

**THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR COUNTERING  
RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM BY 2024**

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*Appendix no. 1*      Analysis of the development of extremism from 2015 to 2019, and the characteristics of individuals and groups inclined toward extremism in the Slovak Republic

*Appendix no. 2*      Main tasks

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Crime Prevention Department of the Office of the Minister of Interior of the Slovak Republic (2020)

Text has not undergone language revision.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Slovak Republic, member state of the European Union (EU) and other international organizations, is fully committed to common values based on respect and adherence of fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic<sup>1</sup>, as well as universal values, such as human dignity, freedom, equality and non-discrimination<sup>2</sup>.

The Conceptual Framework for Countering Radicalisation and Extremism by 2024 (conceptual framework) is the core document defining priorities of the Slovak Republic in the area of preventing and countering radicalisation, extremism, associated with anti-social activities threatening the foundations of a democratic state governed by the rule of law. It builds on the previous Conceptual Framework for the Fight against Extremism 2015 – 2019, which had focused greatly on departments within the Ministry of Interior (MoI), by creating and providing officers with methodological manuals and guidelines aiming to support the early identification of extremist manifestations and their subsequent investigation.

During this period, significant legislative changes were adopted, as well as specialised hate crime trainings designed for members of the Presidium of the Police Force (P PF), the Prosecutor's Office and courts were conducted in cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. As the tasks stated in the previous conceptual framework were evaluated positively in terms of benefits, this conceptual framework extends its scope to civil servants from other relevant ministries. This conceptual framework also focuses on informing the public, in which it pays attention to the prevention of negative phenomena, such as radicalization, extremism as well as hate speech. For this reason, the Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance (VRAX Committee) initiated the change of the coordinator of this document from the National Criminal Agency of the P PF to the Crime Prevention Department of the Office of the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. The conceptual framework is thus shifting in terms of content from the repressive level and preparedness of the P PF, to the level of prevention, in order to strengthen the democratic culture and restore trust in institutions across society.

The primary reason for adopting the conceptual framework and implementing the tasks proposed, stems from the need to protect the values guaranteed by the Constitution and international obligations<sup>3</sup> based on the membership of the Slovak Republic in international organizations. Furthermore, the need to eliminate negative interferences with the rights and freedoms of particular groups of the population, and to ensure social stability and peaceful coexistence of various national, ethnic and religious groups in the Slovak Republic.

The ultimate, though rarely openly declared goal of the extremists is to remove the core elements and attributes of the democratic rule of law, and therefore the state's response should

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<sup>1</sup> Article 12 (2) of the Constitution: „Fundamental rights shall be guaranteed in the Slovak Republic to everyone regardless of sex, race, colour, language, belief and religion, political affiliation or other conviction, national or social origin, nationality or ethnic origin, property, descent or any other status. No one shall be aggrieved, discriminated against or favoured on any of these grounds.“

<sup>2</sup> The EU is based on a common set of fundamental values, including the right to human dignity and non-discrimination set out in Art. 2 of the EU Treaty, as well as the general prohibition of discrimination in Art. 1, Protocol no. 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights and in Art. 21 EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

<sup>3</sup> For example: the European Convention on Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

be commensurate with this threat. Historical experience<sup>4</sup> with the Nazi totalitarian regime and the communist totalitarian regime shows that the enemies of democracy have been able to use democratic tools (freedom of speech, assembly and association) to gain power formally, by legal means, which they have subsequently misused to implement measures that meant removing the foundations of democracy<sup>5</sup> itself.

Extremism poses a threat to the pillars and essence of democracy, allowing the enemies of democracy misuse the tools and opportunities that democracy provides for conducting disruptive activities. It is necessary for democracy to defend itself against such attempts to remove or curtail it. The defence of democracy and its core attributes should therefore be as strong and effective as the determination of its enemies to destroy it. The European Court of Human Rights has also recognized this concept as a fundamental principle of European democracies in several judgments. Slovakia, stemming from own historical experiences with totalitarian regimes, is fully committed to the principles and basis of the concept of defending democracy.

