Prevention of Radicalization as an Emergent Field of Plural Policing in Norway: The Accelerating Role of Militant Islamists

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Abstract
This article provides a brief history of the policing of militant Islamism in Norway between 2009 and 2019. The numerous counter-responses to militant Islamism that have taken place in this decade, I argue, were a primary factor in accelerating the emergence of the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism (PRVE) as a new field of policy and plural policing in Norway. The emergence of this field in Norway is set against similar fields internationally and related to the evolution of the global Salafist-jihadist movement. Based on interviews with practitioners involved in PRVE and other types of qualitative data, my analysis traces the evolution of this field of policing and identifies five phases that follow the arc of conflict escalation–de-escalation between militant Islamists and those tasked to police them. The article also discusses critical aspects of this emergent field, particularly the role of police and intelligence in the policing of radicalization.

Keywords
Militant Islamism, Profetens Ummah, Global Jihadism, Prevention of radicalization and violent extremism, Plural policing, Countering violent extremism

Introduction
Prior to 2010, the Nordic countries received little attention in terrorism and counter-terrorism literature, largely because few terrorist attacks took place in the region (Malkki, Fridlund & Sallamaa, 2018). After 2010, however, these countries were faced with major challenges: terrorist attacks on their own soil, rising numbers of Muslim foreign fighters and increased domestic support for armed Islamist groups in Syria. This article examines how the policing of militant Islamism (MI) developed in Norway between 2009 and 2019, an extraordinary period in terms of the global security threat associated with MI. The purpose of attending to Norway’s massive counter-responses to MI mobilizations during this period is to better understand what led to and accelerated the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism (PRVE) as a new field of policy and plural policing in Norway.

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PRVE marks a continuation of the international counter-terrorism that has evolved in Western democracies in the last two decades (Lindekilde, 2012). During this period, policies and measures aimed at preempting terrorism have affected criminal policies, criminal law and policing considerably in Western democracies and been a main influence in how nation states balance the provision of security with the protection of liberties (McCulloch & Pickering, 2009). In this emerging context, I address several important questions about what PRVE policing looks like in Norway: (1) What led to and accelerated the emergence of PRVE in Norway? (2) How has it evolved in the first decade of its existence? and (3) What are the consequences of its emergence?

When the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) announced its caliphate in June 2014, the Norwegian Government launched a new action plan against radicalization and violent extremism. The plan emphasized enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration and new efforts to prevent all forms of violent extremism. In actuality, though, up to 2019 concerns about radicalization were primarily about MI, and attendant resources for prevention efforts were allocated to address it. The phenomenon of MI was largely unknown when it rose to prominence in Norway between 2012 and 2015. To manage this threat, new knowledge, methods and collaborative structures had to be swiftly established by a series of initiatives by state, private and civil society actors. This management of MI, I argue, has been a primary factor in the emergence of PRVE as a new area of plural policing.

In this article, I set these developments into a wider context by examining MI in relation to the global Salafist-jihadist movement, whose presence in Norway prompted plural policing. In tracing the policing of MI in Norway, my analysis identifies key events at the national and international levels that accelerated the emergence of what has become a national apparatus for plural policing of radicalization and violent extremism (RVE). By tracing the evolution of this field of policing in Norway and explicating some of its consequences, I contribute to research on international PRVE. Compared to other European countries, and even to Sweden and Denmark, few peer-reviewed publications on Norwegian PRVE exist at the time of writing. Therefore, an overview of the field’s characteristics, its emergence and associated critical issues is necessary for filling knowledge gaps. Tracing this field’s evolution will also facilitate a better understanding among researchers and practitioners of current and future policing of radicalization.

I begin by exploring the literature on plural policing and counter radicalization as a way to stake out the research area relevant to my study. This is followed by a discussion of methods and data and a description of the process-oriented approach I employ. I then offer an analysis of developments in the MI milieu and its policing across the five phases of the period in question. Finally, I summarize my findings, suggest avenues for future scholarly inquiry and discuss critical aspects of policing in this field in Norway and internationally, particularly the role of the police and intelligence.

**Plural policing of radicalization and violent extremism**

In the Nordic countries, governments currently call for cooperative efforts by state, municipal and civil society actors to strengthen PRVE efforts. States increasingly acknowledge that they cannot stop violent extremism by coercive force alone, and that relying solely on law enforcement responses may actually create more problems than it solves (Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009). More sophisticated responses are thus emerging internationally (Sivenbring, 2016). The Nordic nations’ first governmental action plans to prevent RVE, launched between 2009 and 2016, exemplify this trend. Internationally, there are similar developments, such as the
UK’s Prevent program and the American and Australian governments’ emphasis on the need to partner with and empower local communities and local government in PRVE (Dalgaard-Nielsen & Schack, 2016).

Collaborative PRVE efforts that involve schools, social and childcare services, civil society organizations, families, religious bodies and local communities, together with the police, secret services and others, are a relatively new phenomenon in the Nordic countries. Multi-agency collaboration in crime prevention, however, has existed for decades in many Norwegian municipalities (Gundhus, 2014). The SLT$^2$ model (for the coordination of local crime prevention measures) has been a central organizational structure for coordinating multi-agency efforts to prevent crime at the municipal level, involving the municipal administration, police and other local actors (Gundhus et al., 2008). Similar collaborative models for crime prevention have existed in Sweden (SSPF) and Denmark (SSP) for years. Cross-disciplinary and multi-agency efforts to counter crime are thus not new. The closer attention given to violent extremism by these crime prevention collaborations – and the establishment of additional structures for PRVE – are, however, recent developments, whose history this article examines. The main focus will be on PRVE measures that are directed at those involved in violent extremism, extremist milieus, and individuals thought to be “at risk” of radicalization into violent extremism – efforts conceptualized in the literature as selective and indicative crime prevention (Sahlin, 2000) or as person-oriented and locally-oriented policing (Gundhus, 2014).

Pluralization of policing

Research has identified an international trend, known as “plural policing” (Crawford, 2008). The concept of plural policing involves a broad take on policing, which includes preventive, reactive, penal, investigatory and other – overt and covert – control measures by a variety of state and non-state actors (Loader, 2000). Plural policing thus refers to a wider process of social control, way beyond mainstream law enforcement (Loftus, 2015).

