



# **BROCHURE FOR MANAGERS OF RELIGIOUS SITES**

*"Better education is better prevention, protection and response to various types of terrorist threats and incidents that may occur in religious places, including attacks with chemical biological and radiological materials."*



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## Preamble

Religious sites are considered to be especially vulnerable to attacks due to their accessibility and the fact that there are usually limited security measures applied.

ProSPeReS project is aimed at increasing the level of protection in places of worship (PWs) by keeping the balance between security measures and preservation of the open nature of PWs. This can be achieved through cooperation between operators of religious sites, public services and security experts, the site's risk assessment, raising public awareness (especially key beneficiaries – clergy and worshippers), as well as developing and validating a comprehensive protection system.

The system involves tools and templates (inc. a tool that has been based on the by DG HOME developed EU Vulnerability Assessment Tool), training (inc. eLearning with virtual reality), educational materials and security measures covering the entire cycle of an emergency and,

finally, a model security system for indoor and outdoor religious gatherings with a set of recommendations. The model includes the most effective methods of cooperation between public authorities and services, faith-based leaders, various religious institutions, security experts and practitioners. Efficient communication is a key element for building a solid platform to exchange needs, expectations and best practices, sharing knowledge and experiences on using technological and non-technological solutions, as well as existing and potential new innovations in the field of public safety and security.

Good organization of reception areas at places of worship and the timely and effective responses of staff, can provide better protection and potentially save lives.

This guide is a part of an awareness raising campaign of the EU Project ProSPeReS with the motto:

*"Better to know."*

### WARNING

This brochure is not intended to replace the regulations in force. Its purpose is to provide practical advice. The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

**The development of effective common security rests on 5 pillars:**

- prevention which relies on comprehensive preparation and holistic organization,
- protection to reduce vulnerabilities,
- detection of threats,
- response to threats,
- mitigation of the results of terroristic attacks.

The process of protecting people at religious sites and large gatherings is part of an institutional mechanism which can be strengthened at the local level by mutual cooperation to improve the effectiveness of security measures and services.

**When are religious events and ceremonies organized?**

Religious events and ceremonies may be organised on during holidays or leisure activities and are generally permitted as a matter of principle.

Relevant local authorities may support, adapt or limit the organisation of a religious events and ceremonies depending on the security conditions.

In the context of a localised attack or very high risk, religious events and large gatherings may be prohibited by relevant authorities.



*6 things to help protect Places of Worship*

## 1. Promote understanding of safety and security in a community

### Definition of safety and security

According to Abraham Maslow “One of the basic human needs is a sense of security”<sup>1</sup> – each subject must experience a sense of security in order to be able to meet other needs.

The safety can be understood as the status of being safe, free from risk of harm or death. Safety is also the knowledge on how to react to a risk when it arises. Worshippers want assurances that they are safe in their own communities.

### Safety policy of religious community

Community safety is much more than just community policing and law enforcement. Religious community safety requires that each member plays a key role in both their own safety and the safety of others. Community participation and a high level of cooperation between government and non-governmental organisations are essential ingredients for an overall success with regards to safety.

*Success requires the mobilization of local stakeholders.*

### Who are stakeholders in the safety and security in places of worship?

Stakeholders refer to anyone who represents a group or association with shared interests. Thus, a stakeholder first of all could be every:

- clergyman, imam, rabbi;
- employees or worshippers;
- individual members of a given community;
- neighbouring communities and housing communities surrounding place of worship;
- local self-government authorities;
- units of central administration.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/safety-maslow-s-hierarchy-of-needs>

### Why are establishing good communication between multiple stakeholders and establishing good community cooperation important factors in increasing the security of Places of Worship?

Due to past societal damage caused by terrorist attacks, other crimes and acts of violence directed against places of worship, people realized that the role of the individual and local organizations, along with unions, associations, NGOs and other organizations in preventing and limiting the consequences of such acts, has increased. This is especially true in democratic societies. That is why there is a systematic shift in paradigms and mental maps within society. Individuals become better educated, trained and aware. They realize that their quality and living standards, including the level of safety, increasingly depend on their own initiative.



