

## **Safeguarding young people and supporting tomorrow's societies – in Central and Eastern Europe.**

Draft Mission statement of the CEE Prevent Net project,

18.11.2018, by the CEE Prevent Net consortium

The key objective of our CEE Prevent Net project is to safeguard young people in Central and Eastern Europe and support their development. Through CEE partners' project work, we aim at enhancing the youngsters' wellbeing and skills, buttressing youth welfare and helping to avert the myriad of risks which young people are facing today – violence, hatred, drugs, criminality, dependencies, self-destructiveness etc. In particular, we seek to keep the youth away from becoming extremists. Thus we intend to apply a comprehensive approach which goes beyond the Islam-heavy West European perspective and also takes account of the potentials and challenges in Central European countries.

We also care about the local communities and areas in which young people live, particularly rural and small town areas which usually hold fewer opportunities for youth. Young people should feel confident to stay in these areas and don't move away from their country – and thus become a pivotal factor for the country's peace and prosperity.

While implementing our CEE Prevent Net project we specifically focus on improving the youngsters' skills of dialogue and tolerance, among similar skills – and prevent them from becoming intolerant and anxious. We regard dialogue and tolerance as key skills which are vital for young people in order to develop their full potential, be healthy and have a long and satisfying life; which is why we see dialogue and tolerance in an entirely non-partisan perspective. For, empirical research has shown that people with limited ability to dialogue with and be tolerant towards others are also less healthy and become less intelligent and productive than they could – and they do not live as long as they could.

This cannot be in anybody's interest. It certainly is not in the interest of young people and their local communities. In fact, youngsters sometimes look at us in all our quarrels, fighting and polarization – and they lose respect and trust in us. We can do better than that!

Hence, we appeal to everybody, from all sectors, to join us in the CEE Prevent Net. As CEE region we may well work together on this. Here the CEE Prevent Net aims at overcoming all partisanship and polarization about this topic and solely focuses on safeguarding and supporting our young people – and thus also contribute to the peace and prosperity of our future societies.