



**CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMS  
ON REHABILITATION, REINTEGRATION  
AND DISENGAGEMENT FROM  
TERRORISM IN KOSOVO**







# CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMS ON REHABILITATION, REINTEGRATION AND DISENGAGEMENT FROM TERRORISM IN KOSOVO

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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Strategy</b>	National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism 2023-2028
<b>Action Plan</b>	Action Plan 2023-2025
<b>MIA</b>	Ministry of Internal Affairs
<b>MESTI</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Innovation
<b>MCSC</b>	Municipal Community Safety Council
<b>LPSC</b>	Local Public Safety Committee
<b>KCS</b>	Kosovo Correctional Service
<b>KPS</b>	Kosovo Probation Service

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs are considered essential in preventing terrorism. These programs address individuals convicted of terrorism, aiming primarily to ensure that convicts do not pose a risk to the community upon their release from prison.

These programs began pilot implementation in 2017 as part of Kosovo's National Strategy Against Terrorism. As part of the periodic assessment of the implementation of strategic objectives against terrorism, using a combined methodology, BIRN has evaluated the fulfillment of obligations and

the results of the programs developed so far.

Rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs include preventive interventions in the community, with the primary objective of influencing prisoners convicted of terrorism. BIRN has identified that the programs have involved only a small number of convicts, with two cases of recidivism recorded among individuals released from prison. [Based on the analysis of data collected from information sources, BIRN finds the following:](#)

## ***Rehabilitation and reintegration programs in Kosovo's correctional system have involved only a small number of persons convicted of terrorism***

*Rehabilitation and reintegration programs in Kosovo's correctional system have involved only a small number of persons convicted of terrorism.*

*Despite investments in training prison staff and increasing capacities, only 17% of convicts*

*and detainees on charges of terrorism have participated in voluntary rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs. The remaining 83% have either been released or remain in prison without participating in any programs.*

## ***Prison-based programs only include those convicted of religiously motivated terrorism, with no programs for right-wing extremists***

*Despite the achieved progress, current programs with Kosovo's Correctional Service are dedicated solely to individuals convicted of terrorism motivated by Islamic ideologies, while other forms of extremism are not included. Given*

*recent arrests of individuals involved in terrorist acts based on ethno-nationalist and right-wing extremist motives, it is necessary to develop programs addressing these forms of extremism.*

## ***Current programs are not specific or individualized***

*The Correctional Service's rehabilitation programs start with the drafting of general programs for all prisoners, and when addressing terrorism, programs must be individualized and tailored to the specific category.*

*Kosovo's Correctional Service is yet to implement a specific program dedicated to treating convicts involved in terrorism-related crimes. Additionally, there is still no rehabilitation and reintegration program for prisoners convicted of terrorism motivated by extreme right-wing ideologies.*

### **Rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs lack mechanisms for assessing their efficiency and effectiveness**

*Kosovo's Correctional Service has not established a procedure to assess the impact of implemented programs for persons convicted of terrorism. As a result, current programs operate without evaluating their effects on convicts.*

*It is noteworthy that of the 19 individuals currently in correctional institutions, 11 convicts in Dubrava prison are housed in a separate pavilion, isolated from the general prison population.*

### **A protocol for coordinating pre-release and post-release processes has not yet been developed**

*BIRN has identified that the country's institutions lack a clear protocol for coordinating pre-release and post-release processes for convicted terrorists.*

*Currently, KCS and KPS are piloting the K-Terac project, a Council of Europe initiative in collaboration with the Kosovo Probation Service and the MIA's Division for Prevention and Reintegration.*

### **Sentences for terrorism-related convictions are issued without pre-sentencing reports**

*The Kosovo Probation Service is required to prepare pre-sentencing reports for every individual accused of terrorism, which are then submitted to the court. However, despite this obligation, Kosovo's courts have yet to request the Probation Service to implement this requirement.*

*So far, the KPS has failed to contribute effectively through pre-sentencing reports for terrorism convicts has not provided any such reports for individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses.*

### **The Probation Service has not yet achieved its full operational capacity**

*In developing rehabilitation and reintegration mechanisms, the Kosovo Probation Service has not yet reached full operational capacity and*

*faces challenges due to limited resources and lack of cooperation with other institutions.*

### **Kosovo's legal framework does not support rehabilitation programs**

*For most convicts, rehabilitation and reintegration programs are voluntary, and prisoners cannot be obligated to participate in programs within the Correctional Service. The Kosovo Criminal Code does not provide for combined sentences of imprisonment with additional restrictions under Probation Service supervision. Furthermore, the*

*Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions gives no authorizations to the Conditional Release Panel to issue additional obligations. The only restrictive measures that can be applied are those linked to alternative conditional sentences.*



### **Challenges in decentralizing the process.**

*Although Kosovo's national counter-terrorism strategy envisions the decentralized of resocialization and disengagement processes at the local level, Kosovo is yet to fulfill this*

*obligation. Local capacities to support this process are not in place in most municipalities across the country.*

### **Institutional challenges in the rehabilitation and reintegration process**

*MESTI is among the key institutions in the reintegration, resocialization, and disengagement process. BIRN notes that while MESTI has made significant progress in training teachers and informing parents through parental council mechanisms, the ministry, in line with the Action Plan of the Strategy, must also develop specialized university-level programs aimed at identifying and addressing violent extremism and terrorism, as well as mitigating their consequences.*

*The publication of the Institute of Psychology provides an important document for scientifically addressing returnees, identifying their needs, and designing specific intervention programs.*

*Additionally, BIRN finds that religious communities have not been adequately involved in the rehabilitation and reintegration processes.*

### **State institutions have not yet allocated budgetary resources or ensured the sustainability of rehabilitation and reintegration programs.**

*All activities carried out so far at both local and central levels—including grants, subsidies, and professional capacity-building through training—are funded by external donors.*

*The Republic of Kosovo is yet to establish or allocate the necessary financial resources for these programs. Furthermore, there is no clear vision on how to transition from complete*

*financial dependency on external donors to sustainable state-funded planning.*

*BIRN notes that due to the limited progress in rehabilitation and reintegration, programs are now being implemented within the community, as most individuals convicted of terrorism have been released and require intervention outside the prison system.*



# INTRODUCTION

Rehabilitation and reintegration programs in Kosovo emerged as a response to the increasing number of individuals convicted of terrorism and the rise of radicalization in the country.

Driven by religious extremist ideologies, around 400 Kosovars joined the war in Syria and Iraq, while the country prosecuted over 200 individuals involved in these events.

Alongside Islamic religious extremism, Kosovo has recently faced a rise in ethno-nationalist extremism. Right-wing extremist groups have been involved in a number of acts of violence, particularly in the northern part of the country, where a police officer was killed, and over 100 members of local and international security institutions were injured during violent protests.

A significant proportion of those accused of terrorism were sentenced to imprisonment, whereas women returned from war zones were primarily given suspended sentences.

Kosovo was among the first countries in the world to repatriate its citizens from war zones in an organized manner. Within these repatriated groups, children were exempted from legal penalties, while most women received suspended sentences and were integrated into alternative rehabilitation programs.

The suspended sentencing of women encouraged their participation in employment programs and vocational training. Data indicate that a significant number of these women are now leading normal lives.

Challenges have been identified in the traditional mechanisms for addressing these issues. Unlike women, who were mostly given suspended sentences, the majority of male fighters ended

up in conventional prisons. Individuals accused of radicalization, financing terrorism, and those arrested while attempting to travel to Syria and Iraq were also incarcerated.

These convicts followed the standard judicial process in Kosovo—arrest, prosecution, and sentencing by the courts.

Data reveal that most sentences involved imprisonment, with very few suspended sentences issued. Consequently, during their time in prison, the convicts had little incentive to participate in rehabilitation programs.

Among the prison population convicted of terrorism, there were two main categories: those arrested within Kosovo or upon their illegal return, and those who were repatriated through organized efforts.

To manage the reintegration of returnees, the Ministry of Internal Affairs established the Division for Prevention and Reintegration of Radicalized Persons. Rehabilitation and reintegration were identified as key strategic objectives in the prevention framework.

Rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs were designed to influence returnees, enabling them to reintegrate into Kosovo's society and live normal social lives. Various mechanisms, including civil society organizations, were engaged in this process.

Available data indicate that the rehabilitation programs have been highly successful for women with suspended sentences. However, serious challenges remain for programs conducted in prisons, with statistics showing difficulties in engaging convicted individuals in rehabilitation programs.

## About BIRN monitoring

BIRN is the first organization in Kosovo to be granted the opportunity to systematically monitor the implementation of activity plans under the National Strategy Against Terrorism within the GCERF program. From 2019 to 2025, BIRN has produced eight periodic monitoring reports assessing Kosovo's strategic documents related to preventing and combating terrorism.