This conceptual framework was carefully elaborated on inter-ministerial level and it is a result of multidisciplinary cooperation, inclusive of experts from non-governmental sector represented in the VRAX Committee, established within the MoI. Considering the issue of radicalization towards violent extremism and extremism itself as cross-cutting, whole-society issue, the conceptual framework presents 41 tasks, which will be fulfilled throughout its duration by all relevant subjects. In addition to the strategic part presented in this document, the conceptual framework as such consists of additional annexes providing a brief *Analysis of the development of extremism in the Slovak Republic from 2015 to 2019 (Annex no. 1)*; *Main tasks (Annex no. 2)* aimed at preventing and countering radicalization and extremism; and *Additional definitions (Annex no. 3)*.

The aim of this material is to promote respect for universal values and to prevent the emergence of prejudices, stereotypes and hate speech based on national, racial, ethnic, religious or other intolerance, and to prevent the emergence and spread of attitudes and activities supporting and promoting racism, xenophobia and other intolerances in a democratic society.

## **2. ANALYSIS AND TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RADICALIZATION AND EXTREMISM IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Preventing extremist radicalization, extremism, as well as combating them, are among the key priorities of EU security policy<sup>6</sup>. The radicalizing tendencies of individuals and groups adhering the ideologies of extreme opposition to the mainstream ideas, as well as extremist groups themselves, present a threat to democratic institutions, which act as the principal promoters of

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<sup>4</sup> The victory of the NSDAP in Germany in March 1933 (gaining 43.9% of the vote), led to the adoption of the Enabling Act, banning other political parties and introducing the leadership principle; as well as the victory of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in the 1946 Constituent Assembly (31, 2%), which led to the control of force structures in the Czechoslovak Republic and the coup in February 1948.

<sup>5</sup> In this context - Goebelss's statement: "We are entering the Reichstag in order that we may arm ourselves with the weapons of democracy from its arsenal. We shall become members of the Reichstag in order that the Weimar ideology should itself help us to destroy it ...".

<sup>6</sup> The Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy (2016) set out five common priorities for a safer Europe, including a commitment to tackling violent forms of extremism.

the principles of human freedom, dignity and equality. Despite the widespread increase of extremist manifestations within the EU, right-wing extremism remains their most widespread form, as is the case in the Slovak Republic.

The entities of the right-wing extremist scene (PEX) have long been established in the territory of the Slovak Republic; however, their priorities and personnel composition are gradually changing. This is mainly due to the political ambitions of its main representatives, whether at the local, regional or parliamentary level, which concluded into demise or decline of several PEX entities in the Slovak Republic. Active entities had organized public meetings during the monitored period and, although they were legally convened, in some of them, expressions of support or sympathy for movements directed at the suppression of fundamental rights and freedoms were present. In this context, increased social resonance, especially during the anti-Roma protests organized by PEX entities in regions where acts of violence or other incidents were committed by members of socially excluded Roma communities preceded, were reported. While in the EU the range of typology of PEX groupings has grown from rather 'classical' neo-Nazi to local groups opposed to so-called 'Islamization', changing the originally anti-Semitic course to anti-Muslim. To the present day, publicly claimed xenophobic and racist manifestations of PEX actors directed mainly against members of Roma communities and persons with foreign origin continue to prevail in the Slovak Republic.

The PEX entities in the Slovak Republic present their attitudes, messages and calls to a wider population mainly through social media (especially Facebook), where content inciting hatred, xenophobia or other forms of intolerance is disseminated, copying the European trend of general relocation of extremist group activities from offline to online space. One of the negative manifestations associated with gaining sympathizers in the online environment and their subsequent acquisition of anti-democratic ideologies is the alarming increase in radicalization leading to violent extremism, regardless of religious or political ideology behind it. Of particular concern is the scale and speed of the spread of this process across Member States, encouraging anti-democratic, discriminatory and polarizing tendencies, whose nature tends to grow into violent acts of extremism.

Although radicalization cannot be considered a new phenomenon, the constant attack on democratic social norms by extremist groups has a major impact on young people. Young people are subjected to negative stereotyping and trivialisation of extremism by the general public, which results in the normalization of such statements or actions, often despite of their highly intolerant and hateful nature. An example of this influence is the tendency of first-time voters to follow opinions offering exaggerated, even extreme solutions to existing socio-economic problems in the Slovak Republic. A very worrying European finding is that trends in recruiting sympathisers are gradually shifting to universities<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, in the context of Slovak education, it is necessary not to underestimate similar risks and try to prevent them at first signs of substandard and intolerant behaviour, or attitudes of individuals that are contrary to the fundamental human rights.

