SHIELD

Solution to Enhance Interfaith Protection of Places of Worship from Terrorist Danger

D5.6
2nd SHIELD Workshop Report

2nd SHIELD Workshop Report

Project Details

Acronym: **SHIELD**

Title: solutionS to enHance Interfaith protEction of pLaces of worship from terrorist Danger

Coordinator: **SYNYO** (Austria)

Reference: 101034229

Type: ISFP-AG

Program: **European Union's Internal Security Fund — Police**

Theme: Solutions to enhance interfaith protection of places of worship from terrorist danger

Topic-ID: ISFP-2020-AG-PROTECT

Start: 03.01.2022 – 02.04.2024

Duration: 27 months

Website: www.shieldproject.eu

Consortium:

No	Participant Name	Short Name	Country
1	SYNYO GmbH	SYNYO	Austria
2	ZANASI ALESSANDRO SRL	Z&P	Italy
3	FUNDACJA OBSERWATORIUM SPOLECZNE	SOF	Poland
4	FUNDACION EUROARABE DE ALTOS ESTUDIOS	FUNDEA	Spain
5	INSTITUTUL INTERCULTURAL TIMISOARA	IIT	Romania
6	TECOMS SRL	TEC	Italy
7	SPIN SYSTEM	SPIN	Belgium
8	HOCHSCHULE FÜR DEN ÖFFENTLICHEN DIENST IN BAYERN	BayHfoD	Germany
9	MUNICÍPIO DO BARREIRO	MBAR	Portugal
10	EUROPE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION	EIA	Italy
11	INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM AND POLICY - EUROPE	ISGAP	Italy
12	EUROPEAN ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY	EOS	Belgium
13	POLSKIE TOWARZYSTWO OCENY TECHNOLOGII	PTOT	Poland
14	ITAPOL VIGILANZA SRL	ITLP	Italy
15	CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE DI RICERCA SISTEMICA	CIRS	Italy
16	FONDAZIONE AMICI DELLA CATTEDRALE DI NOVARA	FACN	Italy
17	GLAVNA DIREKTSIA NATSIONALNA POLITSIA	GDNP	Bulgaria
18	ORSZAGOS RABBIKEPZO ZSIDO EGYETEM	BUJS	Hungary

Deliverable Details

Number: **D5.6**

Title: **2nd SHIELD Workshop Report**

Lead beneficiary: Kristian Reeson (EOS) (Belgium)

Work package: WP5

Dissemination level: PU

Nature: Report (RE)

Due date: 02 April 2024

Submission date: **28 March 2024**

Authors:

Organisation	Author
EOS	Kristian REESON
EOS	Guillaume BRUMTER

Reviewers:

Reviewer n°	Organisation	Reviewer Name
1	CIRS	Laura CASERTA
2	MBAR	Rui TEIXEIRA

Version History:

Date	Version No.	Author	Notes	Pages (no.)
14/03/2024	0.1	Kristian REESON, Guillaume BRUMTER	n.a.	22
21/03/2024	0.2	Kristian REESON, Guillaume BRUMTER	n.a.	22
24/03/2024	0.3	Laura CASERTA, Rui TEIXEIRA	Review	21
27/03/2024	1.0	Kristian REESON, Guillaume BRUMTER	Final Version	20

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Executive Summary

The aim of the SHIELD project was to protect places of worship from the risks of violent extremism. In order to achieve this objective, the project improved the coordination, cooperation, and communication between EU public and private actors who can play a role in protecting places of worship. In particular, SHIELD gathered Christian, Jewish and Muslim organisations, security practitioners, LEAs, municipalities, experts in risk detection and technological partners to identify, for each religion, critical points in places of worship that are more subject to the risk of terrorist attacks.

The best practices and lessons learnt throughout the lifecycle of the project were collected in a tailored Handbook and presented and discussed during the 2nd SHIELD Workshop alongside the other project results, like the empirical findings and insights of the vulnerability assessments (WP2), the security recommendations (WP3) and created simulations (WP4).

