IDE
Identity Development

**PREVENT
RADICALISATION
THROUGH
IDENTITY
DEVELOPMENT**

POLICY PAPER

THE CHALLENGES
PREVENT RADICALISATION OF YOUNG MIGRANTS USING EXISTING YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Short and precise statements about the possible linking between youth organisation experience and political engagement

Radicalisation and radicalisation prevention are delicate matters of global attention, connected to strong emotions, and therefore youth organisations with limited resources cannot be left alone to meet such complicated challenges: political support and engagement at all levels is imminent to help youth organisations make radicalisation prevention efficient.

This paper points to how this linking could happen – bottom-up as well as top-down it is directed to youth organisations who seek to stabilize their work by enlisting support from the authorities. It will increase their visibility and their contribution to the solving of urgent challenges.

NOTE ON RADICALISATION

Radicalisation is not by definition negative and to be avoided. On the contrary, in many situations radicalisation is highly needed.

However, when we use the term "radicalisation" in this paper what we mean is: "radicalisation leading to violent and extremist behaviour".

"Radicalisation" is therefore simply short for "radicalisation leading to violent and extremist behaviour" in the paper.

HOW CAN THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED IN PREVENTING RADICALISATION BE TRANSFERRED TO A POLICY LEVEL?

Most youth organisations are experiencing serious lack of coordination and planning from public authorities as to young migrants and refugees, and in particular when it comes about radicalisation prevention. Many youth organisations are struggling to deliver what the political system is not delivering, but have to face many obstacles due to the lack of coordination, dedication and provision of resources.

Very many political authorities seem to be "hesitating" towards working seriously with the challenges of radicalisation. Evidently, this makes it difficult for youth organisations to create long-term and sustainable empowerment processes for young migrants and refugees. Some youth organisations are actually able to provide valuable environments for the young migrants and refuges:

> We have succeeded in creating a safe and secure environment, where the young people have had the opportunity to share their experiences, feelings and thoughts, with us and each other.

However, in most communities there are no infrastructures or networks to follow up such achievements, and the risk of losing the positive environment is imminent when the young migrants and refugees are moved to other communities or simply moving across the community. Some good practice examples can be found at the end of this document.

> On the systematic level, the NGO´s and other organisations should connect and exchange experience about the person, so that when he/she arrives to a new city, he/she is taken care of.

Youth organisations suggest that such networks should be created at local and at regional level – perhaps even at national level in some cases.

Qualified coordination of any activity linked to young migrants and refuges is a pre-condition for the most basic criteria for successful radicalisation prevention: building trust and resilient identities. **Without such qualified coordination trust is at risk of being broken at any point, often resulting in re-traumatization.**

One of the participants precisely states:

> " In my opinion the slow trust building process is key.

This basic trust – perhaps the most important condition for successful radicalisation prevention – is broken once the young person is forced to leave the trust-building community or moves from one environment to another.

This "loss of trust" might even appear to be traumatic, and it can be difficult to re-establish the trust in a new context. The problem is, however: **What organisation or institution should be responsible for creating such coordinating networks?**

And, more: **Who should provide the needed resources for those networks?** Lack of coordination, consensus and empowerment strategies represent a considerable weakness in the radicalisation prevention efforts, and represent a serious threat to successful prevention and integration.

> " Youth organisations are already doing a lot; there is a weakness on the national level. There should be a cross-sectoral cooperation, but it does not exist – except in certain projects. Refugee centers should focus on all aspects and levels of integration, not only providing refugees with food, accommodation, free time activities and language courses. However, since there are no funds for additional activities, they cannot, even if they would want to. A lot of work is left for volunteers, but countries cannot and should not handle integration issues by letting the work to be done by volunteers.

Taking the youth organisation's experience to a political level includes capacity building of those youth organizations:

> " A lot of youth organisations are not aware about different radicalisation prevention practices and are not used to deal with this topic. It is still a sensitive topic and it would need more practice to talk about it and to be open for a dialogue.
>
> A lot of organisations associate radicalisation prevention work just with Muslim youth, yet young people can be radicalised and face extremism in other areas and of course other religions. More training and awareness rising is needed so organisations don't exclude some areas of work.
>
> Furthermore, organisations create activities and provide youth with tools but in an unrealistic and segregated environment; so the youth are strong when they are within the group and activity but when they leave the group to the "real world" they are fragile.

