MINISTRY
OF THE INTERIOR
FINLAND

National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism

National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism

Ministry of the Interior

DESCRIPTION

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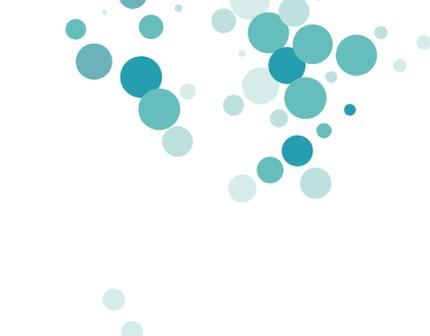National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent
Extremism

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Abstract: In 2012, the Government decided on the preparation of the first national programme of measures – an Action Plan – for the prevention of violent extremism. Now the Plan has been revised. In accordance with international best practices the prevention of violent radicalisation refers to the specific measures focused on those groups and individuals who run the risk of becoming radicalised. The updated Plan continues the actions which are still relevant and which proved effective in the first programme. The Action Plan has been updated by including measures which meet the new challenges of the operating environment as well as changes therein. The Plan was prepared through extensive participation between the authorities, organisations and communities. The Ministry of the Interior steers and coordinates the implementation of the Action Plan; different authorities, organisations and communities contribute to the effort.

The core content and the goals of the Action Plan are as follows:

1. Coordinate prevention, disseminate best practices, increase competency and act flexibly by taking into account the changes in the operating environment. The aim is to make the action coherent, without unnecessary duplication or gaps. Competency and best practices must be easily available. The action must be developed and reviewed according to the changes in the operating environment.

2. Create effective and viable structures and measures for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The objective is to ensure that the wherewithal and permanent structures for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism at the level required by the local situation picture are in place everywhere in Finland.

3. Launch the RADINET (exit) service. The goal is to develop a service which supports the disengagement of radicalised persons from violence and from the sphere of influence of violent groups. At the same time this will reduce the threat of violence to society and people.

4. Launch the Helpline service to support the family and friends of the radicalised people. The goal is to support them in situations where a family member or friend has, or is about to, become radicalised. This will help prevent the social exclusion of the family and contain radicalisation.

5. Promote the actions of organisations in developing services to which radicalised extremists can be referred. The goal is for the organisations to establish violence-prevention services everywhere in Finland which facilitate disengagement from violence, ideologically motivated violence included. The authorities, especially the police, are aware of said services, and case management and service coordination function in an efficient and comprehensive manner.

6. Increase competency, expertise and awareness as regards the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The goal is for both professionals and the representatives of organisations who, in their everyday work, encounter people that have, or are about to, become radicalised to be able to widely recognise the underlying signs of radicalisation and properly act in order to put an end to the development that leads to radicalisation. Expand research on violent radicalisation and extremism.

7. Efficiently detect and investigate hate crime, support the victims and the target communities of hate crime. The police and the other law enforcement authorities will improve their action on detecting and investigating hate crime: the objective is to reduce the underlying causes of violent radicalisation and extremism.

8. Actions resulting from the increased number of asylum seekers. The growing number of asylum seekers has exacerbated polarisation in society, which different extremist movements try to exploit in their efforts to recruit more supporters and to disseminate violence-inducing propaganda. The objective is to prevent the dissemination of violent radical propaganda and recruitment to violent extremist movements among asylum seekers, and to efficiently carry out integration. The action will take into account the recommendations of the report 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:6).

9. Prevent violent radicalisation and extremism through good, balanced and clear communications. The goal is to use words, in writing and in speech, in a manner that does not offend, label or radicalise any individuals or groups as supporters of violent extremism or, at the extreme, as terrorists.

10. Strengthen the ability of children and adolescents to identify and guard against violence-inducing messages and propaganda. The objective is for children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda.

11. The particular responsibility of the police in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The objective for the police is to be comprehensively cognisant of their special responsibility in preventing and countering violent radicalisation and extremism. This responsibility stems from the fact that violent extremism, as a phenomenon, lies at the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights.

12. Measures aimed against different forms of violent radicalisation and extremism.

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Introduction

Violent extremism refers to using, threatening with, encouraging or justifying violence based on one's own view of the world or on ideological grounds. Violent radicalisation is an individual process which may result in a person joining violent extremist groups or action. At its most extreme violent radicalisation can result in terrorist acts. The prevention of extremist violence is important for social harmony as well as the sense of safety and security among communities and individuals alike. Increased visibility of violent extremism in society may not only result in an increase of the direct threat of violence, it may also intimidate people into not invoking their constitutional rights, such as the freedom of speech and expression or the freedom of movement.

The significance of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism has been increasing since the early 2000s. It is now more clearly understood that detecting, countering or investigating violent or terrorist crimes no longer suffices. Rather, prevention is also needed. The phenomena and threats associated with extremist violence are fluid and rapidly evolving. On 6 January 2016 the United Nations (UN) published the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The key goal of the Plan of Action is for the Member States to draft their own national plans of action. In 2014 the European Union adopted the guidelines for combating radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism[1] – a revision of the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism adopted in 2005. Previously this Strategy was updated in November 2008. The Council of Europe is also engaging in efforts to counter violent radicalisation and extremism. In January 2015 the Nordic countries signed a Cooperation Agreement of the Nordic network to prevent extremism. Finland is an active participant in the international prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism.

All said, the international efforts will fall short of the goal unless violent radicalisation and extremism is effectively countered at the national and local level. Being that the threat is global, it demands robust national and local input. In addition to the police, also teachers, social workers, healthcare professionals, youth workers along with organisations and communities are at the core of the action. Families and adolescents are of central importance in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism.

In 2012 the Government decided on the preparation of the first national Action Plan for the prevention of violent extremism.[2] Now the Plan has been revised. The updated Plan continues the actions which are still relevant and which proved effective in the first programme. The Action Plan has been updated by including measures that meet the new challenges of the operating environment as well as changes therein. The Plan was prepared through extensive participation between the authorities, organisations and communities. Three workshops were organised in the summer of 2015, to which a wide range of actors were invited. Using the material developed during these sessions the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism prepared the current Action Plan. While the Plan was being prepared, it was presented to the representatives of, among others, cities, Muslim communities and different authorities with the aim of receiving their comments already at the draft phase. The Action Plan takes into account the evaluations and recommendations obtained from the representatives of the European Union regarding the work carried out in Finland and international best practices. An example of this is the visit of an expert team of the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence in Finland in June 2015. In accordance with international best practices the prevention of violent extremism refers to specific measures focused on groups and individuals which run the risk of becoming radicalised.

