NEW DIRECTIONS IN PREVENTING VIOLENT YOUTH RADICALISATION

COMPARATIVE CHAPTER (EXTRACT) OF THE SUMMARY FINDINGS FROM THE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND INNOVATION PROJECT (YEIP)

EDITOR: DR. THEO GAVRIELIDES

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NEW DIRECTIONS IN PREVENTING VIOLENT YOUTH RADICALISATION
CONCLUDING FINDINGS FROM THE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND INNOVATION PROJECT (YEIP)

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PARTNERSHIP

YEIP is led and co-ordinated by the IARS International Institute and delivered in partnership with 18 partners from seven EU countries.

The partnership includes:

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UK: The Home Office |
Greece: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change Koinofelis Epicheirisi Ipiresion Neapolis Sykeon (Common Benefit Enterprise for Services of Neapolis Sykies) |
Cyprus: Municipality of Engomi, |
Italy: Regione Ligura |
Portugal: Câmara Municipal de Oliveira de Azeméis |
Sweden: Lansstyrelsen I Kalmar lan |

TARGET GROUPS
UK: Khulisa | Buckinghamshire New University
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<td>Kentro Merimnas Oikogenieas Paidiou</td>
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In her position she is managing various EU programs for the integration of refugee and migrants in Romania. She also provides in-depth research, policy analysis, and training related to EU asylum and migration and integration-related issues. In her capacity, she has demonstrated substantial leadership achievements designing and implementing innovative programs to address the shortcomings of the available mainstream education services, advocated for integration-related policy and practice change at the EU and national levels, and build the capacity of local stakeholders in this regard. Her academic achievements include a Fulbright Research Scholarship, MSc in Conflict Resolution and Governance and a BA in International Relations.

Haji, Iman is the Research and Project coordinator at Khulisa. She leads on building Khulisa’s research agenda. To further Khulisa’s objective to influence policy and practice, Iman has co-written a chapter for the Monument Fellowship book “Curing Violence”, an edited collection which explores how we can become a less violent society. She has also presented a papers at a number of international conferences including The Howard League International Conference and The British Society of Criminology annual conference. She has also presented oral evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee on knife crime & has presented at a number of Public Policy Exchange symposiums.

With a background in criminal defence before her time with Khulisa, her work focuses on the importance of trauma-informed practice and the development of social and emotional well-being as the foundation to reducing (re)offending and improving life outcomes for people.
Over the last few years, the terms violent radicalisation, hate crimes, xenophobia, extremism and terrorism have become central features in our political, policy and public debates, social media, academic writings and research, TV, radio, paper and online news. Indeed, much has been written and said about these terms; the beliefs and perceptions that feed them, as well as the criticism, sensitivity and controversies that surround them. It is not my intention to repeat them here.

In fact, the purpose of this book is to help move the debate forward by helping all those interested in the topic of violent youth radicalisation to see it from a new prism. It is with this hope that I applied to the European Commission (EC) to fund the Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project (YEIP) that has informed this publication.

YEIP was a 3-year Erasmus+ funded programme that designed a youth-led, positive policy prevention framework for tackling and preventing the marginalisation and violent radicalisation among young people in Europe. The project run between March 2017 – February 2020. It was developed in response to Erasmus+ Key Action 3 – Policy Experimentation. The Erasmus Call was directed to high level public authorities, focusing on policy. IARS agreed with the Home Office to delegate its power to the Institute, which applied on its behalf and was successful in proposing a youth-led project that would bring together one of the largest consortia of public and civil society organisations to achieve the Call’s objectives.

Led by young people and coordinated by Dr. Theo Gavrielides (Founder of The IARS International Institute), YEIP was delivered in partnership with 18 partners from seven EU countries to construct and test an innovative, policy intervention model founded on the principles of restorative justice, positive psychology and the Good Lives Model (GLM).

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<th>Type of organisation</th>
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| 9 "Public Authorities" from 7 countries | 1. UK: The Home Office  
2. Greece: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change  
3. Cyprus: Municipality of Engomi  
4. Italy: Regione Liguria  
5. Portugal: Câmara Municipal de Oliveira de Azeméis  
6. Sweden: Länsstyrelsen Kalmars lan  
7. Romania:  National Council for Combating Discrimination |
| 7 "Researchers" from 7 countries | 1. UK: IARS International Institute  
2. Greece: Kontor Merimmas Oikogerias Patiion  
3. Cyprus: Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Education  
4. Italy: Anziani e non solo scuola  
5. Portugal: Inova+  
6. Sweden: Lunds Universitetet  
7. Romania: Fundatia Schottei Servicii Sociale |
| 2 "Target Groups" from the UK | 1. Kluissa  
2. Buckinghamshire New University |

Table 1: The YEIP Partnership

YEIP was implemented through the construction and field validation of tools (YEIP PREVENT model/ interventions, toolkit, training) in 4 environments (schools, universities, prisons, online) in the UK, Greece, Cyprus, Portugal, Sweden, Italy and Romania.

The project was broken down into four scientific blocks. The first block involved secondary research as well as primary fieldwork with 133 participants. The second block carried out fieldwork with 380 participants. The
third scientific block involved a total of 478 young people, 354 professionals and 195 policy makers. Finally, the fourth block involved 1408 young participants and 517 professionals.

In total, YEIP directly engaged with and spoke to 3540 individuals from as young as 16 years old to 78. Arguably, this is one of the largest scientific studies on violent youth radicalisation in Europe.

It is my hope that YEIP will lay the foundations for systemic change in the way we deal with violent youth radicalisation at the national and EU levels. The ultimate objective was for the project to help implement the EU Youth Strategy’s objective of preventing the factors that can lead to young people’s social exclusion and radicalisation. The project was also in line with the EU’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy of 2005 (revised in 2008 and 2014). I hope that this book and the results of the project help deliver these strategies.

Finally, I want to believe that the success of this youth-led project will demonstrate to European citizens the leadership and determination of EC institutions in rooting out the reasons that lead to young peoples’ marginalisation and violent radicalisation, firming up in this way trust and confidence. At a time, when European solidarity is questioned, our young people can lead us in re-establishing the very values and reasons that united Europe in the first place.

**YEIP’S YOUTH-LED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

One of the most innovative features of YEIP was its ground-breaking and unique youth-led research and project methodology. This drew from the field of participatory action research, which is experimental research that focuses on the effects of the researcher’s direct actions of practice within a participatory community with the goal of improving the performance quality of the community or an area of concern (Dick 2002). Within this realm, youth-led research is identified. Admittedly, the extant literature on youth-led research is scant and thus the risks considerable (Gavrielides, 2014; Gough, 2006). However, IARS has been a pioneer in this area having introduced some of the first youth led fieldwork in Europe and tested them for policy reform (see Youth in Action).

In a paper published in the *Youth Voice Journal*, a young researcher, Cass, describes the underlying principles of youth-led research and policy as “(1) addressing power imbalances; (2) valuing lived experiences; (3) respecting choice in participation; and (4) empowerment”. The youth-led approach dictates that young people must be left to instigate potential solutions to a problem, one that they have indeed identified themselves, and take responsibility for developing and implementing a solution. Consequently, the youth-led method repositions young people as important stakeholders who can make unique decisions which impact on the quality of their lives, rather than simply accepting the position as passive subjects whose lives are guided by decisions made by adult ‘others’.

To this end, we took the following steps, when conducting youth-led research for YEIP:

- **Step 1:** Relinquish power and “remove hats”
- **Step 2:** Reach out widely and recruit diverse groups in partnership with others
- **Step 3:** Empower through ad hoc and tailored accredited training that is flexible and adjustable to young people’s needs as these are defined by their diverse lives
- **Step 4:** Facilitate discussions on current topics that need change
- **Step 5:** Coordinate their action research and support to write evidence based solutions through peer reviewed processes
- **Step 6:** Support the evaluation, monitoring, project management and control of all previous steps through youth-led tools and a standing Youth Advisory Board

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1. See [www.youthvoicejournal.com](http://www.youthvoicejournal.com)
Step 7: Reward and accredit.

The NGO partners in each participating country, recruited and trained a total of **75 young people** in order to empower them to carry out the research themselves. As a youth-led project, YEIP did not want to replicate the methods that have been used to understand violent youth radicalisation. Below you can see a breakdown of the demographics of the young people who led on the research and who continue to support the project through other activities.

The impact and scalability of the YEIP GLM-based policy measure was assessed through a semi-experimental methodology that sought to identify and evaluate the causality link between our measure and the change it aims to make for young people at risk of radicalisation and marginalisation. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research tools were used.