A key characteristic of contemporary policing or “the delivery of security” is their pluralization, which involves myriad actors, and an emphasis on cross-sectoral collaboration and pre-emption (Loftus, 2015). This characteristic has become clearly observable in Norway with the multi-agency approach to PRVE that emerged during the period examined herein. The emergence of prevention of radicalization as a new field of plural policing is also a reflection of the wider “preemptive turn” in criminal justice across Western democracies: the shift from post-crime to precrime societies – societies in which the possibility of forestalling risks competes with, and even takes precedence over, responding to wrongs actually done (Zedner, 2007, p. 262). The term “Preventive State” connotes the related tendency for states to pass laws and measures designed to enhance their capacity to forestall risk and preempt harm. These changes involve an increased emphasis on preparedness for violent extremist attacks (Chamlian, 2016), and they resonate with a tendency in contemporary crime control whose primary goal is to manage “criminal risk”, rather than tackling its root causes (Chriiss, 2013).

The objective of combating possible risks has become “a major social factor shaping the political cultures of Western nations and their strategies of social control” (Aas, 2007, p. 112), including their policies for PRVE. Much research has been devoted to mapping the

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2. SLT is a Norwegian abbreviation for “Samordning av Lokale rus- og kriminalitetsforebyggende Tiltak”, which translates to Coordination of local measures to prevent drug abuse and crime.
diverse manifestations of this preemptive turn, particularly since the 9/11 attacks (Zedner & Ashworth, 2018). The preemptive turn has involved a shift from reactive responses to crimes that have been committed to prioritizing proactive efforts to forestall, for example, radicalization. The increased emphasis on preventing radicalization marks a notable shift in the counter-terrorism efforts of Western democracies.

Prevention of radicalization
Throughout the world, radicalization was rarely mentioned in the mass media before the 9/11 terror attacks, but since 2005 its increased spread has stemmed from increasing fears about “homegrown” terrorism, especially across Europe (Sedgwick, 2010). Growing governmental attention to radicalization in Norway was made manifest by the first national action plan against RVE of 2010. Prior to that, terrorism had been the primary concern. This shift matches the wider international trend in governmental attention, which has switched from the security threat of international terrorism to the potential radicalization of domestic citizens (Malthaner, 2017).

The concept of “radicalization” has, however, been a source of confusion for policing practitioners and has led to considerable debate among scholars (Harris-Hogan & Barelle, 2015). The way the concept is currently used and defined in policy documents did not originate from scientific research but emerged from the development of counter-terrorism policy in the European Union after 2004; the ensuing prominence of “counter radicalization” in the UK and Europe led Canada, Australia and the USA to adopt similar policies (Harris-Hogan & Barelle, 2015). In policy and much of research, radicalization is depicted as a process whereby a previously law-abiding and “normal” individual adopts radical or extreme beliefs that may cause them to act violently (Lindekilde, 2012). However, some scholars reject this linear, simplistic understanding of radicalization (Khalil, 2014) because it does not take into account the varied individual trajectories of individuals joining violent extremist groups (Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009). The substantial discrepancy between the static image of radicalization often presented in policy documents and the complexities that front-line practitioners experience when they address these phenomena locally has also been pointed out (Jämte & Ellefsen, 2020a, p. 217). Heath-Kelly (2017) argues that the concept of radicalization continues to dominate policy because it enables “policy-making and scholarly communities to render a linear narrative around the production of terrorism,” making it accessible to problem-solving approaches such as governance and plural policing. The invention of a “radicalization process” is therefore at the heart of contemporary counter-terrorism policing because it enables the use of pre-emptive technologies and a specific category of risk (Heath-Kelly, 2017).

Policy documents and local action plans to prevent radicalization frequently list indicators of risk for radicalization, including intolerant or antidemocratic attitudes, conspiracy theories, changing values and personal networks, subcultural attributes or symbols, or violent behavior (Andersson, 2019). A key focus in the policing of radicalization is to identify “at-risk” individuals as early as possible (Mattsson, 2019) by seeking to detect “signs of risk” – before any crime is planned, prepared or committed (Lindekilde, 2012). Researchers have, however, pointed to an array of issues connected with monitoring such signs (Desmarais et al., 2017) – for example, the production of too many false positives (Heath-Kelly, 2017). Andersson (2019, p. 63) goes so far as to say that “most forms of deviant ideas, behaviors and experiences” are depicted as possible indicators of radicalization in local policy documents in Scandinavia. The dilemma for PRVE practitioners is thus to walk the thin line between “mind policing” and the prevention of a potential terror attack (Johansen, 2020).
Currently, scholars are not in a position to answer the question “what works?” in PRVE (Gielen, 2019), and scholars have produced only limited knowledge about the intended and unintended consequences of PRVE initiatives (Pistone et al., 2019). As a growing number of sectors of society are mobilized in the plural policing of radicalization, a greater variety of soft and hard measures becomes available to respond to individuals assessed as representing risk. Whether this pluralization of policing means a shift towards softer, harder or different responses – and whether it involves channeling more or fewer people into the criminal justice system – are crucial questions to which I will return later.

**A process-oriented approach**

In order to understand how and why the plural policing of RVE evolved, in my view, it is fruitful to adopt an analytical perspective that is sensitive to the relational dynamics between key players in the period – or “episode” – in question. Episode refers to a bounded sequence of interaction between contending parties; and below such sequences are divided into temporal segments for the purpose of analysis (Tilly, 2008). In very simple terms, the episode of contention under study involves those that constitute the militant Islamist milieu, on one side, and those tasked to police it on the other. These are the key contending players, or “compound players” who include different factions and groups (Jasper, 2015, p. 10). The interactions over time between these players make up the episode, and are therefore important elements for understanding developments in PRVE. To analyze the current episode, I draw on the “relational approach,” developed by Charles Tilly and his colleagues (McAdam et al., 2001).

Tilly’s work includes systematic analysis of the relational aspects of political contention, where the study of the development of conflict over time has attended interaction between diverse actors (Diani, 2007). The basis for Tilly’s approach to political contention seeks to account for processes of social change in the light of models based on relational explanations, and on varying combinations of certain social mechanisms (Diani, 2007). This article views the current episode as a conflict process, in the course of which both PRVE work and the militant Islamist milieu have been transformed. I will emphasize key events – and some of their consequences – in order to trace how the conflict evolved, rather than identifying the mechanisms involved. I use “tracing”, to refer to my descriptive analysis of “what followed what” in the course of the conflict, which is based on my view that to describe the unfolding of a process is to explain the process (Alimi et al., 2015, p. 34).

A process-oriented research approach entails focusing on specific episodes of contention that involves interactions between claim-makers, their allies, their opponents, the government, the media, and the general public (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007, p. 91). The episode I study, is the period from 2009 to 2019; I examine the emergence of multi-levelled and collaborative efforts to police MI, as well as developments in the global jihadist movement and its Norwegian adherents. This provides an entry-point through which it is possible to trace the emergence of PRVE as a new field of plural policing in Norway.

