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“CULTURE OF PEACE: SOFT POWER FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM”

Report of the study session held by
Youth Peace Ambassadors Network

In cooperation with the
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest

24-29 June 2019

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study session “Culture of Peace: Soft Power for Countering Violent Radicalisation and Extremism among Youth in Europe” was organized by Youth Peace Ambassadors Network in cooperation with Youth Department of the Council of Europe on 24-29 June 2019 in European Youth Centre Budapest.

The study session brought together 35 participants from 24 countries in order to empower people working with youth as well as youth themselves to support the transformation of societies and be able to address violent radicalisation and extremism among young people, by analysing local realities, exchanging practices and promoting a culture of peace.

The study session enhanced the capacity of the peacebuilding activists to counter radicalisation and extremism, provided participants with tools and approaches to addressing violent radicalisation and violent extremism, which they can apply in their local realities back home, facilitated collaboration among the participants to create materials and tools on the spot (i.e. video, infographic, workshop outlines, recommendations), provided space for the participants to develop new projects to be implemented back home.

The outcomes of the study session are:

- developed by the participants youth friendly recommendations “Tools to empower young people as agents of change in countering violent extremism and radicalisation”,
- developed by the participants practical tools which can be used by youth workers in their activities with young people on countering violent radicalisation and violent extremism,
- video to welcome the Council of Europe new Secretary General, and
- the infographic on countering violent radicalisation.

II. INTRODUCTION

The report includes a general overview of the study session, its programme, main outcomes and conclusions of the study sessions, information about follow-up activities and materials developed by the participants of the study session.

The study session is focused on tackling countering violent radicalisation and extremism among youth through promotion of culture of peace.

Study Session Background

This study session falls within Youth Peace Ambassadors Network’s long-term strategic priorities to support young people with knowledge, skills, time, resources and space to become agents of change and peacebuilders with tools for active citizenship. To effectively commit to countering all kinds of extremisms (like violence against migrants, and lack of integration, stigmatisation of migrant groups, social divisions etc.), it is crucial to invest more in prevention measures targeting young people, while including them in shaping of such measures as well as shaping their local contexts.

Empowering young refugees, migrants, young people, especially youth workers from hosting communities in engaging in dialogue, could have an impact on creating space for reconciliation and conflict transformation through building trust between conflict affected and divided communities.

Within the study session it was highly important to gather youth from EU and non-EU countries to facilitate a discussion on: how to analyse the current situation in Europe; to map the reasons and consequences of growing radicalisation among young people, explore and devise useful tools, share and exchange existing practices in preventing this phenomenon; to work out possible solutions, directions of work and plan of actions both on the international and in the local level. Cooperation and work toward mutual values of peace and stability will pave the way for long-term change and without the participation of young people, the protection of youth is not as certain.

Our understanding of peace is based on the approach that peace is more than the absence of war. Peace is also building inclusive societies, and comprehensive human rights education is one of the tools to tackle radicalisation. We strongly believe that the dual challenge facing migrants/refugees and host communities leads to conflict in our communities and even feeds radicalisation and extremism among young people. We recognise a lack of an effective system in place that could improve building dialogue among sides of the conflict and living in the absence of prejudice, stigmatisation and racism towards refugees/migrants (the “newcomers”). Thus, we see the need of young people to respond to the current situation and to help support the integration processes of newcomers because radical and extreme movements are not issues which are created by migrants/refugees.

Members of our Network are equipped in knowledge on how peacebuilding actions could become effective and they are experienced in a wide range of forms of activism, with experience in building inclusive societies by organising actions at the local, regional and international level. The Network has organised previous international projects

involving youth workers, migrants and IDPs. The combination of the experience in organising peacebuilding activities and the partner organisations’ expertise in work with refugees, IDPs and migrants, on the one hand created space to map the needs and deconstruct the positions of both sides. On the other hand, it created a safe space for sharing and learning new methods of peacebuilding that fosters dialogue and mutual understanding, and counter radicalisation and extremism among young people.

The aims and objectives

The aim of the study session:

to empower people working with youth as well as youth themselves to support the transformation of societies and be able to address violent radicalisation and extremism among young people, by analysing local realities, exchanging practices and promoting a culture of peace.

The objectives:

- To develop a common understanding of notions related to violent radicalisation and extremism;
- To promote the inclusion and participation of youth in shaping lasting peace by raising awareness about legal instruments such as UNSCR 2250;
- To promote the use of counter narratives to hate speech as a tool to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism;
- To bring together people working with youth as well as youth themselves to map and analyse the situation and causes of violent radicalisation and extremism among youth in Europe;
- To empower youth as key actors for peace and promoters of culture of peace through exploring youth-friendly tools in the field of peacebuilding and migration;
- To foster and improve transnational cooperation among people working with youth as well as youth themselves through the exchange of good practices in the area of counteracting violent radicalisation and extremism;
- To increase the competence of people working with youth as well as youth themselves in recognising and contributing to mitigation of violent radicalisation and extremism;
- To empower participants to become multipliers contributing to the transformation of a more peaceful and inclusive society by means of youth work.

The key issues which were discussed during the study session were:

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- Countering extremism and counter-radicalisation: understanding, analysing and identifying potential actions;
- Media literacy, alternative and counter-narratives to hate speech;
- The role of youth work and peace activism in countering violent radicalisation and extremism;
- Legal instrument supporting UN Security Council Resolution 2250;
- The role of the Council of Europe.



The participants

The study session brought together 35 young people from across Europe (see list of participants), who are involved in youth work connected to peace-building, conflict transformation or human rights. We have received 183 applications so it was very difficult to select the participants. YPAN made sure to include the participants with different backgrounds.