The scientific work of YEIP comprised of five different building blocks that were represented via different work packages (WPs). Following a thorough literature review (WP1) and the collection of stakeholders’ views through youth-led research (WP2), we constructed the tools that implemented our policy measure (i.e. the YEIP Prevent model/ intervention and a toolkit). These tools were used to capacity build professionals working in our selected environments. Subsequently, field trials (WP3) were conducted in the participating countries. These piloted and evaluated the tools implementing our policy measure and were observed through a mixture of qualitative methodologies. Impact measurement was achieved through a before-after comparison. To triangulate the findings, a pan-European quantitative survey was also carried out (WP4). The research design and approach were youth-led, following the principles of participatory, youth-led action research. Below is what we originally envisaged:

**First building block** (WP1): It aims to “build the foundations” by analysing the current state of the art. To this end, existing knowledge in the selected case study countries will be assessed both in terms of policy, research and practice. A comparative analysis between the case studies and a cross European review will also be conducted alongside a stakeholder mapping. Following this, our experimentation protocol will be finalised.

**Second building block** (WP2): This will have two aims. First, to test the underlying hypothesis of the GLM-based YEIP policy measure. Second, to construct the tools that will implement YEIP’s policy measure (i.e. the YEIP PREVENT model/ intervention and toolkit). Both goals will be achieved by carrying out youth-led primary research in four environments: schools, universities, Youth Offending Institutions and online.

**Third building block** (WP3): This will have two aims. First, to test the YEIP GLM-based policy intervention by conducting field trials following capacity building of professionals using the tools constructed under building blocks 1 and 2. They will be conducted in the country case studies within the four selected environments. Second, to identify and evaluate a causality link between YEIP’s policy measure and tools, and the change that has occurred in our target groups within selected environments. The findings will determine the logic behind the change (counterfactual analysis). A quasi-experimental method will be used by relying on assumptions that will help us justify the claim that the comparison group is similar to the treatment group. To this end, we will carry out before-after comparisons using the same population which undertook the YEIP intervention within a 6-month period.

**Fourth Building block** (WP4): This will aim to triangulate our findings through a quantitative methodology that will counteract the weaknesses found in qualitative methods. Two online surveys will be designed and disseminated across Europe throughout the lifetime of WP2 and 3.
BACKGROUND & IMPETUS

YEIP was created in response to a current social need to have more effective youth policies that can enhance young people’s social inclusion and minimize the risk of radicalization with greater ‘buy in’ from youth themselves.

To this end, YEIP constructed and tested an innovative policy intervention, which generated a set of actions that will help address this need at the local, national and European levels. This measure is founded upon restorative justice and the Good Lives Model (GLM), which assumes that we are goal-influenced and all seek certain ‘goods’ in our lives, not ‘material’, but qualitative, all likely to increase or improve our psychological well-being (Ward, Mann and Gannon 2007).

Through the use of multi-disciplinary tools, we constructed tools that tested and implemented this measure at the local, national and EU wide level. The ultimate objective is for the project to help address the Erasmus KA3 objectives (especially PT7) as these are aligned with the EU Youth Strategy’s objective of preventing the factors that can lead to young people’s social exclusion and radicalisation.

Existing approaches are constructed within the Risk Need Responsivity (RNR) model for prevention. Developed in the 1980s by Andrews, Bonta and Hope (1990), RNR’s focus is on reducing and managing risk as well as on studying the process of relapse. Pathology-focused research and intervention have consequently been developed as tools for RNR based approaches to rehabilitation.

According to Maruna (2006) and Gavrielides and Piers (2013; 2015), RNR is now challenged at practical, policy and financial levels. They argued that concentrating on criminogenic needs to reduce risk factors are not a sufficient condition when it comes to young people. McAdams (1994; 2006) argues that integration and relatedness for young people are crucial in encouraging desistance from violence and radicalisation. Politicians and the public also seem to agree with the extant literature. For instance, the UK Justice Secretary said that prison often turns out to be “a costly and ineffectual approach that fails to turn criminals into law-abiding citizens” (Travis 2010).

YEIP aimed to turn the RNR approach on its head. Instead of “managing” young people as “risks”, our policy measure focused on promoting the talents and strengths of vulnerable young people and through this approach help develop positive identities. The extant literature has defined these as being “the internal organisation of a coherent sense of self” (Dean 2014). The GLM operates in both a holistic and constructive

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**Figure 1: The YEIP Building Blocks**
manner in considering how young people take risk might identify and work towards a way of living that is likely to involve the goods we seek in life, as well as a positive way of living that does not involve or need crime (Scottish Prison Service 2011).

In this process, the argument is that the model works towards a positive, growth-oriented change in life where an offender works on the development of the values, skills and resources towards life based on human goods that is a necessary counter-balance of managing risk alone (Ward, Mann and Gannon 2007: 92), i.e. risk is managed as well as seeking to develop positive life alternatives. This approach is aligned with the underlying philosophy of 2014 EC report on youth workers, which asks for a more coordinated effort in supporting young people with fewer opportunities by tapping into their talents and not by further marginalising them.

This ebook brings together the work that we have done over the last 3 years. It draws some important conclusions that make me ask: what will it take for society to finally raise the mirror of responsibility and look well into its reflection? Every time I look into this mirror, I see nothing but myself and a thousand other fellow citizens. We are the real architects of the social fabric that generates the extremist ideologies, which then gradually corrupt universal values such as tolerance and the respect of life, dignity and brotherhood. The extremist ideology that leads those young men, men and women, to act inhumane is not an alien virus of unknown origin. It is a product of our way of living.

YEIP’S EVALUATION & RESEARCH ETHICS

Internal evaluations
From the outset, the YEIP partnership was very serious about evaluating its own work and delivering the intended outcomes. Therefore, an entire Work Package was dedicated to “Evaluation and Quality Control” running throughout the project period. As a user-led organisation, IARS put together a plan that was aligned with YEIP’s youth-led and user-led philosophy, while maintaining high academic standards.

In particular, an Evaluation Plan was developed along with A Theory of Change, indicating clear building blocks and targets. Specific internal and external evaluation tools were utilized to assess project results, namely:

- The Academic and Ethics Board comprised of 22 international experts.
- The Youth Advisory Board comprised of 8 young people from diverse backgrounds trained to scrutinise, monitor and evaluate all IARS projects.
- The Women’s Advisory Board comprised of marginalised women.
- The Buckinghamshire New University Ethics Committee comprised of high profile academics.

External Evaluations
It was important that in addition to its own internal evaluation methods, YEIP engaged with external evaluation routes. To this end:

- YEIP is registered with the EU funded IMPACT project and Evaluation Toolkit
- IARS commissioned an external evaluation looking at the project’s methodology, outputs, outcomes, results and impact and advising on sustainability. Following an open call and a tendering process, the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) was successful and their independent findings are included as a separate chapter in this book.

Ethics review and human rights
An Ethics Committee was formed to ensure that the consortium follows the ethical principles and practices of the work plan as well human rights as these are protected under the European Convention on Human Rights. The Ethics Committee also examined and responded to ethical queries that arose during the course of the research and review research ethics applications when primary research involved vulnerable individuals. It was also responsible for monitoring and assessing the societal impact of the research, and provide initial findings for management reports. At the national level, the Research Partners involved their own national
Research Ethics committees and followed the principles for research ethics approval as these are defined by their national legislation and standards.

**Theory of Change**

A Theory of Change (ToC) Model was constructed for this project using the building blocks required to bring about our long-term goal. Through regular monitoring of this model, the partnership had the context for considering the connections between the project mission, strategies and actual outcomes, whilst creating links between who is being served, the strategies or activities that are being implemented, and the desired outcomes. Our ToC is a “pathway of change” representation of the projects progress and can be seen below:

![Figure 2: YEIP Theory of Change](image)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I will conclude this introduction by giving my gratitude to the authors of the chapters and their young research teams for their diligence and patience. I am grateful to the young people and the professionals who attended the various seminars that allowed us to collect the original data that was needed for this e-book as well as the organisations and individuals who helped our partners. I am particularly grateful to my team at the IARS International Institute, as well as Rita Seneca for designing this e-book and indeed all the YEIP material and publications. Finally, special thanks go to our funder the European Commission and the Erasmus Plus programme.
COMPARATIVE LEARNING BETWEEN 6 COUNTRIES AND ACROSS THE EU
ABSTRACT

This is the concluding chapter of YEIP, bringing together all the data and findings of the 3-year programme. The chapter has been divided into three parts. The first briefly describes the overall methodology of the programme, while presenting some of the project’s agreed key definitions. The second part presents YEIP findings. Finally, the chapter concludes with some critical reflections for research and European policy and practice.

Overall, the chapter used data that was collected through a youth-led methodology involving 75 young researchers throughout the project and partnership. The project was broken down into four scientific blocks. The first block involved secondary research as well as primary fieldwork with 133 participants. The second block carried out fieldwork with 380 participants. The third scientific block involved a total of 478 young people, 354 professionals and 195 policy makers. Finally, the fourth block involved an impressive number of 1408 young participants and 517 professionals.

