

# TerRaToolkit

Community approach to Radicalisation



*European Network based  
prevention and learning program*

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TERRA is a two year, Europe wide, network based prevention and learning project, funded by the European Commission, DG Home Affairs. It is carried out by Impact Knowledge and Advice Centre, Amsterdam, and AVIIM, Madrid.

Its toolkit is aimed at professionals Europe wide and addresses the full spectrum of the commonest forms of radicalisation currently in Europe.

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For full details of the professionals who have assisted in the creation of this tool kit, please refer to TERRA's web page [www.terra-net.eu](http://www.terra-net.eu)

The full toolkit and other documents can be downloaded free of charge at [www.terratoolkit.eu](http://www.terratoolkit.eu)

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# INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

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## 1 TERRA

TERRA is a two year Europe wide network based prevention and learning project, funded by the European Commission, DG Home Affairs. It is carried out by Impact Knowledge and Advice Centre, Amsterdam, and AVIIM, Madrid.

TERRA takes a preventative approach towards radicalisation leading to terrorism. On the basis of state of the art research and consultations with front liners, academic experts, victims of terrorism and former radicals, it proposes a community approach designed to address the grievances which form the motivational factors of radicalisation, identify and halt the progress of an individual through the radicalisation process and finally, if necessary, prevent them from undertaking a terrorist act.

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## 2 TERRA TOOLKIT

This toolkit takes the community approach as a starting point. It is primarily meant to support existing or new networks of teachers, social workers, law enforcement, religious leaders, and local and national policy makers on exchanging information on young people or for example on people in a troubled neighbourhood. It also informs journalists and policy makers on influences they may have on background factors of radicalisation.

Our tools are aimed at professionals Europe wide, and they attempt to address all of the commonest forms of extremism in Europe – right wing extremism, left wing extremism, Islamist extremism, separatism and single issue extremism. One tool – that for religious leaders – focusses only on Islamist extremism.

**The toolkit comprises:**

- A general background document which covers the objectives, presuppositions and starting points, implications for use and implementation.
- Separate tools for each target group
- Video material
- Website with background information (our literature review, links to background documents for each target group, a bibliography and an overview of relevant links to preventative programmes or possible partners).

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## 3 OUR TOOLS

TERRA has produced a series of documents, each tailor made for professional groups that come into contact with young people vulnerable to radicalisation. Their aim is to raise awareness about radicalisation and how it might be visible. We provide a list of possible indicators, and suggest the value of working together in a coordinated way to take a preventative approach. Here, we'd like to introduce some starting points relevant for the development and the use of the tools:

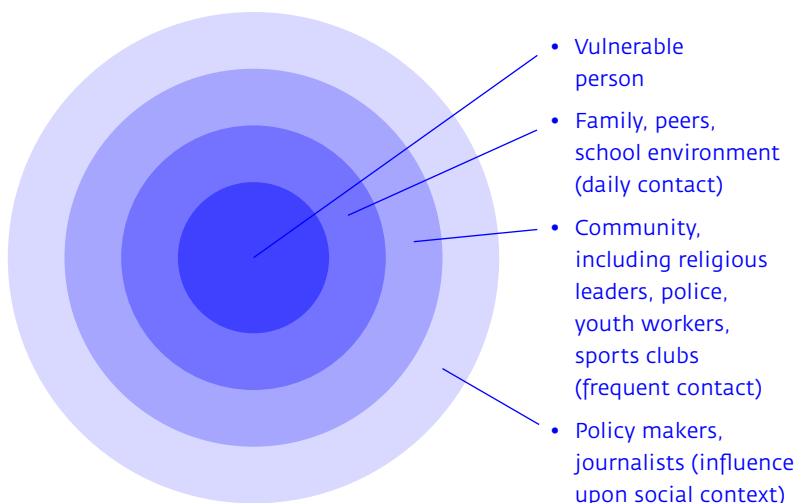
- 1 The target groups and the importance of a community approach;
- 2 TERRA's understanding of radicalisation processes;
- 3 Important remarks on the use of 'indicators'.

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## 4 THE IMPORTANCE OF A COMMUNITY APPROACH

TERRA focuses its attention on prevention by early recognition of radicalisation processes. This recognition needs to take place in the immediate environment of the young people at risk. Alongside parents and peers, this environment consists of professionals in different disciplines, like school teachers, youth workers, religious leaders, or police officers. They are not experts in terrorism, but they can be the eyes and ears observing signs that can be seen as 'early warnings'. In order to make sense of what they see and hear, it is important that they share their worries about a person, to get a better picture and to discuss how to approach and monitor the person.

The principle goal of adopting a community approach is to protect the security both of the vulnerable person who is radicalising, and that of their immediate and broader context. When we talk about families and front liners, we can see that these family members and professionals will come into contact with this vulnerable person with varying degrees of frequency.



Each ring within this circle model has a different kind of contact with the vulnerable person. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to family members or professionals in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has gradually gathered a new set of friends, leaving behind his old peer group. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this change is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.

In the approach which we suggest, representatives from each ring are given a time and space in which they can meet. They are provided with awareness raising and informative material about radicalisation (for example, the documents which make up the TERRA tool kit). They can be existing networks, using this information to deal with this aspect of their work, or new networks, with specific attention for radicalisation.

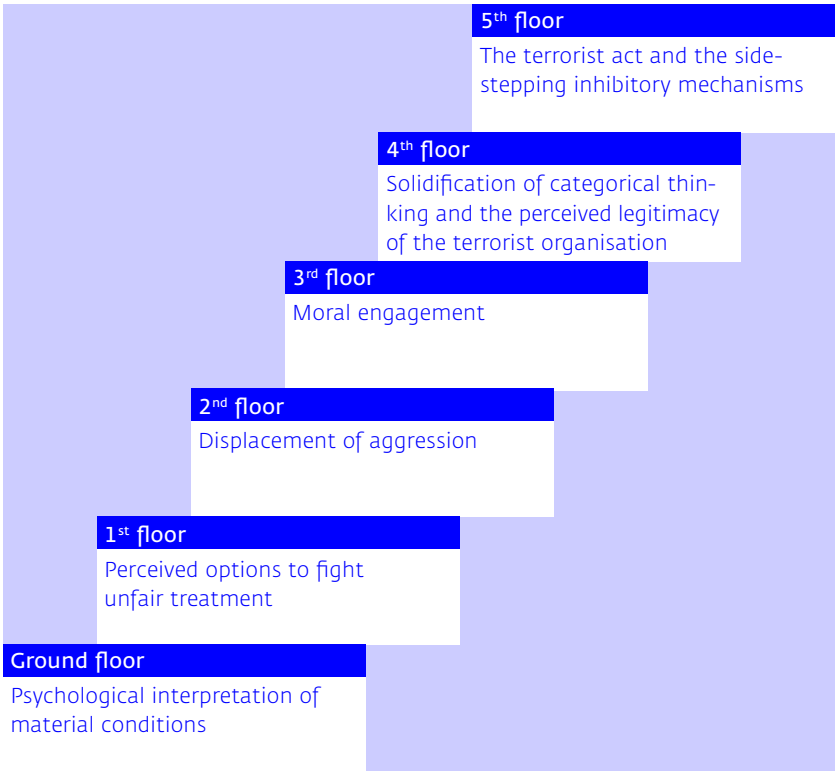
The TERRA toolkit is comprised of complementary tools for:

- Teachers and youth workers;
- Community police officers;
- Prison, probation and parole officers;
- Religious leaders;
- Local Governments.

It also offers policy advice for national governments, and inspiration for journalists. All documents can be downloaded for free on [www.terratookit.eu](http://www.terratookit.eu).

## 5 WHAT IS RADICALISATION?

Definitions of the term 'radicalisation' are manifold partly – due to its use in the political arena where definitions are usually motivated by policy choices. Also academic definitions often seem to be coloured by the specific discipline, and most of them suffer from lack of precision. Most definitions have in common that they refer to an individual process, often strongly influenced by group processes. During this process, the dominant political order is rejected, as well as dialogue, compromise and tolerance as means to bring change. Instead, violence is more and more adopted as an appropriate method to attain certain goals. Thus, at some point, radicalisation can (but does not necessarily) lead to terrorism. This process has been visualized by Fathali Moghaddam in a 'Staircase model', which is central to the TERRA toolkit.



Based upon The Staircase to Terrorism (Moghaddam 2005)

*To deal with radicalisation and terrorism  
we have to think of long term global policies and  
processes that are involved with democratisation;  
we need to go beyond nationalistic thinking.*

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The Staircase model shows a kind of decision making process. A radicalisation process is the movement from one floor to the next. On each "floor," there are doors which could be opened, or not. Whether a person stays on one floor or climbs further to the next depends upon whether they experience the doors and the spaces as open or as closed. As someone climbs the Staircase, they see less and less choices as being open to them. This can mean that they harm themselves, others, or both, if this seems like the only possible outcome.

On the ground floor, elements of fairness and just treatment are crucial. If someone feels that he, and his fellow members of an ethnic, religious, political or even professional group do not have the same advantages as those from other groups, this sense of unfairness can guide an individual's behaviour, leading him up the staircase. The sense that he is unable to influence this situation through legitimate means can lead him to progress to the first floor, which Moghaddam entitles "perceived options to fight unfair treatment." On this stair, an individual's progress up the staircase can be halted by having access to legitimate means through which to address the perceived unfairness. These means may be, for example, legal proceedings, or the opportunity to participate in democratic processes which can positively influence the situation of his group. If these options are not available to him, however, his sense of injustice may be crystallised yet further, leading him to the next floor.

On the second floor, some individuals feel that 'injustices' which they experience cannot be redressed through legitimate means, and these perceptions form the basis for a new morality. This is where a person develops interest in radical ideology and solutions. In fact, this is still relatively harmless, until the radical group comes in, and supply meets the demand. When a person decides to join a radical group, he enters the third floor.

On the third floor, "moral engagement", the thinking of the group becomes more developed within the individual, leading him to believe that an ideal society is achievable, and that any means are justified to achieve it. It is on this floor that commitment to a terrorist organisation and/or cause takes place.

Moghaddam suggests that once an individual has progressed to the fourth floor, "solidification of categorical thinking and perceived legitimacy of the terrorist organisation" takes place. At this point, the radical group along with its parallel morality, have become central to his daily life. He now functions as a member of a terrorist cell, from which he receives a great deal of positive attention, both from a recruiter and from a cell leader. In the case of lone-wolf, 'self-generated' terrorist individuals and small groups, the reinforcement of behaviour is often through the internet. This reinforcement is also sustained through a 'parallel universe' that is created by the terrorist individual, a universe that is completely secretive and sees mainstream society as evil and a justifiable target for terrorist attacks.

The fifth and last floor is entitled "the terrorist act and sidestepping inhibitory mechanisms." At this stage, the individual, now a fully fledged terrorist either as a lone wolf of a terrorist cell member, categorises civilians firmly as "them" in the "us and them" formulation, and justifies violence against them in this way. The terrorist act is carried out through sidestepping mechanisms which usually prevent civilians from harming one another (such as pity), through the suddenness of the terrorist act and the belief that the act is perpetrated against an enemy population.



**FATHALI MOGHADDAM**  
PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY  
DIRECTOR OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM  
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, USA

In order to link the progression up the staircase directly to the target groups of TERRA, we use the following terminology to describe the process:

*RISKS AND RESILIENCE* describes the ground floor, explaining what factors might motivate an ordinary civilian to develop an interest in radical ideas.

*DEALING WITH YOUNGSTERS DEVELOPING SYMPATHY FOR RADICAL IDEAS* deals with changes in ideology which an individual might experience and show on the first floor.

*WHAT IF THEY GO LOOKING FOR A RADICAL GROUP TO JOIN?* This chapter deals with the second floor of the staircase model. It is at this point that supply meets demand and people searching for a radical group come into contact with radical groups searching for vulnerable people.

*IF THEY INTEGRATE INTO THE RADICAL GROUP* considers what might be visible on the third floor, once membership of a group is being confirmed.

*IF THEY TURN INTO HARD CORE RADICALS* covers indicators which may be visible on the fourth and fifth floors.

## 6 ON THE USE OF 'INDICATORS'

The starting point for the TERRA Toolkit is the idea that the processes described above have some characteristics that will sooner or later become visible for those in the environment of a radicalising person. For example changes in behaviour, vocabulary, appearance or choice of friends. Knowing how those changes can, to a certain extent represent indicators for the processes described will facilitate early identification of radicalisation. Thinking in terms of indicators can, however be tricky. All too soon, this might suggest a 'checklist' that says 'radicalising person' when some boxes are ticked. We are keen to steer clear of this. Therefore, we'd like to make some important general remarks here on working with indicators.

- 1 The main emphasis in programmes designed to address radicalisation tends to be laid upon identity formation within the young target population. Supporting adolescents in dealing with issues like identity formation and self esteem is easy to justify. Yet, doing so specifically and overtly with the intention of preventing radicalisation may result in the targeted adolescents becoming unnecessarily labelled as 'radicals'. Because of this concern, it is essential that any attempts to address radicalisation are aimed at the broad target groups, singling out only individuals who show cause for concern, and never targeting specific ethnic or political groups.
- 2 The element of **change** is crucial in the interpretation of observed indicators. A certain indicator might be part of someone's normal conduct; then it is insignificant as an indicator of radicalisation. A certain development should be visible if someone is in the process of radicalising.
- 3 Possible radicalisation cannot be identified from a single indicator. It can only be identified if several indicators are present. Signals should be clarified and verified by considering other surrounding factors.
- 4 The observation of overall behavioral patterns in the individual in question is vital. A strong focus on 'unique' indicators of radicalisation is less effective. Therefore, we recommend a community approach, which means that professionals can discuss a case together, from their different perspectives, in order to get more of an overview.

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## 7 IMPLEMENTATION OF TERRA'S TOOLS

For TERRA's tools to be implemented to maximum benefit, its very helpful if a few things are already in place.

### PRIVACY REGULATIONS

In most European countries, laws or constructions such as a report and advice centre for radicalisation or safety and security networks, are already in place. These allow the exchange of information between professionals which in other circumstances would have been confidential. It is vital that you check what the laws in your country state about this exchange.

### EXPERTS

TERRA is based upon a community approach, which involves the exchange of information between professional people about an individual they are concerned might be radicalising. For guidance and support during this process, it can be very helpful to have an expert – or several – who can offer advice. These people could be academic experts on the subject, themselves former radicals, or other people with specific expertise on this subject.

Working as a network offers good possibilities to find the right person to support and coach young people vulnerable to radicalisation. Once someone is integrated in a group, however, and a deradicalisation process is needed, this is often beyond the capacities in the network. Every network therefore needs a deradicalisation specialist who can coach young people on their way back, or who can support the professionals and parents in dealing with the radicalising person.

### TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

Training and awareness raising activities for professionals can provide substance to prevention activities. Please see TERRA's website for more information and resources.



# MANUAL TEACHERS & YOUTH WORKERS

## Radicalisation and how it's relevant to you

### A MANUAL FOR TEACHERS AND YOUTH WORKERS

*This manual includes information about signs that a young person may be radicalising, some tips about how you can make contact with them to discuss this sensitive issue, and how you might think about working together with other professionals like law enforcement and social services. It has been produced by TERRA, a European wide network-based learning program. This advice is part of a complete toolkit, created for local and national governments, and for front liners coming into professional contact with vulnerable individuals or groups who may be at risk of radicalising.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

This manual is about radicalisation, and has been written for secondary school teachers, and other professionals who come into frequent contact with young people.

