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Contents

A descriptive statistical analysis of violent extremist groups and individuals in Europe (CEIS)

A. Introduction

The SAFIRE project addresses the conceptual process of radicalisation, from moderation to violent extremism and intervention principles to halt, reverse or prevent radicalisation. The end goal of the project is to create a non-linear and dynamic model of the radicalisation process. In the framework of WP4 ('Conceptual Model'), the objective of the CEIS Research Team was to contribute to the development of the conceptual model by conducting research on the radicalisation process.

Building on the results of the project's previous work packages[1], the work in the present summary describes a **study to identify clusters of violent radical groups and individuals focusing on their actions rather than on their stated ideologies.**

This choice was based on the fact that among the fringes of the population that harbour radical views, only a minority actually commits violent acts. Focusing on the '*what*' (organisational aspects) and the '*how*' (modi operandi) rather than on the '*why*' (claimed ideology) might provide valuable insights enabling the distinction between violent radicals and non-violent-radicals, and between radicals and the general public. The general objective was to come up with classifications of both violent radical groups (sub research strand 1) and individuals (sub research strand 2) starting from the analysis of indicators related to their respective Motives, Means and Opportunity[2] as opposed to their claimed ideology.

The expected research results were:

1. To identify to what extent violent radical groups and individuals share similarities and differences when ideological factors are left aside;
2. To generate innovative classifications (clusters) of violent radical groups and individuals by analysing their organisational aspects and modi operandi using statistical analysis[3];
3. To validate the contribution of such a methodology in the development of a process model of radicalisation and to identify the potential next steps, notably the applicability of such a methodology for the project's end-users.

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[1] RAND Europe (2011). Synthesis report on the results from work package 2: inventory of the factors of radicalisation and counterterrorism interventions. Deliverable D2.1. Seventh Framework Programme, SECURITY, Collaborative Project no. 241744 SAFIRE.

[2] In US Criminal law, means, motive, and opportunity is a popular cultural summation of the three aspects of a crime needed to convince a jury of guilt in a criminal proceeding.

[3] According to the "Dictionary of Statistical Terms" (F.H.C. Marriott), the definition of descriptive statistics is the following: "A term used to denote statistical data of a descriptive kind or the methods of handling such data, as contrasted with theoretical statistics which, though dealing with practical data, usually involve some process of inference in probability for their interpretation."

B. Methodology

We carried out the methodology in two steps to test the initial hypotheses.

Step 1: Building the analysis tools – Construction of two analysis grids including key characteristics of violent actions
The Research Team developed two analysis grids (see below) compiling the key characteristics of violent radical groups and individuals. These characteristics focused on the tangible operational dimension of groups and of individuals. A comprehensive independent literature review made possible the identification of such characteristics. For each characteristic, the Research Team developed a precise definition in order to clarify the intended meaning of the generic label. Altogether, these definitions bring coherence and robustness to the analysis grids. In addition to that, they facilitate the understanding of the grid by anyone who would wish to use it in order to analyse additional cases.

The group characteristics included in the group level grid were:
- Nature of the official claims
- Perceived legitimate target
- Actual impact of the terrorist campaign
- General structure and command and control (C2)
- Location of command and control (regarding action area)
- Capabilities
- Range of methods
- Origin of the financial resources
- Resilience
- Local support base/recruitment venues
- Level of success of the attacks

The individual characteristics included in the individual level grid were:
- Link with the cause
- Nature of the perceived enemy
- Scope of the grievances
- Operational role in the group
- Relevant technical skills
- Level of operational experience
- Level of ideological influence
- How was one recruited
- Needed lifestyle adjustments in order to join the cause/pace of the adjustments
- Tipping point of the radicalisation process

The Research Team presented its preliminary findings to experts in the field of violent radicalisation during informal face-to-face meetings and through the organisation of two high-level workshops. These exchanges provided fruitful comments, which allowed for the refinement of the analysis tools and the methodology.

Step 2: Building the study sample – Study of 41 known violent radical groups and of 83 individuals linked to these groups using the analysis grids

The grids enabled the study and comparison of 41 profiles of violent radical groups and of 83 profiles of violent radical individuals.

These 41 groups cover three types of terrorism in Europe: Nationalist-Separatist, Islamist and Extreme-left wing terrorism. Due to time constraints to identify all relevant publicly available data, three types of terrorism identified in WP2[4] were left out of the scope of the study: New Religious, Right wing and Single-issue movements terrorism.

The 83 analysed individuals were all convicted or known terrorists, about whom information is publicly available, and who were linked to one of the 41 groups that were studied, though group membership was not included as a parameter in the individual 'analysis grid'. The Research Team focused on these three types of terrorism for the following reasons:

- They have in one way or another organised attacks on European territory, or had a major influence on cells based in Europe;
- They represent a wide range of organisational schemes: from small cells to paramilitary type groups;
- They enable the observation and analysis of groups and individuals in various times and contexts (from circa the 1920's to today).

Data were collected on the various factors present in the grid for the groups and individuals. All the sources were methodically referenced. Cross filling and harmonisation of the data were crucial to ensure that the information compiled was accurate and trustworthy. The following figure shows the nature of the information used to study the sample of groups and individuals.

Figure 3. Overview of references used in the study of groups and individuals

- *Overview of references used within the group research strand*

Total number of references : 782 (including duplicates)	100%
Scientific productions (universities, books, data bases) : 363	46,5%
National newspapers : 132	16,9%
Wikipedia : 104	13,3%
Other websites (blogs etc.) : 107	13,7%
Official partisan websites, publications from groups etc. : 42	5,4%
Official documents (UN, Official Commissions etc.) : 34	4,2%

- *Overview of references used within the individual research strand*

Total number of references : 1152 (including duplicates)	100%
National newspapers : 427	37,1%
Scientific productions (universities, books, data bases) : 342	29,7%
Other websites (blogs etc.) : 177	15,4%
Wikipedia : 93	8,1%
Official documents (UN, Official Commissions etc.) : 68	5,9%
Official partisan websites, publications from groups etc. : 45	3,9%

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[4] RAND Europe (2011).

C. Results

Building the clusters – Generation of group and individual classifications by a descriptive statistical analysis

Based on the sample using the two analysis grids, the Research Team generated clusters of groups and individuals using descriptive statistics[5]. Indeed, descriptive statistics[6] are recognised as an essential tool for arranging, displaying and describing what the data are or what they show; and for presenting them in a simplified and manageable form.

The analysis resulted in the statistical distribution of the groups and individuals classifications among five clusters for each research strand. These clusters are presented in the tables below, together with their most central characteristics.

Table 1. Cluster of Groups

CLUSTERS OF GROUPS	KEY CHARACTERISTICS		
The Embedded Insurgent Movements	Decentralised leadership	Partly Tangible claim	Limited local support base
The Outsider Cells	Apparent Command and Control structure	International Command and Control	Non-negotiable claim
The Motley Crews of Social Misfits	Lack of visible hierarchy	Low resilience	Artisanal weaponry
The Subversive Cells	Command & Control structure implanted at the national level	Non-negotiable claim	Very-large scale claim
The Irregular Armies	Local Command & control Structure	Centralised leadership	Broad local support base · High resilience

Table 2. Clusters of Individuals

CLSUTERS OF INDIVIDUALS	KEY CHARACTERISTICS		
The Actions Seekers	Actively looked for a group to join / started their own group	National grievances	Medium ideological influence
The Converts	Low ideological influence		Political or ideological relationship to the cause
The Anti-system Agitators	Started their own group	High level of ideological influence	Varied link to the cause
The Indoctrinated	Randomly passive recruitment	Limited influence in the group	Completely changed their lifestyle in order to suit the needs of the cause
The Paramilitaries	Grievances with a local scope	Direct link with the cause: fighting for their kin	High-level of operational experience

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[5] Note: Before starting the statistical analysis, two variables were removed, in order for them not to have an impact on the analysis: 'level of success of the attacks' and 'role in the group' were not used to build the classifications. They are mentioned merely to provide the analyst with further indication regarding the groups and individuals at stake.

[6] According to the "Dictionary of Statistical Terms" (F.H.C. Marriott), the definition of descriptive statistics is the following: "A term used to denote statistical data of a descriptive kind or the methods of handling such data, as contrasted with theoretical statistics which, though dealing with practical data, usually involve some process of inference in probability for their interpretation."

Analysis and interpretation of results, naming of clusters

The analyses above revealed groups (or individuals) sharing similar characteristics in the same cluster. Further analysis of these clusters showed which characteristic or combination of characteristics contributed most to a given cluster. The Research Team subsequently defined the nature of each cluster and named it according to the shared characteristics of the groups/individuals that had been included in it.

For instance, Group Cluster 1 was labelled 'The embedded insurgent movements' because all the groups included in this cluster share the following characteristics: partly tangible (i.e. concrete, substantial and negotiable) claims[7], decentralised leadership and limited local support. The labelling facilitated the definition and the identification of the different clusters, and thus the construction of two solid and objective classifications, one for each strand of the research.

Following the statistical analysis, the Research Team organised an additional workshop to discuss the preliminary conclusions that could be drawn from the classifications with experts from the field. The practitioners particularly commented on the cluster classification of groups and suggested to look into ways to link it with the operational needs of their community.

Notable results

1. <u>The importance of territorial aspects</u>[8]: characteristics related to the territoriality of motivations[9] and means have a significant impact on the clustering of both groups and individuals.