Nationally, the Ministry of the Interior coordinates the prevention of violent extremism. The other authorities remain responsible for actions and development within their purview, pursuant to the Government Rules of Procedure. Municipalities, organisations and communities participate in the implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with the principles of cooperation. All actors share the same goal: a safe and pleasant Finland in the future as well – a country whose inhabitants share the sense of belonging and participate in the development of society through non-violent means.

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[1] Guidelines for the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism 2014

[2] Towards a Cohesive Society – Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism, Ministry of the Interior publications 33/2012.
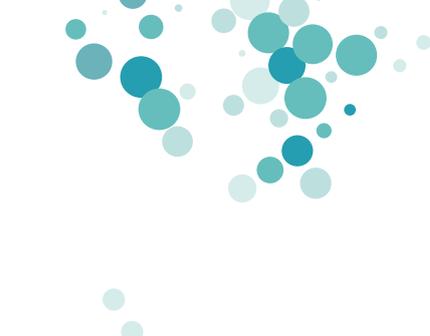
The key content and the objectives of the Action Plan's measures are the following:

1. *Coordinate prevention, disseminate best practices, increase competency and act flexibly by taking into account the changes in the operating environment. The aim is to make the action coherent, without unnecessary duplication or gaps. Competency and best practices must be easily available. The action must be developed and reviewed according to the changes in the operating environment.*

2. *Create effective and viable structures and measures for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The objective is to ensure that the wherewithal and permanent structures for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism at the level required by the local situation picture are in place everywhere in Finland.*

3. *Launch the RADINET (exit) service. The goal is to develop a service which supports the disengagement of radicalised persons from violence and from the sphere of influence of violent groups. Simultaneously, this will reduce the threat of violence to society and people.*

4. *Launch the Helpline service to support the family and friends of the radicalised people. The goal is to support them in situations where a family member or friend has, or is about to, become radicalised. This will help prevent the social exclusion of the family and contain radicalisation.*

5. *Promote the actions of organisations in developing services to which violently radicalised people can be referred. The goal is for the organisations to establish violence-prevention services everywhere in Finland which facilitate disengagement from violence, ideologically motivated violence included. The authorities, especially the police, are aware of said services, and case management and service coordination function in an efficient and comprehensive manner.*

6. *Increase competency, expertise and awareness as regards the prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation. The goal is for both professionals and the representatives of organisations who, in their everyday work, encounter people that have, or are about to, become radicalised to be able to widely recognise the underlying signs of radicalisation and properly act in order to put an end to the development that leads to radicalisation. Expand research on violent radicalisation and extremism.*

7. *Efficiently detect and investigate hate crime, support the victims and the target communities of hate crime. The police and the other law enforcement authorities will improve their action on detecting and investigating hate crime: the objective is to reduce the underlying causes of violent radicalisation and extremism.*

8. *Actions resulting from the increased number of asylum seekers. The growing number of asylum seekers has exacerbated polarisation in society, which different extremist movements try to exploit in their efforts to recruit more supporters and to disseminate violence-inducing propaganda. The objective is to prevent the dissemination of violent radical propaganda and recruitment to violent extremist movements among asylum seekers, and to efficiently carry out integration. The action will take into account the recommendations of the report 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:6).*

9. *Prevent violent radicalisation and extremism through good, balanced and clear communications. The goal is to use words, in writing and in speech, in a manner that does not offend, label or radicalise any individuals or groups as supporters of violent extremism or, at the extreme, as terrorists.*

10. *Strengthen the ability of children and adolescents to identify, and guard against, violence-inducing messages and propaganda. The objective is for children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda.*

11. *The particular responsibility of the police in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The objective for the police is to be comprehensively cognisant of their special responsibility in preventing and countering violent radicalisation and extremism. This responsibility stems from the fact that violent extremism, as a phenomenon, lies at the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights.*

12. *Measures aimed against different forms of violent radicalisation and extremism. The objective is to be able to more efficiently prevent right-wing extremist recruitment, increase the competency and the preparedness of the police in countering left-wing extremist violence, which especially occurs during demonstrations, to reduce the number of those travelling to conflict areas, and to establish a process for dealing with those returning from said areas.*

International cooperation, in which Finland actively participates, supports the national and local efforts to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism. The international cooperation which takes place among the Nordic countries, in the European Union and with third countries helps develop strategies and policies for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism, it also makes it possible to compare the lessons learned and best practices, expand knowledge on different methods, participate in research cooperation and anticipate future developments.

1 The grounds for and the principles of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism in Finland

1.1 What does violent radicalisation and extremism mean?

For the purposes of this Action Plan violent extremism refers to using, threatening with, encouraging or justifying violence on ideological grounds. Violent extremism is not a criminal law concept. Extremist violence is not necessarily revolutionary, and it often targets a group or individuals denoted as the enemy. It raises fear and insecurity locally, such as in individual city districts or communities, and it can also target personal property. Aggravated criminal mischief against a reception centre can be mentioned as an example of this. Crimes motivated by hate or racism can also be categorised as extremist crimes.

Violent radicalisation is a process through which individuals resort to violence or the threat thereof, urge someone to commit acts of violence or justify it on ideological grounds. There are always several underlying causes behind radicalisation, and radicalised persons do not fit any uniform profile. The factors that result in radicalisation are associated with individuals, their life situations and society. One of the most important factors involves the sense of social exclusion, discrimination and racism. Still, while problems in livelihood and marginalisation can foster radicalisation, they alone cannot explain it. Situational factors have a great effect on why some individuals become radicalised and others do not.

In this Action Plan ideology means the kind of shared worldview that stems from attitudes about groups of people, the world, religion, relations between people and states, human dignity, what is sacred and what is profane as well as corresponding beliefs that constitute a moral compass for an individual.

Whereas terrorism is always violent extremism, all extremist violence is not terrorism. Terrorist crimes are specified in the Criminal Code. Terrorist violence is insurgent, targeting states and international organisations. The ambition of terrorism is to extensively cause panic among the general public.

1.2 Why do violent radicalisation and extremism constitute significant threats?

It is always important to prevent crime, disturbances and accidents as well as influence their underlying causes. It is particularly important to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism because their effects rise above those of individual acts.

The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism is important for the sake of *safety, the sense of security* of individuals and society, and for *social harmony*. The effect of ideologically motivated violence is more detrimental to the sense of security and social harmony than the immediate effects of the acts of violence themselves. In addition to the actual victims of violence, and the family and friends, the threat targets the population groups that they represent. The fear created by the threat may intimidate people into not invoking their constitutional rights, such as the freedom of speech and expression, the freedom of religion or the freedom of movement. Then, in reality, extremist violence is also an attack against the democratic system. Violent extremism exacerbates tensions among different groups of the population and may even result in social destabilisation.