**Methods and data**

The data used for this article was gathered in Norway between August 2018 and July 2019, through interviews, observations, and the collection of text documents. Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted (10 respondents, 20 hours) with people holding key positions in agencies involved in PRVE in Eastern Norway: four SLT/SaLTo coordinators, three
local/regional representatives of the police (one of them retired), one interview with RVTS Øst and one with the Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service. I sought interviewees with extensive experience of the implementation of PRVE policies, and who held central positions in policing networks. Interviewees were sought in the municipalities and districts of Eastern Norway which had the highest numbers of foreign fighters, and the most active militant Islamist milieus. The motivation for selecting this particular sample was to capture practitioners’ first-hand involvement in responses to the MI milieu and their knowledge about key events during the episode in question. To protect the anonymity of interviewees, I use pseudonyms and only refer to the agency they represent. This study has been approved by the Data Protection Services of the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, and its guidelines and advice regarding data protection and research ethics have been followed.

Seven days of fieldwork were conducted: it included participant observation in a one-day course intended to give front-line personnel basic knowledge about RVE, and six days of observation in four criminal cases (at three court levels) involving alleged militant Islamist offenders, who were charged with making threats against state officials, recruitment or support for terrorism or participation in terrorism. Norwegian mainstream news stories (a total of 2082, from 2012 to 2018) about Profetens Ummah, were obtained through the Retriever media archive service. Documents on PRVE practices were collected: reports (e.g., local reporting on the implementation of PRVE measures) and governance documents (e.g., guidelines for managing RVE and threat assessments). These documents were obtained from public online sources, while publicly unavailable reports on other local measures were obtained by means of freedom of information requests (through eInnsyn.no). The aims in gathering these data were threefold: to understand how first-line personnel were trained in RVE and PRVE (from observation of the course), to get an overview of the militant Islamist milieu in Norway (by collection of media stories and observation of trials) and mapping the response of the police and others to that milieu (by gathering reports on local measures and observation of trials).

The data underpinning analysis thus consists of transcribed interviews, field notes, news media stories and various documents. The guiding principle for data gathering was to obtain a broad overview of the militant Islamist milieu and how it was policed, and the evolution of PRVE in general. The data gathered covers most of the 2009–2019 period and could therefore be used to identify key events and developments in order to establish a timeline for the whole episode.

The semi-structured interviews focused on three main topics: the practitioners’ experience with policing of MI, the challenges and opportunities of the policing measures they used, and the changes they experienced in PRVE over the years. Interviews were transcribed and coded using NVivo, following a strategy of inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interview data were coded using the main topics and an additional code on the evolution of the policing of MI and PRVE. This latter thematic code was revised during the coding as new subthemes emerged from the data, and I eventually ended up with five subthemes, in line with the five chronological phases that are reported on in the analysis.

The participant observation of trials and the course for practitioners on radicalization provided additional insights that the other data did not. The trials offered a greater understanding of the MI milieu and policing methods used against them, while participation in the one-day course gave me an opportunity to interact with practitioners tasked with PRVE and to witness their training on how to monitor radicalization and police it. News media stories about Profetens Ummah and public documents about PRVE measures were particularly helpful for developing the timeline of the episode in question. Much of the data I used
are not quoted or referenced in the article, but they were crucial throughout this study: I used them early on to get an overview of the episode and key events, which informed the interview guide, but later I also strategically collected documents to substantiate issues raised in the interviews.

Such triangulation of methods and data allows for a deep understanding and sound explanation of the complex phenomenon being researched, while also functioning as a validating strategy (Ayoub et al., 2014). I do not make a sharp distinction between describing and analyzing the conflict in question, because I take the view that it is possible to offer systematic and rigorous descriptions of processes that function as explanations. Careful description is also fundamental to process tracing, where descriptions are crucial building blocks for analyzing processes (Collier, 2011, p. 823). The underlying epistemological idea of such process-oriented analysis is that to describe the unfolding of a process is to explain it (Alimi et al., 2015).

From escalation to de-escalation: Five phases of development in the plural policing of militant Islamism

I separate the current episode into five distinct phases, according to each one’s particular characteristics. My analysis traces developments in the plural policing of MI in Eastern Norway and nationally, which made evident the corresponding emergence of PRVE as a field of policy and plural policing, as well as revealing many of its policing techniques. Each phase represents a stage in the evolution of the conflict between MI and those tasked to police it.

1st phase: Prologue to conflict escalation (2009-2011)

This phase includes the early signs of an emerging militant Islamist milieu in the Oslo area, the launch of the first governmental action plan against RVE, and the worst terrorist attack in Norway’s modern history.

The first governmental action plan to “prevent radicalization and violent extremism” was launched in November 2010 (Justis- og politidepartementet 2010). The Prime Minister mentioned the 2005 terrorist attacks in London and the increased threat of “home grown” terrorism internationally and referred to the violent riots in central Oslo during the Gaza war of 2009 as a wake-up call to the Norwegian government and police. After the riots, the Police Security Service (PSS) conducted several “conversations of concern” with persons they saw as having links to a militant Islamist milieu, and this supposedly stopped recruitment to that milieu – at least temporarily (Foss & Dragland, 2012). MI was seemingly a key concern that triggered the introduction of the first action plan.

The plan, however, had limited impact and gained little public attention, but it was “re-activated” by some municipalities after the 22 July terror attacks. These unprecedentedly violent events triggered major initiatives in the Oslo and Sarpsborg municipalities (Eastern Norway), which were among the first Norwegian municipalities to act on the 2010 action plan. This involved the establishment of what is now known as the Contact Forum for the Prevention of Hate Crime and Extremism in Oslo (Salto, 2017), managed by SaLTo (Oslo’s version of the SLT model). In 2011, the Contact Forum started to regularly bring together a number of actors with central roles in the municipality, to coordinate, share information and establish collaborative networks. An interviewee from SLT/SaLTo (#1) explains how the 22 July terror attacks triggered their focus on PRVE:
It was obvious that now one had to do much more on this [PRVE]. With this issue we saw that there is quite a bit of preventive work ahead. In just the same way as we work specifically with violence and sexual abuse, it was logical to think about hate crime and violent extremism in the same way. […] It was violent right-wing extremism that brought us to this [taking on PRVE tasks].

The Sarpsborg municipality also started PRVE work as a direct response to the 22 July attacks, during which two local residents were killed, and which others survived. The interviewee from SL/T SaLTo (#7) explains:

We got involved early on in this matter because our residents were affected, and because we started to see this as a societal challenge. […] We followed up on the first action plan, through the leadership of the municipality together with the police. We focused on both right-wing and Islamist extremism from the very beginning, in the fall of 2011. We established a working group with the police and the Church of Norway. We also set the priorities for our municipality’s work on this matter.

