



## The Institute for Strategic Dialogue

### Combating Extremism Globally



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## Innovations to counter extremist ideology and recruitment

*The Institute for Strategic Dialogue has built unique networks and partnerships to innovate and hypercharge counter-narrative efforts, on and offline*

Today, the challenge from radicalisation and violent extremism is greater than we have ever seen. Extremists have mastered the use of traditional and social media to recruit members to their cause like never before. They have **more resources and stronger networks** than a generation ago. Hard power alone can't solve the problem - we also need **a soft power solution** to fill the vacuum.

With this in mind, counter-narrative projects are at the heart of ISD's efforts to "do" as much as we "think." We build **networks of credible messengers** and **partner with the private sector** to ensure that we target and scale effective counter-narrative projects sustainably, and sensitively. These counter-narratives are essential to draining the extremist swamp of new recruits.

We use a data-driven approach with support from leading social media companies such as **Google, Twitter, and Facebook**. Our research partners at the **Harvard Berkman Centre** are the leading experts of the use of the Internet in society. We have the generous support of the visionary **GenNext Foundation** and their private sector members and our pilot programmes have already yielded critical data about what works that can be applied to other projects.

By turning analysis into action, and 'learning by doing', ISD is at the forefront of a new approach to countering extremism that breaks free of familiar cycles of only reinforcing assumptions about extremism without demonstrating what works to counter it.





## Credible Voices - Against Violent Extremism

*The Against Violent Extremism network, the world's largest network of former extremists and survivors of extremism, is an unequalled counter-narrative resource*

The Against Violent Extremism (AVE) network, run by ISD in partnership with the **Gen Next Foundation** and **Google Ideas**, is **the largest network of former extremists and victims of extremism** in the world. It is a unique global resource that mobilises the people with the know-how and credibility to tackle violent extremism most effectively – those who have been touched by it personally. Identifying and bringing together an ever-growing number of former extremists and survivors of violent extremist attacks, the network is creating a movement for change, providing its members access to the tools, technology, policy makers, practitioners and resources that enables them to have impact at scale.

The AVE network allows members to **connect, communicate, and collaborate** across groups and across national borders for the first time. It allows them to directly contact one another, share best practices and experiences with one another, and articulate and project effective counter-narratives to those at risk of radicalisation.

### **Output:**

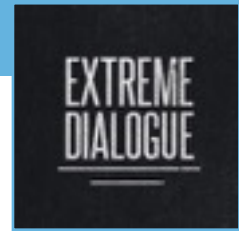
- Growth of network membership, global exchange of practices and proliferation of on and offline deradicalisation work, including a central repository of projects, best practices, and 'how to' guides
- The matching of high-impact projects with the in-kind and financial resources needed to realise, sustain and multiply their impact

[www.againstviolentextremism.org](http://www.againstviolentextremism.org)



## Education - Extreme Dialogue

*Extreme Dialogue is a multi-media education resource designed to inoculate the next generation from extremist ideology*