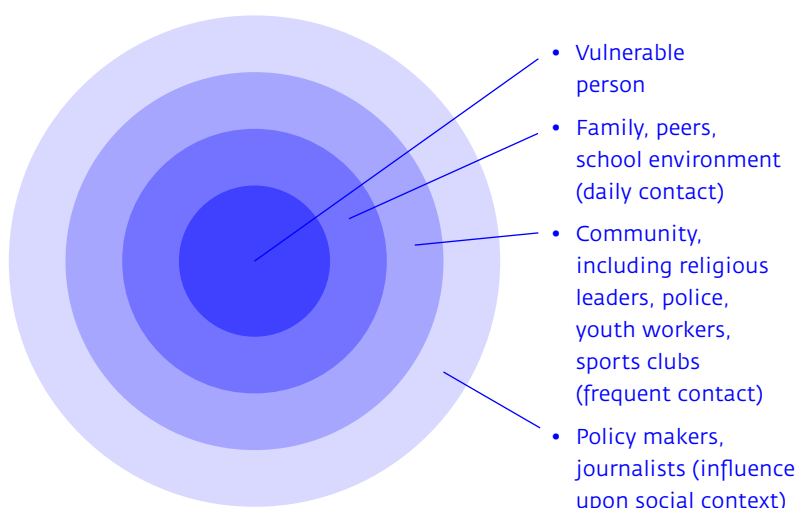
We hope that, when you have read it, you might:

- Be more aware of the possibility that someone within your target group is at risk of radicalising;
- Know what some of the causes of this process might be;
- Know what some of the possible signs of this process are;
- Be aware of the other professional groups which could be involved in influencing this process towards a positive outcome, and providing support both for you and for the person you have concerns about;
- Feel empowered to take action by making contact with those groups and by approaching the person you feel may be vulnerable.

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## 2 WHY YOU?

A young person who is seeking their identity can be greatly influenced by the people they have around them. As someone working regularly with this group in a professional capacity, your job puts you in a perfect position to notice radicalisation. You might see changes in their behaviour, appearance or interactions with you or with their peer group. Here is how we have visualised the context of a young person who may be at risk of radicalising:



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Every circle has its own type of contact with and influence on the vulnerable person involved. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to people in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has gradually gathered a new set of friends, leaving behind his old peer group. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this process is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.

### WHY YOUNG PEOPLE?

Although in theory anyone could potentially radicalise, research shows that some groups are more vulnerable than others. Most terrorists (though not exclusively) are young and male, usually between the teenage years and the mid twenties. Terrorist activity can be an attractive testing ground for young men seeking their identity, with a possibility of thrills and fame adding to its allure. Also, a search for identity plays a role in the development of every adolescent. Radical groups can offer a pre-packaged identity to their recruits, with implicit guidance on how to behave and dress.

The fact that adolescents and young people seem to be more prone to radicalising than other age groups means that professionals working in schools, higher education, correctional institutions and social work are uniquely placed to observe and help them within the context of a familiar and pre-existing structure.

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## 3 WHAT COULD BE YOUR ROLE?

In your profession, you fall within the innermost or second ring, very close to the person who may be at risk. You see them interact and observe them growing and gradually forming ideas and beliefs about their position in society, their own personal identity, and selecting social groups to become members of. You may be a person that they might turn to if they are in trouble, or experiencing problems during this process of forming an identity which we know as growing up. You can support them in forming a positive identity, by emphasising their talents and stimulating them to develop their skills.

We don't want to suggest that you have to become an expert on terrorism – but you are already an expert on the young people within your target group, and through that expertise you may be able to play a vital role. Making contact with other professionals who are active in the field of radicalisation, such as police or social workers, and, if possible, the child's family, can help you to tell the difference between changes which do present a cause for concern and need further attention, and those which do not. The decision to make contact with a person who you are concerned about does not need to be taken alone and should be made, where possible, with the support of other professionals.

### WHAT WE DON'T SEE AS YOUR ROLE

It is very important to underline that there is no checklist of "symptoms" which, if all the boxes are ticked, definitively say that someone is radicalising. It's also vital to understand that if someone is in the process of radicalising, their sense of identity and belonging can be very fragile, and contacting them in a very direct or a negative way can make the problem worse.

*I had this extreme hate to society,  
I was raised with violence and violence was  
the way that I used to solve my problems.*

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## WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Although no checklist of “symptoms” of radicalisation exists, there are some signs which might indicate that a radicalisation process is underway.

A radicalisation process can go very fast, taking place in a matter of weeks, or be a gradual development spread over years, or anything in between. Some people may display all the of characteristics below, others just a few of them. It’s important to remember that one of these characteristics alone is not really a cause for concern, unless its really new and different from normal behaviour. A combination of these characteristics should raise some alarm bells, though.

*So many young people are ill-equipped for this individualistic world. They seek fixed boundaries and often found these in extremist groups. Her they find a community with either adults or peers who seem to know so much about life, or religion, and on whom they can place all responsibility. Whether this group is White Pride, the left wing activist environment or an extremist religious movement might not make too much of a difference – the boundaries are still fixed.*

(Contact person, outreach social street worker. Preventing extremism, a Danish Handbook Series, 14 cases on Handling Radicalisation, The Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, Copenhagen 2011 page 13)

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## 4 RISKS AND RESILIENCE

This chapter points out some background factors which may increase the risk that someone may explore the path of radicalisation. We would like to emphasize that these background factors don’t automatically direct someone in a dangerous direction. A quest for identity, for example, is quite normal at a certain age. It’s nevertheless important to be aware of those factors. It will help you to take a more focused approach to building resilience and offering protective factors.

### A VULNERABLE INDIVIDUAL MIGHT BE:

- Searching for an identity. Although all teenagers are to some degree undergoing this process, those who feel a lack of belonging may be especially vulnerable. Radical groups, which deliver clear rules on how to behave and dress, and even what kind of music to listen to, can be very attractive to a young person who is seeking a way to belong.
- Connected to someone within a radical group. If a sibling, parent or close friend is known to be a member of a radical group, the influence on the individual within your group will be much stronger. It is always important to be aware that this person runs a higher risk of becoming radicalised.
- Experiencing discrimination, real or perceived. If a young person has experienced racism or seen that another ethnic, religious or political group has received preferential treatment, they are likely to feel resentful. If no legitimate solution for this state of affairs is provided, this person may feel drawn to a radical group, in the hope that a solution can be found through that channel instead.
- Introverted, lacking in friends, and the victims of bullying. Adolescents who are socially isolated may seek out the comfort and protection of a group identity.

FIND THIS VIDEO ON  
[TerRaToolkit.eu](https://www.TerRaToolkit.eu)

**THOMAS RUNGE**  
FORMER RIGHT WING RADICAL  
TATTOO ARTIST, DK

## DO

- Provide support in forming a stronger positive identity. Show an interest in hobbies and talents of the individual. Sporting, artistic or musical talents can all provide a positive identity, and a potential social group. Actively support development of these talents where you can, for example by suggesting membership of a sporting group, creating contact with a role model, or simply showing an interest.
- Make yourself available for support and advice.
- Be aware that a young person who has social or familial connections to a radical group runs a higher risk of radicalising themselves. Be extra alert to their development. Where possible, discuss their family or social situation with them; provide support and a place where they can share their experiences. See their experience as an area of expertise, consult with them about it. Where possible, discuss this case with other professionals indicated by TERRA's community approach framework – social workers, other youth workers and law enforcement personnel may be especially relevant.
- Respond proactively to any reports of racism or discrimination. First, explore the experience with the person reporting it. Is it genuine, or has the person mistakenly attributed a negative experience to racism, when in fact simply circumstances were against them? In this case, pointing out that the difference between real and experienced discrimination is vital. Again, discuss these cases with other members of the community approach framework.
- In cases in which you agree that discrimination has taken place, make it clear to the person reporting it that legitimate means to redressing the balance are available, and make sure that these are followed through. People who have experienced discrimination sometimes have the tendency to feel that the negative emotions expressed by the person who discriminated against them are common to their entire social group. Ensure that you underline that the discrimination they have experienced does not in any way represent a general social view, but is the action and opinion of only one individual. Ensure that they feel supported and listened to.

## 5 DEALING WITH YOUNGSTERS DEVELOPING SYMPATHY FOR RADICAL IDEAS

A first step on the path of radicalisation is often caused by feelings of frustration. Someone feels that the actual social group (friends, community, ethnic or religious group) is not effective in fighting against the discrimination which they feel they are experiencing, and they start to explore other options to fight injustice. This implies moving away from the mainstream, looking for groups which do provide a feeling that action to address discrimination or deprivation is being taken. They are open for radical ideas.

Without any support from family members or professionals, this process could move towards a search for answers.

### A VULNERABLE INDIVIDUAL MAY, AT THIS POINT:

- Display a tendency to attribute a lack of success in fulfilling goals or ambitions not to circumstances or personal failure, but to discrimination. For example, within a group of secondary school students, all are instructed to find a work experience placement. If one of the group is unsuccessful in

*Their version of religion was used for me to isolate myself and to become part of their political agenda.*

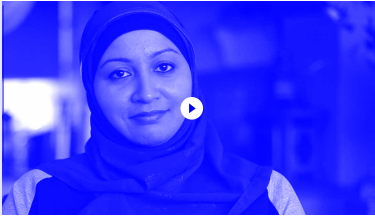
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finding a placement, he may feel that this is not due to a lack of qualifications or a shortage of places, but to his ethnic, religious, or socio-economic background. This may result in particular emotions, like anger, fear, contempt, and disgust, coming more strongly to the surface. They might talk about these feelings, but they may not, so be aware that because they are not spoken about does not mean they are not there.

- Display a loss of sense of legitimacy in authority (school, police, government, etc.) Again, they may or may not talk about these feelings.
- Display a heightened awareness of group identities – for example using an “us” versus “them” terminology – and develop a sense of competition between groups. They might or might not talk about these feelings.
- Be especially receptive to external influences and ideas from new people or groups who share the individual's negative experience of the wider society. Other individuals who share a sense of being disadvantaged can provide a reasoning to explain this sense of disadvantage, and a strategy to fight against it, will be especially attractive. You may be able to see some changes in the individual's peer group already starting to take place.
- Seek a group which provides a very clear identity. You may already see some changes in the individual's appearance, but only once membership to the group has been confirmed will this become very obvious.
- Sense that the new group is effective in addressing the perceived unfairness of society, while the old friendship or social group was not.

## DO

- As far as possible, keep communication open and tolerant. The processes described here are mainly psychological ones, not yet really translated into action. Unless an open dialogue is maintained, even if you see the person on a regular – even daily – basis, you may not be aware that the seeds of a radicalisation process have been sown. Not all of the emotions mentioned in the section above are easily talked about – good communication can make this more possible. Your support and help at this moment could be crucial in preventing a further deterioration.
- If you feel that an individual is attributing a lack of success to discrimination while no actual discrimination has taken place, it is vital that you challenge and question the perception of discrimination. Supporting attempts to improve the situation, for example, in the case given above, by actively helping the student to find a work experience place with another employer can be crucial in reaffirming a positive sense of identity and place in society.
- Connecting the vulnerable person with role models from within their own group can be a very positive step. This can challenge the idea that a lack of success can be attributed to discrimination against that group.
- Challenge a sense of “us versus them” and a lack of legitimacy of authority with counter narratives, for example exploring the common ground between different groups, and stressing the positive aspects of the group which the individual feels is experiencing discrimination. Teaching critical thinking on these issues may give the vulnerable person tools with which to analyse radical narratives that they may be exposed to, especially on the internet.
- Remain aware that the radicalisation process might simply stop by itself.

FIND THIS VIDEO ON  
TerRaToolkit.eu

**YASMIN MULBOCUS**  
FORMER EXTREMIST  
UNDERGRADUATE CRIMINOLOGY STUDENT  
PROJECT INITIATOR, WEST LONDON INITIATIVE, UK

## DON'T

- Make the individual feel as though they have been singled out for special, negative attention.

*The violence I'd been subjected to, the police discrimination, a greater awareness of foreign conflicts such as Bosnia, all this undoubtedly made me highly receptive to the Islamist message. I was desperately looking for answers.*

(M. Nawaz, Radical 2012:78)

## 6 WHAT IF THEY REALLY JOIN A RADICAL GROUP?

The person may come into contact with groups who are actively seeking new recruits. At this point in the process the demand – for a group which provides a clear identity and a means through which to address the perceived unfairness of society: is met with supply – groups actively recruiting. This may be very visible in the form of new faces in the community, or new groups hanging around schools or youth clubs. At this point in the process, the individual is keen to draw attention to their membership of the group, and to take on the clear identity it offers, so the change often comes more to the surface. You may observe for example:

- Change in appearance. This might include adopting a certain style of dress, growing a beard, or indeed shaving off all hair, displaying flags or stickers, getting tattoos proclaiming affiliation to the group. Using vocabulary typical to the group is also common, for example names for certain ethnic or religious groups.
- Change in identity, even in name.
- Change in behaviour. In an attempt to gain or affirm membership of the group to other group members and to peer groups, family and friends, changes in behaviour such as giving up drinking and smoking, and changing diet, skipping classes or taking part in political events like demonstrations may be noticeable. They may be very expressive in support of the ideology of the group, and even challenge non-members who do not conform to the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Change in peer group. Individuals who have become involved with a radical group tend to withdraw from their previous social and leisure activities, becoming increasingly involved in activities connected with the group. This may include forming a new group of friends and associates.
- Clear vocal definition of own group as opposed to other groups. Threatening behaviour towards other groups.
- An increased sense of anger at society, and less participation in it. While this view may not be vocalised, most individuals at this point will share their views, partly to affirm their group membership and possibly with an indirect goal of finding new recruits.
- Decline in performance at school. This can indicate that the attention of the individual is focussed elsewhere, perhaps on active membership of the group. It can also accelerate a radicalisation process, because if an individual is judged only on academic performance, they can feel less and less at home in the school environment, and be less inclined to attend. The radical group can then provide an attractive alternative activity.

*The youth have to be guided in the right direction by somebody who can be a role model, who has been in the same situation and can address it in the right manner.*

*I joined the left wing movement because I wanted to stand up for all the groups which the right wing were repressing. Somehow then it felt like if I didn't do that, the right wing would take over the whole country – and what would those groups do then? Who would stand up for them if I did not?*

(Former member of an extreme left wing group)

## DO

- Remain aware that changes – even fairly small changes – in appearance and in peer group, could have a deeper significance than a normal adolescent search for identity. If you do observe these, seek to discuss them with the individual, so that communication about their process remains open.
- If you notice that an individual seems to be breaking off contact with their normal peer group, see what you can do to re-establish or support the connection.
- Bring the individual into contact with other groups which provide a clear identity and deal with the sense of disadvantage in a positive way, for example, a sports club, voluntary organisation, community group or (non-violent) religious organisations. Show an interest in the talents and hobbies of the individual, and provide support where possible.
- Address any problems at school like not getting grades which are as good as they used to be, or skipping school, actively. Remember that there could be a link with radicalisation. It's also important to remember that too much focus on poor or worsening academic performance might discourage the student and send them towards the radical group in search of understanding and support – so make sure that your attention is also broader, asking about what the student enjoys and feels they are best at.
- Raise awareness amongst youngsters of the tactics which may be used by radical groups in a recruitment attempt, especially the use of biased and emotive narratives.
- Involve law enforcement, social workers, other youth workers and religious leaders in addressing groups which may be attempting to find new recruits by targeting a school or youth club.

## DON'T

- Make the individual feel as though they are being singled out for special attention. Their sense of identity at this point may be extremely fragile, and a feeling of threat to it may serve only to alienate them yet further from what they already perceive as a hostile society.
- Intervene single handedly. Doing so may make the problem worse. Consult with other professionals, judge the degree to which you ought to be concerned, and act accordingly.





**SØREN LÆRCHE**  
FORMER LEFT WING RADICAL  
EXIT MANAGER AT FRYSHUSET, DK

## 7 IF THEY INTEGRATE INTO THE RADICAL GROUP

Once a group has been selected, the individual tends to feel a strong desire to confirm their membership of it. Most of the indicators mentioned will show themselves more outspokenly, like change in clothing style, using aliases, strong us-and-them terminology, or different word choice.

### OTHER NOTICEABLE CHANGES THAT MAY POINT TO MEMBERSHIP OF AN EXTREMIST GROUP:

- A sense that violence as a means of addressing unfairness within society is legitimate. Again, most individuals at this point in the process are fairly vocal in their views.
- Forcing group rules on others, or challenging non-members who do not behave conform to the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Participation in closed meetings.
- Possession of propaganda material.
- Become more extreme in expressions of hate about those who do not share their views.
- Threaten other group members who try to leave the group.
- Being less present and visible at school or in other organised activities as a result of now extreme connection with the radical group.