Despite the limited impact of the 2010 action plan, it triggered some concrete responses as these examples illustrate. The initiatives started in Oslo and Sarpsborg in this phase, seemingly preparing the ground in a way that was important for later phases. The knowledge and experiences that Oslo (and to some extent Sarpsborg) gained through their early efforts later helped guide the development of government policy, and practical efforts by other municipalities.

These multi-agency PRVE efforts, triggered by the first governmental action plan, seem to be among the first of their kind in Norway. The plan marks what I argue to be the emergence of a new societal field of policy and practice for the prevention of RVE in Norway. Before 2010, local communities had implemented measures to tackle violent extremism, such as that of the right-wing extremist milieus of the 1990s and 2000s (Carlsson & Haaland, 2004). Back then, however, the dominant view was still that violent extremism was a matter for the police and their security service (Lid et al., 2016). The first action plan marks the beginning of a policy that moves away from giving law enforcement the monopoly of PRVE – towards a national strategy involving much wider sectors of society.

2nd phase: The rise of public militant Islamism in Norway (2012-2013)
This second phase was characterized by the emergence of a new phenomenon: public militant Islamist activism. Measures to police the phenomenon were somewhat dispersed to begin with and seemed primarily to involve the police and their security service. Key events in this period were linked to the global mobilization of Salafist-jihadists, with ISIL becoming established in Syria in April 2013. This mobilization became manifest in Norway with the establishment of the militant activist grouping Profetens Ummah (PU) in 2012, and the growing number of people travelling abroad to engage with armed Islamist groups in the Syrian civil war.

While the PSS had expressed concerns about MI in Norway for years, 2012 marks a clear change in their level of concern. In their threat assessment that year, the PSS report on important changes in domestic MI networks. In contrast to their threat assessments of MI between 2009 and 2011, PSS now started to report a “high level of activity” in these networks (PST, 2012): first, MI was starting to be expressed in public and disseminated through social media platforms; second, people in MI networks were traveling to conflict areas to be trained or to take part in armed combat; third, extreme Islamists in Norway were becoming more globally-oriented (PST, 2011). These developments became of more serious concern
to the PSS in 2012 (PST, 2012), and they reflect the main characteristics of the new type of domestic MI networks that emerged with and around PU (Lia, 2018).

PU attracted the full attention of the Norwegian media in September 2012, when 100 adherents staged a demonstration against the movie *Innocence of Muslims* outside the American embassy, with protestors shouting slogans in support of al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden (Michalsen, 2016). After this first public demonstration, there was intense mass media interest in PU for the rest of this phase. In December 2012, key figures from PU announced they were establishing links with the British preacher, Anjem Choudary, who has been a key mobilizing figure for Salafist-jihadists in Europe (Moe et al., 2012). PU’s contact with Choudary demonstrates their increased interaction with similar activist milieus across Europe.

The international orientation of Norwegian militant Islamists was also shown by the sudden increase in the number of people traveling to Syria, Iraq and other conflict zones from 2012 (PST, 2012). In October 2012, PU spokespersons stated they had helped about ten Norwegian Muslims to travel to Syria (NTB, 2012). The increased number of travelers to Syria and Iraq at this stage can be explained by the momentum of militant Islamist groups (amid the Syrian conflict), which were a key pull factor, together with the increasingly active milieu around PU (an important mobilizing and facilitating factor), and the easy availability of opportunities to travel without the threat of legal sanctions (Lia & Nesser, 2014). In this phase, participation in jihad had never been easier for Western Muslim youth, a situation that paved the way for the greatest foreign fighter mobilization ever from Norway and Europe, to Syria and Iraq (Lia & Nesser, 2016).

No other event or issue has had a greater radicalizing effect on those belonging to the Norwegian MI milieu than the conflict in Syria that followed the uprising against Bashar al-Assad and the Ba’ath regime which started in 2011 (PST, 2016, p. 4). In November 2012, the Oslo police district and the PSS announced their new tactics for “dealing with the extreme Islamist milieu in Norway”: a series of measures formed a new strategy of going after and disrupting key figures within the milieu, while also establishing dialogue with militant groups and those “at risk” of being drawn into them and making contact with mosques and conducting “conversations of concern” with parents and schools (Foss & Dragland, 2012).

One police interviewee (#9) described the situation in this phase, the new challenges and the resources that were available to them in the Oslo area:

A mood of panic took hold in 2012 and continued through 2013; in the case of Norway, it started outside the American embassy [PU’s first demonstration], and responses started to appear in the police against this milieu. At that point, it was somewhat panicky. And when IS started cutting heads off and we knew that Norwegians were down there participating, politicians did not like it. So, at one point, one got all the money one needed, or at least, what was asked for. But it takes some time for a big organization like the police to pull itself together and carry out new tasks. For a while, there were a lot of legs running very fast.

The SaLTo Contactforum against RVE that had been established in Oslo in 2011, now became a useful tool for managing MI, since it provided a regular meeting place for about 20 people from a variety of agencies in Oslo county, including the municipality of Oslo, the Oslo police, Oslo Educational Department, the PSS and others (Foss & Dragland, 2012). This seems to be the first instance of truly cross-sectoral collaboration for considering how to police the Norwegian MI milieu. An interviewee from SLT/SaLTo (#1) described early experiences with MI in Oslo:
When they [SLT/SaLTO] saw the first cases [of MI] here, many people were like … like somewhat shocked and said: “This is something we need a whole different level of knowledge about.” They felt they did not have any special knowledge about extremism or those kinds of issues.

The above quote shows how the police, SLT/SaLTO and others involved in crime prevention or PRVE were facing a new form of militant Islamist activism for which their established methods and knowledge were insufficient. By September 2013, the Norwegian intelligence services had announced that between 30 and 40 people had left Norway to fight in Syria, and they called for a wider section of society to help in reporting cases of people who might be in the process of being radicalized (Døvik & Zondag, 2013).

In 2013, the Norwegian Parliament also criminalized participation in terrorism and support for terrorist organizations in a new terrorism section (§ 136 a) of the penal code. Under this law, a defendant risked a custodial sentence of up to six years for “establishing, participating in, recruiting members for or providing economic or other material support for a terrorist organization, when that organization has taken steps to realize its goals by using illegal means” (Prop. 131 L 2012–2013). This legislation was mainly introduced to facilitate the criminal prosecution of foreign fighters (Høgestøl, 2018). The Oslo police even started calling in people for conversations in 2013, when there was concern about their public support for or contact with the extreme Islamist milieu in Norway. That year, about thirty people were summoned to such conversations in the Oslo area, and some of these were referred on to the PSS if they broke an agreement made with the police not to have contact with people belonging to the MI milieu (Johnsen & Hopperstad, 2013).