It is possible to *reduce the threat of terrorism and massacres* by preventing violent extremism. It is important to bring the perpetrators of serious crime to justice. In recent years, Finland has reviewed its legislation associated with terrorist crimes and the conspiracy to commit aggravated assault. Nevertheless, according to studies, the penal system and the fear of punishment fail to reduce violence. This is especially true of ideologically motivated violence because in its extreme forms even the perpetrator's own demise does not act as a deterrent to the act. Examples of such action are suicide attacks and massacres where the perpetrators end up killing themselves. Practice has also shown that prospective jail sentences rarely manage to disengage individuals from violent ideals or ideologies. On the contrary, recent examples have shown that jail sentences may even galvanise radicalisation.

It is both legally and economically unviable to extensively monitor people who are ideologically committed to violence. Therefore, it is necessary to try to influence society in a way that that would sway individuals from joining such groups.

The prevention of violence is profitable. The annual price tag of violence in Finland amounts to approximately EUR 850 million. The costs arising from extremist violence have been calculated in Sweden[3]. According to them, a single person participating in violent extremist action for a period of 10–15 years incurs the total cost of SEK 6–30 million to society. A violent right-wing extremist group of 15–20 members incurs the total cost of approximately SEK 290 million to society during a period of 15 years.

Extremist violence is self-propagating. It encourages similar-minded groups to resort to violence, and provokes other violent extremist movements into counter-strikes. The increase of extremist violence often generates a vicious circle of violence which is extremely difficult to break being that the different parties spur each other on to violent behaviour.

The Ministry of the Interior regularly publishes a Situation Overview which evaluates the developments, threats and relevant factors of violent extremism. The overall threat has both evolved and grown in Finland. One of the threats associated with extremist violence involves the conflict in Syria and Iraq and the resultant significant increase in the number of asylum seekers, which has exacerbated polarisation among the population. Since 2012 more than 70 persons[4] identified by the authorities have travelled to the combat zones in Syria and Iraq. Most of them are estimated to have joined terrorist organisations.

The violent far right has become more active. This development has been the catalyst for the rapid increase in the number of asylum seekers in the autumn of 2015. As a result, the violent right-wing movement has stepped up its activities, seeking to increase its support among the population. Astoundingly violent hate speech has become more prevalent, targeting a wide range of individuals and groups. Violent right-wing groups may cause local problems in terms of racist crime because they especially target ethnic minorities and anti-fascists. The violent far left is often energised during demonstrations. Recently, disturbances have been witnessed, especially at nuclear power plant construction sites. Still, the 'lone wolves' who justify their violence on the basis of various motives pose the greatest danger. It is difficult to anticipate or expose their action.

1.3 The principles of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism

The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism in Finland is based on the following principles and policies:

- *The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism will target individuals and groups*. Many factors influence the extent of violent extremism in society. Shortcomings or problems in social policy areas such as upbringing, education, equality, wellbeing, livelihood and social participation, and weak social cohesion provide growth potential for violent radicalisation and extremism. The prevention of violent extremism refers to the *specific measures focused on those groups and individuals which run the risk of becoming, or are already, radicalised*. Therefore, this Action Plan does not consider matters that fall under social policy and which significantly affect violent extremism in Finland as prevention of extremist violence. When it comes to social discourse, the goal of preventing violent extremism is to disseminate information on the phenomenon itself and on such social structures that are the breeding ground for it.

- *The primary goal of prevention is to reduce violence against people, and the threat of it*. Regarding individuals, the objective is to persuade the person to renounce the use and threat of ideologically motivated violence, or the

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3   Nilsson & Lundmark-Nilsson (2013): Sammanfattning av intoleransens pris, and Nilsson & Lundmark-Nilsson (2012): Vänd dem inte ryggen

4   Situation in the autumn of 2015.

encouragement to use it, or to thwart any development which would otherwise result in such behaviour. When it comes to groups the goal of influencing is to prevent violently radicalised groups from forming, and to bolster their indigenous capability to counter violence-inducing propaganda and recruitment.

- *Prevention will target all forms of violent extremism in Finland*. These include the violent far right, the violent far left and the violence used by radicalised alternative social movements, religiously motivated extremist violence as well as individual actors.

- *Participation and transparency, clear coordination.* According to experiences from home and abroad, the effective prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism necessitates wide-ranging cooperation and clear coordination. The prevention of violent extremism will occur under the wide umbrella of local and national cooperation, which includes the authorities, organisations, religious communities and the business community. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the national coordination of prevention. In accordance with the Government Rules of Procedure, the Ministry, and its Police Department, remain responsible for matters regarding order and security in public places. Violent extremism, as a phenomenon, relates to the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights. The other administrative branches are responsible for prevention in their respective sectors. Municipalities play an important role in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism because they are responsible for providing services that promote wellbeing and participation for their inhabitants. Organisations work at the grass roots level by taking into consideration people's situations in a comprehensive manner. This being the case, the organisations' services are elemental to the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Religious communities can strengthen people's participation, social interaction and spiritual life. They can mutually support each other and take action if religion is being hijacked as a justification for violence.

- *Action that counters violent radicalisation and extremism as well as the promotion of democracy and human rights are mutually supportive*. Violent extremism results in the violation of many human rights, such as the right to life, freedom of movement, freedom of speech and religion, and the right to adequate housing and shelter. It is particularly detrimental to the rights of the most vulnerable groups of people, for instance girls in ethnic minorities. The materialisation of human rights as well as transparent and good governance and a non-discriminating society which sustains participation eradicate the grounds for resorting to violence.

- *Interaction, both vertically and horizontally between different authorities, organisations and communities*. The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism demands up-to-date situational awareness as well as various means through which the radicalisation process among individuals and groups can be halted. It is only possible through regular interaction between individuals and organisations to amass all-encompassing information to support prevention. No single authority or organisation possesses the means to put a stop to the radicalisation process among individuals or groups on its own. When the different practitioners collaborate, they also gain access to a wider range of instruments.

- *An implementing organisation based on networking and networks*. Situations and challenges associated with violent radicalisation and extremism are fluid and rapidly evolving. Considering prevention, it is of the essence to be able to react and act fast. Networking and a network-based implementing organisation facilitate fast and flexible reaction in local and national work.

- *Effective and clear communications constitute an element of prevention*. Communications are key to the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Violent extremist movements are adept in using the social media and other communications in recruitment and the dissemination of violent propaganda. The actors that are responsible for prevention can use communications as an important instrument in prevention. Lackadaisical or ill-considered communications or obliviousness about terms and concepts can strengthen radicalisation.

2 Finland's goals for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism

The national short-term (the end of 2018) goals for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism are as follows:

1. National and local structures and procedures based on multi-professional cooperation are in place which makes it possible for the authorities, organisations and communities to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism.

2. The volume of ideologically motivated crime will continue to decrease year by year.

3. The number of those travelling to conflict areas for the purpose of engaging in combat/violence will start to go down from its peak, 1 November 2015.