The group was quite diverse, both regarding background and level of knowledge, which contributed to deep peer learning and interesting discussions and activities.

Many of the participants were coming from areas directly affected by conflicts, have a migrant background or/and identify with minority groups. Gender balance was respected, and the team of the study session ensured that all participants are listened to.

The profile of the participants was: youth workers, youth leaders, peacebuilders, actively involved in the development of culture of peace, youth empowerment, capacity building activities; participants protecting youth from radicalisation and extremism; participants who work to ensure integration and social inclusion – directly or indirectly; representatives of grassroots organisations working on this topic, but also representatives from academia and police forces.

Presentation of the organisers

About Youth Peace Ambassadors Network:

The Youth Peace Ambassadors Network (YPAN) is an informal network of 71 young peacebuilders across Europe who works with and in conflict affected communities. The YPAN was developed from the Council of Europe ‘Youth Peace Ambassadors’ project. The project itself was proposed by the Advisory Council on Youth and endorsed by the Joint Council on Youth of the Council of Europe in 2010 and lasted from April 2011 until December 2013.

The mission of YPAN is to develop a culture of peace by empowering young people, promoting human rights, dignity, equality and respect for diversity through education, advocacy and other non-violent actions. The YPAN brings together 57 young people from 26 countries of the Council of Europe. Members of the Network are involved in work with and for young people within different structures: organizations, institutions, informal groups. Therefore, in the peace-building activities, the Network has a big support from youth organizations all over Europe.

More information can be found:

<https://ypa.network/>

<http://ypbm.es/ypan/>

<http://www.coe.int/web/youth-peace-dialogue/youth-peace-ambassadors>

<https://www.facebook.com/YouthPeaceAmbassadorsNetwork>

The link between the session’s theme and the Council of Europe

The study session had direct link to the Council of Europe work and Youth sector priority to support the building of the Peaceful and Inclusive Societies.

Also, the study session connected media literacy and the lessons learnt from the No Hate Speech Movement and linked it with countering extremism.

We need to highlight that the whole flow of the study session was based on documents provided by the Council of Europe, i.e. “Compass 2015 version”, “Have Your Say!”, “Bookmarks”, “Conflict Transformation T-kit” and “We CAN!”

In the programme a special session was dedicated to the Council of Europe work and its activities. During the session the participants could explore the work of the Youth Department, European Youth Foundation, documents and instruments of the Council of

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Europe in regard to CVE/CVR and specific projects of Youth Department such as Youth Peace Camp and Youth Peace Ambassadors Project. Participants were very positive regarding the flow of the session – very participatory, as well as regarding the outcomes.

Additionally, there was a simulation game to explore the work of the Joint Council on Youth and its recommendation on Refugee transition into adulthood.

III. CONTENT OF THE STUDY SESSION

Within this section, we outline the description of the programme, the methodology of the study session, and its main highlights.

Description of the programme

The main building blocks of the programme of the study sessions were three:

- I) Introduction to the group and to the themes of the study session;
- II) Counteracting violent extremism and radicalisation with youth work, human rights education and peace education;
- III) From knowledge and skills to practice. Focusing on actions on short and long term, including follow up activities.
- IV) Introduction to the group and to the themes of the study session (Day 1 and Day 2).

During the first day, participants were introduced to the study session and to each other through a teambuilding activity. Participants discussed the main concepts of the study session (e.g. radicalisation, extremism, social cohesion, culture of peace).

On the second day, participants started to delve deeper into the subjects of violent extremism and radicalisation. They got to know one possible model to recognise different steps of warning behaviour, the Behaviour Barometer. Participants were prompted to map their local realities and analyse root causes of violent extremism, including push and pull factors.

II) Counteracting violent extremism and radicalisation with youth work, human rights education and peace education (Day 3, Day 4, Day 5).

The third day started by discussing the role of youth work in building peaceful and inclusive societies, by building the understanding of the participants' role in addressing radicalisation and violent extremism. Participants learnt about the UNSCR 2250 and the Council of Europe, including Council of Europe Youth Department, European Youth Foundation, Youth Peace Ambassadors Network, Youth Peace Camp, and documents/tools created by Council of Europe regarding the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. Finally, participants had an open space session, in which participants offered to lead three different sessions.

In the fourth day, participants were given three parallel options for workshops: a live simulation on the Council of Europe co-management system, human rights education workshop, and a workshop on youth participation. These parallel workshops were followed by the expert input of Mimoun Berrissoun from the organisation 180 Degrees and Extremely Together (Kofi Annan Foundation). The expert provided an overview of the work done by his organisation and examples of working on the grassroots level on preventing violent extremism and radicalisation.

In the afternoon, participants had free time and a joint dinner in a Hungarian cooperative.

In the fifth day, participants had in the morning an expert input from Ron Salaj, freelance trainer and member of the Youth Peace Ambassadors Network. The expert lead a half-day workshop on Understanding narratives: communication, media, signs, and languages, which included a theoretical input and a practical session using the Council of Europe’s WE Can! Manual.

III) From knowledge and skills to practice. Focusing on actions on short and long term, including follow up activities (Day 5, Day 6).

The second part of the fifth day is when the programme of the study session moved to the implementation phase, with a session on incubator of tools and approaches. Participants were asked to join one of three working groups. The first one was on creating space to work on instant actions; the second one on practical tools to be used working with young people; the third group worked on drafting youth-friendly guidelines for preventing violent extremism and radicalisation. Moments to collect feedback on the working group progress were ensured in between sessions.

During the last day, participants had time to finalise the work from their working groups from the fifth day, including presentations of the final results and a group revision of the guidelines from the third working group. In the afternoon, participants worked on the next steps after the study sessions in the follow-up session. The last activity of the programme was the evaluation and a closing session.