The 2nd SHIELD Workshop, held on February 28, 2024, marked a significant milestone in the SHIELD project's mission to enhance the security of places of worship from terrorist threats. This workshop, as part of Task 5.3, aimed to increase the project's visibility, disseminate its activities and results, and foster new synergies with related projects and stakeholders. The event brought together security experts, policymakers, religious representatives, and stakeholders from across Europe, fulfilling the objectives outlined in the Grant Agreement.

The workshop featured insightful panel discussions, keynote speeches, and interactive sessions, providing valuable insights into the vulnerabilities, challenges, and innovative solutions regarding the security of places of worship. Participants engaged in fruitful exchanges, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing essential to address current and future security challenges.

Key outcomes of the workshop included a heightened awareness on potential security vulnerabilities, the importance of community involvement, and the role of innovative tools and methodologies in enhancing security preparedness. The event emphasized the significance of proactive measures, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement in safeguarding places of worship while preserving their sanctity.

Furthermore, the workshop facilitated networking opportunities and the creation of new synergies among sister projects and practitioners across Europe. It served as a platform for showcasing best practices, fostering interfaith dialogue, and promoting social cohesion and resilience in European communities.

In conclusion, the lessons learned from the 2nd SHIELD workshop will continue to guide efforts to ensure the protection of places of worship. By fostering collaboration, promoting innovative solutions, and emphasizing community involvement, the workshop has laid a solid foundation for enhancing the security and resilience of religious sites in Europe, contributing to the promotion of religious freedom and security for all.

Deliverable 5.6 "*2nd SHIELD workshop*" reflects the results of Task 5.3 "*Networking activities*", which has the objective to organize two workshops in order to share and disseminate the results of the project among relevant stakeholders, including EU policymakers.

The first of these workshops was organised in Rome on the 1st of December 2022 and was the focus of the prior deliverable 5.4 "*1st SHIELD workshop*". This deliverable, D5.6, provides a comprehensive overview of the organization and outcomes of the 2nd SHIELD Workshop, which took place in Brussels on the 28th of February 2024.

The report is structured into several sections to systematically present the various aspects of the workshop. Section 2 delves into the organisation and planning of the event. Following this, Section 3 provides context and elaborates on the workshop's objectives. Section 4 details the format and structure of the workshop, while Section 5 focuses on highlighting the participants involved. Moving forward, Section 6 delves into the outcomes derived from the panel discussions held during the workshop, offering insights into the key takeaways and conclusions. Lastly, Section 7 highlights the impact of the workshop and encapsulates the lessons learned from the event, emphasising its significance in advancing the objectives of the SHIELD project.

1. Introduction

This deliverable is the result of Task 5.3 "Networking activities", which focused on the organisation of two workshops, one halfway through the project in M12 and the second at the end of the project. This deliverable reports on the second workshop held in February 2024, which aimed at increasing the visibility of the project, enhancing the dissemination of its activities and results, and creating new synergies with related projects, the security community and further end users.

The participants represented a total of 73 security experts, policy makers, and religious representatives from across Europe as well as Law enforcement agencies.

As per the Grant Agreement (GA) SHIELD was set to conduct two workshops (either physical or virtual) at M12 and M22 of the project. The primary goals were to boost the project's visibility, enhance the dissemination of its activities and outcomes, and foster new collaborations, both within clusters and among EC-funded projects. Apart from consortium partners, the workshops included diverse participants, such as a representative from other major religions, representatives from DG HOME, experts in risk detection in public spaces, representatives from religious schools (one for each major religion), policymakers, security practitioners, and members of the general public, including representatives from civil society organisations, universities and practitioner networks.

The first workshop took place in M12 in December 2022 and was reported on in the deliverable 5.4. "*1st SHIELD Workshop*". The workshop was a success in its dissemination, networking, and team building goals. The second workshop was planned for M22 but as the project was extended, took place in February 2024, M26 of the project. This final event, the subject of the present deliverable, served as the concluding conference for the SHIELD project, and featured panel debates shining light on the project's outcomes. During this event, the SHIELD consortium also distributed a printed version of its Handbook, "*A concise and smart guide on the main outcomes and recommendations of the SHIELD project to support the protection of places of worship from terrorist danger*", which summarised the key findings and recommendations of the ISFP funded project.