2. <u>Violent radicals who have no a priori ties to the group's cause</u> (in terms of geography, lifestyle or ideology) are consistently found together in the cluster labelled '*The Indoctrinated*'. These individuals belong to two types of organisations labelled *'The Outsider Cells'* and *'The Motley Crew of Social Misfits'* which are groups with an international agenda and that are not locally anchored. This tends to further demonstrate that the territorial aspect is key in the constitution of the clusters. Also these two types of organisations can be differentiated by their level of operational capabilities and their structures (or lack thereof).

3. <u>A more nuanced categorisation of Islamist groups</u> should be developed, as shown by the generation of three different clusters of Islamist groups: the results of the statistical analysis demonstrate that these groups differ from one another. They indeed have different command-and-control structures, various geographical scopes of actions and different methods. Also, their capacity to conduct successful actions is variable.

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[7] As pointed out by Audrey Kurth Cronin ("When Should we talk to terrorists?, United States Institute for Peace, May 2010), "*negotiations most frequently succeed if groups express tangible demands, and that is true but somewhat tautological. Governments cannot negotiate over demands they can neither understand nor satisfy, and more to the point, popular opinion cannot understand or support such talks. There is a deep historical connection between ideas and terrorism*".

[8] Social embedding, level of action, recruitment base, etc.

[9] i.e. the link between the individual and the agenda of the group.

Relationships between group and individual clusters

In order to further develop the results of the statistical analysis, the Research Team analysed the links between group and individual clusters. This showed that preliminary relationships between clusters of groups and clusters of individuals give surprisingly consistent and interesting results. It would indeed appear that there are correspondences between the clusters of groups and the clusters of individuals. In particular, the vast majority of individuals in any given individual cluster are members of groups belonging to one group cluster.
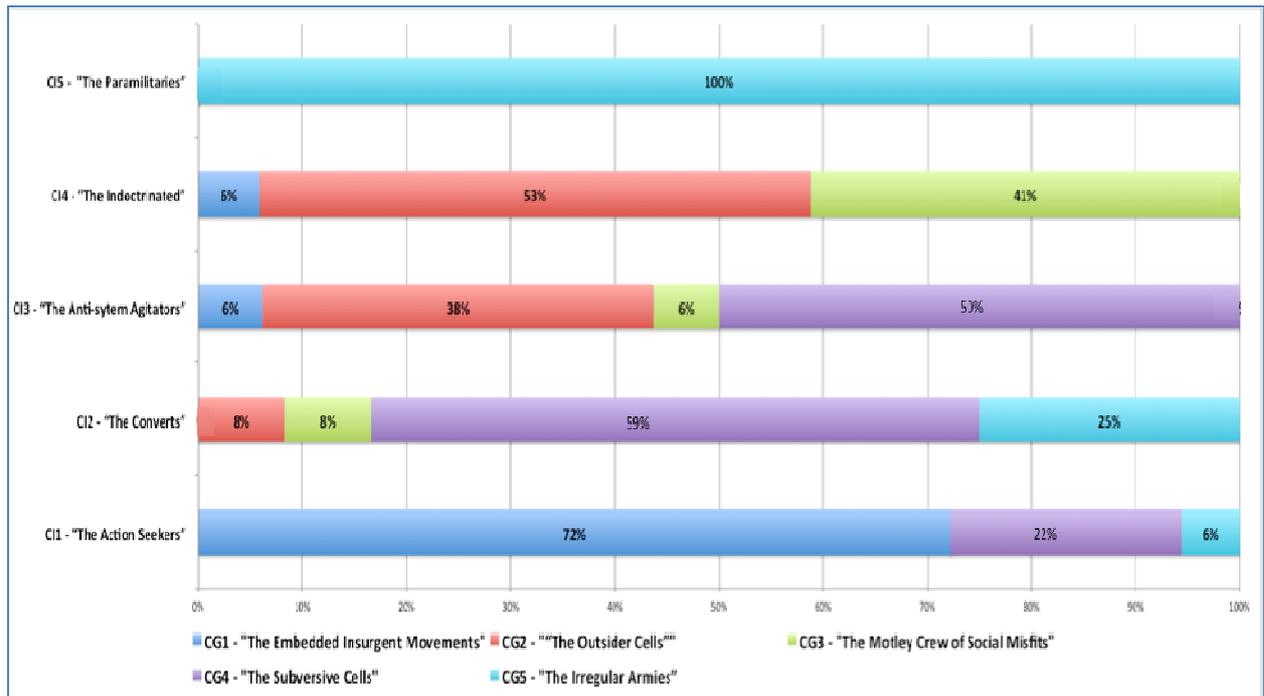

Figure 1. Relationships between group and individual clusters

This graphic shows which cluster(s) of individuals a particular cluster of groups attracts. Notable results are:

- All individuals who fall into the individual cluster 'The Paramilitaries' are members of groups that fall into the group cluster 'The Irregular Armies';
- The majority of individuals in the individual cluster 'The Actions Seekers' are members of the group cluster 'The Insurgent Movements'.

These results suggest there is a need for further analysis in order to determine if it is actually possible to build a general model, as the first results seemed to imply.

D. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to identify relevant classifications of violent radical groups and individuals going beyond the commonly used ideological classifications and to show commonalities and differences between them. The obtained results demonstrate that violent groups and individuals can be consistently analysed and classified relying on their organisational aspects and modi operandi. Therefore, it is expected that the building of these two alternative classifications could be useful in many regards at the operational level:

- These classifications provide some insights into **the most appropriate level of intervention** for each type of cluster of groups identified: political, law enforcement, intelligence or military;
- Law enforcement agents dealing with existing violent radical groups could use these classifications **to gain a more thorough understanding of the challenges and possible risks** they are facing by looking for similarities with groups belonging to the same cluster;
- These classifications could also prove instrumental in **preventing the violent actions of groups and individuals by developing interventions tailored to each specific cluster.** This would be particularly true if on the one hand the classifications were further developed in a model underlining the existing links between group and individual clusters; and on the other hand if appropriate types of interventions have been identified for each cluster.

Based on a coherent methodology, the identification of clusters regardless of the ideological denominations and convictions of the violent radical groups and individuals analysed tends to indicate that **there are alternative ways to look at and to study violent radicalisation**. Such findings pave the way for a better understanding of the processes that underlie radicalisation leading to violence. However, an operationalisation research phase would be required to further enhance and exploit these findings.

Understanding Radicalisation with ordered networks (TNO)

A. Introduction

The objective of the project SAFIRE is to improve the understanding of the process of radicalisation leading to violence, and to use this knowledge to design and analyse a series of interventions to prevent, halt or reverse the process of radicalisation leading to violence in Europe. This chapter describes work conducted by TNO with input from the other consortium partners on understanding radicalisation through the use of ordered networks.

In order to gain an understanding of the process of radicalisation leading to violent behaviour, we conducted a literature review[10]. This analysis of the literature suggests that it is not possible to identify a single terrorist profile or pathway. It also suggests that we should not aggregate individuals from a range of groups when trying to understand the factors associated with radicalisation. One of the most striking elements of radicalisation is that it is a gradual and non-linear process – not a one-time decision – and that the process is not identical for any individual or group. The phenomenon of radicalisation is contingent upon the past and current state of the world, the persons involved, and their interactions with the world. Hence, there are an unlimited number of routes into violent extremism and terrorism, of which only a few have only a limited number of commonalities. Thus, it does not appear possible to develop an all-encompassing theory explaining the process of radicalisation.

To have a fuller understanding of how to effectively handle the challenge of violent radicalisation, and more specifically how to design adequate interventions, it is imperative to understand how and why people are drawn to (violent) radicalism in the first place. Rather than pinpointing single causal chains leading to violent radicalisation, our approach is to identify, on the basis of a body of highly diverse literature (e.g. anecdotal, scientific, biographical), as many relationships as possible between variables. These sets of ordered relationships, also called 'edges', may then be analysed by sophisticated techniques to provide a better understanding of the process of radicalisation leading to violence. This approach can be seen as an alternative to a meta-analysis[11] of scientific studies, given that the phenomenon of radicalisation does not lend itself to the establishment of unambiguous causal relationships in the absence of control conditions. Also, the phenomenon may be too complex to be reduced to single causal chains, as already indicated by our literature review. We therefore require different tools and metrics to better understand the phenomenon of radicalisation. One possible set of tools is derived from Network Science.

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[10] RAND Europe (2011). Synthesis report on the results from work package 2: inventory of the factors of radicalization and counterterrorism interventions. Deliverable D2.1. Seventh Framework Programme, SECURITY, Collaborative Project no. 241744 SAFIRE.

[11] A meta-analysis refers to methods focused on contrasting and combining results from different studies, in the hope of identifying patterns among study results, sources of disagreement among those results, or other interesting relationships that may come to light in the context of multiple studies.

Network science

Network science, as defined in Wikipedia[12], is "a new and emerging scientific discipline that examines the interconnections among diverse physical or engineered networks, information networks, biological networks, cognitive and semantic networks, and social networks. This field of science seeks to discover common principles, algorithms and tools that govern network behaviour." The National Research Council (USA) defines Network Science as "the study of network representations of physical, biological, and social phenomena leading to predictive models of these phenomena."

What is a network? In any data, there are relations among things, such as two people being cousins or a network of amino acids in a protein. These networks might be psychological or cultural, for example, when two people share the same background or beliefs. They might be physical, as in two resources being in the same location or two computers being connected by a line, or they might be social, as in people being related or otherwise connected. There are many reasons why networks exist. Networks are ubiquitous. Everyone and everything is constrained and enabled by the networks in which they are embedded. Everyone and everything is embedded in multiple networks; for instance, one is connected to some people through work, others through school, others through their kids, and so on.

