Guidance Document 6

CDC and Building resilience to radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism

Who is this document for?

This guidance document is addressed to:

- ➢ political decision makers and policy makers with responsibilities for democratic governance, public authorities, social integration, social cohesion, policing, security and education;
- ➢ educators with responsibilities for social integration, social cohesion, student welfare and security (e.g. heads and senior staff of education institutions);
- ➢ education practitioners;
- ➢ parents, parent associations and school boards;
- ➢ the police, members of security services and other state actors involved in the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism.

The use of more technical language to discuss radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism has been deliberately avoided in this chapter in order to make the issues more understandable to a non-specialist readership.

Purpose and overview

This guidance document explains why education based on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (henceforward the Framework) has a central role to play in the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism. The Framework emphasises using education to equip young people with competences for democratic culture. These competences boost individuals' resilience to the conditions that can initiate radicalisation and build resistance to

dehumanising behaviour and to the use of violence as a means of conflict resolution. In addition, developing these competences endows individuals with the capacity and the disposition to contribute to an inclusive society and to effect change through peaceful democratic expression and action rather than through violence.

For this approach to be successful, state institutions need to ensure that their structures are responsive to the concerns of citizens and strengthen their legitimacy through deliberative dialogue and robust democratic engagement. Accompanying actions also need to be taken to address the broader problems of disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion that are experienced by marginalised populations. A central feature of the strategy is the creation of a society that is democratic and underpinned by human rights.

The approach advocated by this document is aimed at preventing the initiation of radicalisation into violent extremism (rather than using education for deradicalisation after radicalisation has already begun). In other words, the approach based on the Framework is preventative (rather than reactive).

The guidance document addresses two action plans that have been published by the Council of Europe: the Action Plan on the Fight against Violent Extremism and Radicalisation leading to Terrorism, and the Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies.

Why is the Framework relevant to building resilience to radicalisation?

The Framework is relevant to building resilience to the conditions that can initiate radicalisation because the competences that are contained in the Framework are precisely the competences that young people require to:

> ➢ critically analyse, evaluate, challenge and reject violent extremist and terrorist communications, propaganda and rhetoric;
> ➢ avoid oversimplistic "us versus them" reasoning in their thinking, understand the complexity of social and political issues, and accept that these issues cannot always be adequately addressed through simplistic responses or solutions;
> ➢ imaginatively apprehend, understand and appreciate the beliefs, perspectives and world views of other people, and recognise that other people's perspectives may be just as valid as their own when viewed from their position;
> ➢ understand and appreciate how non-violent democratic means are more effective tools to use for the peaceful expression of citizens' views and opinions, for managing differences of opinions, and for pursuing political and social causes;
> ➢ value human dignity, human rights, cultural diversity, democracy, justice and the rule of law.

Definitions of radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism

Four of the key terms that are used in this document (radicalisation, extremism, violent extremism and terrorism) are contested, with different authors using them to denote different underlying concepts. The four terms are used in the current document with the following specific meanings, which are intended to draw out their relationship to the concepts of human rights and democracy.

What is radicalisation?

A radical is someone who advocates for fundamental and far-reaching change or restructuring of a social or political system. The term therefore denotes not only those who use violence in an attempt

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to achieve deep reform, but also those who propose using legitimate and peaceful means to do so. However, in this chapter, we are concerned solely with radicals who advocate or use violent extremism or terrorism to try to achieve social or political change. As such, for the purposes of this document, "radicalisation" is defined as the process through which an individual move towards supporting, advocating, assisting or using violent extremism or terrorism in order to bring about social or political change.

What is extremism?

From a human rights perspective, the term "extremism" may be defined as any position that deviates to a highly significant extent from the mainstream norms within a society, adopts highly unconventional beliefs that are at odds with those of mainstream society, or is immoderate in the goals that it seeks to achieve or in the means that it advocates for achieving those goals. As such, if the behaviour that is associated with an extremist position does not violate or undermine the human rights of other people or does not aim to introduce non-democratic social or political change, then that position should be respected. Under the European Convention on Human Rights, individuals who adopt an extremist position are entitled, like everyone else, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression and freedom from discrimination, no matter how unusual or strange their position might appear to others.

