

YOUTH WORK AGAINST VIOLENT RADICALISATION

Theory, concepts and primary
prevention in practice



Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



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Theory, concepts and primary
prevention in practice

Authors:

Miguel Angel García López

Lana Pašić

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
A word on language	7
INTRODUCTION	8
Background	8
The role of youth work	10
Study aims and objectives	12
UNDERSTANDING RADICALISATION LEADING TO VIOLENCE	14
Elements for a “definition”	14
Forms and manifestations	16
Influencing factors	17
A WORD OF CAUTION	21
Trajectories and steps of radicalisation leading to violence	22
INSPIRING PRACTICES	26
Overview	27
Peer education	29
Online campaigns and digital media	37
Co-operation with other stakeholders	45
Providing opportunities	51
Education and training	59
LESSONS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS	69
Lessons for prevention	69
Next steps: challenges and needs of youth work in preventing violent radicalisation	73
Conclusions	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78
ANNEX I	81

Executive summary

Youth radicalisation and the associated use of violence have become a growing issue of concern in Europe and its neighbouring regions. There has been a notable increase in hate speech, incidence of hate crimes and attacks on migrants and refugees, propaganda and violent xenophobia, as well as a rise in religious and political extremism and in terrorist attacks in Europe and its neighbouring regions. All of these emerging concerns have highlighted the need to work with young people in order to identify and address the root causes of extremism and prevent their radicalisation, as well as strengthen young people's resilience, prevent marginalisation, promote equality, emphasise alternatives and reinforce the cohesion of communities in which they live.

In order to determine and illustrate the role of youth work in this regard, the SALTO EuroMed, SALTO EECA, SALTO SEE, the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth have come together in 2017 to research and showcase positive ways and initiatives in which violent radicalisation of young people can be addressed and prevented, and examine how we can strengthen the role of different actors and communities in the countries that signed the European Cultural Convention and in the countries in the Southern Mediterranean region.¹ As a result, this study presents ways in which youth work prevents radicalisation leading to violence. It also identifies inspiring youth work practices, as well as the needs and challenges youth work faces.

1. For the Erasmus+ programme, this translates into the programme countries and neighbouring regions: the Western Balkans, the Russian Federation, the Eastern Partnership countries and the Southern Mediterranean.

“Violent radicalisation” or “radicalisation leading to violence” is defined as the process of adopting an extremist belief system – including the intent to use, encourage or facilitate violence – in order to promote an ideology, a political project or a cause as a means of social transformation. The research identifies individual, relational, community and macro-systemic factors, as well as opportunities and trajectories, which may turn young people towards radicalisation and the use of violence, but it is important to note that each process of radicalisation leading to violence is unique and different, and it is not possible to create “checklists” for identifying youth prone to violent radicalisation. There are also different trajectories or steps young people go through in their radicalisation process. This research uses the Moghaddam model of six steps to explain the process of radicalisation:

- ▶ ground floor: psychological interpretation of the material and social conditions
- ▶ first floor: options envisaged against the unfair treatment
- ▶ second floor: aggression
- ▶ third floor: moral commitment
- ▶ fourth floor: categorical thinking and legitimacy of the violent group or organisation – recruitment
- ▶ fifth floor: the violent act and the mechanisms of inhibition.

The youth sector cannot be the panacea to violent radicalisation. However, youth work can, together with education and other sectors, play a role in preventing it in the early stages. It can do so, for example, by:

- ▶ empowering young people to have a greater degree of autonomy, self-determination and control over their lives in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible way;
- ▶ supporting young people to deal with challenges they face;
- ▶ strengthening young people’s resilience to violent ideologies by developing their critical thinking and helping them recognise the harm violence can cause to them and their communities.

The 20 practices included in this research offer different perspectives on how diverse youth work approaches and methods can shape young people’s attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. These practices are grouped in five categories: **peer education**; **online campaigns and digital media**; **co-operation with other stakeholders**; **providing opportunities**; and **education and training**. While all the practices presented here use more than one approach in the prevention of violent radicalisation, the grouping serves to showcase the

interdisciplinary nature of the work, and a variety of approaches, activities and frameworks that youth workers use in their everyday activities.

Based on these practices, and on the outcomes from the conference “Youth work against violent radicalisation” organised in Malta in November 2017, several findings, lessons, needs and challenges relevant for youth work have been identified.

The key challenges and needs identified relate to the recognition of the limited impact of youth work within the wider social, political and economic context, the lack of in-depth understanding of the phenomena of violent radicalisation, need for further training and networking, the necessity of devising new approaches to working on the topic, the practical challenges regarding the implementation of preventive activities and the need for improving the impact of current practices as inspiration for further work.

Some of the most important lessons and conclusions for prevention and multiplication are as follows:

- ▶ Take a holistic approach to preventing violent radicalisation, linked to intercultural education, human rights, peace education, media literacy, citizenship education etc.
- ▶ Peer-horizontal, trust-based and non-hierarchical relations allow for easier confrontation with sensitive and personal issues.
- ▶ Building partnerships with other community actors is crucial in transferring the values of youth work to the entire community.
- ▶ Empower young people and develop their competences, which will give them more opportunities and better future perspectives in their personal and professional lives.
- ▶ Provide young people with alternatives and role models.
- ▶ Deal explicitly with messages inciting violence and hate speech, by developing young people’s critical thinking and being open and honest with young people.

A WORD ON LANGUAGE

The terms “violent radicalisation” and “radicalisation leading to violence” are used interchangeably to mean the process of radicalisation of youth which may result in young people resorting to the use of violence to pursue their ideas, beliefs and goals.

Introduction

There are more than 1.2 billion young people (aged 15-24) (United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs 2015) in the world today with about 89 million youth (aged 15-29) (EuroStat 2015) in the countries of the European Union. Young people are influenced by constant changes in global social and economic realities, and several of them experience poverty, exclusion, inequality and marginalisation. Their personal circumstances and the wider political, social and economic environment in which they live may make them vulnerable to various radical influences, including radicalisation leading to violence. The realities of this emerging phenomenon make it necessary to emphasise the need to work with young people in Europe and its neighbouring regions in order to strengthen their resilience to radicalisation leading to violence, prevent marginalisation, promote equality, emphasise alternatives and reinforce the openness and inclusiveness of communities in which they live.

In order to determine and illustrate the role of youth work in this regard, the SALTO EuroMed, SALTO EECA, SALTO SEE, the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth came together in 2017 to research and showcase positive ways and initiatives in which violent radicalisation of young people can be addressed and prevented, and examine how to strengthen the role of different actors in this process.

BACKGROUND

Youth radicalisation and the associated use of violence has become a growing issue of concern in Europe and its neighbouring regions. There has been a notable increase in hate speech, incidence of hate crimes and attacks on migrants and refugees, propaganda and violent xenophobia, as well as a rise in religious and political extremism and in terrorist attacks in Europe and its neighbouring regions.

While on one hand, religious radicalisation of young people born and raised in Europe has been on the rise, particularly in countries such as France, Belgium and Germany as well as in the countries of the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean, on the other hand, we are also witnessing a parallel development of right-wing radicalisation in these same countries, but also in Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation. It is important to recognise and emphasise that different types of radicalisation often co-exist and feed into each other.

All of these emerging concerns have highlighted the urgent need to work with young people, in order to identify and address the root causes of extremism and prevent their radicalisation. Radicalisation is a process through which young people start to accept and support changes in society which are against the existing order (European Union 2017), while the term “violent radicalisation” or “radicalisation leading to violence” refers to the process of adopting an extremist belief system – including the intent to use, encourage or facilitate violence – in order to promote an ideology, a political project or a cause as a means of social transformation (Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence 2016). There are different individual, relational, community and macro-systemic factors, as well as opportunities and trajectories, which may turn young people towards radicalisation and the use of violence. Violent radicalisation may occur as young people are influenced by ethnocentric or other ideologies and societal influences, or if they face social exclusion and marginalisation for various reasons, including, but not limited to, broader political context in their countries and the world, poverty, unemployment and underemployment, disability, lack of education, racism, discrimination due to ethnicity, origin, religion, sexual orientation etc., and their resulting questioning of their social, national and ethnic identity, and feelings of injustice and frustration due to limited opportunities.

Radicalisation leading to violence of young people has an impact on their wellbeing, as well as on the wellbeing and stability of their communities and the entire world, as it challenges the democratic values of society. The threat of this type of radicalisation needs to be recognised and prevented through early interventions, which can help increase young people’s resilience to extremism and the use of violence. Some of the ways to work with young people to address these challenges include positive development of their identity through education and training, social networks – parents, families, peers and community, promotion of social cohesion, stability, safe, positive and socially inclusive environments and provision of learning and development opportunities. Youth work, through its values and practices, represents also a means of supporting young people’s inclusion and participation in society. Although the youth sector cannot be the panacea to violent radicalisation,

youth work can, together with the education and other sectors, play a key role in preventing it in the early stages by supporting young people's development, promoting democratic principles, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue and inclusion, and helping youth become active citizens in society.

THE ROLE OF YOUTH WORK

There are various ways in which youth workers, NGOs, community centres, institutions, religious leaders and other civil society actors have been addressing the issue of youth radicalisation by focusing on increasing young people's resilience to radical influences which may bring harm to youth and society, through various youth work activities.

Youth work consists of a range of social, cultural, educational, political and sports-related activities which are carried out with, by and for young people through non-formal and informal learning. It is conducted in a frame of leisure-time activities which take place in different forms and settings, such as group-based, programme-based, outreach or detached,² at local, regional, national and European level. These activities can be managed and organised by youth-led organisations, organisations for youth, informal groups and youth services and public authorities (European Union 2017).

While all youth work activities are aimed at empowering and supporting young people, this study focuses on those activities and initiatives aimed at increasing the resilience of young people and preventing the process of radicalisation leading to violence, in order to support young people in understanding, critically analysing and eventually resisting radical ideologies and rejecting violence.

Youth work is particularly important in this regard as one of the instruments against radicalisation leading to violence, as young people are susceptible to various influences during the critical stage of adolescence, and if they perceive themselves as victims of discrimination, social exclusion or marginalisation, they are more at risk of recruitment from radical ideologies. Since the role and mission of youth work is to focus on young people's lives, and contribute to their general long-term development and well-being, youth work's concern with this topic is just an extension of general youth work, aimed at youth

2. "Detached youth work is a form of street-based youth work which operates without the use of a centre and takes place where young people are both geographically and developmentally. It aims to make contact on the streets with those "hard to reach" or "unattached" young people" (European Union 2017).

empowerment and community cohesion, but with a specific focus on addressing the questions and concerns that arise from this new context.

Youth work can make an important difference by focusing on:

- ▶ empowering youth to have a greater degree of autonomy, self-determination and control over their lives in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible way;
- ▶ supporting youth to deal with challenges they face;
- ▶ strengthening young people's resilience to violent ideologies by developing their critical thinking and helping them recognise the harm violence can cause to them and their communities.

In this regard, youth workers may work on development of young people's life skills, critical thinking, intercultural competences, active citizenship, and promotion of diversity, common values of freedom and tolerance through non-formal and informal learning, as emphasised through the Paris Declaration (European Union 2015). Youth work may also provide safe spaces for discussions, approaching controversial topics, questions and opportunities for young people's engagement, allowing them to openly and honestly raise questions and jointly discuss the dangers of violent radicalisation and myths of radical ideologies. The invaluable contribution of youth work in reaching out to young people vulnerable to radicalisation leading to violence has also been stressed in the European Council Conclusions on the role of the youth sector in an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to preventing and combating radicalisation leading to violence of young people (Council of the European Union 2016), the Communication from the European Commission on supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence (European Commission 2016) and the Action Plan by the Council of Europe "The fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism" (Council of Europe 2015).

However, it is important to note here that the issue of violent radicalisation has also raised new challenges and moral dilemmas for youth work. The radicalisation narrative originates in the work of security agencies, and any work on the topic is ultimately linked with the police, intelligence and security apparatus, which presents the question whether youth workers and educators, such as teachers, have a role to play in this system. In certain countries, educators were asked to report behaviours which could indicate violent radicalisation. This raises the risk of educators being engaged in new roles related to security which may be at odds with their main role in society, which is to support young people's learning and development. This dual role, in which youth workers need to balance between the young people and security agencies, puts them also at risk of becoming agents facilitating social control and losing contact and

trust with youth (Ragazzi 2017). While this study does not analyse this possible tension, we would like to mention it as unresolved and a current debate.

Finally, although youth work is crucial in supporting young people in their transition from adolescence to adulthood and their successful social inclusion, there is a continuous need to emphasise the limits of youth work and the importance of cross-sectoral co-operation at national, regional and local levels. Regarding the theme of this report, the role of youth work in supporting and empowering young people must be seen as contributing to a wider effort by different stakeholders, including families, peers, schools, public institutions and the wider community, including the role of the internet.

STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to present how youth work can make a contribution to counteracting radicalisation leading to violence, and examine how youth work and other actors can increase the resilience of young people and communities in countries that signed the European Cultural Convention and in the countries in the Southern Mediterranean region.

The objectives are to:

- ▶ contribute to the development of a shared understanding of violent radicalisation and different cultural, political and social reasons for its development and uptake by young people;
- ▶ map and highlight youth work examples that prevent or tackle radicalisation, by dealing with root causes, bias and prejudices.

Achievements and inspiring examples, projects, initiatives and long-term processes by NGOs and institutions are presented, keeping in mind their potential for transferability.

The study also draws lessons, conclusions and recommendations regarding the needs and challenges of youth work. It also discussed the implications for the required skills and competences of youth workers, the need for a holistic approach, wider cross-sectoral co-operation, and the limits of youth work.