## DO

- Take these signals seriously.
- Try to prevent the individual from becoming increasingly isolated. Maintain communication as much as possible.
- Where possible, discuss these changes with the vulnerable person's family and peer group. They may now be better positioned to maintain open communication with this person, and challenge the choices they are making.
- Try to re-establish contact with the old group of friends.
- Refer to the individual's identity before they began a radicalisation process, so that this remains relevant, and the option of returning to it and re-embracing it remains possible.
- Discuss the costs of membership of the group.
- Involve law enforcement officers, other youth workers and social workers in sharing your concerns about the vulnerable individual.
- Make sure that law enforcement personnel are aware of your concerns. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin.
- As much as you can, ensure that contact with the vulnerable person is not lost as a result of their reduced presence at school, or participation in other activities.
- Remain aware that the radicalisation process might simply stop by itself.

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## 8 IF THEY TURN INTO HARD CORE RADICALS

Once integrated, the individual may become more and more convinced of the legitimacy of the thoughts and actions of the radical group. They are now very sensitive to indoctrination and will become more and more obsessive about the goals of the group and preparation for (violent) action. At this point, their activities may take place outside your view. As a teacher or youth worker, your only role now can be to communicate your concerns and observations to law enforcement personnel. **The radical person may:**

- Abandon a more extreme "look" in an attempt to blend in with peers, so as to escape the notice of law enforcement personnel and other professional groups;
- Recruit and train new members of the group;
- Make actual preparations for an attack, gathering supplies, carrying out reconnaissance;
- Produce written or video material about his or her intentions.

### DO

- Make sure that law enforcement personnel are aware of your concerns. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin, so it's really crucial to inform the police.

### DON'T

- Assume that abandoning of the "look" associated with the group necessarily means that the person is taking a distance from the group and reintegrating. This may in fact be true – but quite the opposite might be happening, too.

This manual was designed to help you to recognise and address radicalisation within the group you come into professional contact with. If you would like more information about this project, or further resources, please visit our website [www.terra-net.eu](http://www.terra-net.eu)

# MANUAL POLICE OFFICERS

## Radicalisation and how it's relevant to you

### A MANUAL FOR COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS

*This manual describes how a community approach may be implemented, and may benefit the work of the police. It discusses which other professional groups are well placed to recognise signs that someone may be radicalising, some information about how you and they may notice this, and some suggestions about your role within this process. It has been produced by TERRA, a European wide network-based learning program. This advice is part of a comprehensive toolkit, created for local and national governments, and for other professionals coming into professional contact with vulnerable individuals or groups who may be at risk of radicalising.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

The main goal of the information produced by TERRA is to promote and inform a community approach to radicalisation, in which prevention and deradicalisation are the aims.

The full toolkit includes information for secondary school teachers and other youth workers, prison and parole officers, and religious leaders, and guidelines for journalists and policy makers at local and national level. We hope that once you have read this manual you might:

- Be more aware of the possibility that someone within your target group is at risk of radicalising;
- Know what some of the causes of this process might be;
- Know what some of the possible signs of this process are;
- Be aware of the other professional groups which could be involved in influencing this process towards a positive outcome, and providing support both for them and for the person they have concerns about;
- Feel empowered to take action by making contact with those groups and by approaching the person they feel may be vulnerable.

Making contact with law enforcement agencies plays a crucial role in this approach, allowing these professional groups both to share their concerns and receive support with them, and law enforcement agencies an insight into the community which may otherwise have been unavailable to them.

### WHY A COMMUNITY APPROACH?

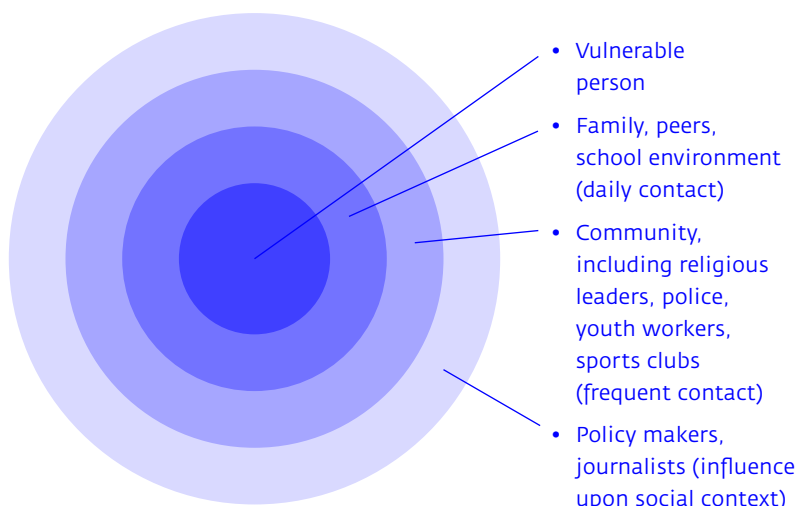
A young person who is seeking his identity can be greatly influenced by the people they have around them. As someone working regularly with this group in a professional capacity, you, and other people working in a frontline role, are in a perfect position to notice radicalisation. You might see changes in behaviour, appearance or interactions with you or within a friendship group.

We propose that you consider making contact with other professionals working with vulnerable individuals or communities on a regular basis. To do so, you may be able to use an existing network (in several European countries, multidisciplinary groups are already in place to deal with other issues, such as youth criminality or troubled neighbourhoods) or you may have to set up a new system, facilitated by local government.

At these meetings, we suggest that you discuss individual causes for concern, doubts or worries about radicalisation and trends in radicalisation in your area with other professionals who are well placed both to observe and act upon it.

Here is how we have visualised the context of a young person who may be at risk of radicalising:

Every circle has its own type of contact with and influence on the vulnerable person involved. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to people in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has a new set of friends. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this process is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.



## WHY YOUNG PEOPLE?

Although in theory anyone could potentially radicalise, research shows that some groups are more vulnerable than others. Most terrorists (though not exclusively) are young and male, usually between the teenage years and the mid twenties. Terrorist activity can be an attractive testing ground for young men seeking their identity, with a possibility of thrills and fame adding to its allure. Also, a search for identity plays a role in the development of every adolescent. Radical groups can offer a pre packaged identity to their recruits, with implicit guidance on how to behave and dress.

The fact that adolescents and young people seem to be more prone to radicalising than other age groups means that professionals working in schools, higher education, correctional institutions and social work are uniquely placed to observe and help them within the context of a familiar and pre-existing structure.

## 2 WHAT COULD BE YOUR ROLE?

The police have several roles in this system. On the one hand, you can use the information to play a very practical role in crime prevention, where necessary acting upon the information you have received. For more guidance on this we refer you to the materials produced by the European project COPPRA (COPPRA 2010), which contains detailed information about types of radicalisation, symbols and logos used by various groups active in Europe, and suggestions about how and when to use this information.

In terms of interaction with the community itself, COPPRA suggests that the police use their engagement with the broader community in order to provide a place in which community concerns and fears over radicalisation can be expressed, and to build public confidence. In order to achieve this, it provides the following advice on six key areas:

### 1 **Attentiveness**

The police should attend to their citizens' problems and 'be present'.

### 2 **Reliability**

There needs to be a degree of predictability about what the police do.

*If you work in an integrated way with other organisations in a preventive way, you should be able to put your police powers aside.*

---

### 3 Responsiveness

The police should provide a client-centered service that is reassuring to their public.

### 4 Competence

The public respects a police organisation that can get the job done and where this cannot be done, the public respects a police force that clearly and honestly explains why.

### 5 Manners

Far more significant than what the police accomplish, is how they treat people on an interpersonal basis.

### 6 Fairness

The police should treat all people fairly.

In addition to interaction with the broader community, in the context of a network approach the police can provide help and support to other professionals with their concerns about groups and individuals, providing a key role in a fully integrated community approach.

In your contact with the broader community, tell people about other members of the community network. If you were, for example, to hold an information session at a school about this subject matter, make sure that you let the children at the school know that if they have concerns about this topic they can share them with a teacher.

*His first memory is of his father hitting him in the face. His mother struggled with addiction and could not protect him from his father's violence. He grew up in a home where violence was the solution to any problem which arose. "I was so full of hate. I didn't know how to do anything but hate." When he became friends with some members of an extreme right wing group he felt accepted and protected for the first time in his life. "I followed their views but it could have been any group, any views. It would have been the same."*

(Former member of an extreme right wing group)

## WHAT THIS CIRCLE OF PROFESSIONALS MAY BE ABLE TO OBSERVE

First of all it is very important to underline that there is no checklist of "symptoms" which, if all the boxes are ticked, definitively says that someone is radicalising. But there are some signs which might indicate that a radicalisation process is underway. A person who is radicalising goes through a psychological process, so visible signs which professionals from this group are well placed to notice may be a change in attitude towards, for example, the government. At a later stage, change in appearance and more visible signs can be seen. In the introductory document which accompanies this manual, you can find a staircase model which describes this process, and some background information on what its causes and psychological elements may be. The aspect of change during this process is crucial.

A radicalisation process can go very fast, taking place in a matter of weeks, or be a gradual development spread over years, or anything in between. Some people may display all of characteristics below, others just a few of them.

Here, we have divided up the things you and other professionals may be able to observe according to which phase of the radicalisation process they are in.



**KEES SCHOONEN**  
COORDINATOR RADICALISATION  
AMSTERDAM POLICE, NL

### 3 RISKS AND RESILIENCE

#### INDIVIDUALS WHO COULD BE VULNERABLE TO THE INFLUENCE OF A RADICAL GROUP MAY BE:

- Searching for an identity. Radical groups, which deliver clear rules on how to behave and dress, and even what kind of music to listen to, can be very attractive to a young person who is seeking a way to belong.
- Connected to someone within a radical group. If a sibling, parent or close friend is known to be a member of a radical group, the influence on the individual will be much stronger. It is always important to be aware that this person runs a higher risk of becoming radicalised.
- The victim of discrimination. If a young person has experienced racism or seen that another ethnic, religious or political group has received preferential treatment, they are likely to feel resentful. If no legitimate solution for this state of affairs is provided, this person may feel drawn to a radical group, in the hope that a solution can be found through that channel instead.

#### DO

- Be aware that a young person who has social or familial connections to a radical group runs a higher risk of radicalising themselves. Be extra alert to their development. Where possible, discuss their family or social situation with them. Where possible, discuss this case with other professionals indicated by TERRA's community approach framework – social workers, other youth workers and teachers may be especially relevant.
- Respond pro-actively to any reports of racism or discrimination. First, explore the experience with the person reporting it. Is it genuine, or has the person mistakenly attributed a negative experience to racism, when in fact simply circumstances were against them? In this case, pointing out the difference between real and experienced discrimination is vital. Again, discuss these cases with other members of the community approach network.
- In cases in which you agree that discrimination has taken place, make it clear to the person reporting it that legitimate means to redressing the balance are available, and make sure that these are followed through. People who have experienced discrimination sometimes have the tendency to feel that the negative emotions expressed by the person who discriminated against them are common to their entire social group. Ensure that you underline that the discrimination they have experienced is a one off, individual action.

## 4 DEALING WITH YOUNGSTERS DEVELOPING SYMPATHY FOR RADICAL IDEAS

A first step on the path of radicalisation is often caused by feelings of frustration. Someone concludes that the actual social group (friends, community, ethnic or religious group) is not effective in combating experienced discrimination, and he or she starts to explore other options to fight injustice. This implies moving away from the mainstream, looking for groups which do provide a feeling that they are able to address discrimination or deprivation in a powerful way. They are open for radical ideas.

### YOU MAY SEE THAT VULNERABLE PEOPLE:

- Display a loss of sense of legitimacy in authority (school, police, government, etc.);
- Display a heightened awareness of group identities – for example using an “us” versus “them” terminology – and develop a sense of competition between groups;
- Feel that the broad social group (friends, community, ethnic or religious group) are not effective in combating the discrimination that they experience or perceive. They begin to look for groups which do provide a feeling that action to address discrimination or deprivation as being taken.
- Be especially receptive to external influences and ideas from new people or groups who share the individual's negative experience of the wider society. Other individuals who share a sense of being disadvantaged can provide a reasoning to explain this sense of disadvantage, and a strategy to fight against it, will be especially attractive. You may be able to see some changes in the individual's peer group already starting to take place.
- Seek a group which provides a very clear identity, and try to join an extremist group. You may be able to see some changes in the individual's friendship group or appearance already starting to take place. This may show itself verbally through associations with the new group, or being very critical of the old friendship group.
- Sense that the new group is effective in addressing the perceived unfairness of society, while the old friendship or social group was not. This feeling may, or may not be verbalised.
- Display a tendency to attribute a lack of success in fulfilling goals or ambitions not to circumstances or personal failure, but to discrimination.

### DO

- If you feel that an individual is attributing a lack of success to discrimination while no actual discrimination has taken place, it is vital that you challenge and question the perception of discrimination. Supporting attempts to improve the situation can be crucial in reaffirming a positive sense of identity and place in society.
- Connecting the vulnerable person with role models from within their own group can be a very positive step. This can challenge the idea that a lack of success can be attributed to discrimination against that group.
- Challenge a sense of “us versus them” and a lack of legitimacy of authority with counter narratives, for example exploring the common ground between different groups, and stressing the positive aspects of the group which the individual feels is experiencing discrimination.



- 
- Emphasise the effectiveness of the group in achieving goals and realising ambitions.
  - Remain aware that at this point, a radicalisation process may stop or die down by itself. Don't assume that an individual will necessarily become more radical.

## DON'T

- Intervene in a law enforcement capacity, yet. You may create a problem by doing so.

---

## 5 WHAT IF THEY REALLY JOIN A RADICAL GROUP?

Once a group has been selected, the vulnerable individual tends to feel a strong desire to confirm their membership of it. At this point in the process, the individual is keen to draw attention to their membership of the group, and to take on the clear identity it offers, so the change is often very visible.

- Change in appearance. This might include adopting a certain style of dress, letting a beard grow, or indeed shaving off all hair, displaying flags or stickers, getting tattoos proclaiming affiliation to the group. Using vocabulary typical to the group is also common, for example names for certain ethnic or religious groups.
- Change in identity, even in name, can take place.
- Change in behaviour. In an attempt to affirm membership of the group to other group members and to peer groups, family and friends, changes in behaviour such as giving up drinking and smoking, and changing diet, may be noticeable. They may be very vocal in support of the ideology of the group, and even challenge non-members who do not conform to the behaviour suggested by the group. Again, it's important to emphasise that any one of these indicators means nothing on its own. A change of diet for example is part of normal, mainstream Islam and is no cause for concern. It is only when seen in the context of other, accompanying changes that it can become significant.
- Change in peer group. Individuals who have become involved with a radical group tend to withdraw from their previous social and leisure activities, becoming increasingly involved in activities connected with the group. This may include forming a new group of friends and associates.
- An increased sense of anger at society, and less participation in it. While this view may not be vocalised, most individuals at this point will share their views, partly to affirm their group membership and possibly with an indirect goal of finding new recruits.
- Clear vocal definition of own group as opposed to other groups. Threatening behaviour towards other groups.

*I live with my actions every day, live the consequences of it, just part and parcel of life; but if we can stop somebody else doing it that would be positive.*

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## DO

- Remain aware that changes – even fairly small changes – in appearance and in peer group, could have a deeper significance than a normal adolescent search for identity. If you do observe these, seek to discuss them with the individual, so that communication about their process remains open.
- If appropriate, bring the individual into contact with other groups which provide a clear identity and can channel this sense of disadvantage in a positive way, for example, a sports club, voluntary organisation, community group or (non-violent) religious organisations.
- Raise awareness of the tactics which may be used by terrorist groups in a recruitment attempt, especially the use of biased and emotive narratives.
- Involve and inform teachers, social workers, other youth workers and religious leaders in addressing groups which may be attempting to find new recruits by targeting a school or youth club.
- Remain aware that the radicalisation process might simply stop by itself.