However, in cases where an extremist position undermines, threatens or violates the human rights and freedoms of others, uses non-democratic means, or aims for non-democratic social or political change, restrictions need to be placed on those who adopt such a position. These restrictions should be those that are prescribed by law, are necessary to protect other people within a democratic society and are proportionate to that need.

What is violent extremism?

"Violent extremism" is an extremist position that endorses, advocates or uses violence. Violent extremism does not necessarily have a transparent social or political goal. For example, it may be used to express hatred of the members of a particular racial, ethnic, national, religious or other cultural group, on whom the violence is inflicted directly, with no further explicit goal in mind. However, many violent extremists do have an underlying social or political goal which they attempt to achieve through the use of violence.

Inflicting violence on other people is the most profoundly anti-democratic act and the ultimate violation of the dignity and rights of others. Violent extremism must be opposed and prevented in any democratic society.

What is terrorism?

Terrorism is a more complex phenomenon than violent extremism – it is a special type of violent extremism that has the goal of generating terror in order to pursue political goals. The term "terrorism" may be defined as violent action, or the threat of violent action, without legal or moral restraint, that is designed to inspire fear, dread, anxiety or terror in a population. In terrorism, the immediate victims of the violence are chosen either randomly or selectively from the target population in order to generate a threat-based political message. This message is designed to manipulate its audience (either the government, the public or a section of the public), and to

intimidate, demoralise, destabilise, polarise, provoke or coerce that audience in the hope of achieving from the resulting insecurity an outcome that is desired by the perpetrator.

Over the years, terrorism has been employed by many different kinds of actors, including individual actors as well as sub-state, state, state-sponsored and transnational actors (with state terrorism having been used in wars aimed at conquest and for subjugating populations and oppositions).

Causes for which violent extremism and terrorism have been employed

Violent extremism and terrorism have been used in the pursuit of many different radical causes over the years. They are not uniquely associated with any one cause, and they are not new phenomena, having been present in European societies throughout history.

This guidance document concerns radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism irrespective of the specific cause that is being pursued.

Variability in the radicalisation process

Research into the radicalisation process has revealed that there is no common pathway that all radicalised individuals take towards embracing violent extremism or terrorism. There is also no single psychological profile and no single set of demographic characteristics that are shared by all individuals who make the transition into violent extremism or terrorism. Instead, radicalised individuals come from a diversity of social backgrounds, have a variety of different personal motivations for moving towards violent extremism or terrorism, and experience a diversity of circumstances or conditions that either push or pull them into violent extremism or terrorism. Furthermore, exactly the same set of conditions that might propel one individual into radicalisation might also apply to many other individuals who, however, do not become radicalised.

In addition, radicalisation is not necessarily a straightforward linear process in which there is a gradual but progressively deepening commitment to violent extremism or terrorism culminating in conversion to the violent cause. Instead, some individuals follow a more fluid and complex path, drifting into and out of violent extremism depending on the specific environments and people they encounter in the course of their everyday lives.

Moreover, not all individuals who eventually adopt a violent extremist or terrorist perspective may consider committing violent acts themselves – those who are converted to a violent extremist or terrorist cause can instead show a variety of different levels of involvement or commitment to that cause. Some may be ready and willing to use violence, others may only be willing to assist in the use of violence (for example by providing funds or goods to those who commit the acts of violence), while others may advocate the use of violence but not be willing to either engage or assist in acts of violence themselves. Violent extremist and terrorist groups, like all other social groups, usually contain a great deal of internal diversity. That said, it is important to note that providing support to violent extremists or terrorists carry the same moral and legal consequences as committing the acts of violence oneself.