The focus of this study is on the role that youth work can play in empowering young people to resist the lure of radical influences and violence in the early stages. On the one hand, youth work can strengthen the resilience of young people as well as communities. On the other hand, youth work can also strengthen “youth agency”, so that young people can support general community resilience.

Thus, considering the role of youth work in these two ways, this research examines the potential of youth work as one of the instruments of generic or primary prevention. Generic or primary prevention is defined as “any form of intervention, information, training aiming at whole groups or populations to prevent certain behaviour and any hazards” (European Union 2015). These types of intervention generally target all young people and include measures influencing lifestyles and behaviours, to reduce the risk of radicalisation leading to violence. These interventions can have the objectives of developing young people’s life skills, strengthening democratic values, community resilience, empowering young people and promoting active citizenship. Some of the examples included in this study touch upon selective or targeted prevention, which works with early detection of symptoms and behavioural deviation, aiming at supporting persons and groups at risk. The primary or generic prevention is chosen as the main focus of the research, as youth work can make the most impact at this stage, while later stages of violent radicalisation often need to include security agencies and may go beyond the scope of youth work.

Understanding radicalisation leading to violence

ELEMENTS FOR A “DEFINITION”

In order to understand and define radicalisation leading to violence and associated terms such as radicalism, extremism or fundamentalism, one needs to look beyond simple definitions in the dictionary, particularly as the terminology of radicalisation leading to violence has very different explanations and connotations. This diversity of understandings is even greater when we go to their use and not-so-rare misuse in the media and in political discourse. Those terms are perceived very differently by various authors, media, political parties, governments and institutions in their different contexts. The differences are notable if the discourse on radicalisation is grounded in the security or in the educational concerns.

The main discrepancy in the consulted literature on the meanings and understandings of radicalisation and extremism is that these terms are either automatically and unavoidably linked with violence, or carefully distinguished from the use of violent actions. Thus, for the purposes of this research, it is important to make a distinction between radicalisation and radicalisation leading to violence. A “radical” person could be someone in favour of far-reaching social and political changes. When violence (including verbal violence) is involved in the process or it is used as a tool for achieving those changes, then we refer to radicalisation leading to violence – an unacceptable violation of human rights and an attack on the democratic values of our societies. This distinction, in which the border between what is acceptable and condemnable is clearly drawn by the use of violence, is a key one, as it highlights the importance of the respect for individual freedoms, civil and political rights and sets the baseline for effective action.

For the purposes of this study, violence is defined as any physical, verbal, emotional, or psychological manipulation, domination or abuse aimed at imposing certain values, beliefs or actions upon the other, causing harm or damage.

There is no universally adopted definition of radicalisation leading to violence. The Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence of Canada,³ the first independent non-profit organisation aimed at preventing radicalisation leading to violence, frames it as:

A process whereby people adopt an extremist belief system – including the intent to use, encourage or facilitate violence – in order to promote an ideology, a political project or a cause as a means of social transformation.

(Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence 2016)

As a process, radicalisation leading to violence would imply:

- ▶ the adoption of an ideology whose rationale becomes a way of life and a framework for meaningful action for the individual
- ▶ the belief in the use of violent means to promote a cause
- ▶ the merging of ideology and violent action.

Although not the “definitive one”, this definition was used as a working definition in this study. This definition is useful as it underlines the nature of the process of radicalisation leading to violence and broadly encompasses various forms and manifestations.

In relation to these elements for a definition, it is useful to add two definitions. The Council of Europe defines radicalisation as the individual or collective recruitment into violent extremism or terrorism (Council of Europe 2015). The European Union considers radicalisation to be the process of growing willingness to accept, pursue and support far-reaching changes in society, conflicting with the existing order. Radicalisation leading to violent extremism is defined as a process whereby a person accepts the use of violence to achieve political, ideological or religious goals, including violent extremism and terrorism (European Union 2017).

For understanding radicalisation leading to violence at the conceptual level, the following sections explore its forms and manifestations, the factors explaining it and the trajectories towards it. The diversity and uniqueness of each radicalisation process should not prevent the attempt of identifying some common trends.

3. More information about the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence is available at: info-radical.org.

FORMS AND MANIFESTATIONS

Radicalisation leading to violence is not a new phenomenon. It may take diverse forms depending on the context and time period, and may be associated with different causes or ideologies. In the last century many countries suffered from violence of different forms including, amongst others, urban violence, the emergence of a violent sub-culture, right- and left-wing extremist violence, nationalist and religiously motivated violence. The following descriptions are based on the report by the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence.

Right-wing extremist violence is a form of violent radicalisation associated with fascism, racism, supremacism and ultranationalism. This form of radicalisation leading to violence is characterised by the violent defence of a racial, ethnic or pseudo-national identity, and is also associated with radical hostility towards state authorities, minorities, immigrants and/or left-wing political groups.

Left-wing extremist violence is a form of radicalisation leading to violence that focuses primarily on anti-capitalist demands and calls for the transformation of political systems considered responsible for producing social inequalities, and which may ultimately employ violent means to further its cause. This category includes anarchist, Maoist, Trotskyist and Marxist–Leninist groups that use violence to advocate for their cause.

Politico-religious extremist violence is a form of radicalisation leading to violence associated with a political interpretation of religion and the defence, by violent means, of a religious identity perceived to be under attack (via international conflicts, foreign policy, social debates, etc.).

Single-issue extremist violence is a form of violent radicalisation essentially motivated by a sole and specific issue. This category includes the following groups if they use violence: radical environmental or animal rights groups, anti-globalisation movements, anti-abortion extremists, sport-related violence, certain anti-trans and anti-feminist movements, and ultra-individualist or independent extremist movements that use violence to promote their causes. Murderers whose motivations are partially or wholly ideological may also fall under this category.

The range of violent actions and manifestations resulting from radicalisation leading to violence can vary from verbal violence to terrorist attacks, including fires and damage to public goods, violent rallies, physical aggression, mafia-type activities and murders. Some forms of violence (e.g. verbal violence) can be the initial stage and foster other more severe and dangerous forms (e.g. physical violence or murders).

This research aims to consider all these forms and manifestations of violent radicalisation that affects young people. The exception here is left-wing radicalisation, which is not represented through the practices. One of the reasons for this, according to Glaser, is because these groups in contemporary Europe are rarely equated with right-wing and religious radicals, since their goals do not go against democratic principles. While radical right-wing and religious groups target violent actions against human beings, the violence used by left-wing radical movements is targeted at objects or institutions, thus having a different level of gradation (Glaser 2017a).

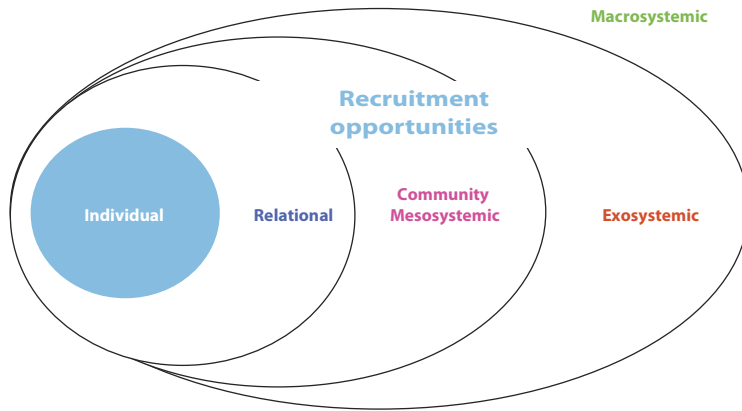
It is important also to note once again that, within these forms and manifestations, the research focuses on the preventive efforts in the first stage, or generic prevention, rather than targeted or selective prevention, which has certain limitations, but also helps us to set the framework of the study.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

Owing to their variety and complexity and despite the growing research in the field, it is impossible to precisely determine all the factors explaining the processes of violent radicalisation, because each process of radicalisation leading to violence is unique and different. Keeping this in mind, it is still possible to group those factors and identify some of the most common tendencies. These factors are based on the compilation of a large list of research studies (see references) focusing mainly, but not exclusively, on religious and extreme right radicalisation leading to violence.

The proposed model in this research for mapping the factors explaining the process of radicalisation which leads to violence takes as a first reference the three levels of factors identified by McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) (quoted in Youth Justice Board for England and Wales 2012): individual, group and mass level. However, as further research has shown that those three levels cannot sum up all the different categories and factors present in the literature due to various social factors, it would also be useful to look at the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (2009) (cited in International Centre for the Prevention of Crime 2015), which underlines the complexity of violent radicalisation, integrating different levels of analysis.

As a result of this evolution and mutual enrichment between different models of analysis, in this study we examine the factors accounting for processes of radicalisation leading to violence by using the following lenses for analysis, as identified in International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (2015):



While the individual is at the core of the model, there are various factors influencing a person's process of violent radicalisation.

- ▶ Individual factors can help to identify some of the tendencies in the profiles of radicalised individuals, i.e. they are factors which may make a young person more vulnerable or prone to certain influences.
- ▶ The relational level explores factors linked to close relationships (family, friends).
- ▶ The mesosystemic level corresponds to institutional and community factors.
- ▶ The macrosystemic level corresponds to influences of large social systems (justice, education), state actions and geopolitical variables.
- ▶ Finally, the exosystemic level covers culture and values surrounding other levels of understanding.

At all of these levels of influence, there are various “recruitment opportunities” – spaces, contexts and situations which may facilitate the process of radicalisation leading to violence. It is important to emphasise that the influencing factors and opportunities are “concentric” – they overlap and influence each other. Therefore, they cannot be analysed in isolation, but must be regarded as mutually reinforcing and interdependent.

It is important to emphasise that the factors as well as the opportunities listed below are neither exhaustive nor final explanations for all manifestations of radicalisation leading to violence, but the factors and influences are rather multi-layered and interconnected. It must also be noted that the existence of

certain factors, or even all of them, does not imply that the person is necessarily in danger of becoming radical and turning to violence. Thus, the factors themselves should not be viewed as a “checklist” for defining a radicalised person, but rather as potential reasons which may explain some of the causes of radicalisation.

Individual factors

At the individual level, factors range from socio-economic circumstances, the personal employment situation and level of education, perceived marginalisation or exclusion, perceived (lack of) opportunities, witnessing violence against family, friends or certain groups, personal and identity crisis, search for purpose, beliefs and values, age and gender, previous military training, criminal record, mental health etc.

Based on the existing data, men seem to display a higher likelihood of turning to violent radicalisation than women, and young people are more susceptible to these influences, particularly during the growing up and adolescence phases, as they are more open and more responsive to various promises and influences (Glaser 2017b).

Relational/microsystemic factors

In relation to family, friends, personal networks and neighbourhoods, the factors for radicalisation leading to violence are: contact with peers and belonging to social networks promoting radicalised thinking, authoritarian or unstructured family, perceptions and stereotypes of gender roles, following charismatic leaders – political or religious, and absence of constructive relations with adults.

Research commissioned by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, “Young and extreme”, shows that relational factors and in particular stereotypes play an important role in the development of a violent behaviour. According to their study, the frequency of violent behaviour is 4.4 times higher amongst young men who agree with stereotypical statements about gender roles than those who do not. Gender is an important variable to take into consideration, as it contributes to the construction of masculinity and violence among radical groups. The central messages of the right wing and Islamic extremist movements are based around extreme nationalism, xenophobia and racism alongside arch-conservative values, an outspoken resistance to gender equality, socialism and liberalism constructed on the violence-oriented masculine ideals and hypermasculinity, with women rarely perceived as independent citizens. On the other hand, women are also important as carriers of social

norms and values of these movements, but their role is presented as subordinate. Gender expectations placed on men and women formulate how people think and act in their surroundings. Using this as a basis, it is also possible to perform preventive work with young people within the framework for broader work to prevent violence (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society 2016).

Community/mesosystemic factors

At the mesosystemic or community level the main factors identified are: isolated (ethno-cultural) communities facing problems of integration into the larger community/society, presence of a sub-culture of radicalisation, and the use of cultural differences as an excuse for heating up social or political conflicts.

Institutional/exosystemic factors

The exosystem consists of the social structures that directly shape the communities and relations an individual takes part in. At this level, a main factor that can influence radicalisation leading to violence is weak or corrupt state institutions. This can include a lack of democracy, lack of civil liberties, and illegitimate or absent law enforcement agencies, as well as discriminatory state or welfare policies. The exosystem also includes material changes to society, such as migration that has transformed societies perceived as relatively homogeneous into heterogeneous ones, or armed conflicts affecting the lives of the individuals.

Ideological/macrosystemic factors

The macrosystem refers to the cultural values or ideologies that shape the underlying levels. At this level we can find structures that do not directly influence the lives of individuals, but instead define prototypes of how local settings should be structured. Media would also fall into this category, due to the way in which the messages from the media influence society and create a context in which individuals operate. The main identified factors contributing to radicalisation leading to violence are: male-dominated patriarchal societies that value aggression, lack of social integration and sense of alienation from society and an authoritarian ideology of how society should be organised. Cultural ideas of one's own race or religion as superior would also be part of the macro system, even if they are not widely held in a given society, or the idea that one is under threat and needs to preserve one's own way of life (Chaudhry 2017).