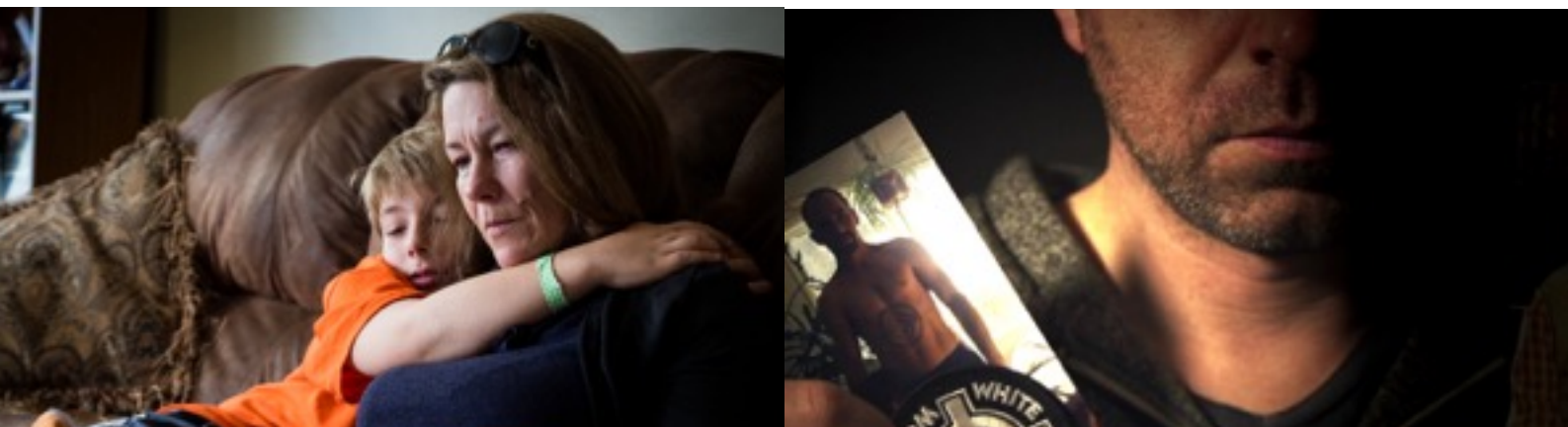
Launching across Canada in February 2015 and expanding into Europe (Germany, Hungary, and the United Kingdom) shortly thereafter, Extreme Dialogue aims to **reduce the appeal of extremism among young people** and offer a positive alternative to the increasing amounts of extremist material and propaganda available on the Internet and social media platforms. A series of short documentary films tell the personal stories of those profoundly affected by violent extremism, beginning with a former member of the extreme far-right and a mother whose son was killed fighting for ISIS in Syria.

The films are accompanied by a state of the art educational resource for teachers, social workers, the police and parents that can be used with young people in classrooms or community settings and are intended to build resilience to extremism through active discussion and enhanced critical thinking.

### Output:

- Hard hitting documentary films telling the stories of and in-depth interviews with former extremists and survivors of extremist violence
- Interactive online educational resources exploring in-depth the issues raised by the films
- Detailed guidance packs for educators or youth workers
- A multi-lingual website to house all of the films and educational resources

[www.extremedialogue.org](http://www.extremedialogue.org)





## Taking back the Internet - Counter-narratives

*Combining credible voices with tech, communications, campaigns and online data/marketing support, ISD is pioneering and scaling online counter-narrative efforts*

In order to push back against an increasingly sophisticated on and offline media strategy by extremists, ISD has formed a **global private sector civil society partnership** that makes up for what governments or individuals aren't able to do by themselves. After years of research, networking, and pilot projects, we have developed a methodology that has earned the trust of credible voices, connects them to resources, and scales up their effective work.

ISD brings the technical, marketing and communications sectors together with those with the expertise and credibility - activists, former extremists, survivors of extremism and frontline workers - to **challenge, push back, disrupt and counter extremist propaganda**. ISD provides strategic management, a data hub that applies lessons and analytics from deployed campaigns, a production fund and private sector coordination and resourcing.

### Output:

- Up to 30 counter narrative campaigns to be created and released in 2015
- Up to four Innovation Labs staged annually, offering training, networking, and collaboration for activists and content creators
- Digital disruption campaigns and analysis
- Strategic advice for governments and policy makers

### Strategic partners



Google Ideas/  
YouTube



Facebook



Twitter



Gen Next  
Foundation



Harvard  
Berkman Center

## Taking back the Internet - One to one interventions

*ISD's One2One initiative facilitates interventions between former extremists and young people who show extremist tendencies online*



We know that former violent extremists of all types often trace their journey away from the movement back to the unexpected kindness of strangers. These small gestures and offers to speak often **sowed the seeds of doubt** that allowed them to begin to question their support of extremist movements. Yet, despite these lessons, when vulnerable people express extremist ideas online there are two types of people listening and waiting; extremists seeking to recruit and law enforcement agencies building evidence.

With this in mind, ISD's One2One initiative brings together a team of former extremists from across ideologies that are identifying those at risk of carrying out violent acts and directly reaching out to these people online offering to engage in a constructive dialogue.

When ISD started this programme, based on similar efforts in the past, 10% of participants were expected to respond with a significant proportion of those responses to be negative. Instead, the programme has resulted in a 35% response rate, with not a single threat or aggressive response. Although it's still early days, this highlights the great potential of this approach.

