that while the activities had perceived immediate (more anecdotal) effects, their sustained influence over time was perceived as limited, again reaffirming that ongoing support and resources for continued utilization are needed.

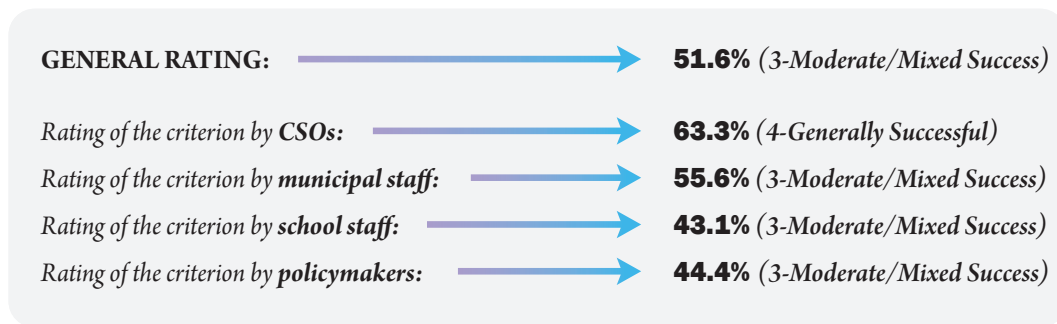
**All parents involved in the focus group discussions believed that discussions about radicalism and violence should be approached with kindness and authority.** They advocate for open dialogues, especially in response to current events, and stress the importance of explaining the consequences of extremist actions to children. Many parents believe schools and municipalities are not proactive enough in addressing these issues. They suggest that institutions should take more responsibility for organizing educational activities and training sessions for parents. While parents who participated in activities found them beneficial, they noted the need for broader participation and mandatory involvement from all parents, particularly those who may be less engaged. Parents view teachers as essential in discussing these topics but feel their efforts must be supported by active parental involvement. They emphasize that teachers alone cannot address these issues without backing from parents and the community. Overall, all focus groups of parents highlighted a need for more structured and widespread efforts from schools, municipalities, and other institutions to address radicalization and violence. Parents were eager for more resources and support to help them in these discussions and would like to see a more proactive approach from educational and community organizations.

*In summary, while there is the perception that the activities posed no significant risks and some positive effects were acknowledged, there is notable concern about the long-term sustainability and continuation of these impacts, especially if funding is limited and if ongoing support and resources for continued use of benefits are not ensured in the future.*

*The overall rating was deemed a "Low Success" for the Sustainability of the Activities. CSOs rated the criteria more positively, viewing the efforts as having "Moderate/Mixed Success", while municipal and school staff reported "Very Low Success". Policymakers also indicated a "Low Success". While stakeholders acknowledged some achievements in P/CVE activities, most expressed concerns about their sustainability. This sentiment highlighted a broader need for substantial improvements to align the activities with the expectations and realities faced by the various stakeholders involved. The lack of coherence in the initiatives, a predominant focus on outputs rather than outcomes, and insufficient involvement of stakeholders in the design process undermined the long-term viability of these efforts. Without addressing these gaps, the potential for sustained impact remained at risk, emphasizing the importance of collaborative and inclusive approaches in future activities.*



## Criterion 7: Utility/Impact



The perceptions of the respondents, both generally and in relation to their specific role (entity) within the research, concerning each evaluation question across the relevant criteria, are presented below.

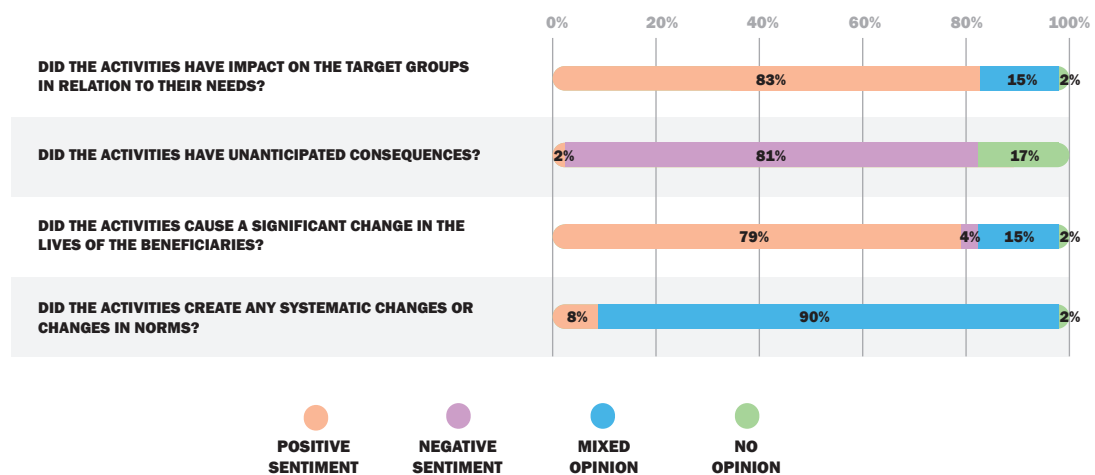
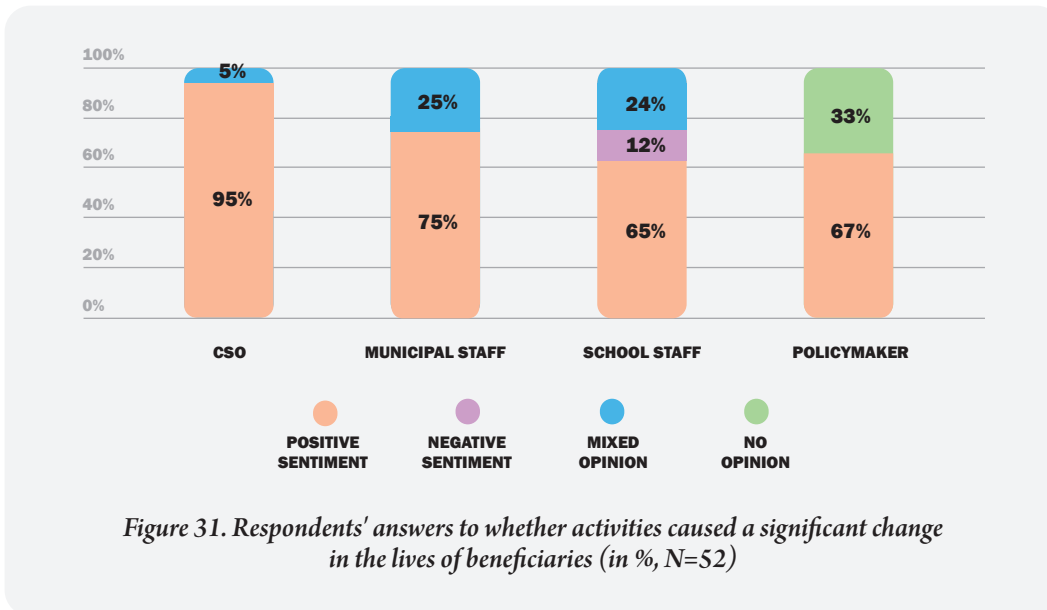


Figure 30. Respondents' answers to evaluation questions for Criterion 7: Utility/Impact of the Activities (in %, N=52)

**In general, respondents indicated that the activities have had a meaningful impact on the target groups, addressing their needs effectively.** Specifically, 83% of respondents affirmed that the activities met these needs, while 15% stated they had a "Mixed Opinion" about this outcome (see Figure 30). Reportedly, the activities yielded benefits for individuals, various stakeholder groups (teachers, students, parents and municipal staff), communities, and institutions. While 79% of respondents perceived significant changes in beneficiaries' lives resulting from the activities, this view was particularly strong among CSOs (95%). Other stakeholders also perceived the changes positively, though to a lesser extent: municipal staff (75%), policymakers (67%) and school staff (65%) (see Figure 31). Notably, school staff shared experiences of successfully integrating students, including those from challenging backgrounds, such as children of returnees from conflict zones in the Middle East. A student from Skopje noted: "I've always been quite reserved and found it difficult to express my opinions. This activity has helped me overcome that barrier, enabling me to articulate my thoughts and feelings more effectively. I've also learned to be more critical, seek evidence, and verify information, especially on social media." Similarly, another student from Skopje remarked– "I've gained increased confidence and now feel more capable of discussing all the topics mentioned." A student from Tetovo similarly remarked – "The most beneficial aspect of these activities for me was collaborating with students from diverse cultures. This experience was crucial as it allowed me to work with, converse with, and discuss topics that significantly affect our daily lives. Gaining insight into cultural differences and fostering trust and respect among peers were key elements that made this experience both valuable and essential."