- *Challenges of Terrorism Prevention Mechanisms in Kosovo*<sup>1</sup>
- *Kosovo's Institutional Capacities for Resocialization and Reintegration of Individuals Affected by Right-Wing Extremism*<sup>2</sup>
- *Employment as a challenge of reintegration and resocialization*<sup>3</sup>
- *Institutions' approach to the strategy against terrorism and violent extremism*<sup>4</sup>
- *The Role of ICK in Preventing Extremism and Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs*
- *Challenges of the Reintegration and Resocialization Process in Kosovo II*

This monitoring report evaluates the results of activities implemented by state institutions responsible for executing the National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.

The data collection methodology consists of a content-based impact assessment of activities, relying on data and interviews.

In the field of rehabilitation and reintegration, the 2023–2025 Action Plan, part of the 2023–2028 Strategy, outlines the implementation of 27 activities by central and local institutions, including MIA, KCK, KPS, MESTI, municipalities, religious communities, and civil society organizations.

This monitoring report evaluates the impact and effectiveness of the programs and services provided to these individuals.

It analyzes existing rehabilitation and reintegration programs and their effects at all levels, with a particular focus on MIA, MESTI, Probation and Correctional Services, and the local level.

The report assesses past actions and their effects, determining whether the institutions have evaluation criteria in place for program success, while also identifying current challenges.

The analysis excludes other mechanisms of protection, response and prosecution, and aims to provide a clear overview of activities under the strategic objective of prevention, with a focus on the rehabilitation, integration and disengagement of radicalized persons.

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1 Report published by BIRN Kosovo, supported by ATRC, under the GCERF Project, titled "Challenges of Preventing Terrorism in Kosovo", accessible here - <https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/birn-al.pdf>

2 Report published by BIRN Kosovo, supported by ATRC, under the GCERF Project, titled "Kosovo's institutional capacities in the resocialization and reintegration of citizens affected by right-wing extremism", accessible here - [https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/BIRN\\_Kosovo\\_Third\\_Bi-Annual\\_Analysis\\_ALB.pdf](https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/BIRN_Kosovo_Third_Bi-Annual_Analysis_ALB.pdf)

3 "Report published by BIRN Kosovo, supported by ATRC, under the GCERF Project, titled "Employment as a Challenge of Reintegration and Resocialization", accessible here - <https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/PUNESIMI-SI-SFIDE-E-RI-INTEGRIMIT-DHE-RISOCIALIZIMT-Final-c-.pdf>

4 Report published by BIRN Kosovo, supported by ATRC, within the GCERF Project, titled "Institutional Approach to the Strategy for Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism", available here [https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BIRN\\_analiza-e-strate-gjive\\_alb4\\_compressed.pdf](https://kallxo.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BIRN_analiza-e-strate-gjive_alb4_compressed.pdf)

## Goals of Terrorism Prevention

In the spirit of the national strategy, terrorism prevention is carried out in two critical phases. In the first phase, the strategy aims to develop activities that prevent the commission of terrorism, while the second phase is dedicated to convicted persons or identified extremists, with the goal that they do not repeat criminal acts.

The aim is implement this process through rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs.

The Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program for Radicalized Individuals defines **disengagement** as *“a social and psychological process in which an individual’s engagement with violent extremism and involvement in it is reduced to such an extent that he or she no longer poses a risk of participating in or engaging in violent activities. This process includes a change in behavior (no longer using or resorting to violence), but it does not necessarily imply a change in the individual’s commitment to a radical or extremist cause.”*<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, this program defines **deradicalization** as the *process of changing an individual’s belief system so that he/she rejects extremist ideology and embraces the general, non-violent values of society. It implies a fundamental shift in understanding, resulting from activities aimed at helping individuals let go of radical or extremist ideas and beliefs, as well as disengage from groups linked to violence.*

Kosovo’s Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program aim both disengagement and deradicalization of radicalized individuals.

The concept of rehabilitation, reintegration, and the programs derived from this concept constitute something relatively new for our state institutions. In this regard, some of the institutions tasked with implementing these programs – particularly municipalities – are still in the phase of understanding and interpreting the matter, while other central institutions are in the process of building internal capacities and ensuring continuity. A remaining challenge is the comprehensive approach to all forms of violent extremism and terrorism, the development of professional capacities, as well as the almost complete lack of access to the Serbian community in schools and cultural activities related to these programs.

Prevention is one of the main pillars of the strategy, encompassing all the steps taken by institutions to address the causes of radicalization and the treatment of individuals involved in terrorist acts.

As a strategic objective, prevention is divided into several activities, and this analysis focuses on the final pillar of the Prevention objective, namely **“Rehabilitation, Reintegration, and Disengagement”** of persons from violent extremist ideologies that led to them facing law enforcement. This reflects the specific interventions that have been implemented in the Kosovo aimed at deradicalizing, rehabilitating, reintegrating, and disengaging these individuals from violent extremist ideologies.

In this context, this analysis evaluates how effective these specific interventions have been so far, what the main results and challenges are, and what measures have been taken to ensure the continuity and sustainability of these programs.

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<sup>5</sup> The Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program for Radicalized Individuals, a document of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, has not been published.

## Temporal Context of the Report

Between 2024 and 2025, Kosovo continued to face serious security challenges. Data indicate that the number of incidents instigated by Islamic religious extremists declined, while numerous incidents motivated by right-wing extremism were recorded in the country.

During this time, incidents related to far-right terrorist groups have been recorded in the north of the country, but also in other areas of Kosovo, especially the two terrorist organizations “Civil Protection” and “Northern Brigade.” The attack in Banjska in September 2023, as well as dozens of incidents and attacks on police and institutions have been attributed to these groups, while in some cases supporters of far-right groups from Serbia and Montenegro have emerged on the borders of Kosovo.

On the other hand, at least one serious incident was observed among the Albanian community. In the Podujeva region, several supporters who claimed to represent the Albanian Orthodox Church of Elbasan were arrested after attempting to occupy and declare a Serbian Orthodox church—one that had not offered religious services since the end of the 1999 war—as an Albanian church. The incident was followed by arrests and indictments of several clerics, with the ideology behind the activists of this organization still under analysis.

In developments involving Islamist extremist groups, there were several incidents attributed to religious motives. Radicalized groups, supported by radical Islamic ideologies, were involved in setting fire to the courthouse in Kaçanik, while another group participated in the armed robbery of a jewelry store in Suhareka.

BIRN notes that within the Islamic community, there were some conflicts among different imams over the issue of the dominance in certain mosques, and there were also cases where specific mosques, such as the one in Viti, did not adhere to the local ICK authorities. BIRN also found that group prayer organizations outside ICK facilities emerged within the Islamic community, organized in the form of prayer houses.

The atmosphere in the country continued to be charged by debates sparked by anti-Islamic movements in Kosovo, which arose within the Albanian community.

In the political realm, the country faced major challenges due to the withdrawal of the Serbian List from the government and other institutions. Supporters of this political party continuously called for opposition to the activities of institutions and called for their boycott in areas where Serbs reside. As a result, state authorities faced significant challenges in carrying out investments and providing services to citizens in these areas.

Statements and actions by the Serbian List aimed at minimizing trust in institutions were a daily occurrence throughout the year.

There were intense debates and strong disagreements amongst Albanian political parties regarding the Law on Reproductive Health and Assisted Fertilization and the Civil Code, which foresees the registration of same-sex civil partnerships.

Movements against the LGBTI+ community within Albanian political parties are considered to be motivated by elements of right-wing extremism.

The country’s environment was also continuously affected by external interventions, particularly by Kremlin-supported disinformation campaigns that persistently sought to incite anti-NATO and anti-EU movements in the country.

# METHODOLOGY

This analysis evaluates and reflects Kosovo's progress toward developing and operationalizing an early response and intervention system aimed at protecting and supporting individuals vulnerable to radicalization.

A key aspect of the monitoring approach is assessing the impact of both governmental and non-governmental initiatives across four main areas. It examines how these actions contribute to the overarching goal of preserving the values and interests of the Republic of Kosovo and protecting its citizens from the threats posed by violent extremism and terrorism.

The primary sources of data include government reports, official statistics, government data, surveys, interviews with key stakeholders, and non-governmental studies or reports.