“Opportunities” for radicalisation leading to violence

At all the different levels of influence, there are “opportunities” – spaces, contexts and situations which may facilitate the radicalisation process and use of violence (International Centre for the Prevention of Crime 2015). Some of these opportunities and spaces are found on the internet⁴ (as a partially uncontrolled space of polarisation, anonymity or false identity, for spreading propaganda and violent interaction) and in prisons (as spaces of radical “contamination”, isolation and very deficient re-socialisation). In some cases, music events (as spaces of identification with radical groups and “modernisation” around music of intolerant ideologies), sports clubs (as spaces for potential emergence of hate speech and right-wing tendencies among the fans) and extremist groups (as spaces for potential manipulation and creation of “us” versus “them” dichotomy) have served as forums for the processes of violent radicalisation.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Different individuals and communities influenced by the same or very similar factors make different choices. In other words, the influencing factors at different levels help us understand the processes of violent radicalisation, but this understanding does not play against the personal and collective responsibilities associated with the choice of using violence. Furthermore, while the risks and factors may be present, it depends on one’s interpretation of these factors and experiences whether a young person will choose to resort to the use of violence. As already emphasised above, the presence of factors themselves does not mean that violent radicalisation will necessarily occur.

Reality is dynamic and more complex than any schematic model can present, and individuals go through different processes on the path to radicalisation. Distinguishing between different levels where opportunities for violent radicalisation of young people exist, can help to understand the factors and different influences behind most of the current radicalisation processes. However, considering the multitude of influences it is also important to emphasise that it is not possible to create profiles or checklists to identify people who may resort to radicalisation leading to violence (Glaser 2017b).

This broad multi-factorial understanding of the phenomenon, in relation to the role that youth work can play in developing resilience of young people and countering radicalisation, is the basis for a holistic response to radicalisation leading to violence.

4. For more information on violent radicalisation and the internet and social media, see the study by UNESCO: Youth and Violent Extremism on Social Media. Available at: unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002605/260532e.pdf.

TRAJECTORIES AND STEPS OF RADICALISATION LEADING TO VIOLENCE

Although there are different individual trajectories and paths towards radicalisation leading to violence, it is possible to identify six steps through which young people can pass while undergoing the process of violent radicalisation. The paths of each person may be quite different, and the transitions from one to the other may not be that clear cut, but these six steps help in understanding some of the personal paths towards formation of radical beliefs and turning to violent acts, as well as why individuals may engage or disengage in the process of radicalisation. It is important to emphasise that not all the individuals going through the first stages reach the level of violent radicalisation. Likewise, it is possible to move between the “steps” and go back and forth within this model.

The Moghaddam model (Moghaddam 2005, International Centre for the Prevention of Crime 2015) aims to show that radicalisation leading to violence is an outcome of much larger processes in society. It does not capture all possible forms of violence – instead, it captures important parts of the radicalisation processes leading to violence. It is not specific for youth, but in combination with other parts of this research it may contribute to a better understanding of this phenomenon.

The trajectories of radicalisation leading to violence are articulated in this model around the following six steps, based on a metaphor of climbing a staircase to floors of increasing acceptance of violence, and may help in explaining better at which stage of violent radicalisation a person is, and what may be appropriate interventions at each level.

Ground floor: Psychological interpretation of material and social conditions

- ▶ Subjective perception of deprivation, injustice, social immobility.
- ▶ Threats to identity.
- ▶ Influence of the media spreading the feeling of injustice.

First floor: Options envisaged against unfair treatment

These options are:

- ▶ perception of the lack of or limited possibilities of social mobility and alternative ways to improve the situation
- ▶ perception of legal proceedings as unfair and biased.

These options generate a sense of injustice and illegitimacy of the normative system in force. The aggression felt is thus projected toward the other, held responsible for the problems, thereby making the transition to the second floor possible.

Second floor: Aggression

The second floor is characterised by the displacement of the aggression, which at this stage is verbal and physical. This is reflected by the direct or indirect support of groups or organisations that advocate and promote a vision of “us against them”.

Third floor: Moral commitment

It is the step where the violent group or organisation appears to support the process of engagement by persuasion and the justification of the means to achieve the ideal society. It employs the tactics of isolation, affiliation, confidentiality and fear. These organisations are positioned at two levels:

- ▶ the macro level, as the only option to change the world or reform the society;
- ▶ the micro level, as the refuge for the outraged, the disaffected, the marginalised and other people who find themselves in similar situations.

Fourth floor: Categorical thinking and legitimacy of the violent group or organisation – Recruitment

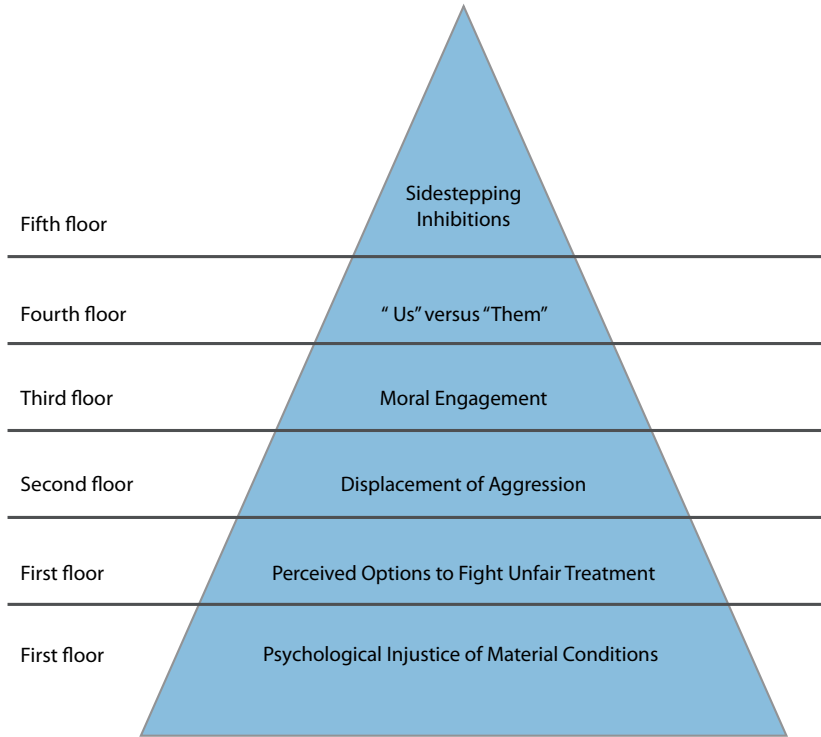
- ▶ Entry into the violent group or organisation and beginning of the “secret” intra-socialisation.
- ▶ The group promotes the dichotomous thinking “us against them” and increases the isolation.

Fifth floor: The violent act and the mechanisms of inhibition

This is the operational phase, where individuals are equipped to carry out violent acts. They receive the necessary resources in order to inhibit the mechanisms that prevent taking violent actions:

- ▶ social categorisation, which is used to identify the target and the enemy
- ▶ the exacerbation of differences between the intra group and the extra group
- ▶ the prevention of any mechanism of inhibition.

Figure 1. Moghaddam: the “Staircase model” of terrorism



Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Staircase_model.png

After analysing the forms and manifestations of radicalisation leading to violence, the influencing factors and the trajectories, it can be concluded that there is no absolutely clear cause–effect relation of radicalisation, but rather it is a complex process leading to it, which is different for each case. Since the cause–effect relation is more than questionable, the term and logic of “prevention” is problematic from the social sciences point of view. In this sense, “prevention” would more precisely mean in this research “addressing radicalisation before it becomes violent” rather than “avoiding it” or “making sure it does not happen”.

Presentations by Glaser (Glaser 2017b) and Grzemny (Grzemny 2017) also indicate that young people often join certain movements and groups driven by a desire to make a difference, change the world and contribute to the society in which they live, because youth often look for radical solutions and meaning in life. Certain groups may offer them these “solutions”, and it is the

role of youth work at this stage, as a method of prevention, to offer alternative solutions and scenarios, giving young people options to engage, contribute to the society, and be “radical” while promoting positive social changes.

In order to examine how youth work can work on the prevention of violent radicalisation and promote these positive alternatives, the remaining part of the study will examine projects, initiatives and activities which have been successful in preventing young people from turning to the use of violence and curbing their progression through various steps.

Inspiring practices

The criteria for selecting the inspiring practices, initiatives, projects and long-term processes addressing radicalisation leading to violence of young people were as follows:

- ▶ Practices implemented by youth workers, organisations and institutions working with young people in one of the countries that signed the European Cultural Convention and in the countries in the Southern Mediterranean region.
- ▶ Practices addressing ***different forms of radicalisation leading to violence*** (urban violence, emergence of a violent sub-culture, right and left political extremist violence, nationalist violence, religiously motivated violence ...) ***and different manifestations*** (verbal violence, damage of public goods, violent rallies, physical aggressions and murders, mafia-type activities and terrorist acts).
- ▶ Practices addressing ***different factors influencing radicalisation leading to violence***. Those are of a very different nature and in line with many “traditional” working fields in youth work like intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, identity, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, conflict management, peace building... From the very numerous existing youth practices in those fields ***the focus is on those addressing directly and explicitly radicalisation leading to violence and/or reacting to its manifestations***.
- ▶ Practices addressing one of the stages of radicalisation leading to violence with ***the focus on preventing and addressing radicalisation leading to violence in early stages***; before or when there is a moral commitment to it.

- ▶ Practices that may be *operating in the so-called “opportunities” or spaces where radicalisation leading to violence can emerge* such as the internet or prisons, and in relation to extreme groups (political or religious).

After the following overview and brief description of the 20 inspiring practices, we will analyse the contribution that youth work can make to the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence, highlighting also the specific needs and challenges in this field.

OVERVIEW

Following the above-mentioned criteria, a call for examples and inspiring practices was launched at the European level through an online questionnaire (see Annex I). Twenty-nine practices were submitted and on the basis of the above-specified criteria, 16 were selected for further analysis, and an additional four were identified through purposeful data collection.

In the following section, the selected inspiring practices are briefly described, indicating a specific focus or type of radicalisation they address, as well as the country in which they are implemented. Practices are grouped in five categories:

- ▶ peer education
- ▶ online campaigns and digital media
- ▶ co-operation with other stakeholders
- ▶ providing opportunities
- ▶ education and training.

The organisations dealing with violent radicalisation are not “new” or created ad hoc for addressing this phenomenon. Their approaches often differ, but they have something in common: their response to radicalisation leading to violence is not that of “fire fighting” (a quick response to a one-off problem), but rather holistic and rooted in a wide understanding of the role, values and practices of youth work, having a long-term perspective of the young people’s learning and development.

As this study focuses on prevention, all the inspiring practices address the first steps of the potential radicalisation leading to violence process: ground floor – psychological interpretation of material and social conditions, and first floor – options envisaged against unfair treatment. In some cases, the next step (second floor – aggression) is as well tackled by addressing violent behaviours or, for example, developing activities with youngsters in prison.

The types of potential radicalisation tackled are politico-religious extremist violence and in some cases right-wing extremist violence.

The analysis of the influencing factors of radicalisation leading to violence concludes that in most cases, organisations involved in youth work aim to address personal factors, such as the personal employment situation and level of education, perceived marginalisation or exclusion, perceived (lack of) opportunities, personal identity and crisis. Nevertheless, all the other factors examined in the previous section (relational, community/mesosystemic factors, institutional and ideological) also have a strong influence, particularly when influencing young people using the internet.

PEER EDUCATION

Peer education – Germany



KIGA e.V. - KIGA (Kreuzberg Initiative
against Antisemitism)
Kottbusser Damm 94
10967 Berlin, GERMANY
mail@kiga-berlin.org

APPROACH: The main approach of the AKRAN project run by KIGA e.v. is peer education. AKRAN itself means “peer” in Turkish and Arabic.

Young peer educators between 18 and 28, with a Muslim background, close to the organisation’s target group and their life experiences, engage in an educational process with other young people.

AKRAN uses a holistic approach to preventing discrimination and radicalisation leading to violence, including preventing violent Jihadism and making young people aware of internet propaganda. AKRAN also works on preventing Islamophobia and other forms of racism in schools, by offering diversity and antidiscrimination trainings to teachers.

Before working with young people, the peer educators are involved in a two-year training on Islamophobia, antisemitism, gender and violent Islamism, relationships between Jews and Muslims and on educational tools for working with young people. Some peer educators also take part in study trips to London and Israel, in order to broaden their horizons when it comes to working with young people and fragile communities.

ACTIVITIES: Activities include training sessions in schools, youth centres and mosques. The methods include interactive tools, encounters, games, videos, religious Muslim narratives, as well as visits to places connected with the contents, like synagogues or mosques or other institutions.

At the moment the peer education initiatives are implemented in Berlin and neighbouring areas, but there are plans to extend them to other areas and cities.

Further information:

www.kiga-berlin.org/

www.facebook.com/groups/1816027555303195/

Peer education and training – Bosnia and Herzegovina



Coalition against Hate
“Embrace differences”
(Zanemari Razlike)
Kemala Kapetanovića
17, Sarajevo,
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
vijece.mladih.ns@gmail.com



The Youth Council of the municipality of Novo Sarajevo is a founder of the Coalition “Embrace differences”. The aim of the coalition is to challenge and break stereotypes and prejudices between young people addressing political, ethnic, religious and right-wing extremist violence. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country with a diverse national, ethnic and religious composition, and young people are sometimes divided along these lines, and influenced by political rhetoric.

As a part of the coalition, the Youth Council works with high school students, youth centres, schools and young people from diverse communities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, addressing individual, relational, community, institutional and ideological factors which may impact on the process of radicalisation of young people. It challenges isolation, prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination caused by the recent history of conflict in the country.

APPROACH: The coalition uses peer education and training to tackle prejudices and stereotypes, in order to prevent the development of prejudiced attitudes and violent behaviour which may lead to radicalisation, conflict and hate crimes among youth.

There are various approaches.

- ▶ Supporting mutual understanding, respect and cohesion, by organising preventive activities, including workshops with young people of all ages, cultural events and street actions.
- ▶ Responding to incidents, by reacting to hate crime or bias-motivated incidents in a timely manner, through public statements and condemnations, in order to contribute to de-escalating tensions and promote harmony, demonstrating that hate-motivated crimes and incidents are isolated individual acts and are not supported or endorsed by the community.