4. Those returning from conflict areas are identified and the ones having committed crimes will be brought to justice. All returning persons will be systematically targeted with individually tailored measures which reduce the risk of violence and help improve their ability to cope.

5. The police will efficiently detect and investigate hate crimes. The victims of hate crime will be supported and the impacts of crime on the victim's reference group will be identified.

The national long-term (the end of 2025) goals for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism are as follows:

6. The number of people who feel personally or collectively threatened by violent extremist movements diminishes.

7. Young people refuse to join violent extremist movements or groups. Influencing society and decision-making through legal means is felt to be effective and rewarding.

3   Different actors and their duties in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism

The field in which violent radicalisation and extremism is being prevented is wide, and a number of actors possess responsibilities, competency and resources for this purpose. The following describes the duties of certain key actors and their capacity to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism.

Politicians and decision-makers direct and steer the different sectors of social policy and provide guidelines for them. From the standpoint of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism, the key policy sectors include education, social and health services, employment, and integration and housing. Successful policies in these sectors curb the breeding ground for violent radicalisation and extremism. Speech is yet another important instrument for decision-makers. Speech and rhetoric can either help reduce violent radicalisation and extremism and strengthen participation in society or increase the risk of radicalisation and give the signal that some of those who are here do not really belong here.

Social services can identify a variety of warning signs associated with radicalisation and refer people to the required services. An important function of social services is to evaluate the need for special support such as benefits for employment, education and livelihood. These can be make-or-break elements from the perspective of the radicalisation process. Social services are responsible for child protection measures which are taken into use when all other means offered to the family no longer suffice. Child protection measures can be employed when the person who runs the risk of becoming radicalised or is already radicalised is under 18 years of age or has underage children. When it comes to the safety and wellbeing of children, violent radicalisation and extremism is a significant risk to their wellbeing and safe development.

Healthcare services can impact the radicalisation process through maternity and child health clinic services as well as school and student healthcare services or by guiding the persons to other services which help them disengage from violence. The healthcare services can access both public and third sector services which offer special assistance for disengaging from violence. Even if violent radicalisation and extremism are not mental illnesses per se, international research and expe-riences indicate that there is a strong correlation with mental health problems. This being the case, mental health services play an important role in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. From the healthcare services' perspective the goal is to look after the health and wellbeing of these individuals, and to pre-empt any actions which could put their life in jeopardy or endanger the family and friends, and other people.

Youth services encounter many adolescents and they can early on identify the young people who are attracted to violent extremism and movements. Youth services can also notice changes occurring in adolescents and intervene in their development through positive means. Outreach youth work can also come across young people who are about to fall into the sphere of violent extremist ideologies and movements. Youth services can carry out actions which strengthen the adolescents' involvement, media literacy and their ability to counter violence-inducing propaganda.

The education sector plays a key role in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. While teachers do notice various signs of radicalisation in adolescents, they do not always distinguish how the behaviour or various problems may be associated with and make them vulnerable to radicalisation. When it comes to the safety and security processes at schools and other educational institutions, it is also important to steer the operating culture towards pupil participation and wellbeing. Pupil and student welfare services along with case management and service coordination are also important means for breaking the radicalisation process. Teachers are professionals in education and, as a part of the teaching process, they are able to improve pupils' media literacy skills and discernment and thereby increase their understanding on how to influence decision-making in society through non-violent means.

The police are important in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. In their everyday duties the police come across persons who are about to become radicalised, are already radicalised or are committing crimes motivated by violent extremism. The multi-professional early intervention model (Anchor model) operating at police departments targets radicalised persons. The Anchor model is supported by cooperation
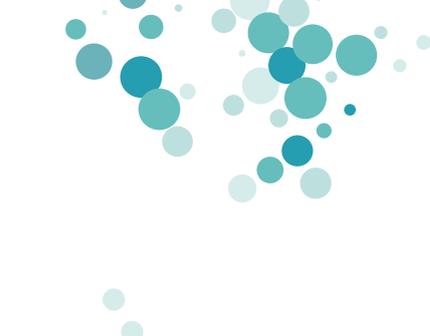
groups which more extensively plan and implement measures that prevent violent extremism. Among other things, the police can use methods such as interviews and criminal investigation instruments, and refer people onwards to services provided by organisations and the other authorities.

The Finnish Security Intelligence Service monitors the development of violent radicalisation and extremism and the situation picture. The exchange of information between the local police and the Finnish Security Intelligence Service is important when it comes to compiling national and local situation pictures. The Finnish Security Intelligence Service monitors international developments, identifies new threats and provides expert assistance to the other authorities.

Organisations provide vital services that are key to the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. It is often the case that those interested in extremist violence and the members of such groups place little trust in the authorities. Therefore, it is often easier for them to turn to services provided by organisations. Organisations have services which help people disengage from violence, they also offer mentoring and other similar services which make it easier to renounce ideals that condone the use of violence. Furthermore, organisations also provide an avenue for non-violent social activism.

Religious communities are experts and credible actors in matters related to religious interpretation. Religious communities can support individuals and groups that counter the recruitment of violent factions. They also play an important role in strengthening the communities' resistance to violence-inducing propaganda. Working together, religious communities can act against violence and spread the message that violence can never be justified on the basis of religion.

The family and friends are in a good position to prevent radicalisation. In spite of this, radicalisation can occur without the family being aware of it. Violent extremist groups often demand that their members sever all ties to people outside the group, family and friends included. Their goal is to make the individual totally dependent, both physically and mentally, on the violent group. This is how families can lose their members. Still, because emotional ties are often strong, they make a potent force in preventing individuals from joining violent extremist action. The family needs support, advice and spiritual counselling in order to prevent its members from joining a violent extremist group.

4   The measures to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism

The party that carries the main responsibility for the given measure is indicated by **bolded text**.

4.1   Coordinate prevention, disseminate best practices, increase competency and act flexibly by taking into account changes in the operating environment

OBJECTIVE: *The aim is to make the action coherent, without unnecessary duplication or gaps. Competency and best practices are easily available. The action is developed and reviewed according to the changes in the operating environment.*

1. The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will be reinstated for another term. It reports to the Ministry of the Interior and its composition reflects the priorities and focus areas of action (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior**).

   According to international experiences the effective prevention of extremist violence necessitates clear coordination and wide-ranging cooperation. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the national coordination. The composition of the National Cooperation Network will take into account the actors that carry key responsibilities in preventing violent extremism. These include the administrative branches associated with upbringing and education, the security of educational institutions and their students, the health and social wellbeing of people as well as criminal policy. The most important organisations from the perspective of action are also represented in the Network.

   The activities of the National Cooperation Network are also supported by a network to which actors are invited on the basis of topical themes and regional emphases. The functional themes are determined annually in the National Cooperation Network's operating plan.