Based on the early success of this pilot programme ISD is **developing One2One as a mobile app** to apply the lessons learned and to ensure that positive voices online can directly reach young people expressing extremist sympathies at a scale large enough to turn the tide against extremist recruiters online.



*"This programme has the potential to be the silver bullet we've been looking for in the fight against extremism online"*

*Ambassador Alberto Fernandez  
Director of the Centre for Strategic Counter-  
terrorism Communications*





## The Women and Extremism Initiative

*ISD's new programme addresses the growing phenomenon of women in extremism, mobilising networks and action to counter recruitment*

ISD's most recent programme, **Women and Extremism (WaE)**, has been launched in order to pioneer new research and initiatives for addressing women within violent extremist organisations and developing new ways for women to counter extremism.

While often assumed to be passive agents, **women play strong roles in online and offline recruitment**, as illustrated by the recent spike in female recruitment to extremist groups. However, they can also act as **strong counter-agents** in the fight against extremism.

WaE brings together policy-makers, academics and activists to evolve this much needed research agenda, increase female-led counter-narrative work, and seed grassroots counter-extremism networks. This approach will allow for greater understanding of how women are being radicalised and facilitate an action network of women capable of countering this trend.

### Output:

- Launch the First Annual WaE International Summit
- Develop localised online counterspeech innovation hubs for female activist networks and creating targeted online campaigns aimed to counter female radicalisation processes
- Publish an interdisciplinary collection of essays mapping the diversity of WaE topics alongside tri-annual research and policy reports
- Commence a WaE women's film initiative, getting young female film makers to produce short subject counterspeech films addressing related topics





## Countering the far right - The FREE Initiative

*The FREE Initiative, created by ISD, is the first online resource to offer practical guidance on countering far-right extremism across Europe*



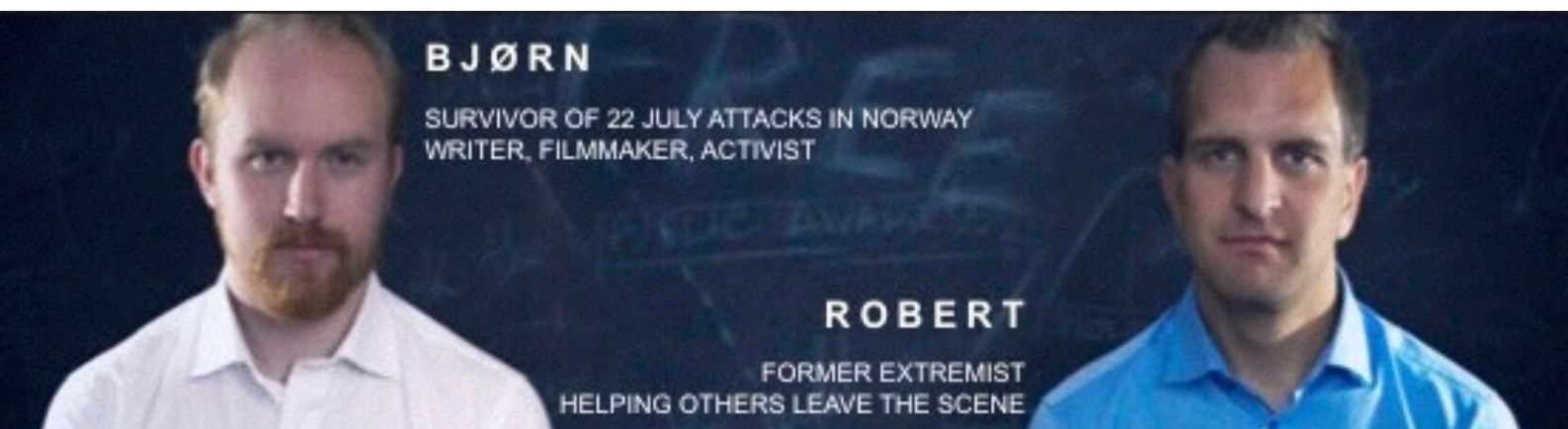
Violent far-right extremism continues to pose a threat to community safety and national security. Its impact is felt on a daily basis by individuals and communities across Europe. The Far-Right Extremism in Europe (FREE) Initiative is the **first initiative to offer practical guidance on countering far-right extremism** across Europe. It aims to inspire and promote cross-border learning among those working against violence far-right extremism.