As the use of the Internet and social media is a widely applied trend promoting extremist and hateful content across Europe actively followed by a whole range of extremist groups (right-

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<sup>7</sup> Busby, E. (2018) „*Far-right group attempts to recruit students at Scottish universities. A Practical Introduction*“ points to the recruitment of university students by right-wing extremists in the United Kingdom.

wing, left-wing, anarchic, religious or single-issue), one of the main differences is the type of platforms, which they use for their activities. In case of left-wing and anarchic extremism, as well as groups recruiting for the purpose of the act of terrorism, own and more sophisticated ways of communication, or commercial platforms such as Signal or Telegram are being used. While the right-wing extremist groups primarily use open forums like Facebook, groups leaning towards violent extremism use uncensored web space to share radical content, such as 4/8/16chan.

Recent years have seen a significant increase in the online and offline hate speech, along with the decline in public debate<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, such influences have caused the increase of violent extremist behaviour and deepening intolerance, aiming to weaken the fundamental values of democracy in the EU. For this reason, the European Commission<sup>9</sup> calls for a more effective fight against illegal extremist and hateful content online, as the Internet provides space to exercise freedom of expression, which can be used by the extremist scene, among other things, to create and disseminate misleading information (disinformation), including the use of fake news or conspiracy theories.

PEX entities also make themselves visible via patrolling activities within their communities, through which they seek to replace the functions of state services in the field of public order. At present, there are dozens of individuals posing a potential security threat to the Slovak Republic because of their possession of military skills, strive to indoctrination, and the risk of a possible connection to the extreme right at home but also abroad. Extremist groups try to influence the public not only via social media but also through sports and leisure clubs. In this context, it is necessary to focus on monitoring inclinations towards PEX in the environment of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic. In the context of developments of trends in the EU, this includes mainly martial arts groups<sup>10</sup>, but also music bands and groups responsible for the production and distribution of materials with extremist content.

Building contacts and strengthening cross-border links between ideologically close or allied groups point to the need critically evaluate foreign trends in the development of radicalization and extremism, as it is easier than ever to be inspired by views, attitudes or actions influenced by extreme ideology abroad, which deny the principles of universal human rights, non-discrimination and equality. It must be emphasized that, in addition to violent extremism, radicalization can also escalate into acts of terrorism<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> *Resolution of the European Committee of the Regions on Combatting Hate Speech and Hate Crime* (2019/C 168/01), which, in addition to the above mentioned, points out that hateful rhetoric divides our society, evokes fear and radicalization, denigrates and deprives individuals of humanity, and can lead to serious acts.

<sup>9</sup> *Commission Recommendation* (EU 2018/334) *on measures to effectively tackle illegal content online*; and High-Level Commission Expert Group on radicalisation (*Final Report*, 2018).

<sup>10</sup> Radicalisation Awareness Network (2019) in „*Far-right Extremism. A Practical Introduction*“, describes the types of leisure activities through which PEX entities try to recruit sympathisers and make them more susceptible for the “warrior mentality”, able to protect own community. PEX entities besides gym and mixed martial art classes are trying to influence the audience also through alternative media providing space for discussion or studies of value literature.

<sup>11</sup> International Centre for Counter-Terrorism „*Male Supremacist Terrorism as a Rising Threat*“ (2020) shows that single-issue forms of extremism and terrorism, are currently represented in the world. Their spectrum of interest is quite extensive. On the rise is, for example, hatred of women - "Misogyny," as a form of male supremacy, or superiority, which justifies violence against women.

Regarding the manifestations and activities of the left-wing extremist entities (LEX) in the Slovak Republic but also generally in the EU, their primary aim is to discredit PEX entities. Violent clashes between the two entities are frequent abroad. The main motivating elements of the LEX are anti-fascist and anti-racist resistance, rejection of state repression, as well as organising of anti-capitalist protests. The cross-border activities of LEX actors are mainly reflected in the issues of climate change, animal and Earth protection, which are becoming violent in the EU. These are mainly being expressed by resistance, or attacks on governmental buildings<sup>12</sup>. LEX entities and especially entities representing anarchist extremism are increasingly becoming a problem for maintaining public order in several EU countries.