In total, YEIP directly engaged with and spoke to 3540 individuals from as young as 16 years old to 78. Arguably, this is one of the largest scientific studies on violent youth radicalisation in Europe.
INTRODUCTION

This is the comparative chapter that brings together all the findings of YEIP’s primary and secondary research as well as the piloting of its Policy Measure. The work informing this chapter was carried out by all 18 partners (2017 – 2020) in seven countries and across Europe on the issue of violent youth radicalisation and preventative, innovative approaches based on positive psychology and the Good Lives Model (GLM)\(^2\).

In short, this chapter and the larger framework within which it is written aims to turn the current, dominant Risk Need Responsivity (RNR) punitive model on its head. Instead of “managing” young people as “risks”, our investigation and programme focused on promoting the talents and strengths of vulnerable young people and through this approach help develop positive identities. The extant literature has defined these as being “the internal organisation of a coherent sense of self” (Dean 2014).

Throughout the project we applied a holistic and constructive approach in considering how young people at risk might identify and work towards a way of living that is likely to involve the goods we seek in life, as well as a positive way of living that does not involve or need crime (Scottish Prison Service 2011). In this process, the argument is that the GLM works towards a positive, growth-oriented change in life where an offender or a person at risk works on the development of the values, skills and resources towards life based on human goods that is a necessary counter-balance of managing risk alone (Ward, Mann and Gannon 2007: 92), i.e. risk is managed as well as seeking to develop positive life alternatives.

YEIP was developed at a critical time for Europe, when there is an urgent need for innovative and bold youth policies that can bring real change to current practices at the local, national and European levels. There can be no doubt that serious and indeed honourable efforts have been made by both regional and national bodies to ensure that our continent and home remain an open, prosperous and safe place to live and work. Let’s not forget that 80% of us think that our own country and the EU are secure places to live (European Commission, 2015). At the same time, over and over again, Eurobarometer, the official survey carried out by the European Commission (EC), records that security is the top concern for Europeans. What we also think as Europeans is that the measures that have been introduced to fight insecurity have compromised our fundamental rights and freedoms.

Of course, radicalisation, violet extremism and foreign terrorist fighters are not the only reasons that cause Europeans’ feeling of insecurity. Key reasons that have been quoted include the financial crisis, war and conflicts on the EU’s doorstep. But aren’t these additional reasons the triggers a vicious circle of marginalisation, especially of society groups that are at risk of being radicalised and pushed into a corner?

YEIP’S RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

One of the key reasons that make YEIP innovative and different from other EU funded initiatives on radicalisation is its research and project methodology. Given that the focus of the project was on generating solutions for young people, I thought that the most appropriate research methodology would be one based on user-led principles. Thus, our overall research methodology drew from the field of participatory action research, which is experimental research that focuses on the effects of the researcher’s direct actions of practice within a participatory community with the goal of improving the performance quality of the community or an area of concern (Dick 2002). Within this realm, youth-led research was identified.

From the outset, the seven research partners were given a clear steer as to what their central research objectives and youth-led methodology were going to be. A detailed Research Guide and a separate document with Editorial Guidelines were produced. The shared research tasks were aligned with YEIP’s overall objectives. Subsequently, a Research Experimentation Protocol was produced coordinating all research steps.

Given the various differences in the participant countries, I also thought that it was important that the seven

\(^2\) For more information on YEIP and to access the edited collection [www.yeip.org](http://www.yeip.org)
national research teams were left with a relative freedom to adjust their methodology and sampling strategies, making them work for their local area and context. This was also important as we looked at different environments where violent youth radicalisation may occur. Although the programme in its totality looked at all places where violent youth radicalisation may take place (i.e. schools, universities, youth offending institutions and online), research partners focused their research and experimentation only on one or two of these environments.

Following the youth-led methodology of the project, the data that informed this e-book and the longer version that is available in the participating languages were collected by young people. The NGO partners in each participating country, recruited and trained a total of 74 young people in order to empower them to carry out the research themselves. These young people came from diverse backgrounds including refugees and asylum seekers, university students, able and disabled.

As a youth-led project, YEIP did not want to replicate the methods that have been used to understand violent youth radicalisation. Below (Table 1) you can see a breakdown of the demographics of the young people who led on the research and who will continue to support the project through social action and awareness raising activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Gender balance</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Training received</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>F 8 M 0</td>
<td>7 University students ages 16-26 And 1 School Student age 16-17</td>
<td>Completed two sessions of training.</td>
<td>Two further young researchers contributed to one focus group (trained by the young researchers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>F 11 M 0</td>
<td>Range 18-25</td>
<td>One day training on qualitative and quantitative research methods</td>
<td>Background: university students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>One day training session (youth-led research, focus groups and interviews, qualitative data analysis and report writing)</td>
<td>Background: university students, social workers, youth workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Total: 9</td>
<td>F 5 M 4</td>
<td>Uni 20-26</td>
<td>Two training courses for School participants covering (2 days)</td>
<td>School and university students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uni: 5 (6 trained)</td>
<td>F 3 M</td>
<td>School 16-17</td>
<td>One training course for University students (1 day)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School: 4</td>
<td>School F 2 M 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>F 9 M 1</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>Two training sessions</td>
<td>Young people in universities and out of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania/Poland</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Students: Unknown Refugees F 1 M 3</td>
<td>5 high-school students 7 University Refugees 17-23</td>
<td>One day training sessions (one for each group involved)</td>
<td>12 Romanians 4 Refugees -3 Syrian -1 Afghan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>F 9</td>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>Two-day training course</td>
<td>8 Portuguese 1 Brazilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 1: YEIP’s 74 Young Researchers**
The 3-year programme was broken down into four scientific blocks and three additional horizontal work packages (Management, Dissemination and Evaluation). The four scientific blocks were informed by secondary research carried out in native languages as well as fieldwork. Various e-books and reports were produced reporting on the work of each scientific block. These can be downloaded for free from YEIP’s website [https://yeip.org/awareness-raising-material/yeip-ebooks/](https://yeip.org/awareness-raising-material/yeip-ebooks/)

In relation to its sampling, YEIP’s first block involved secondary research as well as primary fieldwork with **133 participants**. The second block carried out fieldwork with **380 participants**. The third scientific block involved a total of **478 young people, 354 professionals** and **195 policy makers**. Finally, the fourth block involved an impressive number of **1408 young participants** and **517 professionals**.

In total, YEIP directly engaged with and spoke to **3540 individuals from as young as 16 years old to 78**. Arguably, this is one of the largest scientific studies on violent youth radicalisation in Europe.

Below is a summary of the sample groups that were included in the fieldwork per participating country:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>WP1 sample</th>
<th>WP2 Young researchers</th>
<th>WP2 sample</th>
<th>WP3 professionals</th>
<th>WP3 Policy makers</th>
<th>WP3 young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK - schools</td>
<td>IARS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khulisa</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BNU</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CARDET</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY - Schools</td>
<td>CARDET</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KMOP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KMOP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY - Youth Migrant Centre</td>
<td>CARDET</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY - Youth Migrant Centre</td>
<td>KOMP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR - Schools</td>
<td>KOMP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR - Schools</td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR - Schools</td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR - Universities</td>
<td>KMOP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT - Schools</td>
<td>KOMP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT - Schools</td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT - Universities</td>
<td>KMOP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Schools</td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Schools</td>
<td>INOVA+</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Schools</td>
<td>Schottener</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Schools</td>
<td>Schottener</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Schools</td>
<td>Schottener</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO - Migrant Center</td>
<td>Schottener</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT - Other stakeholders</td>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY - Other stakeholders</td>
<td>CARDET</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW Schools</td>
<td>Linneus University</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2: YEIP RESEARCH SAMPLES**
It is also worth presenting the breakdown of the WP4 sample groups per language used for the two surveys (young people and professionals):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Romanian</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>Polish</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young People</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 3: YEIP RESEARCH SAMPLE FOR WORK PACKAGE 4 – INTERNATIONAL SURVEYS**

**DEFINITIONAL AGREEMENTS**

The terms:

- radicalisation and violent radicalisation
- extremism and violent extremism
- religious fundamentalism, and
- terrorism

are frequently used interchangeably. However, they are very different. Throughout the project, we accepted the following definitions:

**Violent radicalisation** is the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of violence including terrorism as defined in Article 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism\(^3\).

**Radicalisation** does not necessarily lead to violence and has been said to seek making changes to the existing political and social structure. Another approach defines radicalism as a quest for sweeping change, while limiting extremism to the pursuit of concrete and localised political ideologies. In other words, radicalisation can be a good force for change especially in oppressive political regimes.