## DON'T

- Intervene in a law enforcement capacity, yet. You may create a problem or make one worse, by doing so.
- Make the individual feel as though they are being singled out for special attention. Their sense of identity at this point may be extremely fragile, and a feeling of threat to it may serve only to alienate them yet further from what they already perceive as a hostile society.



**BILLY MCCURRIE**  
VICTIM OF TERRORISM AND FORMER RADICAL

## 6 IF THEY INTEGRATE INTO THE RADICAL GROUP

Once a group has been selected, the individual tends to feel a strong desire to confirm their membership of it. Most of the indicators mentioned will show themselves more outspokenly, like change in clothing style, using aliases, strong us-and-them terminology, or different word choice.

### OTHER NOTICEABLE CHANGES THAT MAY POINT TO MEMBERSHIP OF AN EXTREMIST GROUP:

- A sense that violence as a means of addressing unfairness within society is legitimate. Again, most individuals at this point in the process are fairly vocal in their views.
- Forcing group rules on others, or challenging non-members who do not behave conform to the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Participation in closed meetings.
- Possession of propaganda material.
- Become more extreme in expressions of hate about those who do not share their views.
- Threaten other group members who try to leave the group.
- Use violence or commit minor crimes out of disrespect for authority, or display threatening behaviour towards other groups.

### DO

- Take these signals seriously.
- Try to prevent the individual from becoming increasingly isolated. Maintain communication as much as possible.
- Where possible, discuss these changes with the vulnerable person's family and peer group. They may now be better positioned to maintain open communication with this person, and challenge the choices they are making.
- Discuss the costs of membership of the group.
- Involve teachers, other youth workers and social workers in sharing your concerns about the vulnerable individual.
- Prepare for intervention, or intervene. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin.

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## 7 IF THEY TURN INTO HARD CORE RADICALS

Once integrated, the individual may become more and more convinced of the legitimacy of the thoughts and actions of the radical group. They are now very sensitive to indoctrination and will become more and more obsessive about the goals of the group and preparation for (violent) action. At this point, their activities may take place outside your view. **The radical person may:**

- Abandon a more extreme "look" in an attempt to blend in with peers, so as to escape the notice of law enforcement personnel and other professional groups;
- Recruit and train new members of the group;
- Show changes in pattern of travel, or staying in specific areas (i.e. conflict area);
- Express extreme feelings of hate or intentions of violence towards those who do not share their views;
- Make actual preparations for an attack, gathering supplies, carrying out reconnaissance (see also the COPPRA pre-incident indicators: Residence, Transport, Currency, Forged documents, Objects, and Preparation);
- Produce written or video material about their intentions;
- Remove all their money from the bank.

### DO

- Act upon this information, urgently.

### DON'T

- Assume that abandoning of the "look" associated with the group necessarily means that the person is taking a distance from the group and reintegrating. This may in fact be true – but quite the opposite might be happening, too.

*When I was young, no matter what we did, it didn't help.  
Violence seemed like the only way to bring attention to our community  
and the problems we had.*

(Former member of the Irish Republican Army)

This manual was designed to help you to recognise and address radicalisation within the group you come into professional contact with. If you would like more information about this project, or further resources, please visit our website [www.terra-net.eu](http://www.terra-net.eu)

# MANUAL PRISON OFFICERS

## Radicalisation and how it's relevant to you

### A MANUAL FOR PRISON, PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICERS

*This manual includes information about signs that a prisoner or former prisoner may be radicalising, some tips about how you can make contact with them to discuss this sensitive issue, and how you might think about working together with other professionals like law enforcement and social services for prevention and monitoring. It has been produced by TERRA, a European wide network-based learning program. This advice is part of a complete toolkit, created for local and national governments, and for front liners coming into professional contact with vulnerable individuals or groups who may be at risk of radicalising.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

This manual is about radicalisation, and has been written for **prison, probation or parole officers**.

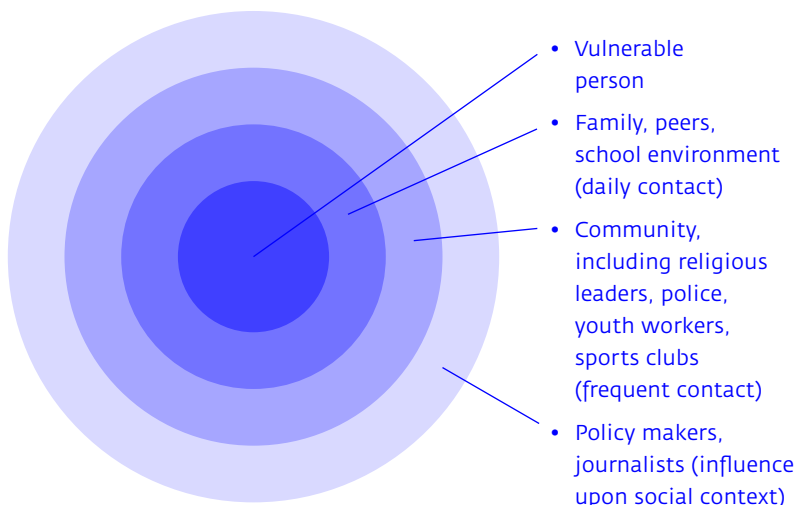
We hope that, when you have read it, you might:

- Be more aware of the possibility that someone within your target group is at risk of radicalising;
- Know what some of the causes of this process might be;
- Know what some of the possible signs of this process are;
- Be aware of the other professional groups which could help you with your concerns about this, and perhaps help to prevent someone radicalising;
- Feel able to take action by making contact with those groups and by approaching the person you are worried might be radicalising.

---

## 2 WHY YOU?

Radicalisation is a process of change. In your job, you come into frequent or even daily contact with a target group which might be vulnerable to radicalisation. This puts you in a perfect position to notice it. You might see changes in their behaviour, appearance or the way they talk and socialise with you or with their peer group. This model shows the context of someone who is radicalising.



The people in each circle have their own type of contact with and influence on the vulnerable person involved. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to people in the circle closest to the person who is radicalising. For example, parents can see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has a new set of friends. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this change is crucial.

That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between the circles is vital.

---

### 3 WHAT COULD BE YOUR ROLE?

Prison, probation and parole officers are in the first or second ring, seeing the person who may be radicalising on a daily or other very frequent basis. You see them hang out and talk with you and others. Maybe you hear what's on their mind, and see their emotions when they talk about others or about the world around them. You know who their friends are, and you can see if there is a change amongst a friendship group.

In some cases, prisoners have access to education. For some inmates, this might be the first time they have had this opportunity. This, and meeting other prisoners with political views, can influence how they look at the world, or at themselves. They may take a political stand, or become friends with like-minded people. They may tell you about it, or you could see it happen.

We don't want to suggest that you have to become an expert on terrorism – but you are already an expert on the people you are dealing with professionally, and through that expertise you may be able to play a vital role.

It is very important to underline that we DO NOT suggest that every conversion to a new religion or political group during or immediately after prison should be seen as a cause for concern. A prison term can, in some cases, be a time of change anyway. It may be a moment of personal crisis. Also, the need for physical safety makes membership of a group seem attractive. It may even be one of the first times that an individual is exposed to education on a structural level.

But it is crucial that if you are in doubt, you share your observations with other professionals who are working on radicalisation, or who are also working closely with the person you are worried about. This way, you can see if other people share your concerns about them, you can work out a way to approach them, and you don't have to deal with your concern on your own.

In this way, a process of radicalisation can be stopped or checked, thereby increasing security around the person you believe may be radicalising, and perhaps even the safety of that person too.

You should be aware of three issues<sup>1</sup> which are specific to the prison system:

#### 1 Influence from outside

Most prisons screen the resources which are being sent to prisoners, but there have been a few cases in which prisoners have been contacted with radical books, videos or websites. It is vital to stick to screening procedure and to investigate any instances where this has been a problem. Report that the prison and its inmates are being targeted by radical groups to law enforcement services.

#### 2 Influence from inside

If known terrorists are kept within a prison, there is a higher risk factor within it. Terrorist prisoners can in some cases enjoy a "hero" status and use their influence to convert and convince their fellow inmates. Keep an eye on the social interactions of any such prisoners housed within your institution.

#### 3 Radical Gangs

Gang culture has a long history within the prison system and seems to stem from a variety of factors, including the need for group protection of physical safety. In some instances these gangs have assumed a political identity which can take a radical form.

In case you notice any of these three factors, it is important that you pay attention to them, and discuss them with the network around you, including the police, social workers, and religious leaders who provide care within your prison.

<sup>1</sup> These three factors were identified by Peter Neumann in his 2010 report *Prisons and Terrorism: Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*

*As soon as you block someone out of a dialog or conversation, they will go and talk to someone who agrees with them instead.*

---

## WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?

First of all it is very important to underline that there is no checklist of "symptoms" which, if all the boxes are ticked, definitively say that someone is radicalising.

But there are some signs which might indicate that a radicalisation process is underway. A radicalisation process can go very fast, taking place in a matter of weeks, or be a gradual development spread over years, or anything in between. Some people may display all of the characteristics in this manual, others just a few of them. Usually, just one of these changes or characteristics is not really a cause for concern. Be especially alert to change.

---

## 4 RISKS AND RESILIENCE

This chapter points out some background factors that may increase the risk someone may explore the path of radicalisation. We would like to emphasize that those background factors don't automatically direct someone in a dangerous direction. A quest for identity for example is quite normal at a certain age. It's nevertheless important to be aware of those factors. It will help you to take a more focused approach to building resilience and offering protective factors.

Individuals who may be vulnerable to the influence of radical groups may be:

- Searching for an identity. Radical groups, which deliver clear rules on how to behave and dress, and even what kind of music to listen to, can be very attractive to someone who is seeking a way to belong.
- Brought up in an environment where violence is an accepted means to solve problems or display power.
- Connected to someone within a radical group. If a sibling, parent, close friend or fellow inmate is known to be a member of a radical group, the influence on the individual within your group will be much stronger. Be aware that this person runs a higher risk of becoming radicalised.
- The victim of discrimination. If someone has experienced racism or seen that another ethnic, religious or political group has received preferential treatment, they are likely to feel resentful.

### DO

- Show an interest in hobbies and talents of the individual. Sporting, artistic or musical talents can all provide a positive identity, and a potential social group. Be extra alert to someone who has social or familial connections to a radical group. Where possible, discuss their family or social situation with them. Discuss this case with other professionals– social workers, other youth workers and law enforcement personnel may be especially relevant.
- Respond pro-actively to any reports of racism or discrimination. Again, discuss these cases with other members of the community approach framework.
- In cases in which you agree that discrimination has taken place, make it clear to the person reporting it that legitimate means to redressing the balance are available, and make sure that these are followed through. People who have experienced discrimination sometimes have the tendency to feel that the negative emotions expressed by the person who discriminated against them are common to their entire social group. Ensure that you underline that the discrimination they have experienced is a one off, individual action.





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*His first memory is of his father hitting him in the face. His mother struggled with addiction and could not protect him from his father's violence. He grew up in a home where violence was the solution to any problem which arose. "I was so full of hate. I didn't know how to do anything but hate." When he became friends with some members of an extreme right wing group he felt accepted and protected for the first time in his life. "I followed their views but it could have been any group, any views. It would have been the same.*

(Former member of an extreme right wing group)

## 5 DEALING WITH YOUNGSTERS DEVELOPING SYMPATHY FOR RADICAL IDEAS

A first step on the path of radicalisation is often caused by feelings of frustration. People feel stuck in their situation, and they try to find out how to get better hold of their lives. This implies moving away from the mainstream, looking for groups which do provide a feeling that they are able to address their troubles in a powerful way. They are open for radical ideas.

They may:

- Feel that they have not achieved goals or successes they wanted because of racism or discrimination.
- Show a loss of sense of legitimacy in authority (police, government, etc.)
- Show strong feelings about group identities and develop a sense of competition between groups. You may hear them talking strongly in terms of "us" versus "them".
- Be especially receptive to ideas from people or groups who share their negative experience of the wider society. Others who recognise the sense of being disadvantaged and who talk about fighting it, will be especially attractive. You may be able to see new friendships develop.
- Look for a group which provides a very clear identity. You may already see some changes in their dress, haircut, tattoos etc. This will only be very clear in the next phase, when they have definitely chosen a group and become a member.

### DO

- As far as possible, keep talking with the person. The processes at stake here, are mainly psychological ones, not yet really resulting in any action. Your support and help at this moment could be really important in stopping the process.
- If appropriate to the situation, connecting the person with role models he can easily identify with, can be a very positive step. This can challenge the idea that a lack of success can be attributed to discrimination.
- Challenge a sense of "us versus them." Always focus on the common ground between groups. Lay emphasis on the positive aspects of the group which the person feels is discriminated against. Support critical thinking, especially about radical groups which the person may come into contact with, for example on the internet.

*If we de-humanise people,  
make them into the enemy and don't listen,  
then we are going to keep the conflict going.*

*When I was young, no matter what we did, it didn't help.  
Violence seemed like the only way to bring attention to our community  
and the problems we had.*

(Former member of the Irish Republican Army)

## 6 WHAT IF THEY REALLY JOIN A RADICAL GROUP?

The person may come into contact with groups who are actively seeking new recruits. At this point in the process the demand – for a group which provides a clear identity and a means to address the perceived unfairness of society – is met with supply – groups actively recruiting. This is a very crucial point in the process. Once they get involved with a group, it will become harder to go back. You might notice new faces in the community, if the individual is no longer in the prison itself.

At this point, several changes may come to the surface:

- Change in appearance. Once a group has been selected, the recruit tends to make his support of it really visible. This might include adopting a certain style of dress, growing a beard, or indeed shaving off all hair, displaying flags or stickers, getting tattoos which show their membership. These changes may be visible in someone within the prison system as well, even though in some prisons the inmates wear uniforms. Using vocabulary typical to the group is also common, for example names for certain ethnic or religious groups.
- Change in identity, even in name, can take place.
- Change in behaviour. In an attempt to affirm membership of the group, changes in behaviour such as giving up drinking and smoking, and changing diet, may be noticeable. They may be very expressive in support of the ideology of the group, and even challenge non-members who do not follow the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Change in friendship group. Individuals who have become involved with a radical group tend to withdraw from the social and leisure activities they used to do, becoming increasingly involved in activities connected with the group. This may include forming a new group of friends.
- They are very clear in the definition of their own group in comparison to others. Sometimes they speak or behave in a threatening way about other groups.

### DO

- If someone is already re-integrating into society, bring him or her into contact with other, positive groups or activities which provide a clear identity and can channel this sense of disadvantage in a positive way, for example, a sports club, voluntary organisation, community group or (non-violent) religious organisations. To a more limited degree, these measures could be applied to someone within the prison system too.
- Raise awareness amongst the prison population as a whole about the tactics which radical groups can use to recruit people, especially the use of shocking and biased narratives. These only present one side of the story and it's important to think critically about them.



**JO BERRY**  
BEREAVED FAMILY MEMBER FROM TERRORISM  
FOUNDER OF BUILDING BRIDGES FOR PEACE, UK

- If you feel that an individual is being targeted by recruiters, involve law enforcement, social workers, other youth workers and religious leaders.

## DON'T

- Make the individual feel as though he's being singled out for special attention. His sense of identity at this point may be extremely fragile, and a feeling of threat to it may serve only to alienate him yet further from what he already perceives as a hostile society.

## 7 IF THEY INTEGRATE INTO THE RADICAL GROUP

Once a group has been selected, the individual tends to feel a strong desire to confirm their membership of it. Most of the indicators mentioned will show themselves more outspokenly, like change in clothing style, using aliases, strong us-and-them terminology, or different word choice.

**Other noticeable changes that may point to membership of an extremist group:**

- An increased sense of anger at society, and less participation in it. Most individuals at this point will share their views, partly to affirm their group membership and possibly with an indirect goal of finding new recruits.
- Forcing group rules on others, or challenging non-members who do not behave conform to the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Participation in closed meetings.
- Possession of propaganda material.
- Become more extreme in expressions of hate about those who do not share their views.
- Threaten other group members who try to leave the group.