## How to improve safety and security

1. **Know** about the nature and history of the threats that exist towards religious communities and places of worship. Be aware of what extremists are saying and doing in society, particularly locally.
2. **Develop** a relationship with local authorities such as the police and fire department so you can discuss potential threats and your security concerns and explore possible solutions together. Keep local authorities informed about any suspicious activities or incidents that have caused concerns in your community. Emergency plans and procedures should be discussed and agreed with them so their procedures and emergency responses to the place of worship are considered and included.
3. **Create** a local safety and security partnership with neighbouring properties and residents. This can act as a forum to build positive neighbourly relationships while encouraging community collaboration towards increased safety and security awareness for everyone in the neighbourhood.
4. **Conduct** a vulnerability assessment, to keep up with the evolving nature of the threats which considers local conditions and make use of 'good practices and emerging technologies to develop effective security measures.
5. **Involve** people within your religious community who have relevant experience and training from the safety and security sector such as law enforcement, military and the emergency services by recruiting them as volunteers and using them to support safety and security measures as part of a 'welcome team'.
6. **Make** plans for different types of security threats. A security plan that sets out clear procedures in different scenarios is essential to effective security at places of worship. Plans should include a direct attack on the place of worship by an active threat (like a firearm or bladed weapon), but you must also plan for indirect threats (like a direct attack nearby, local civil unrest/protests). Also consider the possibility of disputes between congregation members, domestic issues, and mental health issues that could arise during a religious gathering.
7. **Communicate** emergency plans to your congregation. Make sure members of your congregation know that you have plans to keep them safe in an emergency. They should know how to report a security concern and how to react if there is an emergency while they are at the place of worship. There should be a communication plan so expectations of worshippers and visitors are clear during an emergency situation.
8. **Train** a 'welcome team' of volunteers to support safety and security measures by working with security staff during an emergency. Such a team will need to be given clearly defined emergency roles and responsibilities and receive training in them so they can help with implementing emergency plans and procedures and providing medical first aid if needed.
9. **Equip** a 'welcome team' with a two-way 'walkie talkie' radio system so they can communicate effectively with each other and be integrated into the security team at the place of worship so they can communicate effectively with them during an emergency.
10. **Install** security cameras and an alarm system to enhance basic security measures and act as a deterrent. Take care of basic security measures so all doors and windows can be effectively locked and secured. Consider installing an access control system to control/restrict access to certain parts of the site. Consider a holistic approach and review of your comprehensive physical security system to deter would-be intruders, monitor your grounds, and alert authorities to keep your religious centre and worshippers safe.

11. **Keep** a First Aid Kit, necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and other emergency equipment on the premises where they are easily and quickly accessible to the 'welcome team' and security staff during an emergency.
12. **Perform** exercises to rehearse and reinforce emergency plans. Security staff and volunteers should be involved in at least one exercise to consolidate their training. If possible, exercises should be arranged with local authorities, so their emergency responses are also included and practised.

#### An example of automated external defibrillator, AED

(Rafał Kowalczyk based on © tpap8228, © Iakov Kalinin, Adobe Stock)



*6 things to help protect Places of Worship*

## 2. Organise Vulnerability and Threat Assessments

### Definition

Vulnerability and Risk Assessment contains the process of defining, identifying, classifying, and prioritising vulnerabilities to attacks, which stem from several factors such as for example a high concentration of people combined with a lack of security measures.

### Aim

The use of the Vulnerability and Risk Assessments aims to introduce a solid methodological approach in order to support the later identified common needs and requirements to raise the level of protection in PW. A comprehensive vulnerability and/or risk assessment, along with a risk management program (such as the ISO 31000:2018 guidelines on risk management provide), can help stakeholders to improve the protection of their (public) spaces by adopting focused and justified security measures and policies, thus making informed decisions.

### What to do

- Identify all stakeholders who can be involved in the protection of the PW.
- Organise a Vulnerability Assessment workshop, forming a working group of experts. An indicative example of participants could be formed by LEAs, First Responders, Municipal staff, Citizen Representative Organisations, Local Commerce, Urban Planners, Security Solution providers etc.

It is crucial that before the workshop, all the background information about the Place of Worship and its operations is collected and made available to the participants prior to the workshop. The information may include:

- Description of the PW's background (access roads, means of transport, emergency services, neighbourhood) and its purpose.
- Description of daily activities at the PW.
- Description of activities and the area of interest during large events.
- Description of the PW's infrastructure, including its critical operations. Know the configuration of your reception area: layout of buildings, development of spaces, routes and emergency exits.
- Provision of maps, layouts or architectural drawings of the critical buildings (e.g., a Church).
- Applied security measures and procedures daily and on occasion, including the presence of LEAs and first responders.
- Indication of crowd concentration points ("hot areas" with highest crowd density).
- Report of past security and safety incidents at the PW.

### Vulnerability assessment tool

ProSPeReS Vulnerability assessment tool- lite version (VAT Lite) can be used as a quick scan for Places of Worship to determine the overall risk level (and to come up with risk treatments such as better security measures or social innovative solutions to counter possible risks) with regards to the following

types of risks. In some cases, performing risk assessments may seem like a very difficult task when we talk about security. The ProSPeReS VAT Lite aims at helping local Places of Worship by making the risk assessment process a little lighter and easier to conduct. If the VAT Lite indicates that there is an above medium level of risk, it is advised to contact local authorities to discuss a more in-depth risk assessment, carried out by experts.