The participation of practitioners and, in particular, sister projects is vital to create synergies across Europe. In order to ensure an in-person and diverse participation, the first workshop was held in one of the capitals of Europe and one of the religious capitals of the world: Rome. This allowed practitioners across Europe to participate and facilitated newspaper coverage of the event, further increasing visibility of the project.

This deliverable (D5.6) focusses on reporting the organisation and outcomes of the 2nd SHIELD Workshop held in Brussels on the 28.02.2024. The body sections of this report are structured in the following way:

- Section 2 reports on the organisation and planning of the event objectives of the workshop
- Section 3 reports on the context and objective
- Section 4 on the format and structure of the workshop
- Section 5 focusses on the participants
- Section 6 deals with the outcomes of the panel discussions
- Section 7 on the impact and lessons learned from the event

2. Organisation of the event

Regarding the present section, its purpose is to provide an overview of the organisation of the 2nd SHIELD workshop based on the conclusions and lessons learnt from the first workshop held in December 2022.

The organisation and planning of the 2nd SHIELD workshop was grounded in the experiences of the consortium, gained from its previous activities. As such, the experiences from the first workshop in Rome, were used to enhance the second workshop in Brussels. Thus, potential technical issues were addressed by investing in technical support and relying on the expertise of the Audio-Visual team the venue put us in contact with. Another essential lesson learned was recognising the importance of a less densely packed agenda. The multitude of sessions, speakers, and activities in the initial workshop led to oversaturation, leaving limited time for nuanced discussions and interactive engagement with the audience. To rectify this, the agenda for this final workshop allocated more time for each session. Furthermore, during the 4th Panel *The use of Simulations for Security Measures and Awareness*, the audience was split up into two groups for in-depth discussions on the presented topics, promoting interactive engagement and more fruitful conversations. A final lesson learned was the importance of simultaneous translation based on the needs of our audience. Due to the large number of Italian partners in the consortium, there were many Italian participants at the first SHIELD workshop and based on the registration numbers for the second conference, a similar number would be in attendance this time. As such, it was decided to provide simultaneous translation in Italian and English.

The entire consortium was involved in the organization of the 2nd SHIELD workshop in deciding who to invite, disseminating the invitations, and planning their respective panels. However, the partners more involved in the ideation and organisation of the event were the Task Leader EOS, the Project Coordinator SYNYO, and the Work Package Lead SPIN. Together they formed a task force that met weekly to discuss and plan the workshop. These meetings were essential in deciding on the agenda, determining the technical aspects needed, including finding and booking the venue, restaurant for the consortium dinner, hotel for the participants, Audio Visual assistance and translators etc. and ensured the timely and proper organisation of the event.

The agenda of the second SHIELD workshop was meticulously crafted to achieve a dual purpose: showcasing the tangible outcomes of the project while fostering vibrant discussion and exchange of ideas among participants. Structured around a panel format, each panel corresponded to a specific work package, providing a comprehensive overview of the project's multifaceted approach to safeguarding places of worship. By aligning panel discussions with distinct work packages, the agenda ensured a focused examination of key themes and initiatives, ranging from vulnerability assessments to innovative security solutions. This format not only allowed for the systematic presentation of project results but also encouraged active engagement from participants, who were invited to contribute their insights, perspectives, and challenges during interactive sessions. Through this dynamic agenda, the workshop effectively balanced the dissemination of the project findings with the opportunity for collaborative dialogue, enriching the discourse on protecting religious sites and laying the groundwork for future collaboration and innovation in the field.

3. Context and objectives

The second SHIELD workshop was centred within the context of the SHIELD project, that being the protection of places of worship from the dangers of terrorism. The workshop took place at the end of the project lifecycle and was a great occasion to display the results of the project whilst promoting further discussions on the topics examined.

As in its first iteration, the workshop's aim, as stipulated in the Grant Agreement (GA), was to increase the visibility of the project, enhance the dissemination of its activities and results, and create new synergies with clusters and EC-funded projects. Furthermore, the GA outlined precise targets for participant diversity, stipulating the inclusion of representatives from various religions beyond those explored in SHIELD: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; along with experts in risk detection, policymakers, and security practitioners. Achieving these objectives was crucial for the workshop's success, as it facilitated the involvement of a broad spectrum of knowledgeable practitioners from diverse organisations, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), and sister projects.