   The National Cooperation Network coordinates and promotes the nationwide action for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Other important duties of the Network are, among other things, preparing the training arrangements for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism, research, drafting the Situation Overviews, promoting local activities, planning the EXIT action and other services, cooperating with communities, and communications.

   Create effective and viable structures for the prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation.

OBJECTIVE: *The objective is to ensure that the wherewithal and permanent structures for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism at the level required by the local situation picture are in place everywhere in Finland.*

2. The intersectoral early intervention model (Anchor model) operating at police departments prevents violent radicalisation and extremism and carries out individual early intervention. Organisations and representatives of communities are also involved in this activity. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, **National Police Board**)

   The police have decided to establish the intersectoral Anchor model at each police department. In addition to the police, representatives of social services as well as psychiatric nurses and youth workers, among others, operate within the framework of the Anchor model. Support and participation from the other authorities is needed for the Anchor model to be established.

   The capacity of the Anchor model to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism is contingent upon the local operating environment and situation picture. There are three levels to the model.

   The levels are the following:
   Minimum level. The intersectoral Anchor model operating at each police department functions as a point of contact and the responsible party for cases associated with violent radicalisation and extremism. The Anchor model provides the necessary training to the regional authorities and other actors so as to make certain that they are able to contact the appropriate parties from the outset.
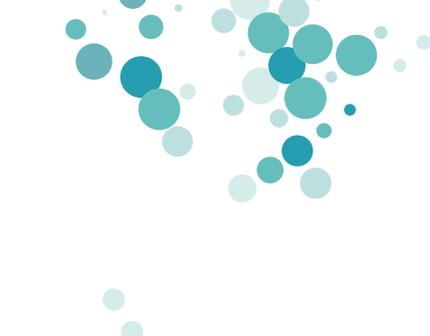
The minimum level is best suited to small communities and localities where violent radicalisation and extremism occurs at the individual level. However, it is important to point out that the risk of violent radicalisation and extremism does exist even in small localities. School assassins, those that threaten to commit massacres and the individuals that became 'self-radicalised' over the Internet and travel to conflict areas serve as examples of this. For this reason it is important to establish extremism-intervention expertise even in smaller localities

Basic level. In addition to the Anchor model a local co-operation group or the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism operates in the municipality or region. In addition to the organisations that participate in the Anchor model, the group comprises those authorities and actors that participate in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism, or which possess special intelligence and expertise in it. These are, among others, the education sector, the regional office of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service, organisations working against violence as well as victim assistance organisations and crisis support services. The task of the cooperation group or network is to monitor the development of violent radicalisation and extremism locally – relying principally on the observations of the Anchor model – and to launch such actions and initiatives that reduce its threat in the region. The cooperation group or network can act as

an element of already existing municipal security cooperation and planning structures, when appropriate.

The basic level is suitable for cities and localities where one or more violent extremist movements or groups are active, or where the risk of several different forms of violent extremism is evident. The Ministry of the Interior, together with the National Police Board, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, will prepare a list of the municipalities which should, at minimum, launch the model at the basic level. All of the abovementioned actors, working together, will systematically support the launching of the activity in these municipalities.

High level. In addition to the basic level functions which comprise the intersectoral Anchor model and the National Cooperation Network, at high-level localities there are full-time experts on violent extremism working at the police department or the municipality, or both. Local needs will determine the focus of the experts' work; it is linked to the Anchor model and/or the activities of the local cooperation group.

The high level is best suited to cities where extremist violence poses an elevated threat to everyday security and the sense of security. Municipalities and police departments, relying on their own situational assessments, will independently determine the extent to which they apply the high-level model.
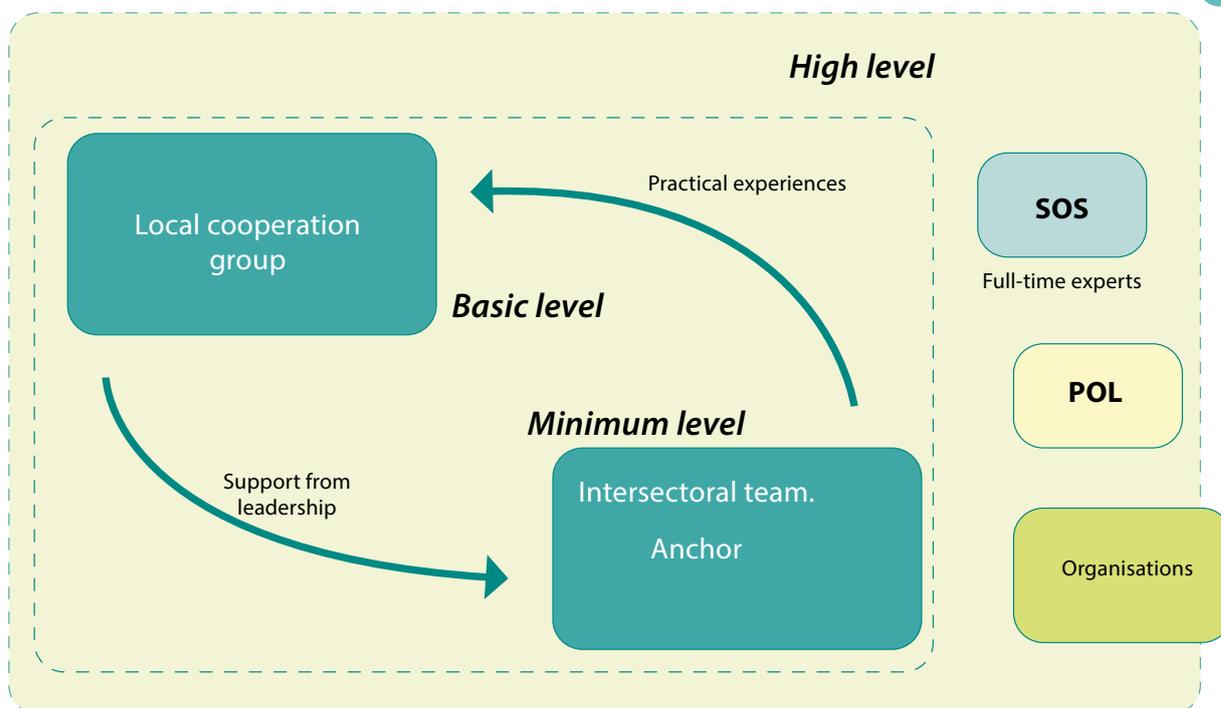
Figure 1. Legend: SOS = Social services, POL = Police, Organisations = organisations active in the prevention of extremist violence.

In addition to the authorities, organisations and the representatives of communities also participate in local action. The police or, if otherwise agreed, the municipality will invite the representatives of organisations and communities into this cooperation.