Capacity building of youth organisations working with radicalisation prevention – directly or indirectly – should be a political responsibility at local as well as regional and national level. Coordinated efforts would prevent the young people from a broken experience: trust and empowerment in one reality, but not in the others.

This should include clear definitions and distribution of responsibility and tasks between the involved players: the political institutions, the NGOs and the schools. Most youth organisations repeatedly characterize radicalisation prevention provision as scattered, punctual and uncoordinated. Pan-community coordination is the key to sustainable trust-building, identity development and radicalisation prevention.

CONCLUSION

Youth organisations are increasingly able to build safe environments and provide empowering work processes for young migrants and refugees, adding considerably to the creation of resilient identities; but to ensure successful outcomes of such services for the young people the youth initiatives need to be taken to a political level.

What does "taken to a political level" mean in this context?

It means that political institutions at all levels (local, regional and national governments) need to provide the necessary infrastructures, coordination and networks to allow organisations working with radicalisation prevention to work efficiently and provide continuity in the trust-building across the different societal realities (NGOs, schools, clubs, labour market and family).

The political engagement should include the following actions and resources:

- *Continuation and sustainability of local, national or European radicalisation prevention initiatives*
- *Providing appropriate cross-sector infrastructures to coordinate different organizations' interaction with the young migrants and refugees, beyond local level*
- *Offering youth organisations and youth workers capacity building to manage the complex tasks of radicalisation prevention*
- *Creating solid political platforms for such radicalisation prevention, including basic funding*
- *Building open forums in the community to monitor and evaluate radicalisation prevention activity at local and regional level and to evaluate the efficiency of such activity*
- *Taking new and appropriate radicalisation prevention initiatives based on observed needs*
- *Placing young migrants and refugees at the centre of the activities and negotiate with them how their needs can be met*

IMPORTANT MESSAGES

Serious lack of coordination of radicalisation prevention initiatives from public authorities. Without such qualified coordination trust is at risk of being broken at any point. Coordinated efforts from political institutions would prevent the young people from a (sometimes irreversible and irreparable) broken experience: trust and empowerment in one reality, but not in others.

The coordinator of IDE is present partner in another Erasmus + project that tries to tackle these challenges: https://kultur-life.de/projekte/promise/

Let us now provide some input to how youth organisations can reach out to mobilise the political institutions.

HOW CAN YOUTH ORGANISATIONS, THEN, HELP TAKE THEIR EXPERIENCE TO A POLITICAL LEVEL – HOW CAN THEY REACH OUT TO LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS?

Youth organisations working with radicalisation prevention in various ways should continuously reach out to and put pressure on political authorities. Youth organisations should try to become the drivers and initiative-takers of such political pressure, as they have concrete and practical experience with what efficient radicalisation is about and what such efforts need. Evidently, such activity is not a natural part of most youth organizations' practice and will take considerable capacity building.

Youth organisations can engage in political outreach in many ways, such as:

- *Use social media and local media to promote successful radicalisation prevention and integration and to give the young people themselves a strong political voice*
- *Share young migrants and refugees' personal life stories in all sorts of media, and through public events*
- *Constantly interact with local and national governments to provide sufficient infrastructures and resources for radicalisation prevention and similar initiatives*
- *Build alliances with various forms of educations to put pressure on the governmental institutions*
- *Seek support from other sectors, such as the private sector and from influential community stakeholders*

In some communities the local government is providing basic infrastructures and coordination of radicalisation prevention initiatives, but in most European communities such support exists hardly at all – neither at local, nor at national levels.

As mentioned above, many political institutions seem to hesitate to embrace serious engagement in radicalisation prevention. However, to mobilise political interest and support, certain collaborative actions might need to be taken in advance:

> The youth organisation can reach out to the local government. However, cooperation between different youth organisations would be needed first so that they could reach out jointly. It also depends on the size of the local community. In smaller communities it is easier to establish a direct contact; in bigger cities organisations should get connected. (See the Flüchtlingsrat in the last section as an example of how this works)

But, once again, most youth organisations might not have the capacity to continuously interact with local or national political systems.

This means that youth organisations not only need capacity building to work with radicalisation prevention, but also to take political action to ensure the quality and efficiency of such radicalisation initiatives.