Their participation not only enhanced the workshop's effectiveness but also enabled SHIELD to forge synergies and foster collaboration with a wide array of cluster projects and stakeholders. The networking possibilities created by the workshop will allow for the creation of consortia to continue the work of SHIELD in further projects.

4. Format

The workshop was held between 9:00am and 5:00pm in hybrid format on the 28th of February 2024 at the *Hotel NH Collection Brussels Grand Sablon* in Brussels, Belgium. First, the participants upon arrival were asked to register and then take their seats.

The workshop began with a welcome and introduction by SYNYO, summarising the objectives of the SHIELD project. Following this, Tamara Muñoz, the Program Manager at the Directorate-General for Migrations and Home Affairs at the European Commission, delivered a keynote speech on the importance and benefit of SHIELD and the cluster of projects involved with the protection of places of worship, such as SOAR which aims to enhance protection at religious sites through the implementation of a 'security by design' concept, along with innovative communication approaches and training programs to increase awareness and response capacity to physical security threats; SHRINEs which focuses on improving security and safety at places of worship while fostering an interfaith network and promoting innovative solutions against current and emerging threats; and SPIRIT, which seeks to bridge the gap in vulnerability assessment tools by incorporating advanced technological features, aiming to enhance preparedness and response capabilities at places of worship and religious gatherings through a holistic and integrated toolbox of modern technological solutions and security best practices.

Throughout the day, participants engaged in panel discussions covering various aspects of safeguarding places of worship. The first panel, moderated by Alessandro Marani from Zanasi & Partners, focused on the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by places of worship. The panellists were Gabor Werner from Budapest University of Jewish Studies, Massimo Cozzolino from the Europe Islamic Association, and Edoardo Mattiello from the Fondazione Amici della Cattedrale di Novara. These panellists leveraged their expertise in the field and their different religious backgrounds, as well as their experiences in the SHIELD project to address topics concerning common threats to places of worship, implementing security measures without disrupting the open and inclusive nature of places of worship, community involvement, and the impact of geopolitical tensions on the safety and security of holy places.

Following a coffee break, the workshop reconvened with a keynote speech by Giacomo Zarfati – the National Security Coordinator of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities who stated that ensuring that security measures, even the most technologically advanced, respect the privacy of the faithful and the rituality of religious practices is a priority for us. Minimum safety standards must be able to be guaranteed to all religious communities, even the smallest. To do this, the support of the European Commission and targeted European calls are needed, not only for Jewish sacred places, but for all places of worship. The following 2nd Panel on the topic of *Solutions and Responses to Potential Threats to Places of Worship* was moderated by Kristian Reeson from the European Organization for Security. The panellists were Patrich Antonello, the Vice commander of the Local Police of Treviso, in Italy and Dr. Patrícia Villas–Boas, the Deputy of the Security Team of World Youth Journey on August 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal. The panel examined the topics of prevention strategies, rapid response, risk assessments, and balancing security measures with openness.

After lunch, the third panel on the topic of *Enhancing the Security of Places of Worship: Insights from the sister projects* took place. The session was moderated by Niklas Hamann, from SYNYO – the project coordinator. The panellists were conference attendees from sister projects involved in the protection

of places of worship: Kaashif Awan from the SOAR project, Victoria Tokatzian representing the SHRINEs project, Marcin Podogrocki from PROSPERES, and Androniki Tsatsouli from SPIRIT. The panel focussed on the main threats and vulnerabilities faced by places of worship, improving awareness and response, and the roles, impact, and sustainability of their respective projects.