- ▶ Providing alternatives to hate, by working on projects that are beneficial to the community (i.e. painting over offensive graffiti, workshops for youth on prevention of hate crimes and radicalisation, debating competition for youth on cultural diversity etc.). The coalition shows those prone to radicalisation of hate-based ideology that community inclusion and personal expression can and should be conducted in positive and constructive ways and not through the framework of hate and violence.

ACTIVITIES: The Youth Council organises trainings, workshops and debates on prevention of all types of violence, including peer violence, violence against women and girls, as well as cultural events which promote the common cultural heritage. Some of the activities include Summer Schools of Tolerance for Youth (July 2015 and August 2016), which involve young people from the two entities in neighbouring municipalities in Sarajevo, preventing the development of the prejudiced attitudes and violent behaviour that lead to conflict and hate crimes among youngsters, and engages youth, families and the entire community in dialogue on the prevention of hate crimes and countering violent extremism. The Coalition also worked with young activists of Coalitions against Hate across Bosnia and Herzegovina. In May 2017, a debating competition for youth on Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development in Canton Sarajevo was organised, giving young people the opportunity to discuss and debate discrimination, reconciliation, hate crimes and hate speech, diversity etc., while at the same time building their analytical and public-speaking skills and capacities.

Further information:

www.facebook.com/vijece.mladih

Peer learning and citizenship education – Italy and Denmark



mhtconsult
Bygmestervej 10
DK-2400 Copenhagen NV, DENMARK
www.mhtconsult.dk



CESIE
Via Roma, 94, 90133 Palermo, ITALY
www.cesie.org
dorothea.urban@cesie.org



The “Community Counteracting Radicalisation” (CoCoRa) is a two-year European project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. It aims to develop and test a new community-based prevention strategy that involves local communities and citizens with a Muslim background directly and actively in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism through the process of empowering young people from these communities to feel belonging and equal citizenship. The project is implemented in five European countries: Italy, Austria, Germany, France, and Denmark as the European co-ordinator.

The overall aims of the CoCoRa project are:

- ▶ to contribute to a community-based prevention of violent extremism strategy targeting young people potentially at risk of radicalisation
- ▶ to involve and activate Muslim communities in prevention efforts – thereby qualifying the base of knowledge and strengthening the dialogue and collaboration across civil society and local authorities in the professional prevention efforts
- ▶ to incorporate the equality and empowerment approach into the prevention strategy in order to relate the prevention efforts clearly to the perspective of an equal, active and self-including citizenship
- ▶ to offer young people with a Muslim and ethnic minority background visibility and voices of their own in order to counter discrimination, stigmatisation and negative preconceptions about young people in Western societies.

APPROACH: By promoting the community approach in prevention efforts, the CoCoRa project has proved that the concept and definition of “community” should always be adapted to the local context, local preconditions and local possibilities for anchoring the efforts in order to strengthen future sustainability. The five project partners have implemented a variety of community approaches, ranging from collaboration with a local Muslim organisation, transversal collaboration within a limited geographical area, in civic associations and NGOs, in youth clubs and integration institutions, etc.

Common for all community approaches is the strong focus on interreligious and intercultural exchange and training in appreciative dialogue, sociocultural inclusion and equality issues, self-including citizenship through consciousness of rights and duties, empowerment and building of self-esteem and development of positive communities with own visions.

Furthermore, motive and drivers behind radicalisation and violent extremism are reflected in the safe and trustful contexts of the CoCoRa activities. The goal is to create a prevention strategy focused on young people’s empowerment and active citizenship. The common CoCoRa approach also involves the use of peer learning networks, positive role models, creative and artistic expression, etc.

For instance, in Italy, the project relies on the inclusion of newcomers in the society through active learning supported by the use of primarily non-formal methods including: Reciprocal Maieutic Approach,⁵ Creative Thinking, Theatre of the Oppressed,⁶ plus dance and other artistic and creative techniques, including Critical Incidents Method (Cohen-Emerique).⁷

In the Danish example, the Danish tradition for study circles, where young people gather to discuss certain topics, was activated as a forum for cognitive learning as well as for discussions and common reflections on issues about radicalisation, minority positions, democratic citizenship, antidiscrimination etc.

ACTIVITIES: The new community-based prevention strategy builds on three activity programmes, aiming to challenge the “us and them” dichotomy which may lead to the distancing of young Muslims from the surrounding society:

- ▶ the CoCoRa Collaborative Programme to build a solid and mutual relationship to local communities as a framework for the collaboration on prevention activities for young people from a Muslim background.

5. More information on the approach can be found at: en.danilodolci.org/rma/eddili-rma-manual/.

6. More information on the Theatre of the Oppressed technique can be found here: beautifultrouble.org/theory/theater-of-the-oppressed/

7. More on the use of this method by CESIE can be found here: cesie.org/en/in-action/european-cooperation/healthy-diversity-kickoff/.

The idea is to involve the knowledge, contacts, status and resources of representatives from the local communities so as to meet the actual prevention needs among the youngsters;

- ▶ the CoCoRa Prevention Programme to develop and conduct a long-term training presenting issues such as reasons for radicalisation, equal citizenship, discrimination, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, religion in a secular society, empowerment etc.;
- ▶ the CoCoRa Ambassador Programme to train young people from the target group to become spokespersons and visible representatives for young people's interests and needs towards local authorities and municipal professionals in the general prevention efforts. The Ambassador Programme provides the young ambassadors with communication and dialogical skills to make presentations on workshops for authorities and professionals in the general prevention efforts.

Further information:

The CoCoRa project has been selected by RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network) as Best Practice:

ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7395_en ; bit.ly/2DAZXnX

Further information on the CoCoRa project: cocoraproject.eu/

Overview of CESIE's initiatives: cesie.org/en/initiatives/

EXIT project Fryshuset – Stockholm, Sweden



Fryshuset
Mårtendalsgatan 2-8
exit@fryshuset.se

Exit is a project within the non-profit organisation Fryshuset, whose aim is to help and provide support to those who wish to leave nationalistic/racist/Nazi oriented groups and movements and integrate into society, and those who may be on their way to radicalisation.

Fryshuset was founded in 1984, providing sports and music activities for youth, but soon social issues became the core of their agenda, particularly focusing on alternatives to violence. The organisation runs several schools and programmes for vocational training, seminars and conferences, courses in theatre, music, and sport as well as hosting events, concerts, parties and discotheques, and it even has its own church.

APPROACH: Exit helps young people to leave racist or other extremist movements by focusing on engaging them with the broader society and providing them with alternatives. Young people involved in these groups are often victims of bullying and crime, and such movements help them to find meaning, direction and structure by developing among them a feeling of superiority compared to other groups in society and a sense of community. These groups are often militant and sectarian and it is very difficult for people to leave them. It is also very difficult for people leaving these movements to be accepted by society.

Exit offers everything from listening to the personal stories to helping them create a new life and a new identity, providing hands-on support. Professional social workers and people who left the Nazi movement – “formers” – work with young people, sharing their stories and experiences in order to provide alternative narratives. The stories demystifying the narratives of white supremacy and racism become powerful when told by former members of the Nazi movement themselves.

ACTIVITIES: The activities vary from educational speeches demystifying the movements, providing alternative narratives, holding motivational interviews/conversations with young people, and working with local collaborators, such as police or social services, school, child and adolescent psychiatry, housing

companies, crime prevention councils, on-call services for victims of crime, the labour exchange, business people, the regional social insurance office and clubs, as well as the family and friends of the young people, in order to help people leaving the movements rebuild their identity and establish themselves in society.

The preventive activities are mainly focused on dialogue and working with Swedish schools and governmental authorities, to help understand the mechanism behind these groups. Based on two decades of experience of Exit and the lessons learnt, Fryshuset gives lectures, seminars and workshops, and educates professionals, organisations and others working with people wanting to leave these groups.

The organisation also educates schools, authorities, police, the correctional system, social workers and parents in how to deal with Nazism/racism and identify prevention mechanisms.

Exit Sweden inspired similar projects in other European countries – Exit Germany started in 2000, and Exit Sweden today is engaged in spreading this work throughout Europe and the world, and is recognised and supported by the European Commission through the RAN EXIT Working Group.

Exit also works with other organisations like the Pluralism and Dialogue Institute (PDI) at Fryshuset, in delivering trainings to frontline workers, developing evidence-based preventive methods (the Integrative Complexity thinking programme developed at Cambridge University) and building the capacity of municipalities for the prevention of violent extremism.

Further information:

fryshuset.se/in-english

exit.fryshuset.se

A slide show explaining the experience is available at slideplayer.com/slide/9436052.

A presentation by Robert Örell, Director of Exit Sweden, explains the transformation of individuals engaging in violent extremism and shares ideas on how to counter it: www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNlgKsb1QbA.

ONLINE CAMPAIGNS AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Online campaigns and street actions – Bosnia and Herzegovina



PRONI Centre for Youth Development
Mehmedagica 24, 76100 Brčko,
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The PRONI Centre for Youth Development in Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina works with 15- to 30-year-old young people in the north-east part of Bosnia and Herzegovina implementing peace work education in the post-war areas. It aims to address political, ethnic, religious and right-wing extremist violence, which is often motivated by relational/microsystemic factors, including peers and social networks promoting radicalised thinking, and community and institutional factors, such as history of conflict based on nationality, religion and ethnicity, and the resulting isolation of ethno-cultural communities. There is also a strong influence of individual factors, such as the high unemployment rate among youth (63% of young Bosnians between 15 and 30 are unemployed).

APPROACH: PRONI uses peace education in the post-war areas. Owing to the recent history of conflict in the region, there are prominent divisions based on nationality, religion and ethnicity, and a growing potential for extremist behaviour among young people. The existing structures and economic situation make youth easy targets of ethnic, nationalist and religious groups targeting particularly youth's need to "belong". Once drawn into specific groups, youth are ready to "prove their loyalty" and defend their newly adopted beliefs both online and offline.

ACTIVITIES: The project was inspired by research findings that Bosnia and Herzegovina has become a target for national and global extremist recruitment efforts, due to recent historical and political conflicts, as well as high unemployment rates among youth. In order to address this issue and work on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence, confront violent behaviour online and offline, and provide alternatives to radicalisation through sports and training, PRONI organises various activities.

These include social media campaigns, street actions, sporting events and planned trainings of youth workers to confront youth radicalisation. The Facebook campaign Citizens Against Terrorism B&H, which aimed to raise awareness among young people about the issue of radicalisation leading to violence, and confront violent behaviour online and offline, reached 347 383 and engaged more than 50 000 people (post-engagement) and had 1 531 page likes. The campaign had wide media coverage, with over 40 media reports so far. As part of the campaign, a street action was also organised in Tuzla, with 427 people signing a petition and sending it to Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ambassador to the UN. In the petition, they asked for 22 May to be recognised as the International Day against Terrorism. The goal of the campaign was to send a message that youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina are active in addressing radicalisation, and are working locally, but thinking globally.

Another important activity undertaken with the aim of presenting sports as an alternative to radicalisation was the organisation of a "Block the Terrorism" volleyball tournament in May 2017. The tournament brought together 13 teams of young people to mark the end of the Citizens against Terrorism social media campaign, by showing that sports can be one of the alternatives to the use of violence for radical goals.

PRONI also organised a round table discussion: "Is B&H suitable ground for terrorism" at the University of Tuzla, during which students and experts in the field presented their research and experiences about the potential for violent radicalisation and its prevention in the country.

Further information:

www.proni.ba/CAT

www.facebook.com/CATBIH

Non-formal education and media campaigns – Montenegro



Forum MNE
(Forum mladi i neformalna edukacija)
Bratstva i jedinstva 4
81 000 Podgorica, MONTENEGRO
montenegro@forum-mne.com

Forum MNE is a local organisation which supports young people's development into conscious, responsible and active individuals and citizens capable of recognising, seeking and realising their rights, while contributing to the development of a just and peaceful society. The forum works with 15- to 30-year-old young people in all three regions in Montenegro (north, central and south), with a special focus on working with marginalised groups – specifically those coming from small and economically and socially deprived communities with limited opportunities. It aims to address, through preventive community youth work programmes, religious, political and nationalist radicalisation, by targeting various factors and influences which may contribute to the development of violent radicalisation.

APPROACH: Forum MNE organises trainings on multiculturalism, tolerance, promoting universal human rights, openness, partnership, community activism, peace conflict transformation and individual development. The organisation also uses online tools, such as the video clip with 60 young people who send messages to their peers who are victims or witnesses of online or in-person recruitment for religious extremist groups or cyber-bullying based on national or religious affiliation.

Forum MNE also conducts research and develops specific programmes which include targeted and tailor-made capacity-building trainings for youth leaders from the northern municipalities of Montenegro on combating or preventing violent extremism. Youth leaders as the game changers/actors of change in their communities are conducting multiple community actions on preventing violent extremism targeting most vulnerable peers and the general public.

ACTIVITIES: The project "Preventing Youth Radicalisation in Northern Montenegro through Youth Work" focuses on challenging the current value system of young people in the three municipalities in the northern part of Montenegro (Rožaje, Plav and Berane), promoting tolerance, peace building, conflict transformation and individual development. Many adolescents can be greatly affected in various manners, converting to radical religious strains

which may lead to violence (reflecting this even in profiles and messages on social media) when they are not satisfied with their status in society.

In Rožaje and Plav, it is related to a very strong affiliation to Islam, and in Berane to the Orthodox Church. Forum MNE is doing preventive work, so none of these issues are tackled directly, but rather following the meticulously tailored project activities that mainly deal with value systems and conflict management in all three municipalities. Among other activities, the project involves the following: capacity-building trainings for young people from targeted municipalities on preventing violent radicalisation and extremism through online and offline activities, at least 10 community-based activities (documentaries, festivals, workshops, graffiti etc.) targeting this issue and an e-brochure on prevention of youth radicalisation.