Methodology

The team of trainers from Youth Peace Ambassadors Network designed and implemented the study session using the principles and values from Non-Formal Education. These principles were introduced to participants on Day 1. The study session included a range of typical non-formal education methods and activities, including, but not limited to, working groups, role-playing games, plenary and small group discussions, simulations.

In order to ensure that the programme was tailored to participants’ needs, reflections groups were done at the end of every day. Each reflection group was facilitated by one of the trainers. During the evening’s team meetings, the main pointers from reflection groups were discussed and programmed revised, if regarded necessary.

Materials from the Council of Europe were used in the design and delivery of sessions, including the We CAN! Manual, Compass, and T-Kit 12 Youth Transforming conflict. Additionally, various resources from the Council of Europe were also used during the study session, such as recommendations on the topic of prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation.

Main highlights from the programme

The study session’s design and facilitation created a safe space for deep discussions and reflections on the sensitive and hot topic which is violent extremism and radicalisation.

An added value from the study session was as well a very diverse group of participants. Participants had a diverse background in terms of geographical origin and work expertise. A range of various stakeholders were represented, including NGOs, student associations, universities, police forces. This element was regarded as beneficial by many participants. An example on how this enriched the discussion was during the session on definitions of terms connected the study session (Day 1). Participants, in fact, highlighted how challenging certain definitions can be, especially with participants coming from very diverse backgrounds and experiences.

“You are wrong”

If defining terms was already difficult, pinpointing when behaviour can be considered extreme, or alarming, can be even more difficult. In sharing experiences from their field, participants became more aware of the process and stages of violent extremism and radicalisation thought a number of activities.

Such activities were regarded as challenging, but rewarding, from participants. The importance of youth work came up, as one participant expressed: “This makes us reflect on how a small type of behaviour, if we are careful about it, can avoid a much more troublesome behaviour in a later stage.”

But what it is extremism? Any of us can become radical, and being radical does not mean necessary in a negative way, as emphasised by one of the experts invited, Mimoun Berrissoun. In his session, he stresses the importance of inward and outward bias, the relevance of hate speech and introduced the concept of “Group-focused enmity”, the hatred and hostility and violent actions towards a different group. His session spoke directly to some issues which were already underlined by participants in previous sessions, such as identity crisis, “patriotic” but alarming behaviours and a romanticised view of an ideology –including other push and pull factors.

The importance of dialogue was also key in discussions, and how activists can also get radicalised. How often we can hear activists saying to someone “you should not behave like this”. One of the experts shared a similar experience: when working with former radicalised people, one of their triggers was being told “You are wrong”.

Us VS Them

Context matters. In the second day of the study session, participants were asked to map their local communities. Most participants found the activity insightful, as it had twofold objectives: to make them learn about other realities, and as well give an opportunity to reflect on their own communities. In particular, participants appreciated the chance to observe and reflect upon commonly mentioned factors of radicalisation. One highlight from the participant, whom had to draw their communities, was the fact that also the online sphere acts in the radicalisation process.

Exploring different realities and different push and pull factors in the radicalisation process, participants reflected on how communications and language can contribute to the division on “us versus them”. This topic was the focus of the session from another invited expert, Ron Salaj. In discussing populism, the media and narrative, many of his quotes struck our participants, such as:

“Today a country belongs to the person who controls communications. (...) Communication has been transformed into heavy industry. Restore a critical dimension to passive reception” (Umberto Eco, 1973)

He connected the topic to our daily realities, explaining how the constant stress of being exposed to notifications creates an emotional and mental stress which is multiplied by many channels (i.e. social media, tv, radio..). As mentioned previously, this is an important factor as media can be influenced by a number of actors, as internet trolls, gamergaters, hate groups and ideologues (including Alt right, the manosphere: men’s rights group), influencers, etc.

Participants used their newly acquired learning or communications and narratives (including counter and alternative narratives) in an activity inspired from WE Can! Manual. In this activity, participants had to use steps from the first pillar of the manual to analyse instances of hate speech or viral videos or messages.

Even if they were not asked during the activity to present ideas for counter or alternative narratives, participants were proposing their thoughts on campaigning – showing their enthusiasm and willingness to act.

IV. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Growing network

As a result of the study session YPAN will be able to take on up to 36 new members as the youth peace ambassadors and grow its network.

2. Mainstreaming Council of Europe's work

Study session informed the activists on the work of the Council of Europe in human rights and counter-radicalisation; it also provided hands-on simulation to experience the co-management system of the Youth Department. Such activities have allowed to showcase how Council of Europe's values fit with youth work and actions carried out at the grassroots level by the participants.

3. Identified Challenges to counter violent extremism

Challenges that young people working with other young people in the process of combating extremism and radicalization have been identified as the following:

- Lack of youth awareness and accessibility in CVE, especially in rural areas;
- Existence of stereotypes / prejudices / narratives / radicalized media against target groups based on perceived cultural differences;
- Relative lack of legal norms;
- Deficiency of peace-building learning in the educational system;
- Lack of non-formal education (preparation and tools) adapted to different context;
- Lack of intergenerational dialogue regarding human rights and community values;
- Lack of funding youth programs and initiatives working on CVE;
- Lack of partnerships between governmental, non-governmental organisations and youth organisations.

4. Recommendations for the Council of Europe and Youth Organisations

Based on the identified challenges, study session participants discussed how governments and civic society could most effectively build a culture of peace. The participants recommend policy makers, youth workers and organisations to consider the following:

- 1) Increasing the interaction between governmental, non-governmental and youth organizations through a platform that includes NGOs working together on countering violent extremism.