Community plays a role in both the process of radicalisation leading to violence and de-radicalisation. Just as any person, someone who has been drawn toward radicalism relies day-in and day-out on a network of people with whom they relate on some level. One promising approach to study the networks of persons drawn to radicalism is Social Network Analysis (SNA)[13]. SNA typically probes the patterns of relationships among people or organisations. SNA can help visualise the connections between and among individuals, groups, or organisations, as well as provide metrics to clarify the communication patterns and communication-related roles in groups. However, SNA is useful only for well-bounded networks and assumes a static, position-based view of individuals, making it inadequate for modelling large dynamic organisational networks over time. In addition, it is intricate to create social network models of individuals or groups who are suspected of future violent behaviour as a result of radicalization.

Compared to a more traditional approach of identifying factors that predict violent acts as a result of radicalisation, the building of a network has the advantage of including and visualising variables and their relationships. Visualisations have two advantages. First, they can give a sophisticated overview of the many variables related to radicalisation, and thereby aid in hypothesizing about relationships. Second, different forms of examination emerge from network analysis, because the structure of the relationship between entities can be incorporated. Network analysis can be used to increase understanding of the process of radicalisation. For example, information about the relative importance of nodes (variables) and edges (relationships) in a graph can be obtained. Examples of questions that can be asked are: Which of the variables immediately precede violent acts? Are these variables related? Are they directly related

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[12] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Network_science>. Retrieved October 27, 2011.
[13] Wasserman, S., & Faust, K. (1994). Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

or indirectly (through another variable)? How central or peripheral is a variable in a network? Which variables serve as bridges between other variables?

This new way of representing and investigating knowledge that is available in the literature about factors of radicalization leading to violent acts has many uses. It can pinpoint several issues and conclusions that guide interventions, give indications of which set of factors are central, and which are peripheral, and help to decide which variables can be targeted when trying to prevent violent acts as the result of radicalisation.

B. Methodology and Results

Several tools are available for the analysis and visualization of networks. One such tool, Organizational Risk Analyser (ORA), was designed to identify individuals or groups that are potential risks to the organization[14]. ORA is an analysis tool designed to help the user evaluate one or more networks. It can be used to assess the nature of, features of, change in, and determinants of complex networks. A large variety of networks can be assessed including, but not limited to, social networks, activity networks, task networks, knowledge networks, supply chains, and communication networks. Using ORA, questions such as the following can be addressed: what is critical, are there groups (clusters) of interest, are there patterns of interest, how might interventions impact the network, who is critical, are there emerging groups, how is the network changing? ORA can assess any data that can be represented as nodes and relations regardless of what the nodes or relations signify. Hence, ORA can assist in the analysis of relationships between any two variables.

Building a database with relationships

In order to be able to apply SNA to a dataset, we first gathered relationships between variables that are relevant for violent radicalisation/radicalisation leading to violence. These relationships were then stored systematically in a database, using MS Excel. This database was then imported in ORA for further analysis.

Our database contains hundreds of relationships between factors. Relationships were taken from the work performed in previous and parallel Work Packages in SAFIRE, and include the following traits: use of drugs, antisocial behaviour, marital status, economic status, educational levels, GDP, multiculturalism, happiness, interpersonal trust, religious factionalism, and terrorist activity. Relationships between any two of these factors are expressed in terms of strength, for instance: the relationship between being married and terrorist activity might be -0.17 on a scale of -1 to +1 (if a quantitative measure is available) or 'weak' (if only a qualitative measure is available). Examples of relationships we uncovered are:

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[14] Carley, K.M., Reminga, J., Storrick, J., & Columbus, D. (2011). ORA User's Guide 2011. *Carnegie Mellon University, School of Computer Science, Institute for Software Research, Technical Report, CMU-ISR-11-107*

- At the country level, more satisfaction with the governing system is negatively associated with more political mindedness as measured by the European Values Study (1999) [15].
- The global indication of Terrorism (higher scores indicate more casualties) is negatively associated with GDP indexes in 2009, in other words poverty is correlated with the incidence of terrorism.
- At the country level, more interpersonal trust is positively associated with the desire to have different groups as neighbours.
- Economic globalisation positively affects Islamist terrorism.
- More generous social welfare provisions tend to reduce terrorism and also to fewer citizens who perpetrate terrorism.

Relationships between factors pertaining to radicalisation were selected from the following research areas: cultural-economic, socio-psychological, politico-demographic, and intervention studies, congruent with the Work Packages. The origin of the retrieved relationship was included in the database, varying from repeatedly demonstrated empirical research findings to third-hand anecdotal information.

The relationships in the database were categorized on the basis of a number of other characteristics. This way, variables belonging to a sub-group can be selected to be further scrutinized in a (sub)-visualisation. For example, the coded characteristic 'ideology' allows for a visualisation containing only left-wing or only right-wing individuals and groups. Table 3 shows all characteristics that were distinguished for all relationships in the database.

Table 3. Overview of included categorizations of relationships between factors

Refers to	Characteristic
Research population	Actor
	Age category
	Gender
	Nationality
	Ethnicity
	Level of education
	Social economic status
	Ideology
	Actor affiliation
	Actor type
	Setting
	Research field
Value of relationship	Type of relationship
	Relationship strength
	Coefficient type
	Relationship quality
	Source reliability
	Reference

Conceptual images of networks can be built using the ORA Visualizer. Real world entities such as violent acts, joining (terrorist-)training or criminal groups, but also states such as interpersonal trust and need to affiliate, are represented as nodes. Links connect nodes that share a direct relationship. Indirect links are relationships between

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[15] http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/

variables that are connected through other nodes. In the visualisations, one can zoom, select, isolate, add and remove nodes, and much more. For example, a selection can be made of all variables directly linked to violent acts.

With ORA many reports can be run: Risk analysis, Intelligence analysis, and Sphere of Influence to name a few. Sphere of influence analysis allows for identification of those factors that are connected to the factor of interest in the first degree, second degree and so on. Multiple organisations can be compared against each other, network structure can be optimised, subgroups within a network can be identified, and scenarios involving the removal of nodes or links can be examined. Reporting capabilities are constantly being refined and updated.

An example of a network visualisation is provided below (Figure 7). This example, based on Tuckman's stages of group development [16], and the states the group might achieve, is only for demonstration purposes.
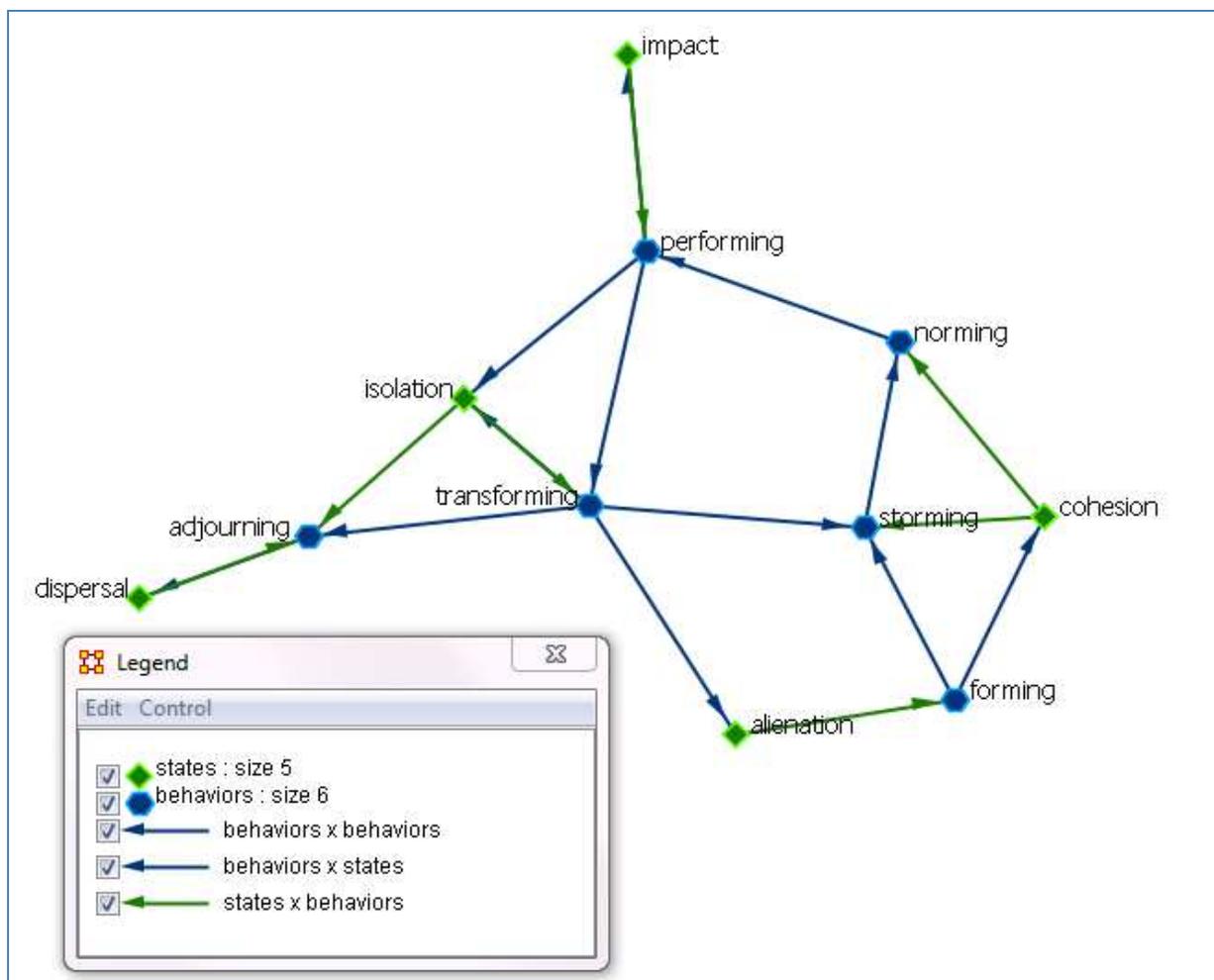

Figure 7 Example of a network visualisation representing relationships between Tuckman's stages of group development and the states the group achieves

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[16] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman's_stages_of_group_development

There is a large variety of options for how additional information can be represented: Different colouring can be used to represent labels, as well as mouse-over options. In addition, the location of the node in the network often gives information about how many connections a node has, with a more central location representing more connections ('centrality'). Other visualization characteristics that are commonly used are: the size of the node (i.e., to indicate the strength of the combined connections) and the thickness of the lines (i.e., to indicate the strength of a connection).