**Extremism** has been referred to as the adoption of a particular ideology with the intention to use violence to remove the state or ruling structure and its elites\(^4\). Again, extremism can be seen as a positive act for change.

**Violent extremism** involves the exercise of power through violent acts with the intention of changing status quo and the ruling structures illegitimately.

**Religious fundamentalism** is “a belief in an absolute religious truth, which is challenged by the forces of evil and which must be followed today in the same way as in the past”\(^5\).

**Terrorism** is “any act of violence or threat thereof notwithstanding its motives or intentions perpetrated to carry out an individual or collective criminal plan with the aim of terrorising people or threatening to harm them or imperilling their lives, honour, freedoms, security or rights or exposing the environment or any facility or public or private property to hazards or occupying or seizing them, or endangering a national resource,”

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\(^3\) Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on Combating Terrorism. Article 1 provides that each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the intentional acts referred to nine expressly specified offences, as defined under national law, which given their nature and context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing an act, or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation, shall be deemed terrorist offences.


or international facilities, or threatening the stability, territorial integrity, political unity or sovereignty of independent States”.

FINDINGS

1. TWO CONFLICTING MINDSETS

Over a relatively short period of time, the way of talking about and working on preventive measures regarding the violent radicalization of young people have received a great deal of attention in the literature and international social policy. However, confusion between the security discourse and of preventive work risks creating long-term uncertainty as to how security can be combined with prevention initiatives including restorative justice. The field, therefore, faces great challenges in future.

One has to ask as to why the policy and media debates on violent youth radicalisation are increasing and indeed becoming more and more alarming. Is it because:

• ... violent extremism is going up?
• ... more people are dying due to terrorism?
• ... human rights laws are getting in the way?
• ... we need to find better ways to protect ourselves?

OR is it because:

• ... we are worried that our civil liberties are at stake?
• ... the narrative of the “them” and “us” is questioned along with the security policies that we have adopted?
• ... current practices, strategies, policies and international agreements are not working?
• ... there might be other alternatives for European, national and local practices, education and strategies for preventing violent extremism?

Our answers to the aforementioned questioned will vary depending on which of the two dominant two mindsets we have adopted. The first is what I call the “security mindset” which:

✓ Gives priority of the state to protect
✓ Puts human rights on hold in the name of citizens’ safety
✓ Believes that security threats are increasing
✓ Suffers from lack of citizens’ trust, prioritises the protection of national borders, and puts immigration controls to this effect.

On the other hand, the “human rights mindset” believes that:

✓ Even terrorists have human rights
✓ Due process and fair trial are as important as citizens’ safety
✓ Civil liberties cannot be compromised in the name of security
✓ There are universal values that we cannot ignore independently of who and where we are, and that it is through the respect of these values that we fight extremism and the views that generate it.

YEIP argues that this split mindset which has dominated our debates on violent youth radicalisation must be addressed, if we are to overcome the divisions that lead to further extremism and failed politics. Our project has proved that the two narratives of security and human rights are not incompatible. They are different

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6 Convention on Combating International Terrorism adopted by the OIC in 1999
Taking a more cynical view, I once named human rights as “The unicorn of reconciliation”, meaning that it is:

- The unicorn that we all dream about, but never see!
- The solution that we always want to reach for, but never do!
- The all loved one, but never experienced!

Whether a unicorn or not, the truth is that whatever we do, we must act now. YEIP and other similar initiatives have proved that the road that we have taken for security policy and practice in Europe and internationally is leading to further division and the erosion of our societal values.

**THIS IS BY NO COINCIDENCE!**

We are in a *democratic deficit* perpetuated by a number of challenges such as the *economic downturn, fears of security, nationalism* and the continuous *marginalisation of the disempowered*. To maintain this deficit, control is exercised through fear:

- Security terror (terrorism & radicalisation)
- Financial terror (financial crisis)
- Identity terror (nationalism)

**HOW SECURE IS EUROPE?**
THE NEW REALITY

2. VIOLENT YOUTH RADICALISATION: A DISTORTED PICTURE OF MYTHS AND FACTS

Chart 1: Terrorist attacks in Europe in 2017

Our project and the work that a number of campaigners have undertaken suggest that the media and many politicians present a distorted picture of myths leading to greater fears about violent radicalization. For example, if we look at the official statistics of actual terrorist attacks in the EU in 2017 (failed, stopped or completed), there were 205 in total with 107 of them in the UK.

Did you think there were more, and why so many in the UK?

In relation to actual deaths resulting from terrorist attacks, there were:

- 61 in total
- 38 in the UK in 6 different attacks!

---

... and yet, we know from YEIP and official research publications that the UK has

- One of the most up-to-date, “informed” and scientific security strategies in Europe
- Spends more on security than any other European country
- The most up to date, strict anti-terrorist and security legislation.

This leads me to a quick reality check. According to the same EUROPOL study, per 100,000 population in Europe, we get the following death figures for each listed cause:

- 265 – cancer
- 132 heart
- 11.7 suicide
- 5.9 traffic
- 1.06 consumer products!
- 0.03 terrorism
- 0.01 lightening

In short, it is as likely to be killed by a terrorist attack, as it is to be struck by lightning!

The EC’s official statistics speak for themselves. And yet, we are more afraid and angrier about terrorism than consumer products! This is not only the product of bad information but also of lack of information. Our research for work package 1 showed that there is also lack of clarity as to how serious and big the issue of youth radicalisation is in the participating countries and across Europe. While some member states may have some records of young people arrested for radicalised and extreme behaviour and actions, this is not consistent.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that there is also a gap between actual reality and public perceptions. This was highlighted by all the research teams. For instance, in Portugal, the government has not yet divulged any exact numbers on how many young people have been detected as radicalized in the country⁸. The media has been speaking about “new cases”, but no accurate and official numbers are available⁹.

I must, therefore, return to my previous conclusion. The fear that is created by certain actors in Europe and internationally is not by coincidence. This fear creates a vicious circle of power, which maintains systems of hierarchy and profit. In this vicious circle, young people are vilified and exposed to the “them” and “us” rhetoric’s, leading to further marginalization and alienation.

3. NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL

YEIP has also argued that in order to address the aforementioned fears and indeed the marginalisation and violent radicalisation of young people in our localities, it is important to develop a sceptical reflexive, and critical attitude towards all forms of simplified categorizations of young people and entities. Simplified versions of youth groups risk stigmatizing rather than contributing to effective social pedagogical work. By starting

from a critical, inclusive and reflexive social pedagogical perspective, it will become possible to conduct an
analysis of social contexts, risks, and negative spirals, without condemnations. This is not something that
most journalists and the media are willing to understand or accept.

The truth is that there is not a defined characteristic of young people who are susceptible to radicalisation.
Although in some countries, radicalisation is predominantly of political nature (extreme right or left-wing ide-
ology), it extends to hooliganism with political ideologies dominating sport associations. Orsini (2016) speaks
of social marginality, describing it as a socio-psychological condition in which a person no longer recognises
himself within the values of the society in which he lives and tries to oppose them, pushed by a crisis of so-
cial identity due to traumas or suffering. Vidino (2014) speaks of integration issues as the difficulty in feeling
part of a particular society as well as the confusion related to one’s social identity. He argues that, although
factors of discrimination and socio-economic integration should not be ignored, it is more useful to look for
the causes of radicalisation in the psychological profile of a subject and in his search for an identity. The same
can be said for political extremism (Orsini, 2010), and we have observed this in our own research especially
in countries such as Greece, where violent youth radicalisation is more attached to political extremism rather
than religion or any other cause.

In Europe, there is not a policy for the prevention of radicalization of youth, in general, and in schools, uni-
versities, youth offending institutions or online, in particular. The comparative learnings from the seven
research teams lead us to conclude that there is also a lack of a systematic mechanism for the prevention
of violent youth radicalisation. The landscape is characterised by a series of experiences, which locally try to
intervene, directly or indirectly, on the theme, with enormous differences from country to country. The YEIP
Prevent Policy Measure presents a unique, unified way forward that can be adjusted to each member state
and locality, while coordinating action across the EU.

4. PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

In our search for causes that lead to violent youth radicalisation, YEIP defined “push factors as something
which “pushes (one) away from mainstream society and causes them to be susceptible to radicalisation” and
pull factors as something which acts as a trigger increasing the likelihood of the acceptance of violent ex-
tremism. Pull factors can be described as elements which involve participation in a movement, organisation
or activity in order to gain a type of reward such as a universal one. Pull factors can also involve being within
a favourable environment and having exposure to ideologies and recruiters. Push and pull factors are based
around three categories of motivational triggers:

- **background factors**, which relate to personal and lack of social integration
- **trigger factors**, which can either provoke antipathy or activism, and
- **opportunity factors**, which relate to the individual’s environment in which they were brought up in.