### Sneak preview of the VAT Lite – the guidelines



### An example of the “Record template B” of VAT Lite

**MAIN SITE INFORMATION - COUNT THE NO'S**

Name site name / address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Description, date & time of activity: \_\_\_\_\_  
 When to call in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checklist**

Zone	Question	Yes	No	N/A	Points
Zone 1	Are there access control measures for the visitors in place (e.g. x-ray machines, metal detector gates etc.)? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Are the main door and windows or main access point locked during closing hours? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	If the place of worship is open 24/7 please answer "No" <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Are there locking mechanisms, bars, or other materials (e.g. impact resistant window films or reinforced glass) installed on the windows to prevent break-ins or dangerous items thrown into the building? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Do you have a CCTV system installed for monitoring the areas within the building where people gather? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Are there any CCTV systems installed for monitoring the areas within the building where people gather? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Is there a security system with a silent alarm that is connected to the police or a private security provider? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Do you have a fire alarm in place? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Do you have signage in front of the place of worship indicating the existence of security measures inside the facility (e.g. CCTV or security officers warning)? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Does the main building have emergency exits? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
Zone 2	Does your place of worship have a procedure for the staff to monitor parcels or items received at the place of worship? If you don't receive parcels at the place of worship please don't answer this question. <b>Difficulty:3</b>				
	Do you have measures or a policy for unattended suspicious items at your place of worship? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Is the main gate locked during closing hours? If there is not a gate in place answer "No". <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Are there measures in place (e.g. bollards, street lighting) preventing (speeding) cars from entering the area outside the main building where people gather? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	If there is a parking lot at your place of worship, does it have access control measures for the cars entering it? If there is not a parking lot in this zone, don't answer this question. <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	If there is a parking lot at your place of worship, does it have sufficient lighting? If there is not a parking lot in this zone, don't answer this question. <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	If you have a CCTV (Closed Circuit Television, camera surveillance) capable of monitoring areas the areas outside the building where people gather? If you don't have a CCTV system in place don't answer this question. <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Do you have sufficient lighting in the area around the main building to eliminate dark areas and hiding spots? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Is there a parking lot adjacent your place of worship, does it have access control measures for the cars entering it? If there is not a parking lot in this zone, don't answer this question. <b>Difficulty:3</b>				
	Are there any streets around the site that allow speeding vehicles to have direct access to the premises of your place of worship / areas of people gathering? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
Zone 3	Do you have sufficient lighting in the area to enhance monitoring and eliminate dark secluded areas? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	Are there any police officers patrolling the area around the site? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Are there any staff members supporting the activities of the place of worship trained to carry out the emergency procedure? <b>Difficulty:3</b>				
	Have you in the past conducted any type of emergency response trials to see how your facility staff will perform in a crisis situation? <b>Difficulty:3</b>				
	Are there any designated evacuation routes? <b>Difficulty:2</b>				
	Are the evacuation routes clear and unobstructed to facilitate an emergency evacuation / invasion? <b>Difficulty:1</b>				
	* The scores of the questions reflect the implementation complexity/difficulty of possible security measures.				
	POINTS				



*6 things to help protect Places of Worship*

### 3. Identify indicators of terrorism

**What to pay attention to?**

- Behaviours suggesting 'hostile reconnaissance' - this could involve unusual curiosity relating to security measures and the organisation of the PW the prolonged observations of people and vehicles coming and going, taking photos and videos, suspicious vehicles (with or without occupants) or a person remaining in the same place for a prolonged time. Other indicators could be verbal threats, threatening tags or anonymous calls.
- Unusual dress code for the season – this could involve the wearing of clothing to conceal a person's identity or what they may be carrying.
- Vehicles parked near the building at an inappropriate location – this could involve being in a restricted area or parking in breach of local regulations.
- Subcontractors, delivery persons / couriers or others with a legitimate link to the PW acting outside their normal role and responsibilities – this could involve unexpected deliveries, their presence outside their normal working hours or being seen in an area of the site they would not normally be expected to visit.
- Abandoned bags and suspicious items or packages.

**Abandoned bag (Rafał Kowalczyk based on © pigprox, Adobe Stock)**

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## 4. Identify potential signs of individual vulnerability to radicalisation

Risk factors can be formed by the physical and social environment in which crime occurs, but they can also arise at the level of an individual. Individual risk factors entail the internal processes that take place in the radicalization of an individual.