Subsequently, the fourth panel on *The Use of Simulations for Security Measures and Awareness*, moderated by Calin Rus, from the Intercultural Institute Timisoara. The panellists were Jose Martinez, representing the Murcia Local Police from Spain; Qamar Fazal from the Ahmadi Mission of Islam in Spain; and Massimo Cozzolino from the Europe Islamic Association. The panel, unlike the previous sessions throughout the day, allowed for break-out discussions as the participants were divided into two groups: one exploring the use of simulations to train LEAs and in preparing preventive measures and intervention plans; the other for religious communities, delving into the use of simulations to raise awareness on best practices of preventative security measures and preparedness in the event of a terrorist attack. At the end of the panel the groups reconvened to display their findings: commenting on the usefulness of the SHIELD project outcomes in training and raising awareness procedures.

The fifth panel: *The SHIELD Handbook and the Future Challenges in Safeguard and Resilience of Places of Worship*, moderated by Luca Guglielminetti from Spin System, centred on the SHIELD Handbook and future challenges in safeguarding places of worship. The panellists were Alessandro Marani from Zanasi & Partners; Carlo Fidanza of the EU Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religion Tolerance; Alessandro Calcagno the Assistant General Secretary from the Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE). The panellists discussed collaboration among stakeholders, gaps in awareness and expertise, and strategies to mitigate conflicts' impact on religious communities and interfaith dialogue.

The workshop concluded with closing remarks, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration and proactive measures in safeguarding places of worship. Overall, the event provided valuable insights and fostered dialogue essential for addressing current and future security challenges facing religious communities. The SHIELD Workshop served as a platform for stakeholders to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and forge partnerships aimed at enhancing the resilience and security of places of worship across Europe.

Figure 1: Agenda of the workshop.

SHIELD Final Conference – AGENDA
Wednesday 28th February 2024

Time		
8:45 - 9:00	Registration and welcome coffee	
09:00 - 09:15	Welcome and introduction of SHIELD	*Niklas Hamman*, SYNYO - SHIELD Coordinator
9:15 - 9:45	Keynote speech on security in places of worship	
9:45 - 10:45	1st Panel: Vulnerabilities and Challenges of Places of Worship	<u>Chair:</u> • *Alessandro Marani*, Zanasi & Partners <u>Panelists:</u> • *Gabor Werner*, Budapest University of Jewish Studies • *Massimo Cozzolino*, Europe Islamic Association • *Edoardo Mattiello*, Fondazione Amici della Cattedrale di Novara • *Giacomo Zarfati*, Centro Internazionale di Ricerca Sistemica – National Security Coodinator of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities
10:45 - 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 - 12:00	2nd Panel: Solutions and responses to potential threats on Places of Worship	<u>Chair:</u> • *Kristian Reeson*, European Organisation for Security <u>Panelists:</u> • *Patrich Antonelli*, Vice-Commander of the Local Police of Treviso, Italy • *Patricia Villas-Boas*, Deputy of Security Team of World Youth Journey on August 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal • *Alexander Van Leuven*, KU Leuven University
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch break	
13:30 - 14:30	3rd Panel: Enhancing the Security of Places of Worship: Insights from the Sister Projects	<u>Chair:</u> • *Niklas Hamann*, SYNYO <u>Panelists:</u> • *Kaashif Awan*, SOAR project • *Marcin Podogrocki*, PROSPERES project • *Victoria Tokatzian*, SHRINES project • *Androniki Tsatsouli*, SPIRIT Project
14:30 - 15:30	4th Panel: The use of Simulations for Security Measures and Awareness	<u>Chair:</u> • *Calin Rus*, Institutul Intercultural Timişoara <u>Panelists:</u> • *Jose Martínez*, Murcia Local Police, Spain • *Qamar Fazal*, Ahmadi Mission of Islam in Spain • *Massimo Cozzolino*, Europe Islamic Association
15:30 - 15:45	Coffee break	
15:45 - 16:45	5th Panel: The SHIELD Handbook and the future challenges in safeguard and resilience of places of worship	<u>Chair:</u> • *Luca Guglielminetti*, Spin System <u>Panelists:</u> • *Alessandro Marani*, Zanasi & Partners • *Carlo Fidanza*, EU Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religious Tolerance • *Alessandro Calcagno*, Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) • *Elena Ghibaudo*, International Cooperation and European Projects at ANCI Piemonte, Italy
16:45 - 17:00	Closing remarks and farewell	

5. Participants

The Grant Agreement of the SHIELD project had some specific criteria for the participants to this workshop. The GA indicates that at least 1 representative from another major religion, 2 representatives on behalf of DG HOME, 2 experts of risk detection in public spaces, 3 representatives of religious schools (one for each religion), 3 policymakers, 5 security practitioners and 15 members of the general public should participate in the workshop. Furthermore, sister projects should also be invited to participate.