C. Conclusion

Neither the process of entering nor the process of leaving violent radicalisation is precise. Many interconnected components influence the process of radicalisation, and so the concept of being removed from violent radicalism (for example by intervention programmes) also cannot be strictly defined. The varying sources of radicalisation and goals of extremist groups lead to interventions that have assorted goals of their own, and differing methods of achieving those goals.

In an effort to keep radicalisation from further infiltrating societies around the world, public and private entities have developed various types of intervention programmes with differing – though sometimes overlapping – goals. The motivation and rationale driving individuals prone to violent radicalization, needs to be taken seriously in order to devise efficient de-radicalisation policies. As such, knowledge and understanding of the large variety of factors related to radicalisation (i.e., the culture from which radicalising individuals come) is imperative for effectively dealing with radicalisation in a multinational European context.

One conclusion we can draw from the data we have incorporated, is that the notion of one overarching theory of how radicalisation evolves is not to be expected. Depending on the level of analysis, the actors involved, the characteristics of the situation, the state of actor, and the unwanted and extreme behaviour, different determinants play a role.

Based on our research, a causal deterministic chain of behaviours could not be found in our data. This could be due to the fact that there were areas of literature and study that in hindsight we should have included in the database, such as developmental psychology. The lack of connections could also be due to a knowledge gap in the sense that the theoretical hypotheses we have identified have not been empirically investigated. Consequently, no data is available on them.

We have tried to make clear that radicalisation is not a certain state of an actor but a process. For each behaviour of a specific actor different factors need to be considered; a network approach allows for retaining the richness and dynamisms of the process but at the same time allows for making sense of specific radical behaviour. We also demonstrate that a multidisciplinary approach is a necessary requirement to understand radicalisation. More importantly, what we can conclude from our approach is that – and this should not come as a surprise – the various scientific but also operational points of view and fields of interest need some sort of common ground to connect these insights. The ordered networks approach does exactly that. It is able to represent 'collective knowledge' on radicalisation from very diverse fields of expertize

in one language and systematize present and future knowledge acquisition. By generating one overview in one system we can identify what links are blatantly missing and start to formulate hypotheses to make the connections and test these by gathering empirical evidence. What is also required is temporal data per actor (at both the individual and group levels) to achieve some appreciation of causality. Changes in radical behaviour over time need to be reported on, systematically and always in conjunction with the prevailing relevant cognitive and emotional states of the actor and the state of his/her environment. With these new and longitudinal edges (relationships between two factors) a representation of a 'fuzzy' causal chain of increasingly radical behaviours culminating in violence becomes possible and thus increases the probability of effectiveness of interventions that are aimed at inhibiting violent and extreme behaviour.

This report does not answer the question what is radicalisation, but it does answer the question how radicalisation can be understood and dealt with. We have provided an alternative approach to making sense[17] (in the Weickian manner) of radicalisation, and our preliminary results suggest this may also become relevant for practitioners in designing interventions.

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[17] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sensemaking

National cultural factors associated to processes of violent radicalisation and terrorism (University of Coimbra)

A. Introduction

This summary is based on the scientific report of the work developed by the UC in the SAFIRE project WP4.2 about the cultural and national factors that could be associated with processes of radicalisation leading to terrorist violence. When dealing with this issue, we are faced with a clear illustration of a shift from a social paradigm to a cultural paradigm, in the sense of Touraine (2005; see also Taguieff, 1991; Wieviorka, 2000); a change in which social categories (like working class) lose their centrality to make room for the emergence of cultural categories (e.g., identity based) regarding claims and conflicts structuring social transformations. Through this shift, the discrimination and marginalization experienced are more and more often interpreted on a 'cultural basis'. Actually, nowadays, across different violent extremisms in Europe we find the claims for 'our identity' at the core of the processes that justify fighting 'against them'.

These pervasive cultural arguments cut across different types of violent extremism in Europe and they are of utmost importance when trying to understand the phenomena of violent radicalisation. Therefore, it seems reasonable that, if we want to improve the understanding of processes of violent radicalisation, which may potentially lead to terrorism, we must take into account these cultural issues. However, we need to have in mind several precautions when analysing the cultural factors and processes that are within the scope of the SAFIRE project.

First, a cultural analysis always risks the trap of homogenisation, and important differences that should be taken into account in this type of analysis, as they may otherwise be overlooked. That is, we risk encapsulating other social and psychosocial differences inside a culture, for example, when we talk about collectivistic cultures vs. individualistic cultures. We should not forget that there is strong diversity (namely economic, social and psychosocial) within each culture. And it should also be stressed that this is not only a theoretical problem, but could also be a real barrier for front-line workers in this field. Even when cultural categories are suitable for analysis, they risk bringing problems for interventions, namely stereotyping.

Another related issue that should be outlined is the level at which we decided to approach culture. In SAFIRE, from its starting point, this cultural analysis set out to focus on the national level. We are aware this categorisation is an artefact, because cultures are not limited to the countries' borders, nor is culture homogeneous inside these borders, and also in the sense that we risk falling into the abovementioned trap of considering the all-moulding power of culture inside each nation. However, considering culture at the national level of analysis is an important research tool that affords us an operational way of dealing with our topic. Actually, for the purposes of the present work we used the concept of 'national culture' in the strictly operational sense of available

empirical data (e.g., on socio-economical, political or cultural indicators) about a specific country.

Second, a cultural analysis should not be insensitive to the subcultures in a more anthropological sense, as well as in a specific sense of organisational culture of groups and organisations involved in violent radicalisation processes and actions. When we study terrorism or radicalisation that could lead to terrorism, no doubt the organisational level is of the utmost importance (cf. Kruglanski & Fishman, 2009).

Third, there is another important dimension of cultural factors in radicalisation processes not covered in our analysis: a group processes dimension. Group process polarisation phenomena (Moscovici & Doise, 1994) are very relevant for radicalisation. Besides, a group is never alone in society. Instead, intra-group processes are deeply linked with intergroup relations. Actually, relations between different extremist groups could lead to more radicalisation or antagonism under certain conditions or to de-radicalisation under other conditions.

The abovementioned dimensions of organisational culture and group processes are of central importance for understanding the whole process of radicalisation, although they were not studied here. We are aware that this is an important limitation of the present work, although they are not within the scope of our objectives.

Nevertheless, at this starting point of the research, from a pragmatic point of view and from a methodological perspective, an analysis at the national level was considered to be more realistic due mostly to the availability of a great amount of information in public European databases, such as the European Social Survey or the European Values Study.

Research questions
Through the work conducted in Work Package 4.2, we aim to understand which are the 'cultural' factors that, in a broader sense, are empirically associated with terrorist incidents. In a more specific way, our goal here was to identify, in the existent literature and in several European databases, the most relevant and available cultural variables that could be related to terrorist incidents in Europe.

B. Methodology and Results

To answer the aforementioned research questions, we first conducted an extensive review of theoretical and empirical literature on cross-cultural aspects of radicalisation leading to terrorism. For the literature review, we decided to conduct our analysis taking a 'country of origin perspective' or, in other words, the cultural contexts where terrorism develops.

In the second part we conducted an empirical study using data available in different European databases (conducted by UC and TNO). Here, our goal was to identify in the European databases the most relevant available cultural variables that could be related

to terrorist incidents in Europe and to other proxies[18] of violent radicalisation. In this second part, contrary to the first part, the countries analysed were the target countries where the terrorist acts took place (i.e. 'target country perspective').

Evidence from studies regarding cultural determinants on terrorism

We conducted an extensive review of empirical literature regarding cultural factors reported to be associated with violent radicalisation and terrorism. We came across several difficulties during this process because culture is only generally referred to in the literature and not specified. For this reason we have selected variables that we consider to be related to culture (e.g., political, historical, values, socio-economic, or group process related factors).

We have mainly focused on studies that refer to factors that may impact the development of terrorism in certain countries (country of origin perspective). Specifically, we reviewed large country-sample studies in order to tackle national characteristics that can make a country more prone to be a breeding ground for terrorism. The country of origin perspective, as opposed to the target perspective, focuses on the country of origin of the perpetrators of terrorist events, regardless of the country in which these events have taken place.