> Some organisations are also not aware of their own capacities. Or their volunteers, youth workers etc. are not aware of funds or are not able to develop strategies, some are simply just afraid to start.

This challenge is further complicated by the fact that few political intuitions are willing to dedicate themselves to such initiatives:

> By an initiative and involving the municipality – which should be the one organizing meetings between all organisations, that are active in the community (schools, companies providing job or traineeship opportunities, sports associations, volunteers etc). Together they could develop a strategic plan and research for funds. However, not all mayors and municipalities are eager to get involved, some do not support integration. In this case the youth organisations would have to do the work on their own, create a network, organize meetings and trainings etc. A first step could be to identify and share the good practice examples of the own organisation with other initiatives and the local community.

> Schools and youth clubs are a great resource, also minority centers and cultural clubs could be a great way to bring toghether already integrated individuals and new-comers.

Some of the more experienced youth organisations are indeed aware of what kind of community actions could mobilise political and other forms of support for the radicalisation prevention initiatives, as suggested by one of the participants:

- *Create outcomes for publicity*
- *Talk to local newspapers*
- *Make open house presentations*
- *Activities to include the local community and government*
- *Share your ideas of alliances by using your local network*

The outreach to political institutions should engage a variety of young environments:

> Young people need diverse activities, mainly activities related to building relationships and having new projects. Sport and education activities are important as well as cultural and artistic performances. We would like to have a project including it all.

Such reflections point once more to the need for coordination of cross-sector and pan-community initiatives. Most likely, but also ironically, most of the resources to create such infrastructures will need to be provided by less resourceful youth organisations, clubs and schools.

To be efficient, such radicalisation prevention alliances need to mobilise political support, at local and perhaps even at national level – to make the initiatives and the alliances solid, sustainable and continuous.

Trust, credibility and continuity are among the most important things when working with young migrants and refugees, and dedicated support from political institutions will add considerable solidity to the initiatives.

Youth organisations deplore a number of reasons for the non-involvement from the political institutions, such as:

- *Lack of real interest in integration*
- *Afraid to work directly with radicalisation and radicalisation prevention*
- *Not willing to give financial priority to radicalisation prevention*
- *Lack of sufficient knowledge about radicalisation and radicalisation prevention*
- *Afraid to be the target of critical, anti-immigrant voices*
- *Careful not to create negative attitudes towards politicians in power, as "migrants and refugees" are stigmatized all over Europe*

Youth organisations working with young people in radicalisation prevention and various forms of integration therefore need to increasingly engage in what we might call *entrepreneurial activity*, based on developing new *entrepreneurial mindsets*. They will need to go beyond the traditional activities of the youth organisation and create *capacity to act in the community*, in the political systems and in the media.

Although this is a major challenge to most youth organisations, the good news is that they have a very strong case: radicalisation, extremism and terrorism are among the most important topics, locally, nationally and globally. Actions in the community and in the political system can therefore be highly justified.

In this context, entrepreneurial mindsets refer to taking action in the community, building new alliances, networks and projects, creating activities that were not there before, and bringing about change in the interaction between (young) citizens and the political institutions. Entrepreneurial orientation includes building capacity to provide financial and other resources for the new initiatives.

Importantly, such entrepreneurial orientation should include untraditional approaches to the private sector, as modern management has a stronger understanding of the needs of young people than the political systems. The young people – whether migrants, refugees or other young people at risk of radicalisation – should be at the forefront of such entrepreneurial action and should build self-confidence and respect through this co-driving.

CONCLUSION

Most youth organisations engaged in or planning to engage in radicalisation prevention or various forms of integration face a number of heavy challenges when trying to mobilise the political system for support:

- *They will to a large extent need to act alone*
- *They do not have the capacity or resources to mobilise governments, whether local or national*
- *They will need to create community alliances to mobilise political levels*
- *The staff needs various forms of empowerment and capacity building*

One of the Gordian knots is precisely: who will be able to provide the needed capacity building of youth organisations and youth workers to enable them to generate further resources and support for radicalisation prevention?