The FREE Initiative brings together those doing the toughest work with far-right extremists. Hear the stories of those who are on the streets having the hard conversations with far-right activists, or those **pushing hundreds of violent extremists to leave the scene**. Listen to survivors of far-right violence and former violent extremists, who share their stories to prevent attacks like this from happening again. Find practical guides and advice on how to take action.

### Output:

- Resources and analysis on the problem of far-right extremism across Europe
- Interactive graphics and 'how-to' guides to manage specific challenges
- Hundreds of case studies of innovative initiatives to counter the far-right
- Film series showcasing stories of those on the front line

[www.thefreeinitiative.com](http://www.thefreeinitiative.com)



## Research, policy exchange and practice

*For much of the past decade, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue has led pioneering research and policy initiatives aimed at real world practice*

Over the years, ISD has pioneered **research into extremism across ideologies**, whether far-right or Islamic, and has facilitated **government and practitioner exchanges, training, advisory work and briefings** at the highest levels. We publish **up to 10 detailed research reports annually** disseminating our findings widely in the media and among policy makers. Recent reports issued include:

- *Becoming Mulan? Female Western Migrants to ISIS* (2015)
- *Western Foreign Fighters: Innovations in Responding to the Threat* (2014)
- *On the Front Line: A guide to countering far-right extremism* (2014)
- *Policy Briefing: Foreign Fighters, The Challenge Of Counter-narratives* (2014)
- *Review of Programs to Counter Narratives of Violent Extremism* (2013)

As facilitators of the **Policy Planners Network on Counter-Radicalisation (PPN)** and co-chairs of the **Radicalisation Awareness Network Internet and Social Media working group (RAN@)**, ISD has a leading role in ensuring that practitioners share best practices in countering violent extremism (CVE), while disseminating key information through our online repository, [counterextremism.org](http://counterextremism.org), a one-stop-shop for policy makers and practitioners.



## The Policy Planners Network

*ISD facilitates the Policy Planners Network, which works to improve and coordinate government approaches to counter extremism*



The Policy Planners Network on Countering Radicalisation and Polarisation (PPN) is an intergovernmental network that aims to **improve policy and practice to counter extremism and radicalisation**. Set up in 2008 and facilitated by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), the PPN works to upgrade and coordinate strategies of its members by streamlining and systematising the sharing of information on government approaches to countering extremism.

The PPN Network includes **representation from 11 government agencies** from the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Finland and Norway. The network also cooperates with the European Commission and the Counter-terrorism Coordinator (CTC) at the Council of the EU.

### Output:

- Network convenes 2-3 times per year on themes of mutual interest
- Compilation of comprehensive background dossiers on priority issues
- Production of policy briefings and other insight and analysis reports
- Ongoing advisory services and strategic guidance to members and to successive EU Presidencies





## counterextremism.org

*ISD's counterextremism.org is a comprehensive, online resource for policy makers and practitioners in the counter-extremism domain*

ISD has built the first comprehensive **online repository for policy-makers and practitioners** working on countering radicalisation and polarisation. The portal includes an easily searchable up-to-date repository of government policies and programmes, both current and historical, and contains a log of case studies and evaluated best practices. This library of resources acts as a one-stop-shop for those working to tackle radicalisation and polarisation, contains a diary of forthcoming events and meetings, and has an 'expert finder'.

The website also has the capability to support online practitioner network forums, 'hot topic' and crisis response chat rooms, and expert facilitated discussions. Funded by the European Commission, it is intended to **help policy makers, decision makers, practitioners and academics** to exchange information and examples of good practice, stay in touch, and remain up-to-date with latest developments.