Additionally, only one CSO respondent noted an unintended success, with parents, who began communicating with the CSO more frequently to share experiences, exchange information, and seek advice on supporting their children (see Figure 30).



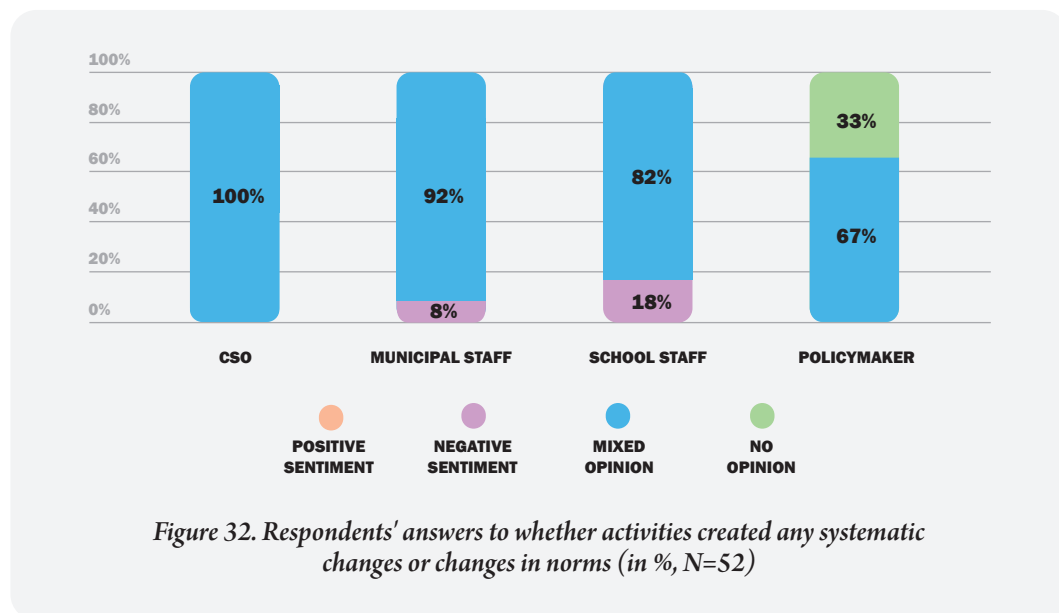
All the parents unanimously agreed that the main benefits included improved communication, better management of impudence and impatience, a shift in perspective during conflicts, increased tolerance, and a greater ability to listen to both sides and address specific issues. Every parent observed positive changes in their personal lives. A parent from Kumanovo noted: “I apply the techniques from the project in my personal life, leading me to greater family closeness and more open communication.” Another parent from Kumanovo also observed a positive change in their child, including a heightened desire to help others, as a result of participating in the project. Parents expressed a strong desire to participate in future activities related to these issues. They seek opportunities to learn new skills, gain knowledge, and address various challenges related to violence and radicalization.

Despite the notable benefits on beneficiaries' lives, the majority of respondents (90%) felt that the activities were only partly transformative and did not fully create systemic change or shift norms (see Figure 30). This sentiment was shared by all CSOs, 92% of municipal staff, 82% of school staff, and 50% of policymakers (see Figure 32). For example, the municipality of Gostivar established dedicated budget lines to support community action teams. This initiative resulted from both a policy orientation and sustained efforts by local CSOs and the political will of the municipality. A CSO representative from Skopje (Respondent 44) noted, “Governmental institutions learned that CSOs can be crucial partners in building the capacities of state and local actors in the fight against radicalization and VE”, which is also reflected in the 2023 – 2027 National Strategy for CVE where CSOs are partners in implementing the activities stipulated in the Action Plan.<sup>30</sup>

In order to see transformative activities and enable systemic changes, some shortfalls from current practices would need to be overcome, such as students' uncertainty about where to seek help for concerns related to extremism and parents' feeling that teachers often lack the

<sup>30</sup> Government of Republic of North Macedonia (2023). National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (2023 – 2027). [online document]. Available at: [https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng\\_national\\_cve\\_strategy\\_2023-2027.pdf](https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/eng_national_cve_strategy_2023-2027.pdf) pp. 23 [18.09.2024]

time to focus on empathy and emotional development due to curriculum pressures (both stated during the focus group discussions). Parents also called for more structured support from the state, municipalities, and CSOs to make educational resources on these topics more accessible.



When evaluating the impact of the activities on schools' visions of radicalization and VE, one teacher from Skopje (Respondent 41) remarked, "This is such a difficult question; there is no vision on this subject in the schools or the community." Policymakers echoed this sentiment, noting the lack of systemic solutions for funding such activities. A policymaker from the CVE/CT National Committee (Respondent 51) observed, "The cooperation between institutional members of the committee and the civil sector is open. If we provided additional support to local governments, the results would be even better. There is a need for greater support from local government, including establishing budgets at the municipal level and influencing policies and activities on this topic. Currently, it is not feasible to sustain these activities without donor funding."

Students involved in the focus group discussions provided thoughtful recommendations for future P/CVE practices. They suggested increasing the frequency of such activities and starting them at earlier educational stages. They emphasized the importance of engaging parents and ensuring that discussions about these topics occur both at home and at school. They also advocated for state and municipal support in terms of training and resources to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of these activities. In summary, students found the P/CVE activities valuable and insightful, but they recommended improvements in the delivery and format of these programs to enhance engagement and effectiveness. They also highlighted the need for a collaborative effort involving educators, parents, and community organizations to better address and prevent violence and extremism.

*In summary, to understand the processes that enabled the results of the activities, it is crucial to consider the broader political and socio-economic context in which they were implemented. The activities were heavily dependent on external financial support, highlighting the need for sustainable funding mechanisms. There was insufficient alignment and integration of local resources and capacities, which affected the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the activities. The topic of radicalization and VE is also dynamic, shaped by a variety of evolving social, political, and technological factors. Extremist ideologies are constantly changing, adapting to global events, societal shifts, and cultural narratives. For example, the rise of social media has transformed how radical ideas are spread. Therefore, the context in which*

radicalization occurs can vary between regions and communities. In that sense, activities often struggled to adapt flexibly and adequately to these changes within their design. The absence of cohesive institutional support and guidance also contributed to the challenges in implementing and sustaining the activities. There is a broader issue of separation of students based on the language of instruction and insufficient investment in developing a curriculum that fosters new skills and capacities within schools (of school staff, students and parents), which affects the long-term impact and integration of these activities.