## DO

- Take these signals seriously
- Try to prevent the individual from becoming increasingly isolated. Maintain communication as much as possible.
- Where possible, discuss these changes with the recruit's family and friends – the old friends they used to socialise with. They may now be in a better position to speak with this person, and challenge the choices he or she is making.
- Try to re-establish contact with the old group of friends.
- Discuss the costs of membership of the group, for example: losing old friends, getting on the wrong side of the law (again), personal danger, and loss of opportunities for development.
- Make sure that law enforcement personnel are aware of your concerns. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin.
- As much as you can, ensure that contact with the vulnerable person is not lost as a result of their reduced presence at meetings, or participation in other activities.

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## 8 IF THEY TURN INTO HARD CORE RADICALS

Once integrated, the individual may become more and more convinced of the legitimacy of the thoughts and actions of the radical group. They are now very sensitive to indoctrination and will become more and more obsessive about the goals of the group and preparation for (violent) action. The indicators for individuals already active on behalf of a radical group are (hopefully) only applicable to those already in the community, and not those in prison, who are prevented from undertaking a terrorist attack by their incarceration. However, these indicators are extremely relevant to individuals already released into the community. Your only role now can be to communicate your concerns and observations to law enforcement personnel. **The radical person may:**

- Abandon a more extreme "look" in an attempt to blend in with peers, so as to escape the notice of law enforcement personnel and other professional groups.
- Make actual preparations for an attack, gathering supplies, carrying out reconnaissance.
- Recruit and train new members of the group.
- Threaten other group members who try to leave the group.
- Produce written or video material about their intentions.
- Express extreme feelings of hate or intentions of violence towards those who do not share their views.

### DO

- Make sure that law enforcement personnel are aware of your concerns. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin, so it's really crucial to inform the police.

### DON'T

- Assume that abandoning of the "look" associated with the group necessarily means that the person is taking a distance from the group and reintegrating. This may in fact be true – but quite the opposite might be happening, too.

*I joined the left wing movement because I wanted to stand up for all the groups which the right wing were repressing. Somehow then it felt like if I didn't do that, the right wing would take over the whole country – and what would those groups do then? Who would stand up for them if I did not?*

(Former member of an extreme left wing group)

# MANUAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS

## Radicalisation and how it's relevant to you

### A MANUAL FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

*This manual includes information about signs that a young person may be radicalising, some tips about how you can make contact with them to discuss this sensitive issue, and how you might think about working together with other professionals like law enforcement and social services. It has been produced by TERRA, a European wide network-based learning program. This advice is part of a complete toolkit, created for local and national governments, and for front liners coming into professional contact with vulnerable individuals or groups who may be at risk of radicalising.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

Radicalisation is a topic of concern for a lot of religious leaders. As a religious leader, you may see young people drifting away from the community towards more radical groups, or encounter parents who are worried about their children. Maybe you have been invited by the local government or by law enforcement to cooperate, but it's hard to estimate what they want and what that would mean for your position and your community.

This manual aims to support you in dealing with this topic. It offers information about signs that a person may be radicalising, some tips about how to respond, how to use your community in building resilience, and how to support parents. It also reflects on the role you could play in a network approach, together with for example social services and law enforcement.

We have written this manual because religious radicalisation in Europe is a growing problem. The other manuals in the TERRA toolkit focus on other forms of radicalisation as well, but this one focusses especially on Islamist extremism. It has been written by a group of researchers, supported by an Imam and theologian.

We hope that, when you have read this manual, you might:

- Be more aware of the possibility that someone within your community is at risk of radicalising;
- Know what some of the causes of this process might be;
- Know what some of the possible signs of this process are;
- Feel empowered to address the signs appropriately in contacts with vulnerable individuals and their families;
- Have a clearer idea on how you and your religious community can promote resilience;
- Be aware of the other professional groups which could be involved in influencing this process towards a positive outcome, and providing support both for you and for the person you have concerns about.

Remember that the Qur'an warns against religious extremism: "**Do not go to extremes in your religion.**"<sup>1</sup> Fittingly, this warning is given twice, perhaps indicating the reality that there always two extremes either side of every Golden Mean.

Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) repeatedly warned against the dangers of extremism and taught practical steps that would guarantee a balanced spiritual life in this world and guard against destructive extremism. One of the teachings of the Prophet in this regard is: "Beware of extremism in religion, for it destroyed those before you."<sup>2</sup>

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## 2 WHY YOU?

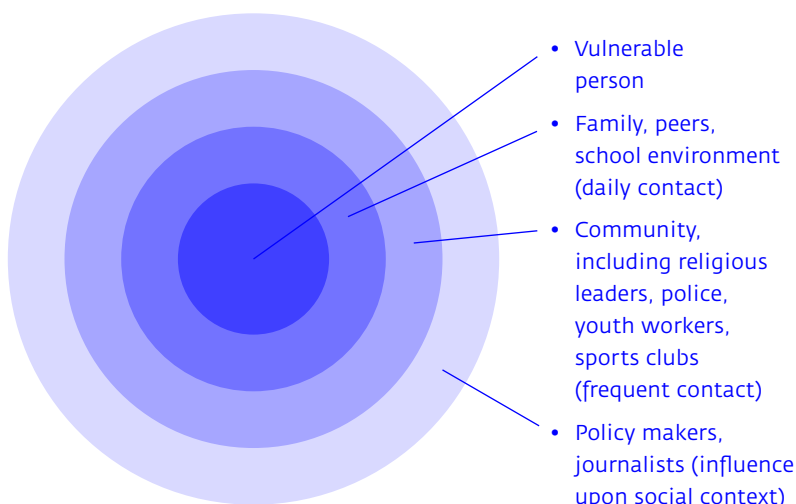
Radicalisation is, essentially, a process of change, connected to a quest for identity and meaning. As someone working regularly with people searching for meaning and guidance, your profession puts you in a position where you may be confronted with signals of possible radicalisation. You may see people from your community change their behaviour, appearance or interactions with you or with their peer group.

1 Qur'an, al-Nisa' (Women), 4:171 & al-Ma'idah (The Tablespread), 5:80

2 Ahmad (nos. 1851 & 3248), Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Hakim & others - cf. Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir of M.N. al-Albani, no. 2680 & Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah of M.N. al-Albani, no. 1283.

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Here is how we have visualised the context of a person who may be at risk of radicalising:



Every circle has its own type of contact with and influence on the vulnerable person involved. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to people in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance, and has gradually gathered a new set of friends, leaving behind his old peer group. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this process is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.

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### 3 WHAT COULD BE YOUR ROLE?

In your profession, you fall within the innermost or second ring, close to the person who may be at risk. You see young people in your community growing up and gradually forming ideas and beliefs about their position in society, and their own personal identity. You are aware of their family context and you see them selecting peer groups. You may be a person that they turn to if they have questions about meaning, or if they want to discuss certain aspects of religion. As the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught: "Every one of you is a shepherd, and every one is responsible for his or her flock."

In your role of teaching a community, you can stimulate resilience amongst youth, addressing the topics they struggle with, pointing to the nuances. Your teachings may also support parents in discussing ideology when their children develop radical ideas.

You don't stand alone on this: you can involve the whole religious community in offering a safe space for adolescents to develop their own identity. You're also not alone on this since we propose a network approach that promotes a multi-disciplinary sharing of questions and concerns on this topic.

In no way do you have to become an expert on terrorism – but you are already an expert on teaching and caring for the people within your community, and through that expertise you may be able to play a vital role. Besides, with your expertise you can also add a lot of value to the network of professionals, like

*Evil exists in the world and our test is to face it and turn it around into goodness.*

social workers, teachers and police officers. Your knowledge of cultural and religious customs and beliefs may help them interpret issues they may have with a person in the right way, and chose an approach that is appropriate in the given situation.

*Help each other towards piety and righteousness.  
Do not help each other towards sin and enmity.*

[Qur'an 5:2]

It may be helpful though, to have a basic understanding of the mechanisms that play a role in radicalisation. That is what this manual provides, along with an indication of what may be worrying signs. It is very important to underline that there is no checklist of "symptoms" which, if all the boxes are ticked, definitively says that someone is radicalising. But there are some signs which might indicate that a radicalisation process is underway. A person who is radicalising goes through a psychological process, which may become evident in a change in attitude towards, for example, the government. Also, group influences are crucial for radicalisation processes. Therefore you have to be alert to recruitment, family ties, and groups drifting away from the mainstream.

A radicalisation process can go very fast, taking place in a matter of weeks, or be a gradual development spread over years, or anything in between. Some people may display all of characteristics described in the following chapters, others just a few of them. You may see indicators occur simultaneously or maybe only one or two can be relevant in a given situation. You don't need to see the whole picture on your own. Share your concerns.

## 4 RISKS AND RESILIENCE

This chapter points out some background factors that may increase the risk someone may explore the path of radicalisation. We would like to emphasize that those background factors don't automatically direct someone in a dangerous direction. A quest for identity for example is quite normal at a certain age. It's nevertheless important to be aware of those factors. It will help you to take a more focused approach to building resilience and offering protective factors. It also stresses the importance of timely addressing those struggles in your sermons and in your contacts with youth.

**Individuals possibly vulnerable to the influence of radical groups may be:**

- Struggling with identity. Especially young people who deal with a dual identity (they are Muslims, but they also feel very much a part of the European society they belong to) need attention. They often feel excluded when their issues are not being addressed. Searching for an identity is very natural, as God says, "We made you nations and tribes that you may know each other ..." [Qur'an 49:13]
- Connected to someone within a radical group. If a sibling, parent or close friend is known to be a member of a radical group, the influence on the individual within your group will be much stronger. As the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught: "A person follows the way of his or her close friend, so be careful whom you befriend closely."
- Experiencing discrimination, real or perceived. If a young person feels treated differently due to the ethnic, religious or political group he belongs to, he or she is likely to feel resentful. If no legitimate solution is found, this person may eventually feel attracted to the solutions a radical group promises.





USAMA HASAN  
FORMER RADICAL  
SENIOR RESEARCHER QUILLIAM FOUNDATION, UK

*The violence I'd been subjected to, the police discrimination, a greater awareness of foreign conflicts such as Bosnia, all this undoubtedly made me highly receptive to the Islamist message. I was desperately looking for answers.*

(M. Nawaz, Radical 2012:78)

## DO

- Invest in gaining trust. Trust in religious authority can't be taken for granted no more in the younger generation. Only when trusted you can offer young people positive clues and a safe environment to develop their identity. "Have compassion for young people," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught.
- Be extra alert to the development of young people with social or familial ties to a radical group.
- Stimulate resilience:
  - In your sermons, include young people by using language they understand, and by addressing the issues they have to deal with.
  - Invest in knowledge of mainstream tradition and Sharia.
  - Stimulate your community in supporting young people in their struggle with identity, for example by mentoring or by creating possibilities for the individual to develop their talents. Sporting, youth groups and social activities can all provide a positive identity, and a potential social group. In fact, this is what many religious communities already provide. It doesn't need to be explicitly connected to prevention of radicalisation – better not.
  - Be aware of the legitimate means in your country to report or address discrimination. In cases in which you agree that discrimination has taken place, you can point these out to the person reporting it. "Deal justly: truly, God loves who deal justly." [Qur'an 49:9]

## 5 DEALING WITH YOUNGSTERS DEVELOPING SYMPATHY FOR RADICAL IDEAS

A first step on the path of radicalisation is often caused by feelings of frustration. Someone concludes that the actual social group (friends, community, ethnic or religious group) is not effective in combating experienced discrimination, and he or she starts to explore other options to fight injustice. This implies moving away from the mainstream, looking for groups which do provide a feeling that they are able to address discrimination or deprivation in a powerful way. They are open for radical ideas.

This may be expressed in:

- Displaying low self-efficacy and a tendency to attribute a lack of success not to circumstances or personal failure, but to discrimination and injustice. This may result in particular emotional expressions, like anger, fear, contempt, and disgust, coming more strongly to the surface. Displaying a loss of sense of legitimacy in authority (school, police, government, etc.). Instead, he or she may name new ideological leaders or role models.
- Displaying a heightened awareness of group identities and developing a sense of competition between groups. This may be expressed in for example in the use of an "us" versus "them" terminology, or in mentioning 'threats'.

- 
- Argumentative behaviour or provocative questions on interpretations of Sharia and Jihad.
  - Experiencing an event that has a high impact on his or her life, like the (sudden) loss of someone close, a complex dilemma that puts cultural or religious values under pressure, failure or a break up etc. In itself, this is not a cause or reason for radicalisation, but it may speed up processes – those events can then be considered a 'tipping point' or 'catalyst event'.

## DO

- Keep communication open and tolerant. Do not ask young people to choose one side all the time or to define themselves only in terms of religion or nationality. Remind them of the Islamic emphasis on the oneness of humanity as "Children of Adam." (Qur'an 49:13 etc.) At this stage, the processes are mainly psychological, not yet really translated into action. Remember that one of the major functions of the Prophets and Messengers of God is to help people with their self-purification and self-development (tazkiyat al-nafs).
- If you feel that an individual is attributing a lack of success to discrimination while no actual discrimination has taken place, it is vital that you challenge and question the perception of discrimination. Supporting attempts to improve the situation can be crucial in reaffirming a positive sense of identity and place in society. Remind them of the Qur'anic teaching of being fair to others, even your enemies or opponents: "O believers! ... Let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety ..." (5:8)
- Connect the vulnerable person with role models from within their own group. This can challenge the idea that a lack of success can be attributed to discrimination against that group.
- Support your community in challenging the "us versus them" thinking, by addressing their role in society in your sermons, and by sharing knowledge on radicalisation and the counterbalance a community can offer. Remind them that, according to the Qur'an, we have a common humanity as "Children of Adam" and must be fair to others, even our enemies or opponents. Sectarianism and tribalism are opposed to the spirit of the Qur'an (6:159, 16:92)
- Teach critical and nuanced thinking, offering tools with which to analyse radical narratives that they may get exposed to, especially on the internet.
- Make young people going through a hard time feel supported by you and the religious community. "Have compassion for young people," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught. People need spiritual and religious support through such events, e.g. "Patience is only at the first blow of a calamity" (hadith); "Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return" - They are those on whom (descend) blessings from Allah, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance." [Qur'an 2:155-157]
- Share your concerns about the possible impact of certain events with the other professionals in your network. Especially when it touches the core of religious values, you may have a better understanding of the real impact than they do. Your information may help them to support the person in the right way, too.

## 6 WHAT IF THEY REALLY JOIN A RADICAL GROUP?

The person may come into contact with groups who are actively seeking new recruits. At this point in the process, the demand – for a group which provides a clear identity and a means through which to address the perceived unfairness of society – is met with supply – groups actively recruiting. This is a very crucial point in the process. Once they get involved with a group, it will become harder to go back. At this point, the individual is keen to draw attention to the membership of the group, and to take on the clear identity it offers, so the change is often very visible.

Joining a radical group can show itself:

- **Verbally:**
  - Association with a new group
  - Different word choice, especially when it comes to words used to describe other religious or ethnic groups.
  - Change in personal narrative, setting it in the context of radical narratives
  - Overtly critical or negative on the effectiveness, customs or beliefs of the group one used to be part of
- **In behaviours:**
  - Seeking or having frequent contact with leaders of radical groups
  - Change in religious practices, for example extreme increase in devotion, a stronger emphasis on apocalyptic beliefs
  - Changing names, using aliases
- **Increase in the time spent on religious or radical websites in changes in physical appearance:**
  - A sudden increased devotion to prescriptions on clothing style and hair wear
  - The use of symbols from Jihadist groups on clothes or personal attributes

When recruitment is taking place, this may be visible in the form of new faces in the community, or new groups hanging around mosques. Recruiters may take advantage of mosques for 'talent-spotting' and as points of first contact, but once a contact has been established, they usually move away from the mosque and continue the recruitment in closed locations, such as private flats and makeshift prayer halls. So, when young people suddenly or gradually tend to withdraw from the community, this may also ring alarm bells.