Many opinions can be gathered from this, one being that an individual is more likely to turn to violent rad-
icalisation due to their level of class within society. YEIP believes that violent youth radicalisation is caused
by frustration with weak, corrupt or illegitimate governance, marginalisation, fractured relationships, lack of
voice and opportunity and struggles with diversity and belonging.

We suggest that in order to deal with violent youth radicalisation and be able to eradicate it, we need to
move away from adversarial approaches and towards cooperative solutions. In order to help young people at
risk, and address the push and/or pull factors which may lead to a path of violent radicalisation, the EU, CoE
and European youth work need to make youth programmes more focused on areas such as real or perceived
threats of well-being, security and wealth and the feeling of belonging to a group/community.

**Push factors**

YEIP findings suggest that push factors that help to nurture the rise or spread in the appeal of violent extrem-
ism amongst young people include social marginalisation and fragmentation and perceived oppression and/or fascination with violence. A trigger event such as death or other reasons such as rejection by peer, faith or social group or family and/or pressure from peers associated with extremism could also increase one’s vulnerability and put them at risk of being radicalised for violence. The reasons can further be grouped into three main categories: the individual’s circumstances, life experiences or their state of mind. These reasons were consistent across the seven participating countries.

Social marginalisation and fragmentation were defined as “the norms and processes that prevent certain groups from equal and effective participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of societies”. We argued that this is why young people turn to violent radicalisation, as they may see it as a way of being heard and a form of getting their view across to many people who haven’t been listening.

Perceived oppression could result in young people “becoming hyper-aware of critical issues ensuing in a radical irrationality and a subsequent willingness to violently act on this awareness”. This fascination with violence then becomes an escape route leading to socialising with the wrong crowd and “engag(ing) in political violence without moral restraints”. For example, the Staircase to Terrorism Model links the perceived oppression to radicalisation as it holds that there are five floors, with one viewing different kinds of opportunities “to be open to him or her on that floor”. It is believed that the higher a person gets, their choices are limited, and the belief is the only outcome being the destruction of others, oneself or both.

We have also witnessed that peer pressure can increase young peoples’ vulnerability and put them at risk of being radicalised towards violence. Peer pressure is seen as a way of group bonding and can easily become a social process in the absence of other forms of constructive integration and belonging. This then leads to the view being believed that violence is a way of dealing with the injustice young people face, thus making violent radicalisation hard to deny or overcome.

**Pull factors**

Our research points that that the reasons young Europeans maybe living within environments whereby opportunities arise for violent radicalisation are largely due to the lack of introspection. The term introspection was defined as “the examination or observation of one’s own mental and emotional processes”. We are mindful, however, that there are additional pull factors that draw individuals into a path of violent radicalisation, such as attaining reputation and acknowledgement, seeking a sense of belonging and the promise of adventure and money.

For example, in the UK, the “Prevent Strategy” states that the ideologies that people may hear about are based on “historic texts and extensive contemporary literature, including what purports to be rigorous thinking about key texts from the recent and even distant past”. It also states that the ideology used within violent radicalisation is key as it determines people’s engagement within terrorism-related activity as it is more likely to be accepted and people would be more willing and motivated to take part. This could be down to the type of words used in order to attract and connect with people on different levels. The document states that in order to tackle radicalisation and challenge the ideologies put forward by different groups, society needs to be confident in their own human right values. Nevertheless, the same strategy has been criticised and over and over again by many human rights groups and campaigners, while it remains questionable as to its independence, allocation of funds and political priorities. This is not unique to the UK as our research with policy makers in all seven countries suggests that there is a gap between policy intentions and implementation. This creates frustration amongst youth, and a lack of trust that is perpetuated by their own experiences in all four investigated environments.

**Push and pull factors: The YEIP way**

Based on our findings, we have no doubt that the phenomenon of violent youth radicalisation can only be rooted out through a bottom up structure of cooperative European youth policies. Violent radicalisation is a threat to Europe’s universal human rights values as these are based on its cultural and humanist inheritance following two world wars. European cultural inheritance provides narratives of a collective identity, meaning
and purpose to young people. This could be argued that it helps young people get through some rough parts of their life, while nurturing their talents and avoiding treating them as threats.

YEIP looked at the “what”, “who and “where” of a counterterrorism approach. In terms of looking at the “what” factor and countering violent extremism, the push factors play a part as it highlights the underlying grievances that violent extremism exploit such as no path for advancement and no escape from injustice which feeds instability and disorder. This plays off the pull factors as it allows for recruitment tactics to be used and individuals who are trapped within impoverished communities to be targeted. They may be an easy target as they could be easily persuaded and feel like their rights are being valued and recognised so they are willing to participate in events, which may not be morally correct.

The “who” aspect requires a “whole of society approach” between various stakeholders and ensure trust is built and fraught relationships between the EC, governments and actors in civil society or marginalised communities are repaired.

The “where” aspect involves considering the areas in which young people may be targeted in order to prevent the expansion of terrorist networks and keep vulnerable communities on a path of stability. Our field trials looked at four different environments (schools, universities, youth offending institutions and online) and piloted our Policy Measure providing tools and guidance on how to implement it.

5. GAPS IN EUROPEAN RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Over the last decade, several European policies to prevent the risk factors that lead to the marginalization and violent radicalisation of young people have been developed. Some examples are the European Agenda on Security, the EU Youth Strategy, the Education and training 2020 and the Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. Some of these are aimed at preventing youth marginalisation, social exclusion and radicalisation by addressing the issues of education, civic participation, unemployment and poverty.

However, action plans and concrete steps on implementing them have not been finalized by a number of member states, and no impact studies are yet available on the proposed measures. Furthermore, there is a dearth of work exploring the connection between the marginalisation and violent radicalisation of young people. Our project is only a small example of scientific studies focusing on this issue.

Furthermore, studies on the use of GLM-based prevention policies and practices at the local and European levels remain absent. Similarly, restorative Justice does not feature in these initiatives despite the EC’s and Council of Europe’s keen interest to invest more in this concept. Finally, the continuity of grass roots programmes remains to be strongly dependent on ad hoc funding, losing momentum and the bonds they create with youth communities.

Our three-year programme also led us to conclude that there is still a need to develop educational tools for the prevention of violent youth radicalization in all the examined environments. We have also learned that these tools need to be adapted to each country's profile as well as the professionals that they aim to reach. Detecting youth at risk of marginalization and radicalisation is clearly not an easy task, while providing the right support within the GLM philosophy is complex.

For example, we observed that currently, in schools, the policies and prevention programmes follow either the “security mind set” or the “human rights mind set” (e.g. Programme Choices, Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People). Nevertheless, even if they adopt a human rights approach, this does not necessarily involve the concept of positive psychology or the GLM.

We have also learned that educational strategies to support prevention efforts are dependent on the educator’s abilities to identify personal challenges of young learners as they struggle with issues of well-being, identity and meaning and are tempted to adopt radical views in search for meaningful answers. That is why,
YEIP created easily accessible online tools for professionals to motivate, support and equip them with appropriate skills and tools to understand their own biases and further engage in combating radical narratives at the level of individual students. The autonomy let to schools at local level must be explored further by national governments, to identify the zones where young people are at risk, and establish partnerships with the schools concerned.

Due to the specificity of each member state and their reality towards violent radicalization, the application of the GLM model to all the investigated environments, will only be possible with adjustments. The local context of implementation of the future methodology will also have a significant impact, being necessary to test the process in young people at risk, who show a moral opposition to the system and adopt a radical behaviour, even if symbolic. Involving young people as co-designers is paramount. It can also be helpful to connect youth workers and educationalists with other concerned professionals in the community (e.g. from the justice, social and child protection sectors) as well as families in view of providing learners with relevant and timely assistance on the full range of issues that they may be struggling with.

Additionally, there is a need to develop and implement a set of support measures for socially disadvantaged and marginalized youth groups in parallel with prevention initiatives, in partnership with all relevant local and national authorities.

With regards to youth offending institutions, our discussions with professionals who work with ex-offenders, mental health practitioners and young people at risk or who have offended indicate that the GLM and restorative justice could help develop resilience and aspirations. By treating young people involved in the criminal justice system equally, without discrimination and by giving them goals and skills through participation in activities, they could achieve the development of a sense of agency, identity, autonomy and responsibility. Above all, this process can allow them to have hope and thus invest in their future and integrate socially. It is also worth noting that professionals themselves asked for more training and support in understanding GLM-based interventions that are co-designed with young people and avoid the RNR paradigm of punishment and control.