The overall rating of the impact of the P/CVE activities indicated “Moderate/Mixed Success”. CSOs rated the criteria more favorably, reflecting a sense of achievement in their efforts. In contrast, municipal and school staff, plus policymakers all provided “Moderate/Mixed” ratings, suggesting a shared recognition of the challenges that remained. Students emphasized the importance of the activities in understanding cultural differences and building trust among peers. Parents reported increased confidence and improved communication skills, enabling better conflict management and greater tolerance. They noted positive changes in their personal lives and expressed a strong interest in participating in future activities to learn new skills and address challenges related to violence and radicalization. This variance in perceptions highlighted the need for long-term measurement, evaluation, and follow up to determine long-term impact along with aligning projects with what can be feasibly continued by the school staff and stakeholders. Overall, while there were positive elements acknowledged, the feedback underscored the importance of addressing the gaps to achieve a greater impact in the community.

## 4. Conclusions

Education today extends far beyond the mere transmission of knowledge. Modern schools are pivotal in shaping students' values and character by fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a sense of responsibility. They cultivate empathy, ethical behavior, and adaptability, while promoting an appreciation for cultural diversity and global issues. This comprehensive approach equips students to become informed and engaged citizens capable of contributing to sustainable and just societies. By leveraging education as a tool for nurturing active citizenship, schools can address the underlying factors of radicalization. Through curricula and activities that emphasize critical reflection, tolerance, and constructive engagement, education can empower students to resist extremist ideologies and contribute positively to their communities. Thus, today's education not only prepares individuals to navigate the world but also to actively participate in building resilient, cohesive societies.

Figure 33 (below) illustrates the general rating and the sub-ratings for each stakeholder category of the analyzed criteria (in %), with a higher percentage indicating a stronger positive sentiment for the criteria. As shown in the below graphic, stakeholders expressed strong sentiments regarding the Relevance and Quality of the Design of the Activities compared to other criteria. In contrast, perceptions of Efficiency, Coverage, Coherence and Connectedness, Sustainability, and Utility/Impact were significantly less positive. Notably, CSOs had considerably more favorable responses across all evaluation criteria than other stakeholders, while school staff provided the most conservative scores for all criteria except for the Criterion Efficiency. CSOs highly rated the Relevance and Quality of Design as well as Effectiveness but CSOs provided a “Moderate/Mixed” rating for Coverage, Sustainability, plus Coherence and Connectedness. Municipal staff rated Relevance and Quality of Design as “Moderate/Mixed Success” and reported high effectiveness, but they also noted lower scores for Efficiency, Sustainability, as well as Coherence and Connectedness. School staff had the lowest ratings overall, reflecting low scores for Relevance, Quality of Design, and Effectiveness. Staff gave even lower ratings for Coherence and Connectedness. Their views on Sustainability were notably negative. Policymakers rated Relevance and Quality of Design as “Moderate/Mixed”, along with Effectiveness. However, their scores for Sustainability plus Coherence and Connectedness were deemed “Low”. Overall, it was observed that while CSOs perceived the activities positively, other stakeholders highlighted significant gaps in areas critical for long-term success.

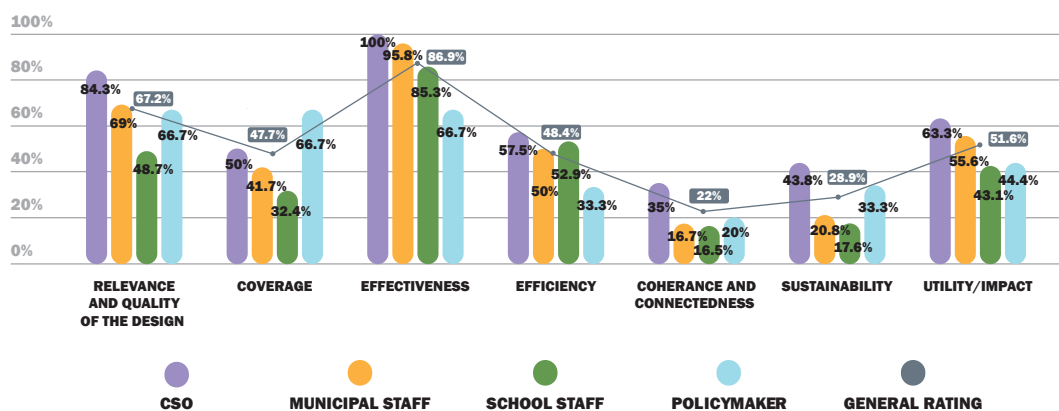


Figure 33. Overview of general rating and sub-ratings by all stakeholders of the evaluation criteria (in %, N=52)

## ➔ **Relevance and Quality of Design of the Activities**

The criterion **Relevance and Quality of Design of the Activities** was rated as “**Generally Successful**”. The activities were broadly recognized for their relevance to the local context, addressing a diverse range of target groups beyond just schools. A significant percentage of respondents (96%) confirmed that the activities were sensitive and responsive to the evolving local dynamics during implementation. However, this success is viewed differently by various stakeholders. CSOs expressed a strong confidence in the Relevance and Quality of Design of The Activities. In contrast, municipal staff shared a positive view, though slightly more reserved than the CSOs. School staff, however, expressed more skepticism, placing their perspective at “Moderate/Mixed Success”. Challenges in the design stage of these activities, pointed to disparities as to whether the design process fully addressed the needs of the beneficiaries or if the activities and outputs were consistent with relevant policies. The disconnect between the Relevance of the Activities and the beneficiaries' understanding of their value points to a lack of shared knowledge about the policies, the motivations behind the activities, and the logic underpinning them. Additionally, there was insufficient active participation from stakeholders, with many beneficiaries remaining passive recipients rather than engaged participants. While the activities were designed to effectively meet the needs of stakeholders and aligned with national and local priorities for building resilience against VE, the design process fell short in fostering active beneficiary participation. As the understanding and institutional responses to P/CVE evolve, traditional training-focused approaches are increasingly seen as outdated. Future activities should incorporate stakeholder feedback, leverage previous experiences, and increase stakeholder ownership to enhance the activities. There is potential for replicating or expanding successful activities with a greater emphasis on dynamic and inclusive design processes.

## ➔ **Coverage of the Activities**

The criterion **Coverage of the Activities** was rated as “**Moderate/Mixed Success**” This suggests a prevailing sense of uncertainty about the appropriateness of the selection method of the geographical areas and schools as well as on the inclusion of the school staff across various stakeholder groups. There were concerns among some teachers and municipal staff who questioned the appropriateness of the projects to their local environments, not perceiving their areas as particularly vulnerable to radicalization and VE. A significant issue identified was the limited involvement of teachers and other school staff in assessing vulnerabilities and the design of the projects. This lack of engagement led to an inclusion bias where the primary criteria for selecting beneficiaries appeared to be the municipality's willingness to participate rather than an actual assessment of local needs. School staff expressed a perspective of “Low Success”. This lower rating likely indicated specific concerns within educational settings, including insufficient induction into the activities and the broader P/CVE field. Consequently, some target groups or localities either did not perceive the activity as necessary or did not fully understand its purpose. These issues suggest that without proper training and support, educators may struggle to effectively engage with and implement P/CVE initiatives, ultimately impacting the overall success of the programs. Addressing these gaps could be crucial for enhancing the appropriate coverage of future activities in schools. This divergence in perspectives underscores the need for further dialogue among stakeholders regarding the selection process and the involvement of educators. Engaging those directly involved in education will help align activities more closely with specific local vulnerabilities.