### DO

- Remain aware that changes – even fairly small changes – in appearance and in peer group, can just be a normal adolescent search for identity, but also might go deeper than that. If you do observe changes, seek to discuss them with the individual, so that communication about their process remains open.
- When a person starts challenging your beliefs and values, be open for sincere discussion. "Religion is sincerity," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught. Do not just stick to the cognitive level though; also pay attention to the emotions, behaviours and group processes that come along.

*There are consequences to violence and you can be blinked from those consequences as a young person, but at some point in the future, if you survive, you will have to face up to them.*

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In itself, ideology won't cause radicalisation. Yet, as a vehicle for group bonding or legitimating aggressive feelings, it can be an influential dimension of radicalisation processes.

- Raise awareness of the tactics which may be used by extremist groups in a recruitment attempt, especially the use of biased and emotive narratives.
- When you suspect a group inside the mosque of radicalisation or recruitment, it is recommended not to send them away for fear of the authorities, but to stay in touch with the group and prevent them from easily getting isolated.
- Involve social workers, and youth workers, and (depending on the situation) even law enforcement in addressing groups which may be attempting to find new recruits by targeting a place of worship.

## DON'T

- Make the individual feel as though he's being singled out for special attention. His sense of identity at this point may be extremely fragile, and a feeling of threat to it may serve only to alienate him yet further from what he already perceives as a hostile society. "Be gentle with delicate, fragile, crystal-like hearts," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught.

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## 7 IF THEY INTEGRATE INTO THE RADICAL GROUP

Once a group has been selected, the individual tends to feel a strong desire to confirm his or her membership of it. Most of the indicators mentioned will show themselves more outspokenly, like change in clothing style, using aliases, strong us-and-them terminology, or different word choice.

**Other noticeable changes that may point to membership of an extremist group:**

- Forcing group rules on others, or challenging non-members who do not behave conform to the behaviour suggested by the group.
- Participation in closed meetings.
- Possession of propaganda material.
- Withdrawal from their previous social and leisure activities, becoming increasingly involved in activities connected with the new group.
- An increased sense of anger at society, and less participation in it. Most individuals at this point will share their views, partly to affirm their group membership and possibly with an indirect goal of finding new recruits. Note that this is very unhealthy for their spiritual balance: "If a person says, 'The people are destroyed,' he himself has been destroyed the most," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught.
- A sense that violence as a means of addressing unfairness within society is legitimate. They may commit minor crimes to express their disrespect for authorities. The teaching of the Prophet, peace be upon him, about "correcting evil with the hand" must be understood and taught as applying only to legitimate force, e.g. police and army, not to individuals or vigilante groups.



**PATRICK MAGEE**  
FORMER IRA COMBATANT  
SPEAKER BUILDING BRIDGES FOR PEACE, UK

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## DO

- Take these signals seriously.
- Try to prevent the individual from becoming increasingly isolated. Maintain communication as much as possible.
- Encourage them to resume social and leisure activities. "There is a time for this and a time for that," as the Prophet, peace be upon him, taught, i.e. there is a time for serious work and worship, and a time for rest, relaxation and entertainment.
- Where possible, discuss these changes with the vulnerable person's family and peer group. They may now be better positioned to maintain open communication with this person, and challenge the choices they are making.
- Discuss the costs of membership of the group.
- Involve law enforcement officers, other youth workers and social workers in sharing your concerns about the vulnerable individual. Also when someone totally loses contact with your community, this doesn't mean your responsibility ends. You can still share your concern about him having left.

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## 8 IF THEY TURN INTO HARD CORE RADICALS

Once integrated, the individual may become more and more convinced of the legitimacy of the thoughts and actions of the radical group. They are now very sensitive to indoctrination and will become more and more obsessive about the goals of the group and preparation for (violent) action. At this point, their activities may take place outside your view.

**If you are still in contact with the person, you might see him or her:**

- Glorify martyrdom or violence.
- Abandon a more extreme "look" in an attempt to blend in with peers, so as to escape the notice of law enforcement personnel and other professional groups.
- Recruit and train new members of the group.
- Become more extreme in expressions of hate about those who do not share their views.
- Threaten other group members who try to leave the group.
- Produce written or video material about his or her intentions.
- Making preparations for or actually going on training travel.
- (Planning to) travel to a foreign country to join in a war.

## DO

- Make sure that law enforcement personnel are aware of your concerns. It is at this point that genuinely dangerous and violent activities may begin, so it's really crucial to inform the police.

## DON'T

- Assume that abandoning of the "look" associated with the group necessarily means that the person is taking a distance from the group and reintegrating. This may in fact be true – but quite the opposite might be happening, too.

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## 9 SUPPORTING THE PARENTS

Often parents are the first to see early warning signs, but it may be hard for them to find the right way to respond.

**They may come to you:**

- feeling that they lack the knowledge to counter the radical narratives their child comes up with.
- not knowing who else to turn to, since they fear the potential consequences of reporting signs to police or law enforcement.
- feeling that they lose contact with their child and maybe even fearing what he's capable of.

**Whenever they do so, take them seriously:**

- Don't try to reassure them too quickly.
- Provide a safe space where they can express their worries.
- Help them in finding solid arguments and the right tone to discuss ideology.
- Discuss with them if they'd allow you to use your network to find appropriate support for this family.

In the early phases of the radicalisation process, support may be found inside your network, for example in a social worker or someone who can support the parents with advice on education and information about normal processes in adolescence. In some countries, de-radicalisation specialists can be called in for help, for example by coaching parents, or mentoring a youngster who is prepared to leave the radical group. Some countries also offer family programs for de-radicalisation. Be aware of the possibilities in your country.

Several research projects on support for families encountering radicalisation are still running, so be alert to whatever becomes available.

*I followed my son into the mosque but he did not want to talk to me. But I met the Imam there, and he helped me to make contact again with my son.*

(Anonymous, mother of a radical)

This manual was designed to help you to recognise and address radicalisation within the group you come into professional contact with. If you would like more information about this project, or further resources, please visit our website [www.terra-net.eu](http://www.terra-net.eu)

# GUIDELINES JOURNALISTS

## Reporting and Radicalisation and how it's relevant to you

### GUIDELINES FOR JOURNALISTS

*This guideline has been written for journalists, and contains some discussion of the relationship between reporting and radicalisation and terrorism. It gives some suggestions on working methods, and factors which journalists might take into consideration when covering his sensitive issue.*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION: CENTRAL ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

A lot has been written on the almost symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism. The now famous metaphor by Margaret Thatcher that “publicity is the oxygen of terrorism” refers to the need of terrorists for a public. Media, by their capabilities of agenda setting and framing, are crucial in shaping and moving such a public. The benefits are mutual, then, since terrorism provides the media with drama, shock, and tragedy – suited to be packaged as human interest news, the perfect ingredients for a product that sells. The influence reporting about terrorism may have on the public is often addressed in terms of fear, or of support for counterterrorism measures. What terrorists also try to accomplish, though, is getting recognition of their motives and sympathy for their cause. This points to the perspective of this document: the influence of **the traditional news media on radicalisation**.<sup>1</sup>

Not only reporting on terrorism, but also depicting and addressing minorities is an issue here. Stereotypes and prejudices can easily (and sometimes unintentionally) be maintained or reinforced by media coverage, especially on matters of religion or ethnicity. Confirmation of existing (but not ideal) social relations or status quo, may add to (group) grievances, consolidate or even fuel nationalism, or otherwise contribute to inter group tensions. On the other hand, when fully aware of the influence of rhetoric on the experience of ‘us-and-them’ thinking or on perceived deprivation, journalists also have the power to avoid facilitating or verbalising discrimination.

**The objectives of this document are**

- to raise awareness on how reporting on some aspects of society might influence radicalisation processes in Europe.
- to stimulate discussion on the role media play and to what extent they can or should take responsibility.
- to point out options for policy makers, editors, and journalists for working consciously with this subject.

### RADICALISATION

Definitions of the term ‘radicalisation’ are manifold – due to its use in the political arena where definitions are used to motivate policy choices. Also academic definitions often seem to be coloured by the specific discipline, and most of them suffer from lack of precision. Most definitions have in common that they refer to an individual process, often strongly influenced by group processes. During this process, the dominant political order is rejected, as well as dialogue, compromise and tolerance as means to bring change. Instead, violence is increasingly accepted as an appropriate method to attain certain goals

<sup>1</sup> There is a huge body of literature on online radicalisation, but that is not the focus of this text.



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## 2 HOW MAY REPORTING ON MINORITIES INFLUENCE RADICALISATION?

Research shows that there are lots of factors which can push someone towards radicalisation. It may be a personal issue – essentially a search for identity or meaning, or a personal trauma which triggers drastic change – but the fact that the social context plays a vital role in dictating how this process progresses, and on the narratives which feed it, is undeniable. What is crucial here is how people perceive their conditions. Subjective perceptions of discrimination can powerfully generate feelings of deprivation, on an individual level or on group level. Those perceptions may be reinforced by deep prejudices, and strong us-and-them thinking, thus becoming self-fulfilling prophecies.

Group grievances, where the members of a group see less rights or possibilities for themselves than for other groups, are more often mobilising than personal experiences. What is especially noticeable is that groups or individuals sometimes 'adopt' grievances from others and become self-appointed promoters of a cause other than their own, for instance people leaving to join a fight in a conflict in another country.

Whenever people don't find a way to address their grievances by the normally accepted ways of social regulation like dialogue, legal process, democracy and tolerance, they seek alternative routes, thus taking a step into the process of radicalisation. This can be the case not only for minorities feeling discriminated against, but also for majorities feeling threatened by immigrants or minority groups.

### REPORTING ON MINORITIES CAN INFLUENCE RADICALISATION IN A NEGATIVE WAY

- **By framing**
  - Stereotypes often easily come up, for example in the connection between negative actions or provocative statements and someone's cultural or religious background – even when this background is in fact not relevant at all.
  - Using episodic frames, not placing it in the bigger context.
- **By agenda setting**
  - Whenever a group undergoes serious injustices and it is subsequently neglected by the media, this makes it even more painful.
  - At the same time, heavily addressing the grievances of a few as if they represent a whole community may also result in misbalance which could put a situation under much more pressure than necessary.
- **By rhetoric**
  - A style which underlines a sense of "us-and-them" or "good and bad", may reinforce polarisation.
  - Once launched, a (newly-coined) term may become a stereotype in itself, which does not acknowledge the complexity of the situation, and does harm.

*We can unintentionally have a political impact in how we report; our first duty as journalists is to be as accurate and as attentive to what is really going on out there.*

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## REPORTING ON MINORITIES CAN INFLUENCE RADICALISATION IN A POSITIVE WAY

- **By framing**
  - Referring to overarching patterns of particular risk factors.
  - Showing the bigger picture, for instance by providing statistics, expert analysis or other relevant background information.
- **By agenda setting**
  - Raising awareness about diversity, stimulating the public debate on discrimination.
  - Paying attention to positive examples of cooperation between minority and majority groups, and of minority contributions to majority society.
- **By rhetoric**
  - Using a nuanced style, and a positive tone.

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## 3 HOW MAY REPORTING ON TERRORISM INFLUENCE RADICALISATION?

Apart from grievances, also thrill and excitement may push someone in the direction of radical behaviour. Coverage of terroristic acts or threats could "feed" the thrill seeking tendency of young men at risk of radicalisation by depicting terrorist activity as exciting and adventurous. Think of the Rolling Stone glam cover photo of Boston bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, which pictures the bomber as a sexy star, recalling photos of Jim Morrison.<sup>2</sup>

Some other pull factors include the emotional pull to act in the face of injustice, and status and internal code of honour. Terrorists will try to use the media to address these factors and win receptive young people for their cause. Their goal is to make those people think about their motives and to gain sympathy for their cause, and to gain a certain kind of legitimate status, that makes them in the eyes of the public equal to the mainstream political actors.<sup>3</sup> This doesn't mean that they always force-feed their motivations to reporters. Often, motivations are relevant for the story, or the only new information once the events are reported on, and therefore voluntarily addressed.

The other factor, the desire for status and respect, is played upon by terrorists by showing their potential supporters what they are capable of. Spectacular images of attacks can inspire admiration. Apart from that, they try to achieve a profile for their leaders that makes them seem comparable to 'regular' political leaders, for instance by personal interviews, professionally recorded videos, and carefully framed messages.

A last factor to be mentioned here, leading to radicalisation in some cases, is trauma and a desire for revenge. Here, a different perspective is at stake: the impact of reporting about terrorist attacks on victims and their communities. Reporting on the attack and interviewing victims may influence the way a community reacts to the drama. Especially in the case of separatist attacks in areas where conflicts are deeply rooted and touching complete communities, this can be highly relevant.

<sup>2</sup> 'Rolling Stone defends Tsarnaev glam cover amid outcry <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/07/17/dzhokhar-tsarnaev-boston-marathon-bombing-rolling-stone/252389/>

<sup>3</sup> Brigitte Nacos developed an extensive framework on this in her book *Mass-Mediated Terrorism: The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, (2007) Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.



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## REPORTING ON TERRORISM CAN INFLUENCE RADICALISATION IN A NEGATIVE WAY

- **By framing**
  - Framing terrorist activities as war, or as evil, reinforces polarisation, and forces an us-and-them dichotomy, only leaving two camps. This can be very confronting to people with dual identities, and move them towards more extreme directions.
  - Framing it as glamorous. This will seriously make it more attractive to young guys seeking for "coolness".
  - Sheer focus on the action risks presenting an unbalanced picture of the intensity of the conflict as a whole.
- **By agenda setting**
  - Paying a lot of attention to terrorist groups behind an attack, including their motivations and leaders, may generate sympathisers.
  - Not covering the victim's perspective, as well as emphasising it too strongly, can lead to grievances working as a seed for radicalisation.
- **By rhetoric**
  - When a report on a (suicide) attack contains a lot of details, it could almost be read as an instruction.
  - (Detailed) references to planned or current anti-terrorist actions may inspire radical groups and harm the counter terrorism approach.

## REPORTING ON TERRORISM CAN INFLUENCE RADICALISATION IN A POSITIVE WAY

- **By framing**
  - Presenting terrorist attacks as criminal acts, regardless of the terrorist's cause, makes it subject to laws and justice, instead of placing it on an equal level. This may reduce the perceived power of the terrorists.
- **By agenda setting**
  - Paying attention to issues other than the attack, brings balance and perspective. Maintaining the status of 'breaking news' when it's not so breaking anymore, may increase its impact.
- **By rhetoric**
  - Be careful with the use of the terms terrorism, extremism and radicalisation. Definitions of those terms are manifold. Because of this, it is important to realise or even make explicit what connotations may arise when describing certain events in terms of terrorism or radicalism.

## 4 MEDIA AND RADICALISATION: DILEMMAS AND PERSPECTIVES

Media coverage of ethnic and religious issues has already been a focus of attention during the last decades, at least in the mainstream, quality press, as a result of the introduction of diversity policies and editorial guidelines. Research amongst journalists in several European countries shows that, when reporting about ethnicity and religion, journalists declare themselves dedicated to the values of objectivity, media plurality, democracy and civic society. At the same time, they acknowledge that the media still often play a role in the promotion of negative stereotypes and prejudices connected to ethnicity and religion. What is needed, according to the journalists interviewed, is to achieve a balance between two main efforts in reporting on diversity issues: informing and interpreting. Informing refers to a true presentation of the events as they occurred while interpreting should aim at the promotion of “a constructive public dialogue about the issues of public concern”.<sup>4</sup> The report comes up with a number of recommendations, which are mostly also made explicit in other documents on the topic and many of the journalistic professional codes and guidelines that have been developed since the late 19th century. In fact, it’s generally about sensitive reporting, background information and fact checking (see frame). The same principles hold true when it comes to reporting on terrorism. Then, too, it is important to be balanced, critical about sources and careful in the representation of perpetrators and victims.