For the compilation of this analysis, multiple data collection methods were employed to ensure a triangulated approach to findings. The key methods include:

- **Desk Review:** BIRN conducted a comprehensive review of academic literature, policy documents, reports, and case studies related to rehabilitation and reintegration interventions as specific objectives for preventing radicalization. Strategic documents reviewed include: National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Leads to Terrorism (2015-2020) Counterterrorism Strategy (2018-2023), National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism (2023-2028), and action plans associated with these strategies. Additionally, the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program for Radicalized Individuals from the Ministry of Internal Affairs was analyzed, as well as criminal legislation, with a special focus on the Kosovo's Criminal Code, Law on the Execution of Penal Sanctions, particularly regarding sentencing types, conditional release panel powers, Law on the Probation Service, Law on

the Correctional Service of Kosovo, and other relevant bylaws related to this monitoring report, and other relevant documents of key stakeholders. International publications and guidelines from institutions and organizations specializing in rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement of convicted individuals involved in terrorism-related crimes were also reviewed. Through this process, key themes, theories, and intervention frameworks were identified, covering factors contributing to radicalization, intervention approaches, and evaluation methodologies.

- **Survey:** A questionnaire was developed and distributed to key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy, both at the central and local levels. For this analysis, BIRN sent surveys to all municipalities in Kosovo, receiving responses from 26 municipalities<sup>6</sup> including 7 major municipalities and 6 Serb-majority municipalities.
- **In-depth Interviews with key stakeholders:** Interviews were conducted based on a pre-designed questionnaire containing questions related to key indicators. A semi-structured qualitative interview technique was applied to ensure that the entire topic of the analysis was covered, while allowing the interviewees to independently present important topics related to the issue at hand. At the central level, BIRN conducted interviews with the Director of the Probation Service, Mr. **Arsim Tahiri**, and Mr. **Sami Hajrullahu**, Mr. **Besar Gashi**, Deputy General Director for Operations and Security, Kosovo Correctional Service, Mrs. **Aferdita Jaha**, Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, and Mr. **Mensur Hoti**, Director of the Public Security Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- **Direct observations:** Direct observations of activities were conducted to better understand the implementation methodology of the Strategy. In this regard, BIRN participated in

<sup>6</sup> Municipalities of Leposavic and Fushë Kosova have responded only after the intervention of the Information and Privacy Agency.

the workshop organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and OSCE on December 16, 2024, where reports were presented by key institutions and other stakeholders regarding the implementation of the activities outlined in the 2023-2025 Action Plan for the Strategy on Preventing and Combating Terrorism (2023-2028). Additionally, regular engagements were maintained with municipalities where referral mechanism training sessions were held, such as Hani i Elezit and Mitrovica. In Hani i Elezit Municipality, BIRN attended the referral mechanism meeting on October 1, 2024.

The data collected for this analysis covers the period from July 1, 2023, to December 31, 2024, which aligns with the adoption of the National Strategy by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo on June 29, 2023.

**Municipalities that have not responded:**

1. Partesh
2. Mamushë
3. Novobërdë
4. Zubin Potok
5. Vushtrri
6. Viti
7. Podujevë
8. Mitrovica North
9. Klina
10. Klllokot
11. Deçan
12. Istog



# ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This report reflects and evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness, challenges, and difficulties of rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs for radicalized individuals, highlighting both the progress made so far and the institutional needs in Kosovo to address violent extremism and terrorism.

The report provides an overview of all efforts, measures, specific interventions, coordination, and obstacles that Kosovo’s central and local institutions have faced so far in their efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism.

## *Identification of Individuals in Need of Deradicalization Measures*

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kosovo, through the Division for Prevention and Integration, remains the leading and coordinating institution regarding the prevention and fight against terrorism in Kosovo. The Minister of Internal Affairs also serves as the National Coordinator for the Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (2023-2028).

In the context of rehabilitation, reintegration and disengagement from violent extremism and terrorism ideologies, in response to the individual return until 2018 and the organized return in April 2019 and July 2021 of our citizens from war zones in Syria and Iraq, but also to address individuals who were investigated and tried in Kosovo in relation to these acts, the Ministry of Internal Affairs developed the **“Reintegration Program for Radicalized Persons”**, which constitutes a dynamic and adaptable document that outlines in detail the measures, interventions and stakeholders for carrying out these interventions.

In 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has conducted training sessions for municipal officials in four municipalities, including: Prishtina, Fushe Kosova, Podujeva and Peja. Prior to 2024, training sessions were also held in: South Mitrovica and Hani i Elezit.

By 2025, a decision is expected to be issued formalizing and operationalizing these teams.

According to data collected by BIRN from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, around 500 individuals have been directly or indirectly involved in the Ministry’s program, with 163 direct beneficiaries, including women and children. Among these individuals, 57 have been successfully employed or self-employed as a result of the Division’s efforts.

Table 1. MIA data related to individuals

Individuals in the program	163 individuals
Employed or self-employed individuals	57 individuals
Indirect individuals	500
Recidivism	1 individual
Supported by grants.	108 individuals

## *What are rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs and who are their beneficiaries in Kosovo?*

Rehabilitation and reintegration programs are targeted interventions for individuals who have been radicalized into violent acts (not only those convicted of terrorism-related offenses), their families, and those who have not entered the prison system but show signs of support for violent extremism. This includes individuals who returned from territories controlled by terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq<sup>7</sup>.

These programs offer educational and vocational training, counseling, employment opportunities, and ideological re-education.

In the context of Kosovo, the individuals of R&R programs are primarily the following individuals<sup>8</sup>:

- **Returnees from war zones in Syria and Iraq;**
- **Individuals who have committed terrorism-related offenses in Kosovo**
- **Referrals from mechanisms or families themselves;**

Currently, the MIA is handling two referred cases, while in 2023, two similar cases were addressed from two different cities in Kosovo.

According to data collected by BIRN, there has been no increase in the number of individuals participating in these programs<sup>9</sup>.

The treatment of these three categories differs, and interventions are applied based on the category to which the individual belongs. In the first category of returnees, in addition to rehabilitation and reintegration measures, many individuals also need basic initial intervention, including housing, food, medical treatment and education for children.

The MIA has also engaged with host communities, as this group has been absent from Kosovo for a considerable time and requires community adaptation support.

In the second category, which includes individuals who have not been in war zones but who committed acts related to terrorism, no need for basic initial intervention has been identified, as health and psychological treatment has already been provided during their stay in correctional institutions or under the supervision of probationers.

In the third category, treatment begins with a close approach, but in this case, the essential thing is to assess the risk of the individuals and then assess the mental health and social needs.

**As a result, rehabilitation and reintegration programs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs at this stage are not targeted to the perpetrators of all forms of criminal offenses, but are rather focused only on the perpetrators of offenses related to violent extremism and terrorism with religious motives.**

7 OSCE Guideline for Policymakers and Service Providers in South-Eastern Europe, entitled "Rehabilitation and Reintegration Outside the Prison Context to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Leads to Terrorism", available at the link - [https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/0/467055\\_0.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/0/467055_0.pdf)

8 BIRN interview with Mr. Mensur Hoti, Director of the Public Security Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs

9 MIA's Responses to BIRN's inquiries (January 16, 2025)

Table 2. Questionnaire completed with MIA's responses to BIRN's questions

MIA	Question	Yes (if applicable)	No (if applicable)	Response
1	<p><b>What are the main programs of MIA for rehabilitation, reintegration and re-socialization?</b></p> <p><b>What is the current number of people involved in the MIA rehabilitation and reintegration program? (how many women, men, children)</b></p>			<p>The main programs are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rehabilitation program</li> <li>2. Reintegration program</li> <li>3. Programs related to KCS and KPS.</li> </ol> <p>the total number is over 500 people.</p>
1.1	<p>Has this number increased in recent years?</p> <p>What are the main trends in the number of individuals registered in the MIA Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program?</p>			<p>There is no increase in the number of people.</p>
1.2	<p>What are the barriers to enrolling more people in this program?</p>			<p>The program is voluntary and there are no barriers to enrolling in it. In terms of lack of support, we can say that the lack of donations can be an obstacle.</p>
1.3	<p>Is there any assessment of the effectiveness of these programs?</p>			<p>The research "From Syria to Home" has been completed. "A comprehensive analysis of the repatriation, resettlement, reintegration, rehabilitation, resilience and mental health of returned citizens of Kosovo" – research conducted in collaboration with the Institute of Psychology.</p>
1.4	<p>What is the total number of individuals included to date in the MIA rehabilitation and reintegration program?</p>			<p>In addition to the direct individuals, 163 in total, we also have children and their families, which brings the total number to over 500 people.</p>
2	<p><b>Is there data available on how many people have benefited from the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts of all stakeholders (not only MIA)?</b></p>			<p>To date, a total <b>108 individuals</b> have been supported through grants.</p>
2.1	<p>How many individuals have been supported, employed, self-employed?</p>			<p>57 individuals are currently employed or self-employed.</p>
3	<p><b>What forms of financial or other support are offered to individuals working on de-radicalization? Who are the main supporters?</b></p>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Individual grants</b></li> <li><b>2. Community grants</b></li> <li><b>3. Vocational trainings</b></li> <li><b>4. Courses</b></li> <li><b>5. Extracurricular activities</b></li> </ol> <p>The main supporters for all these activities are external donors.</p>
3.1	<p>How has this support enabled these units to improve or expand their deradicalization efforts?</p>			<p>This support has allowed these individuals to improve their professional capacity, seek employment and self-employment, and enhance community awareness.</p>