YEIP recommends that European and national prevention policies should offer opportunities to vulnerable young people for the development of skills and for the implementation of actions and events to improve their inclusion into society. These will equip young people with a structure of activities in their everyday life and offer them a sense of belonging. Moreover, it is essential to include personalized local counselling services adapted to the needs of vulnerable young people who are either at risk of marginalization or already marginalized at risk of violent radicalization. In this process, it is important to consider the culture and the particular characteristics of the individual. Policies should target the implementation of training programmes for vulnerable young people based on their knowledge, skills and specific needs, while considering the current labour market conditions. Such programmes for young individuals could include a variety of activities like sports, arts and crafts and so on and could be complementary to school. Lastly, it would be necessary to inform families, educational institutions and community bodies on the topic and enhance networking and cooperation between them.

6. THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

YEIP was built on IARS’ philosophy and strapline of “Community-led solutions for a better society”. We strongly believe that it is only through partnership work with local communities that the EC and national governments can win the war against terror. Indeed, the EU’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy has four key pillars – Prevent, Protect, Pursue, Respond – carefully designed to fight terrorism globally and make Europe safer, while respecting human rights. The ‘Prevent’ pillar can be distinguished from the following three in that it focuses on non-coercive measures that seek to prevent or mitigate VE. However, the remaining three pillars tend to

11 The Prevent pillar is designed to combat radicalisation and recruitment into terrorism, which also includes PVE
focus on coercive measures. This prevention strategy also recognises the four crime prevention approaches proposed by the UN. One of the approaches in them identifies the significant role of the ‘community’ in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism.

YEIP argues that one of the key functions of community in crime prevention is to change local conditions that might be affecting criminal behaviour, victimization and a sense of insecurity among vulnerable individual or groups. With this objective, community crime prevention emphasizes community mobilization, using the notion of “community” in the sense of either a social group or a living environment, and includes the aim of improving the quality of life of residents. This is paramount if GLM-based prevention strategies are to be adopted by national and local institutions.

The relevance of the notion of community in relation to PVE can also be identified in one of four main targets of intervention levels: the individual, the relational environment, the community environment and the social environment. More broadly, community environmental measures focus on strengthening the community’s ability to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalization, and to mobilize resources to intervene should these individuals become radicalized. This may involve PVE initiatives designed to strengthen the community’s trust in institutional authorities or to create safe spaces for youth in trouble. Usually, these initiatives endeavour to foster community resilience, social cohesion and integration of their members. We used several examples in our study and Khulisa acted as one of our community based “user partners” where we piloted our Policy Measure indicating success both in relation to the ultimate beneficiaries (young people) as well as the criminal justice professionals.

Furthermore, we found out that local communities also play an important role in helping to govern, as well as to implement, PVE initiatives. Firstly, local communities of young people (let those be through connections of race, religion, sexual orientation and so on) are better placed to identify the main local drivers of violent radicalisation, such as poverty, income disparity, lack of education, ideology, failure of national policies etc. Secondly, local perceptions that resonate with the target audience and cultural sensitivities are critical in shaping locally acceptable programmes to counter VE. Local practitioners will often be better placed to identify key target audiences and provide current information about the evolving nature of VE. Accordingly, PVE programmes need to gain support and input from local communities where they are being implemented. Here civil society and community actors —such as local elders, local religious figures, those with political power, etc., play critical role in the development of holistic, relevant and responsive PVE strategies that have resonance and sustainability with vulnerable groups.

It is true that the concept of community and its relevance to counter-terrorism has been the debate of many policy discussion in Europe. PVE initiatives involving local communities have also been marked by the measures. This strategy was revised in June 2014 in light of evolving trends, such as ‘home-grown’ terrorism, foreign fighters, and the use of social media by terrorists. Under this strategy the EU has been developing policy frameworks and implementation measures both inside the EU and worldwide.

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13 Ibid
18 Khalid Koser, “5 ways communities can counter violent extremism” (2015). Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/05/5-ways-communities-can-counter-violent-extremism/
development of two major approaches, namely ‘Community-targeted approach’ or ‘Community-driven approach’. In the latter case, PVE initiatives are pursued through locally driven, co-operative initiatives, tailored to local contexts, to increase effectiveness. That said, in practice, the EU has acknowledged the significance of community-driven PVE initiatives by expanding its approach beyond ‘hard-power’ initiatives and law enforcement interventions and has recognised the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration in the form of community-driven initiatives. YEIP has produced a number of case studies illustrating the power, but also the weaknesses of community driven practices.

The revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism has provided a more comprehensive and integrated approach towards PVE. For example, it encourages collaboration between governments, communities, civil society, NGOs and the private sector. It specifically calls for efforts from multi-stakeholders at local levels to support vulnerable individuals or groups in building community cohesion and community resilience. This is also highlighted in the Communication from the EC of June 2016. Furthermore, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has similarly reinforced the importance of involving communities in efforts to PVE. It has also highlighted the need to increase locally tailored and locally driven initiatives that draw on partnerships among a wide range of actors, beyond traditional security practitioners in their efforts to PVE. Likewise, as part of the process of putting communities at the centre of counter radicalisation, the RAN policy recommendations define radicalisation as a local issue that requires local solutions and active communities. Most importantly, the RAN asserts that this ‘local issue’ can be contained within those communities. The weakness and caveat that still remain is that of implementation. Our work with policy makers at the national and EU level has led us to conclude that despite well intended European and national policies, there is still a huge gap between stated aims and implementation.

7. POVERTY AND THE CURRENT ECONOMIC EUROPEAN REALITIES

Traditionally, policy makers have turned away from the economic reality of many young people in Europe. As the continent accepts more young people from challenging socio-economic backgrounds, including refugees and asylum seekers, this reality must be accepted and addressed positively. As most financial reports indicate, in Europe, poverty and social exclusion have increased during the economic crisis and young people were impacted the most by this decline.

YEIP was developed in support of the EU Youth Strategy, which acknowledges the links between young

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19 These are ‘hard-power’ initiatives that target communities for intelligence-gathering and enforcement activities driven by the security priorities of the member state. They involve little or no consultation or partnership with members and groups from the general public.


21 EC Communication on Supporting the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to VE, COM (2016) 379 final of 14 June 2016. It emphasised that “the absolute priority must be to prevent more people from being radicalised and ensure that those who already are enter de-radicalisation programmes and are prevented from spreading terrorist propaganda and hate speech”.


23 Similarly, 2016 UN Plan of Action for the PVE, goes beyond security-centric measures by introducing systemic, multi-tiered and synchronised steps to pre-emptively address conditions precipitating radicalisation and violent extremism.


25 The current EU Youth Strategy strives to “(a) enable young people to be architects of their own lives, build their resilience and equip them with life skills to cope in a changing world; (b) encourage young people to become active citizens, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values and a Europe-
peoples’ financial hardship and the risks of being radicalized for violence. Therefore, our project had two side objectives: to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market, and to encourage young people to actively participate in society\textsuperscript{26}. These can become the side objectives of all EU funded projects, and the EC can introduce these criteria in their evaluation processes for Erasmus, REC and Horizon programmes.

In relation to the education and training of youth workers and young people, the EU Youth Strategy works to ensure that young people can transit from education to employment. Here, the Erasmus+ programme must be highlighted since it “supports projects designed for youth organisations or groups of young people, with a focus on non-formal learning”, such as youth exchanges or volunteering, and it also engage people in a Structure Dialogue with policy makers\textsuperscript{27}. All these actions have a role in preventing youth radicalisation since they promote social inclusion and foment education as well as they involve young people in the decisions that affect them directly.

The new EU Youth Strategy\textsuperscript{28} (2019-2027) proposes some important novelties such as: (1) a clearer link between EU youth policy implementation and related activities in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps; (2) a tracking of EU spending for youth in main funding programmes, but also (3) an agenda for youth work to further improve its quality and to allow other sectors to capitalize on the potential of non-formal learning. The Commission proposes a new framework for cooperation on youth so young people and EU can get closer and address the issues that concern them the most, focusing on three areas of action: engage, connect and empower\textsuperscript{29}. While this strategy is forging a stronger link between the EU and young people through inclusive ways of dialogue, bring effective results through focused priorities and actions, and provide a more effective structure to capture and transmit young people’s ideas\textsuperscript{30}, it will also help EU by tacking huge steps in the prevention of young people’s violent extremism and radicalisation.

Furthermore, in their 2015 Paris Declaration, the EC committed to strengthening their actions to promote social inclusion and to ensure that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences and enhance their critical thinking\textsuperscript{31}. All these commitments have a huge potential at what it comes to young people radicalisation since they can be used to manage young people who may have be at risk. For instance, if young people have the tools to develop their critical thinking when they are face-to-face to extremist messages on the internet they will have the capabilities to produce their own counter-narrative and to see/understand behind that message.

The youth-les structure of YEIP has proved that by having youth engaging directly with the issue we aim to address, they are given the opportunity to improve what matters the most to them. This also makes them feel more included in society. Ultimately this can also become one of the tools to tackle violent extremism and radicalisation.

