

Report on first Project year receives positive evaluation – A summary of the first 12 months

PAVE is now already running for 1 ½ years and recently submitted the first Periodic Report to the EC. Further, external reviewers had the chance to read through the report as well as submitted Deliverables of the Project to provide recommendations especially for the work in the next months. Overall the project review was very positive and reflects the hard work the Consortium put into starting the project and preparing for the field work that is now underway.

Summarizing the report, we can say that despite the challenging circumstances posed by the year 2020, the project has made significant progress and achieved the set aims for the first year. In light of the upcoming data collection phase to advance the knowledge on violent extremism in the MENA and the Balkans, the PAVE partners put significant efforts in this reporting period to lay the necessary groundwork. This included the identification of the current gaps of knowledge to be addressed, the building of a common understanding of the phenomena researched and developing seven methodologically and ethically sound country case studies based on solid field site selections.

We have thus several main results that will carry the project forward. We published [three thematic studies](#) on the state of the art of knowledge on cumulative extremisms, the interface between state and religious institutions and online and offline (de)radicalization. The three reports were then synthesized into an overall [theoretical framework for the project](#), which reviews existing knowledge on the drivers of vulnerability and resilience to ideological, ethnic, sectarian, political or religious radicalisation across the three thematic clusters. It also outlines areas for further research, which will be examined through the empirical research in seven countries in the next reporting period. Based on this groundwork, a preliminary policy brief presented some of the main policy insights.

The research design and the methodology for the case studies for the three cluster were agreed upon and compiled into our report on fieldwork plans and field sites selection. Another achievement of the first year were the granting of all necessary ethical approvals, with only one significant delay envisioned as result of the Covid-19 circumstances ([we have now also started a series where you can read about the impacts of the pandemic on the field work](#)).

Further, in all seven research countries, national and local-level stakeholders have been engaged to contribute to the project. Some of the partners managed to conduct [stakeholder committee meetings](#), despite the severe restrictions set for in-person meetings, while others conducted the meeting online or had to shift to individual meetings with identified stakeholder committee members. The stakeholder meetings aimed to inform the framing of the research and confirm the validity of the proposed focus and methodology for the fieldwork.

PAVE also started to create general awareness by producing communication materials such as an animated clip and a newsletter, both can be found on the website (incl. a [subscription link](#) for the latter). Importantly, to foster partnerships and to use synergies of already existing initiatives, contact was made with the Coordinators of the H2020 [PREVEX](#) and [CONNEKT](#) projects.