3.2	What challenges remain in providing sufficient support for deradicalization activities?			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mungesa e qëndrueshmërisë lidhur me mbështetjen.</li> <li>2. Mungesa e burimeve financiare që lidhen drejtpërdrejt me subjektet.</li> <li>3. Mungesa e strategjisë së komunikimit.</li> <li>4. Mungesa e koordinimit ndërinstytucional.</li> </ol>
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is funding de-radicalization activities and how?</li> </ul>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of sustainability regarding support.</li> <li>2. Lack of financial resources directly related to the individuals.</li> <li>3. Lack of a communication strategy.</li> <li>4. Lack of inter-institutional coordination.</li> </ol>
4	<b>Is there a mechanism that conducts regular consultations among stakeholders to assess the effects and impact of de-radicalization programs implemented in correctional and probation institutions?</b>		X	
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes? What is the exact purpose of this mechanism and who is involved?</li> </ul>		X	
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often are consultations with stakeholders held and what issues are usually discussed?</li> </ul>		X	
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What key insights have been gathered from consultations on the impact of de-radicalization programs?</li> </ul>		X	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have these consultations resulted in program adjustments or improvements?</li> </ul>		X	
5	<b>Are there regular reports on the implementation of de-radicalization programs in correctional and probation institutions?</b>		X	
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, how regularly are these reports prepared and were there any interesting findings that led to improvements?</li> </ul>		X	
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who produces these reports and who is usually involved in the process?</li> </ul>		X	
6	<b>Are de-radicalization programs being implemented targeting affected populations in correctional and probation institutions?</b>		X	
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the scope (focus) and reach (who exactly is targeted) of de-radicalization programs in correctional and probation institutions?</li> </ul>		X	
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there any assessment of how effective these programs are in addressing the specific needs of the population within these facilities?</li> </ul>		X	

7	<b>Are there specialized trainings and other capacity building for staff of correctional and probation institutions working on de-radicalizing the currently affected population?</b>		X	
7.1	• What is the content and purpose of specialized training for personnel in correctional institutions?		X	
7.2	• Is there any impact assessment of such trainings in strengthening the capabilities of beneficiaries to manage de-radicalization efforts?		X	
7.3	• Are new needs emerging for staff working with radicalized individuals?		X	
8	<b>What are the current local-level efforts for designing and implementing deradicalization programs?</b>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multidisciplinary Teams are currently being established at the local level.</li> <li>2. After their creation, a decision is then issued by the Mayors.</li> <li>3. Development of an SOP.</li> <li>4. Implementation support</li> <li>5. Coordination with the central level.</li> </ol>
8.1	• Is there progress in developing and implementing de-radicalization programs at the local level?			The establishment of multidisciplinary teams has started 6 municipalities of Kosovo.
8.2	What specific challenges have emerged in implementing the program at the local level?			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of professional capacities</li> <li>2. Staff turnout</li> <li>3. Political will of Mayors.</li> <li>4. Lack of stable financial resources.</li> </ol>
9	<b>What programs are involved and what treatment do children receive as part of the program?</b>			<p>We have continuously supported the repatriated children with various activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extracurricular activities</li> <li>2. Psychological support</li> <li>3. Recreational activity in resocialization.</li> <li>4. Courses, depending on their needs.</li> </ol>
10	<b>How is the MIA program financed, what is the share of the state budget and that of donors, and what is the long-term plan for the financial sustainability of the support programs for rehabilitation, reintegration and disengagement?</b>			The only support we receive from Kosovo is payments for temporary accommodation provided to some of the repatriated families. Everything else is funded by donors.

### ***Disengagement and Deradicalization Programs in Correctional Institutions in Kosovo***

The Kosovo Correctional Service is yet to develop a specific program dedicated solely to inmates convicted of offenses related to violent extremism and terrorism.

Although there have been initiatives and interventions targeting inmates convicted of terrorism-related offenses, these do not cover all forms of violent extremism and terrorism. The

focus remains primarily on religiously motivated terrorism, despite the emergence and increased prevalence of other forms of violent extremism and terrorism, such as the attacks that occurred last year in northern Kosovo.

Programs like anger management are available to all prisoners, whereas the pre-release and post-release rehabilitation program, a Council of

Europe-supported project, is still in its pilot phase. There has yet to be any concrete involvement of the Kosovo Probation Service, and no impact assessment of this project has been conducted so far.

It should also be noted that Kosovo Correctional Service programs have not been sufficiently attractive to convicted individuals involved in terrorism-related offenses. Of the 168 individuals who have passed through correctional institutions either as detainees or convicted prisoners, only 29 have participated in specific programs.

Currently, 19 individuals are held in correctional institutions, of whom 11 are in pre-trial detention, and 8 are convicted prisoners. These individuals are housed in a special pavilion within the Dubrava prison.

Furthermore, the cooperation agreement signed in 2018 between the Islamic Community of Kosovo and the Ministry of Justice for the provision of theological treatment for prisoners has remained inactive, with no progress made by KCS in this regard.

According to data collected from questionnaires and in-depth interviews conducted by BIRN, it

was found that Correctional Service officers have attended specialized training sessions, including: Specific tools for VEP (Violent Extremist Prisoners). 5 documents.

Two social officers are currently being trained as “Train the Trainer” (ToT) instructors. Fifteen other social officers are undergoing training for “anger management” program. At present, the Kosovo Correctional Service employs 74 social workers, 14 of whom are stationed at the Dubrava Correctional Institution.

Additionally, the “Pre-Release Program and Post-Release Support Framework for Violent Extremist Prisoners (VEP) and Other Marginalized and At-Risk Prisoners of Radicalization” is currently under development. As part of this project, “Risk Assessment and Classification Training for Inmates with Terrorism-Related Offenses (K-TERAC)” is also being implemented, aiming to identify violent extremist behaviors and support the implementation of a rehabilitation program.

However, there is no specific evaluation of the impact of these training programs, nor is there a mechanism in place to assess their effectiveness.

Table 3. Kosovo Correctional Service data

KCS	Question	Yes (if applicable)	No (if applicable)	Response
1	<b>What de-radicalization programs targeting the affected population in correctional institutions are currently being implemented in the KCS?</b>	Yes		1. Anger management program. 2. Pre- and post-release rehabilitation program for violent extremist prisoners (supported by the Council of Europe).
1.1	What is the focus and reach (who exactly is targeted) of de-radicalization programs in correctional institutions?	Yes		It targets inmates convicted of terrorism or persons who are associated with terrorism and other persons who show signs of radicalization.
1.2	Is there any assessment of how effective these programs are in addressing the specific needs of the population within these facilities?		No	The supervision of the Pre- and Post-Release Rehabilitation program for violent extremist prisoners was carried out by a Council of Europe expert.  Due to the fact that persons convicted of violent extremism have not committed any crimes after serving their sentences, with an exception of <b>2 cases</b> , We consider that the programs have had a positive effect.
1.3	If yes, describe any key successes identified so far?			Preventing the spread of extremist ideas to the rest of the prison population.