From experience it might be concluded that no single action can solve this problem. We believe that a stepwise bottom-up model is needed, such as for example:

01 The youth organisation should produce considerable practical experience and documentation in the field of radicalisation prevention; this might in certain cases be supported by various forms of local, national or European projects

02 The youth organisation should develop a simple and efficient "political mobilization strategy", and perhaps share this with other youth organisations

03 The youth organisation should, then, build alliances in the community in support of the radicalisation prevention initiatives (other youth clubs, schools, private organisations with social programmes and similar)

04 This alliance should create a strong voice in the community and beyond, including through qualified media work and story-telling, and the young migrants and/or refugees should be in the forefront of this media work

05 Finally, this alliance must be powerful enough to continuously approach the political system and force the political institutions to provide the needed involvement, infrastructures and coordination

IMPORTANT MESSAGES

Youth organisations need *double capacity building*:

→ capacity building in the field of **radicalisation prevention**

→ capacity building to create **alliances** and to **mobilise** the needed support from the political institutions

→ youth organisation should contribute to the general **political awareness** of young people in the community to put increasing and qualified pressure on the political systems

HOW CAN POLITICAL AUTHORITIES REACH OUT TO YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO ESTABLISH COLLABORATION TO HELP PREVENT RADICALISATION?

> " It is still a sensitive topic and not all politicians are keen to get involved in this work which can also be linked to their political position towards integration and migrants.
>
> If too many locals are discontent about the government supporting any activities connected to immigrants because of political position the government wouldn´t have the benefit of advertisement and therefore not that much economic reasons to support the radicalization prevention.

This challenge is the complete opposite of the first challenge: How can youth organisations help mobilise the needed support from the political institutions? The first challenge is bottom-up (from youth organisations to the political system), while this challenge is top-down (from local and national governments to youth organisations).

This challenge therefore brings about very different questions.

How could local governments reach out to and interact with young migrants and other young people to help prevent radicalisation?

The youth organisations and the young participants have very clear ideas about this:

> " They could support organisations and volunteers by providing premises and venues for meetings, organize events, help to create networks on the regional or national level, reserve funds for these activities.

> "
> * Provide better possibilities of funding to bring together people from different places on a national and international level.
> * Start a dialogue with young migrants and young people
> * Integrate the ideas of the youngsters into their work for them

- Provide a sustainable system of support especially for young migrants over 18 years
- Share positive examples of migrants and integration in the media
- Public Counter speech against hate speech
- Invite them to youth organisations' events such as a getting-to-know-each-other-party (flyers, social media, and schools)
- Create a youth Council which will involve young people in decision-making process

> Engage a range of communities and civil society groups, to encourage them to open up transparent dialogue, provide monthly meetings and presentations. It is very important to know who are radical influencers and work on IT policy to prevent access to that material and the use of that kind of networks.
>
> This could be reached by knowing the culture and tradition of new people coming, knowing what the organisation does for them in the local community, if the organisation is providing different events to keep their culture alive.

Many youth organisations are quite clear about the needed support from the political system, in particular to provide coordination, infrastructures, collaboration and various forms of resources.

Public authorities at the same need to develop a deeper understanding of how the political system can use the experience, knowledge and capacity of youth organisations working with migrants and refugees:

> Youth organisations can reach out to young people; they work directly with the target group and can establish trust. Local governments can´t achieve this on their own.

> Use the resources, knowledge and networks of the youth organisation to build up different types of activities which bring together young migrants and the local youngsters.
>
> Take part in activities of the youth organizations to use their interest and presence for and towards the target group.
>
> Co-Create new programs together with the youth organizations as they know the needs of the target groups.

> " Youth organizations have a closer bond to communities and know the situation better since they have field work and follow their integration processes. They keep partnership closer. They are a direct bond to raise community concern and engagement. Youth organizations strengthen information networks and already have gained trust from the community to work with them even on sensitive issues.
>
> Youth workers have a closer bond to users and the local community should support that by giving added education to youth workers and young users.

Political institutions and governments should therefore develop radicalisation prevention strategies that interact with, learn from and build on the specific resources and capacities in the youth organisations.

The political institutions might also base radicalisation prevention initiatives in schools on the experience and expertise of the youth organisations.

In this way such win-win interaction would result in increased respect for and recognition of the specific experience and expertise of the youth organisations – far beyond the "on the side-line" attitude towards non-formal youth work found across most political institutions and governments.

What kind of organisations should the political institutions reach out to and interact with?