**3rd phase: State of emergency and rapid introduction of counter-responses (2014–2015)**

The sense of urgency and the counter-responses that appeared in the previous phase developed and came to a peak in this third phase. Key factors in this were the increased flow of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq, ISIL’s announcement of their Caliphate, PU’s continued activity and fears about a potential attack on Norway soil. All these helped to create an extraordinary security situation. At the same time, concerns about returning foreign fighters became increasingly acute. These developments triggered a second, much more far-reaching series of counter-measures.

The official terrorist threat level was raised to maximum in July 2014. There was acute anxiety when intelligence services learned of a possible forthcoming terrorist attack in Norway. This led the PSS to arrest and deport about 20 people, because of their links to international MI networks (Hultgreen & Stang, 2014). A police interviewee commented; “I don’t think Norway woke up until 2014–2015”, when international terrorism was starting to get “painfully close to our own country” (Politi Østlandet #6). The momentum of ISIL in Syria also involved an increasing number of planned and executed terror attacks internationally, with more people killed by jihadi violence in Western Europe between 2014 and 2016 than in the whole period between 1993 and 2013 combined (Nesser et al., 2016).

ISIL’s Caliphate was declared in June 2014, the same month as the Norwegian Government launched their second national action plan against RVE (Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet 2014). Shortly afterward, the PU network announced their support for ISIL (Michalsen, 2016, p. 300) and from that point, their activities mainly revolved around the

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3. This corresponds to § 147 d of the old penal code.
Syrian conflict and support for ISIL and foreign fighters (Lia, 2018). In November 2014, a national news media agency broke a story about seven people leaving a single street in Fredrikstad to travel to Syria. At that time, the municipality was unaware of any local milieu that supported armed jihadist groups in Syria (interviewees #3 and #9). One interviewee from SLT/SaLTo (#7) vividly described the situation in this phase, when political pressure and the exodus of foreign fighters were at their peak:

At that point, we imagined masses of travelers and eventual returnees. Its dimensions and how we were to assess it as a municipality was quite … and it may sound strange to say this today … because the situation was like that then, when everyone was on tenterhooks, and there was a really high level of stress surrounding this matter. And we did not have much experience of what it actually meant. Like, how much of a threat does a returned foreign fighter pose … and then it was … People were stressed, frightened and uncertain.

Several SLT/SaLTo interviewees spoke of similar experiences during this phase, putting particular emphasis on their lack of knowledge about the phenomena (radicalization and Islamist extremism) which they were tasked to manage by the 2014 action plan. Uncertainty was expressed about how they should assess the threat at hand, and how to identify and monitor residents that were involved in, or might be becoming involved in MI (see Lid et al., 2016).

Seemingly, it was not until 2014 that central government, municipalities, schools, the social welfare and health services, parts of civil society and others embarked on intensive collective efforts to fulfil the central aim of the new action plan: enhanced multi-agency cooperation to enable a broad and more efficient apparatus for detecting and managing RVE. The government’s emphasis on the municipalities’ responsibility for PRVE was marked by letters sent by the Prime Minister in October 2014 to the 23 municipalities with the greatest extremist challenges, urging them to initiate immediate measures (Ørstavik et al., 2014). A police representative (#4) described how their attention was suddenly drawn to MI in 2014:

We were not aware of developments in extreme Islamist circles before it all suddenly got going in 2014, and people started to travel and quite a few left. We were not fully aware of the situation. We were looking for other things, we had heard about other things [other forms of extremism]. For the Police Directorate, this was not a major issue before 2014, when Østfold was one of the first police counties to be allocated a radicalization coordinator. That was when we really started working on these matters.

Action against MI thus came later in the East police district and Østfold than in Bærum (where it started in 2013) and Oslo (where the first initiative was in 2009). In Oslo, various branches of the Police and SaLTo had already been working for several years to manage MI. The 2014 action plan helped initiate and steer a coordinated national response, with clearer guidelines and emphasis on the central role of municipalities. Some interviewees described how work done in SaLTo’s Contact Forum in Oslo accumulated valuable knowledge that impacted the development of the 2014 action plan. One interviewee said that many of those who had been involved in the Contact Forum (e.g., RVTS, the PSS, Oslo police and various municipal agencies) were also involved in developing the new action plan, and thus fed experiences from Oslo into the national plan.

Despite increasing opportunities for PRVE in this phase, the move towards multi-agency collaboration involved challenges (Lid et al., 2016). For local actors with little or no experi-
ence of them, the issues of extremism, foreign fighters and MI were daunting. Many municipalities therefore started issuing their own local action plans, establishing collaboration between the police and local SLT/SaLTo coordinators, and establishing guidelines and structures for receiving, assessing and following up on reported concerns about the radicalization of local residents (see Lid et al., 2016).

In 2014 there were several criminal justice responses to people linked to MI in Eastern Norway: three were arrested by the PSS on suspicion of attempted violations of § 147d (Hultgreen & Egeberg, 2014). A former Taliban minister was deported, as the Justice Department saw him as a mentor for extreme Islamists and “a threat to fundamental national interests” (Svendsen, 2018). Under the Criminal Procedure Act, the PSS obtained their first court order to seize control over the bank accounts and finances of (two) foreign fighters. The first criminal case involving prosecutions under § 147 d of the old penal code (this corresponds to § 136a of the new penal code) appeared in court in February 2015, with all three defendants linked to PU. Four months later, 18 people from Norway were either charged, prosecuted or convicted because of their connections with ISIL or other terrorist organizations (Torset, 2015).

Besides the escalating criminal justice responses and the work of municipalities, other regional agencies became increasingly important in this phase. The 2014 National Action Plan tasked the RVTS (Regional Resource Center for Violence, Traumatic Stress, and Prevention of Suicide) with guidance, consultancy and the dissemination of basic knowledge about RVE to frontline personnel, those taking professional PRVE roles (e.g., police radicalization contacts) and others. In this phase, myriad local, regional and national actors devoted a vast amount of time and resources, to disseminating basic knowledge on RVE across agencies and municipalities, as well as establishing cross-sectoral collaboration to exchange information and deal with individual cases of radicalization. Other key institutions, such as the Norwegian Correctional Service, its directorate (KDI) and educational department (KRUS), started to employ new measures in prisons, including the introduction of training and courses on RVE for prison staff (Kriminalomsorgen, 2016).

4th phase: Normalization of threat and responses (2016-2017)

This fourth phase was marked by the almost complete end of foreign fighters traveling from Norway to Syria and Iraq. After years of being the target of military offensives, ISIL lost ground in Syria, following military defeats. The number of ISIL-linked terror attacks in Europe, however, reached a historic peak in 2016, possibly as a reaction to Europe’s part in the military coalition to defeat ISIS (Nesser et al., 2016). These years saw further cases of the imprisonment of foreign fighters, and more prosecutions, deportations and disruption of core PU activists. As a result, PU’s public activity further declined.