There are several indicators that emerged from our review. These were aggregated into three main categories of indicators:

1) *socio-demographic and economic*
- poverty and inequality (Azam & Delacroix, 2006; Azam & Thelen, 2008; Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010; Blomberg & Hess, 2008a; Freytag, Krüger, Meierrieks & Schneider, 2008; Krueger & Laitin, 2008; Kurrild-Klitgaard, Justesen & Klemmensen, 2006; Ozdogan, 2006; Piazza, 2007, 2011; Plümper & Neumayer, 2010)
- modernization (Crenshaw, 1981; Robinson, Crenshaw, & Jenkins, 2006)
- socio-economic and demographic changes (Azam & Delacroix, 2006; Azam & Thelen, 2008; Boylan, 2010; Burgoon, 2006; Freytag et al., 2008; Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Ozgodan, 2006; Piazza, 2008; Plümper, & Neumayer, 2010; Walsh & Piazza 2011)
- education (Azam & Thelen, 2008; Berrebi, 2007; Boylan, 2010; Freytag et al., 2008; Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Krueger, 2008; Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Kurrild-Klitgaard et al., 2006)
- urbanization (Robinson et al., 2006)

2) *political and institutional*
- political systems (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010; Burgoon, 2006; Eubank & Weinberg, 2001; Kurrild-Klitgaard et al., 2006; Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Li, 2005; Ozgodan, 2006; Plümper & Neumayer, 2010; Robinson et al., 2006)
- political participation (Crenshaw, 1981, Piazza, 2008, 2011; for a revision cf. also Lia & Skjølberg, 2004)

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[18] A proxy, in this sense, is a variable not in itself of immediate direct interest for the purposes in question, but from which a variable of interest can be obtained. For example, *per capita GDP* is often used as a proxy for measures of standard of living or quality of life.

- welfare policies (Burgoon, 2006; Freytag et al., 2008)
- political transformation and instability (Piazza, 2008; Walsh & Piazza, 2010);

3) *psychosocial and cultural indicators*
- ethnic heterogeneity (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010; Bloomberg & Hess, 2008a; Boylan, 2010; Krueger & Laitin, 2008; Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Kurrild-Klitgaard et al., 2006; Ozgodan, 2006; Robinson et al. 2006; Piazza, 2008)
- Hofstede's cultural values (Wiedenhaefer, Dastoor, Balloun, & Sosa-Fey, 2007)
- the temporal contagion effect, meaning that past terrorism bears new terrorism within one country (Boylan 2010; Enders & Sandler, 2005; Lai, 2007; Piazza 2007)
- social facilitation in the sense of historical antecedents of political violence (Crenshaw, 1981; Mousseau, 2003; Post, Ruby & Shaw, 2002a, 2002b).

The first, and perhaps the main, finding that emerged from this literature review on the conditions conducive to terrorism is that **this phenomenon is too complex to be reduced to only one root condition**. Also, the fact that most of the evidence presented is contradictory hints even further at the complexity of the phenomenon, and it is very clear that non-linear approaches would be more suitable for the study of terrorism.

According to our revision of literature, terrorism is more likely to emerge in highly populated, non-democratic and instable countries. However, there is not much evidence indicating that poor economic conditions alone lead to terrorism. In this sense, the importance of the economic order in the production of terrorism seems to be surpassed by the political and institutional ones.

There is also an indication that countries with historical antecedents of political violence, lack of political participation, excessive repression by state authorities and instability (political, economic and social) and uncertainty avoidance (in the sense of Hofstede's cultural values) may be more at risk for terrorism.

Analysis of European databases

This section describes the main findings of the analysis of country-level variables conducted on several European databases.

The basic premise in this analysis lies in the idea that individual behaviour can be explained by a combination of ecological context, institutions, practices, and psychological outcomes (Van Hemert, 2010). The indicators describe the host society, that is any European country that can be considered a target of violent radicalisation, be it domestic or international terrorism. Therefore, in this part of our work, we cover the 'target country' perspective, thus admitting that the effect of culture is not as clear-cut in violent radicalisation, which may have a global perspective.

Method
A search was done to find country-level variables and statistics that cover most of the factors in the cultural framework described in the previous part of this summary.

Furthermore, we also searched for other cultural variables that could be important to understanding violent radicalisation and terrorism, but which were not found in the literature review. The variables and statistics are examined in order to explore the impact of national culture on the process of radicalisation. For these analyses we employed different European databases, such as the European Social Survey, and other open source databases with data relevant for our analysis, such as the World Fact Book. In this analysis we used the previous aggregation of variables in three main categories (socio-demographic and economic; political and institutional; psychosocial and cultural).

Variables

For the present analysis, 48 variables were selected from the existing open-access databases used to create our work database. All variables pertain to the country level, that is, they are either aggregated from the individual level to produce country scores or they are conceptualized and measured at the country level. Variables had to be available for at least 10 European countries to be included in our analysis.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

Socio-demographic and economic factors pertain to characteristics of each country and are mainly related to wealth and composition of the country's population.
- Gross Domestic Product per capita for the year 2009 was retrieved from the World Bank Database[19].
- Gini Coefficient (i.e. the inequality of income or wealth distribution in a country; a value of 0 expresses total equality and a value of 1 maximal inequality; retrieved from the International Human Development Indicators website[20]).
- Unemployment (i.e. the percentage of unemployment refers to the share of the labour force that is without work but available for and seeking employment[21]; retrieved from the World Bank website[22]).
- Percentage of Muslims (i.e. statistics for the year of 2009; retrieved from the Pew Research Center report of Mapping the Global Muslim Population[23]).
- Percentage of Christians (i.e. statistics for the year of 2009; retrieved from CIA World Fact Book site[24]).

POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

Variables included in this category refer to the specificities of each country in regards to the way its political system and institutions are organized.
- Polity (i.e. a regime's authority spectrum on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 [hereditary monarchy] to +10 [consolidated democracy], a summary measure of a country's democratic and free nature; calculated by subtracting an autocracy

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[19] http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD
[20] http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/90406.html
[21] The definitions of labour force and unemployment differ by country.
[22] http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS
[23] http://pewforum.org/uploadedfiles/Orphan_Migrated_Content/Muslimpopulation.pdf
[24] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

score from a democracy score[25]; made through assessment of regimes' characteristics made by experts; retrieved from the Polity IV dataset).

- MIPEX (Migrant Integration Policy Index; integration policies across a broad range of differing environments. 148 policy indicators divided into seven categories: labour market mobility, family reunion, education, political participation, long-term residence, access to nationality, and anti-discrimination[26]; all the migrant integration policy subscales and the overall *integration* policy).

- Degree of Freedom within a state (i.e. governments' respect for a wide range of internationally-recognized human rights for countries of all regime-types and from all regions of the world; three items [alpha: .76]; retrieved from The Cingranelli and Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset).

- State Instability (i.e. defined as the single onset or a combination of onsets from four categories of instability events: ethnic war, revolutionary war, genocide or politicide, and adverse regime change; three items [alpha: .89]; taken from Marshall [2008]).

PSYCHOSOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

These variables are not psychological characteristics of individuals, but rather are composite measures of psychosocial and cultural characteristics and tendencies at the country level.

- National pride (i.e. the percentage of people indicating that they are proud to be a citizen of their country, or the average indicated pride of people to be a citizen of their country; one item from the *European Values Study*, 2008).

- Interpersonal trust (i.e. the average percentage of respondents saying "most people can be trusted"; higher scores indicate more interpersonal trust; retrieved from Allik, & Realo, 2004).

- Organizational membership (i.e. the cumulative percentage of citizens belonging to 16 or more types of voluntary associations within a given country; retrieved from Allik, & Realo, 2004).

- Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1980, 2001)
    o Power distance (i.e. the extent to which people perceive power differences within a given country; retrieved from Hofstede, 2001).
    o Uncertainty avoidance (i.e. the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty; retrieved from Hofstede, 2001).
    o Individualism (i.e. the degree to which individuals are (or are not) integrated into groups; the individualist side: societies in which the ties between individuals are *loose*; the collectivist side: societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families that continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty; retrieved from Hofstede, 2001).
    o Masculinity (i.e. the distribution of emotional roles between the genders; more masculine cultural values are competitiveness, assertiveness,

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[25] http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm
[26] http://www.integrationindex.eu/countries

materialism, ambition and power; more feminine cultures place more value on relationships and quality of life; retrieved from Hofstede, 2001).