### Output:

- Continued uploading of practical case studies to the portal
- Increase website traffic from non-western geographies
- Increase monthly content downloads and user visits by 25% in 2015

[www.counterextremism.org](http://www.counterextremism.org)

### LIBRARY SEARCH

THEMES	COUNTRIES	TARGET AREA	RESOURCE TYPE
<input type="checkbox"/> Select All	<input type="checkbox"/> Select All	<input type="checkbox"/> Select All	<input type="checkbox"/> Select All
<input type="checkbox"/> Terrorism and counter terrorism	<input type="checkbox"/> UK	<input type="checkbox"/> National only (eg. Germany, USA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Articles
<input type="checkbox"/> Extremism (Select all)	<input type="checkbox"/> Belgium	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional only (eg. Alsace, Quebec)	<input type="checkbox"/> Case studies
<input type="checkbox"/> - Extremism (General)	<input type="checkbox"/> Denmark	<input type="checkbox"/> City/Local only (eg. Munich, Cambridge)	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluations
<input type="checkbox"/> - Animal Rights extremism	<input type="checkbox"/> Finland	<input type="checkbox"/> European Union	<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation
<input type="checkbox"/> - Far Right extremism	<input type="checkbox"/> France	<input type="checkbox"/> Non EU international organisations (UN, NATO etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ministerial speeches
<input type="checkbox"/> - Far Left extremism	<input type="checkbox"/> Germany		<input type="checkbox"/> Policy documents
<input type="checkbox"/> - Islamist extremism	<input type="checkbox"/> Hungary		<input type="checkbox"/> Research papers
	<input type="checkbox"/> Norway		



## Countering Lone Actor Terrorism

*ISD is a partner in the Countering Lone Actor Terrorism initiative, which aims to create the first open-source database of 'lone wolf' terrorism in the EU*



Funded by the European Commission, the Countering Lone Actor Terrorism (CLAT) initiative aims to **improve the understanding of the profiles of lone-wolf terrorists** in Europe. ISD has partnered with a consortium of leading research institutes, including Chatham House, the Royal United Services Institutes (RUSI) and the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism at Leiden University to collect all plots of 'lone-wolf' terrorism in Europe.

The initiative will create the **first open-source database of 'lone-wolf' terrorist plots** in the European Union; analyse profiles of perpetrators to inform future policy development; and train frontline practitioners in countering the threat of potentially violent lone individuals. The Netherlands National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV); and the UK Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) are associate partners on the project.

### Output:

- Creation of the first open-source database of lone-wolf terrorism in Europe
- Production of six insight and analysis reports for local, national and EU policy-makers
- Training of frontline workers and practitioners on effective strategies for identifying risk indicators and responding to individuals of concern
- Develop a long-term community of experts focusing specifically on the problem of lone-wolves across Europe with links internationally





## Local Institutions Against Extremism

*ISD is a lead partner in LIAISE (Local Institutions against Extremism), which seeks to improve knowledge about radicalisation on local levels*

In cooperation with the European Forum for Urban Security, ISD is working on Local Institutions Against Extremism (LIAISE), a Europe-wide capacity building initiative to **train local authorities to counter extremism and radicalisation.**

As a result of the increasing challenges faced by the threat of violent extremism at a local level, ISD is working on a 24-month project that will assess and analyse the capacity gaps and challenges faced by local authorities in developing strategies to counter violent extremism. The initiative will **seed the first city-level network of local authorities** to facilitate exchange of information and expertise related to countering violent extremism and will develop tailored training modules for local authority practitioners to more effectively counter radicalisation at a local level.

### **Output:**

- Development of first city-level network of local authorities to facilitate exchange of expertise
- Cross-country research visits to 9 pilot cities to collect data on core needs and challenges
- Development of 3 tailored capacity building and training modules for local authorities
- Ongoing expert advisory services to local authorities in countering violent extremism