The project is implemented in close liaison with project partners – the Directorate of Youth and Sports and *Građanska inicijativa mladih Rožaje*. Having worked a lot with young people in this area (specifically in the Rozaje youth club), Forum MNE recognised the need to work on these issues, because many adolescents the organisation has been working with are sensitive in this life period and can be greatly affected in various ways.

Further information:

Research on Youth Resilience to Radical and Extreme Behaviours in Montenegro in both Montenegrin and English: bit.ly/2FDifFn and the English version bit.ly/2mED4IJ

Television programme *Živa istina* (English: Truth Alive) where the Programme Manager of Forum MNE, Tamara Čirgić, presented the results of the Research on Youth Resilience to Radical and Extreme Behaviours in Montenegro: bit.ly/2EG9ER9.

Young people in the municipality of Rozaje organized a radio programme on the issue of preventing youth radicalisation and extremism. You can listen to it at bit.ly/2Dd55Bz.

Short video clips, “Me, my values and the world around me” with young people’s messages to their peers who are victims or witnesses of online or in-person recruitment for religious extremist groups, cyber bullying on national or religion affiliation, are available at bit.ly/2ElbFwc.

Forum MNE Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/MladiBezMrznje/?ref=ts&fref=ts.

Digital storytelling – Belgium



Maks vzw- Media Actie Kuregem Stad
G Moreaustreet 110, 1070
Brussels BELGIUM
www.maksvzw.org
maksvzw@gmail.com

Maks vzw is a local non-profit organisation in Brussels, which works on enhancing the digital skills of young and older people, while at the same time providing individual counselling and coaching for jobseekers, and graphic design services.

Maks vzw works with vulnerable youth and second- or third-generation migrants and refugees in two of the poorest neighbourhoods in Brussels: Kuregem and Molenbeek. Most of its activities are in schools and in leisure time, targeting young people from 6 to 30 years of age, and also working with school drop-outs and unemployed youth.

There is a rise in right-wing nationalist parties and populism in Europe, with racist discourse against migrants and refugees in the media, as well as increasing hate speech against Roma, youngsters of Muslim origin and homosexuals, but at the same time a high number of those recruited to fight in Syria, under the impact of the Daesh propaganda, which has consequences for youth of Muslim background.

The main objective is empowering youth through digital inclusion and access to the labour market for disadvantaged inhabitants of Brussels, targeting two types of radicalisation – hate crimes and hate speech, and the issue of Islamic radicalisation.

APPROACH: MAKS VZW uses digital tools to counter Islamic radicalisation and hate speech, such as digital storytelling, coding or other film techniques to increase global citizenship, making youth prosumers instead of consumers of devices, using technology to enable their social mobility, and also address the propaganda of the Daesh recruiters searching for vulnerable young people. Digital storytelling is the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories – it is an online personal narrative in digital format. As with traditional storytelling, most digital stories focus on a specific topic and contain a particular point of view, using a mixture of computer-based images, text, recorded audio

narration, and/or music. The stories can vary in length, typically between one and five minutes, and are made and edited by the storyteller.

ACTIVITIES: Some of the activities include youth meetings with parents of young people who went to Syria and looking up information about the situation in Syria on the internet. In the story circle, small groups of students discuss the issue of the story, giving each other feedback, trying to find the way to express their opinion, or visit places where they can find relevant information. After the storytelling, participants edit their story with images, music and voice recordings. Similarly, for the topic of hate speech, young people search online for the information about victims of hate speech and hate crimes in Belgium and Europe. In the story circle, they tell some stories about things that happened in their lives or the life of their peers, speaking of being a victim or a perpetrator.

MAKS VZW also trains young people to make their own video CV, to learn coding, app development, gameplay and robotics, use a digital reflex camera and prepare photo exhibitions about positive and negative topics in their neighbourhoods.

Further information:

Story examples – Islamisation: vimeo.com/170233996
<https://vimeo.com/168442557>

Link to some stories – hate speech: vimeo.com/92845753
<https://vimeo.com/album/2937249/video/89600039>

Intergenerational projects on discrimination and racism: vimeo.com/92035817
Digital storytelling methodology: bit.ly/2DjTWyh

Counter-narratives and peer learning – Serbia



Institute for European Affairs
27. marta 25a, Belgrade, SERBIA
office@iea.rs

The Institute for European Affairs is an independent non-governmental organisation set up in Serbia in 2010. The organisation operated before as a Youth Board for Education, and its goals are promoting and strengthening European values and human rights. The Institute brings together a large number of professionals and external experts with whom it organises trainings, debates and other forms of capacity development to contribute to enhanced understanding of Euro-Atlantic relations of Serbia. Its target audience are 18- to 26-year-old students vulnerable to political, ethnic, religious and right-wing extremist violence resulting from discrimination, prejudice and hate speech which may be spread through the internet.

APPROACH: The institute focuses on prevention and countering hate speech online, by countering narratives of the violent groups, spreading positive narratives and exposing hate speech.

ACTIVITIES: One of the institute's initiatives aimed at preventing radicalisation is the Peer to Peer (P2P) Challenging Extremism project. Project activities include small-scale online and offline campaigns for young people to understand the meaning of violent radicalisation, as well as spreading messages and writing analyses and comments through social and traditional media.

The P2P Challenging Extremism project has so far undertaken three campaigns. Owing to the extensive presence in the media of ISIS, which relies heavily on violent videos and propaganda messages to attract potential young jihadists, the first awareness-raising campaign targeted 14- to 25-year-olds, preparing and distributing via social media videos and strong messages about the danger and terrible consequences which extremist and terrorist organisations cause, and organising peer-to-peer activities, presenting the campaign in schools, universities and some NGOs, and organising media appearances.

The second campaign was conducted by a group of eight young people targeting teenagers and adolescents, focusing on positive values and affirmative messages, using peer education, plays based on forum theatre and a party, together with a video, and sending affirmative, inspirational and positive messages to young people, in order to reach youth and make them think about this topic. Both campaigns released videos with thousands of views and created a Facebook page with 7 648 likes and a reach of approximately 650 000 people.

The P2P Challenging Extremism project continued in 2017, with the focus on fighting stereotypes and prejudices and promoting hate-free speech and fighting the spread of misinformation through the internet, but also sports tournaments and presentations and workshops in schools and universities, with a Facebook page with 8 027 likes and an Instagram page with 1 036 followers.

Another important project aimed at fighting stereotypes and radicalisation is the Youth Reconciliation Ambassadors programme, aimed at young professionals from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. In three years, 125 young professionals took part in the programme attending 120 high-level meetings, lectures, workshops and debates. They organised 125 P2P trainings for 4 200 secondary beneficiaries, 210 media appearances discussing EU integration and regional reconciliation and collected 125 essays on how they can contribute to regional reconciliation and overcome past conflicts, challenging ethnic radicalisation and nationalism in the region.

Further information:

www.iea.rs

First campaign: youtu.be/CvoLXOiod2A

Second campaign: youtu.be/FKBI-ncR4GQ

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Positive community change behaviours – Jordan



I Dare for Sustainable Development

Amman, Shmesani, 93 Queen Nour Street,
Housing Bank Commercial Complex, Ground Floor
P. O. Box 211327, 11121 Amman, JORDAN

team@i-dare.org

i-dare.org/en/

“I Dare for Sustainable Development” is a not-for-profit and non-governmental Jordanian organisation dedicated to enabling youth to develop and lead the positive sustainable transformation in their communities. It works on the prevention of violent extremism through positive behavioural change within the community. The main individual influencing factors leading young people to radicalisation arise from personal and identity crisis, employment and education levels, and perceived marginalisation, exclusion and lack of opportunities, as well as relational/microsystemic factors, including contact with peers and social networks which promote radicalisation leading to violence and community/institutional factors arising from the lack of integration, experiences of racism, and social injustice.

APPROACH: “Positive Community Change Behaviour”

Based on the experience with youth and communities directly affected by violent extremism, I Dare set the following principles for preventive interventions which address violent extremism at the root by preventing it from occurring, rather than combating or countering it at a later stage.

- ▶ **Environment:** it is important to provide holistic support to youth, including infrastructure and social environment, and to ensure the participation of young people, with a focus on the local level, and universities, which have become breeding grounds for radicalisation leading to violence.
- ▶ **Community participation:** communities should play an active role in developing inclusive national identity, social cohesion, and avoiding exclusion, through the creation of role models among youth, and dialogue with religious institutions, in order to prevent the hijacking of religious concepts and their exploitation by misinterpretations. Young people should not be considered only as potential victims of radicalisation leading to violence, but, in line with UN Resolution 2250

on youth, peace and security, youth should be recognised as active partners in preventing radicalisation leading to violence and enabling peace and security.

- ▶ Narratives: alternative narratives, based on the discourse of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, should be promoted through social media and youth awareness campaigns, combining online and on the ground activities, encouraging critical thinking and youth agency.

ACTIVITIES: I Dare for Sustainable Development conducted research about the “contagion theory”, and then based on the research results organised an online campaign, #United4PVE, to prevent violent extremism, creating alternative narratives to hate and violent content, in both Arabic and English.

Those online activities are combined with offline ones such as “Speak and Cook” (where youth from different backgrounds cook and talk) and the “Placard campaign” on the main streets with alternative narrative messages.

A new phase of the project is being implemented through a project called Shabab 2250, which is about providing a practical translation of United Nations Resolution 2250 about youth and its active role in building sustainable peace and security. The Shabab 2250 project supports youth-led initiatives at the local level promoting a democratic government, an equitable distribution of resources, good relations with neighbours, acceptance of the rights of others and the free flow of information.

Further information:

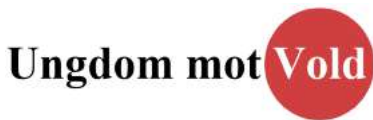
Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/c/IDare

Online Love Speech Facebook campaign: web.facebook.com/OLSJo1/

#United4PVE Facebook campaign page: web.facebook.com/United4PVE/

An alternative narrative platform: www.idareact.org

Co-operation among different services – Norway



Ungdom mot Vold –
YAV (Youth against violence)
Torggata 10, 0187 Oslo, NORWAY
umv@umv.no
www.umv.no/

Ungdom mot Vold – YAV is a civil society organisation working to reduce and prevent violence, bullying, discrimination, prejudice, indifference and crime in Norwegian society. It works with children and youth aged 12-25, who find themselves in vulnerable situations and at risk of marginalisation and crime. The aim of the organisation is to prevent political and religious extremist violence, bullying, discrimination, prejudice, indifference and crime. YAV works on addressing mainly individual influencing factors, but also working in prisons, as potential spaces for radicalisation leading to violence, preventing not only the first two steps of psychological radicalisation process, but also aggression.

APPROACH: YAV's approach and measures aim to empower young people by enhancing their self-image and improving their control and coping skills, in addition to offering support and assistance with everyday practical issues. The main purpose is to provide young people with the necessary conditions and functional skills (e.g. IT skills, time management, planning) to be the actors of their own change and to better integrate into their local environment and their society in general.

ACTIVITIES: YAV has developed a model of close co-operation with the correctional services, the police and some schools. The model has helped to identify persons and environments at risk of radicalisation leading to violence and implement measures with a short response time. Young people identified through this model and then included in the programme have been supported with mentoring through an individual plan. Co-operation with the police allows resolving conflicts and the dissemination of preventive work among youth.

YAV co-operates with schools in their preventive work against dropping out from school and for preventing their recruitment by gangs and criminal networks. It also conducts classroom discussions on key issues for groups at risk such as freedom of expression, diversity, inclusion, empathetic communication and conflict resolution.

YAV works as well with convicted youth in co-operation with probation offices to prevent recidivism and falling back into criminality.

Further information:

Research about YAV's work: bit.ly/2mIH0Zh

Bringing together the municipality, the policy and young people – Belgium



Stad Vilvoorde
Grote Markt
1800 Vilvoorde
BELGIUM
www.vilvoorde.be

The Municipality of Vilvoorde started working on the issue of violent radicalisation of young people in 2012 and 2013, as an increasing number of young people started departing to Syria and Iraq. In this period, some 28 young people, including three minors, out of 43 000 inhabitants, joined ISIS. 43% of the population are of foreign origin and half of them are unemployed, leaving them feeling frustrated, isolated and thus vulnerable to various radical influences and recruitment.

The scope and work of the Service for Radicalisation and Polarisation within the municipality is an addition to the regular youth, prevention, equal opportunities and integration work done within other areas of the city. The municipality deals mainly with the potential radicalisation of young Muslims, working with 16- to 24-year-old youth.

APPROACH: From the start of the municipal work in this area, the important question was to distinguish prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE), as opposed to other youth work activities. The starting point for this was decided to be a triangle of prevention, used in criminology and education, with different levels, including society, general services by local government, education, crime prevention, youth work, specific prevention measures, intervention and repression and law enforcement. The Municipal Service for Radicalisation and Polarisation is a buffer between the broader social services and law enforcement, dealing with a specific issue. The idea is to work from the non-problem-based approach, assuming that an issue can be addressed and dealt with before it becomes a problem, and focusing on addressing the existing frustrations, the need for building trust within the community and engaging as many stakeholders as possible to work on each specific case of potential radicalisation, influencing young people and reviving their links to the society in which they live.

Since 2012/2013, a lot of progressive work has been done in Vilvoorde, starting with numerous conversations and dialogue with young people in the city and youth active in local mosques. As a result of these, the issue that came to

the fore was the tension between young people and the local police. Young people in the streets feel stigmatised by the police and repeated identity checks, which increases the feelings of injustice and isolation among youth and eventually leads to their radicalisation and leaving the country. On the other hand, police officers feel that they cannot do their job, because young people react aggressively towards them. As a result of this finding, a Second Wave project was initiated to improve the dialogue between youth and the police, and address their prejudices.