- 2) Create an online platform that gathers different NGOs that work in the field of countering radicalization and extremism to share tools and practices that can achieve a common goal.
- 3) Empowerment of formal and non-formal educational system in the field of creating a culture of peace and peace-building among young generations by educational proposals in schools and civil societies.
- 4) Developing a Manual for youth workers in countering violent extremism and radicalization by consulting different stakeholders with specific expertise in youth in different regions
 - Developing a manual for workshops online addressing CVE
 - Dissemination sessions for teachers in schools especially in rural areas.
- 5) Supporting peace-building media:
 - Create a campaign promoting actions and tools for countering violent extremism and radicalization;
 - Creating more initiatives on countering hate speech among youth;
 - Ads for promoting CVE on public transportations and boards;
 - Crisis communication skills in media;
 - Awareness campaigns on social media and internet data flow;
 - Awareness campaigns for the importance of volunteering working on CVE.
- 6) Providing more specific legislative framework for fighting radicalization among youth.
- 7) Increasing the funding of youth projects in the field of capacity and peace-building.
- 8) Approaching youth from rural areas and villages with more opportunities for CVE.
- 9) Increase volunteering capacity in youth organizations.
- 10) Approaching / including minorities and vulnerable groups with targeted and accessible youth opportunities.

In addition, study session participants have identified different types of actions, tools and methods to support peace-building, reconciliation and a culture of peace, in order to fight against violent extremism and radicalization among youth. Three key tools based on their effectiveness have been identified: 1) Theater (forum, legislative, invisible, image); 2) Living/human libraries; 3) Study visits.

5. Visuals

An infographic to address Extremism and Islamophobia was created by the participants together with the video to congratulate the new Secretary General of the Council of Europe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZKg0sHAzDU>.

VI. FOLLOW-UP FORESEEN BY THE YPAN

The study session was designed in a way that allowed participants to use the acquired knowledge and experience gained at sessions for their personal development, as well as follow-up activities in their realities. In the last two days, four sessions were focusing on incubating tools and approaches and developing follow-up activities and methods. According to their personal and organisational interests and to their context, participants could choose between three action groups: instant action, practical tools or developing youth friendly guidelines on countering violent radicalisation.

For all the sub-groups, participants were given more than 3 sessions to work on deliverable concrete material and outcomes, around 4 hours in total.

Practical tools

Participants developed non-formal education activities on youth countering violent radicalisation and violent extremism. In total, three activities were created. One is a simulation highlighting the strong influence of the media, and especially of fake news on radicalisation processes; the second one helps understanding and recognising violent radicalisation through case study cases and with the barometer tool; the next one, “Flower power”, is inspired from an activity from Compass and adapted to violent radicalisation and extremism. The practical tools can be found in the **Appendices**.

Recommendation

Another group of participants worked on youth-friendly guidelines for countering violent radicalisation and extremism. These guidelines can be shared among network, but also with the Council of Europe and the youth centres. They can be found in the **Appendices**.

Instant actions

The last group of participants worked on a video to welcome the new CoE secretary general and to highlight the important work of the youth and of the European Youth Centres.

They also worked on an infographic aiming to raise awareness about violent radicalisation and extremism.

Action Plans

After participants worked on these tools, activities and concrete outputs, they also developed dissemination plans adapted to their local contexts. How are they going to share and disseminate these materials? How will they use the newly-created activities in their local contexts?

Thanks to the Facebook group and WhatsApp chat created during the Study Session, participants also continue to share opportunities, materials and interesting events. They can also update each other on the projects they are implementing.

YPAN follow-up

The team of trainers is available to continue supporting participants in any local implementation.

Two participants mentioned they would like to join the network.

This Study Session is the very first study session implemented with the Council of Europe on countering violent radicalisation and extremism among young people; it is also the first time that YPAN is working on this specific topic. The process was evaluated very beneficial to the participants, to the CoE, and to the network.

VII. APPENDICES

List of Participants

Nr.	Last name	First name	Country	Name of organisation
1	Samadov	Bahruz	Azerbaijan	NIDA Civic Movement
2	Jugović	Damjan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	IOM BHRI
3	Ennara	Islam Mohammed Mohammed Elhasanin	Romania	GEYC
4	Gourlomatiss	Dimitrios	Greece	Greek Police
5	Tsiklauri	Taia	Georgia	
6	Aiba	Astanda	Abkhazia	IQan
7	Eloy	Haris	Sweden	RFSL UNGDOM
8	Khalil	Mustafa	Portugal	Global Platform for Syrian Students
9	Ahmed	Omer Ali Ahmed	Italy	
10	Tappi	Adrià	Andorra	Andorran Youth Forum
11	Petriashvili	Temuri	Georgia	ISIE
12	Giorgi	Jashiashvili	Georgia	Active youth Union

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13	Raccagni	Sara	Italy	ADL a Zavidovici Onlus
14	Babanoski	Kire	North Macedonia	MIT University - Skopje and IMPETUS Center for Internet, Development and Good Governance
15	Gramov	Kristijan	North Macedonia	Red Cross of Macedonia
16	Hamzali	Eldar	Azerbaijan	
17	Sadiku	Flutura	Kosovo*	Youth Council of U.S. Embassy in Kosovo
18	Falhan	Leyla	Belgium	
19	Markezini	Chrysoula-Valentini	Greece	
20	Goktepe	Feyza	The Netherlands	Maastricht University
21	Gorokhova	Tetiana	Ukraine	Priazovskiy State Technical University
22	Bayram	Alperen	Turkey	Karaman Youth Club NGO
23	Çakaloz	Zeynep	Turkey	Youth for Understanding Turkey
24	Grouta	Evie	Cyprus	Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR)
25	Ton	Chau	Switzerland	Youth Peace Ambassadors Network
26	Derunets	Nataliia	Ukraine	Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics

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27	Chkadua	Lana	Abkhazia	Women Fund for Development
28	Obbie	Afri	Netherlands	Unity in Diversity / Institute of Social studies of Erasmus University
29	Tariq	Jarrad	Portugal	Encompass Trust
30	Bazaiti	Ledio	Albania	Albanian Education Foundation(Fondacioni Arsivor Shqiptar)
31	Gelgoev	Bekkhan	Russian Federation	Youth For the Future
32	Zizolli	Matilda	Albania	International Voluntary Projects(Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare)/ Tirana Municipality
33	Demchenko	Marharyta	Ukraine	NGO Severodonetsk Youth Council
34	Prokhorenko	Katerina	Republic of Belarus	Human Constanta
35	Mkrtchyan	Larisa	Armenia	Rondine Cittadella della Pace
36	Mancigotti (Team)	Cristina	The Netherlands	Youth Peace Ambassadors Network
37	Cucurella (Team)	Marie	Germany	Youth Peace Ambassadors Network
38	Ielfimova (Team)	Yuliya	Ukraine	Youth Peace Ambassadors Network
39	Neringa (Team)	Tumenaite	Lithuania	

Final Programme

23 June 2019, Sunday

	Arrivals
19:00	Dinner
20:00	Welcome evening

24 June 2019, Monday

08:00	Breakfast
9:15	Official opening Introducing the programme, creating the working space (aims and objectives, expectations, contributions)
11:00	Break
11:30	Teambuilding
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Defining terms: Having a common understanding of terms
16:00	Break
16:30	Introducing Culture of Peace
18:00	Reflection groups
19:00	Dinner
20:30	Favourites Night

25 June 2019, Tuesday

08:00	Breakfast
09:15	Recognizing violent radicalization
11:00	Break
11:30	Mapping Local realities
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Analysing root causes of violent extremism
16:00	Break
16:30	Push, pull and Personal factors of violent radicalization
18:00	Reflection groups
19:00	Dinner
20:30	Affiliation Bazaar

26 June 2019, Wednesday

08:00	Breakfast
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09:15	Role of youth work in building peaceful and inclusive societies
11:00	Break
11:30	Exploring legal instruments and local implementation of UN 2250
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Introduction of the Council of Europe: documents, activities with a specific focus on counteracting of violent radicalization and extremism
16:00	Break
16:30	Sharing and mapping good practices to address violent radicalization and extremism
18:00	Reflection groups
19:00	Dinner

27 June 2019, Thursday

08:00	Breakfast
09:15	Exploring Concrete Tools to Address violent radicalisation
11:00	Break
11:30	Example of Localisation of Peace Activism
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Free Afternoon
19:00	Dinner in the city

28 June 2019, Friday

08:00	Breakfast
09:15	Counter narratives to hate speech
11:00	Break
11:30	Real life cases of addressing violent radicalization
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Incubator of tools and approaches on counteracting violent extremism I
16:00	Break
16:30	Incubator of tools and approaches on counteracting violent extremism II
18:00	Reflection groups
19:00	Dinner

29 June 2019, Saturday

08:00	Breakfast
09:15	Finalization of drafting youth-friendly guidelines on counteracting violent extremism

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11:00	Break
11:30	Follow up: Multiplying outcomes on individual and peer level
13:00	Lunch
14:30	Follow up: Multiplying outcomes on organizational
16:00	Break
16:30	Study Session Evaluation
18:00	Closing of the Study Session
19:00	Dinner

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tools to empower young people as agents of change in countering violent extremism and radicalisation



Culture of Peace: Soft Power
for Countering Violent
Radicalisation and Extremism
among Youth in Europe

23-30 June 2019



INTRODUCTION

Youth has a main role in the development of societies and building a culture of peace, while facing any threats of violent radicalization and extremism.

To clarify what these threats mean:

Radicalization is a social and psychological procedure of dedication to ideologies or ideas (political, religious, social, etc.) in extreme way by supporting them with further actions.

Extremism is the state of being extreme in measures, believes or views, which is directly related to radicalization.

We, the young people are particularly targeted in this process of radicalization and extremism, therefore we are united in sharing our need of tackling these challenges and behaviours for a peaceful and hopeful future.

These guidelines are designed by the youth as an outcome of Culture of Peace Study Session organized by Youth Peace Ambassadors Network and supported by the

Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre in Budapest as a tool to share our good practises for countering radicalization and extremism among young people.

CHALLENGES

Challenges that young people working with other young people in the process of combating extremism and radicalization are:

- Lack of youth awareness and accessibility in CVE, especially in rural areas;
- Existence of stereotypes / prejudices / narratives / radicalized media against target groups based on perceived cultural differences;
- Relative lack of legal norms;
- Deficiency of peace-building learning in the educational system;
- Lack of non-formal education (preparation and tools) adapted to different context;
- Lack of intergenerational dialogue regarding human rights and community values;
- Lack of funding youth programs and initiatives working on CVE;
- Lack of partnerships between governmental, non governmental organizations and youth organizations.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We recommend youth workers in organizations to consider the following:

1. Increasing the interaction between governmental, non-governmental and youth organizations through a platform that includes NGOs working together on countering violent extremism.
2. We encourage youth workers to create an online platform that gathers different NGOs that work in the field of countering radicalization and extremism to share tools and practices that can achieve a common goal.
3. Empowerment of formal and non-formal educational system in the field of creating a culture of peace and peace-building among young generations by educational proposals in schools and civil societies.
4. Developing a Manual for youth workers in countering violent extremism and radicalization by consulting different stakeholders with specific expertise in youth in different regions
 - Developing a manual for workshops online addressing CVE
 - Dissemination sessions for teachers in schools especially at rural areas.
5. Supporting peace-building media.
 - Create a campaign promoting actions and tools for countering violent extremism and radicalization
 - Creating more initiatives on countering hate speech among youth

- Ads for promoting CVE on public transportations and boards
 - Crisis communication skills in media
 - Awareness campaigns on social media and internet data flow
 - Awareness campaigns for the importance of volunteering working on CVE.
6. Supporting peace-building media.
 7. Providing more specific legislative framework for fighting radicalization among youth.
 8. Increasing the funding of youth projects in the field of capacity and peace-building.
 9. Approaching youth from rural areas and villages with more opportunities for CVE.
 10. Increase volunteering capacity in youth organizations.
 11. Approaching / including minorities and vulnerable groups with targeted and accessible youth opportunities.