Despite of the fact that there are no explicitly dangerous extremist religious groups (NEX), which could possibly endanger the health and lives of the population, high-risk religious groups' activities related to psychological manipulation with the aim of expanding their scope and financial enrichment, seeking among other things registration between state-recognized Slovak churches and religious groups have been recorded. However, suspicions that some of their activities are in conflict with the principles of humanity, tolerance and civil rights and, in extreme cases with the protection of citizens' health exist. The EU countries with higher threat of violent religious extremism and terrorism based on militant Islamic fundamentalism make greater efforts to the prevention of radicalization<sup>13</sup> than others.

Considering violent extremism as a serious societal problem, in tackling it, it is essential to involve number of actors, including civil society. The EU<sup>14</sup> has long called on Member States to support institutions and organizations active in the field of education and human rights, in order to work together whilst addressing de-radicalisation, hate speech and hate crime, as well as to combat disinformation and propaganda. Discourse and attitudes motivated by extremist ideologies are largely responsible for the polarizing tendencies in society, and could even lead to its destabilization. Therefore, the key interest of the Slovak Republic, taking into account experiences of other Member States, should be prevention of similar tendencies in partnership with civil society<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> EUROPOL (2020) stated that the year-on-year increase in left-wing attacks rose from 34 in 2018 to 111 in 2019, of which 26 attacks were of a terrorist nature. Anarchic extremist groups are represented mainly in larger cities and do not have a hierarchical structure. These are mainly present in countries such as Spain, Greece and Italy.

<sup>13</sup> Radicalisation Awareness Network (2020) emphasizes the need to prevent polarization in society and to promote social inclusion, as the exclusion of individuals can trigger radical action, and at the same time, these persons can become a target of attacks of the right-wing extremists. The Conclusion of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States (2016 / C 467/02) call on the Member States to combat radicalization, as this tends to lead to acts of violent extremism. At the same time, the European Commission (2016) "*Supporting the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violent Extremism*" has long informed about the need to work with radicalized persons serving prison sentences for acts of violent extremism.

<sup>14</sup> Conclusions of the Council of Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the prevention of radicalization leading to violent extremism (2016 / C 467/02), which recommended, inter alia, addressing social conditions and socio-pathological phenomena that may influence the formation of individuals' attitudes.

<sup>15</sup> Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on „*Cooperation with civil society to prevent the radicalization of young people*“ (2018 / C 129/03), calls on the Member States to perceive civil society actors as partners, rather than use them only as tools in the fight against violent extremism.

The more extensive *Analysis of the development of extremism in the Slovak Republic from 2015 to 2019*, which shaped the ground for this conceptual framework, as well as the characteristics of individuals and groups inclined to extremism in the Slovak Republic are part of the *Annex no. 1*.

### 3. THE GOAL OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The fundamental goal of the conceptual framework is **to defend and protect democratic rule of law, its basic values and attributes and to call for the creation of a strong democratic and political environment rejecting any manifestations of extremism or hate speech based on the grounds of national, racial, ethnic, religious or other intolerances.**

*The Annex no. 2* of the conceptual framework consists of tasks created with the aim to reflect on the state and development of radicalization and extremism in the Slovak Republic, taking into account the cross-border nature of the impact of radical influences on the population. Fulfilment of the fundamental goal will be supported by four partial goals through individual tasks, which will be carry out by various stakeholders alone, or in cooperation with civil society actors:

- I. Ensure the protection of the foundations of the democratic rule of law and its values, including the safety of the population from actions of individuals or movements advocating extremist ideologies;**  
By conducting monitoring and analytical activities, contribute to a more accurate knowledge of radical and extremist scene in the Slovak Republic, and use the findings as a base to the re-assessment of the existing legislation, in order to protect the democratic rule of law and the health and safety of the population.
- II. Strengthen the democratic culture in society by raising awareness about human rights and breaking down negative stereotypes;**  
By strengthening the awareness of human rights and informing about the negative effects of stereotyping and hateful behaviour online and offline, contribute to the prevention of radical or extremist behaviour stemming from the influences of undemocratic ideologies among the population.
- III. Restore the trust in public institutions and encourage reporting of unlawful activities;**  
By expanding the professional knowledge of civil servants on the issues of radicalization, extremism and discriminatory behaviour based on racial, ethnic, national or religious intolerance, actively work on creating conditions for restoring the public trust in democratic institutions.
- IV. Promote de-radicalisation, social integration and social prevention.**  
By creating support mechanisms, strengthen the inclusion of minorities and marginalized communities, and the work with radicalized individuals through

educational activities by providing assistance not only to the victims, but also to the convicted offenders, with the focus on prevention of recidivism.