3. Cooperation among the authorities, organisations and communities is carried out in an intensified manner in Helsinki, Turku and Tampere. These localities will launch the 'Reach Out' action establishing a close-knit community uniting the authorities, organisations, communities and religious actors that work under the umbrella of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. The participants will receive intensive support for their efforts to curb violent radicalisation and extremism.

The goal is to make available everyone's expertise and experiences among all participants and to spread the word of available services and best practices in the region. (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior, Finn Church Aid** (FCA)).

4. Cooperation in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism will be increased among the cities in the capital region and their police departments to ensure that a radicalised individual living in the region, or one about to become radicalised, will not be left without the appropriate support merely because of red tape. (Responsibility: **National Police Board, the cities** and Police Departments of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa).
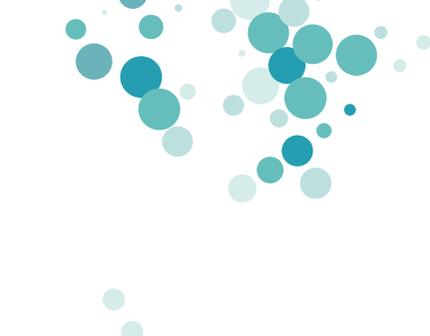
4.2   Launch the RADINET (exit) service

OBJECTIVE: *Develop a service which supports the disengagement of radicalised persons from violence and from the sphere of influence of violent groups. Simultaneously, this will reduce the threat of violence to society and people.*

5.   Launch the Radinet (exit) service. It is systematic action targeting the individual and its aim is for the person in question to renounce ideologically motivated violence or disengage from it. Entering the process is voluntary. The objective of the Radinet service is to reduce the threat of violence and is a supplement to criminal justice instruments. It is impossible to reduce the threat of violence posed by violent extremist movements or criminal gangs to people and society by tackling the problem of violence through a criminal justice response alone. In the first phase the action targets radicalised religious extremists and in the second phase the radicalised supporters of violent right-wing groups. Participation in the Radinet service is voluntary. The action is coordinated by the Vuolle Settlement, and many organisations, supported by religious communities, participate in organising services. While the Radinet service is supported by local grass-roots organisations and representatives of religious communities, the steering group also includes the key authorities regarding this action. (Responsibility: **Vuolle Settlement**, organisations, Ministry of the Interior)

6.   Prevent radicalisation in prisons. Prisoners are in many ways vulnerable and, hence, particularly susceptible to the propaganda and recruitment of violent extremist groups. Radicalisation in prisons is one of the greatest concerns in Europe. In line with the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union, Finland commits to implement a considered and tailor-made policy to prevent radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism in prisons, adapted to national circumstances and the needs of the individuals involved, which could include elements such as: developing risk assessment tools and tools to detect early signs of radicalisation; training prison staff to recognise radicalisation; offering inmates opportunities for learning and developing critical thinking skills in prison, etc. The policies of the Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) on radicalisation and extremist violence, a subordinate body to the Council of Europe, and the experiences of the Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence (RAN) will be taken into account in planning and implementing the activities. Finland will also actively participate in RAN and in the operation and development of the Radinet (exit) network insofar as the action concerns remand prisoners (detainees) and sentenced prisoners. (Responsibility: Ministry of Justice, **Criminal Sanctions Agency**).

4.3   Launch the Helpline service to support the family and friends of the radicalised people

OBJECTIVE: *Support the family and friends of the radicalised people in situations where a family member or friend has, or is about to, become radicalised.*

7.   The families and friends of those who have become radicalised need support. The support can be pre-emptive when the individual is only considering joining some ideologically based extremist group or movement. Likewise, support is also needed when the individual has already joined such a group or movement. For example, support can materialise in the form of expert counselling and guidance on how to act in a given situation and to whom to turn for the required services. Support can also be provided to a family whose child has departed for a combat area. According to preliminary experiences individuals that abandon their action in a combat area and return home do so as a direct result of family influence. Yet another objective of the support is to help the family overcome the crisis.

It must be ensured that the other family members do not become radicalised because of pressure or shame. The organisations are expanding their action in supporting families and individuals that suffer from radicalisation and violent extremism by launching the Helpline action which assists families and friends in questions related to radicalisation. The expert assistance and support of the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence (RAN) will be utilised when the action is being developed. (Responsibility: SOS-Crisis Centre, **Ministry of the Interior**).

4.4 Promote the actions of organisations in developing services to which violently radicalised people can be referred

OBJECTIVE: Everywhere in Finland there are organisations that have violence-prevention services which facilitate disengagement from violence, including ideologically motivated violence. The authorities, especially the police, are aware of these services, and case management and service coordination function in an efficient and comprehensive manner.

8. Even in spite of the fact that young men are over-represented among the perpetrators and victims of crime, there are only a few anti-violence and disengagement services available for young men in particular. Most services are provided by organisations. Only a small fraction of the young men seek out or are referred to these services. We will promote the nationwide proliferation of organisation services that support disengagement from violence occurring outside the home. We will promote the expansion of the scope of activities of anti-violence organisations to include the prevention of ideologically motivated violence through international and domestic training. The awareness of the authorities, especially the police, regarding the available services will be increased. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network, local cooperation groups, **organisations, National Police Board**).

Grass-roots organisations are present in people's everyday life. These organisations play an especially important role when it comes to preventing travel to conflict areas and teaming up with violent right-wing gangs. We will support and promote the activities of these organisations and their abilities to participate in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Organisations also provide an avenue for non-violent social activism. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network, local cooperation groups**).

4.5 Increase competency, expertise and awareness as regards the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism

OBJECTIVE: Professionals and the representatives of organisations who, in their everyday work, encounter people who have, or are about to, become radicalised are able to widely recognise the underlying signs of radicalisation and properly act in order to put an end to the development that leads to radicalisation.

9. The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will annually compile the training needs upon which a comprehensive training plan will be prepared. The plan will also take into account the training conducted by various actors. The key focus groups for training are the key sectors of action: education, youth work, social and health services and the police as well as basic and high-level local cooperation groups. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network**, local cooperation groups).

10. Promote research which yields information that supports the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Actively participate in Nordic and international research activities, and effectively utilise national and international financing sources. (Responsibility: researchers**, different branches of administration**, and other actors within their respective sectors)
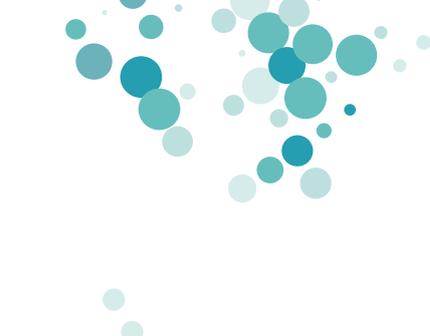
11. The National Police Board provides guidance and remains responsible for pre-emptive action and the systematic training of the Anchor model as regards matters associates with violent radicalisation and extremism. The Anchor model actors will network with each other and disseminate best practices and lessons learned. The expertise of the police will be utilised in training local networks and other authorities. The Anchor participants will remain responsible for providing training at minimum-level localities. (Responsibility: **National Police Board**, Anchor practitioners).