ACTIONS, TOOLS AND METHODS

We recommend youth workers to create and use different types of actions, tools and methods to support peace-building, reconciliation and culture of peace, in order to fight against violent extremism and radicalization among youth. We would like to draw your attention to the best practises to address countering radicalisation:

- Theatre (forum, legislative, invisible, image...),
- Living/human libraries,
- Study visits.

In addition, the following should be considered as effective tools:

- Non-formal educational activities:
 - Workshops, Trainings, Study sessions, Seminars,
 - Scenarios (role-playing games, simulation games...),
 - Analysis events and examples from real life (case studies),
 - Association games, Brainstorming sessions,
 - Work in small groups, Fish-bowl, World cafe,
 - Round tables, Debates,
- Conferences, Forums, Symposiums,
- Youth democratic participation,
- Youth exchanges,
- Peace camps,

- Incubators,
- Human rights awareness campaigns,
- Intercultural dialogue,
- Online games/quizzes,
- Artistic events (music festival, photo-contests, art, short movies, documentaries, theatre...),
- Storytelling,
- Surveys and Researches (interviews, focus groups...),
- Developing Manuals/Handbooks,
- Using comics, Paper animations.

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**“CULTURE OF PEACE: SOFT POWER FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM” –
YPAN STUDY SESSION 2019**

Infographic

'AHA!' MOMENTS

Study Session Culture of Peace: Soft power for countering violent radicalisation and extremism among young people in Europe

45%

of those arrested for terrorist offences in the European Union in 2017 were between 20-30 years old*

*European Union terrorism situation and trend report 2018





Not sure how extreme you are?

Check the behaviour barometer!

<https://bit.ly/2jEQ9y3>

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Understanding		Think critically
map push and pull factors		empower marginalised groups
communities	Action	empower youth
Analyse stereotypes	Inclusion of minorities	
Provide alternative and counter narratives to fake news		'We' instead of 'Us and Them'

PREFER SOMETHING INSTANT?




For example...
 To treat:
 - Blind intolerance
 - Irrational Fear of Muslims
 Try Islamophobin!

*Side effects: May result to peaceful coexistence

Before
After

FOR LONG TERM RESULTS, GET INVOLVED



Visit <https://ypa.network/>

**“CULTURE OF PEACE: SOFT POWER FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM” –
YPAN STUDY SESSION 2019**

Practical Tools

Activity 1: Human Rights Education at Schools

Themes: Human Rights

Advocacy

Youth Participation

Extremism and Radicalization

Objectives: Explore the General Idea & Concept of Human Rights

Improve participants knowledge on Human Right Advocacy

Develop skills to review information critically and relate it to everyday life

Stimulate feelings of responsibility, solidarity, justice and equality

Promotion of Human Rights and Advocacy

Foster Active Citizenship and Democracy

Target Group: Youth from 14-18 years old - schoolchildren

Time Frame: 80 minutes

Instructions:

Part 1: Small Intro Part and Ice Breaking Phase

Brainstorming, collecting Ideas and small discussion. Posing a question about which are the needs that are fulfilled to make them feel happy and complete. (10mins)

Part 2: Divide the participants into groups of 5-6 people. Participants will be asked to discuss and draw a group flower with 8 petals, which size will differ according to the importance of the need presented by. The petals will present the following themes: Basic needs, Personal Security, Financial Security, Health, Friendship, Family, Esteem, Personal Fulfilment.

Each group presents its flower on the wall. The following questions are being posed to the groups.

1. Do you think if there is a way of securing the needs which the flower is representing?
2. Which is the link between the petals and Human Rights? Why is it important?
3. What do the words “Human Rights” mean to you?

After the discussion the facilitator will start ripping away some of the petals, starting from the smaller ones/the less important to them and ask the participants to reflect on their feelings every time one of their rights are being taken away. They can always present a willingness of undertaking any kind of action to claim and protect those rights (Expressed by Push Factor).

Debriefing and Evaluation:

To summarise and debrief the activity according to the following questions:

1. Was it hard to decide about the size of the petals? Are some Human Rights more important than others? For whom? When? In which conditions?
2. Are there other needs that are not represented by the petals?
3. Do you see any connection between the ripping of a petal and violent radicalisation?
4. What are the consequences of having damaged the petals?
5. Does the ripping a petal reminds you about a real/everyday situation from your life? Bring an example.
6. What is needed to protect the different petals? Which is the best way of action?
7. Did you enjoy the activity? Why? Why not?