- Religiosity (i.e. five items [Cronbach's alpha: .85]; the degree to which people consider themselves to be religious; higher scores indicate lower levels of religiosity; retrieved from the *European Social Survey,* Round 4, 2008).
- Importance of religion (i.e. one item: "how important was religion in their life"; higher scores indicate less importance of religion in the life of individuals; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).
- Belonging to a religious denomination (i.e. one item; higher scores indicate people do not belong to any religious denomination; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).
- Postmaterialism (i.e. the undergoing transformation of individual values in Western societies; the degree to which there is a switch from materialist values, emphasizing economic and physical security, to a new set of postmaterialist values, which instead emphasize autonomy and self-expression; retrieved from Inglehart, 1997).
- Political orientation (i.e. one item; the degree to which people place themselves on the left-right according to political orientation; higher scores indicate more right-wing orientation; retrieved from the *European Social Survey*, Round 4, 2008).
- Political mindedness (i.e. two items [alpha: .66]; the degree to which people think politics is important in their life and if they discuss politics on a regular basis; higher scores indicate more political mindedness; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).
- Political action (i.e. seven items [alpha: .80]; the degree to which people have taken different forms of political action in the previous 12 months: contacted politicians, worked in political parties or other organizations, signed petitions, etc.; higher scores indicate more political action; retrieved from the *European Social Survey, Round 4*, 2008).
- Confidence in the system (i.e. 11 items [alpha: .90]; the degree to which people have confidence in different kinds of institutions, such as church, school system, press, armed forces, police, European Union, etc.; higher scores indicate less confidence in the system; retrieved from the *European Values Study* (2008).
- Trust in authorities (i.e. seven items [alpha: .95]; the degree to which people have trust in authorities, such as the parliament, legal system, police, politicians, political parties, European Parliament and UN; higher scores indicate more trust in authorities; retrieved from the *European Social Survey Round 4* (2008).
- Satisfaction with the system (i.e. four items [alpha: .97]; the degree to which people are satisfied with the system, as a whole, with democracy, national government and state of economy; higher scores indicate more satisfaction with the system; retrieved from the *European Social Survey, Round 4*, 2008).
- Openness to immigrants (i.e. six items [alpha: .90]; the degree to which people would allow immigrants – from the same ethnic group, different ethnic group, poorer countries outside Europe – to come into their country and if they felt that immigrants enrich the country's life and economy; higher scores indicate people would be more willing to allow more immigrants into their country; retrieved from the *European Social Survey, Round 4*, 2008).
- Ethnic, linguistic and religious fractionalization (i.e. Ethnic fractionalization – the extent to which a country is divided into sections/groups based on ethnicity;

linguistic fractionalization – the extent to which a country is divided into sections/groups based on language; religious fractionalization – the division into religious groups; higher scores indicate more fractionalization; retrieved from *The MacroData Guide*27).

To assess potential radicalisation, we used different indicators that might be associated with polarized attitudes towards different concepts, such as multiculturalism or attitudes towards immigrants. We must note that these indicators are not, per se, measures of radicalisation. They are better conceptualized as proxies of radical attitudes, which may lead to violent radical behaviour.

- Multiculturalism (i.e. 36 items from eight scales [alpha's between .66 and .92]; the degree to which people have positive attitudes towards multiculturalism; higher scores indicate more positive attitudes towards multiculturalism; taken as a negative correlate of radicalisation; based on the *European Social Survey, Round 2*, 2004 and retrieved from Schalk-Soekar, van de Vijver, Arends-Tóth, & Van Hemert, under review).
- Attitudes towards immigrants (i.e. eight items [alpha: .88]; the degree to which people have positive attitudes towards immigrants; higher score s indicate more positive attitudes towards immigrants; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).
- Tolerance towards diversity (i.e. 14 items [alpha: .89]; the degree to which people would allow different kinds of individuals to be their neighbours – heterogeneous groups such as heavy drinkers, religious groups, extreme right or left-wing, etc.; conceptualized as a proxy of positive attitudes towards different societal groups of people; higher scores indicate more liking of different groups; retrieved from the *European Values Study, 2008*).
- Experienced discrimination (i.e. seven items [alpha: .68]; the degree to which people have felt discriminated against – based on colour or race, nationality, religion, language, ethnic group, age and gender; higher scores indicate more experienced discrimination; retrieved from the *European Social Survey, Round 4*, 2008).

Besides all the categories of variables mentioned above, we also used for the present analysis other variables that relate to people's perceived well-being, happiness and life satisfaction. We assume that these variables may all be negatively related to proxies of radicalisation.

- Subjective well-being (i.e. people's evaluations of their lives; higher scores indicate higher level of subjective well-being; retrieved from Diener, Diener and Diener, 1995).
- General happiness (i.e. one item; the degree to which people feel happy in general: higher scores indicate less happiness; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).
- Life satisfaction (i.e. one item; the degree to which people feel satisfied with their life; higher scores indicate more life satisfaction; retrieved from the *European Values Study*, 2008).

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27 http://www.nsd.uib.no/macrodataguide/set.html?id=16&sub=1

INDICATORS OF VIOLENT RADICAL BEHAVIOUR

We searched for indicators of terrorism as one of the measurable components of violent radical behaviour, so we could assess the degree to which these indicators are associated with the variables included in our dataset.

- Terrorist events (i.e. number of terrorist events within each country between 2000 and 2006; retrieved from the *Nation Master Database* [28]).
- Global terrorism indicator (i.e. number of deaths within each country due to terrorist acts; range of 0 to 5: 5 means greater than 1000 deaths and 0 means no deaths recorded; retrieved from the *Nation Master Database* [29]).
- Perceived likelihood of terrorist attacks in Europe (i.e. one item; how likely people believe a terrorist attack is in Europe during next twelve months; higher scores indicate people feel an attack is less likely; retrieved from the *European Social Survey Round 4,* 2008).
- Perceived likelihood of terrorist attack in one's own country (i.e. one item; how likely people believe a terrorist attack is in their own country during the next twelve months; higher scores indicate people think that a terrorist attack is less likely; retrieved from the *European Social Survey, Round 4*, 2008).

Results

Correlations were calculated across all selected variables. In order to avoid capitalization on chance, we focused on patterns of strong correlations rather than on single significant correlations. Several trends stand out. For example, countries scoring higher on perceived likelihood of a terrorist attack in the country or in Europe have more deaths because of terrorism and more incidents.

The variables representing economic context, such as Gross Domestic Product and unemployment rate, were significantly correlated with a number of variables. Interestingly, wealthier countries have higher scores on the Migration Integration Policy (indicating better integration policies), in particular on Education, Political Participation, and Access to Nationality (but not on Labour Market Mobility, Family Reunion, Long Term Residence, and Anti-Discrimination). In addition, wealthier countries score higher on happiness and life satisfaction, in line with previous country-level research (Diener et al., 1995), and lower on importance of religion, religiosity, and belonging to religious organizations. Strong positive correlations were also found between wealth and freedom, state instability, social capital (i.e., interpersonal trust and organizational membership) and Hofstede's individualism.

Finally, positive attitudes towards multiculturalism and openness towards immigrants were more prevalent in wealthier countries. As mentioned before, Migration Integration Policy is positively related to wealth. In addition, countries that have better integration policies, have higher social capital, present higher levels of individualism, femininity, and happiness. All in all, countries with more economic wealth seem to be more open to immigrants, both in terms of policy as in terms of individual attitudes.

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[28] http://www.nationmaster.com/cat/ter-terrorism
[29] http://www.nationmaster.com/cat/ter-terrorism

Fractionalization, be it ethnic, linguistic or religious, was positively related to being proud of the home country (i.e., the country where people live), but not much else. The only exception is religious fractionalization, which was related to less religiosity and more experienced discrimination.

Countries where more people belong to religious or political organizations (more organizational membership) perceived their country to have more freedom and be more tolerant towards diversity. These countries also scored higher on happiness and life satisfaction, on interpersonal trust and trust in authorities and higher in satisfaction with the system. Furthermore, the same group of countries scored lower on ethnic fractionalization, political mindedness and political action.

Countries in which the population has more positive attitudes towards multiculturalism (Schalk-Soekar et al., under review) show higher levels of individualism, femininity, happiness, and less uncertainty avoidance and preference for hierarchy. In addition, in countries where there is more tolerance towards diversity, there is a more left-wing political orientation and lower numbers of terrorist attacks. Also, these countries are wealthier and score higher on political mindedness.

Synthesis

Most of the variables found to be associated with radicalisation leading to violent radical behaviour belong to the socio-demographic and economic category. Variables related to wealth (such as GDP, and income inequality) seem to play an important role in predicting possible radicalisation leading to violent radical behaviour. Furthermore, variables included under the category of political and institutional factors (such as state instability and integration policies) are associated with proxies of radicalisation (such as multiculturalism, and attitudes towards immigrants) and several other variables belonging to the psychosocial and cultural category.

C. Conclusion

It seems a reasonable starting point for our work to ask which might be the national cultural factors associated with violent radicalisation leading to terrorism. However, it came as a relative surprise that we found very few studies dealing specifically with this issue. This is particularly true regarding empirical research, no matter the methodology used. In fact, frequently, culture is generally referred to but not specifically studied.

When studies refer to culture, usually they take the cultural context as a background or facilitating environment where radicalisation can occur, that is, as a precondition and not a precipitant in Crenshaw's terms (1981). So, in a certain sense, we can say that the "absence of empirical studies of relevant cross-national factors" referred to by Crenshaw in 1981 (p. 381) is still valid today. Especially, if we are talking about studies on specific cultural variables associated with violent radicalisation processes in Europe.

Another point we should reflect upon here refers to the concept of radicalisation itself. In our work we take the definition of the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council (communication held on September 21st 2005) in

which 'violent radicalisation' is defined as "the phenomena of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism" (Commission of the European Communities, 2005, p. 2). Nevertheless, we are faced with a diversity of notions and actions covered by the term radicalisation in our analysis. It should be stressed that we risk running in a wrong direction in our work in this field, if we are dealing with a large scope of different processes, actions, claims and groups over one single term.

For this reason, one of our conclusions relates to the necessity of questioning and debating the concept of radicalisation at the theoretical level and at the empirical level. This debate is important not only for developing a scientific approach to study and analyse violent radicalisation processes, but also to deal properly with policy and intervention issues in this domain. Actually, the concept of radicalisation was already introduced at the official level in the European Union – namely by the European Council in 2004 – and several Member States are developing intervention programs on counter-radicalisation strategies. The well-founded ground of these policies and their translation into concrete intervention programs, as well as their assessments, are topics of major relevance for the social cohesion in Europe.

For the purposes of our analysis and to create a systematic way of integrating the different parts of our work, the 'national culture' indicators were aggregated into three main categories: socio-demographic and economic, political and institutional, and psychosocial and cultural factors, potentially associated with violent radicalisation and terrorism.