### IT’S ALL ABOUT SENSITIVE REPORTING

The type of recommendations given in documents on reporting on diversity, are mostly rather basic. Some examples:

**Move beyond the event:**

**provide background information, and explain legal contexts.**

Many news stories feature provocative or salient aspects of an event, without referring to overarching patterns of particular risk factors. Instead of those so-called ‘episodic frames’, reporting on sensitive subjects benefits from the use of ‘thematic frames’, that show the bigger picture. This can be done for instance by providing statistics, expert analysis or other relevant background information.

**Your story is only as good as your sources**

if you are reporting frequently on a community ensure you know it well, work on sources there. Make sure you provide a full picture.

**Never be satisfied with getting one side of a story.**

Be sure to interview sources with opposing viewpoints to prevent the story from giving readers a distorted version of an event.

**Do not stay on the fringes.**

Balance in reporting is not simply going to the extreme left and the extreme right.

**Give a voice to the voiceless.**

Whenever a group undergoes serious injustices and it is ignored,

<sup>4</sup> Rupar (2012) Getting the facts right. Reporting ethnicity and religion. Belgium, International Federation of Journalists. p. 58

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There is often a difference, though, between those codes and guidelines on the one hand, and daily practice on the other. Several explanations reveal the harshness of reality at this point:

- The focus in codes and guidelines on fact checking, using multiple sources and being nuanced, seems to contradict what news making means nowadays: being the first with the story, (leaving not much time for thoroughness or making well-informed decisions on whether or not to publish or broadcast certain aspects); and attracting viewers and readers and thereby increasing advertisement income.
- The heavy workload of most journalists seems discordant with the recommendations for greater thoroughness, and more post-degree education for journalists on, for example reporting on minorities.
- Terrorist attacks offer a lot of opportunity to attract news consumers: it has drama, danger, shock, blood, human tragedy, miracle stories, and heroes. Terrorism makes people pay attention to the news media for a long time, so it almost seems a logical choice or even a duty to over cover it. Besides, who decides how much news coverage is “too much”?
- Nuance often gets lost in moral equivalency, meaning that when media refuse to condemn acts that are labelled in politics as terrorism or murderous acts, they will be under suspicion of offering a platform to perpetrators or criticizing counterterrorism policies.
- This may have direct consequences for commercial liability: reputational risk is directly related to financial risk in terms of lost advertising or circulation revenue. When, in the UK, the Daily Mirror took a strong anti-war stance in 2003, they suffered a crippling loss in circulation as a result.
- When it comes to the choice of hiding or revealing details, the risk is balanced with the urge to protect society’s right to know. There may even be systematic efforts to mislead, by parties who have an interest in that, by providing journalists with disinformation.

Given the restrictions of time and money, the pressure of competition, and the changing place of traditional media in the media landscape, sticking to the codes all the time seems really tough. If it is so hard to avoid negative effects, is there any possibility - or even responsibility - to use the news media’s power for the positive? The Media4Diversity report,<sup>5</sup> goes as far as stating that the media do have a responsibility for raising awareness about diversity, taking a stand on discrimination, and promoting a positive identity for ethnic and religious minority groups. The report describes many examples of how this is practiced across Europe. It is, however, not self-evident that this is something all types of media are more or less obliged to do. Given the diversity of characteristics, traditions, target groups, and ideological and political backgrounds in the media landscape, it resembles more an approach which some channels or papers can use to distinguish themselves by. This also raises the question whether general guidelines and recommendations are useful at all, if in practice the tradition and colour of a specific channel determines its policy entirely. What the discussion should be about, is maybe not so much the content of quality standards, but their actual status and power. What is the responsibility of the news media towards the public, and in what way can this guide decisions? This should be the topic of debate, in a general sense, but surely with specific attention for radicalisation.

5 Media4Diversity. Taking the Pulse of Diversity in the Media. A Study on Media and Diversity in EU Member States and 3 EEA countries

*When we are working on difficult material  
about political violence is very easy  
to become black and white very quickly.*

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## 5 HOW TO TAKE THIS A STEP FORWARD?

Given the demonstrated necessity and the complexity of paying attention to the connection between reporting and radicalisation, there is a need to invest in motivation and knowledge. Those seem to be conditions that should be met first in order to be able to keep codes and guidelines.

### AWARENESS AND MOTIVATION

Radicalisation is a very relevant topic for media, not just to publish about, but also to formulate policy on. Awareness of the connection between reporting and radicalisation, and the motivation to act accordingly, should be higher on the agenda of media education and media policy. The discussion we referred to earlier could stimulate that, along with examples of best practices

### ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

More easily accessible knowledge on terrorism mechanisms and processes of radicalisation will help to avoid getting the bigger picture in relatively short time, and avoiding easy mistakes.

On a policy level, this means that knowledge from research should be constantly updated in easily available practical factsheets and directions, which take into account that there is often little time to search and read. Also, an overview of possible databases should become available. See for some help the lists of resources here below. This list can be of help on the practical level, for editors and journalists, as a quick starting point for checking facts and the use of terms, or for doing back ground research.



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## 6 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### TERMINOLOGY AND USEFUL GLOSSARIES

Definitions of the terms 'terrorism' and 'radicalisation' are manifold – partly due to its use in the political arena, where definitions are used to motivate policy choices. Therefore, it is important to realise or even make explicit what connotations may arise when describing certain events in terms of terrorism or radicalism.

Words not used frequently in your native language sometimes have connotations you may not be aware of. Also avoid using terms that the audience may have little or no knowledge of or that can easily be misinterpreted. In case they cannot be avoided, clarify. The word "jihad", for example, is often mistranslated as "holy war" and connected to terms like wrong, dangerous, sinister, etc. Even though some militant groups use the term in that way, the concept has a totally different connotation for mainstream Muslims. Likewise, the Arabic phrase "Allahu Akbar," which can be translated as "God is the Greatest," is extremely important to and commonly used by Muslims. It is a repeated feature of Islamic prayer but it is also used as a general cheer. However, in the media the phrase has sometimes been explained as a battle cry. This potentially casts all uses of the phrase as suspicious or threatening.

Some useful glossaries in this context:

- **Glossary Religion**

<http://www.thearda.com/learningcenter/religiondictionary.asp> (US) dictionary of religious terms, also contains maps, graphics, and a rich information database

- **Glossary Immigration**

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/glossary/index\\_a\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/index_a_en.htm)

The EMN Glossary has been published in a number of languages and also in Arabic. It contains an introduction explaining how the Glossary was developed by the EMN. The following language versions are currently available: Deutsch, English, Español, Français, Italiano, Português and Arabic.

- **Glossary Terrorism**

<http://www.terrorism-research.com/glossary/>

- **Index of symbols and groups:**

<http://nctc.gov/site/groups/index.html>

### RESOURCES ON TERRORISM

Most assumptions on terrorism are based on the so-called 'black swans': incidents that fall outside the realm of regular expectations, have a high impact, and defy predictions. The attack on 9/11 is an example of a black swan; an extremely deviant event in all respects, but it has had major influence on many theories, definitions and measures related to terrorism. Being aware of the 'myths' on terrorism this event generated may also support a more balanced reporting on terrorist attacks. See for examples of 'myths' LaFree's account on

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"Discussion point: black swans and burstiness: countering myths about terrorism"

(<http://www.start.umd.edu/news/discussion-point-black-swans-and-burstiness-countering-myths-about-terrorism>) and "START Director addresses common myths of terrorism"

(<http://www.start.umd.edu/news/start-director-addresses-common-myths-terrorism>).

**The Annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT)**, produced by analysts and experts at Europol, drawing on contributions from EU Member States and external partners

<https://www.europol.europa.eu> > Strategic analysis reports > EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT)

**Official European list of terrorist persons, groups and entities**

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013D0395&rid=1>

<http://www.terrorismdata.leiden.edu/>

Research database on Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Radicalization, set up by the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC) of Leiden University (Campus The Hague), The Netherlands.

<http://www.start.umd.edu/>

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism—better known as START—is a university-based research and education center comprised of an international network of scholars committed to the scientific study of the causes and human consequences of terrorism in the United States and around the world

The website contains a database of publications, background reports of attacks, datasets and tools to search data, such as the **Global Terrorism Database** (<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>)

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is an open-source database including information on terrorist events around the world from 1970 through 2012 (with additional annual updates planned for the future).

<http://www.transnationalterrorism.eu/>

This is the official website of the European research project **Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (TTSRL)**. TTSRL was a multi-faceted research project that aimed to help Europe better understand terrorism. The research was conducted between 2006 and 2009 and yielded several useful publications, available via this website.

**Information and instruction on interviewing victims and reporting on shocking events:**

<http://dartcenter.org/gateway/journalists>

A lot of information and guidelines on reporting on traumatising events, responsible interview techniques, using open questions and avoiding the re-traumatisation of witnesses/ victims.

The DART Center for journalism and trauma also offers a lot of information, fact sheets, tip sheets and guides on this subject, for example "Tragedies & Journalists - a guide for more effective coverage"



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## RESOURCES ON RADICALISATION

[www.radicalisationresearch.org](http://www.radicalisationresearch.org)

Provides policymakers, journalists, and anyone whose work utilises concepts such as radicalisation, fundamentalism or extremism with easy access to high-quality academic research on these controversial issues.

[www.strategicdialogue.org](http://www.strategicdialogue.org)

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) is an independent think tank working with leaders in government, business, media and academia to develop multi-country responses to the major security and socio-economic challenges of our time and to enhance Europe's capacity to act effectively in the global arena.

[www.counterextremism.org](http://www.counterextremism.org)

Contains a rich database, which allows to search on theme, country, target area and resource type.

<http://icsr.info>

Website of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation

## RESOURCES ON REPORTING AND DIVERSITY

<http://www.media-diversity.org/en>:

Rich database of codes, guidelines, reports, best practices etc.

<http://ethicaljournalisminitiative.org/en>

Rich database, links to many resources, publications and practices.

<http://www.mediawise.org.uk/diversity>

Articles, reports and guidelines for best practice on Ethnic minorities, Gender, Islam, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans, People with disabilities, Roma, Gypsies and Travellers

<http://www.mediaact.eu>

Website of an EU research project on media Accountability and Transparency in Europe, with literature database and research outcomes.

<http://ethicaljournalisminitiative.org/en>

A.o. full text of the report by Rupar, Getting the facts right. Reporting ethnicity and religion.

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# POLICY ADVICE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## A Community Approach to Radicalisation

### POLICY ADVICE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*This document has been written for local government workers, and suggests tackling problems of radicalisation at local level, through a community approach. It contains guidance on how to implement such an approach, the professionals who can best be included in it, and on what this approach hopes to achieve.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

The benefits of addressing the problem of radicalisation at a local level are clear. It's a problem whose impact is first felt at local level. If a young person is radicalising, this process will, most likely, at first be noticed by family members, and then by the broader community – friends, teachers, perhaps a religious leader, or a trainer at a local sports club. Local health care professionals or social workers may become involved and local police. If the process of radicalisation proceeds unchecked, the individual may even pose a threat to local security. In addition, recent events seem to show that radicalisation can take place on a geographically specific level. There are numerous examples from the Netherlands in which several young people from the same city council area have radicalised towards extreme Islam and travelled abroad, either as combatants or as jihad brides.

Taking a preventative approach to radicalisation can enhance security within your council area, and help to protect and support the citizens within your care.

**The purposes of this document are:**

- To raise awareness about radicalisation, its origins and impact at local level;
- To suggest that the best approach towards prevention of radicalisation is a community based one;
- To provide a practical framework upon which such a community approach can be based.

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## 2 WHY YOU?

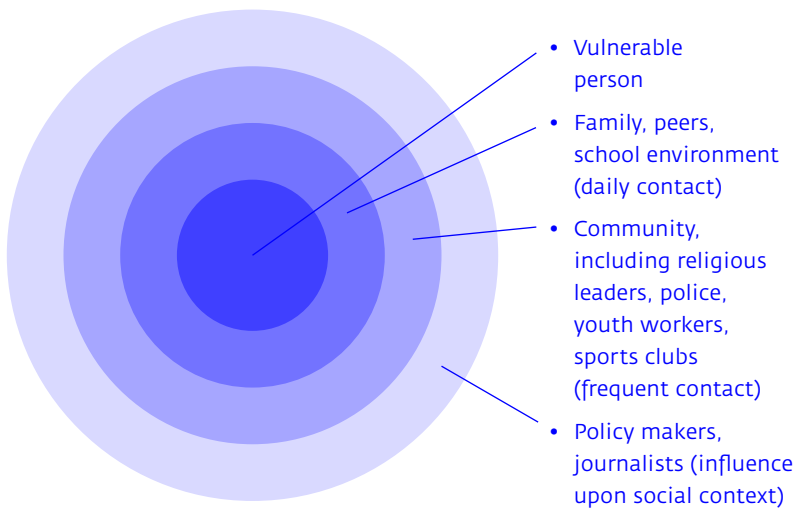
Your support in setting up a community approach which can combat radicalisation at a grass roots level is vital.

TERRA proposes using a community based approach, in which professionals from very different disciplines come together on a regular basis to discuss radicalisation in their area. They might for example share concerns about a particular individual or social group, discuss how they can take a shared approach, or decide how best to communicate with a family which has raised concerns about a family member. Without your initiative and support, the contact between these professional groups will be difficult to achieve and maintain.

An integrated approach which promotes communication between families and front line professionals who come into contact with vulnerable individuals can provide support and protection to these individuals and their families, and contribute positively to local and national security.

### 3 THE BENEFITS OF A COMMUNITY APPROACH

The principle goal of adopting a community approach is to protect the security both of the vulnerable person who is radicalising, and that of their immediate and broader context. When we talk about families and front liners, we can see that these family members and professionals will come into contact with this vulnerable person with varying degrees of frequency.



Each ring within this circle model has a different kind of contact with the vulnerable person. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to family members or professionals in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has a new set of friends. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this change is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.

*Fear is an important element in radicalisation  
and it is experienced on both sides.*

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## 4 PROFESSIONALS TO INCLUDE IN THE COMMUNITY APPROACH NETWORK

The scientific literature about radicalisation has a lot to offer when it comes to suggestions about who to invite. An approach which includes a broad spectrum of professionals is recognised as highly valuable (Schmid 2013). Police officers, especially community officers, play an obvious role. In some regions, police personnel with a special responsibility for counterterrorism are already appointed. Other law enforcement personnel, for example prison warders and parole officers, could also usefully be included, as prisons can be an incubation point for radicalisation (Neumann and Rogers 2007).

TERRA focusses its attention on young people. Research shows that young males between the ages of 15 and 25 are the demographic group most likely to radicalise (Silke 2008 and Christmann 2012). Teachers and other youth workers, such as social workers, professionals involved in addressing youth unemployment or school dropout rates, those working at youth clubs, social centres or sports clubs may all be interesting for a community based approach. As a search for identity and citizenship is also proven to be crucial in a radicalisation process (de Wolf and Doosje 2010, de Koster and Houtman 2008, Moghaddam 2005) teachers of certain subjects, such as history, mother tongue and foreign language, comparative religion and personal and social education or any other subject dealing with citizenship can be especially relevant (Staub 2007).

While political groups play a significant role in radicalisation in Europe, religious extremism must also be taken into account. As a result, religious leaders can very usefully be included in this community network.

Smaller scale initiatives which can also play an active role may also exist in your area. Examples of these may include organisations based around demographic groups or active groups already involved in anti-violence or anti-racism campaigns.