ACTIVITIES: The Second Wave project included 15 young people and 15 local police officers in a debating group over a period of a year and a half. This pilot project is a partnership between municipality, youth, police, local NGOs, and also an NGO from the Netherlands which had expertise in working with youth on tackling difficult topics.

Young people were recruited very specifically – the municipal project co-ordinators went into hotspots where young people were on the streets and had issues with local police or they had a criminal record. These groups are very difficult to reach and involve in activities, as they rarely ask for help and traditional youth work and youth organisations do not reach out to them. From the police team, 12 first liners were included in the group, including officers working in traffic units, intervention units and other units in the street.

Youth and police officers gathered on a monthly basis, with professional guidance, discussing sensitive topics, including why police officers ask youth to show their IDs, why certain young Muslims refuse to shake hands with others, etc. The idea was that this core group would be a leading example to others, which would help to ease the tensions in the streets and community, and improve mutual understanding.

The pilot project has worked very well and local police have now included these trainings in their training package for local officers. The project has also indicated the need to hire more police officers from minority groups, which can better relate to young people. The partnership was also created with youth organisations, and the project will be repeated on a yearly basis, specifically working on prevention and tackling the group which works on attracting young people and recruiting them to join radical religious movements and use violence.

Further information:

Second Wave project Practice Sheet: efus.eu/files/2016/09/PS_Vilvoorde_SecondWave_ENG.pdf

Article from The Independent [ind.pn/2DyzMy9](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/anti-terrorism/second-wave-project-a6848411.html)

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES

Collaborative work on employability – Georgia



Action Against Hunger
37 Mtskheta Str. Tbilisi, GEORGIA
Imerabishvili@sc.acfspain.org

Action Against Hunger (AAH) is a network of international non-governmental organisations working in more than 40 countries worldwide. Georgia is one of the countries of the South Caucasus covered, running programmes on economic and rural development, food security and livelihoods, disaster risk reduction, water, sanitation and hygiene, agriculture, community development and confidence building. AAH carries out its activities to improve the lives of disadvantaged individuals, including ethnic minorities, displaced persons, victims of domestic violence, people with disabilities, vulnerable youth and women. Through the LINC project (Leveraging Employment Initiatives and Networking to Build Confidence among ethnicities in Georgia) the organisation aims to build confidence and address religious radicalisation among the communities of Akhmeta town and Pankisi Gorge, which are one of the most remote and ethnically diverse parts of Georgia, near the border with Russia. The population in this area consists of Kists and refugees from Chechnya, IDPs from South Ossetia and Georgians, as well as eco-migrants. Poor socio-economic conditions, low quality of education and a lack of social integration have caused further isolation of the region, hampering the development of local ethnic people (Kists), particularly youth and therefore their segregation from their Georgian peers. As a result of diversity and limited opportunities, conflicts between Georgian and Kist youth has been also reported based on religious and cultural misconceptions, as well as the increasing influence of the new Islamic schools and their tensions with the traditional local form of Islam in the valley, as the radical Islam is perceived to isolate their followers from public life.

APPROACH: In order to prevent the ethnic, nationalist and religious radicalisation of young people living in Pankisi Gorge, AAH uses peer education and confidence-building tools, skills development and coaching, combined with an innovative methodology, “Employment Shuttles”, which aims to bring together a diverse group of youth (in terms of ethnicity, religion, vulnerability,

educational background, etc.) from Akhmeta and Pankisi to work collaboratively on their personal and professional skills and employability competences. This approach was developed by AAH in Spain within the framework of the Vives Project and is acknowledged as best practice by the European Commission in promoting the social inclusion and employability of its participants. It is based on the principles of empathy, team work and peer-to-peer support, which enables the establishment of strong ties among the youth from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, prevents radicalisation leading to violence of Kist youth and supports participants to overcome challenges in an environment with limited opportunities.

ACTIVITIES: The Employment Shuttle is a team of 20 people who, with the help of a coach, work together to support one another in their personal and professional development and search for employment. The programme lasts for five months and participants engage in group sessions three times a week on topics such as effective communication, team work, presentation techniques, entrepreneurship, project writing, intercultural relations and conflict resolution. There are two Employment Shuttles supported in the project, one in Akhmeta town (resided by ethnic Georgians) and one in Pankisi Gorge (resided by ethnic Kists). Twice a month the Georgian and Kist participants have joint sessions, where they get to know each other better, acquire important skills to define needs and design joint community projects to address those needs. Throughout the process, many of the project participants have changed their impressions and stereotypical views about one another and they built grounds for further interaction and collaboration. Some of them succeeded in finding employment or established their own small businesses to promote local culture and services.

Further information:

www.facebook.com/employmentshuttles/

Employment and capacity building – Georgia



ხანჯათის რეგიონული განვითარების ფონდი
KAKHETI REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

Kakheti Regional
Development Foundation
Cholokashvili Str. 52
Akhmeta 0900 GEORGIA
krdf@krdf.ge

The Kakheti Regional Development Foundation (KRDF) is a local Georgian organisation founded in 2008 through the support of the Norwegian Refugee Council. KRDF works in eight municipalities of the Kakheti region, providing free legal assistance aimed at internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Abkhazia and Samachablo (war-affected population since 1990). KRDF is also implementing various projects for Chechen refugees in Akhmeta municipality in Pankisi Gorge (Russian-Chechen war-affected population in 1999) and the local population.

KRDF works with 12- to 28-year-old ethnic Kists and Chechen youth in Pankisi Gorge, Akhmeta, Georgia, where there are many refugees and IDPs, and it also supports and works with women in the region. The foundation addresses religious and ethnic radicalisation and gender issues, which emerged in the country after independence. As ethnic and religious identity gained more importance after independence, radical influences have also started to gain ground in some parts of society, causing alienation and limited relations between communities, as well as increased hate speech and verbal confrontation.

APPROACH: KRDF uses education, development, and promotion of development of active civil society intercultural exchanges. KRDF helps to unite the community and improve its socio-economic stability through provision of different services and conducting campaigns for protection of interests, as well as increasing their legal awareness and civic responsibility.

ACTIVITIES: The “Empowering youth in Pankisi Gorge” project aims to support relationships between Georgian, Kist and Chechen youth living in Pankisi Gorge and their development, in order to create links between youth from different backgrounds, establish communication channels and stimulate intercultural understanding. Pankisi youth from different villages attend different vocational and educational courses such as English language, mathematics, Georgian language and literature, dancing, welding, carpentry, bee-keeping, mobile repairing and cooking. These courses play a great role in the development process of youth and contribute to their potential for self-employment and

improvement for boys and girls. The project also includes a small grants scheme, trainings, meetings with opinion leaders and excursions across Georgia. The project activities have contributed to the motivation of youth in Pankisi Gorge, by helping them realise their ideas and projects concerning regional issues.

Besides this project, the organisation also offers free legal consultation in the Kakheti region, providing information, consultation and legal assistance to IDPs from Samachablo and Abkazia and also Chechen refugees residing in the Kakheti region. KRDF also works on promoting gender equality, women's participation and addressing sexual and gender-based violence in the internally displaced people and refugee communities.

Further information:

bit.ly/2mFWAEI

Using sports – United Kingdom



Afristar Foundation

907 Oldham Road,
Manchester, M40 2EE, UK

gbomac@yahoo.com

The Afristar Foundation is a community interest organisation, supporting young people with limited opportunities, in deprived areas of Manchester.

The foundation addresses ethnic and religious radicalisation, particularly focusing on Black youth (African and Caribbean) and the tensions between them and the white community. The foundation is focused on youth development, sports, culture and the preservation of African heritage. Within the sports realm, the organisation implements activities aimed at inclusion of young people and preventing radicalisation which may lead to violence.

There is a strong presence of drug and violent culture in these deprived areas and recently many second-generation British of Somali heritage who are Muslim, Black and deprived have been targeted by religious radicals. The main influencing factors relate to poverty, limited education, deprivation, immigration restrictions, isolation due to systemic exclusion from mainstream society, limited funding for youth projects, culture of mistrust and racial profiling leading to resentment.

APPROACH: The Afristar Foundation uses positive role models, peer education, cultural sensitivity education and democratic citizenship education as approaches in its work with young people. The Afristar Foundation implements projects supported by the Erasmus+ programmes. The Afristar Foundation also uses sports and entertainment to get the attention of young people.

ACTIVITIES: The Afristar Foundation runs drop-in sessions for youth, and organises weekly video games, table tennis and pizza nights, where young people can talk about the challenges ranging from domestic problems to college, personal and family issues, poverty, and other concerns. Then, the foundation discusses issues such as areas they need support in and either signposts them via referrals to services which they may need (social services, unemployment bureaus, education, administrative officers etc.) or provides such support in-house. Camping trips and visits to other cities are also organised, as well as movie nights and basketball evenings, to connect with youth and gain their trust.

Detached sessions are also run within communities, in case young people need immediate support with some issues. The foundation focuses on being proactive, in order to get to young people before those who may potentially radicalise them. The Afristar Foundation's main activity is the Summer Sports Project. As a part of this project, and during drop-in and detached sessions, young people were offered the possibility to go through the training to become coaches, after which they had an opportunity to volunteer and work with other youth. Some of the youth going through the programme ended up enrolling in college, or chose to start careers as sports coaches and fitness instructors.

Sports are a major tool for changing the incentives of deprived young people and making life worth living such that radicalisation leading to violence becomes a non-factor.

Further information:

www.afristarsfoundation.org

Sports for human rights education – Ukraine



PLAY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
Hetmana Mazepy, 28/24
Ivano-Frankivsk
76018 UKRAINE
Loft.cfco@gmail.com



The League of Tolerance started its work at the beginning of 2016, as a volunteer association of artists, human rights defenders, sports coaches and lawyers. They are implementing the national campaign “Play for Human Rights”, which combines human rights education with grassroots sports, involving sports volunteers, physical educators and people who want to use sports in their youth work activities. This campaign was recognised as one of the ten best practices of youth work in Ukraine in November 2017, by the Ministry of Youth and Sport.

APPROACH: The “Play for Human Rights” training course, which is a part of the larger campaign, is a unique approach which provides the opportunity for youth sports workers and volunteers to use human rights education with grassroots sports activities for resolving social problems, especially in the regions affected by armed conflicts and regions hosting refugees or internally displaced people. The activities include youth, but also people with disabilities, Roma communities, former soldiers, and 20% of people over 35 years of age, ensuring diversity in the group, allowing everyone to practise sports and creating a connection between people of different ages, ethnic minorities, different socio-economic backgrounds and rural and urban areas. The idea behind the campaign is that sports workers and coaches, athletes or active citizens can become carriers of peace building potential in their communities, which is why it is important to facilitate that they acquire key competences in human rights education.

The goal of the campaign is to promote inclusion and equality and provide young coaches with mentor support in their future daily work. The league also aims to create role models in society, particularly from minority backgrounds, who will be agents of change, shape values of respect and work on combating discrimination, stereotypes, hate speech and violent radicalisation.

Intercultural learning and human rights education play a central role in the campaign, and the interdisciplinary approach of grassroots sport and human rights education can facilitate recognising and addressing prejudices, combating aggressive and exclusive forms of nationalism in Ukraine, and identify competences necessary for youth social workers in a multicultural and inclusion learning environment.

Sport is used not only as a mental and social activity to keep youth fit and healthy, but it is also used in activities as an interactive model for the whole society, showing inclusion and equality and working towards social changes. Through individual and team approaches, young people are taught to treat their teammates with respect and help each other, learn inter-cultural dialogue, compassion and inclusion, and not to discriminate.

ACTIVITIES: Trainings of trainers, festivals “Play for Human/Children Rights” based on sport inclusion and human rights education, a pilot project on grassroots football for children and youth with disabilities, internally displaced youth and youth from the host community, ethnic minorities, at-risk youth and youth with fewer opportunities.

Participants of trainings of trainers implement their own projects in different communities during the three- to four-month follow-up period, organising public “Play for Human/Children Rights!” aimed at resolving local issues and sharing achieved experiences of using an interdisciplinary approach (grassroots sports and human rights education) with other youth sports workers.

So far, trainings of trainers have been organised in eight cities all over Ukraine, and the programme has 97 graduates and 381 children and young people who took part in the festivals during these courses. Graduates then shared the campaign with 250 colleagues during implementation of their own follow-up initiatives, resulting in a minimum of 4 000 people taking part in the public events and further daily work.

Further information:

www.facebook.com/loft.cfco/

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Open youth work – Austria



Verein Wiener Jugendzentren

Pragerstr. 20

1210 Vienna, AUSTRIA

wieder-jugendzentren@jugendzentren.at

www.jugendzentren.at/

The educational approach of the Association of Youth Centres in Vienna (Verein Wiener Jugendzentren) is based on open youth work. The purpose of open youth work is to offer young people, on the basis of their voluntary involvement, developmental and educational experiences that will equip them to play an active part in democratic society as well as meet their own developmental needs. Open youth work takes place in youth clubs, youth projects, youth centres, youth houses as well as on the street (through detached youth work) (see European Confederation of Youth Clubs). It offers young people a place to be in their spare time, individual support and an open environment to talk. The youth centre is generally open for all young people but tries to focus on those with a poor socio-economic and educational background. Therefore, it also attracts young people who are vulnerable to extremism and violent radical ideas, due to various individual factors such as personal employment situation and level of education, personal identity crisis and perceived lack of opportunities, marginalisation and exclusion. Open youth work focuses on addressing political and religious extremist violence, as well as giving support to develop coping strategies for the psychological interpretations of the material and social conditions, and perceptions of opportunities.