In this first part of the work (i.e. literature review), we reviewed large country-sample studies in order to tackle 'national culture' characteristics that can make a country more prone to be a breeding ground of terrorists (country of origin perspective). In the second part, a search was done to find country-level variables available in free-access databases with data across Europe to find national culture indicators that are related to terrorism (target country perspective).

Our analyses revealed that historical and cultural factors can indeed be a fertile ground for radicalisation to grow, but only if other more immediate factors, like economic or political instability, are present as well. This implies that a combination of economic, political, and cultural factors can increase the risk of a country being faced with violent radicalisation. Exactly how these different factors interact and strengthen or weaken each other is difficult to deduct from the theoretical and empirical data that are available at the moment. It seems feasible that, because of the relative constant nature of cultural factors, cultural factors would be less relevant when explaining sudden changes in radicalisation in European countries.

More specifically, in our analysis of the available literature, several indicators showed significant relations with terrorism, namely a history of political violence, lack of political participation, non-democratic states and uncertainty avoidance, amongst others.

Furthermore, in the second part of our work, we have conducted data analysis of different variables pertaining to aspects of national cultures across Europe, such as

indexes of democracy, national pride, government respect for human rights, tolerance towards diversity, attitudes towards immigrants, experienced discrimination and unemployment rates, to name just a few, and searched for associations of such variables with indicators of terrorism (incidents, number deaths, perceptions of threat) and proxies of violent radicalisation.

Our results point to the predominance of socioeconomic and political variables (such as GDP and unemployment) associated with terrorism. More concretely, we find consistent evidence for the importance of people's political participation and trust in authorities (national and European parliament, legal system, police, political parties, United Nations), because they are negatively associated with our indicators of terrorism (such as the Global Terrorism Indicator, which measures the number of deaths caused by terrorist events).

Concluding, we must bear in mind that, in isolation, cultural variables can hardly be responsible for violent radicalisation and terrorism. These processes are too complex and diverse to be attributable to single causes. Nevertheless, national cultures can be a fertile ground for these phenomena to emerge, namely, when we refer specifically to political and economic variables in the European countries under analysis.

Evaluations of Interventions (TNO)

A. Introduction

To date, there is no uniform method for measuring the effectiveness of interventions. Several reasons account for this absence. First, it is difficult to determine what constitutes effectiveness. Second, it is difficult to attribute effects (or the absence of effects) to one intervention. Third, researchers have contested that it is impossible to create uniformly successful interventions because there are no uniform problems or uniform participants. Although these arguments are very valid, they also lead to a suboptimal usage of the expertise of those involved in counter-radicalization and de-radicalization programmes, specifically front-line workers. We suggest here that the expertise of front-line workers should be taken very seriously as they can provide an important measure of an intervention's effectiveness. This is especially important in identifying effective (socio-psychological) processes on a more generic level.

This study aimed to evaluate counter- and de-radicalization interventions and report on the underlying factors that contribute to the effectiveness of such interventions. It has been debated whether it is possible to evaluate interventions in order to reach uniform recommendations. Interventions often consist of custom tailored activities that make them unfit for generalization. We suggest that investigating the underlying, socio-psychological principles and methods of interventions instead of their concrete configuration may circumvent this problem. This focus allows us to draw conclusions on a more generic level whilst avoiding conclusions on custom-tailored activities.

B. Methodology

We assumed that front-line workers have a host of knowledge, both explicit and implicit, that makes them experts in the field of counter- and de-radicalization. However, implicit knowledge is difficult to verbalize and front-line workers may not have explicit knowledge of underlying socio-psychological principles. Therefore, we constructed five categories of socio-psychological factors and related the presence of these factors to effectiveness ratings given by front-line workers who based their judgments on both their knowledge and their intuition.

C. Results

In our analyses we related the mean effectiveness judgments to the presence or absence of the underlying socio-psychological factors. Our data shows that the two categories creating positive identity (e.g., interventions focused on bolstering one's self-esteem), and reducing negative emotions (e.g., interventions focused on reducing feelings of anger, frustration, or humiliation) are associated with higher effectiveness of interventions. Restoring authorities (i.e., interventions focused on restoring the perceived legitimacy of authorities and regaining trust in authorities) is associated with moderately lower effectiveness of interventions. Two other categories, decreasing the

distance to the out-group (e.g., interventions focused on creating healthy relations with members of other social groups) and offering ways back (e.g., informing about ways out of a radicalized environment), do not show any effect. This suggests that, according to front-line workers, interventions that focus on creating positive identity and reducing negative emotions are more effective than those not focusing on these categories. For restoring authorities, the opposite seems true. Interventions that focus on restoring authorities are less effective than those not focusing on this category.

Close examination suggests that the above findings display a **divide between internal and external factors**. *Creating positive identity* and *reducing negative emotions* are typically factors that exist within an individual. They reflect how people feel and think about themselves, experience control over their lives and their self-efficaciousness. On the other hand, *decreasing the distance to out-group*, *offering ways back and restoring authorities* have to do with one's relationship with the world around them. These factors seem to target the practical symptoms of and solutions to radicalization leading to violence, such as a distancing from other-minded people, starting a new life away from the radical group and restoring the radical's trust in authorities. The former category of internal processes was judged more effective than the latter category of external symptoms and solutions. A reason may be that without addressing problems underlying or contributing to radicalization leading to violence, fighting symptoms and offering solutions will not result in durable change. Furthermore, focussing on the internal life of the individual helps increase self-confidence and subsequently resilience to recruitment methods. Particularly, in the vulnerable groups usually considered at risk for radicalisation.

An interesting implication of this finding could be that the often reported **inter-group contact effect** (the finding that inter-group contact reduces inter-group prejudice; Allport, 1954) is qualified by individuals having a positive self-image, and an absence of negative emotions. An assumed characteristic of radicalizing individuals is that they have a weak identity or hold a negative self-image which fuels their prejudice toward out-groups (Crenshaw, 1986; Horgan, 2003). Thus, potentially having a positive self-image should be related to less prejudice toward other groups. To our knowledge, previous research on the inter-group-contact theory has not focused on radicalized individuals (Pettygrew & Tropp, 2006). As a result, this research also has not focused on positive self-image as a qualifying mechanism of inter-group prejudice. We suggest more research be done to test the validity and impact of a positive identity and negative emotions as a qualifier of inter-group contact and inter-group prejudice. If this reasoning appears to be true, then focusing on internal processes before seeking external symptoms and solutions would be a practical advice to professionals in the field of counter-radicalization.

Finally, we tested our hypothesis that former extremists will be more successful than other types of front-line workers who carry out interventions, especially for individuals who have begun their radicalization process and for whom restorative interventions are indicated. We based this hypothesis on literature showing that people are more persuaded when a counter-party has no ulterior motive or vested interest and can therefore be trusted, and literature showing that information signalling achievability of a goal (such as leaving a radicalizing group, and conversing with people who have done so) motivates people to achieve this goal themselves. This is indeed what we found:

interventions carried out by former radicalized front-line workers are associated with higher effectiveness, especially when individuals at risk have already begun a radicalization process.

D. Conclusion

In order to further the understanding of processes underlying successful interventions, future interventions would do well to pay attention to **four factors before implementing their interventions**. **First**, they should be aware of the socio-psychological processes that play a role in counter- and de-radicalization and indicate to what extent their intervention affects each of the socio-psychological processes mentioned in this report. Doing so does not mean that interventions should affect all processes. Rather, doing so facilitates the ability to draw valid conclusions on the relation between these processes and effectiveness judgments.

The **second** issue for future interventions is to pay attention to how effectiveness can be measured or judged. That is, how and where such data can best be collected or retrieved. One option is to set up a network of front-line workers and other experts. Based on the activities and goals of an intervention these experts can judge interventions, as has been done in the present study, or even more extensively. For example, effectiveness measures may be retrieved from participants in the form of attitude measurements concerning their privately held extreme beliefs, or attitudes concerning the intervention itself. Also, real behaviour (e.g., recidivism) may be measured, or the intentions to behaviour.

Because an intervention's effectiveness is related to (but not exclusively determined by) the set goals, a **third** issue future interventions should pay attention to is to closely and concretely define their goals (e.g., along the lines of SMART formulation of goals). This enables policymakers to determine to what extent an intervention was successful in terms of reaching its stated goals and may motivate policy makers to reach them.

Lastly, if nothing is ever measured, effectiveness of one intervention can never be compared to another, even on a generic level as has been done in the present study. We therefore strongly urge policymakers and front-line workers to be explicit about the measurement of effectiveness (e.g., by the means used in this work) and to make effectiveness measurements a mandatory part of interventions.

This study examined the effectiveness of socio-psychological factors underlying counter- and de-radicalization interventions. Analyses shed light on the assumed importance of these factors, and as such aim to present overarching guidelines for effective elements in counter- and de-radicalization interventions.

Overview of Observable Indicators (ISCA)

A. Introduction

The comprehensive elements of the SAFIRE project aim to advance the body of knowledge of radicalisation by developing new insight and gathering contemporary empirical data to ultimately provide innovative actionable approaches to counter-radicalisation efforts. This Overview of Observable Indicators serves to provide a more well-rounded understanding of the process of radicalisation, and of the current practices of detecting radicalisation in Europe. The interviews and workshops with front-line workers that served as the basis of information gathering for this report provide insight into how to determine whether an individual is radicalising, and if so, at which point in the process of radicalisation they are.