\textsuperscript{26} How is it being done? Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en .
\textsuperscript{27} The Eu Youth Strategy, Education and training. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/education-training_en .
8. EDUCATION: YOUTHS’ SOFT POWER

YEIP argues that education can act as the soft counter power that can play a key role in the prevention of violent youth radicalisation. Education plays an essential role in the promotion of the core values of the EC and the CoE, and it has been a defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, and more. This growing awareness is reflected in the adoption of the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education by the Organisation’s 47 members states in the framework of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7.

In other words, young people need relevant learning opportunities to develop skills and attitudes that can instigate their resilience against extremist propaganda. In the context of YEIP, resilience was defined as the capability of people, groups and communities to reject proponents of violent extremism when it manifests itself.

Our research with young people in four different environments showed that resilience can help young people to build positive actions, rather than heading down to violent behaviours. Resilience enables young people with the ability to utilize the opportunities that exist in their local communities, while it can also create new ones. Consequently, when confronted with problems they manage them positively.

We provided evidence that this resilience can be built through formal and informal education as it can act as the vehicle for engagement even with the most vulnerable young people. We have also argued that the primary purpose of education should not only be to develop knowledge, skills and competences but also to embed fundamental values that help young people – in cooperation with parents and families – to become active, responsible and open-minded members of society.

Our findings and recommendations are in line with the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent VE. This acknowledge the importance of quality education to address the drivers of violent radicalisation. This is also in line with the 2015 UNESCO’s Executive Board Decision, which enhances the importance of education as a tool to help prevent violent extremism, as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Nevertheless, although the right to education has been recognised as a human right in international conventions and as one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN member countries, the reality is that many children and youth face barriers in accessing and receiving quality education. De-

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41 According to Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals report by the UN Secretary-General, despite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, access to education, as well as educational inequality in terms of outcomes and unequal distribution of educational resources such as trained teachers, technologies, still constitute a major challenge in education (E/2017/66).
spite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, only 63 per cent of youth accessed upper secondary school education in 2014, according to the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report by the UN Secretary-General.

We have also found that good quality education that prevents young people from extremist views can take place through both formal and informal routes. Formal education was defined understood as “the structured training systems that run from pre-primary and primary through secondary school and on to university”42. Non-formal education was defined by our project as “any planned programme of education designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational setting”.

One format of non-formal education is youth work. Youth work can enable youth with safer spaces for discussion, to express their selves, to pluralistic debate and engagement43, as well as it can promote counter-narratives and alternative role models based on tolerance and democracy44. However, it “takes an exceptional level of honesty, integrity and moral judgement to help young people explore their own beliefs without imposing our own”45. Considering that social exclusion is a risk factor for youth’s radicalisation and knowing that it denotes to “a process of progressive multidimensional rupturing of the social bond at the individual and collective level”46 youth work can provide them with positive behaviour and instigate positive relations with peers. In conclusion, teachers and youth workers need to be equipped with appropriate skills and tools to deal with young people’s problems47. Resilience is about how students are taught as well as what they are taught48.

Our field trials in several school environments in the participating countries also showed that teachers can play a central role in the prevention of VE (not as punishers, but as educators). They can be role models but also the first to identify signs of violent radicalization. They can also serve as a bridge between school, families and the broader community49.

The YEIP training package that was developed and delivered to teachers was very much in line with UNESCO’s first Teacher’s Guide on the Prevention of VE through education. This Guide was designed for teachers in upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, and was developed with the hope that it can support teachers working in both formal and non-formal educational settings50. Similarly, our toolkit for teachers and other educationalist aimed to provide practical advice on when and how to discuss the issue of violent extremism with learners, and to help teachers create a classroom climate that is inclusive and conducive to respectful dialogue and critical thinking.

However, YEIP also found that education on its own cannot prevent an individual from committing a violent act. However, we strongly believe that the provision of relevant education of good quality can make it diffi-

44 “Thinking Seriously About Youth Work: And how to prepare people to do it”, Partnership between the EC and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, 2017, pp. 321.
cult for violent extremist ideologies to proliferate, and that’s why future European education policies must ensure that learning doesn’t become a breeding ground for violent extremism\textsuperscript{51}. Ensuring inclusive education for both children and young people helps counter racism and discrimination, promotes citizenship and teaches understanding and acceptance for different opinions, beliefs or lifestyle\textsuperscript{52}. And when trying to face this problematic, Europe cannot afford wasted talent, social exclusion or disengagement among its youth, and that’s why young people should not only be architects of their own life, but also contribute to positive change in society\textsuperscript{53}.

9. EUROPEAN FAMILIES: BONDS OF BELONGING

The role of family in preventing violent youth radicalization has become the centre point in European debates. YEIP argues that family members should be seen “as partners in signalling, preventing and protecting individuals at risk of radicalisation, contributing to the safety and security of society”. RAN and YEIP research shows that parents need appropriate support to succeed\textsuperscript{54}. National governments need to allow and support parents to develop a better understanding of radicalisation processes that lead to violence. Parents also need to be equipped with the skills that will allow them to play a proactive role in shaping positive attitudes toward non-violence\textsuperscript{55}. Capacity building is crucial to safeguard families, and so it’s suggested that it should be facilitated by national and local authorities by means of a proper financial resource putting on the field enough human resources, by developing the understanding of processes of change, disengagement or deradicalisation and by investing in support structures for family support professionals\textsuperscript{56}.

We also found out that the notion of “family” is continually evolving and it is important that local understandings are accepted. Family is one of the domains where greatest changes have taken place over the past years in Europe. The traditional nuclear European family consisted of a married father and mother with several children. However, today, this is only one of the many European family models. The role of men and women has changed with women in most European countries enjoying the same educational and employment opportunities as men. Regardless the consequences that all these changes have, violent extremism and radicalisation prevention still benefit from familiar support, even if it is a single parent family, a family composed by two homosexual parents or just a “typical one”.

10. INTERNET AND YOUNG PEOPLE

One of the environments where we carried out research was online. As indicated in young peoples’ responses virtual reality and the internet have a huge impact on them, as they grow up in a world surrounded by technology and social media. Our research confirms that many uses of social media by violent extremism groups are meant to foster fear and to polarize societies\textsuperscript{57}. And so, young people must be protected from inappropriate content, so they are free to enjoy the amazing opportunities the internet has to offer, and for this to happen, they must be as protected online as they are offline\textsuperscript{58}.

\textsuperscript{52} “Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education”, Informal Meeting of European Union Education Ministers, Paris, 2015.
\textsuperscript{54} RAN Center of Excellence, “Family support: what works?”, 2016, UK, pp. 1.
\textsuperscript{56} RAN Center of Excellence, “Family support: what works?”, 2016, UK, pp. 3-4.
\textsuperscript{58} Net Aware Report 2017: “Freedom to express myself safely: Exploring how young people navigate opportunities and
Our research showed that the biggest risks for young people when online include: (a) interaction with strangers (e.g. unsolicited friend requests and sexual or offensive messages); (b) inappropriate content that is particularly prevalent on sites and apps with livestreaming functionality, and where young people deal directly with violence, radicalisation and hatred, sexual content and bullying.

We have also found that the internet and technology can be used as tools to counter violent radicalisation. Raising awareness about the risks of the internet for VE is paramount\(^59\). Strengthening children’s and young people’s ability to think critically particularly in the context of the internet and social media is a must, if they are to distinguish facts from opinions and be able to recognize propaganda and hate speech\(^60\). Of correlated factors, that when combined with other social and psychological factors may facilitate the radicalisation process\(^61\).

### 11. INTEGRATION THROUGH A HOLISTIC APPROACH

We argue that it is imperative to foster the construction of a more inclusive European society, which is prepared to deal with cultural differences, if violent youth radicalisation is to be addressed. Respect for diversity can also help to understand antagonistic viewpoints that will foment social abilities as empathy and compassion\(^62\). And if two of the most mentioned topics that young people want the EU to focus on are education and skills (53%) and the management of migration and integration of refugees (40%), it is necessary that European governments allocate funds in a way that responds to these concerns\(^63\).

In the “State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law” report, the CoE’s Secretary General\(^64\) named inclusive societies as one of the five fundamental building blocks of democratic security, by saying that a democratically secure Europe is only possible if guaranteed that all members of society have equal access to fundamental rights. Because, it is by paying attention to respect for diversity that it is possible to build a society prepared to deal with differences, that is more inclusive and in which the risk of radicalization by young people will be possibly null. And so, at a time of increasing global challenges and threats worsened by local tensions and conflicts which undermine humanity’s cohesion, learning to live together becomes more topical than ever before\(^65\).