## ➔ Effectiveness of the Activities

The criteria **Effectiveness of the Activities**, received a general rating of “**Outstanding**”, based primarily on stakeholders' perceptions. These initiatives covered a wide range of topics aimed at fostering resilience and mitigating extremism risks, extending beyond schools to training facilities and local cultural institutions. However, concerns arose regarding their focus on outputs rather than meaningful outcomes. Selection criteria for schools and students, such as prioritizing top performers and limited budgets, also raised questions about their effectiveness. Many activities lacked mechanisms for integrating new knowledge into daily routines, and institutional barriers, like language differences, posed challenges. Despite these issues, effective communication with municipal staff, the involvement of school principals, and the expertise of project teams were key to the activities' success. Student motivation and collaboration among actors also contributed significantly. While stakeholders perceived the activities as effective, there was an emphasis on immediate results rather than long-term impacts on students and educational practices. Without proper oversight, it was difficult to determine if skills and knowledge from training were effectively integrated into teaching. This gap means that the benefits of the activities may not reach students in a meaningful way. Focusing solely on outputs, such as the number of workshops conducted, and without ongoing monitoring and adaptation, the high ratings might mask limitations in real-world applicability. Overall, while the activities were seen as achieving their objectives, they faced challenges related to funding, coordination, and long-term impact, undermining their effectiveness. Future efforts should prioritize tailored approaches, comprehensive stakeholder engagement, and systemic issues to enhance effectiveness.

## ➔ Efficiency of the Activities

The criterion **Efficiency of the Activities** received a general rating of “**Moderate/Mixed Success**”. While most of the activities did not face major barriers during implementation, several issues affected the overall efficiency. CSOs, municipal and school staff indicated a consensus on the ranking. CSOs encountered various difficulties, including motivating teachers, students, and municipal staff, securing and maintaining municipal support, and managing logistical and financial constraints. Despite these obstacles, they successfully navigated potential risks without significantly impacting the intended outcomes and impact of the projects. Key challenges included shifts in political governance, which led to changes in local power dynamics and a lack of alignment between local and national authorities. Maintaining continuity of activities and fostering high motivation among diverse stakeholders proved challenging, particularly within an ecosystem of CSOs characterized by limited financial resources. The rating from policymakers as “Low” in Efficiency suggests a critical need for a better ecosystem of coordination, cooperation, partnership building, funding, and transferability between the activities and real-life school practices, as well as the broader strategic goals of the policies.

## ➔ Coherence and Connectedness of the Activities

The criterion **Coherence and Connectedness** received a general rating of “**Low Success**” with a general consensus among all stakeholders. The activities exhibited significant challenges in achieving internal and external coherence. There was lack of internal coherence and this problem was compounded by municipal decisions that influenced which projects received administrative support, and the limited capacity of teachers to influence or modify pre-designed activities. Overall, there is a fragmented approach within the same context.

This fragmentation was marked by insufficient alignment between various actors and institutional misalignment. The activities, while unique and valuable, did not integrate well with other related efforts, leading to isolated impacts rather than a cohesive strategy. More so, efforts to foster partnerships and enhance the impact of related projects and policies were viewed critically. Only 10% of respondents felt that the activities successfully created meaningful synergies and partnerships with other projects. This reflects a broader issue of ineffective collaboration and limited integration of activities. Local capacity did not get the necessary institutional attention, leading to a lack of cohesive, coordinated efforts. Although local capacity on the topic was supported and developed, there was minimal structural support for creating lasting cooperation frameworks between actors. Again, as reiterated by respondents, factors contributing to the lack of coherence included insufficient institutional capacities, partisan involvement, and distrust among governance structures at both national and local levels, as well as between different civil sector actors. These challenges undermined the potential for achieving a larger social impact, as the focus on the quantity of activities and the number of participants overshadowed the need for stronger alliances and effective mobilization. Overall, there is insufficient information sharing and networking between educational institutions, policymakers, and CSOs which limits the sharing of best practices and lessons learned. This fragmentation impedes the development of a unified approach to integrating topics of P/CVE into the formal educational curricula. In summary, the activities struggled with achieving high scores in Coherence and Connectedness because of their isolated efforts with limited integration and collaboration. This lack of cohesion and partnership-building hindered the potential social impact of the activities.

### ➔ **Sustainability of the Activities**

The criterion for **Sustainability** received a general score of “**Low Success**”. Half of the respondents stated that they did not think their P/CVE activities would continue. There is a heavy reliance on external donor funding. The majority of respondents indicated that the activities would likely end if donor support were withdrawn, highlighting a significant risk to the sustainability of projects. Despite the decline in motivation and dependency risks, there was a positive sentiment by some respondents that the effects of the P/CVE activities persist beyond the project's completion. Yet, this is not a sentiment shared by municipal and school staff who reported “**Very Low Success**”. This sentiment highlighted a broader need for substantial improvements to align the activities with the expectations and realities faced by the various stakeholders involved. The lack of coherence in the initiatives, a predominant focus on outputs rather than outcomes, and insufficient involvement of stakeholders in the design process, as seen in other criteria, undermined the long-term viability of these efforts. Without addressing these gaps, the potential for sustained impact remained at risk, emphasizing the importance of collaborative and inclusive approaches in future activities. In summary, while the P/CVE activities have perceived lasting benefits and reportedly achieved their intended outcomes, their sustainability is undermined by a strong reliance on donor funding and a decline in motivation for continued engagement. This critical dependency on external financial support poses a significant challenge to the long-term continuation and impact of the activities.

### ➔ **Impact/Utility of the Activities**

The criterion for **Impact/Utility of the Activities** received a general score of “**Moderate/Mixed Success**”. Respondents perceived that the activities impacted the target groups and effectively addressed their needs. The activities were perceived to have improved

beneficiaries' improvements in beneficiaries' lives, demonstrating their likely utility in mitigating issues related to radicalization and VE. Notably, CSOs rated the criterion more favorably, reflecting a sense of achievement in their efforts. In contrast, policymakers, municipal and school staff, all provided "Moderate/Mixed Success" ratings, suggesting a shared recognition of challenges. Despite the perceived positive impact, the majority of respondents felt that the activities were only partially transformative and did not achieve systemic change or shift norms to the extent desired. In addition, the activities were heavily reliant on external financial support, underscoring the lack of sustainable funding mechanisms. The lack of alignment and integration with local resources and capacities affected their overall sustainability. Additionally, the dynamic nature of radicalization and VE posed challenges for the activities to adapt flexibly and adequately within their designs. Finally, the absence of cohesive institutional support and guidance contributed to challenges in implementing and sustaining the activities. Issues such as parallelism in the education system, separation based on language of instruction, and insufficient efforts made to develop a curriculum that targets new skills such as critical thinking, digital literacy, cooperation skill, civic engagement, adaptability and resilience, negatively impacted the long-term integration and effectiveness of activities. In summary, while the activities had a perceived meaningful impact on addressing beneficiaries' needs, they were less successful in achieving systemic change or fully incorporating inclusive practices. The reliance on external funding and the lack of alignment with local capacities and broader institutional support constrained the long-term impact and sustainability of the activities. Overall, while there were positive elements acknowledged, the feedback underscored the importance of addressing the gaps to achieve greater impact in the community.

# Recommendations

## ➔ 1. Establishing a P/CVE Education Coordination Mechanism

A well-structured coordination mechanism is essential for fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders involved in P/CVE education efforts. By establishing a committee that includes representatives from schools, municipalities, CSOs, and policymakers, a comprehensive platform for sharing information about ongoing projects and best practices can be created. This committee would aim to enhance coherence among initiatives, ensure that efforts are not duplicated, facilitate the appropriate selection of schools and beneficiaries, and provide oversight to ensure that resources are utilized efficiently. Additionally, it would serve as a centralized body for resource mobilization, helping to secure funding and support for projects that have proven effective in various contexts. Funding partners, such as international donors, could also participate to provide input on current and future possible projects. Their involvement could mobilize resources and reduce duplicating projects.