This report provides information on indicators that may signify a progression within the process of radicalisation. This compilation of information from primary sources will shed light on the current practice of counter-radicalisation efforts and show how socio-psychological factors of radicalisation and radicalism are believed to manifest themselves into observable indicators that can be noted and acted upon by front-line workers.

What is an observable indicator and what is its significance?

For the purposes of this project, an observable indicator is an apparent change in someone's demeanour that can be noticed by observation or engaging in surface interaction, as opposed to in-depth social and/or psychological involvement. Such indicators may include a change in behaviour, personal conduct or reaction to social topics. The simultaneous presence of a noticeable change in demeanour, along with the presence of a combination of relevant indicators, signifies the possibility of radicalisation. Singular observable indicators are not alone proof of radicalisation or intentions to commit extremist violence. Rather, each indicator is a signal that a given person may be in the process of radicalisation, which can only be clarified by considering other surrounding factors.

B. Methodology

In order to identify observable indicators of radicalisation, interviews and workshops were held with front-line workers from multiple EU countries. All participants were involved with de-radicalisation, radicalisation prevention and/or disengagement efforts on a professional basis. This includes people who work at an organisation that has the objective of preventing radicalisation leading to violence, affecting de-radicalisation and/or affecting disengagement in individuals or groups, as well as professionals who are involved in counter-radicalisation programmes, such as social workers, police officers and teachers. We additionally addressed some community representatives who work closely with the police to better understand and prevent radicalisation. The participants can be categorised into four groups: those associated with programmes

focusing on right-wing radicalisation, those associated with programmes focusing on Islamic radicalisation, those associated with law enforcement, and those associated with groups that do not specialise in a specific type of radicalisation.

C. Results

1. Crucial considerations in determining the significance of observable indicators

The element of change

The significance of an observable indicator increases with the **element of change**. If a given observable indicator is part of someone's regular conduct, it is insignificant in terms of that person's progression – or lack thereof – in the process of radicalisation into violence. If an observable indicator appears as a change in behaviour, then it may be significant. For example, if someone shows a pattern of violent behaviour, that alone does not mean he or she is radicalising; if someone were rarely or never violent and then began frequently engaging in violence, that change in behaviour could be an indicator of violent radicalisation. Such indications will only be noticed by someone who is familiar with how the individual behaved prior to the changes, and who therefore has a point of comparison.

Individual and cultural context

Varying circumstances of each individual's situation, and specificities of local cultures, lend flexibility to the connotation of each observable indicator. The significance of a given indicator can fluctuate depending on the **circumstances**. As such, cultural idiosyncrasies need to be accounted for in determining whether an observable indicator is likely to represent radicalisation.

2. Crucial elements in identifying/evaluating an individual's process of radicalisation

Personal identification is the big picture to monitor when it comes to detecting the process of radicalisation

Change in identification is recognised as a core element of the process of violent radicalisation that underpins all other observable changes. This supports the notion from Work Package 3.1 that interventions addressing an individual's identity are perceived to be more effective than those that do not.

As a person radicalises, their priorities change. Several observable indicators mentioned involved an individual immersing themself in a cause or becoming fixated on a certain cause and/or person symbolizing a cause. That fixation may then lead to dissociating with society, or part of society, and re-association with a new network related to that cause.

Internal vs. external observable indicators can reveal clues about a person's point in the process of radicalisation

Observable indicators of radicalisation can be categorised into **internal or external indicators**. Internal indicators are defined as those relating to emotions and viewpoints, whereas external indicators are qualified as those relating to relationships, physical attributes, or behaviour and activities. The participants said that internal indicators constitute a sign of vulnerability, which makes an individual susceptible to ideological and political change in an effort to reconcile their actual and desired emotional states. External indicators, meanwhile, show that radicalisation is underway. Amongst external indicators, activities are considered to symbolise a radicalised individual, while changes in physical appearance, behaviour and relationships may be recognised as developing stages of the process of radicalisation.

3. *The presence of a sole observable indicator does not validate intervention – with one exception*

The element of change with regard to these indicators, and also a **combination of indicators**, is what signifies possible radicalisation. Each indicator individually is not necessarily an indication of radicalisation or intentions to commit extremist violence. Rather, each indicator is a signal that a given person may be in the process of radicalisation, which can only be clarified by considering other surrounding factors.

However, participating front-line workers identified **associating with a charismatic radical figure as an observable indicator that always warrants intervention**.

Furthermore, it was also acknowledged by participants that **not every indicator necessitates intervention**. While the use of observable indicators is constructive and helpful, it can also lead to generalization and stereotyping if misused. Due to the freedoms guaranteed by democratic societies and to practical limitations, it is neither desirable nor achievable to intervene with every detected indicator of possible radicalisation

4. *Establishing trust enhances the effectiveness of counter-radicalisation efforts to prevent violence*

Participating front-line workers repeatedly emphasised the positive impact of building trust with intervention participants in efforts to prevent, halt and reverse violent radicalisation. Many of them said building trust is an essential component of their intervention. Additionally, an analysis of perceived effectiveness of interventions as a function of level of intervention and type of intervention practitioner shows that interventions carried out by former extremists are perceived to be more successful than interventions carried out by others, especially with regard to restorative interventions.

Twenty-one indicators were identified and are divided into five categories: Self-identification, Us vs. Them Societal View, Social Interaction, Persona, and Association. **Self-identification** indicators refer to the way individuals define their own character; **Us vs. Them Societal View** indicators refer to situations in which individuals see

society as a whole as an opposition to which they cannot relate; **Social Interaction** indicators refer to the way individuals interact with society; **Persona** indicators refer to individuals' personality and expression of emotion; **Association** indicators refer to individuals' relationships with, or representation of their connection to, radical groups.

5. The identified observable indicators

The following is a list of observable indicators of possible radicalisation as identified by the domain experts.

A. Self-identification
   1. Naming New Ideological Leaders/Role Models
   2. Lingering Concern with Questions of Meaning and Identity
   3. Concentrated Self-image
   4. Very Strong Devotion to a Particular Change
   5. Newfound Patriotism

B. Us vs. Them Societal View
   6. Seeing Society and Government as the Enemy
   7. Expressed Feelings of Disconnection
   8. Change in Personal Narrative

C. Social Interaction
   9. Disconnecting from Former Community
   10. Initiating Personal Violence
   11. Forcing Customs on Others
   12. Untouchable Demeanour
   13. Dependence on Communication Technology

D. Persona
   14. Change in Personality
   15. Particular Emotional Expressions

E. Association
   16. Associating with Extremist Groups
   17. Word Choice
   18. Change in Physical Appearance and/or Attire
   19. Internet Identity
   20. Training Travel

D. Conclusion

Implications for counter-radicalisation practice

Moving forward in community counter-radicalisation efforts, front-line workers can use the information described here as a source of professional information sharing to increase their insight into the practical approach to the radicalisation process. The

division of the observable indicators into categories provides front-line workers with the resources to build their knowledge, hone their capabilities, and increase their effectiveness by being able to consider each person's individuality and context into their counter-radicalisation efforts.

Understanding the importance of change in identifying possible radicalisation is crucial to the just and effective practice of counter-radicalisation efforts. Change in the prevalence or frequency of a particular behaviour is what makes an observation noteworthy – not the mere presence of an indicator. This notion should inform and guide practice in order to ensure that individuals' freedoms of thought and expression are maintained, and so that front-line workers do not focus on a singular social or ideological group.

Most of the observable indicators collected in this work package were mentioned by more than one type of front-line worker, and so are not exclusively associated with one type of radicalisation. Any person has the potential to radicalise toward violent extremism, and any kind of counter-radicalisation professional can integrate the information from this report into their practices.

Due to the fact that each front-line worker cannot logically be expected to immediately have contextual background information needed to make a sound judgment on the state of every individual in the process of radicalisation, observable indicators of radicalisation such as the ones catalogued in our work can serve as a constructive tool with which they can initiate their evaluation of a given situation. Front-line workers can use these observable indicators to monitor possible radicalisation without discriminately categorizing individuals.

Implications for counter-radicalisation policy

Governments can take several key points form this work package to incorporate into their national policies. To translate the importance of change in the prevalence or frequency of observable indicators, governments can invest in initiatives and/or training programmes that focus on identifying *changes* in behaviour rather than identifying the mere existence of behaviour. Policy and practice should reflect the notion that a given observable indicator does not necessarily signify radical or violent intentions. Furthermore, policy and practice should reflect the fact that radicalism does not equate to terrorism.

It is also important for public entities and policy makers to take note of the fact that observable indicators can span across societal groups. This overview of observable indicators of possible radicalisation can inform public personnel related to counter-radicalisation efforts about different observable indicators and how to properly and fairly apply them to their work – namely with a focus on the non-linear understanding of the process of radicalisation, emphasizing that observable indicator A does not necessarily lead to action B, and so to consider the context of the individual.

This overview further gives policy makers guidelines with which to proceed with regard to relevant observable indicators. If policy makers did not acknowledge certain

observable indicators, or if they include many more indicators in their policy, that may be cause for re-evaluation.

Implications for counter-radicalisation research

Participating front-line workers emphasised the notion that the research community lacks sufficient knowledge of, and attention given to, the cognitive approach to radicalisation. Furthermore, they note that the psychological and pedagogical ways of responding to radicalisation should be given more attention as well.

They further acknowledged the connection between radicalisation and hooliganism, and between radicalisation and criminal gangs, on which future research could focus. The findings of research comparing and contrasting the processes and contexts of radicalisation, hooliganism, gang involvement, along with the violence that is a possible outcome of all three associations, could then contribute to further development of intervention strategies.