12. The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will organise annual seminars and other events which gather the different actors together. 'Tietotalo' seminars will be continued where tangible information on violent extremism is presented to cities and authorities alike. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network**).

13. Actively participate in international events and training with the objective of obtaining new information and disseminating best practices and lessons learned. The goal is to evenly provide training among all regional and local practitioners while taking into account the local level of the threat of violent extremism, and the need for training. In addition to the authorities, also promote the possibility of organisations, cities and communities participating in the training. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network**).

14. As the focus areas of supplementary training provided by the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) and the Regional State Administrative Agencies are being determined, increasing the instruments and competency in identifying and handling propaganda and violent radicalisation and extremism in schools and educational institutions will be taken into account. (Responsibility: **Ministry of Education and Culture**, FNBE, Regional State Administrative Agencies).

15. In the primary phase the 'electronic toolbox' will be taken into use. The toolbox, designed for professionals, will be further developed to meet the demands of the changing operating environment, the focus of activities and the information needs of the practitioners. The toolbox will become an integral element of nationwide prevention. (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior**).

4.6 Efficiently detect and investigate hate crime, and support the victims and the target communities of hate crime

OBJECTIVE: *The police and the other law enforcement authorities will improve their action on detecting and investigating hate crime. One objective is to reduce the underlying causes of violent radicalisation and extremism.*

16. Hate speech and hate crime are linked to violent radicalisation and extremism. Hate speech can egg on those that are particularly vulnerable to commit hate crime or to link up with violent extremism. Individuals and groups targeted by hate speech and hate crime run a high risk of becoming radicalised, especially when they feel that society and the authorities do not sufficiently intervene and protect their rights. As part of their everyday work the police detect and tackle suspected hate crimes reported to the police and, when required, carry out criminal investigations. The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior will prepare a report on how the process of detecting and investigating hate crimes should be intensified, and what kind of research and data support are needed. (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior**).

17. *Hate crime has been defined as a crime against a person, group, a person's property, institution, or a representative of these, motivated by prejudice or hostility towards the victim's real or perceived ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or appearance, or disability*[5] *or some similar characteristic.*

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[5] "Hate crime reported to the Police in 2011" (in Finnish): Police University College publications. http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-815-243-2

When it comes to hate crime the individual targeted by the crime is not the only victim. Rather, it is the entire community the victim represents. If the victim does not receive any support, the general willingness to report further hate crimes to the police may decrease. This, in turn, increases cynicism and the notion that hate crimes are not taken sufficiently seriously and that the victim will not receive justice. Together with Victim Support Finland (VS) the Ministry of the Interior has implemented the EU's 'Good Practice +' project which creates the practices for supporting the victim of racist and hate crime. The best practices created through the project, and potential follow-on projects, will be implemented. (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board, VS**)

18. Religious communities and religious premises can also become the targets of hate speech and hate crime. Finn Church Aid (FCA), working with religious communities, develops action in which said communities will support each other when threatened or faced with a concrete danger. The 'Shoulder to Shoulder' action will be further developed and implemented. (Responsibility: **FCA**, religious communities).

4.7　Actions resulting from the increased number of asylum seekers

OBJECTIVE: *Prevent the dissemination of violent radical propaganda and recruitment to violent extremist movements among asylum seekers, and efficiently carry out integration. The action will take into account the recommendations of the document 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:6).*

19. Approximately 32,000 asylum seekers arrived in Finland in 2015. According to estimates, the number of asylum seekers in Europe will remain high for the coming years as well unless the root cause of the problem, i.e. wars

and conflicts around the world, can be resolved. Owing to their vulnerable status and uncertain future asylum seekers can be particularly susceptible to extremist propaganda. Asylum seekers and reception centres are also targeted by vandalism and crimes. The aforementioned facts, coupled with problems in integration as well as misgivings and discrimination on behalf of the majority population may also increase the risk of individual radicalisation. Reception centre staff and others working with asylum seekers will be trained to identify violent radicalisation and extremism and to prevent it. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, **National Police Board**).

20. Pursuant to the goals of the Government action plan on asylum policy (8 December 2015) Finland will effectively promote integration for those who have been granted a residence permit, proactively prevent feelings of social exclusion among young people and ensure safe growth and education paths, particularly for unaccompanied minors. The action will take into account the recommendations of the document 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:6). (Responsibility: **Ministries and authorities responsible for integration**)

21. The security of all persons and employees involved with the integration process will be guaranteed. (Responsibility: **Ministries and authorities responsible for integration**).
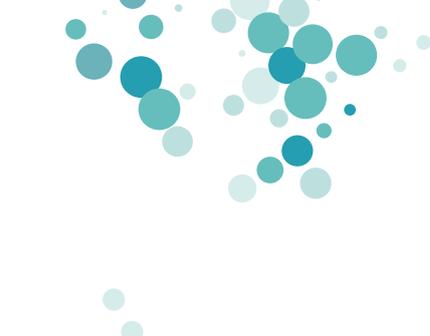
4.8 Prevent violent radicalisation and extremism through good, balanced and clear communications

OBJECTIVE: *Use words, in writing and in speech, in a manner that does not offend, label or radicalise any individuals or groups as supporters of violent extremism or, at the extreme, as terrorists.*

22. Speech and words are important in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Poorly chosen words and expressions may exacerbate radicalisation and heighten the sense of marginalisation which is often an important catalyst for violent radicalisation. A glossary for 'violent radicalisation and extremism' will be prepared that will encompass the kinds of terms that are positive and constructive and whose use will not foment radicalisation. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**).

23. Improve and clarify communications regarding the goals and means for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Attempts will be made to engage in dialogue and interaction with different groups with the aim of achieving a sense of having shared goals and means. Prepare up-to-date material to support communications which increase awareness among those working to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism as regards messages between violent extremist groups, the means of dissemination and the focus groups of the messages. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**).

24. Further advance the situation overview arrangements on violent extremism. The goal is to disseminate up-to-date situational information on violent extremism in Finland. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**).

25. Regularly organise round table discussions with members of the media, and when necessary other parties, on topical issues regarding violent radicalisation and extremism. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**, local cooperation groups).

26. Experiences from different countries have shown that when crises associated with violent extremism occur, clear, balanced and successful communications are of paramount importance to limiting and reducing damage. A crisis communications plan will be prepared which will describe the principles of communications in situations which demand communicating information on the phenomena associated with violent radicalisation and extremism during disruptions, disturbances and crises. (Responsibility: **National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**).