To this purpose, 73 people attended the workshop, including:

- 1 representative from each religion involved in the SHIELD project: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity
- Several representatives of other religions, such as from the St Paul's Anglican Church or the Romanian Orthodox Church amongst others
- Policy makers, such as from DG HOME as well as local governments
- Several security experts, including those with OSINT, counterterrorism, and police backgrounds, such as from the Guardia di Finanza in Italy, Carabineieri, the Timis County Prefect Office, the Gendarmerie - Specialised Operations and Combating Terrorism General Directorate, and the MURCIA Police department from Spain
- Representatives from the sister projects: SOAR, SHRINES, PROSPERES and SPIRIT

Figure 2: Participant Organisations to the SHIELD 2nd Workshop

No.	Nationality	Which organisation type do you belong to?
1	Hungarian	Religious representative
2	Romanian	Religious representative
3	Poland	LEAs
4	Italian	Network
5	British & Belgian	Religious representative
6	Italian	Research Organisation
7	Belgian	Religious representative
8	Poland	NGO; Academia & Research
9	Greek	Sister Project / Public Research Organisation
10	English	Sister Project; Research Organisation
11	Italian	Sister Project / Research Organisation
12	Spanish	Academia & Research
13	Polish	Religious representative
14	Polish	Academia & Research
15	Romanian	NGO
16	Italy	NGO
17	Italy	Law Enforcement agency (LEA)
18	Hungary	Religious representative
19	German	Academia & Research
20	Spanish	LEAs
21	Romanian	LEAs
22	Romania	NGO
23	Romania	Religious representative
24	Romania	Local Government

25	Romania	Local Government
26	Romania	NGO
27	Polish	Academia & Research
28	Polish	NGO; Academia & Research
29	Italy	NGO
30	Hungarian	Academia & Research
31	Italian	Religious representative
32	Italian	Academia & Research
33	Italian	General Industry; Academia & Research
34	Italian	General Industry
35	Belgian	General Industry
36	Bulgarian	LEAs
37	Bulgarian	LEAs
38	French	General Industry
39	Italian	Religious representative
40	Italian	LEAs
41	Italian	Religious representative
42	Italian	Religious representative
43	German	Academia & Research; SME
44	Portuguese	Local Government
45	Italia	LEAs
46	Italia	SME
47	Brazilian	SME
48	Bulgarian	Academia & Research
49	Italian	Network
50	Portuguese	Military
51	Italian	NGOs
52	Italian	General industry
53	Polish	Academia & Research
54	French	General industry
55	Spanish	Religious Representative
56	Italian	Academia & Research
57	Portuguese	Academia & Research
58	Italian	Academia & Research
59	Polish	Religious Representative
60	Italy	Academia & Research
61	Italy	NGOs
62	Austria	Academia & Research
63	Portuguese	LEAs
64	Italian	NGOs
65	Romanian	NGOs
66	Spain	Academia & Research
67	Ukrainian	General Industry
68	Spanish	Religious representative
69	Romania	Religious representative
70	Italian	Religious representative
71	Italian	LEAs
72	Spanish	EC
73	Italian	General industry

Therefore, the project fulfilled the participant criteria and diversity in the audience allowed for a great sharing of knowledge among practitioners and policy makers from all over Europe.