The collaborative structures and measures for plural policing of MI introduced in the previous phase now seemed to become better established and normalized. Previous attempts to achieve widespread dissemination of knowledge on MI and coordination across agencies and municipalities, appeared to be successful. The strengthened apparatus for detecting and managing MI, combined with the decreased activity of the militant Islamist milieu thus contributed to a normalization of the situation in Norway, leaving behind the extraordinary urgency of the previous phase. This change of mood is clearly expressed by an interviewee from SLT/SaLTo (#5):

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4. Oslo tingrett made their decision in line with § 202 d of the Criminal Procedure Act (straffeprosessloven).
5. Supreme Court conviction HR-2016-1422-A.
We have clearly gone from kind of an atmosphere of crisis, where everything was like: Oh, help, what do we do now? To a situation of normalizing it [managing MI] as much as possible.

Tackling returned foreign fighters and preparing for more returnees still featured as a major issue. By the end of this phase, about 100 people had left Norway for Syria and Iraq, 40 had returned and about 20 had died (Piene, 2017). The Norwegian Correctional Service introduced a “mentoring program” in 2016, for use with imprisoned foreign fighters and others linked to MI (Mikail, 2019). The Correctional Service also issued a handbook about how these issues should be handled by those employed in prisons (Kriminalomsorgen, 2016). In this phase, less than ten people were imprisoned in Norway for links to ISIS; many of them had been part of the PU milieu (Døvik & Svendsen, 2018). The first three of these, after serving custodial sentences, had been released at the end of 2017. New issues then arose, regarding monitoring Muslims released after serving terrorism-related sentences.

By this stage, basic knowledge on radicalization and MI had been disseminated across local actors in Eastern Norway and beyond, but there were still gaps and considerable variations across municipalities. Measures introduced against RVE in the preceding phases had, however, helped establish radicalization and Islamist extremism as new social problems that were now much more likely to be recognized by frontline personnel in schools, social welfare and other public agencies (e.g., Haugstvedt, 2019). Training, increased knowledge and systematic educational efforts also seem to have contributed to greater confidence among frontline personnel and those with key coordination roles about how they should understand and approach militant Islamism in their local areas. Two interviewees from RVTS (#8) described how their training evolved:

**Interviewee One:** It was a lot of work in the first few years [after 2014]. To actually enable ourselves and others to handle a challenge that we were not familiar with. And eventually we had the feeling that we did perhaps know the challenge at hand after all. Much of our thinking has eventually been that this challenge is “same shit, new wrapping”.

**Interviewee Two:** Yes, and we talked about [on training courses] the fact that these are vulnerable youths. You talked about travelers to Syria, and you could see that many of them had been involved in other types of crime or involved with drugs. And that’s precisely what the SLT coordinators are working on: the prevention of crime and drug use among young people, among other things. A part of what we worked on was to say: “These are young people and adults that you already know, that you are already working with.” But this [extremism] is now a new thing that these people might do or use as a solution to find meaning in their lives. In addition to drug abuse or other types of crime, this [extremism] is a new thing that has now appeared.

The interviewees point to a process that was particularly important in the previous phase: that of establishing some common understanding of “radicalization” and “violent extremism” across local communities and frontline personnel. For key personnel like the SLT coordinators, RVE were now established as new social problems which they would deal with, in addition to the others they were handling. Establishing RVE as social problems, with similarities to other well-known problems, presumably made local first-line practitioners more confident, as it provided them with a framework for understanding these phenomena and

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6. This refers to those who went to Syria after 2011–2012 without an aim of directly siding with or supporting armed salafist-jihadist groups. For example, some have supposedly mainly taken part in medical services.
the realization that they could use many of their existing tools to manage them. This way of perceiving the threat thus helped to normalize it and their responses to it.

The roles of the key actors involved at national, regional and local levels were also now becoming better established, with clearer divisions:

*Interviewee One:* Our problem was that it was a lot of arms and legs in the beginning [the previous phase]. There were few defined roles. The action plan was very general at times, and sometimes it was very, very clear. And when it was very clear, we and other actors sometimes disagreed about that clarity. So, there was a lot of confusion, and one had to find one’s role and place. What I see today is totally different.

*Interviewee Two:* Yes, very different.

*Interviewee One:* In the beginning, there was a lot of duplicated work, a feeling that everyone was doing many of the same things. But, because of frequent meetings and cooperation, I guess, it has become more streamlined. (RVTS #8)

Many Norwegian municipalities still lack experience of tackling local RVE challenges. Some municipalities might face considerable challenges if returned foreign fighters or released MI prisoners sought to establish themselves in their local community. During this phase, however, more assistance became available to municipalities through counselling, guidance and courses. These are now provided mainly by regional chapters of RVTS and the police radicalization contacts (and coordinators).

In 2016 the Caliphate started to collapse, as ISIS lost territorial control in Syria and Iraq, and the flow of foreign fighters from Norway and Europe decreased. The near absence of Norwegian foreign fighter recruitment since late 2015 may suggest that the previous criminal justice responses were successful (Lia & Nesser, 2016). In May 2016 however, the Norwegian Parliament enacted two revisions of the penal code to provide further opportunities for the criminal prosecution of foreign fighters (§ 145) and those recruiting them (§ 146) (Prop. 44 L 2015–2016). These legal changes brought further criminalization of foreign fighter activity, by removing the previous distinction made between terrorist organizations and other non-state armed groups. Earlier difficulties for the PSS in prosecuting and obtaining convictions against those claiming they had participated in non-terrorist rebel groups in Syria were thus removed (Høgestøl, 2018).

The last known attempt by people in Norway to join ISIL was in the fall of 2017 (PST, 2019a). Several initiatives against key figures in the MI network of Eastern Norway also helped disrupt that milieu. For example, one PU activist was deported to Sweden in 2016 (Zaman & Christoffersen, 2016), after taking on the role of spokesperson for the PU after the previous one was remanded in custody. Several such actions against the PU helped to disrupt their network and activism; another factor was the death of a number of PU activists in Syria.