When a local government decides to reach out and interact with organisations working with young people to prevent radicalisation and help build resilient identities, it should take into account one of the major obstacles to successful prevention and integration: the lack of coherence and coordination between different institutions, societal sectors and young environments.

This means that political outreach and engagement should aim to interact with a variety of organisations and environments across the community to build up such coherence and to avoid young migrants and refugees being (re-)traumatized by changing realities.

> *It is hard to exclude some organizations as the organisations work differently and focus on different aims, some of them focus on the inclusion in the labour market which is an important aspect for the special inclusion of migrants, others focus on sport activities in a rather informal setting but it leads to the integration and connects the local community with young migrants. Therefore it should be round table with representatives from a variety of organisation.*

> *Organizations working in the fields of psychology, education, inclusion and multiculturalism, ideology, online and digital media and human rights; any organisation that works with marginalized groups.*

HOW CAN SCHOOLS CONTRIBUTE TO A SOLUTION?

A special focus for such governmental initiatives and outreach should, evidently, be the *schools*, in particular secondary schools and vocational schools.

On one hand, the schools are among the most important environments for young people, including preventing radicalisation and promoting integration; on the other hand very few secondary schools in Europe are engaged in systematic radicalisation prevention.

In this case schools should cooperate with and learn from the experience and expertise of youth organisations, including their work forms, values and interaction principles: formal education should learn from non-formal education!

The IDE production BEYOND LANGUAGE - SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MIGRANTS AT SCHOOL provides examples of how school based activities can contribute to helping young migrant students develop resilient identities.

The production provides three types of such contributions: the role of the teacher, a safe classroom and how to use fiction as a tool to communicate one's life story.

THE ORGANISATION'S PART IN CREATING A SECURE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school is an important part to keep people away from violent extremism. Yet, schools have no possibilities to work with all the factors that could lead to violent extremism, nevertheless schools have the possibility to work with many of these factors and hopefully

succeed to influence. Sadly though, one has to admit that schools do not use their full potential according this matter.

 "The school should strive for an open atmosphere, where different views can meet, be tested and challenged" [free translation] (Skolans roll i arbetet mot våldsbejakande extremism p.16). If schools started to report children's and student's opinions or possible signs for radicalisation to the police or local co-ordinators working to counter violent extremism, there is a great risk that the trust between the employees at school and the students decrease and schools remit aggravate.

Teachers must get further training. As a teacher you must be educated so that you in a better way know how to think and act when working with refugees, to be as prepared as possible when they arrive.

THE TEACHER ROLE:

There are many different aspects to this matter. Is it important what kind of person you are, how you as a teacher act, your personality etc? Is it important how you treat the students, how you succeed to include them and gaining their trust? Is it important how lessons are managed? Of course, all of these aspects matter.

- You must be empathic and able to see and deal with students that are struggling with more than just the learning process, but at the same time have the confidence in other professions, at school, and guide the students to the right profession for their problem, e.g. psychologist.

- You must be prepared to question and sometimes reevaluate your own valuations, and your ways to look at the world, the society etc. Also be able to see that there is more than one way, your way that could be the right way.

A SAFE CLASSROOM:

Despite their background the students must have the opportunity to have a normal life in school. In the classroom focus must be school, subjects and school work.

> Cross-sectoral cooperation is essential to achieve results. Schools need to be included as they have valuable information on young people and on the other hand should be trained in non-formal education methods, to create a more relaxed atmosphere when dealing with certain topics.
>
> Schools can be a seen as a place where youngsters can be reached. Especially if the students act as multipliers and talk about the activities and organizations to friends and family who cannot be reached through schools or other channels.
>
> In our work we always use local networks to share the activities and to invite students to join the activities. It is one opportunity to present to work of the youth organisation and/or government to a high amount of youngsters at the same time which makes it attractive.
>
> Use school as a platform to meet students who can be invited to organizations and bring their friends (to even reach the ones who don´t go to school), make it special and interesting (for example a motto party or a party where everybody can chose one song from their countries).

> Schools should be supported in peer harassment and hate speech prevention. Invest in human rights education and equality. Also, provide additional education and trainings in the fields of social inclusion.
>
> Schools could have more individual advising and maybe a work group because some young people don't want to be a part of any organisation. This way schools could motivate them to join other organisation, exchanges or events.