Figure 3: Group picture at the Workshop

6. Panel discussion outcomes

Panel 1: Vulnerabilities and Challenges of Places of Worship

The first panel delved into the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by places of worship, providing valuable insights into the types of threats commonly encountered and trends observed in attacks. Gábor Werner of Budapest University of Jewish Studies shed light on the prevalent threats and operational procedures, while Massimo Cozzolino from the Europe Islamic Association explored strategies for enhancing security measures while preserving the sanctity of these spaces. Edoardo Mattiello of Fondazione Amici della Cattedrale di Novara discussed the importance of community involvement in protecting places of worship and mitigating risks effectively. Discussions also touched upon the role of law enforcement agencies and governmental administration in bolstering security measures, as well as promoting collaboration between different religious communities for mutual protection. Furthermore, the panel addressed the potential impact of geopolitical tensions on security dynamics, emphasizing the need for proactive measures and cooperation in mitigating risks effectively.

Panel 2: Solutions and Responses to Potential Threats to Places of Worship

The second panel focused on exploring solutions and responses to potential threats faced by places of worship, providing insights into proactive measures, rapid response strategies, risk assessment methodologies, and the delicate balance between security and openness. Patrich Antonello, Vice Commander of the Local Police of Treviso, Italy, shared perspectives on preventive measures and operational processes, highlighting the importance of collaboration between law enforcement agencies and religious representatives. Dr. Patricia Villas-Boas, Deputy of the Security Team of World Youth Journey on August 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal, discussed the importance of risk assessment in identifying vulnerabilities and potential threats, emphasizing the need for effective strategies to maintain a welcoming environment while ensuring robust security measures. Discussions also explored the role of technology and innovation in enhancing security measures and facilitating rapid response to security threats.

Panel 3: Enhancing the Security of Places of Worship: Insights from the Sister Projects

The third panel showcased insights from sister projects, including SOAR, PROSPERES, SHRINEs, and SPIRIT, on enhancing the security of places of worship. Panellists discussed the main threats and vulnerabilities faced by religious communities, strategies to improve awareness and response to these threats, and the contribution of their projects to a comprehensive European strategy for fostering security. Discussions also highlighted the importance of fostering a culture of security and trust among religious communities and wider society, as well as ensuring the long-term sustainability of project results. Furthermore, panellists shared experiences of addressing social issues related to the protection of places of worship and promoting collaboration with other EU-funded projects to maximise synergies and enhance collective efforts in safeguarding these sacred spaces.

Panel 4: The use of Simulations for Security Measures and Awareness.

During the fourth panel, moderated by Calin Rus from the Intercultural Institute Timisoara, discussions centred on the utilisation of simulations for enhancing security measures and raising awareness among religious communities. Divided into two groups led by the panellists, the participants explored distinct yet interrelated questions. Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) deliberated on the practical applications of simulations in training LEA staff, devising preventive measures, and formulating intervention plans. Led by Jose Martinez from Murcia Local Police, Spain, and Qamar Fazal from the Ahmadi Mission of Islam in Spain, this group delved into the intricacies of simulation-based training for LEAs. Conversely, religious communities, under the guidance of Massimo Cozzolino from the Europe Islamic Association, focused on leveraging simulations to disseminate awareness about the significance of preventive security measures and fostering preparedness in the event of an attack. These discussions underscored the importance of proactive approaches in addressing security challenges and promoting collaboration between stakeholders in safeguarding places of worship.

Panel 5: The SHIELD Handbook and the Future Challenges in Safeguard and Resilience of Places of Worship

In the fifth panel, moderated by Luca Guglielminetti from Spin System, discussions revolved around the SHIELD Handbook and future challenges in safeguarding and enhancing the resilience of places of worship. The panellists, including Alessandro Marani from Zanasi & Partners, Carlo Fidanza from the EU Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Religion Tolerance, Alessandro Calcagno from the Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), engaged in an insightful dialogue addressing pressing issues. They deliberated on the actual and future challenges faced in collaborating among stakeholders at the local level, particularly in protecting urban spaces and places of worship. The panellists identified gaps in awareness, knowledge, and expertise and proposed strategies to address these deficiencies. Moreover, the discussion explored the potential impact of conflicts in the Middle East on religious communities and interfaith dialogue in Europe, highlighting the need to mitigate polarisation among communities and ensure social cohesion and resilience. The panel concluded with a call for continued dialogue, collaboration, and proactive measures to address these challenges and foster a safe and inclusive environment for all communities.