### PROFESSIONALS WHO YOUR NETWORK COULD INCLUDE:

- Police officers
- Prison warders
- Parole officers
- Teachers
- Other youth workers
- Social workers
- Religious leaders



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## 5 SETTING UP A COMMUNITY APPROACH SYSTEM

We advise that local governments take the following steps:

- Inventorise whether a network – either formal or informal – already exists within your area. If it does, check that the profiles suggested below are represented within it. In many cities, networks are already in place to deal with youth criminality, troubled neighbourhoods, or comparable problems. These networks could be vital in supporting an initiative to recognise and address radicalisation.
- If no such network exists as yet, act as the initiator.
- Identify whether, within the area under your jurisdiction, there are “hot spots” for radicalisation. This may be a school, place of worship, or residential area in which a racial, ethnic, religious or political divide is acutely felt. If such a “hot spot” does fall under your jurisdiction, ensure that it is well represented from all of the professional groups within your network meetings.
- Identify key figures that are well placed to identify vulnerable individuals. Try to embrace as many disciplines which may be connected to this process as possible, and include projects which may be specific to your area. Example of the profiles of professionals you may want to include is given below.
- Be prepared to act in a facilitating role. Initiate contact between these key figures, and invite them to an opening meeting. TERRA's video materials and presentation might provide you with some assistance in presenting the aim of the initiative.
- Check the law around the exchange of professional information in your country. Is it legally viable for the network to operate in this way? What are the restrictions?
- Request that participants in the group respect the confidential nature of the information exchanged there.
- Ensure that this group continues to meet on a regular basis. Where possible, facilitate this as much as possible with practical support, such as providing a location for meetings to take place.
- Function as a facilitator at these meetings. Ensure that any reports of concern about an individual or group are clearly communicated to all of the professionals involved in the initiative, so that efforts to support that individual in an effort to formulate a positive identity through attention, communication and help can be coordinated.

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## SUBJECTS WHICH CAN USEFULLY BE DISCUSSED DURING NETWORK MEETINGS

- Individual cases which may be a cause for concern;
- How the family of this individual can best be supported;
- Social groups which may be potentially vulnerable to radicalisation;
- Radical elements in the area, for example a recruiter or criminal group who may be connected to radical ideology;
- Incidents of racism, discrimination or targeted violence which nourish grievances within a community and can feed radicalisation;
- Reintegration of former radicals;
- Awareness raising and the use of victim narratives in education, as a means of prevention.

In order to recognise and address the problem of radicalisation, a broad and holistic approach is needed. A network which can share its concerns about a vulnerable or radicalising individual will be well positioned to address the problem in your community.



# POLICY ADVICE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

## Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in Europe

### RESEARCH BASED POLICY ADVICE FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

*This document has been written for policy makers, and suggests tackling the problem of radicalisation at local level, through a community approach. It contains guidance on how to implement such an approach, the professionals who can best be included in it, and what it hopes to achieve. Further it gives advice on how national policy can support this.*

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## 1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND: DEALING WITH RADICALISATION

Radicalisation can lead to terrorism, and radical groups within a society can prove divisive, creating social fissures which in turn can fuel new radicalisation processes. In order to improve both social cohesion and, crucially, basic security, it is vital that European governments are fully aware of the causes and processes of radicalisation, and take a far reaching, holistic approach towards tackling it.

This document has been produced with one goal in mind: to guide you in implementing and sustaining such an approach. It provides advice on how you can support front line workers who can identify and prevent radicalisation, and in supporting the de-radicalisation of those who wish to leave an extremist organisation behind. If properly implemented, these initiatives can enhance security.

It has been produced on the basis of state of the art research, and consultations with the experts who can offer the most detailed and intimate knowledge of the processes of radicalisation and de-radicalisation – those who have been the victims of terrorism, and those who have been terrorists themselves, and who have undergone a de-radicalisation process. Leading academic experts have also been consulted.

It aims to reach above the level of party politics, and to contribute instead to a cross party agenda of enhancing national and European security and promoting social cohesion.

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## 2 RADICALISATION; THE COMMUNITY APPROACH

We propose a structure which allows and facilitates a clear flow of information between a broad cross section of professional and social layers. In order to monitor both the individual trajectory of vulnerable people who may be radicalising and trends in radicalisation at local and national level, we suggest the implementation of a community approach.

**Within a community approach, various front line professionals per city council area are invited to come together to discuss:**

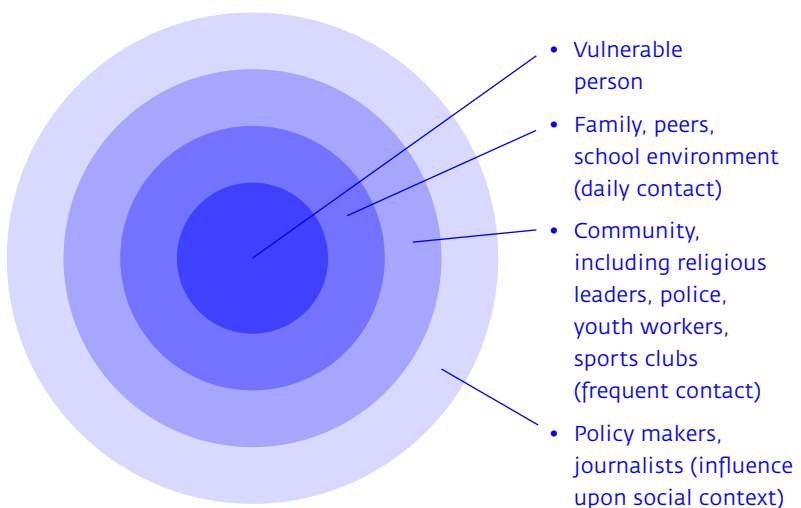
- Individual cases which may be a cause for concern;
- How the family of this individual can best be supported;
- Social groups which may be potentially vulnerable to radicalisation;
- Radical elements in the area, for example a recruiter or criminal group who may be connected to radical ideology;
- Incidents of racism, discrimination or targeted violence which nourish grievances within a community and can feed radicalisation;
- Reintegration of former radicals;
- Awareness raising and the use of victim narratives in education, as a means of prevention.

Existing networks, for example those already in place to address youth criminality or troubled neighbourhoods, can be used to implement this approach, or new networks can be set up.

Meetings should be held on a regular basis, and emphasis should be laid on the sharing of concerns regarding an individual or group, and supporting those in close contact with that individual, and on monitoring trends per area.

## PROFESSIONALS WHO CAN USEFULLY BE INCLUDED IN A COMMUNITY APPROACH NETWORK

In the approach which we suggest, representatives from each ring are given a time and space in which they can come together. They are provided with awareness raising and informative material about radicalisation (for example, the other documents which make up the TERRA tool kit).



Each ring within this circle model has a different kind of contact with the vulnerable person. Changes in behaviour, peer group or ideology are more obvious to family members or professionals in the innermost circle than the outermost. A young person's parents, for example, are able to see that their son has made drastic changes to his appearance and has a new set of friends. A police officer, who is seeing the boy for the first time will not be able to see how much he has changed within the last year – and this change is crucial. That's why it's so important to realise that in order to really grasp what might be going on, contact, communication and transparency between and within the respective circles is vital.

The scientific literature about radicalisation has a lot to offer when it comes to suggestions about who to invite. An approach which includes a broad spectrum of professionals is recognised as highly valuable (Schmid 2013). Police officers, especially community officers, play an obvious role. In some regions, police personnel with a special responsibility for counterterrorism are already appointed. Other law enforcement personnel, for example prison warders and parole officers, could also usefully be included, as prisons can be an incubation point for radicalisation (Neumann and Rogers 2007).

TERRA focusses its attention on young people. Research shows that young males between the ages of 15 and 25 are the demographic group most likely to radicalise (Silke 2008 and Christmann 2012). Teachers and other youth workers, such as social workers, professionals involved in addressing youth unemployment or school dropout rates, those working at youth clubs, social centres or sports clubs may all be interesting for a community based approach. As a search for identity and citizenship is also proven to be crucial in a radicalisation process (de Wolf and Doosje 2010, de Koster and Houtman 2008, Moghaddam 2005) teachers of certain subjects, such as history, mother tongue and foreign language, comparative religion and personal and social education or any other subject dealing with citizenship can be especially relevant (Staub 2007).

*We need to be aware of the language that somebody uses when talking about non-negotiable ideas.*

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While political groups play a significant role in radicalisation in Europe, religious extremism must also be taken into account. As a result, religious leaders can very usefully be included in this community network.

Smaller scale initiatives which can also play an active role may also exist in some areas. Examples of these may include organisations based around demographic groups or active groups already involved in anti-violence or anti-racism campaigns.

## THE ROLE OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

While the main responsibility of organising this community based approach will lie at local government level, support at national level is crucial. While one such network in one city council area may make a difference to the residents of that area, implementation of these networks at national level could result in a significant improvement to national security. The use of existing networks to implement this approach cut the costs of it to a minimum, but general support from national government, and recognition at that level of the vital role that local governments are playing, is fundamental to the success of such an approach.

National government must co-ordinate counter-extremism policy across government departments. Although policies may be specific to justice, community or education departments, and delivery of projects may be the responsibility of local government, clarity and consistency across all government departments will prevent confusion and improve effectiveness.

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## 3 CONSTRUCTING COUNTER NARRATIVE

So far, this document has dealt with radicalisation on individual and group level, showing how the people surrounding the radicalising individual can be supported. But a recent trend in the scientific literature suggests that radicalisation can take place on state actor levels as well (Schmid 2013, Bellamy 2013). Specifically, this theory suggests that state actors can also radicalise, authorising renditions, for example, or colluding in the use of torture as part of counter terrorism – in short, acting outside the law and breaking the moral code which prohibits causing or authorising bodily harm to civilians. While we cannot go so far as to say that torture causes terrorism, it certainly fans the flames which set terrorism alight, and an increase in the use of torture by a regime can often be seen to be concurrent with an increase in terrorist attacks in the region, and the number of fatalities they cause (Bellamy 2013).

Into the same category, we may place the use of counter terrorism strategies which explicitly single out specific ethnic groups (Bux 2007). Not only recent literature, but also recent news reports illustrate that these are not only ineffective, they also work against community cohesion, and can serve to make one ethnic group feel discriminated against, and to criminalise the image of that ethnic group in the minds of their white counterparts.

Extremist narratives not only rely on an ideology that politically exploits religion, they also manipulate grievances. Improving the compatibility between counter-terrorism legislation and human rights will prevent the undermining of vital counter-extremism work, as national governments can maintain the moral high ground that extremists try to seize from them. Improving communication channels between state and society will also clarify government policy and undermine the extremist exploitation of grievances for the purposes of radicalisation and recruitment.



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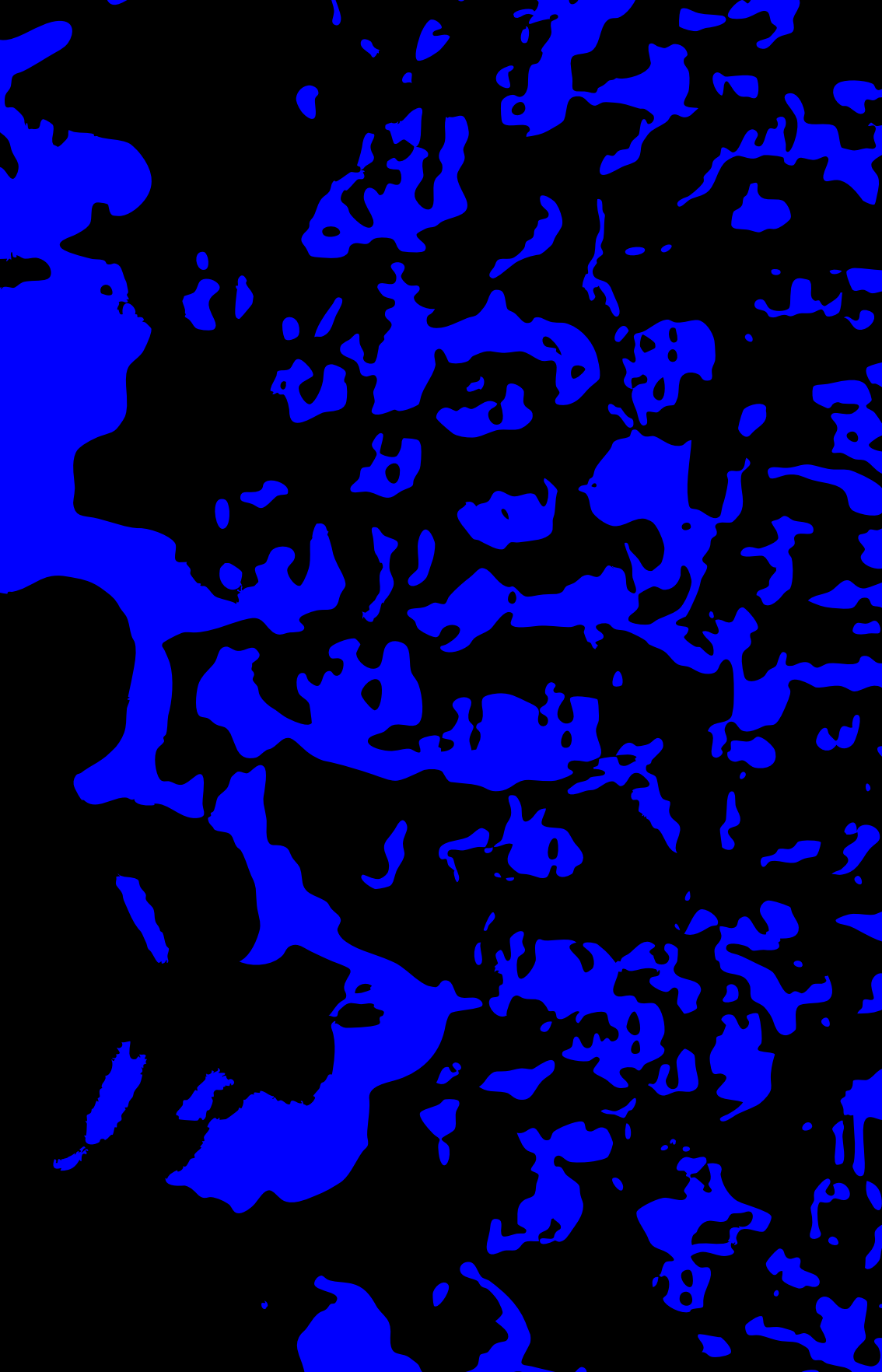
The fact that radical groups use narratives to recruit new members is well documented and well known (for example Bailey and Grimalia 2006, De Koster and Houtman 2008, Schmid NCTB 2010 Nawaz 2012). It is crucial for extremist groups to be able to back up their messages with (carefully selected) facts. In supporting morally dubious counterterrorism practises, Western governments not only contribute to extreme narratives, they undermine the credibility of their own (de Graaf NCTB 2010).

Some very clear policy advice can be derived from this research at the level of how you present your own position:

- Do not support the use of torture or rendition, and be public in your rejection of these practices.
- Do not implement counterterrorism measures which inhibit or discriminate against elements of your own communities.
- Clarify laws on foreign fighters.
- Be clear in communications regarding foreign policy.
- Regulate and communicate clearly about the behaviour of security/surveillance services (including data communications).
- Be aware that in some European countries, a lack of trust in authorities, in particular law enforcement services, can have a direct influence on radicalisation, feeding the narratives of extreme groups. Issues such as profiling, institutional racism, and discrimination should be investigated thoroughly and communicated clearly and honestly to the general public.

## 4 DE-RADICALISATION AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Literature shows that many factors can form the turning point in an individual's decision to take a distance from the extreme group which they used to belong to. Of these reasons, the most commonly occurring are beyond the control of policy makers: A change in personal circumstances, or disillusionment with the leadership of the radical group (Alonso 2011, Nawaz 2012, Reinares 2011). However, the same literature shows that one particular approach can be of crucial importance for successful reintegration. Using former ETA terrorists as an example, Alonso (2011) shows that while making any political concessions to the terrorist group is inadvisable, personal support is crucial to ensuring that each individual has the opportunity to enable them to begin a new life, free from violence. These can include reintegration activities, change in identity, and witness protection schemes, if they choose to inform on their previous colleagues. Personal gains such as reduced jail sentences, and support in building up a new life, were found to have been very effective.



The material you can find in this Toolkit and online on [www.terratookit.eu](http://www.terratookit.eu) has been designed for professionals who come into contact through their work with a population which may be vulnerable to radicalisation. It explains why this subject may be of relevance to you, how you might notice if this issue was developing, and what you can do about it. Manuals which contain a fuller picture of this problem and an approach to solving it, and short fact sheets, can both be downloaded from the website free of charge.



partner in