2	<b>Are there specialized trainings and other capacity building for staff of correctional institutions working on de-radicalizing the currently affected population?</b>	Yes		<p>Correctional Service officers have attended specialized training such as: Specific tools for VEP (Violent Extremist Prisoners). 5 documents.</p> <p>The “Pre-Release Program and Post-Release Support Framework for Violent Extremist Prisoners (VEP) and Other Marginalized and At-Risk Prisoners of Radicalization” is currently under development.</p>
2.1	What is the content and purpose of specialized training for personnel in correctional institutions?	Yes		Risk Assessment and Classification Training for Inmates with Terrorism-Related Offenses (K-TERAC) aiming to identify violent extremist behaviors and support the implementation of a rehabilitation program.
2.2	Is there any impact assessment of such trainings in strengthening the capabilities of beneficiaries to manage de-radicalization efforts?		No	
2.3	Are new needs emerging for staff working with radicalized individuals?	Yes		Depending on the admission of new cases of prisoners requiring specific treatment, there may be a need for further staff development.
3	<b>Is there a mechanism that conducts regular consultations among stakeholders to assess the effects and impact of de-radicalization programs implemented in correctional institutions?</b>	Yes		<b>The Correctional Service has designated a team that has acted as a unit for managing violent extremism.</b>
	If yes? What is the exact purpose of this mechanism and who is involved?			The purpose of this mechanism is to manage extremist prisoners who are held in Correctional Institutions. This mechanism includes a correctional officer, a social work officer, and a health professional from the Prison Health Department.
	How often are consultations with stakeholders held and what issues are usually discussed?			Meetings and consultations are held monthly, mainly discussing risk assessment, needs, and advancing the implementation of programs that have a positive impact on the re-education of extremist prisoners.
	What key insights have been gathered from consultations on the impact of de-radicalization programs?			Depending on the individual assessment of cases, conclusions are drawn on further actions for the management of prisoners belonging to this category.
	How have these consultations resulted in program adjustments or improvements?			Depending on the inputs obtained, motivational interviews were held.
4	Are there regular reports on the implementation of de-radicalization programs in correctional institutions?	Yes		

	If yes, how regularly are these reports prepared and were there any interesting findings that led to improvements?	Yes		Reporting on the Implementation of programs are regular/periodic.
	Who produces these reports and who is usually involved in the process?	Yes		Periodic reports are compiled by responsible officials.

### Disengagement and Deradicalization Programs in the Kosovo Probation Service

Currently, the Kosovo Probation Service supervises only one individual who has been conditionally released after being convicted of terrorism-related offenses.

Between 2015 and 2025, a total of 68 individuals have completed their supervision under the Probation Service.

Table 4. Data on individuals that have been treated by the KPS

2015-2024	40 male individuals in conditional release
	28 female individuals with suspended sentences

The Kosovo Probation Service is yet to develop a specific program dedicated exclusively to individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses, and has no program that encompasses all forms of violent extremism and terrorism. Instead, the focus remains entirely on violent extremism and terrorism with religious motivations.

The current interventions offered to individuals under the supervision of the Kosovo Probation Service include: motivational interviews, conversations for change, anger management sessions, awaiting the implementation of the pre-release and post-release program.

Currently, the Kosovo Probation Service is involved in the “Horizontal Facility 3” Project, an initiative of the Council of Europe launched in June 2024. This program is dedicated to the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals before and after release and is implemented in cooperation with the Correctional Service. The involvement of

the Probation Service and the Prevention and Reintegration Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is also envisaged in the last 3 months of the individual’s journey in the Correctional Service, to coordinate the process and assess the needs of the individual. This project is currently in its pilot phase and is being implemented at the Dubrava Correctional Center and the High-Security Prison.

Trainings to date for probation staff have primarily focused on handling individuals convicted of violent extremism and terrorism with religious motivations, without addressing other specific forms of extremism. There is a recognized need for probation officers to receive specialized training in new techniques and approaches for dealing with these categories of offenders.

Additionally, 10 probation officers have participated in a ToT training on anger management. As part of a project supported by the British and Dutch Embassies, a handbook has been developed, providing basic explanations on radicalization, violent extremism, terrorism, and other relevant topics.

Apart from psycho-social approaches, the Probation Service has not yet established any material support or financial relief programs for individuals under its supervision. The only exception is few grants provided through donor-supported projects.

Additionally, this project also envisaged the creation of a database for rehabilitation and reintegration cases. However, as of the date of the interview with the Director of the Probation Service, Arsim Tahiri, on December 17, 2024, the database had not yet been finalized. Similarly, the online platform for case monitoring has also not been completed.



Table 5. Kosovo Probation Service data

KPS	Question	Yes (if applicable)	No (if applicable)	Response
1	<b>What de-radicalization programs targeting the affected population in probation institutions are currently being implemented in the KCS?</b>	X		As part of the Horizontal Facility 3 project with the Council of Europe, in June of this year, the Pre-Post-Release Rehabilitation Program was finalized for persons coming under supervision with a history of radicalism, extremism and terrorism. This program is led by the Kosovo Correctional Service in cooperation with the Kosovo Probation Service and the Division for Prevention and Reintegration within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The idea of this program is to deepen cooperation between agencies, which will guarantee more qualitative rehabilitation and reintegration.
1.1	What is the focus and reach (who exactly is targeted) of de-radicalization programs in probation institutions?	X		This rehabilitation program includes persons with a history of criminal offenses of extremism, radicalism, and terrorism, as well as persons who are serving sentences for other criminal offenses but who are at risk of radicalization within prisons.
1.2	Is there any assessment of how effective these programs are in addressing the specific needs of the population within these facilities?	X		Currently, this rehabilitation program, which comes from the Horizontal Facility 3 project with the Council of Europe, is being piloted in two correctional centers; the High Security Prison and the Dubrava Prison, and the first impacts will be reported shortly.
1.3	If yes, describe any key successes identified so far?		X	
2	<b>Are there specialized trainings and other capacity building for staff of probation institutions working on de-radicalizing the currently affected population?</b>	X		Projects executed by KPS with local and international partners include various trainings, meetings and round tables to build capacities in KPS in working with this category of individuals under supervision.
2.1	What is the content and purpose of specialized training for personnel in probation institutions?	X		In general, trainings are related to the phenomenon of radicalism, extremism and terrorism, as well as specialized techniques and approaches to better confront surveillance by the Kosovo Security Force.
2.2	Is there any impact assessment of such trainings in strengthening the capabilities of beneficiaries to manage de-radicalization efforts?		X	

2.3	Are new needs emerging for staff working with radicalized individuals?	x		Despite the fact that we currently do not have many cases under supervision from this category (we currently only have one person on conditional release), we have received instructions from staff to update the relevant specialized techniques and approaches.
3	<b>Is there a mechanism that conducts regular consultations among stakeholders to assess the effects and impact of de-radicalization programs implemented in probation institutions?</b>	<b>x</b>		<b>Perhaps not a mechanism, but we have ongoing consultations with the KCS, MIA, as well as our local and international partners regarding the challenges, difficulties, and progress of supervision.</b>
	If yes? What is the exact purpose of this mechanism and who is involved?		x	The purpose of these discussions is to ensure higher quality rehabilitation and reintegration of persons under supervision.
	How often are consultations with stakeholders held and what issues are usually discussed?	x		We have consultations and discussions regarding this process, under the projects with the Council of Europe, the British and Dutch Embassies. In general, issues of challenges, difficulties, and progress of work are discussed.
	What key insights have been gathered from consultations on the impact of de-radicalization programs?	x		Strengthening the knowledge of KSC officials regarding how to deal with this category of supervision in the most professional way.
	How have these consultations resulted in program adjustments or improvements?	x		For example, until the finalization of the Pre-Post-Release Program for persons with radicalism, extremism and terrorism, frequent meetings and trainings were held with the KCS within the CoE project.
4	<b>Are there regular reports on the implementation of de-radicalization programs in probation institutions?</b>	<b>x</b>		<b>The KPS reports regularly to MIA on the implementation of its activities under the State Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism.</b>
	If yes, how regularly are these reports prepared and were there any interesting findings that led to improvements?	x		KPS reports bi-annually to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
	Who produces these reports and who is usually involved in the process?	x		The reports are issued by the KSC officials and describe the activities related to the implementation of the aforementioned strategy.

### ***Institutional Interaction and Reporting Mechanisms for Evaluating the Impact and Effects of Deradicalization Programs in the Probation and Correctional Services***

The Division for Prevention and Reintegration of Radicalized Persons of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as the process coordinator, has yet to formalize the cooperation mechanisms or effectively utilize the results of this coordination.

Although continuous communication and

cooperation are evident, there are still no formal mechanisms in place, and progress in this area remains limited. As a result, the burden of the R&R process still primarily falls on MIA.

The Correctional Service and the Probation Service of Kosovo have not established a joint risk assessment

instrument for individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses. Such an instrument is considered crucial for this process.

Additionally, the Probation Service has not established cooperation with the Employment Agency of Kosovo to strengthen support for convicted individuals. Nor has it developed cooperation with the Islamic Community of Kosovo for theological treatment of inmates.

Similarly, the Kosovo Correctional Service has not succeeded in offering theological treatment for

prisoners, either through the Islamic Community of Kosovo or any other religious organization.

While the Ministry of Internal Affairs has made progress in cooperation with academic institutions, particularly the Institute of Psychology, leading to the research study “From Syria to Home”, this collaboration has not extended to the development of specialized university-level programs addressing these issues. Furthermore, the academic sector has not been involved in designing activities, policies, or strategic documents related to deradicalization.