7. Impact and lessons learned

The workshop was a success as it was a great opportunity to disseminate the results achieved by the SHIELD project. In particular, the conference was able to shine light on the Handbook – a manual of sorts including best practices and recommendations of the SHIELD project for the protection of places of worship. The workshop also provided a great opportunity for networking and involving external stakeholders with whom to create synergies within current and future projects, building on the results of SHIELD.

The workshop achieved its objective of improving the visibility of the project by organising the workshop and inviting stakeholders from across Europe. Furthermore, the workshop allowed SHIELD to increase its outreach via the publishing of articles concerning the workshop and project in newspapers, such as *la Repubblica*, which has nationwide circulation in Italy. The workshop also achieved its second aim of enhancing the dissemination of its activities and results through presenting the results achieved, including the Handbook. Finally, the workshop was able to create new synergies among sister projects and practitioners across Europe.

The workshop was also impactful as an important event of interfaith dialogue demonstrating that even in the current heightened climate it is possible to come together to discuss the protection of places of worship – a matter that affects us all.

The 2nd SHIELD workshop had significant impact and yielded valuable lessons for all participants involved. One key impact was the heightened awareness and understanding of the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by places of worship across different religious communities. Through engaging panel discussions and keynote speeches, participants gained insights into the various types of threats and risks posed to these sacred spaces, as well as the potential strategies for enhancing their security while preserving their sanctity.

Moreover, the workshop facilitated fruitful exchanges among experts, policymakers, and practitioners from diverse backgrounds, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. This collaboration is crucial for developing comprehensive and effective approaches to safeguarding places of worship. Additionally, the workshop highlighted the importance of community involvement and the role of religious leaders in protecting these sites, emphasising the need for multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement.

Furthermore, the event served as a platform for showcasing innovative tools and methodologies, such as simulations for security measures and risk assessments, demonstrating their potential to enhance preparedness and response capabilities. Overall, the workshop underscored the significance of proactive measures, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement in addressing the evolving security challenges faced by places of worship. The lessons learned from the event will undoubtedly inform future initiatives and contribute to the ongoing efforts to promote religious freedom and security for all.

8. Conclusion

The second SHIELD Workshop, held on February 28, 2024, served as a pivotal platform for advancing the discourse on the security of places of worship. As part of Task 5.3, this workshop played a crucial role in achieving the project's objectives outlined in the Grant Agreement. By bringing together security experts, policymakers, religious representatives, and stakeholders from across Europe, the workshop effectively increased the visibility of the SHIELD project and disseminated its activities and results.

Through insightful panel discussions, keynote speeches, and interactive sessions, participants gained valuable insights into the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by places of worship. The discussions also explored innovative solutions and responses to potential threats, ranging from preventive measures to rapid response strategies. Importantly, the workshop fostered collaboration and knowledge-sharing among diverse stakeholders, paving the way for future synergies and partnerships.

One of the key outcomes of the workshop was the recognition of the importance of community involvement, interdisciplinary collaboration, and proactive measures in safeguarding places of worship. Participants emphasized the need for religious communities to be actively engaged in security efforts, working hand in hand with law enforcement agencies and policymakers. This collaborative approach is essential for creating a comprehensive and effective security framework that respects the sanctity of religious spaces while ensuring their protection from threats.

Furthermore, the workshop highlighted the role of innovative tools and methodologies in enhancing security preparedness and response capabilities. Discussions centred around the use of technology, such as simulations and advanced risk assessment techniques, to identify vulnerabilities and mitigate risks effectively. By promoting dialogue and raising awareness about these tools, the workshop contributed to the promotion of religious freedom, social cohesion, and resilience in European communities.

In conclusion, the lessons learned from the 2nd SHIELD workshop will continue to inform and guide efforts to ensure the protection of places of worship. By fostering collaboration, promoting innovative solutions, and emphasising community involvement, the workshop has laid the foundation for a holistic approach to safeguarding religious sites in Europe.

9. Bibliography

SHIELD D5.4 *1ST SHIELD Workshop Report*

Guglielminetti, L., Marani, A., *Protecting Places of Worship from Violence and Terrorist Danger: A Quick Guide for Local Stakeholders and Practitioners*