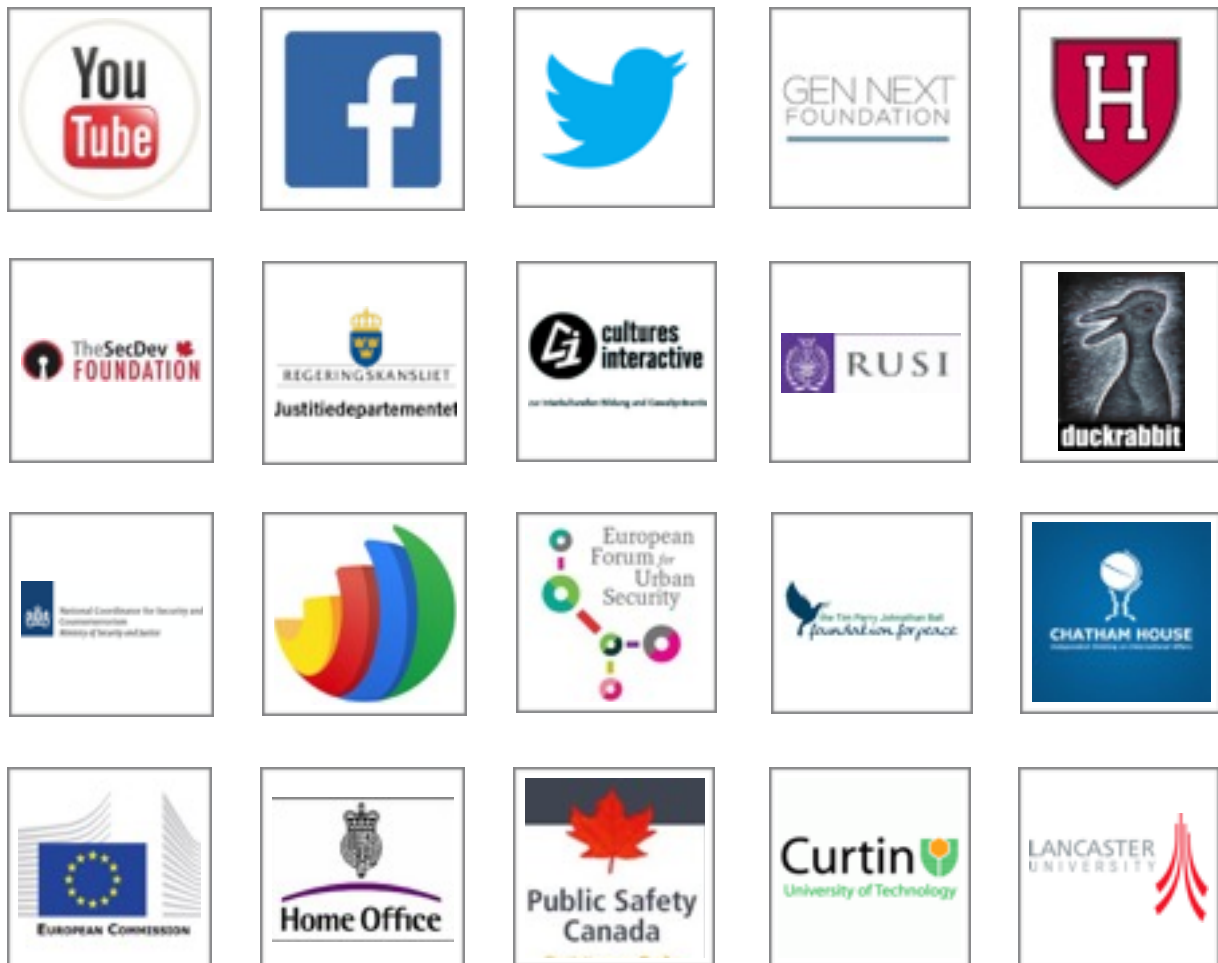
## Building partnerships that deliver

*ISD's reach and relevance is underpinned by the partnerships we have built with governments, academic institutions, and the private sector*



ISD has long worked with governments, academic institutions, and grassroots organisations to ensure that our research and output is state of the art. Our partnership model is the means by which we amplify our impact and ensure delivery.

The fight to win the battle of ideas is just beginning. To truly scale up a broad based counter-narrative response, we need to leverage and mobilise all of our technical, creative, and innovation capabilities. By building a global counter-extremism soft power machinery, we can defeat the extremists.