Why schools do not engage in radicalisation prevention

It is important when local and national governments reach out to interact with institutions working with young people to help prevent radicalisation that they understand why schools are not in general engaging in radicalisation prevention. They need to take this into account

when reaching out to institutions in the community. In short, the most important obstacles to radicalisation prevention engagement in schools are:

- *Schools are overloaded with restrictive curricula, not leaving free space for such activities as radicalisation prevention and integration*
- *Most schools and teachers do not feel that they should work with such a "political" topic*
- *Teachers are not sufficiently prepared to engage in radicalisation prevention, much less than youth workers*

When public authorities reach out to the community to support and coordinate radicalisation prevention initiatives, the authorities need to ensure that the schools are provided with the needed time, space and resources to engage.

LINK: BEYOND LANGUAGE - SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MIGRANTS AT SCHOOL[1]

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND FUNDING

Regardless of the degree of voluntarism in the radicalisation prevention work, quality provisions to young migrants and refugees need appropriate funding. Even if youth organisations should develop entrepreneurial skills to create such funding, radicalisation prevention should be regarded a key political responsibility in all European communities and countries. Therefore one of the most important support from political institutions is about funding or co-funding the community' radicalisation prevention initiatives.

Local and national governments need to develop a stronger understanding of the fact that it is more economically efficient to *pro-actively* prevent than to *react* to the results of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism.

> They should cover at least the costs for the meetings (venue, coffee, snacks …) of local prevention networks to ensure a good working environment. Depending on the size of the municipality and the number of immigrants, they could cover part of the

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[1] If Link does not work, open document here: https://bit.ly/2XNTVwz

salary of a youth worker. They could also be in charge of the coordination – minimizing the costs the youth organisation would have.

"
They can support each activity with a certain allocated budget. They can also put certain requirements; activities should involve youth people, have young people in mind and include their interests.

"
They should provide funds to prepare local community to answer radical behaviours in the community. Empower organizations to launch radicalization prevention initiatives, mobility actions and youth exchanges.

It would be very good if local government provides more funds for youth exchange and trying to get new experience, exchange personal stories and get support.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of governmental outreach and support to radicalisation prevention should be the development of what could be named:

AN ECO-SYSTEM OF RADICALISATION PREVENTION

What does this mean?

It means that the governmental engagement **should** **not**:

- Remain top-down
- Be limited to certain societal sectors
- Be or promote short-term engagement
- Forward full responsibility to other institutions in the community

An eco-system of radicalisation prevention is a coordinated network of all sorts of activities in a community involved in radicalisation prevention (and quality integration), representing all relevant sectors of the community: schools, youth organisations, youth clubs, healthcare provision, labor market institutions, cultural institutions and private companies – and in some cases the police. Such eco-systems are at present being researched by the Erasmus+ project Promise: https://www.promise-project.eu/

Their efforts are coordinated and mutually support and qualify each other's engagement.

The eco-system places the young migrant or refugee at the centre of the activities and engages the young people as co-drivers, not consumers, of the activities. Such engagement should be regarded a considerable contribution to the young person's self-confidence, empowerment and strong identity-building.

The fully developed eco-system ensures that the young migrant or refugee will be able to move across the community with trust and confidence. The eco-system aims to avoid the typical and traumatic trust-breaking that threatens to undermine good and resilient identity-building.

The political institutions, delivering the overall coordination of such eco-systems, will discover that such eco-systems will create considerable community coherence benefit, far beyond radicalisation prevention and integration.

In the longer perspective local eco-systems of radicalisation prevention should be coordinated at regional or national level.

> A cross-sectoral cooperation, actively involving local young people in the activities enabling peer-to-peer education, intercultural awareness raising events, inclusion of immigrants in the development, planning and implementation of activities; develop activities with them, not for them.

IMPORTANT MESSAGES

Public authorities need to engage systematically in radicalisation prevention through reaching out to youth organisations with such expertise and to coordinate and support radicalisation prevention in all community contexts

Public authorities should aim to build eco-systems of radicalization prevention

Public authorities should engage in competence development of key public staff to enhance the understanding of coordinated radicalisation prevention and to help build capacity in the institutions engaged in radicalization prevention

Public authorities should provide capacity building of key community staff working with radicalisation prevention, including youth workers, teachers and social workers

Public authorities should pay considerable attention to providing schools with the needed time, capacity and resources to engage in radicalisation prevention

Erasmus+ Youth strategic partnerships (and School strategic partnerships) might provide a strong initial platform for such community eco-systems and for the various forms of capacity building

WHAT CAN ERASMUS+ DO TO HELP QUALITY RADICALISATION PREVENTION IN THE COMMUNITY?