#### 4. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

All definitions presented in this chapter have been developed solely for the purposes of the conceptual framework. Additional working definitions can be found in the *Annex no. 3*.

##### **Radicalization**

Radicalization<sup>16</sup> refers to a process of growing acceptance of an ideology, which is contrary to the democratic rule of law. Democratic rule of law shall be understood as a set of constitutional and legislative norms, adhering the system of fundamental rights and freedoms, the division of state power, independent judiciary, freedom of the press, free elections, equality before the law, plurality of political parties, and the free and legal influence of the political opposition. During this process, individuals or groups under the influence of some form of political or religious extremism acquire the new system of “values” which are incompatible with the democratic rule of law, denying equality before the law and human dignity. With the acquisition of a specific form of political or religious extremism, individual or group deviates from the democratic rule of law, gradually increasing one’s level of identification with some form of extremist ideology and determination to perform this form of political or religious extremism in practice. This can take on violent forms; even the use the means of terrorism<sup>17</sup> in the final phase of radicalization. It is possible to intervene in each of the phases of radicalisation process, in order to prevent it from happening. Such interventions are called **de-radicalization**.

##### **Extremism**

Extremism is being represented by manifestations and acts based on attitudes rising from the extreme ideology, which is in a conflict with ideas of the democratic rule of law. In order to promote own ideological goals, deliberate verbal or physical actions against the main attributes of the existing democratic system may be conducted directly or in a certain period. The characteristic features of extremism include attacks on the system of fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and international human rights documents, as well as attempts to limit, suppress, or prevent the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms for certain groups of people defined by their real or perceived belonging to a race, nation, nationality, ethnic group; or by their real or perceived origin, skin colour, sex, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs. Extremism could be categorized into right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism, religious extremism, and single-issue extremism (for example, ecological, separatism, etc.).

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<sup>16</sup> Council of Europe (2018) Youth work as a form of prevention of violent radicalization. Theory, concepts and primary prevention in practice.

<sup>17</sup> The issue of radicalization is included in several documents at the EU level. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Preventing radicalization leading to terrorism and violent extremism - Strengthening EU action COM (2013) 941; STOCKHOLM PROGRAM - An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens (OJ C 115, 4.5.2010, p. 1), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: an area of freedom, security and justice for European citizens; Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Program, COM (2010) 171 final.

## **Political extremism**

Political extremism is a political ideology that challenges and rejects some of the main principles of the democratic rule of law, the three branches of state power, or the universal suffrage. Instead of equal rights for all, political extremism promotes own political system and system of values, in which one's rights and value are determined by "origin" (racial, ethnic or class), or through which political extremism seeks to limit the exercise of fundamental human rights. In doing so, political extremism uses the instruments of democracy, such as the freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression (increasingly common in the online space) in order to misuse them, seeking to remove democratic principles from society, or to attack and intimidate opponents.

## **Right-wing extremism**

Right-wing extremism or the extreme right<sup>18</sup> can be defined as an ideology based on the following key components: ultranationalism, xenophobia, racism, anti-democracy, or so-called anti-systemic attitudes associated with claims for the so-called "strong state", which must replace the democratic rule of law. These components may not always be represented together, however, at the core of the right-wing extremism/extreme right is the fundamental idea of inequality between "us" and "them" (most often: immigrants, ethnic and religious minorities). This means that thereby, by rejecting the principles of equality originated in the foundations of democratic rule of law, extremists define persons through their own, subjective and constructed ethnic, racial, national, cultural or religious criteria. Right-wing extremism/extreme right adherents also demonstrate efforts to build nation's cultural unity, all by rejecting political plurality, by denying, discriminating or diminishing the universal rights and freedoms of other people, willing to use verbal or even physical violence.

## **Left-wing extremism**

Left-wing extremism seeks to use violence, in order to replace the democratic rule of law with a political system based on the ideology of communism or anarchism. Left-wing extremism intends to eliminate any form of inequality in all areas of social life, but this ultimately leads to the revocation of individual choice and freedom.