Activity 2: “Four ears”

Theme: Reconciliation dialogue

Objectives:

Defining causes of radicalization

Preventing of youth radicalization

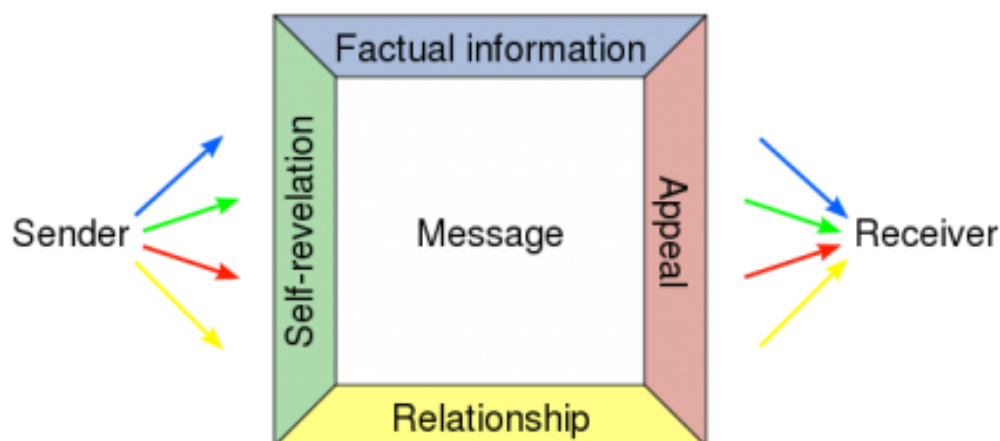
Understanding and interpreting and a message “strong ears”;

Target group: Youth workers, 20 people

Materials: flipchart, paper A4, stickers, markers, printed story about young people in radicalization (2 copies per group).

Instructions:

Before starting the exercise the trainer explains the four-ears-model Schultz von Thun.



The participants are divided into 5 groups per 4 people in each.

The trainer gives the story of radicalization.

Every participant in groups analyses the story using method «4-ears», paying attention only to emotions, facts, values or reasons. Ask the participants to choose one of the following roles and explain that they will be asked to share what they heard afterwards.

The groups work on the story for 30 minutes.

Then ask the participants to share what they heard. Avoid them just retelling the story and instead focus on giving just the information related to their role (either the facts, feelings, values or the purpose).

Debriefing:

1. Ask the group how they found listening at different levels. What was valuable about this process?
2. Are there different ways the story can be interpreted?
3. Reframing (reinterpreting stories or questions) is using different lenses to help people to move from a ‘point of view’ to ‘points of view’.

Story

Maysa, a teenager from Brussels, was a music fan and a ‘ray of sunshine’ at school. But an encounter on social media had changed her within a year.

“I was so nearly there, just hours from leaving. I was there in my head: in Syria, with Islamic State,” the 18-year-old says.

Maysa had been like many other teenagers – at least those in her neighbourhood on the outskirts of the Belgian capital. Her parents are observant Muslims with Moroccan roots, but far from rigorous. Her marks at school were good and she had lots of friends.

A year ago, that sunshine dimmed. First she donned a jilbab, the loose gown and headscarf worn by some devout or traditional Muslim women. There was no more dancing or singing – favourite pastimes before – and no more cigarettes either. There was no more music, whether her preferred American gangsta rap or anything else. Maysa had never drunk alcohol but went out with friends who did. That ended too.

“I look back and it is like a black hole,” she says.

The first approach came through social media. Maysa had initially adopted the jilbab to “hide some weight I’d put on” she says. When she posted a selfie wearing her new clothes on social media, she was contacted by another woman in her late teens. They chatted about her “new look” and agreed to go shopping together. Maysa was introduced to a group of young women from a similar background to her own.

First the conversation was about Islam, and the failures of many so-called Muslims. Then about politics, and the worldwide persecution of Muslims. Then finally about Isis, and life in the new “caliphate”, and how good life was there.

“They told me how there was no crime and no discrimination in the Islamic State. They spoke about the relations between men and women, and said that I would find a

good husband, even if I would be one of several of his wives. They spoke about fighting the unbelievers and heretics, but never mentioned any violence or executions or anything like that,” Maysa says.

Within weeks, her new friends provided Maysa with a cheap mobile phone with a prepaid sim card and told her to keep it a secret. “I now see I knew nothing about them, really. Just their first names. But I didn’t question it,” Maysa says.

Within weeks of meeting her new friends, Maysa’s schooling was suffering. Within months, she was in trouble for absenteeism. She added gloves and a full face veil to her long gown.

Then came word that a young man to whom Maysa had once been close had died in Syria. He had travelled to the conflict two years earlier with a group of teenagers from Brussels who all frequented the same martial arts club. The bad news was exploited by her new acquaintances. “You have to do your duty. You have to go to Syria,” Maysa was told.

She saw the “sisters” more and more. The pressure intensified.

“Everything we spoke about or [the literature] they showed me was straight from [Isis], or that’s what they said,” Maysa says. “I just got to the point where going [to Syria] was all I wanted to do. I believed what I heard. When afterwards I saw the videos of decapitations I cried.”

This week Brussels remains on high alert with a “serious and imminent” threat of terrorist attack. It is seven months since Maysa smashed the “secret” phone she had been given on the rails of the city’s metro. She has not heard from the former friends since and does not want to. Their threats may not have been realised, but she has not forgotten them.

Maysa now wears jeans, T-shirts and sweaters as before. The painted fingernails are back, and so are the cigarettes. A coloured scarf is wound around her head. She is studying again, but is restless. She wants to leave Brussels, Belgium, altogether and dreams of living and working in London, perhaps in the music industry.

On her mobile phone are pictures of a very different woman, fully veiled and flashing a “V for victory” sign.

“I was totally radicalised. I was not thinking my thoughts. I was not who I am,” she says.

Activity 3: The Reality Show

*“Welcome to the real world, it sucks, you will gonna love it”,
Monica Geller, Friends S01E01*

Theme: #hate_speech #media_manipulation #fake_news

Objectives:

1. Introduce Participants the concepts of hate speech, and media manipulation.
2. Increase the skills of conducting objective discussion.

Target Group: Youth new to the topic (16 - 20) years old.