The conditions that can lead to radicalisation

Research has revealed that there are many conditions that can lead to radicalisation. These conditions may be divided into two main types: predisposing conditions and enabling conditions. In reading the following descriptions, it should be borne in mind that different subsets of conditions operate in the case of different individuals, no single condition by itself is likely to lead to radicalisation, and even if

a large subset of conditions applies, this will still not necessarily lead an individual into violent extremism and terrorism, especially if that individual is equipped with the competences that confer resilience to violent extremist and terrorist propaganda and rhetoric.

The following descriptions of the conditions are, in all cases, based on evidence from the research literature. Readers who are interested to find out more about these various conditions should consult the sources that are listed at the end of this document in the Further reading section.

Predisposing conditions

Radicalisation may arise from one or more of the following conditions, which range from the personal to the social and the political (but note that this ordering does not have any particular significance).

Problematic family background

In some cases, individuals are brought up in families that have a history of relationship conflict, domestic violence, parental substance abuse, parental mental illness or abusive parenting. Individuals from families with one of more of these characteristics are unlikely to have received appropriate intellectual, emotional and behavioural support during their development – they are more likely to have experienced poor supervision and harsh and erratic discipline. Individuals from these backgrounds are more likely to experience failure in education, and they are also more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour and to show a readiness for violence and aggression.

Estrangement from other people or from society

Estrangement from parents and other members of the family, alienation from peers, experiencing a sense of isolation from other people, lacking a sense of belonging to any social group, and estrangement from society can all lead to emotional insecurity, vulnerability and loneliness. Those who are socially estranged may be prone to radicalisation because membership of a violent extremist group readily provides the bonds of friendship and comradeship that such individuals might need.

Difficulties with personal identity

People sometimes experience a diffuse, confused, uncertain or unstable identity where they do not have a clear and secure sense of themselves and are not sure about how they would describe or define themselves, what the purpose of their life is, what their real interests are, or what their future ambitions should be. At any one time, identity uncertainty may apply only to a few aspects of the self or it may be more extensive and apply across many different aspects. Identity difficulties such as these are common during adolescence and early adulthood, and they can be associated with feelings of self-doubt, insecurity and instability. Because violent extremist and terrorist organisations offer a sense of certainty and can provide a strong identity to their members based on fierce loyalty to the cause, they can hold an attraction for individuals who are struggling with their personal identity.

Simplistic thinking style

There are significant variations in people's styles of thinking and reasoning. Some individuals use a style that is very simplistic. These individuals prefer single, definite and clear answers to questions rather than ambiguous or qualified answers. They use oversimplistic "us versus them" reasoning when thinking about social groups, and other people are readily seen as either friends or enemies. They make broad generalisations and ignore exceptions and alternatives, are quick to reject competing views, and are often unwilling to change their way of thinking. It has been found that people with this

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simplistic style of thinking are more likely to embrace conflict, are less likely to use collaboration and compromise to resolve conflicts, lack empathy for people who belong to other social groups and are more likely to adopt dogmatic and authoritarian positions. It has also been found that individuals who display this style of thinking are more likely to endorse violent extremism.

Lack of exposure to positive role models and alternative points of view

Some individuals lack positive role models while they are growing up, only encounter a limited range of views and perspectives in their everyday environments, and are not exposed to analysis, reflection or dialogue about values, attitudes or social issues in their family or at school. Being exposed to other people who model altruistic and respectful behaviours, having access to knowledgeable people, and being exposed to a wide range of ideas, opinions and reflections from other people and texts, can divert individuals who might be considering violent extremism from pursuing this path. Those who lack these advantages are more likely to make the transition into violent extremism.

Racism and discrimination

When the members of the racial, ethnic or religious group to which an individual belongs are continually subjected to racism, discrimination and hostility, or when an individual has frequently experienced personal harassment, victimisation or attack due to their race, ethnicity or religion, they may be more prone to radicalisation. This is because the feelings of humiliation, resentment and anger that are aroused by racism and discrimination can act as significant motivators for making the transition into violent extremism.

Deprivation and marginalisation

It is possible for racism and discrimination to lead to unemployment or underemployment. This in turn can result in economic deprivation, blocked social mobility, limited socio-economic opportunities, exclusion and marginalisation. All of these conditions can predispose individuals to radicalisation. Perceptions of blocked social mobility and limited opportunities can also arise in the absence of racism and discrimination, for example in the case of disadvantaged members of a majority group.

When people compare their own position to the positions of others, and realise that by comparison they have far fewer resources than they ought to have, and they perceive barriers to their entry into mainstream society and an absence of prospects for a successful or prosperous future, the sense of unfairness and inequity can generate a wide range of emotions including frustration, resentment and anger. These emotions can motivate the radicalisation process, especially if an individual believes that their personal situation cannot be improved through legitimate means.

Grievances and injustices

It is not only racism, discrimination, deprivation and marginalisation that can motivate radicalisation. Indignation, outrage and anger about other injustices can also motivate the process. For example, grievances against the police, grievances against the media and their biased coverage of minority issues, anger about human rights violations, antagonism to, anger about or even hatred of a country's foreign policy and overseas aggression, and perceptions of double standards in government policies, can all motivate a desire to act against the injustice. Grievances about injustices that have been perpetrated against members of one's own cultural group can be especially powerful as a motivating factor. When individuals perceive grave injustices and hold grievances against the perpetrators, they are more likely to make the transition to violent extremism.

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Disillusionment with politicians and conventional politics

There is currently widespread disillusionment with conventional political processes, and mainstream politics is frequently viewed as dominated by elites who are remote from the everyday concerns and lives of citizens. If mainstream politicians are perceived as failing to respond to citizens' concerns, or if there is a belief that the actions that politicians take are not sufficient to address these concerns in a meaningful way, then distrust of politicians and dissatisfaction with the political system can occur. This can lead to feelings of frustration and disempowerment, a rejection of the democratic norms that are held by others, and a resort to alternative modes of action that might include violent extremism.

Disillusionment with democratic forms of citizen participation

Individuals can also feel disenchanted and disillusioned with democratic forms of citizen participation. For example, they may feel that institutional channels through which their point of view can be expressed are ineffective, and that they are unable to have any meaningful influence on public policy. A feeling of powerlessness may result, with the person seeing little point in engaging in conventional political actions (e.g. voting, writing to an elected representative) or alternative peaceful forms of political action (e.g. participating in protests, signing petitions). Under such circumstances, membership of a violent extremist group can provide a sense of empowerment that cannot be gained through other means.

Enabling conditions

When an individual has been following a personal trajectory towards radicalisation as a consequence of one or more predisposing conditions, the transition into violent extremism or terrorism can take place when that individual encounters one or more enabling conditions. These conditions usually involve exposure to an ideology that justifies the use of violence.

Exposure to violent extremist ideology through a social group that provides a sense of community and belonging

Association with like-minded people (who could be family members, members of a local community or religious group, or members of a disaffected marginalised group) can provide bonds of friendship and a feeling of peer-acceptance. The friendships that are encountered through a violent extremist group may provide a sense of belonging and can compensate for the effects of social estrangement. Radicalisation through this route may happen in so-called "places of vulnerability", such as religious proselytising settings, prisons or other settings that are invisible to the authorities, where newcomers can be disconcerted or unsettled and feel insecure or anxious. Sometimes, group leaders or charismatic figures play a role in welcoming and drawing a newcomer into the group. Alternatively, a few members of the group may act as role models who help to sustain the commitment of the individual in the early stages, facilitate their movement into the group, and introduce them to the group's violent extremist ideas and beliefs. A newcomer's receptivity to these ideas may be high if they already share the same grievances as the other members of the group and if they identify with those who are perceived as being victimised.

