

## Problems with PREVENT

1. The current strategy lacks empirical evidence to justify its focus upon religion and theology over more relevant and influential factors, such as socio-economic backgrounds or political disaffection.
2. In September 2016, over 140 experts attacked PREVENT's Extremism Risk Guidance 22+ in an open letter to the Government.<sup>1</sup>
3. PREVENT has caused widespread alienation and mistrust amongst Muslim communities<sup>2</sup> for conflating religion with extremism and attempting to seemingly gather intelligence on Muslim communities through individuals embedded in local services.<sup>3</sup>

**In 2010 the installation of 218 CCTV cameras in Muslim areas of Birmingham - 72 of them hidden – were partly funded by Home Office counter-terrorism funds.<sup>4</sup>**

4. Almost 70% of Channel referrals have been made through the education sector. Therefore, there are serious issues of teachers being turned into spies and the subsequent impact of schools compromising the learning environment.<sup>5</sup>

**In January 2016, a four-year-old drew a picture of a cucumber while at nursery, and told staff it was a “cuker-bum”. The staff, believing he was referring to a “cooker bomb”, told the child’s mother that he was being referred to Channel, and might be taken away from her.<sup>6</sup>**

5. The strategy serves to create a ‘pre-criminal space’ wherein innocent individuals are treated with suspicion of probable crimes.<sup>7</sup>
6. 80% of Channel referrals prove unwarranted and thus only serve to stigmatize and victimize individuals.<sup>8</sup>
7. The use of PREVENT within university settings is a curtailment of academic freedoms enshrined in the Education (No 2) Act 1986

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<sup>1</sup> Alice Ross, "Academics criticise anti-radicalisation strategy in open letter," The Guardian, September 28, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/sep/29/academics-criticise-prevent-anti-radicalisation-strategy-open-letter>.

<sup>2</sup> "Eroding Trust: The UK's Prevent Counter-Extremism Strategy in Health and Education," Open Society Foundations, accessed April 12, 2017, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/eroding-trust-uk-s-prevent-counter-extremism-strategy-health-and-education>.

<sup>3</sup> Randeep Ramesh, "Prevent programme 'spying on our young people', say east London imams," The Guardian, December 06, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/dec/06/east-london-muslims-prevent-strategy>.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Lewis, "Surveillance cameras in Birmingham track Muslims' every move," The Guardian, June 04, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/jun/04/surveillance-cameras-birmingham-muslims>.

<sup>5</sup> "Eroding Trust: The UK's Prevent Counter-Extremism Strategy in Health and Education," Open Society Foundations, accessed April 12, 2017, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/eroding-trust-uk-s-prevent-counter-extremism-strategy-health-and-education>.

<sup>6</sup> Tal Fox, "Four-year-old who mispronounced 'cucumber' as 'cooker bomb' faced terror warnings, family say," The Independent, March 12, 2016, , <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/four-year-old-raises-concerns-of-radicalisation-after-pronouncing-cucumber-as-cooker-bomb-a6927341.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Rob Price, "When my school received Prevent counter-terrorism training, the only objectors were white. That says it all," The Independent, March 29, 2016, , <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/when-my-school-received-counter-terrorism-prevent-training-the-only-objectors-were-white-that-says-a6957916.html>.

<sup>8</sup> ""Five children a day" referred to Channel," MEND, June 21, 2016, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://mend.org.uk/five-children-day-referred-channel/>.