APPROACH: Open youth work's theory of change is "enabling youth – adolescence". Adolescence is a time during which they prepare for employment and life and develop their identity, which is often predetermined by their social and family status. Thus, key objectives of open youth work are enabling self-expression, self-efficacy and creating an appreciative environment for individual and educational growth. The organisation has established a strong network with other social work units and security departments, and their youth workers are trained in the recent developments in radicalisation and in religious and political issues.

ACTIVITIES: Youth workers organise various leisure activities with vulnerable youth, using different socio-pedagogical methods, in order to build respectful relationships based on trust. Young people with extremist tendencies often approach them, and youth workers also do proactive and direct outreach to young people they perceive to be at risk or vulnerable to radical influences. They discuss topics including sexuality, media literacy and issues related to migration, and provide alternative narratives to youth, in order to counteract online and offline propaganda from radical organisations. The youth workers offer those vulnerable youngsters both practical perspectives and spiritual orientation without specifically supporting or downgrading one or the other's religious approach.

Further information:

Publications of the Association of Youth Centres in Vienna (Verein Wiener Jugendzentren) www.jugendzentren.at/publikationen-blogbeitraege/publikationen/

Article on "The preventive role of open youth work in radicalisation and extremism" based on this practice: bit.ly/2jdlEXC

Human rights education and media literacy – France



**International Institute
for Human Rights and Peace**
Maison des Quatrans, 25, Rue de Geôle
14000 Caen, FRANCE
contact@2idhp.eu
www.2idhp.eu

The International Institute for Human Rights and Peace is a non-profit organisation. It aims to develop a culture of peace by promoting equal access to human rights for every citizen. It works on preventing radicalisation leading to violence through human rights education and media literacy. The institute works with young people in vulnerable situations and young people under a court order (e.g. where a judge has set a date for trial of a case where they were involved) with the aim of preventing right-wing and political and religious extremist violence. It addresses individual, as well as relational/microsystem, and community/institutional influencing factors, and works in prisons as spaces of violent radicalisation, addressing the psychological steps of radicalisation, as well as aggression.

APPROACH: The International Institute for Human Rights and Peace uses three pillars.

- ▶ Human rights education through non-formal education. Non-formal education is particularly effective with young people who may have been lured towards violence by radicalised groups, as it allows them to share their experiences, particularly as young people involved in radicalisation may not have access to, or are hostile towards, formal education.
- ▶ Using positive role models when working with youth. For instance, in a project with the juvenile protection administration, the minors under court order meet a journalist to help them to help them to decrypt the mechanisms used by certain radical groups.
- ▶ Using arts for the learning process. Young people can express their feelings on the subject through arts, such as photography. For example, the institute worked with rural youth on addressing certain stereotypes (e.g. about migrants or Muslims) which may lead to radicalisation. After expressing (through arts) those feelings, young people could more rationally discuss the facts, realities and their experiences with those stereotyped groups.

ACTIVITIES: The institute's main project on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence is the ELEM project, which has been implemented in Normandy since 2016. This project pursues two main goals:

- ▶ strengthening the skills and the background of youth workers working with young people under court order
- ▶ raising awareness in young people of freedom of speech and media education.

The main focus is on media literacy, freedom of speech and its limits, teaching youth to critically analyse propaganda. This project has four main steps, which take place over a year: training of youth educators, raising awareness activities with young people, meeting with role models and developing an art project with young people on how to prevent radicalisation. Each year, a new group of young people goes through the programme.

Further information:

"Image de soi, regard sur l'autre", photography project and publication: fr.calameo.com/books/002312084a59ff323fa4e
bit.ly/2DcUCpK

"Education on the freedom of expression and media literacy" project: bit.ly/2aueZOx

Human Rights Education programme: bit.ly/2DyD7gy

Matrix and challenge cards – United Kingdom



Positive Steps
80 Union Street, Oldham OL1 1DJ, UK
davestewart@positive-steps.org.uk

Positive Steps is a local organisation focused on the well-being of young people in the Oldham area of the United Kingdom, by offering a comprehensive set of counselling and support services. The main goal is to support people to succeed in their lives, challenge things that limit their potential, and help people take control of their lives. The target group are people who display prejudice and have emotional issues, anger and depression, and young people who have raised concerns around extremism, both right-wing and religious.

Oldham is a multicultural community which has experienced race riots and community antagonism, and the government does not encourage schools, public organisations and youth workers to discuss extremist narratives and young people's thoughts. Young people do not have the opportunity to learn about each other's beliefs and concerns in schools or youth settings. This can create distorted meanings and narratives, leading to prejudice, fear and conflict.

APPROACH: The matrix and challenge cards have been designed to be used with young people and adults around all areas of their lives, including religious beliefs, their ethnic and cultural identity and political beliefs, as well as young people who have been referred with concerns from schools and communities about extremism and radicalisation. The work is focused on both right-wing political and religious radicalisation. Trainings with cards are done in schools, colleges and with local authority staff, including youth workers. The cards help us explore the beliefs, values and intentions, create new meanings and develop new narratives.

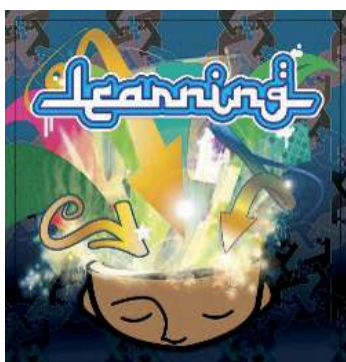
ACTIVITIES: Matrix and challenge cards are used to talk to young people and explore their intentions, beliefs and values, the effects of their behaviour and how others see them, as well as their powers, and what they want for themselves and their families and communities. Matrix cards have been specifically developed to help practitioners fully engage and explore key issues with young people around the "Prevent programme". There are 17 cards designed to engage young people in dialogue about themselves, their community and

the world. The cards use Islamic imagery to enable young people to discuss their own beliefs and values. This can help them to share the different meanings relevant to their lives. The matrix cards raise awareness of issues young people are facing in their lives and build resilience in individuals and communities. Challenge cards have been specifically developed. They help practitioners fully engage and explore key issues with young people, such as far-right views and activities. The cards open up conversations and will stimulate individual and group discussion about right-wing issues. The training takes workers through a number of individual and group work exercises to challenge and identify generalisations and distortions behind their extremism.

Further information:

Metacards website www.metacards.co.uk

Positive Steps website www.Positive-Steps.co.uk



Street mediation – Norway



Norwegian Red Cross
Hausmannsgate 7, 0186 Oslo, NORWAY
www.rodekors.no/tilbudene/gatemegling/

The Norwegian Red Cross is part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, providing humanitarian assistance around the world without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. The organisation's work is based on voluntary engagement, with the goal of reaching out quickly and efficiently to people who need help. One of their areas of work is also focused on teaching young people in Norway how to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner without using violence.

Recognising that violent radicalisation can start at a very young age, the Norwegian Red Cross works with youth from 13 to 25 years old, to equip them to master their own conflicts and mediate each other's conflicts. Although the goal is to prevent violence in society at large, there are also groups of youth which are identified as being particularly at risk of being susceptible to violent influences. The programme is adapted based on the target group, and certain skills are taught at each level. The programme has been developed in co-operation with the Norwegian mediation service in order to work on crime prevention. The implementation is based on collaboration with many local actors including leisure clubs, school, outreach, police, social services, teachers, conflict councils and refugees.

APPROACH: In *Gatemegling* or street mediation, youth are trained to recognise and express feelings and needs that arise in a conflict. As these emotions and reactions may result in the use of physical or mental violence, the Red Cross works on preventing destructive conflicts. The idea behind this approach is that young people themselves are best suited to change the causes which create insecurity in their environment; they only need the right tools. Thus, peer-to-peer action is the main approach. The methodology is based on active learning through role play games, activities and exercises. If the programme is more extensive, adult street mediators may mediate in conflict situations between young people.

ACTIVITIES: Street mediation involves three stages of education. The first stage is the basic conflict workshop, where basic awareness of the conflict, causes of conflict, anger, emotions and triggers, and opportunities are learnt. Non-violent communications are promoted to emphasise the need for considerate communication methods. The workshop is implemented for 15 hours over six weeks, after which the meditation workshop is organised, teaching concrete skills in conflict mediation, and how we can help resolve the conflicts without taking part in them. The focus is on youth being role models in their communities, raising awareness about their identity and practising various mediation techniques. Following the additional 15 hours for the second stage, the young people go through role play conflict mediation, after which they are certified as street mediators. In addition, some young people participate in a 20-hour instructor workshop to become trainers in the methodology, together with adult instructors.

The training and particularly certification are important for youth with few opportunities and limited education, as it gives them an opportunity to learn concrete applicable skills which they can use in their community context.

Further information:

www.rodekors.no/tilbudene/gatemebling

Research and awareness-raising – Kosovo



KCSS
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

Kosovar Centre for Security Studies
Str. Sylejman Vokshi Block B, Entry
2, No. 1 10000, Prishtina, KOSOVO
arife.muji@gmail.com

The Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) is an independent policy research centre dedicated to security sector development and reform in Kosovo and the Western Balkans. The goal of the centre is to promote principles of good governance, integrity and resilience, and offer an alternative expertise in security studies in the region.

The centre conducts research, events, training, advocacy and direct policy advice, publishes reports, policy analysis and policy briefs, and organises conferences, round tables, lectures and debates in collaboration with regional and international partners.

One of the main research programmes – the programme on countering and preventing violent extremism – was founded in 2015 after KCSS first published the report titled “Report into inquiring causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens’ involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq”. Before that, the KCSS team was extensively involved in opinion making by providing assessments on the security risks deriving from the increase in violent extremist groups. The programme intends to analyse violent extremism as a phenomenon and prevent violent extremism at a community level. This programme is implemented at the local level in all municipalities in Kosovo, involving relevant actors, such as municipal representatives, representatives of civil society, the security sector, Islamic Community of Kosovo and the media. At the central level, the KCSS has been involved in drafting the “National Strategy against Violent Extremism”, partaking in drafting policies on violent extremism, advocating through research etc.

APPROACH: The centre’s work on violent extremism includes research at the policy and academic level, as well as field research. One of the main purposes of the programme is raising awareness among the citizens about the risks of violent extremism, using methods such as organising lectures and discussions with high-school students in Kosovo.

ACTIVITIES: As a part of the “United against violent extremism” project and the Countering Violent Extremism programme, the KCSS team has visited around 100 high schools and has met with more than 1 000 young students, organising debates with young people in schools and round tables with municipality and community representatives.

The team is engaged at the community/grass-roots level, involving representatives of communities in its discussions, conferences and other activities. The centre also works on the role of women in prevention of radicalisation. In August 2017, they organised an event, “Strengthening the Role of Women in Prevention of Violent Extremism: Achievements and Challenges of Vushtrri Municipality”, focusing on the necessity of co-operation between the government of Kosovo, religious communities and civil society as a strong triangle in the prevention of violent extremism. The event highlighted the economic empowerment and education of women as a key factor in empowering women’s role in preventing violent extremism.

Further info:

Report inquiring into the causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq, available at: bit.ly/1GdFjVO

Report “Reintegration of returning foreign fighters: what approach best suits Kosovo?”, available at: bit.ly/2B1YqEI

Report “Women in Violent Extremism, Lessons learned from Kosovo”, available at: bit.ly/2k10OnY

Lessons, findings and concluding remarks

LESSONS FOR PREVENTION

The above-described practices are a quantitatively small sample of various youth work activities undertaken with the goal of contributing to the prevention of violent radicalisation of young people. However, the sample offers an overview of qualitative information, showcasing the interdisciplinary nature of the youth work and the variety of approaches and activities that prevent violent radicalisation and promote an inclusive and more equal society. These qualitative data – the literature review, the evidence from the selected practices and the findings from the “Youth Work against Violent Radicalisation” conference in Malta, in November 2017 – allow us to draw lessons and provide recommendations on how youth work could contribute to this process.

While youth work plays an important role and may contribute through various interventions to the prevention of violent radicalisation, the theory, as well as the practices presented here, indicate that the main purpose of youth work goes beyond dealing with this problem, and instead addresses various aspects of young persons’ social, emotional, physical, mental and intellectual development. In some practices, it may be difficult to identify an immediate relation between youth work and the problem of radicalisation leading to violence. This testifies to the fact that youth work as such, as an offer of social, educational, political, leisure time positive activities for young people has already in its mission the objectives of offering spaces for learning, living together, development for young people. The focus on radicalisation comes very often as a new focus of the work or a new problem young people are facing, while the types of interventions are not that new in the field of youth work.

The purpose of youth work is to invest in young people, empower them, and offer them support, learning spaces, opportunities and alternatives for their development and future. All of these aspects are important within the context of radicalisation leading to violence, and this is why youth work may play a substantial role in countering this process, by identifying radicalisation in its early stages, strengthening young people's resilience by helping to develop their values, attitudes, critical thinking abilities and opinions through education. The analysis of the practices indicates that the approaches and activities used by youth work are the most transferable elements, as different youth work strategies can be used in diverse contexts and could be beneficial for this area of work, if carefully adapted to this new challenge and continuously improved.

Some of the key lessons and findings that can be identified from the practices are, in brief:

- ▶ adopting a holistic approach
- ▶ developing peer-horizontal and trust-based relations with young people
- ▶ building partnerships with other community actors
- ▶ empowering young people – developing their competences
- ▶ providing young people with alternatives and role models
- ▶ dealing explicitly with messages inciting to violence and hate speech.

Adopting a holistic approach

The practices included in this study use different approaches, but within their diversity, the common thread is their holistic view of the issue: these practices work on intercultural education, human rights, peace education, media literacy, citizenship education, information and counselling and conflict transformation.