### **Local-Level Efforts in Designing and Implementing Deradicalization Programs**

The role of local institutions in rehabilitation, reintegration, disengagement, and deradicalization programs is essential. Accordingly, the Strategy for the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism and its Action Plan place local-level institutions at the center of addressing the problem.

However, BIRN’s findings indicate that the MIA, specifically the Department for Public Security and the Division for Prevention and Reintegration, continues to be the primary driving force behind R&R programs. Although the strategy envisions local institutions playing a central role, this monitoring report reveals that local institutions are almost entirely absent from addressing this issue. However, this monitoring report reveals how the local level is almost completely excluded, fails to recognize the issue, doesn’t understand the process, and remains indifferent to the issue.

- *Only 2 out of 24 municipalities reported having a list of radicalized individuals and were able to explain how they update and use this list.*
- *Only 3 out of 24 municipalities reported having a local deradicalization program or initiative, but they could not provide any evidence of efforts thereof.*
- *Only 8 out of 24 municipalities stated that they had conducted specific training sessions to strengthen the capacities of the local staff working on deradicalization. However, none of the 8 municipalities could provide evidence of any impact assessment of such trainings.*
- *Only 2 out of 24 municipalities reported that they regularly produce reports at the local level regarding the implementation of deradicalization programs.*
- *Only 5 out of 24 municipalities reported that*

*they hold regular consultations with key stakeholders involved in the implementation and evaluation of deradicalization programs.*

- *Only 2 out of 24 municipalities have allocated grants for individuals within rehabilitation and reintegration programs.*
- *No municipality has conducted an awareness campaign on rehabilitation, reintegration, or disengagement of radicalized individuals.*

*The Strategy for the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism aims to establish multidisciplinary referral mechanisms in all municipalities by the end of its mandate. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has conducted the necessary training to establish these mechanisms in **six municipalities**. However, none of these municipalities have issued a decision to formally establish the mechanism. Survey responses from municipalities indicate a fundamental misunderstanding of the role of local institutions in rehabilitation and reintegration programs, despite the fact that many of these municipalities host returnees from war zones, including women and children.*

The role of local institutions is particularly critical in the strategic objective of prevention, beginning with early identification and extending to rehabilitation and reintegration. Their role is also important in planning and establishing referral mechanisms at the municipal level, as well as in decentralizing obligations derived from the counterterrorism strategy.

Despite this, municipalities continue to neglect their responsibilities in this regard.

Moreover, data generated from questionnaires reveal that only 2 out of 24 municipalities that responded to BIRN have a list of individuals who need to benefit from deradicalization measures.

The Municipality of Gjilan and the Municipality of Hani i Elezit are the only municipalities that declare that they have a list of entities, that they update

that list and use it, while 22 other municipalities have not been able to provide relevant data.

Table 6. Indicates whether municipalities have lists of radicalized individuals

	Municipality	Do you have a List of people in need to benefit from de-radicalization measures? How is this list compiled and periodically updated?	How regularly is this list updated and what criteria are used for inclusion?	How effectively was the list used for intervention planning?
1	Prishtina	No	n/a	n/a
2	Prizren	No	n/a	n/a
3	Peja	n/d	n/a	n/a
4	Gjakova	N/D	n/a	n/a
5	Gjilan	Yes	Depending on the cases, the list is updated and progress is tracked for the referred cases, and the determining criteria are based on the behaviors and radicalized individuals.	Depending on how effective the support package has been, support/intervention planning also takes place.
6	Ferizaj	No	n/a	n/a
7	Mitrovica North	n/d	n/a	n/a
8	Kaçanik	No	n/a	n/a
9	Hani i Elezit	Yes	When cases emerge	It has been very effective.
10	Shtime	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	Skenderaj	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Rahovec	No	n/a	n/a
13	Drenas	No	n/a	n/a
14	Kamenicë	No	n/a	n/a
15	Ranillug	No	n/a	n/a
16	Junik	No	n/a	No cases
17	Obiliq	No	n/a	No cases
18	Dragash	No	n/a	No case of radicalization.
19	Suhareka	No	n/a	n/a
20	Zvecan	No	n/a	n/a
21	Strpce	No	n/a	n/a
22	Malisheva	No	n/a	No cases
23	Lipjan	No	n/a	n/a
24	Gracanica	No	n/a	n/a
25	Leposavic	No	n/a	n/a
26	Fushe Kosova	No	n/a	n/a

The Municipality of Peja, responding to BIRN's questionnaire, stated it does not possess specific data on this issue, as the municipality has no sector specifically addressing this issue.

The Municipality of Gjakova stated that "The municipality under no circumstances has the powers to address the topic of deradicalization and has not been involved in any program that addresses this topic."

*Table 7. Indicates whether municipalities have de-radicalization programs*

	Municipality	Have you developed any de-radicalization programs, what efforts are being made in this direction, and are de-radicalization programs being implemented at the local level?	Is there progress in developing and implementing de-radicalization programs at the local level?	What specific challenges have emerged in implementing the program at the local level?
1	Prishtina	No	n/a	n/a
2	Prizren	No	n/a	n/a
3	Peja	n/d	n/a	n/a
4	Gjakova	n/d	n/a	n/a
5	Gjilan	Yes	We have an older work plan in place.	Understanding the importance of approaching this issue, but also the lack of commitment of officials and members of the RM, especially members of non-Muslim religious communities, also due to commitments in their primary work, payment, etc.
6	Ferizaj	No	n/a	n/a
7	Mitrovica North	n/d	n/a	n/a
8	Kaçanik	No	There is an initiative.	n/a
9	Hani i Elezit	Yes	We have the mechanism for preventing and dealing with radicalism and terrorism.	Referral of cases
10	Shtime	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	Skenderaj	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Rahovec	No	They have not created a mechanism, but they are making efforts to prevent radicalism from arising, as Kosovo is a democratic country.	n/a
13	Drenas	No	n/a	n/a
14	Kamenicë	No	n/a	n/a
15	Ranillug	No	n/a	We have not developed any program.
16	Junik	No	n/a	No cases
17	Obiliq	Yes	The MCSC plan includes activities to prevent this phenomenon.	Fear from parents who come across this phenomenon through social networks
18	Dragash	No	n/a	n/a

19	Suhareka	No	n/a	n/a
20	Zvecan	No	n/a	n/a
21	Strpce	No	n/a	n/a
22	Malisheva	No	n/a	n/a
23	Lipjan	No	n/a	n/a
24	Gracanica	No	n/a	n/a
25	Leposavic	No	n/a	n/a
26	Fushe Kosova	No	n/a	n/a

Apart from the list of radicalized individuals in need of intervention, it also appears that only 3 out of 24 municipalities that responded to BIRN have rehabilitation and reintegration programs for radicalized individuals.

In addition to the municipalities of Hani i Elezit and Gjilan, Rahovec has indicated that activities aimed at preventing radicalization are planned through the MCSC. However, they did not provide further details on how they would respond if a case of radicalization arises.

The lack of local plans and programs for deradicalization significantly affects the quality of local institutions' response to violent extremism and terrorism. Firstly, they lack mechanisms for early identification, and secondly, they do not have an organized and structured approach to handling potential cases.

Without local programs in place, interventions are unplanned and, as a result, inadequate. If interventions are inadequate, they will fail to achieve the goal of reducing recidivism and minimizing risks to public security from potential future cases.

### ***Specialized trainings for building local-level capacities working on de-radicalization***

*Table 8. Indicates whether municipal officials have attended any de-radicalization training*

	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Are there specialized trainings and other capacity building for staff of local level institutions working on de-radicalizing the currently affected population?</b>	<b>If yes, what is the content and purpose of such specialized training? Describe the training in detail, when it was held, who organized it, how many participants were there?</b>	<b>Is there any impact assessment of such trainings in strengthening the capabilities of beneficiaries to manage de-radicalization efforts?  Are new needs emerging for staff working with radicalized individuals?</b>
1	Prishtina	No	n/a	n/a
2	Prizren	No	n/a	n/a
3	Pejë	n/d	n/a	n/a
4	Gjakova	n/d	n/a	n/a

5	Gjilan	Po	<p>This year, 3 workshops were held in the municipality of Gjilan with nearly 80 participants. With the organization "YouthCenter" - 30 participants.</p> <p>With the principals/ teachers of the schools of the municipality -24, organized by RM</p> <p>Workshop by "Sbunker" NL Netherlands - 23</p>	Participants gained knowledge about the existence of RM and case identification. Now they have an address where they can refer cases.
6	Ferizaj	Yes	Wherever training is organized, the municipality sends its officials	General knowledge organized by the Strong Cities Network.
7	Mitrovica North	n/d	n/a	n/a
8	Kaçanik	No	n/a	n/a
9	Hani i Elezit	Yes	We have had training for institutional staff on identifying and handling cases.	<p>Yes, because those trainings have prepared us to handle cases today.</p> <p>Yes, with the aim of involving as many stakeholders as possible.</p>
10	Shtime	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	Skenderaj	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Rahovec	<p>Yes -</p> <p>A training was held at the Regional level</p> <p>Topic: Violent extremism and <b>6 officials</b> where trained from the Municipality of Rahovec.</p>	They have not created a mechanism, but they are making efforts to prevent radicalism from arising, as Kosovo is a democratic country.	<p>This training was held on 05.12.2024, in Gjakova, with ATRC lecturer Luan Keka (director of the counter-terrorism directorate).</p> <p>Thesis: Different forms of violent extremism. Capacity building for municipal officials; Topic: Different forms of violent extremism (far-right extremism, ethno-extremism, religious extremism/terminology and concepts);</p> <p>Risk factors and threats (focusing on current terrorist and extremist threats in Kosovo, local and international threats);</p> <p>The role of the parties and institutions in P/CVE; The identification process (early signs, indicators, etc.).</p> <p>Reporting mechanisms and information exchange.</p>

13	Drenas	Yes	Two-day training/ workshop on the topic; on different forms of violent extremism, held on 09-10/10/2024, lecturers: Luan Keka, nearly 20 officials from the invited municipalities of the Pristina Region participated.  At the end of the training Certificates were awarded, and the organization was done by ATRC, GCERF	The training was very important and the lecturer was very professional.
14	Kamenicë	No	n/a	n/a
15	Ranillug	No	n/a	We have not developed any program.
16	Junik	Yes	CSW officer B.F. attended a training on deradicalization	The Ministry of Internal Affairs organized the training.
17	Obiliq	Yes	Police and CSW members participated in a training organized by OSCE	Yes, there is, because they are aware of this (all members of the MCSC and other mechanisms need to be aware of this)
18	Dragash	No	n/a	n/a
19	Suhareka	No	n/a	n/a
20	Zvecan	No	n/a	n/a
21	Strpce	No	n/a	n/a
22	Malisheva	No	n/a	n/a
23	Lipjan	Yes	Training of social work officers in 2023/24	n/d
24	Gracanica	No	n/a	n/a
25	Leposavic	No	n/a	n/a
26	Fushe Kosova	No	n/a	n/a

### ***Inter-Institutional Coordination for Assessing the Effects and Impact of Deradicalization Programs at the Local Level***

Only 6 out of 24 municipalities that responded to BIRN reported having a mechanism for regular inter-institutional consultations to assess the effects and impact of deradicalization programs.

It is important to note that in 2024, trainings on the establishment of referral mechanisms was conducted in 4 municipalities. Previously, trainings had also been held in two other municipalities, while the municipality of Gjilan already having established its referral mechanism.

The 2023-2025 Action Plan of the Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism envisions that municipalities will play a role in providing grants and support for host communities, and offering vocational training programs for targeted individuals.

However, 4 out of the 7 largest municipalities were unable to confirm whether they have a mechanism for coordinating policies and interventions, nor could they assess the impact



and effectiveness of deradicalization programs.

The municipality of Gjilan identified its referral mechanism and provided details on its structure and operations, including cases where neglect or failure to refer individuals was identified.

Meanwhile, the municipalities of Ferizaj, Junik, Rahovec, and Strpce only provided information on the frequency of their meetings, without elaborating on the composition or specific outcomes of their coordination mechanisms.

*Table 9. Overview of municipalities that have built a consultation and coordination mechanism between key stakeholders*

	Municipality	Is there a mechanism that conducts regular consultations among stakeholders in the local level to assess the effects and impact of de-radicalization programs?	What is the exact purpose of this mechanism and who is involved?  How often are consultations with stakeholders held and what issues are usually discussed?	What key insights have been gathered from consultations on the impact of de-radicalization programs? How have these consultations resulted in program adjustments or improvements?
1	Prishtina	No	n/a	n/a
2	Prizren	No	n/a	n/a
3	Pejë	n/d	n/a	n/a
4	Gjakova	n/d	n/a	n/a
5	Gjilan	Yes, the Referral Mechanism is functional.	Cases are reported in RM, where psychologists, educators, community police, sociologists, family members, etc. are involved. The goal is identification and prevention.  We hold regular meetings as RM.  Referred cases, new cases, who should be involved and what support measures are foreseen are discussed.	Cases are reported in RM, where psychologists, educators, community police, sociologists, family members, etc. are involved. The goal is identification and prevention.  We hold regular meetings as RM.  Referred cases, new cases, who should be involved and what support measures are foreseen are discussed.
6	Ferizaj	Yes, Municipal Community Safety Council	Increasing the level of security	Information about the situation
7	Mitrovica North	n/d	n/a	n/a
8	Kaçanik	No	n/a	n/a
9	Hani i Elezit	No	n/a	n/a
10	Shtime	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	Skenderaj	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Rahovec	Yes	With the probationary institution at the regional level	n/a
13	Drenas	No	n/a	n/a
14	Kamenicë	No	n/a	n/a

15	Ranillug	No	n/a	n/a
16	Junik	yes	MCSC, DSHMS, DAKRS, LPSC  Meetings are held every two months and the situation is reviewed from time to time.	n/a
17	Obiliq	We do not have such information.	I don't have such information.	n/a
18	Dragash	No	n/a	n/a
19	Suhareka	No	n/a	n/a
20	Zvecan	No	n/a	n/a
21	Strpce	Yes	At the local level, the municipal safety committee is functional. The safety of citizens is the main goal of the safety committee. Meetings are held six times a year.	n/d
22	Malisheva	No	n/a	n/a
23	Lipjan	Yes, within the MCSC an annual work plan has been developed, which includes activities related to radicalization every year. These proposals come from the actors that make up the MCSC, and during these meetings, the issues of radicalization and religious extremism have often been discussed.  The Islamic Community Council of Lipjan has envisaged activities to address this phenomenon, including discussions with security institutions and collaboration through ICITAP. Lectures have been held in Kosovo prisons by theologians as part of deradicalization efforts.	Each Safety Council contributes in its own way. ICC in Lipjan has conducted awareness-raising lectures on Fridays aimed at preventing religious extremism and continues to monitor the situation in the field.  The Council includes all security institutions, the municipality, and NGOs.	The functionality of the Councils depends on the topics and local interests that require meetings and discussions. The recommendations generated by these Councils are brought to the MCSC for further discussion.
24	Gracanica	n/a	n/a	n/a
25	Leposavic	No	n/a	n/a
26	Fushe Kosova	No	n/a	n/a

## Reporting on the Implementation of Local Deradicalization Programs

Local institutions have not established proper communication channels with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other institutional actors regarding violent extremism and terrorism. Out of the 24 municipalities that responded to BIRN, only 2 municipalities stated that they produce regular reports on the implementation of deradicalization programs.

The municipality of Gjilan reported to preparing annual and, when necessary, periodic reports on the implementation of deradicalization programs, which they also submit to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The municipality of Lipjan stated that they

prepare regular reports, which include input from other relevant institutions.

None of the remaining municipalities provided BIRN with any information regarding the existence of such reports, who prepares them, their content, institutions involved, or how these reports are utilized.

This highlights a significant institutional gap, considering that the MIA's rehabilitation and reintegration programs currently cover individuals in 10 municipalities across Kosovo.

Table 10. Regarding the drafting of reports at the local level on the implementation of programs

	Municipality	Are there regular reports at the local level on the implementation of de-radicalization programs?	If yes, how regularly are these reports prepared and were there any interesting findings that led to improvements?	Who produces these reports and who is usually involved in the process?
1	Prishtina	No	n/a	n/a
2	Prizren	No	n/a	n/a
3	Pejë	n/d	n/a	n/a
4	Gjakova	n/d	n/a	n/a
5	Gjilan	Yes	We prepare regular reports to the mayor. We draft annual reports and, if necessary, periodic ones.	Reports are drafted by the mechanism coordinator and members and reported to the mayor and the Ministry of Interior.
6	Ferizaj	No	n/a	n/a
7	Mitrovica North	n/d	n/a	n/a
8	Kaçanik	No	n/a	n/a
9	Hani i Elezit	No	n/a	n/a
10	Shtime	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	Skenderaj	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Rahovec	No	n/a	n/a
13	Drenas	No	n/a	n/a
14	Kamenicë	No	n/a	n/a
15	Ranillug	No	n/a	n/a
16	Junik	No	n/a	n/a
17	Obiliq	We do not have such information.	I don't have such information.	n/a
18	Dragas	No	n/a	n/a
19	Suhareka	No	n/a	n/a
20	Zvecan	No	n/a	n/a

21	Strpce	No	n/a	n/d
22	Malisheva	No	n/a	n/a
23	Lipjan	Yes	In 2022/2023 regarding the improvement of integration circumstances	CSW-ZLK-MIA
24	Gracanica	n/a	n/a	n/a
25	Leposavic	No	n/a	n/a
26	Fushe Kosova	No	n/a	n/a

### ***Number of Persons Involved in the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program, Interaction with Host Communities, and Challenges in Securing Sustainable Support***

According to data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, provided through the questionnaire and an interview with Mr. Mensur Hoti, there are currently over 500 individuals included in the MIA's rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

Some of the key successes of these programs include:

- Prevention of terrorist attacks in Kosovo,
- Inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as women and children, in these programs,
- Identification of individuals and their mapping;
- Low recidivism rates.