Rules:

1. There is no contact between the two teams, the only way to communicate is through media Groups.
2. Ten situations are optional, just to track the level of radicalisation, and the game could be over in any one.

Instructions:

1. Hand in the instructions of the game to the participants and explain the rules, show a simple example like the following:

“We, the 4 of us, we go to the other room, while you stay here, the media teams will go in both directions and tell each team what the other team decided to do, one of the teams will tell the truth or will deceive you, and you will not know which is the liar and which is the truthy”. [10 mins]

2. Divide them into 4 groups (6 people for the team group and 4 for the media group).

3. Each of the teams go to a separate room.

4. Members of media groups will be given instructions whether they have to tell the truth or not to the teams, while the teams are not aware if they are getting true or false information.

5. Please consult the handbook section to see the possible situations they choose the actions to each one.

6. Media transmits news for situations, it should write a piece of an article according to its assigned role, trainers register what are the actions.

7. Teams go to the same room and acts to the same situations without media interventions, trainers also register what are the actions.

8. Ask the groups to gather again, start a discussion about the actions whether they were radicalised or moderate.

Debriefing:

1. How do the participants feel?
2. Did you feel radicalised? if yes, why?
3. How did the media affect your decisions, and in what way?
4. Do you see any similarity with real life and exercise?

5. Is there anything you would do differently?
6. What do you take home from this game with you?

Handouts:

1st situation:

“You are two states, which shares borders, there some tensions over a frontier region, there was nothing going on, until yesterday one of the neighbors started shooting a military point of the other one”

Now ask the media groups to make up news about the accident and deliver it to one of the teams, the evidence of the story depends on whether the media group was instructed to tell the truth or lie.

Actions are given by the teams.

2nd situation:

“Representatives of the other side are going to make a demonstration at the borders and condemn our actions”

3rd situation:

“Two immigrant women have injuries for unidentified reasons yet, the investigation is going on”

4th situation:

“One of the states started extracting natural gas near opposite state’s coast, there is a possibility of them extracting diagonally so they are stealing”

5th situation:

“One of the countries decided to freeze the another country’s accounts on their banks, and imposing visa for its citizens when they want to visit their families or transit through the country”

6th situation:

“One child was found on the borders seeking for his parents”

7th situation:

“The news line in one of the countries’ media shows statements made by their president about supporting groups which is considered terrorist in other country”

8th situation:

“The country who owns the media that has shown the news claims that it was hacked and the president did not say such a thing”

9th situation:

“Undefined group of people targeted a school with plastic bullets, many children were severely injured”

10th situation:

“People in one of the countries were gassed by their government, council of security is meeting today to discuss ways to stop the massacres”

Activity 4

Theme: Detecting Radicalization and Understanding the Process of Radicalization.

Objectives:

1. Understanding what radicalization is.
2. Understanding how radicalization rises.
3. Learning the steps of radicalization.
4. Give tools to identify radicalization behaviour in society.

Target group and time: High School students, youth aged between 14-19

90 minutes

20-130 person

Materials: flip chart, pencils, print out of the cases.

Instructions:

1. Energizer (5 minutes)
2. Session explanation (5 minutes)
3. Dividing the big group to 4 group.
4. Reading and Analysing the cases and answering the questions in small groups (20 minutes)

Cases

1) In week four of the semester, a residence welfare colleague from one of the student halls arranges to meet you. Concerns have been raised by a residence mentor about John Jones, a first year Islamic Studies student. John has not been engaging in any of the freshers’ activities in halls, he ensures that he goes to the dining room either very early or very late, when it is almost empty, his flatmates say that he often stays up late at night, praying, and only goes out to meet up with some local young people at an Islamic bookshop in the centre of the city.

2) You study in a multicultural school where skipping school is high and there are ethnic tensions. You have been schoolmate with Sophia for two years, who is 16 years old; one evening she appears wearing a hijab.

3) Jason is a young student in your class. He has always held very strong opinions. Recently he has spoken to you about how angry he feels towards testing on animals. He

tells you he has attended a meeting of an organisation that does something about this. He names the organisation, which is known to you, and he has been involved in violent acts in the past.

4) Shortly after a terrorist attack in your country, there are serious tensions amongst the school that you study. You know that some of the parents identify with far right ideology. White young people begin to single out the minority ethnic young people telling them that they are the ones that have caused the terrorist attack. You learn that some of them have threatened the minority ethnic young people – telling them to watch out and that their families are going to ‘get it’.

Questions:

- Identify the actors in the case.
- Try to identify the problems in the cases.
- Based in your perspective, what do you think about the problematic behaviour?
- What are the challenges faced by the actors?
- Do you have any similarities with your local reality?

Presentations (3 minutes each) 15 minutes.



Presenting the radicalization barometer. (3 minutes)

We ask them to identify which case was an example of which level barometer and brainstorming on the elements of each step. (10 min)

Things to find:

Insignificant: desire to increase involvement, peaceful campaign, adopting signs, arguing.

troubling: paranoia, suddenly changes his/her habits. Is drawn to conspiracy theories and discourse.

Worrisome: need to dominate. Expresses hateful views towards other individuals or groups. Expresses hateful views towards other individuals or groups

Alarming: violence. Taking violent action. contact with a group or a network of individuals known to be violent radicals, either online or in real life. Recruits individuals for a violent extremist cause.

We go to our old groups and ask them a new question: (10 min.)

Imagine that your are detected such behaviours, what can you do ?

Summarizing the session and debriefing:

Debriefing questions:

What are the similarities between these cases?

What are the differences between these cases?

The conclusion should include that the barometer should be considered as a whole and behaviours should be thought in the context. We do not encourage people to identify problematic behaviour based on stereotypes.