Understanding the Drivers of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism:

Launch of International Research Project PAVE

**Berlin, Germany, 19 February 2020. The South – East Europe Programme of ELIAMEP participates to the new EU research project PAVE (Preventing and Addressing Violent Extremism through Community Resilience in the Balkans and MENA). PAVE aims to tackle the global issue of radicalisation by examining its root causes and driving factors. Based on a comparative assessment of local communities with features of vulnerability or resilience to violent extremism across seven case study countries, the 13 international partner institutions will develop concrete policy proposals to inform citizens and stakeholders within and beyond the regions under study. Over the next three years, the consortium will receive EUR 3 million funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.**

In the light of an increase in radicalism and violent extremism in Europe and worldwide, there is a growing need for a common political strategy and effective prevention measures. It seems especially relevant to look into the local, regional and national contexts and transnational dynamics of violent extremism in Europe and its close neighbourhood and to draw concrete lessons learnt for the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy and the expanding scope of external engagement.

Based on a participatory and inter-regional approach, the new research project PAVE has set out to advance evidence-based knowledge on violent extremism in the broader Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Western Balkans, and to strengthen the capacity of policy-makers and community leaders for an effective prevention strategy between the European Union and its neighbourhood. The research endeavour will encompass empirical studies in selected municipalities of four Balkan countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia) and three MENA countries (Tunisia, Lebanon, Iraq) conducting comprehensive analysis of the similarities and differences between the regions and what might account for them. A particular focus will be on the assessment of existing preventive initiatives and measures to enhance community resilience in the following four thematic areas:

1.) The interface between religious, political and ethnic/sectarian extremisms

2.) The interaction between religious and state institutions

3.) On- and offline narratives and (de-)radicalisation

4.) Transnational interactions, including impact on and from Europe

“While the drivers for violent extremism may be quite context-specific, the factors that make communities resilient to them may be similar for multiple regions”, says Project Coordinator Dr Véronique Dudouet from the Berghof Foundation. “In PAVE, we aim to address the current gap in comparative research while at the same time fostering an interdisciplinary understanding and increased interaction between different scientific fields.”

Within the three-year project lifetime, the interdisciplinary research team will develop innovative training tools and guidelines to support agents of community resilience (including religious leaders, mayors, educators, civil society organisations, women and youth), and will support mutual learning on best practices engaging stakeholders, community leaders, policy-makers and the wider public in the EU, MENA and Balkans.

The PAVE consortium comprises partners from 12 different countries. On 19-20 February 2020, they will all come together for the official project kick-off in Berlin, Germany.

Project Key Facts

*Title:* PAVE – Preventing and Addressing Violent Extremism through Community Resilience in the

Balkans and MENA

*Start*: 1 February 2020

*Duration:* 36 months

*Budget:* 2,999,651.25 €

*Coordinator:* Berghof Foundation Operations gGmbH, Germany

*Website:* www.pave-project.eu

Project Partners

* American University of Beirut, Lebanon
* Berghof Foundation Operations gGmbH, Germany
* EURICE – European Research and Project Office GmbH, Germany
* Finn Church Aid, Finland
* Fondation Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, France
* Fundación Euroárabe de Altos Estudios, Spain
* Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Greece
* Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, Kosovo
* Open Think Tank, Iraq
* Sfax University, Tunisia
* Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
* University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
* Uppsala University, Sweden

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| **N:\Horizon_Projekte\TRADITOM_VP_CZ_5050_Granell\Dissemination\EU emblem.jpg** | The PAVE project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870769. |