## **Religious extremism**

Religiously motivated attitudes and activities violating the principles of the democratic rule of law and fundamental human rights, aimed at establishing or maintaining a theocratic system or regime where the church hierarchy is the highest decision-making and executive body, superior to the body of representative democracy. Religious extremism uses religion to promote interests and goals that lead to the establishment of a theocratic system or regime, to a significant intolerance, suppression of human dignity, and to human rights abuses against persons of other faiths, and even to the suppression of human dignity and violation of human rights of own religious followers.

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<sup>18</sup> Mudde, C. (1995): *Right-Wing Extremism Analyzed. A Comparative Analysis of the Ideologies of Three Alleged Right-Wing Extremist Parties (NPD, NDP, CP'86)*. in European Journal of Political Research, 27, s. 203-221. Carter, E. (2018): *Right-wing extremism/radicalism: Reconstructing the concept*. in Journal of Political Ideologies. RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN. EX POST PAPER (2019) *Local-level management of far-right extremism*.

## Terrorism

Terrorism can be defined as the deliberate and systematic use of acts of violence, which, by their nature or context, could seriously damage a country, or an international organization where committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization<sup>19</sup>. Terrorism is one of the most serious violations of the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity and the applicability of fundamental human rights and freedoms. It is considered one of the most serious attacks on democracy. Terrorism can be the act of an individual, a group of individuals or an organized group, acting either alone or with state support. However, it may also be an act of the state power against own population (human rights violations, genocide) or be related to an international armed conflict against the civilian population of an enemy state (e.g. destruction of infrastructure, use of explosives or CBRN substances).

## Crimes committed with a special motive out of hatred

Crimes committed with a special motive out of hatred also known in the international context as “*hate crimes*”, encompass a full spectrum of extremist crimes from hate speech (verbal, graphic) to violent types of hate crimes. The Penal Code (300/2005 Coll.) in the Slovak Republic regulates the possibility of committing an extremist crime on the basis of a special motive, thus taking into account *acts committed out of hatred*, as stated in the Section 140 letter e). For the purposes of this conceptual framework, all forms of expressions motivated by *hate speech*, which spread, incite, support or justify racial, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, or other kind of hatred based on intolerances (i.e. biases such as sex, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political affiliation, minority belonging, being migrant, or persons of immigrant origin), manifested by forms of aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, could be also considered extremist acts.

## The concept of defending democracy

The concept of “*defending democracy*” represents a democracy that is active through legal, power and discursive instruments against its ideological enemies within the existing democratic system. The defence of democracy has to be active prior to the accomplishment of the main threats of enemies arising from their existence, and prevent in particular, the threat of serious disturbance or destruction of stability of the constitutional establishment. These enemies are subjected to repression, which is, however, a result of the democratic political process and does not unduly interfere with fundamental human rights<sup>20</sup>. The enemy of democracy does not have to be necessarily a political entity, but any group or movement that seeks to damage, disrupt or

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<sup>19</sup> Definition of a terrorist acts based on the Council Framework Decision 2008/919 / JHA, used in judgments of the Court of Justice of the EU [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/e-library/glossary/acts-terrorism\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/e-library/glossary/acts-terrorism_en)

<sup>20</sup> The definition of defending democracy is based on the work of Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse, who call this concept “*streitbare demokratie*”, as used in the publication of Miroslav Mareš and Štěpán Výborný “*Militant Democracy in Central Europe*” (2014, Centre for the Study of Democracy and Culture).

eliminate democratic structures, and whose agenda is contrary to the democratic foundations of society.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The evaluation of the fulfilment of goals will be a subject of *The Monitoring Report on the State of Extremism in the Slovak Republic* (monitoring report), along with the proposal for actualisation of the tasks included in the conceptual framework. The monitoring report will be submitted to the meeting of the Government of the Slovak Republic on a two-year basis. The fulfilment of the partial objectives will be evaluated on an ongoing basis by the VRAX Committee and by advisory bodies of the Government of the Slovak Republic, directly engaged with the issue of extremism, in order to propose possible adjustments of tasks during the validity of conceptual framework. The findings will be also used as a part of the basis for the preparation of the following conceptual framework.