Radicalisation prevention is a pan-European challenge and should be addressed at European level. It should be linked strongly to general quality integration of young migrants and refugees.

As nationalism, populism, climate change and pollution are increasingly challenging Europe, more and new forms of radicalisation and extremism can be expected from still more desperate young generations. Europe needs to respond to this, including through the Erasmus+ programme.

Youth organisations across Europe are struggling to offer young migrants and refugees quality integration and sustainable identity-building, but they are doing this with very few resources.

Therefore European funding of such activities should be very seriously considered, in particular as such funding can serve as a *starting platform* for new radicalisation prevention activities.

WHAT CAN ERASMUS+ DO TO HELP BUILD QUALITY RADICALISATION PREVENTION?

Let us bring forward some of the most important Erasmus+ potentials:

Make it a priority

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should make radicalisation prevention and sustainable integration a clear priority and promote and welcome quality initiatives in this field.

A broader radicalisation prevention approach

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should provide a much broader perspective on radicalisation and extremism, including for example new right-wing groups, neo-fascist groups, football ultras and organised crime.

Recognition of youth organisations

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should demonstrate increased recognition of non-formal youth work, including through increased funding, as such youth work is of great importance to respond to major European challenges, such as radicalisation and extremism.

Double capacity building

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should invite youth projects developing capacity building in youth organisations to

- provide high quality radicalisation prevention to young migrants and refugees
- co-drive eco-systems of radicalisation prevention in the community, including through mobilising governmental institutions

Cross-sector projects

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should in general invite more cross-sector initiatives, in particular to develop quality and coordinated radicalisation prevention, and to engage new forms of alliances with for example private companies.

At the end of the day: bringing young people together

The new Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 should, through more flexible mobility measures and increased youth programme funding, heavily promote the bringing together of young people from across Europe, including young migrants and refugees.

A strong statement from one of the young participants: "Simply being part of this project and meeting up with young people from other countries really empowered me".

FROM DOUBLE TO TRIPLE CAPACITY BUILDING: FUNDRAISING

Discussing how European funding can help create a platform for youth organisations to engage in or qualify their radicalisation prevention initiatives adds yet another capacity building challenge to the double challenge described above: capacity building to receive European funding.

Youth organisations can receive considerable funding for projects on radicalisation prevention and integration through the Erasmus+ Youth sub-programme, in particular from the Strategic Partnership strand. However, few youth organisations have the capacity to create quality applications for the increasingly competitive Erasmus+ programme.

Therefore youth organisations wishing to receive such funding need to either build capacity to produce and manage such projects, or team up with organisations or professionals with such capacity.

SUSTAINABILITY

An important part of the capacity building of youth organisations is to ensure that local, national or European projects are followed up after the termination of the project.

Therefore it is recommended to include the building of local eco-systems of radicalisation prevention along such projects – to help make the initiatives sustainable.

ON A MORE POSITIVE NOTE: SOME GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES FROM OUR NETWORK IN THE CITY OF KIEL, NORTHERN GERMANY AND ONE OUTSTANDING SUCCESS FROM FLANDERS, BELGIUM.

From the previous considerations regarding the cooperation between youth organisations and decision-makers at political level, we could learn, that the following criteria are essential for success:

- Stability - participating organisations could not be financed based on time-limited projects, but receive sufficient funding to develop long-lasting activities.

- Cross-sectorial cooperation - the participants in any prevention activities collect experiences in a variety of situations, and they meet with citizens and institutions of the hosting society in an even larger variety of shapes and sizes. If the institutions do not cooperate, initiatives, that are started by one institution can be completely annihilated by another one, if those are not coordinated.

- Make sure to include initiatives, that I started by members of the target group themselves - avoid top-down strategies.

Unfortunately, prevention of radicalisation is just one topic that competes for the attention of decision-makers. What has helped to gain the attention of media and politicians was the sense of urgency, that went along with increasingly violent and terrorist activities. It will be a challenge to uphold this necessary level of attention, when first successes of the prevention activities have led to decreased degree of violence.