It is recommended that the committee could meet quarterly, with CSOs assisting in organizing meetings and logistics, limiting the organizational responsibilities to one or two entities to avoid over-complicating the coordination. Regular communication and updates will ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and informed. This inclusive approach would improve communication and foster a sense of ownership and accountability among stakeholders, ultimately leading to more impactful P/CVE activities.

- ➔ **Responsibilities:** National-level institutions and municipalities should be responsible for enabling the coordination mechanism, while CSOs could contribute to its establishment, capacity building, and management.

## ➔ 2. Developing an Integrated P/CVE Curriculum

Developing a national-level P/CVE curriculum that seamlessly integrates into existing school programs is crucial for ensuring the long-term impact of activities. In this regard, collaborating with teachers to create such a curriculum will be critical to ensure that it is both relevant and practical.

Based on the findings in this research, it is crucial to address the concerns and negative sentiment expressed by school staff about continuing their work in the field of P/CVE. Future activities should prioritize bottom-up approaches that engage school staff in the design process, ensuring that initiatives are context-sensitive and flexible. Therefore, incorporating interactive learning formats and facilitating regular consultations with school staff during the development of tools, materials, and curricula, could foster a sense of ownership and commitment, ultimately strengthening the long-term impact of P/CVE programs.

Such a curriculum should also explain how to embed various P/CVE themes (not limited to radicalization and extremism) across school subjects, provide examples of collaborative lesson planning among teachers, and suggest ways for teachers to support student-led initiatives. It should also encourage interactive and participatory methods to enhance student engagement with P/CVE topics. This curriculum must be designed for sustainability and with sufficient flexibility, allowing schools to implement it independently over the long term, recognizing local knowledge and capacities.

Additionally, embedding this curriculum in national teacher training programs will prepare new educators to engage with P/CVE themes from the outset of their careers. The curriculum could be accompanied by an **online learning platform** dedicated to innovative teaching approaches, as a valuable resource for teachers and other community actors. By offering guidelines and resources that promote engaging pedagogical methods such as game-based learning and digital storytelling teachers can more effectively integrate P/CVE topics into their daily routines. Collaborating with teachers in the development of these resources ensures they meet the actual needs of the classroom, making them more effective and widely adopted.

A regular review cycle for the curriculum, ideally every three years, would also help ensure that it remains updated in line with the evolving context, as well as new practices and developments in the P/CVE field.

- **Responsibilities:** CSOs, teachers, and national-level institutions can forge an alliance to develop an integrated P/CVE curriculum. CSOs can work with teachers to establish an online learning platform.

### **Promising Practice Identified During the Mapping Exercise:**

➤ **School Activities within the Project: “Youth Civic Education Platform for Countering Radicalization (Youth Counter)”**

*This initiative, implemented by a consortium including the Initiative for European Perspective (IEP) in partnership with the Association for Development and Activism – AKVA, Struga; the Center for Intercultural Dialogue, Kumanovo; Nexus-Civil Concept, Skopje; and Community Building Mitrovica, Kosovo, broadened its focus from solely addressing violent extremism to including relatable topics such as intercultural communication, socio-economic development, and media literacy. According to the implementers and students in the focus groups, this shift enhanced the relevance of the activities and motivated student engagement. The initiative prioritized student-led initiatives by training and guiding them to develop ideas and organize a youth competition event. Additionally, the inclusion of a digital resource repository (a platform for CSOs) improved access to information and educational materials, while providing networking opportunities. This holistic and adaptable model for P/CVE can be easily replicated in various contexts.*

### ➤ **3. Supporting Curriculum Implementation and Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers**

To successfully integrate the P/CVE curriculum into daily school activities, ongoing support and mentorship for teachers are imperative. Establishing a peer mentoring system can facilitate knowledge transfer and foster a collaborative learning environment among teachers. Activities may include small grant schemes, external mentoring from CSOs to teachers on implementing the curriculum, peer mentoring between experienced and less experienced teachers, and the establishment of a support network for ongoing guidance within and between schools.

Creating mechanisms for professional development, scholarships, and rewards for teachers is essential for fostering a culture of excellence in P/CVE education. Funding schemes should support joint workshops between schools, collaborative projects involving schools and community actors, and the development of a platform for sharing success stories. Recognizing the contributions of teachers and staff not only motivates them but also builds a community of practice that values ongoing learning and collaboration, thereby enhancing the long-term



sustainability of the P/CVE activities. By facilitating networking opportunities among schools, the sharing of best practices and resources can be enhanced, strengthening cooperation among different P/CVE activities.

Another key aspect of implementation is shifting the power to students by encouraging student-led initiatives and project-based learning, where students research and present on specific P/CVE topics. This hands-on approach enhances student understanding and empowers them to contribute to their communities.

- **Responsibilities:** Financial support for these initiatives will require involvement from municipalities, national-level institutions (such as the Ministry of Education and Science), the National Committee on CT and CVE, and the international donor community. CSOs can catalyze these opportunities by assisting, mentoring, and connecting teachers and schools to utilize them effectively and develop feasible project applications.

### Promising Practice Identified During the Mapping Exercise:

➤ **School Activities within the Project: “Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities”**  
 Implemented by Open Gate La Strada, Skopje, this project utilized “Theater of the Oppressed” as a participatory learning method that engages students in culture and art. This approach allowed students to explore issues related to Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE), act out scenarios, and discuss potential solutions in a safe space. The content and delivery methods resonated with the diverse backgrounds and experiences of young people in a multi-ethnic context like Kumanovo. The target groups recognized this as a unique way to address the P/CVE topic and local challenges.

#### ➤ 4. Enhancing Understanding of Policies Among School Staff

Improving awareness of relevant P/CVE policies among school staff is essential for translating policies into effective local practices. Awareness-raising workshops and easily accessible informational materials will empower teachers to better understand the policy framework and integrate its recommendations into their teaching and school culture. This increased understanding will foster a more supportive environment for teachers, creating a cohesive approach to P/CVE that is vital for sustainable change.

- **Responsibilities:** CSOs, in cooperation with national-level institutions and municipalities, can develop these action steps and help bring the policy framework closer to teachers.

#### ➤ 5. Supporting Capacity Building at the Local and National Level

An effective local system requires municipal staff and CSOs to gather diverse perspectives and ensure that activities are responsive to local dynamics. They should facilitate workshops and consultations before consenting to P/CVE activities, ensuring that proposed activities are relevant, that selected beneficiaries are appropriate, and that the activities properly address local needs. Investing in capacity building for municipal staff is essential to ensure that P/CVE initiatives respond to local demands. By equipping staff with the skills to better understand the field of P/CVE and how to assess and coordinate P/CVE activities effectively through the development of training resources and learning platforms they could promote a more integrated approach to education and community engagement. This would also enable better knowledge management. Cross-sectoral workshops that bring together teachers, municipal



staff, and CSOs can facilitate the development of joint strategies tailored to specific community dynamics related to P/CVE. Additionally, leveraging digital tools and platforms to track and report on the implementation of new P/CVE projects, along with standardized protocols outlining how to integrate new knowledge from implemented projects into future practices, should be considered part of the work of the NCCVECT. Members of the NCCVECT should receive further guidance on how to effectively lead the process of translating practice into policy, and policy into practice.

- **Responsibilities:** CSOs can support the development of training resources, learning platforms and standardized protocols to enable inductions for new municipal and national officers working on P/CVE. Municipalities and national-level institutions play crucial roles in enabling these opportunities, which can be further supported by international donors.