In July 2017, ISIS lost control of Mosul after massive military offensives, and they lost Raqqa in October. These turning points marked the beginning of the end for their Caliphate. Following these defeats, ISIS’s distribution of information material about their Caliphate, which long constituted the bulk of its propaganda output, dropped by two-thirds, and in mid-September 2017 it ended entirely (Zelin, 2017). The spread of public propaganda by the MI milieu in Eastern Norway had also dramatically declined. These events are important because online propaganda played a central role in mobilizing international support for ISIS (Andersen & Sandberg, 2018).
5th phase: Reorientation and potential last group of returnees (2018–2019)

This fifth phase saw a further normalization of the situation, with a reduction of the threat posed by MI in Norway. This enabled interviewees to reflect on past experiences, to re-orient to new PRVE initiatives and to give attention to the increasingly active extreme right-wing movement. This reorientation caused concern among some interviewees: it was seen to involve risks of losing the expertise built up in recent years, through shifts of focus and organizational priorities, and because of personnel changing jobs.

A last group of Norwegian returnees, including women and children, were expected to potentially return from Syria in this phase, following the defeat of the last remnants of the Caliphate in March 2019. The PSS assumed that 40 children and 30 adults with status as Norwegians were still in Syria in March 2019 (PST, 2019a). As a result of increased criminalization, legal modifications and convictions in earlier phases, adult returnees were now more likely than ever to face prosecution for offences relating to support for terrorism or armed engagement with foreign non-state groups.

At the end of the previous phase, the PSS announced that the activities of right-wing organizations were increasing in Europe and in Norway. Despite greater focus on right-wing extremism, however, MI still posed substantial challenges in terms of the “rehabilitation” of imprisoned foreign fighters and the monitoring of returnees. In the 2019 PSS threat assessment, militant Islamists were still considered the greatest domestic threat (PST, 2019a). The situation, however, varies across regions of Norway. Interviewees described two different situations in late 2018: in Oslo, 80–90 percent of reported concerns were still said to be related to extreme Islamism, while in Østfold the most reported concerns were now to do with right-wing extremism. The interviewee from the Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service (#2) mentioned a similar re-orientation of their attention, which was increasingly being directed to right-wing extremism. This reorientation to other extremist groups triggered concern among several interviewees about the danger of shifting focus too much or “forgetting about” militant Islamism as soon as there was little visible activity of that kind.

A police representative (#4) reflected on the issues involved:

What is important is that we should not forget to focus on all forms of extremism. Even if people are not going to Syria anymore, we cannot believe that people are not becoming [Islamist] extremists. […] One cannot ignore it. Because that is the thing … One works on one issue and there is a lot of focus on it in the media. And then something else suddenly happens, and one is supposed to focus on that. It is important to maintain continuity and build relationships with people and communities. That takes time. This is something that needs to be kept up all the time. So, one has to… one needs to keep focused all the time, and not think: “OK, now there isn’t that much [Islamist] extremism so we can scale down.”

Similar anxieties were voiced by other interviewees from SLT/SaLTo and the police. Concerns were also expressed about their organization’s redirection of resources to other tasks, at the expense of the long-term work that interviewees saw as important for maintaining preparedness for unanticipated events, such as those that occurred in the 2014–2015 phase. Since these interviews, the focus on right-wing extremism has increased further. After several terror attacks in New Zealand and the US carried out in 2019 by lone right-wing extremists, and an attempted attack on the Al-Noor Mosque in Norway in August 2019, the PSS changed their assessment of the likeliness of a terror attack by right-wing extremists from “unlikely” to “possible” in Norway (PST, 2019c).
Other signs of reorientation surfaced in interviews: large municipalities, like Oslo and Bærum, introduced new local action plans against “hate crime and violent extremism”, thus replacing “radicalization” with “hate crime” (Salto, 2018; Bærum kommune and Oslo Politidistrikt, 2018). Oslo’s action plan states that this shift is designed to help focus more clearly on actions that are illegal, rather than on the ambiguous concept of radicalization (Salto, 2018). In Bærum’s plan, the change of thinking is said to reflect an “increased acknowledgment of the need to strengthen measures directed against hateful opinions and hate speech, in view of the connection these might have to violent extremism.” One SLT/SaLTO (#5) representative explained the change of thinking and orientation like this:

I think we now have better systems for handling the “red cases” [urgent cases of radicalized individuals], as the PSS would call them. And we have the opportunity to closely monitor [individuals of concern], and we have become more experienced. That is why we now are working more on hate, hate speech and hate crime. Because we see that the areas that we perhaps now need to do a lot more work on are related to the polarization in society.

Increased emphasis on hate crime in this phase was also reflected in the establishment in the fall of 2018 of online police patrols, which are designed to carry out preventive work, but which also involve making it possible for the public to easily report cases of online hate crime and RVE (Trædal, 2018). The Norwegian Police Directorate also reported an increased level of police competence and awareness regarding hate crime in this phase (Politidirektoratet, 2018).

RVTS (#8) also described changes in thinking in the queries they received from actors seeking advice on RVE:

Interviewee One: At this point, I think we are in the position to stop and think. […] Because things are different now.

Interviewee Two: And the requests we receive are different. It is no longer like: “Help! We have some people here, what should we do?” It is much more like: “We want a risk assessment project.” Or “We want to strengthen our competence on this issue.”

Interviewee One: So, we see that we have to be more specialized.

Interviewee Two: Yes, and that enables us to engage in more long-term projects and not to be so “all over the place”, which is what we have been.

Interviewees from RVTS also referred to a broadening of focus in terms of connecting the problems of RVE to established problems of violent crime, criminal gangs, drug abuse and other crimes. This is based on the acknowledgment that many of those involved in MI in Norway have previously, or at the same time, been involved in other criminal activities, and that “reintegration” measures for extremists and those for criminals are often similar, according to interviewees. Reports on the socio-economic backgrounds of those who have been under the scrutiny of the PSS confirm this picture, both for MI and extreme-right milieus (PST, 2016; PST, 2019b).

Several interviewees raised the issue of the lack of evaluation of the various measures that were employed (e.g., the use of mentors and “exit” measures) in the course of this episode. Knowledge and experiences exist among many actors who have made use of measures, but there has been little independent research systematically examining the developments, suc-
cesses and failures of Norwegian PRVE in the last decade. The lack of overall scientific assessments of the intended and unintended effects of PRVE measures is a major challenge for the development of knowledge-based PRVE policies (Jämte & Ellefsen, 2020b; Pistone et al., 2019).

Discussion and conclusion
This article demonstrates the influence of global jihadist terrorism on national security policy and on the emergence of a new field of plural policing of radicalization in Norway. Its origin in European counter-terrorism policy has been described, along with the relationship of the Norwegian version to its counterparts across Europe and in other Western democracies. The analysis of the decade-long contentious episode has pointed out a considerable shift in the societal response towards persons associated with RVE in Norway. Several changes occurred across the five phases of the episode, in national policies, legislation, criminal justice responses, state resource allocation, collaborative structures, multi-agency measures and local initiatives. A work logic has been established through policy that grants new responsibilities to myriad actors collaborating across sectors and across local, regional and national levels. The implementation of these new responsibilities, collaborative practices and preemptive logics has been crucial in creating the basis for what is now a loose nationwide structure and apparatus for PRVE in Norway. This has involved attempts to establish a society-wide system for detecting and reporting signs of radicalization, and collaborative structures for assessing and handling individuals thought to be at-risk or posing a risk. This way of attempting to foresee “future terrorists” by seeking out signs of radicalization is now a responsibility assigned to first-line practitioners across much of the Western world (Sjøen & Mattsson, 2020, p. 221).