Risks to the public safety of PW can also come from radicalized individuals. Within our European borders, we have also seen severe attacks by lone actor terrorists.

When an individual starts to: **dive very deep into the 'us against them' type of thinking**, radicalisation processes can start occurring.

Especially when this type of antagonism arises (considering society as 'us against them'), the other in their mind can be considered as the enemy. In the case of religion, when an individual is not able to separate the individual beings from the religious ideology, they then deindividualize human beings and see them as a representation of that religion.

These individual risk factors are often factors such as:

- **lack of social competence,**
- **narcissistic personality disorder,**
- **suicidal intent and others.**

But not every individual with extremist views and certain personality traits will act on these views.

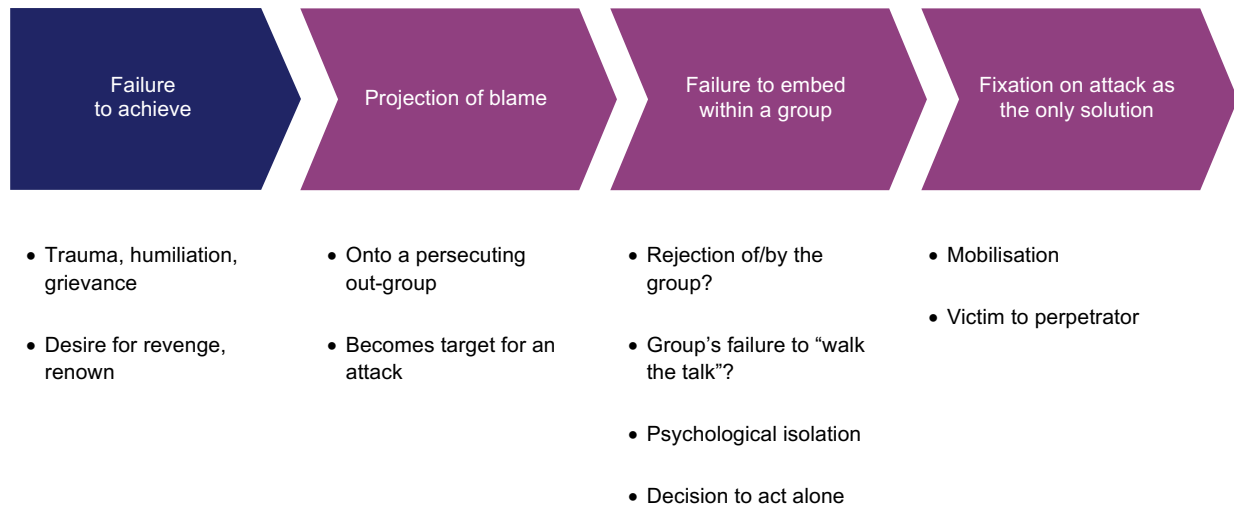
The EU Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) describes in its report on lone actors that assessing the risk of a lone actor preparing for an attack, requires the identification of the presence or absence of threshold behaviours that mark the position they are on the 'lone actor pathway' to an attack<sup>2</sup>. Sharing this information, according to the EU Commission RAN, enables patterns of behaviours to be identified.

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<sup>2</sup> European Union (2021). *Lone Actors as a Challenge for P/CVE*. Retrieved on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022. URL: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-10/ran\\_lone\\_actors\\_as\\_challenge\\_for\\_pcve\\_july\\_2021\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-10/ran_lone_actors_as_challenge_for_pcve_july_2021_en.pdf)



## Lone actor pathway



### The mindset of intent

- Shift from victim to perpetrator
- Stridency of belief
- Links severed with family and friends
- Dialogue overtaken by preaching
- Compassion and humour lost
- Attack planning begins

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## 5. How to understand indications of preparation for an attack using hazardous materials

It is characteristic of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incidents (CBRN) that it is difficult to detect or recognise they have been released during the initial stages. Hazardous materials used in an attack could be odourless, colourless and tasteless, thus exposure may not be evident immediately. There are some indicators which could point to a possible CBRN incident:

- Suspicious devices or packages (especially showing wiring, air cylinders, containers with powders or liquids);
- Oily coating, powder or gel-like substance on exposed surfaces;
- Unexplained, unauthorised overhead spraying in the area (from small planes or drones);
- Unexplained odours (bitter almonds, peach kernels, mown hay, cut grass);
- Cases of nausea, breathing difficulties, disorientation;
- Unexplained medical symptoms (sore eyes, headache, vomiting, fitting, non-thermal burns, skin irritation);
- Sick or dead animals in the area;
- Low-lying clouds or fog unrelated to current weather;
- Unexplained clouds of dust;
- Withered plants.

CBRN incidents can also be recognised when there are people who have collapsed without an obvious explanation by the 1-2-3 protocol:

- **1 casualty** – proceed to give first aid as usual.
- **2 casualties** – show caution and look for other indicators of CBRN materials.
- **3 or more casualties** – suspect the involvement of CBRN materials and look for other indicators and seek specialist advice and support.

**Sudden death of animals or plants should definitely worry you (Rafał Kowalczyk based on © Anatoliy Gleb, © Iakov Kalinin, © Mitand73, © humbak, © InputUX Adobe Stock)**



### 6 things to help protect Places of Worship

## 6. Report any potentially relevant information or concerns

For any type of threat, it is necessary to pass information to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible. In an emergency, it is likely that many witnesses will try to inform the emergency services using the EU emergency number 112 (or by different localised emergency numbers).

However, every organiser of religious events should have an emergency response plan agreed upon and, ideally, should have trained with local emergency services. The plan should identify who is responsible for providing timely and accurate information to the emergency services (e.g., priest/imam/rabbi, security manager, or a nominated 'incident manager'). The plan should also describe the communication methods and channels for transferring information between the organiser and responders at the place of worship in an emergency situation. The plan should outline how staff and/or volunteers provide information about perceived threats and any developing or actual emergency situation.

An ETHANE report structure may be used to provide the best available information about an emergency:

<b>E</b>	<b>Exact location</b> – precisely where the threat/attack is, what part of the site/building(s) are affected, reporting where any attackers were last seen and where they were going
<b>T</b>	<b>Type of incident</b> – what type of incident/threat/attack (suspicious package, bomb threat, active shooter, attack with a bladed weapon etc.)
<b>H</b>	<b>Hazards present or suspected</b> – what hazards/potential hazards are involved (possible explosives, weapons seen/used, suspected release of CBRN materials etc.), report description(s) of the attacker(s)
<b>A</b>	<b>Access</b> – routes that are safe to use (what are the best routes for emergency access and exit (consider options from any plans previously agreed/held by emergency services)
<b>N</b>	<b>Number, type, severity casualties</b> – how many and what type of injuries
<b>E</b>	<b>Emergency services present and those required</b> – which ones and how many are there, specify any others needed and how many for the specific threat(s), hazard(s) and impacts of the emergency situation

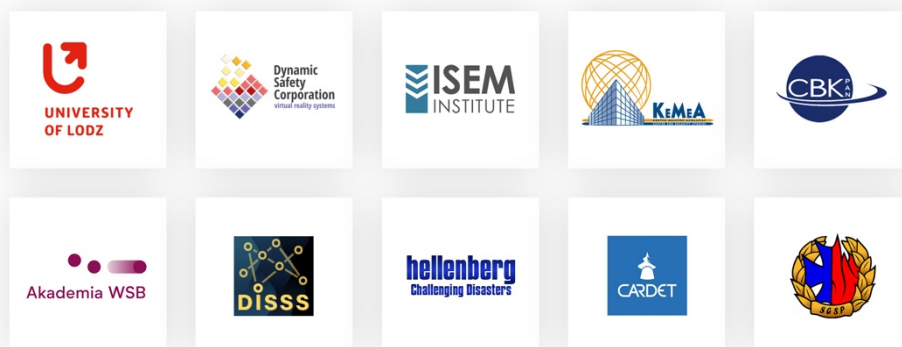
When the involvement of CBRN materials is suspected, it will also be important to inform the emergency services:

- Why the release of CBRN materials is suspected?
- Who discovered any suspicious package, mail or substance and how they have been managed and supported?
- What are local weather conditions that might affect the emergency (like rain, wind direction, temperature)?
- If the place/building/event is a likely target for an attack?
- If there have been any messages or intelligence about an attack or possible use of CBRN materials?

A threat or emergency can cause stress and an emotional response; informants should be encouraged to stay calm when making their reports to the emergency services (or incident manager). They should give accurate and precise information when communicating and to answer any questions to the best of their ability and knowledge (and say if they are uncertain about something). If they are making a report on their phone (or radio) they should stay connected until they receive a clear message they can hang up and end the conversation; they should then carry out any instructions they have been given and remain attentive in case the emergency services or incident manager recontacts them for more information or an update. If the situation changes, they should use recontact the emergency services to update them so they can organise more/other responses and update their responders so they can adapt to the changing circumstances.

## The ProSPeReS Consortium

Security experts, security research and academic institutions,  
providers of technical solutions and services



### Law enforcement agencies (LEAs)



### Faith-based organizations







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