## ➤ 6. Exploring Sustainable Models for CSOs

The CSOs and their ability to implement P/CVE initiatives depend on available external resources and financial support, which are critical for the long-term sustainability of their effects and for making transformative changes. It is essential to explore alternative self-funding models for CSOs. By identifying revenue-generating activities and forming partnerships with businesses, CSOs can reduce their reliance on external funding. This approach not only enhances their capacity to implement projects but also fosters resilience in the face of funding fluctuations. Mentorship programs that connect experienced financial managers with CSOs can also help develop innovative fundraising strategies and tailored sustainable business models.

Moreover, beyond financial issues, the research identified the lack of coordination and insufficient evidence of impact as direct challenges to sustainability. In this regard, if the other recommendations are implemented effectively, these could strengthen the sustainability of P/CVE initiatives carried out by CSOs on a broader scale. Establishing a coordination mechanism (recommendation 1), investing in developing core curricula (recommendation 2) and capacity-building initiatives that empower local stakeholders to lead and sustain programs independently (recommendation 3), and embedding these initiatives within the community's education and development framework can enhance resilience and reduce dependency on external donor funding.

- **Responsibilities:** Support from the international donor community can provide the initial boost needed to rethink self-funding mechanisms and sustainability among CSOs. CSOs should adopt an active approach to engaging community-level stakeholders and develop a more holistic, multifaceted strategy for their P/CVE initiatives.

## ➤ 7. Developing Guidelines and Tools for CSOs to Systematically Evaluate Programs, Quantify Successes, and Identify Areas for Improvement along with Utilization of Digital Technologies

Implementing effective measurement, monitoring, and evaluation (MM&E) practices is crucial for assessing the impact of P/CVE initiatives. By providing user-friendly guidelines and training, organizations can quantify their successes and identify areas for improvement. Resources should be available through an online learning platform where CSOs can access training materials, webinars, and resources focused on MM&E techniques. The data-gathering process can be facilitated by digital tools, such as mobile apps or software platforms, allowing for real-time data collection and monitoring of outcomes. Training CSOs on how to effectively use these tools to gather and analyse data, along with having robust evaluation practices, will

promote the sharing of success stories and lessons learned, informing future initiatives and strengthening the overall P/CVE framework in the country. A centralized digital repository could also serve as a space where CSOs can share tools, templates, case studies, and success stories related to P/CVE initiatives. Funding providers, such as international donors, national institutions, and local municipalities should actively encourage the CSOs to strengthen their MM&E efforts as well as disseminate and share their findings, where appropriate, for the wider reference and understanding of all actors in this field.

- **Responsibilities:** CSOs should be responsible for implementing these actions, with necessary financial support from municipalities, national institutions, and international donors. Actors who are able to distribute funds, such as international donors, national institutions, and local municipalities, should require CSOs to incorporate rigorous MM&E strategies into their project proposals and agreements

## ➤ **8. Developing a Support Mechanism for Parents**

Engaging parents in P/CVE activities is critical for creating a supportive home environment. Parents need educational materials, guidance, and advice on how to shape family conversations around diverse P/CVE topics. This support can take the form of an easy-to-navigate online platform or app where educational materials, articles, and resources related to P/CVE can be stored, along with short online courses and platform-based learning modules. These online activities should be complemented by offline workshops and training sessions, and Parent School Councils can serve as effective starting points for educating parents on broader P/CVE topics. Celebrating parental involvement during school events can foster a more collaborative approach between home and school, strengthening community ties and support for P/CVE initiatives.

- **Responsibilities:** CSOs supported by teachers and schools can provide a framework for partnership between parents and schools.

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# Annex 1. Data Matrix of School-Based P/CVE Activities in the Selected Localities: Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar, implemented from 2018 to 2023

No.	PROJECT AND ACTIVITY NAME	IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITY / IN PARTNERSHIP WITH	TYPE OF ENTITY	LOCATION(S)	DURATION	TOTAL BUDGET	TARGET BENEFICIARIES	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	OVERALL OBJECTIVE	MAIN THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS	TYPE OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	OUTPUTS/ PRODUCTS	ACHIEVED RESULTS
1.	<b>Project:</b> Community-Based Intervention Programme: Path to Reintegration <b>Activity name:</b> Organization of Community Events	NEXUS Civil Concept in partnership with MCIC/ Horizon/ IEP/ PLEIADES	CSO	Elementary schools in Skopje (Cair, Gazi Baba, Studenicani, Saraj) (in total 7), Tetovo (in total 4), Kumanovo (in total 15)	01/07/2021 - 30/06/2024	1095919 MKD	Students from elementary and secondary schools, school staff and municipal staff	198 students	Building community resilience among youth and students in preventing P/CVE	Promoting tolerance, critical thinking, human rights (right of the children), empathy on animals	Organizing events i.e. football games, theatre, art workshops, quizzes, animals shelters visits	Increased awareness concerning children's rights, animal welfare, strengthened multiculturalism and enhanced P/CVE	Promotional video material prepared; Developed working materials for each community event; Promotional material prepared	Seven community events; built capacity on human/ children's rights
2.	<b>Project:</b> Community-Based Intervention Programme: The Path to Reintegration <b>Activity name:</b> Capacity building of school staff i.e. front line workers	NEXUS Civil Concept in partnership with MCIS/ Horizon/ IEP/ PLEIADES	CSO	Elementary schools in Skopje (Cair, Gazi Baba, Studenicani, Saraj) (in total 7), Tetovo (in total 4), Kumanovo (in total 15)	Jan 2022 - Dec 2023	2599631 MKD	Frontline workers i.e. School Staff	241 school staff representatives	To strengthen capacities of front-line workers (school staff and teachers) for P/CVE and R&R	Building resilience	Organization of tailor-made capacity-building workshops	Gained knowledge on P/CVE and R&R	Developed comprehensive training program	Five thematic capacity-building workshops organized
3.	<b>Project:</b> Multiculturalism and Radicalisation - New Approaches Against Old Problems <b>Activity name:</b> Organization of workshops	NEXUS Civil Concept in partnership with Horizon from Skopje and Aqua from Struga NEXUS Civil	CSO	Secondary schools from Skopje from municipalities of Chair, Gazi Baba and Butel	May 2021 - Aug 2022	2591354 MKD	Secondary school students	258 students	Strengthening inter-ethnic relations and prevention of radicalization by creating a system for peer learning, using creative tools, analyses and campaigns	Strengthening inter-ethnic relations and prevention of radicalization by creating a system for peer learning, using creative tools, analyses and campaigns	Organization of 5 specific workshops; Development of 4 training modules; Development of 1 module for mentorship and training of trainers	Raised awareness on P/CVE and the importance of multiculturalism and inter-ethnic tolerance	Prepared and delivered a comprehensive training and mentorship program consisting of: 1 module on multiculturalism; 1 module for creative toolkits addressing multiculturalism; 1 module for the prevention of radicalization; 1 module for creative toolkits addressing the prevention of radicalization; 1 module for mentorship and training of trainees. 1 Public Survey conducted 1 Desk analysis prepared 1 Video prepared	Organized thematic workshops; prepared and delivered training and mentorship program; implemented advocacy tools