ZBBS (WWW.ZBBS-SH.DE)

Stability: With the ZBBS, we have an institution that meets some of the above criteria. With the help of untiring lobbying with the city council, the initiative has finally managed to achieve institutional funding, which to some extent alleviates the permanent pressure to develop new and innovative projects, instead of just continuing with well-established and impact-proven activities. In parallel, the organisation runs several language courses for migrants, which are paid for by public funding and which also create a somewhat independent stream of revenues.

Cross-sectorial cooperation: the institution runs a variety of advice and support activities, such as language courses and tutoring. Unfortunately, their outreach into the municipal administration is somewhat limited and not institutionalised. It would be desirable to establish a round table with members of the various institutions that migrants encounter, particularly in the first month after arrival.

Bottom-up approach: the initiative was founded by migrants and is still very much shaped by them. This contributes largely to their credibility amongst members of the target group. Some migrants recently opened up a 'Centre for empowerment and intercultural creativity' (http://www.zeik-kiel.de) that has in a very short period of time assembled a large number of supporters from within the migrant community, or teach each other key competences relevant for successful integration and therefore prevention of violent radicalisation.

FLÜCHTLINGSRAT SCHLESWIG HOLSTEIN (REFUGEE COUNCIL) (WWW.FRSH.DE/HOME)

The refugee Council is the umbrella organisation for all initiatives in the province, that deal with the topics of migration, flight and integration.

Stability: the situation of the refugee Council is on the provincial level, what the ZBBS is on a local level. They get some institutional funding from the provincial government, and otherwise run a multitude of projects with a wide variety of funding sources.

Cross-sectorial cooperation: their set up as an umbrella organisation makes their outreach into provincial politics much more powerful, as an individual youth organisation could ever dream to be. Although this structure requires a lot of coordinating activities, it helps to bundle the messages from the sector and makes lobbying as well as public relations in general much more efficient.

Bottom-up approach: the organisation is - due to its structure - one levelled away from the individual, young migrant and refugee. To that aspect, it is a compromise in between first-line practitioner engagement and the political pressure group. Small initiatives that are run by migrants may find it difficult on various levels to make their voice heard in such an institution.

These are just two examples of what can be done on local and regional level in order to create an infrastructure, that allows use organisations to have sustained impact. They both have in common that they need financial and other support from the institutions that they want to reach out to. The only way out of this conundrum is constant lobbying and focus on and impact of the activities, that is linked with the overall goals of the community representatives. In the case of the prevention of radicalisation, there has probably never been a time when decision-makers have been more open to support such activities. Let's make the best use of this window of opportunity!

MECHELEN

A good practice example, that includes a whole city, is the Belgian city of Mechelen. Mechelen is a medium-sized city with 90,000 inhabitants, with more than 20% of them migrants. This example shows what can be done, if the city administration is not reluctantly driven by youth organisations, but a powerful driver of integration and radicalisation prevention. Bart Somers, the mayor of Mechelen, highlights the importance to start refugee integration from day one. In a joint effort, education institutions, labour market agencies and social benefit administrations work hand in hand with news organisations, sports clubs

and other civil society initiatives to look after newly arrived migrants and open doors to a successful integration into the hosting society. This welcoming policy is accompanied by zero tolerance strategy to discourage anti-social behaviour. In recognition of his achievement, Mr Somers has been voted 'World Mayor' in 2016 by the global City Mayors foundation for his success in the integration of newcomers to the city of Mechelen.

The success of the city administration is also reflected by the financial Times nomination as to be one of the top 10 micro European cities of the future.

There certainly has been a sense of urgency in the city. 50% of the newly born are born into migrant families, and more than 130 different nationalities live together. The right-wing populist have succeeded in getting more than 30% of the votes. The liberal coalition led by Somers achieved almost 50% of the votes in the latest, 2018 city council election. the right-wing Vlaams Belang was successfully kept below 10% of the votes.

FURTHER READING

A wider collection of good practice examples has been collected by the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in their policy paper: Developing a Local Prevent Framework and Guiding Principles, published online (https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/archive_en) and 'Multi-Agency Working and Preventing Violent Extremism' (https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers_en).