However, despite these achievements, MIA lacks a specific instrument or assessment mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. The only available indicator is whether individuals repeat the offense (recidivism).

Additionally, a critical challenge remains the fact that participation in these programs is entirely voluntary, which limits engagement.

Another major challenge, as highlighted in both the questionnaire and interviews, is the issue of funding and the lack of financial sustainability for these programs.

So far, the Division has provided individual grants to program participants after their release from prison, with funding coming mainly from international donors. The MIA's budget has primarily been allocated for securing housing for individuals.

Hoti stated that the financial assistance through grants should remain a responsibility of the central government, rather than being passed on to municipalities, and that municipalities should prioritize the needs of individuals in their areas of responsibility.

Furthermore, Hoti told BIRN that donor support remains essential at least until the completion of the current strategy. However, he acknowledged that Kosovo's institutions must develop independent plans to ensure long-term funding for these activities.

The main goal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its Division is to expand the range of interventions and, in particular, to strengthen cooperation with local actors, including establishing and operationalizing referral mechanisms, building capacities in schools and centers for social work, and engagement with host communities.

# IMPACT ANALYSIS

In the overall assessment, the activities implemented under the rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement programs have achieved positive results, primarily based on the low rate of recidivism among convicted individuals.

Data indicates that when individuals voluntarily participate in the programs, the success rate is high. However, the main challenge for institutions is finding modalities to encourage unwilling convicts to participate. The fact that only 17% of convicted and detained individuals were engaged in voluntary programs highlights the need for alternative modalities, also involving the community. The slow progress in decentralizing work with municipalities creates a large gap and the possibility that released persons will remain without treatment.

In prison settings, the current programs only target individuals convicted of religiously motivated terrorism, excluding right-wing extremists and those involved in ethno-nationalist terrorism. This creates a major gap in addressing all forms of extremism. The challenge is particularly evident given the increasing number of arrests for such offenses.

In the correctional system, programs remain generalized rather than individualized to address the specific needs of radicalized individuals. An effective approach requires personalized programs that consider the individual motivational factors of each convict.

KCS has not developed mechanisms to assess the impact of these programs. This makes it difficult to measure their effectiveness and efficiency. The lack of concrete data complicates efforts to improve and refine these programs.

The Kosovo Probation Service is yet to reach its full operational capacity and faces challenges in inter-institutional cooperation. Additionally, the decentralization of reintegration and disengagement processes at the local level has not been fully achieved due to the lack of municipal capacities.

In terms of inter-institutional coordination, there is no clear protocol for managing pre-release and post-release processes. This creates gaps in the monitoring and support of released individuals, increasing the risk of recidivism.

MESTI has made progress in training teachers and informing parents, but there is still a lack of specialized university programs focused on identifying and addressing violent extremism. Religious communities remain insufficiently engaged in the rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

Funding remains a persistent challenge in rehabilitation and reintegration efforts. Currently, most activities are financed through international donors. Kosovo has failed to secure sustainable funding for these programs, putting their future continuity and effectiveness at risk.

Key **Conclusions** from the Assessment of Rehabilitation, Reintegration, and Disengagement Programs:

- **Limited participation of convicted individuals in rehabilitation and reintegration programs.**
- **Absence of measurable mechanisms to evaluate the efficacy of these programs.**
- **Lack of clear protocols for pre-release and post-release phases.**
- **Challenges faced by both the Correctional and Probation Services in developing and implementing personalized rehabilitation programs.**
- **Ongoing difficulties in inter-institutional coordination for program implementation.**
- **The current legal framework does not support mandatory rehabilitation and reintegration programs.**
- **Lack of sustainable financial resources for rehabilitation and reintegration programs.**
- **Religious communities and educational institutions have not sufficiently fulfilled**

**their roles in these efforts.**

- **Serious capacity limitations at the local level for program implementation.**
- **While current rehabilitation and reintegration activities have been successful, cases of recidivism have also been recorded.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## For the Kosovo Correctional Service

- The Kosovo Correctional Service should conduct an internal assessment of the impact of existing programs through empirical measurements of results.
- KCS should develop specific programs that individualize the approach to inmates convicted of terrorism-related offenses, alongside its general programs.
- KCS should increase its capacity and expand programs to include all forms of violent extremism, particularly right-wing extremism.
- KCS should develop specific instruments to assess the risk levels and deradicalization progress of individuals, including those convicted of other offenses who may become radicalized within correctional institutions.
- When implementing individual programs, KCS should enhance its instruments for continuous evaluation and review of programs and measures applied to convicts with a history of terrorist offenses;
- KCS should establish impact assessment mechanisms for training programs and identify staff training needs within correctional institutions.
- KCS, in collaboration with the MIA and KPS, should prioritize finalizing the pre-release and post-release coordination protocol.
- KCS should create standardized evaluation methods and continue advancing staff capacities through specialized training on handling of all forms of violent extremism.
- KCS should assess the impact of housing convicted terrorists in a shared prison pavilion, determining whether this has contributed to further radicalization.
- KCS should develop modalities for providing theological and ideological treatment for inmates.
- KCS should design new programs aimed at increasing the participation of convicted individuals in terrorism-related rehabilitation efforts.

## For the Kosovo Probation Service

- KPS should seek to enhance and expand the range of psycho-therapeutic actions for prisoners under supervision, to include material support, facilitation, and mediation with other institutions for the purpose of employment or self-employment;
- KPS should prioritize finalizing a joint risk assessment instrument with KCS for individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses.
- KPS, in collaboration with MIA and KCS, should prioritize finalizing the pre-release and post-release coordination protocol.
- KPS should complete the database and online platform for R&R programs to enhance information exchange with KCS and MIA.
- KPS should review existing programs and assess the need for new initiatives using a scientific approach that examines both successful and ineffective practices in rehabilitating terrorism-related offenders.
- KPS should establish a cooperation agreement that facilitates preferential treatment

for convicts regarding employment and vocational training, particularly during their probation period.

- KPS should develop training programs for probation officers, covering all forms of violent extremism and terrorism, while also creating specific evaluation tools to measure the impact of these trainings.

- KPS should enhance the quality and volume of pre-sentencing reports provided to the courts, while also improving coordination with the judiciary to ensure higher-quality final reports on individuals under supervision.

### For the Ministry of Justice

- Review and amend the Criminal Code to allow combined sentences that include both imprisonment and supervised restrictions by the Kosovo Probation Service.
- Review the Law on the Execution of Penal Sanctions to empower the Conditional Release Panel to issue additional obligations on individuals during their conditional release phase.

### For the Ministry of Internal Affairs

- MIA should enhance collaboration with municipalities and their mayors, ensuring local authorities understand their obligations in the deradicalization process.
- MIA should accelerate the establishment of referral mechanisms in municipalities and assist in drafting documents necessary for their operationalization.
- MIA should review and evaluate existing programs, developing clear criteria and indicators to measure their success or failure.
- MIA should design specific assessment tools to measure the success of deradicalization programs and the level of disengagement of individuals.
- MIA should take a leading role in coordinating efforts with a strong focus on academic institutions, involving them in needs assessments, program evaluations, activity design, and the development of strategic documents.

### For Municipalities

- Municipalities should accelerate the establishment of referral mechanisms and adopt regulations necessary for their full functionality.
- Municipalities should improve awareness and understanding of deradicalization processes in their scope, including the number of radicalized individuals and programs available to them.
- Municipalities should develop local deradicalization plans, outlining specific programs, a list of radicalized individuals, and actions taken for their reintegration.
- Municipalities should enhance staff capacities through professional training for local officials involved in handling radicalized individuals.
- Municipalities should establish evaluation tools to assess the needs for local deradicalization programs and measure their impact.