4.	<b>Project: Multiculturalism &amp; Radicalisation - New Approaches Against Old Problems</b> <b>Activity name: Community Engagement Actions</b>	Nexus - Civil Concept in partnership with Horizon from Skopje and Aqua from Struga	CSO	Secondary schools from Skopje from municipalities of Chair, Gazi Baba and Butel	May 2021 - Aug 2022	2591354 MKD	Secondary school students	54 students	Strengthening inter-ethnic relations and prevention of radicalization by creating a system for peer learning, using creative tools, analyses and campaigns	Strengthening inter-ethnic relations and prevention of radicalization by creating a system for peer learning, using creative tools, analyses and campaigns	Organization of two community engagement events in Skopje	Raised awareness on P/CVE and the importance of multiculturalism and inter-ethnic tolerance	Prepared promotional video Prepared handicrafts and paintings by the engaged students	Organized two community engagement events
5.	<b>Project: Youth Civic Education Platform for Countering Radicalization (Youth Counter)</b> <b>Activity Name: Organizing of Training for Youth &amp; CSOs on Intercultural, Socio-Economic and Media Literacy</b>	Concept, Association for Development and Activism - Aqua from Struga, Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (CID) from Kumanovo and the organization Community Building from Mitrovica - Kosovo	CSO	Secondary schools in Skopje (in total 4), Kumanovo (in total 5)	Apr 2022 - Dec 2022	80,000 MKD	Secondary school students	249 students	To gain knowledge on intercultural, socio-economic and media literacy	Capacity developments, Building resilience	Thematic workshops	Increased knowledge on P/CVE	Six (6) specific training modules developed and delivered	Organized 12 capacity-building workshops
6.	<b>Project: Community-Based Intervention Programme: Path to Reintegration</b>	MCIC, NEXUS Civil Concept, Initiative for European Perspective (IEP), Association for Active and Healthy Development of Women and Children "Pleiades" (Pleiades), Association for Civic Activism and Encouraging Social Responsibility "Horizon Civitas"	CSO	Elementary schools in Skopje (Chair and Centre) (in total 2) and Petrovec (in total 1)	01/07/2021 - 30/06/2024	700,000 USD	Vulnerable families and potentially returnees	6	Initiating holistic approaches for sustainable reintegration of vulnerable families (including those with RFTF's) in North Macedonia	Raisngawareness for P/CVE	Conducting a research on local labour market needs; Developing local economic plans integrated to community reintegration programme; Developing individual plans for professional development for vulnerable families; Organizing skills-development activities	RFTF's successfully reintegrated and community resilience will be increased	Developed research on local labour market needs; Developed local economic plans integrated to community reintegration programme; 6 individual plans; 3 tailored trainings and coaching	Capacity building of three candidates; research for the labour market needs and developed economic plans for each municipality
7.	<b>Project: Youth Civic Education Platform for Countering Radicalization (Youth Counter)</b>	IEP/NEXUS Civil Concept/CID/AK-VA	CSO	In total 9 schools from Skopje, Kumanovo and Struga. Additional cities: Shtip, Kavadarci, Ohrid, Bitola	01.01.2021 - 31.12.2024	271,504.70 EUR	CSOs, youth and local self-governments, secondary schools and community action groups	200 youth; More than 30 CSOs involved as members of the platform	Overall objective Enhancing the capacity of local civil society for building resilience against radicalization of the youth population in N. Macedonia	Empowering Youth, Gender Equality and Women Rights, focusing on propensity of CSOs to divert the potential influence of violent extremism on youth, define and organize positive youth generated community actions	Campaign for fight against radicalization, boosting of inter-cultural cooperation among the youth	Increased knowledge of students on P/CVE. Skills developed for prevention of radicalization	Platform for youth civil education developed/ integrated training curriculum developed and delivered	Strengthened awareness of more than 200 youth about online radicalization, hate speech, violent extremism and radicalization
8.	<b>Project: Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC) Activity name: Workshops with Youth</b>	Open Gate/La Strada	CSO	Secondary schools in Kumanovo, Tetovo, Skopje	Dec 2021 - Dec 2023	370633	Students aged 14-18 (Skopje, Tetovo, Kumanovo)	343	N/A	Promoting tolerance, critical thinking, (Radicalism Violent extremism Discrimination Hate speech Human rights Social media and media literacy)	Workshops	Increased awareness on P/CVE	N/A	Built capacity of 343 students to navigate difference, combat stereotypes and prejudices and conflict resolution

No.	PROJECT AND ACTIVITY NAME	IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITY / IN PARTNERSHIP WITH	TYPE OF ENTITY	LOCATION(S)	DURATION	TOTAL BUDGET	TARGET BENEFICIARIES	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	OVERALL OBJECTIVE	MAIN THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS	TYPE OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	OUTPUTS/ PRODUCTS	ACHIEVED RESULTS
9.	<b>Project: Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC)</b>	MYLA in partnership with Open gate La Strada, Centre for common grounds and Centre for tolerance	CSO	Elementary and secondary schools in Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Struga, Ohrid, Plasnica, Kichevo	July 2021 - June 2024	30.000,000 MKD	Students primary and secondary schools	app: 2000	Life learning soft skills, youth debates, mixed cultural and sport activities, summer camp trust building dialogues and forums, collaborative dialogue	Enhance dialogue between youth and critical thinking, joint collaboration & work in resolving common issues promoting tolerance, anti-discrimination, life learning skills, community engagement, participation in diverse education & social activities, reduce stigmatization	Multi-ethnic camps, training events, workshops, sport and cultural activities, focus groups, etc.	Increasing inclusion into the community, reducing stigmatization, strengthening PVE among youth	N/A	More than 120 events organized with engagement of more than 2000 participants
10.	<b>Project: Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC)</b>	Centre for Tolerance and Lifelong learning as partner to MYLA and La Strada / Centre for Common Ground	CSO	Elementary and secondary schools in Skopje (in total 6), Petrovec (in total 1), Zelenikovo (in total 1), Kumanovo (in total 2), Chucher Sandevo (in total 2), Tetovo, Chelopek (in total 1), Brvenica (in total 1)	Oct 2020 - Dec 2023	3560000 MKD	Target group 1: Students from elementary school aged 12-15 years; Secondary school students 15-18 years ; Target group 2: Teaching staff and parents	450 students; App 200 Teaching staff and parents	Prevention of extremism / prevention of peer violence that can lead to extremism	Confidence Building / Prevention of Peer Violence and Violent Extremism	Workshops with students, teachers, professional colleagues and parents; Organization of a summer camp for students and teachers	Increased awareness on P/CVE Reduction of peer violence in targeted schools.	Handbook for workers; Preparatory program for the education of students and teachers in the field of P/CVE	Organized 25 workshops with elementary schools students; 18 workshops for teachers and professional school staff and parents
11.	<b>Project: Civica Mobilitas</b>	Centre for Tolerance and Lifelong learning	CSO	15 schools	Feb 2024 - Oct2024	305000 MKD	Target group 1: Students from elementary school aged 12-15 years ; Secondary school students 15-18 years ; Target group 2: Teaching staff and parents	75 students App 300 Teaching staff and parents	Prevention of extremism / prevention of peer violence that can lead to extremism	Confidence Building / Prevention of Peer Violence and Violent Extremism	Workshops with students and professors	Increased awareness on P/CVE and reduction of peer violence in targeted schools	Handbook for workers; Preparatory program for the education of students and teachers in the field of P/CVE	Organized 5 workshops with children and 1 seminar with teachers
12.	<b>Project: Strengthening Front-Line School Workers And Parents To Build Youth Resilience To Violent Extremism</b>	The Centre for Research and Policy Making	CSO	Municipalities of Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Skopje	2019	N/A	Front-line workers from elementary and secondary schools and parents	N/A	To develop community resilience to Radicalization and Violent Extremism	Capacity building; Resilience building; Inter-institutional cooperation development	Capacity building of frontline school workers through a developed training program which was conducted successfully with the school workers in 4 municipalities (Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Skopje). Mentorship activities were carried out consisting of 84 visits to schools encompassed with the capacity building activities by the selected mentors to guide them through the process at their workplace in using the checklist and protocols for dealing with radicalization & countering violent extremism. Referral mechanism at a local level was developed as part of the working package 2. The referral mechanism was presented on workshops in 4 target municipalities with relevant stakeholders, bearing in mind the holistic approach the action is based on	Partnerships were built with numerous stakeholders such as the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVET), the ministries of education and internal affairs, as well as with the eight municipalities within the three regions where the activities are implemented	Training program developed; organized workshop; mentorship activities carried out; organized 84 visits in the schools	Synergies built with the OSCE Mission to Skopje (OSCE MTS) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)