This holistic approach is based on youth work's holistic view of young people's development. Additionally, knowing that radicalisation occurs due to a variety of influencing factors, and is very different in diverse contexts, it cannot be prevented with a single or punctual response. Thus, all existing and new manifestations of radicalisation leading to violence should be analysed in a holistic manner, with an adequate and all-encompassing response. This emphasises the need for understanding the interdisciplinary nature of youth work, by keeping in mind the different aspects of youth work including, but not limited to, education, guidance, mental and psychological support and social work. On the other hand, this also requires recognising the limits of youth work alone and acknowledging the role of factors and influences that are beyond the reach of youth work, such as individual, family, community and wider systemic influences on young persons' development.

Developing peer-horizontal and trust-based relations with young people

The examples of youth work included in the study illustrate the value and role of peer relations, and youth work allows the setting of non-hierarchical relations with young people. In the analysed practices, it is clear that the peer and horizontal relations between youth workers and youth allow for an easier confrontation with sensitive and personal issues. Moreover, youth work can create spaces where young people can learn from other young people and develop positive relations with their peers, in a safe space.

Therefore, the building of a relationship, with differentiated roles and responsibilities but based on trust, co-operation and co-decision is a very important contribution of youth work, not only to the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence, but also to building young people's social capital, and supporting them to live together, despite differences. The examples from Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina illustrate the positive impact and ways of using peer education in preventing violent radicalisation.

Building partnerships with other community actors

The practices indicate that co-operation with other partners of the community is very important for the success of preventive initiatives. The examples above show very positive experiences of co-operation of youth organisations and youth workers with the formal education system, religious groups, and police or with the staff of correctional centres, as was done in the cases of Norway and Belgium. However, when it comes to co-operating with security services, there is a need for a thorough reflection on how this can be done, without losing the trust of young people.

This co-operation is easier with the education sector, for example. At the level of the Council of Europe countries, in partnership with the European Wergeland Centre, a new education campaign "Free to Speak, Safe to Learn: Democratic Schools for All" will begin to address radicalisation within schools.⁸

Formation of these partnerships is not a quick and easy process – it takes time, commitment and energy of youth workers, but it also ensures that the values and approaches of youth work are transferred and incorporated into the entire community. What must also be kept in mind is how much youth work can co-operate with all the other sectors without losing its specificity as a safe space for young people to ask questions and debate issues that are important for them.

8. For more information on this campaign and background report, see bit.ly/2mFHPIk.

Empowering young people – developing their competences

The practices analysed show that preventing radicalisation leading to violence cannot be limited to reacting to radicalisation. Rather, a holistic preventive approach requires the empowerment of young people, developing their competences in different fields such as human rights, intercultural dialogue, media literacy, citizenship skills, as well as building their professional and transferable capacities by involving them in different trainings, non-formal education opportunities, apprenticeship opportunities or Erasmus+ projects.

This allows young people to have more opportunities and better future perspectives in their personal and professional lives. With those competences young people are able to actively react, critically but constructively, to many factors influencing radicalisation leading to violence (discrimination, lack of opportunities, social injustices, cultural intolerance ...). Finally those competences will allow them to detect and counter the violent radicalisation messages they face on the internet or within some groups.

Therefore, empowering young people and developing their competences is an important tool to combat radicalisation leading to violence, and this is clearly indicated in all the examples, focusing on developing young people's skills and knowledge, as is done through digital media skills and associated campaigns in Belgium and Montenegro.

Providing young people with alternatives and role models

Prevention of radicalisation leading to violence also requires youth work to present viable alternatives to young people. These can be potential opportunities and alternatives through building professional skills and capacities, creation of employment opportunities, particularly where youth unemployment is high, as is the case in the context of Georgia. It can also involve various other activities which will occupy the time of young people by giving them constructive opportunities, for example through sports, which gives youth a healthy and meaningful way to use their spare time, as is done in the case of the Afristar Foundation in the UK and Play for Human Rights in Ukraine.

Dealing explicitly with messages inciting to violence and hate speech

The holistic approach and the development of different competences should not play against dealing explicitly with messages of violent radicalisation. At a certain point within a well-reflected process and on the basis of mutual

trust between youth workers and young people, these messages and ideas should be discussed and reflected upon. As young people are daily exposed to various messages, a responsible youth worker cannot ignore their reach and influence. This is a sensitive and unavoidable part of most of the analysed preventive practices. It requires the combination of mutual trust, honesty and expertise, because the logic and mechanisms of radicalisation messages should be disclosed, discussed, confronted and analysed with youth. This can be done either through individual work, such as in the case of Positive Steps in the UK, or various online and offline campaigns confronting radicalisation leading to violence, such as those conducted in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina or Belgium.

NEXT STEPS: CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF YOUTH WORK IN PREVENTING VIOLENT RADICALISATION

The research and lessons learned indicate that there are still many remaining challenges and needs faced by youth work in dealing with violent radicalisation. These challenges and needs depend on the context, and the next steps in prevention of radicalisation should be devised based on the specific setting, type of radicalisation, and factors influencing the process of radicalisation leading to violence. However, some general tendencies are identifiable and they can be summarised as follows:

- ▶ recognising the limited impact of youth work in the wider context
- ▶ need for a deeper understanding and recognition of the phenomena
- ▶ demand for further training and networking
- ▶ devising approaches to working on the topic
- ▶ addressing practical challenges of implementing preventive work
- ▶ improving current practices and their impact.

Recognising the limited impact of youth work in the wider context

- ▶ Young people are influenced by various social and economic conditions and cultural expectations, community laws, non-formal systems and patriarchal context. Thus, youth work needs to take into account the wider context in which young people live, and recognise that it can have a limited influence on certain aspects of their lives.
- ▶ The attitudes of members of the “majority” towards the “minority” (e.g. Muslims, Roma), hate speech and verbal confrontation, as well as

stigmatisation, make it more difficult for youth workers to reach out to the marginalised groups and be accepted by them.

- ▶ The media, specifically those reporting on “spectacular events” and those attracting youth to radical ideas, contribute to shaping young people’s attitudes and opinions. Political leaders oversimplifying geopolitical conflicts or phenomena like migration or delinquency also use the media to spread intolerant narratives. Youth work in this context needs to counter on a daily basis these radical or discriminatory messages and “compete” with the different messages and influences.

Need for a deeper understanding and recognition of the phenomena

- ▶ Violent radicalisation of young people is a new topic and there is a lack of understanding of the phenomena and a shortage of trained experts in this area. This makes it more difficult for youth workers to devise strategies and approaches for working on the prevention efforts or to find their role in this new field.
- ▶ There is a need to better understand the multi-causal factors influencing violent radicalisation and why young people get involved in such groups, the terms and the language of extremism propaganda and the thinking behind them and the link and interaction between a religious practice and an everyday life in a secular society. This requires further research of this new phenomenon – mapping, clearer terminology and concepts.
- ▶ It is important for youth workers to recognise the first signs of radicalisation leading to violence and know how to approach young people targeted by extremism.
- ▶ There is a need to debunk the myths about violent radicalisation, right-wing ideologies and religions – this will require a better understanding, openness, safe spaces and willingness to listen, learn, build trust and engage.

Demand for further training and networking

- ▶ Considering the challenges of new topics and the shortage of professionals in this field, there is a lack of methodology and capacity of youth workers to deal explicitly with this topic. Thus, there is a need to organise meetings and seminars for exchanging ideas and approaches and specialised training on youth radicalisation for some of the key actors – youth workers, local authorities, teachers and parents.

- ▶ There is a need for better digital skills and competences to work with youth, and these can be built through targeted training for youth workers.

Devising approaches to working on this topic

- ▶ Based on the practices and examples from the conference, it is recommended that work on this topic begins with a non-discriminatory, objective and critical approach to radicalisation, without stigmatising any group when addressing this issue. As youth work is funded by governments, youth workers need to find ways to navigate the official agenda and ensure that they are working towards addressing young people's needs.
- ▶ It is important to focus on inclusiveness and integration, and for youth work to reach out to youth in suburbs and rural areas, connecting with young people who are less likely to benefit from traditional youth work activities, training and networking opportunities.
- ▶ Work in a long-term perspective, recognising the interdisciplinary nature of youth work, with planned co-operation with other actors, including parents, teachers, public and private institutions etc.
- ▶ Youth work needs to create safe spaces and an atmosphere of trust with young people in order to facilitate the sharing of experiences so that young people feel confident to specifically discuss the topic. In the context where radicalisation and violence are of interest to security services, it is challenging for youth workers to build and maintain trust with young people, while also abiding by law and reporting potentially dangerous cases.
- ▶ Youth work should work more on promoting democratic values and equality, addressing hate speech from the start and focus on challenging it. This is particularly relevant in the contexts where right-wing ideas have become mainstream and more acceptable, and there is an even greater need to challenge that narrative. Youth work needs to be more political again and work for creating a more open society.

Addressing practical challenges of implementing preventive work

- ▶ There is a lack of resources for doing the preventive work: funding, time, highly trained and qualified youth workers, specialised material, further training of youth workers, and the short-term nature of projects and activities in this area, due to limited funding. In order to have a long-term

approach, states should allocate the necessary resources, and guarantee the continuity of youth centres as hubs for disadvantaged young people in the area prone to radicalisation leading to violence.

- ▶ The lack of co-operation between different sectors: schools, families, NGOs, police, social services, religious groups and other stakeholders means that the process of radicalisation is not fully addressed. Even if the willingness to co-operate exists, there are many difficulties due to the different methodologies or approaches used in their work.
- ▶ There is also no networking between, within and across countries on this topic which results in the absence of well co-ordinated national, regional and local “plans”, leaving the co-operation to the spontaneous initiatives of some actors.
- ▶ The results of youth work, and particularly of preventive work, are difficult to measure, especially as youth work is concerned with the change of mentality and attitudes which occur over a longer time period. The lack of measurable results and evidence on the utility and success of the strategies and approaches youth workers use means that it is challenging to know which strategies, approaches and activities may be most relevant and bring the desired results.

Improving current practices and their impact

- ▶ Make use of good practices, powerful stories, alternative narratives and role models in youth work activities to empower young people, and promote them in co-operation with mainstream and new media.
- ▶ Improve evaluation of the impact of changes occurring from activities and programmes aimed at preventing radicalisation leading to violence.
- ▶ Advocate for recognition at government level of the current youth work practices for the prevention of violent radicalisation, as well as recognition of the importance of media and information literacy for young people, and youth information for society. There is a need to develop relationships with state actors to ensure sustainability of youth work strategies and activities in this area.

CONCLUSIONS

Youth work can make an important contribution to the prevention of violent radicalisation by empowering young people, supporting them in challenges they face and strengthening their resilience to violent ideologies by developing

their critical thinking and helping them recognise the harm violence can cause to them and their communities.

Twenty practices included in this research showcase the diversity of methods and approaches and different perspectives youth work uses in diverse contexts, and how it can shape young people's attitudes, perceptions and behaviours.

However, the research also highlights that youth work cannot be the panacea to violent radicalisation, and the issue requires a wider involvement of various stakeholders, including community, education sector and state institutions, among others.

The question for youth work is whether youth work should specifically address this problem or focus more generally on its "traditional" issues such as community cohesion, discrimination, access to information and intercultural work, which are much broader themes, but nonetheless have an impact on prevention of radicalisation.

In order to make the most meaningful contribution to the prevention efforts, youth work should focus on its strengths and advantages, for example on issues of youth empowerment, participation, learning and inclusion. At the same time, youth work actors should seek to better understand the context and the problem of violent radicalisation, and engage in continuous learning and reflection on the challenge and how to tackle it.

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Annex I

QUESTIONNAIRE

Basic information about organisation

1. Name of institution/organisation/group/youth workers, address, country, contact details.
2. What is your mission? (2-3 sentences)

Working with youth

3. Which groups of young people do you work with and where? (1 paragraph)
4. Give some brief examples of your past activities. (1 paragraph)

Addressing violent youth radicalisation

5. What type of violent radicalisation do you try to address (e.g. religious, ethnic, political etc.)? (1 paragraph)
6. What are some of the main causes and reasons for youth violent radicalisation you are working on? (1 paragraph)
7. What types of tools, approaches and mechanisms do you use in working on preventing violent radicalisation of young people (e.g. peer education, human rights and democratic citizenship education, using positive role models, Erasmus+ programmes etc)? (1-2 paragraphs)
8. What are the major challenges you encounter in your work aiming to prevent violent radicalisation of young people? (1 paragraph)
9. What would you need to be more effective in your work? (1 paragraph)

Selected example

10. Please provide an example of a project/activity/initiative which is particularly relevant/successful – title and main characteristics (duration, mechanisms, tools used and outcomes) (2-3 paragraphs)
11. You can use this space to share links and/or additional information.

Radicalisation leading to violence has become a growing issue of concern in Europe and its neighbouring regions. This emerging concern has highlighted the need to work with young people in order to address the root causes of extremism, but also promote living together and community cohesion. Youth work can play an important role in this respect.

This study includes concepts that can be useful for youth work practitioners in understanding the phenomenon of radicalisation leading to violence. It includes 20 examples of youth work practices, grouped in five categories: peer education; online campaigns and digital media; co-operation with other stakeholders; providing opportunities; and education and training. It also analyses the needs and challenges youth work faces.

Youth work empowers young people to have a greater degree of autonomy, self-determination and control over their lives in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible way. Youth work also supports young people to deal with challenges they face and strengthens their resilience and critical thinking.

This study was prepared with input from the following partners: SALTO EuroMed, SALTO EECA, SALTO SEE, and the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and the United Kingdom.



The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

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EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE