



Welcome to the 3rd PROTON newsletter

The [previous editorial](#) concluded that the first year of project PROTON was “the most difficult for setting up the scene” and that promising results would come in the next year and a half. The meeting held in Jerusalem in October 2017 represented the closure of the first cycle of the project and the beginning of the new one. The technical Review meeting scheduled for April 2018 will express the opinion of the EU Commission on the quality of the work carried out until now by the Consortium.

Being halfway through, now we can draft **a preliminary overview** of what has been done and what we expect to do in the next period. Literature reviews and innovative studies on organized crime, terrorism and cybercrime revealed **the limitations and differences among current research on recruitment processes to OCTNs**. This is particularly true for the organised crime part, which is still underdeveloped respect to the research on terrorism and on the processes leading to radicalisation.

Thanks to secondary data made available by State Agencies, **innovative studies have allowed us to understand more about the past trajectories of criminals**. Their results have opened a discussion with policy makers on the lessons learnt from the past and on more effective policies to curb these criminals in the next future. These are also the questions that the Agent Based Modelling (ABMs) and Experiments processes will answer in the following months. The ultimate goal is **converting PROTON results into a Wizard** that will allow policy makers and LEAs to **understand more about the recruitment processes and to select the optimal policies against OCTNs and their use of cybercrime**. I now look at this entire process with great optimism. Let us wait for the opinion of the EU Commission and its Mid-term evaluation.

Ernesto Ugo Savona,
PROTON Scientific Coordinator

News from the PROTON project



Finalising the systematic review on risk factors for radicalization and recruitment to terrorism

PROTON partner [HUJI](#) presented the results of its **systematic review and meta-analysis on risk factors for radicalization and recruitment to terrorism at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) annual meeting** in Philadelphia, USA in November. The study, presented at a panel of the Campbell Collaboration, was well received, including by representatives of the Canadian intelligence services who were in attendance. HUJI also presented the results of T3.4 at the ASC and at a Cyber-security conference hosted by the Cyber-Security Research Center at HUJI.

Over the last few months, HUJI and the other WP2 partners have **finalized the results of their respective studies**. PROTON partners have also held a series of meetings to **further the development of the ABM for both Organized Crime and radicalization to terrorism**. In these meetings the partners developed the model implementation plans based on the inputs from the work package tasks and their results. The development of the models is progressing as planned and the base models' development is nearing completion.



Research on organized crime & terrorism in cyberspace

Within the framework of a systematic literature review, that should provide the directions for the technical work, data from various social media sources (YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Reddit) and propaganda magazines was collected, and the textual information was analyzed by means of natural language processing and psycho-linguistics.

With this approach, we were for example able to **identify clusters of personality traits amongst the publishers and commenters of videos related to Jihadism.**

Through a comparative analysis of the social media activities of 42 lone wolf terrorists with 42 non-violent radicals, **new insights into the development of radicalization could be gained and characteristic behavioral patterns could be identified.** Furthermore, the **links between the Darkweb and the visible web were quantified and identified** as signposts into the Darkweb, and an approach to measure analyze the social media activities of European outlaw motorcycle gangs was introduced.

The current work focuses on further analysis of the collected data, the collection of new data and the operationalization of the results to serve as input for the agent based simulation.



[Beyond the Godfather](#)

A new study is revealing the profile of modern mafia and scientifically testing possible policies to fight it

In the early 1990s, a series of initiatives were set about fighting organised crime on a European level. However, the [killing of “ndrangheta” members in the German city of Duisburg](#) in 2007 acted as a wake-up call. **Europe started to realise the mafia wasn’t just an Italian problem.**



[2018 starts with new collaborations and synergies for PROTON](#)

In early 2018 PROTON has joined different events and meetings, aimed at presenting its early results and improving relations with other projects and initiatives in the same area.

Recommended events



Security Forum 2018

2 - 3 May 2018 | Hagenberg im
Mühlkreis, Austria



The Stockholm Criminology Symposium

12 - 14 June 2018 | Stockholm,
Sweden



American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting

14 - 17 November 2018 | Atlanta,
USA



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