The EC and SALTO have worked together to ensure that cultural diversity is understood, respect and promoted within Youth in Action and beyond. SALTO Cultural Diversity\(^66\) is a Resource Centre that provides resources, information and training courses in this area, and the We Are All Europeans\(^67\) is one of the tools develop by it. This guide is designated to support young people and youth workers to create intercultural youth projects.
using educational and project planning tools and the Youth in Action funding. This guide is for young people, youth workers and youth organisations that want to carry out projects with migrant or multicultural groups and it can be used to inspire ideas, to learn about funding opportunities and more.

Integration policies have positive ancillary effects on preventing violent radicalisation. However, a holistic approach to integration is necessary, that manages social, cultural, religious, linguistic and national differences. And although young people can be radicalised they are not “risks” to manage, in a way that all of them have something to offer, and that’s why Europe needs their ideas and hopes. To empower young people implies the discovery of individual skills, the transformation of emotions into energy and ideas into projects.

In other words, to enhance the social impact of violent extremism prevention it is needed to take another step forward and include young people voices, because this is the only way to achieve their goals and limit the negative outcomes through social policies.

In this regard, young people should be encouraged to channel their energy to create and develop positive ideas and solutions to the challenges we face today. This way, through the participation in organizations and informal groups, young people can develop self-confidence, identity, belonging, friendship, feelings of comradeship and give purpose to their lives. Society needs to deal with the fact that extremism is going to be around for a very long time and that the “most effective long-term solution is looking upstream and changing the ethos of people to make sure they are more tolerant, more inclusive and more diverse as a preventive measure.”

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

**SHARING POWER**

Over the last few years, when it comes to violent radicalisation and extremism, young people, have been the focus of political and media debates across Europe. However, this has not been for the right reasons. YEIP has showed that these debates have deepened the inter-generation gap and created further isolation of marginalised youth groups. We have argued in favour of a GLM-based approach, which dictates that young people need relevant learning opportunities to develop skills and attitudes that can instigate their resilience against extremist propaganda. We have witnessed that resilience can help young people to build positive actions, rather than engaging in violent behaviours.

YEIP provided evidence that this resilience can be built through formal and informal education as it can act as the vehicle for engagement even with the most vulnerable of youth. Our recommendations and Policy Measure are in line with the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent VE. This recognises the importance of quality education to address the drivers of violent youth radicalisation. UNESCO’s Executive Board also adopted a decision that enhances the importance of education as a tool to help prevent violent extremism, as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Restorative justice and GLM-based preventative initiatives can take place through both formal and informal routes. They can promote counter-narratives and alternative role-models based on tolerance and democracy. However, it “takes an exceptional level of honesty, integrity and moral judgment to help young people

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70 “We are all Europeans: Your guide for projects with migrant, minority and multicultural youth groups,” SALTO YOUTH.


73 Aly Jetha, CEO and Founder, Big Bad Boo Studios.
explore their own beliefs without imposing our own\textsuperscript{74}. A key underlying value of restorative justice is power sharing. This must be pursued at all levels when engaging with young people.

**DRIVERS OF VIOLENT YOUTH RADICALISATION**

The extant literature on violent extremism is rich. And yet, we are far from being able to “profile” those at risk. In fact, there is more evidence to claim that by attempting to profile and predict, we may in fact be breeding the very reasons that lead those at risk to violent radicalisation\textsuperscript{75}. The factors that we have identified can be summarised as: individual backgrounds and motivations; collective grievances and victimization stemming from domination, oppression, subjugation or foreign intervention; distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences; and leadership and social networks.

As the Plan of Action on PVE affirms, there is no one driver for radicalization. The broad PVE agenda, covering economic, social, cultural and political structures and systems thus calls on a “whole of nation” approach for these drivers to be addressed. As noted earlier, the participation of development, peace, and humanitarian agencies, as well as community groups, would be critical in addressing the complex push and pull factors of violent extremism amongst young people. I have argued elsewhere that the true terrorist is to be found within, and by raising the mirror of responsibility\textsuperscript{76}.

**UNIVERSAL AND UNDENIABLE HUMAN RIGHTS**

James Madison once said, “Perhaps it is a universal truth that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against danger, real or pretended from abroad” (Letter of James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, May 13, 1798). How true these words sound when considering the anti-terrorism legislation that we have been drafting to minimise the risks created by “pull and push factors”. Take as an example, the UK’s Terrorism Act of 2000 and the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001. Both have exposed the British government to a number of criticisms, mainly from international NGOs such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other national human rights groups such as Justice and Liberty.

The road that we have taken in preventing young people from violent extremism is encouraging international society to become more polarised than ever, while the “them” (criminals - terrorists) and “us” (victims) rhetoric dominates political speeches and media presentations. And we have to ask: what will it take for society to finally raise the mirror of responsibility and look well into its reflection? We are the real architects of the social fabric that generates extremist ideologies, which then gradually corrupt universal values such as tolerance and the respect of life, dignity and brotherhood. The extremist ideology that leads those young men and women to inhumane actions is not an alien virus of unknown origin, but a product of our way of living.

Finding the true terrorist

Sharing responsibility and the ability to look inside also forces us to ask whether a public debate and a restorative dialogue for responsibility-taking might indeed be more fruitful than yet another “war on terror” that could take more freedoms away from those who are most vulnerable such as those in hospitals, care homes, foster care and prisons.

Following the September 11th attacks, the narrative of national governments and the EC have traditionally surrounded “war on terror”. However, as YEIP has outlined, communities of young people have risen and gradually responded to this and numerous other narratives (economic, gender, political, and so on). Shifting the focus from “war on terror” to “PVE” has opened up space to the critical participation and leadership of


youth communities and civil society in the prevention of violent extremism.

In a “whole-of-society” approach to PVE from national to sub-national levels, the local European communities can now provide a strong basis for any plan of action. This is because underlying drivers of violent radicalization are intimately manifested at the local level. Community-led interventions supported by local government authorities; the private sector; leaders of communities; professionals; women’s and youth organizations; families; faith-based groups; and social service providers, among others, are crucial to any interventions at all stages from pre-radicalisation, radicalisation, engagement in violent extremism, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The challenge in this approach is how to ensure its effectiveness, as security sector strategies run alongside civil society, community-led efforts without each cancelling out each other’s gains.
This book is the final publication of the Erasmus + Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project, which looked at the issue of violent youth radicalisation in seven European countries and across Europe. The project investigated the attitudes and knowledge of young Europeans and practitioners, while testing innovative tools for addressing the phenomenon through positive psychology and the application of the Good Lives Model.

The book is based on data that was collected through one of the largest scientific surveys on violent youth radicalisation. The project applied a youth-led methodology involving 75 young researchers throughout the project and partnership. The project was broken down into four scientific blocks. The four scientific blocks were informed by secondary research carried out in native languages as well as fieldwork. The first block involved secondary research as well as primary fieldwork with 133 participants. The second block carried out fieldwork with 380 participants. The third scientific block involved a total of 478 young people, 354 professionals and 195 policy makers. Finally, the fourth block involved an impressive number of 1408 young participants and 517 professionals. In total, YEIP directly engaged with 3384 individuals from as young as 16 years old to 78. Arguably, this is one of the largest scientific studies on violent youth radicalisation in Europe. In total, YEIP directly engaged with and spoke to 3540 individuals from as young as 16 years old to 78.

“YEIP positively applies Resolution 2250 stated by the United Nations, when creating a transnational project that is youth-led, thereby involving young people in policy-oriented research designed to counter and prevent violent extremism.”

David Ruah, Network Member of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (Communication and Narratives Group), ex-Young Ambassador.

“Today, the possibility of young people feeling disenfranchised and drawn into divisive and radical ideologies, potentially leading to violence, is a critical reality. The Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project (YEIP) represents a remarkable milestone in our collective understanding and approach to tackling the psycho-social conditions that overshadow and silence life-hope and its primordial place for human flourishing, fuelling marginalisation, injustice and ultimately anger and division. At the heart of YEIP’s accomplishment is the integration of youth-led action across science, theory development, solution finding and policy innovation. Its findings deliver momentum for a collective response promoting actions out-of-hope (to tackle division and injustice) and not out-of-fear (retaining safety through an un-challenged status qua). Its training tools (informed by the Good Lives Model) and restorative justice ethos connect the dots – helping to envisage effective multi-agency interventions that offer young people alternative narratives and resources to develop ideological agility, positive identities, and the will to safeguard inclusive citizenship for a future with societal structures that render meaning and opportunities towards a life-worth-living. “

Professor Aneta D. Tunariu, Dean of School of Psychology at the University of East London, UK

Lead author of the “Philosophical Dialogues Programme: towards sustainable prevention of youth radicalisation” (2017) and the “iNEAR: an existential positive psychology intervention for resilience, wellbeing and affirmative mindset” (2015; 2017).