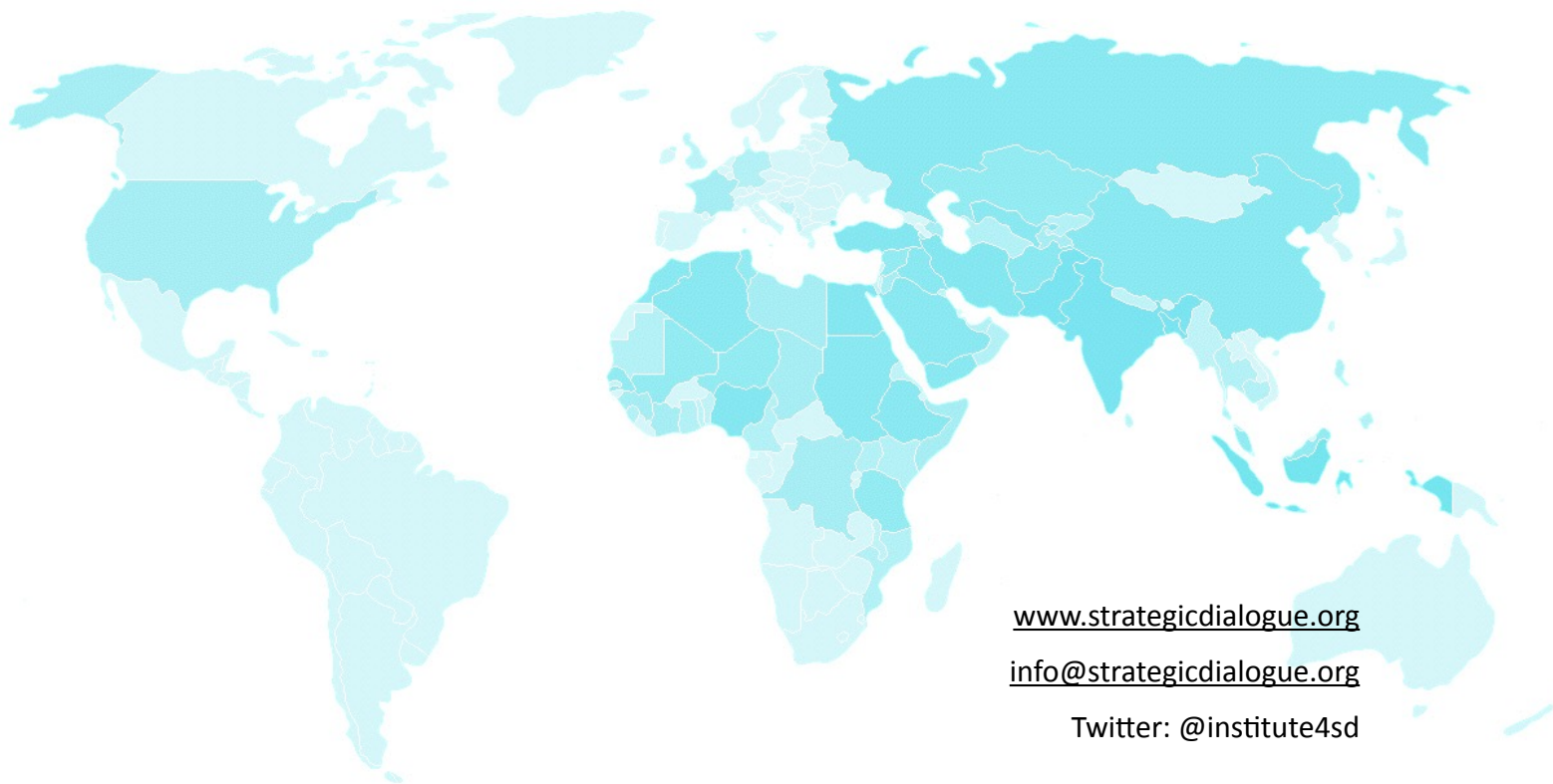




## About ISD

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) is an independent 'think and do tank' working with leaders in government, business, civil society and academia to develop cross-border responses to the major geo-strategic, social and security challenges of our time.

Combining research and policy advisory work, with innovative delivery programmes, specialised task forces, cross-sector partnerships and networks, ISD works to counter global extremism, bridge inter-communal divides and enhance Europe's capacity to act effectively in the global arena.



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