13.	<b>Project:</b> Strengthening Resilience of Youth Against Radicalization	<b>Implementer:</b> GLOBSEC Slovakia National partner: Horizon Civitas	CSO	Secondary schools in Skopje	Sep 2018 - Nov 2019	1,107,000 MKD	Students of all ages	452	Strengthening capacities of youth in identification of radicalization	Building resilience	Research, Training, public campaign	Increased awareness on P/CVE	Developed regional research on perceptions of youth on radicalization	Built capacity of student to navigate difference, combat stereotypes and prejudices and conflict resolution
14.	<b>Project:</b> Multiculturalism and Radicalization: New Approaches to Old Problems	Horizon Civitas as partner to Nexus	CSO	Secondary schools in Skopje (in total 3)	June 2021 - Jun 2022	150,000 MKD	Students aged 16 - 19 years old	50	Countering radicalization through promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue	Building resilience, promoting intercultural dialogue	Training	Reduced violent extremism among the students	Integrated training curriculum developed and delivered	Two Learning and empowerment through peer education modules developed
15.	<b>Project:</b> Organized Against Crime!	Horizon Civitas	CSO	Secondary schools in Skopje (in total 3)	July 2023 - Nov 2023	535,050 MKD	Students aged 16 - 19 years old	80	Strengthening capacities of youth in identification of terrorism, arm trafficking and human trafficking	Building resilience	Workshops	Reduced violent extremism among the students	Developed prospectus on organized crime integrated training curriculum developed and delivered	Built capacity of 80 on how to identify organized crimes, built resilience
16.	<b>Project:</b> Youth Peace and Security Agenda Promotion	Horizon Civitas	CSO	Nation wide	Dec 2023 - March 2024	90,000 MKD	Students of all ages	~50,000	Promoting five pillars of the UNSC Youth Peace and Security Agenda	Promotion of security - related agenda	Public campaign	Increased knowledge on P/CVE	5 promotional videos developed and published	Strengthened awareness of ~50,000 citizens about policies on prevention of radicalization
17.	<b>Project:</b> For Dialogue, Against Extremism!	Horizon Civitas	CSO	Schools: Islamic high school -madrasah "Isa beu" and Christian high school	Aug 2023 - Feb 2024	300,000 MKD	Students of all ages	50	Mobilizing future religious preacher in countering religious radicalization through interfaith interaction and dialogue	Building resilience, promoting interfaith dialogue	Workshop, peer-to-peer mentored initiatives	Reduced violent extremism among the students	Workshop held, 4 follow-up initiatives implemented, one-social media page opened	Built capacity of 50 students to combat religious radicalization
18.	<b>Project:</b> Together Against Violent Extremism	National Council for Gender Equality	CSO	N/A	Jan 2020 - Jun 2020	330 000 MKD	N/A	N/A	The overall goal is to raise awareness of violent extremism and radicalization in order to strengthen protection and prevention mechanisms	Building resilience, promoting institutional and structured dialogue	/	/	/	/
19.	<b>Project:</b> Game for Change – Digital Serious Game – Educational Tool for Strengthening Community Resilience	Centre for Social Innovations Blink 42-21	CSO	Secondary schools in municipalities: Cair, Tetovo, Gostivar Kumanovo	Aug 2019 - Jul 2020	N/A	Secondary schools teachers, students, CSO representatives and youth workers	N/A	/	/	Production of digital Serious Game as an educational and training tool for teachers, youth workers and youth	Strengthening community resilience	/	/

No.	PROJECT AND ACTIVITY NAME	IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITY / IN PARTNERSHIP WITH	TYPE OF ENTITY	LOCATION(S)	DURATION	TOTAL BUDGET	TARGET BENEFICIARIES	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	OVERALL OBJECTIVE	MAIN THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS	TYPE OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	OUTPUTS/ PRODUCTS	ACHIEVED RESULTS
20.	<b>Activity name:</b> Workshop With Ninth Grade Students on Preventing Radicalization and Violent Extremism	Centre for Education and Development	CSO	One elementary school in municipality of Tearce, Tetovo	25.09.2019	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
21.	<b>Project:</b> Passage4prevent: Use of Education to Prevent Youth Online Radicalization	Centre for Research and Policy Making - CRPM	CSO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The main goal is to build digital resistance to the online radicalization of young people through the use of prevention education	/	Baseline assessment for awareness raising and capacity building to use education to prevent youth online radicalization; Guide on Cyber Security prepared; Policy paper	/	/	/
22.	<b>Project:</b> Strengthening the Sustainability of the Fight Against Violent Extremism in Local Communities in North Macedonia <b>Activity name:</b> Art Exhibition Against Violent Extremism	Municipality of Gostivar and Centre for Common Ground	Local Government Unit and CSO	Elementary and secondary schools in the municipalities of Gostivar and Skopje (Cair) and LG in Kichevo+E27	October 15 2018 until October 15, 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	The project aims to support the National Strategy and Action Plan for Countering Violent Extremism by strengthening cooperation between local actors including civil, religious and youth leaders and local/central authorities on CVE issues, and by establishing Community Action Teams (CATs) within three pilot municipalities, Chair, Gostivar and Kichevo	/	Community outreach events	Youth groups engaged in advancing social cohesion and preventing violent extremism of the youth across dividing lines and promoting collaboration and confidence building	One Art exhibition was organized with 20 painting prepared by the students	/
23.	<b>Project:</b> Communities Against Violent Extremism <b>Activity name:</b> Multimedia Event "Together for the Same Goal"	Municipality of Kumanovo with support of CSO "CIVIL"	Local Government Unit and CSO	Elementary and secondary schools in the municipality of Kumanovo	8th May 2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	To prevent violent extremism, radicalism and terrorism at the local and national level through multidisciplinary activities and processes, civic engagement, education, mentoring, partnerships, support and communications	Cohesive actions/ promotion of non-violent culture	Analysis and recommendation; intersectoral collaboration and partnerships; community participation	N/A	N/A	N/A
24.	<b>Activity name:</b> Recognizing, Preventing and Dealing With Violent and Aggressive Behaviour and Extremism Among Students in Primary and Secondary Schools in Kumanovo	Municipality of Kumanovo with support of The Institute for European Educational, Socio-Cultural and Economic Policies from Skopje	Local Government Unit / CSO	Elementary and secondary schools in the municipality of Kumanovo	8 June 2021 - 9 June 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Annex 2. List of Respondents in the In-depth Interviews with the Target Groups

<b>RESPONDENT 1</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 2</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 3</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 4</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 5</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 6</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 7</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 8</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 9</b>	→	<b>TETOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 10</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 11</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 12</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 13</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 14</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 15</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 16</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 17</b>	→	<b>GOSTIVAR</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 18</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 19</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 20</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 21</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 22</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 23</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 24</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 25</b>	→	<b>KUMANOVO</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 26</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 27</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 28</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 29</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 30</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 31</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 32</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 33</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 34</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 35</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 36</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 37</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 38</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 39</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 40</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 41</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 42</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 43</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 44</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 45</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>MUNICIPAL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 46</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 47</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 48</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 49</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>CSO</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 50</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>POLICYMAKER</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 51</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>POLICYMAKER</b>
<b>RESPONDENT 52</b>	→	<b>SKOPJE</b>	→	<b>POLICYMAKER</b>



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