By tracing the series of events that followed the escalation and de-escalation of the conflict between the militant Islamist milieu and those tasked to police it, the article has demonstrated what led to the emergence and acceleration of the prevention of radicalization as a field of plural policing in Norway. The analysis made clear how responses to the growing militant Islamist milieu were fundamental in accelerating what has become a national structure for monitoring and managing RVE. Rather than examining individual actors, policing agents or militant milieus singly, as much existing research does, I have employed a “relational approach” (McAdam et al., 2001) that traced interactions between the militant Islamist milieu and those tasked to police it in the course of one contentious episode. This type of approach, which examines the relational dynamics of militant milieus and their plural policing, I argue, offers a greater explanatory potential than that of approaches that treat actors individually. While this article has examined one wave, or episode, of contention, new waves are likely to appear bringing new challenges. My analysis of the current wave also paves the way for comparison with forthcoming waves, and can be used as a basis for exploring the further evolution and implications of PRVE policing.

By tracing the emergence of this field of policing in Norway, attending to its relation to similar fields in other countries (above) and highlighting some of the critical consequences of preemptive policing (below), I have sought to contribute to research on transnational policing of RVE. I also offer an overview of the field and phenomena of PRVE that is useful for future research as this field evolves in Norway. Particularly, it is crucial to better understand how the modes and measures dominating this field of policing affect the persons who are – rightfully or wrongfully – targeted by this type of policing. This article is also a useful basis for comparing policing practice in Norway with similar policing practice in other
Western democracies. “Scandinavian exceptionalism” (Pratt, 2018) in this field of policing is a related issue: Do aspects of the Scandinavian (or Nordic) policing of RVE differ substantially from those of other countries? With its basis in Norwegian policing, this article could well contribute by making such comparisons easier in future research.

The police, intelligence and intelligence-led policing
Assessed from a security perspective, the above changes have seemingly enhanced Norway’s ability to monitor, detect and manage RVE. There are however other aspects of this development that warrant attention: the rest of this section discusses issues of police work, prevention and intelligence which are central to the consequences of PRVE in Norway and beyond.

According to the Norwegian Police Directorate (NPD), the extended collaborative networks having been established in this field “provide an improved intelligence basis and access to more types of working methods” for the police (Politidirektoratet, 2018, p. 41, author’s translation). This is an example of “third party policing” (Mazerolle & Ransley, 2005) when the police engage other organizations or individuals and use a range of civil, regulatory and administrative laws to create or enhance crime control and prevention networks (Wakefield & Fleming, 2009). The aim of such measures is to enable the police to take advantage of legal powers and levers not otherwise available to them. In addition to these expanding opportunities, police intelligence also plays an increasingly important role in PRVE, because the police currently – through their central role in PRVE networks (and use of new technology) – have easier access to information from a wider range of actors and arenas. Police can also instigate a wide array of measures via third parties on the basis of their own intelligence, while the increased amount of intelligence collected can further be used for criminal investigation.

Intelligence has become increasingly important for steering police work and policing practices internationally. Research shows that the adoption of intelligence as the guiding principle for knowledge production in the Norwegian police (since 2014) follows a new logic which pulls their preventive work towards looking for risks and “enemies,” rather than working preventively by being present in local communities (Gundhus, 2018). In this context, intelligence is primarily a tool to help decision-makers to manage risk, rather than part of a scientific method for analyzing future risks (Gundhus & Jansen, 2019).

The precautionary principle inherent in prevention is about instigating early efforts to reduce uncertainty and to forestall events that might lead to crime or violence. Prioritizing proactive measures would, one could anticipate, imply a reduction in the use of criminal prosecution, punishment and other reactive measures. However, the ways in which the police collect more intelligence on “known criminals” and potential perpetrators, surveil and monitor suspicious and risky behavior, might paradoxically result in more reactive forms of police work (Gundhus, 2018). If the move to proactive intelligence-led police work triggers a parallel increase in reactive police measures, the dominance of prevention will not entail replacing reactive and punitive measures but be an addition to them. This implies a widened net of social control, in which more people are monitored for preventive purposes and more people are brought into the criminal justice system. The Norwegian Police Directorate says that it is hard to know whether there are currently fewer radicalized people in Norway as a result of intelligence-led police efforts to prevent radicalization, but conclude that more people “at risk” are uncovered and that measures are being directed towards more people (Politidirektoratet, 2018). The increased importance and impact of intelligence in the police seemingly blurs distinctions between their proactive and reactive measures, and also perhaps those between preventive intelligence gathering and criminal investiga-
tion (Gundhus, 2018). Research on the policing of RVE in Denmark has also shown that its multi-agency approach to PRVE, which extends policing practices into various sectors of the welfare system, also leads to the blurring of boundaries between security and other public services (Johansen, 2020).

In addition to identifying these trends in the roles of the police, intelligence and the prevention of RVE, existing research has warned of potential counterproductive consequences these developments may have internationally. For example, the widespread use of intelligence methods in UK policing – where the policing of RVE has expanded greatly – means that all types of interaction between citizens and the police may be seen by citizens as an occasion for police intelligence gathering, with standards of confidentiality potentially being undermined because anything said to the police may be used as intelligence that helps achieve police objectives (Diderichsen, 2019). This type of intelligence-led policing, which is increasingly being adopted by the Norwegian police, may contribute to a shift in the ethical framework of policing, as “the introduction of intelligence practices in policing potentially transforms citizens into potential enemies, thereby undermining trust and legitimacy” (Diderichsen, 2019, p. 418). Such developments undoubtedly affect the prevention and policing of radicalization. Kundnani (2009) has already pinpointed the challenges for teachers, community workers and other practitioners in the UK who are legally obliged to share information with the police and security service to counter radicalization, which then undercuts their professional norms of confidentiality.

A range of challenges in the prevention of radicalization is examined in existing research from outside Norway, but there has been a shorter length of experience and less research on the situation in Norway. Cross-national comparisons by following the above trends, consequences and challenges internationally seem particularly important for understanding and explaining the ways in which the plural policing of radicalization plays out similarly/differently across nations and the conditions under which it does so.

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