4.9 Strengthen the ability of children and adolescents to identify, and guard against, violence-inducing messages and propaganda

OBJECTIVE: *Children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, are able to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda.*

27. Children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, are able to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda. Media literacy is a key skill which bolsters the ability of children and adolescents to counter propaganda and the 'alternative media' which has proliferated in recent years. In the general objectives of the core curricula for pre-primary and basic education, approved in 2014, and the objectives of the national core curriculum for upper secondary schools, approved in 2015, media literacy, as an element of across-the-board competency, is included in the multi-literacy skill set and in different subjects

of basic education in a cross-cutting manner. Further-more, the new objectives for basic education place increasing emphasis on human rights and adjustment to the democratic society. In addition to schools also youth work, libraries and organisations, among others, promote media literacy. (Responsibility: Ministry of Education and Culture, **Finnish National Board of Education, National Audiovisual Institute KAVI**).

28. Foreign policy, human rights and encounters with human rights violations as well as belittling human suffering are important underlying causes of violent radicalisation. Violent extremist movements effectively exploit these themes in their propaganda, fostering feelings of injustice and frustration. This is why many an adolescent feels that violent action is an important, or the only, means of direct influencing. We must make certain that young people have the opportunity to engage in open dialogue on topics that are important to the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism by organising youth-centred debates and other events that focus on themes such as foreign policy, human rights, etc. (Responsibility: **Ministry for Foreign Affairs**, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice).

29. According to studies Finnish adolescents, young boys especially, are extremely biased against ethnic minorities. Prejudice, and the associated fear of otherness, is often the result of ignorance. Cultural and global education will be intensified in schools and during leisure activities; opportunities for young people to visit different religious communities (e.g. churches, mosques, synagogues, etc) will be increased and opportunities for engaging in dialogue and interaction among different religions will be created. (Responsibility: **educational institutions, youth services**, organisations, religious communities).

4.10 The particular responsibility of the police in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism

OBJECTIVE: *The police are comprehensively cognisant of their special responsibility in preventing and countering violent radicalisation and extremism. This responsibility stems from the fact that violent extremism, as a phenomenon, lies at the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights.*

30. The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism will be included as part of the pre-emptive action of the police and the Anchor model, which will be expanded. According to the decision of the National Police Board all police departments must carry out activities as per the Anchor model. The model will include the preparedness for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. All police departments will implement the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism at the minimum, basic or high level. (Responsibility: **National Police Board**).

31. Police presence in the social media is a new and evolving feature. It is an element of all police work, pre-emptive activities included. Thus far it has not systematically focused on violent radicalisation and extremism because its virtual presence has varied depending on the grounds of the police departments' own capacities and focus areas in the social media. The National Police Board will further develop the online presence of the police and, at the same juncture, determine the content, goals and tasks of virtual police action with regard to preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, **National Police Board**).

32. The individuals that pose a security risk include those with a high potential for violence but are impervious to a criminal justice response, or who cannot be committed to involuntary treatment. In order to manage the security threat a focused threat assessment instrument – a screening instrument – is being used at the command centres of Helsinki and Oulu Police Departments, and by nearly all police units. The screening instrument has proven viable in practice. It has already helped prevent potentially serious acts of violence and massacres. The police have established the 'national threats' function. The goal of concentrating this function nationally is to further hone the threat evaluation processes of the police, the screening instrument itself, to participate in international threat evaluation cooperation, to support police units in managing demanding and high-risk threats and to act as the national point of contact of the police vis-à-vis the other authorities, especially the social and healthcare authorities. The possibility of an expedited referral of risk individuals to specialised healthcare has not materialised as planned. There has been no success in establishing a uniform national model for case management. The 'national threats' model will continue developing the introduction of the screening instrument among the police authorities, the network of healthcare experts specialised in danger-level assessment and targeted violence, and a national model for referring an individual to a medical evaluation. (Responsibility: **National Police Board**).

4.11 Measures aimed against different forms of violent radicalisation and extremism

Violent far right

OBJECTIVE: *Improve the preconditions of preventing recruitment to violent right-wing groups.*

33. So far the volume of violent far-right activities and the number of active members has been quite modest. However, recently there have been signs of increased activity among different groups. In order to prevent their membership from growing it is imperative to obtain information on the means of, and the individuals targeted by, recruitment. The police will prepare a report to support pre-emptive action. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board, **Finnish Security Intelligence Service**).

Violent far left

OBJECTIVE: *Increase the competency and the preparedness of the police in countering left-wing extremist violence, which especially occurs during demonstrations.*

34. The threat of anarchist violence is particularly prevalent during demonstrations. In these cases the violence also targets the authorities, particularly the police, as well as far-right groups and neo-Nazis whom the anarchists view as their main adversaries. The police will improve their action in countering violence during demonstrations. This includes action both before and after demonstrations. (Responsibility: **National Police Board**).

Religiously motivated violent radicalisation and extremism

OBJECTIVE*: Reduce the number of those travelling to conflict areas and establish processes for dealing with those returning from these areas.*

35. Per capita, and compared to similar situations in the past, quite many people from Finland have travelled to conflict areas. Especially in recent times those having departed for Syria and Iraq have mainly joined the terrorist groups operating in the region. Extensive cooperation among the authorities, organisations and communities is required to reduce the number of people travelling to combat zones. However, it is important for one actor – the Anchor model – to be able to proceed in a situation when an individual is contemplating travelling to combat areas or is about to depart. The other actors can always contact the Anchor operators when they encounter an individual who is about to become radicalised. The Anchor model, and its cooperation with other actors, will be strengthened as regards preventing travel to conflict areas. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, Finnish Security Intelligence Service, **National Police Board**).

36. The individuals that departed for the combat zones in Syria and Iraq and are about to return pose a serious challenge to society. The first item of importance is to establish the identities of the people returning from the region. Those having committed crimes must be brought to justice. Nonetheless, a number of them cannot be prosecuted for crimes: either there is not sufficient evidence or they do not pose any security threat. When it comes to these individuals the most important thing is to reduce the risk of violence and the increasing risk of radicalisation associated with them, and to promote their re-integration into society. The procedures must be open, they must strengthen the security of society and its inhabitants and reduce the risk of violence. The processes for managing those returning from combat zones will be established. (Responsibility: **Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice**, National Police Board, Office of the Prosecutor General).

5   Action Plan: follow-up and reporting

The implementation and results of the Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism will be monitored by a steering group which comprises the representatives of organisations that are of paramount importance to carrying out the measures. The steering group will annually approve the operating plan which describes the following year's actions and schedule in detail. Simultaneously, as the annual plan is approved, the annual thematic groups for the network which supports the cooperation group will also be accepted. The networks will comply with the focus areas of the annual operating plan and contribute to the expertise and participation required by its implementation.

MINISTRY
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