Exposure to violent extremist ideology through the internet or written materials

Radicalisation can also take place through exposure to violent extremist ideology on the internet or in pamphlets and other written materials. An individual will be receptive to the ideology encountered on the internet or in written materials if it helps them to make sense of the grievances that they hold

or of their own personal experiences of the social or political world. Violent extremist ideologies usually legitimise the extremist position by exaggerating the differences between the extremist group and those who are to be targeted through violence, using an "us vs. them" framework. The specific contents of the ideology vary of course from one extremist group to another, but most violent extremist ideologies portray and exalt the use of violence as honourable and prestigious. The justification of the violence is commonly based on a narrative of oppression which argues that "we" are under attack from "them", obligating a violent response and portraying the violence as a necessary and effective means to achieve the group's objectives. The ideology therefore builds a collective identity based on a narrative of violent struggle, with the violence being rationalised as "defensive". The justification redefines conceptions of good and evil, and this can help to overcome potential moral inhibitions that an individual might have about advocating or using violence. In addition, violent extremist ideologies often dehumanise the targets of the violence, likening them to animals, which further reduces moral qualms which group members might have about the use of violence.

Some violent extremist and terrorist groups have become extremely sophisticated in the use of the internet for disseminating their ideologies. The internet offers numerous advantages to these groups, including easy access, low cost, little regulation, anonymity, rapid information flows, interactivity, and potentially vast audiences. It also highly flexible, so that as soon as propaganda on one website is taken down by the authorities, the same material can be immediately relaunched on another website.

Exposure to violent extremist ideology that satisfies other basic psychological needs of the individual

Violent extremist or terrorist ideologies can also be attractive to some people because they satisfy other basic psychological needs. For example, in the case of those who are experiencing difficulties with their personal identity, are confused or uncertain about who they are, or are subject to feelings of insecurity and self-doubt, a violent extremist or terrorist ideology can provide them with a clear and compelling psychological focus and sense of purpose which might otherwise be lacking. The ideology may also provide them with a sense of control and empowerment, as well as a sense of self-esteem. Commitment to the ideology may be further enhanced if the person believes that the use of radical, defiant or violent language and action bestows a high social status on them within their social milieu.

Exposure to violent extremist ideology that stimulates a moral, religious or political awakening

It has also been found that radicalisation sometimes occurs as a consequence of exposure to ideologies that stimulate a moral, religious or political awakening. This may occur if the ideology presents it as a moral or sacred duty to take up arms in defence of a victimised people with whom the individual identifies. In some cases, the awakening may simply consist of an intensification of an existing religious commitment that leads the individual towards an increasingly strict religious observance; in others, the awakening may consist of conversion from having no beliefs to adopting a very strict and rigorous set of beliefs or convictions. While these kinds of awakenings have been found to have played a key role in the radicalisation of some violent extremists and terrorists, many other individuals undergo very similar moral, religious or political awakenings but do not become radicalised, and it is unclear why some individuals but not others make the transition into violent extremism or terrorism as a consequence.

Exposure to violent extremist propaganda that offers a sense of adventure, excitement and heroism

Finally, young men in particular may be radicalised through their exposure to ideologies that create a positive emotional pull by offering them the prospect of heroism and a sense of adventure, excitement, risk, thrill and danger. These are precisely the enticements that can appeal to young males who are in the process of developing and exploring their own masculinity. It has been found that terrorist propaganda frequently plays directly on this attraction, by presenting terrorist training camps in a manner that is strikingly similar to outdoor adventure activity settings where young people are able to chase thrills and engage in fantasies of glory and heroism. Some violent extremist and terrorist groups have become extremely adept in tailoring their online materials and videos to youth audiences. Their video-editing techniques may be borrowed from mainstream television and cinema, the depicted violence may be scripted and staged, and the theatre of war may be turned into an arena that resembles a "gaming space". These sophisticated methods enhance the attractiveness of online videos to young people. It is sometimes not just males who are attracted by the element of excitement. Some young women may also be attracted (e.g. by the thought of travelling to another country to support heroic fighters on the front line, to live a self-sacrificing spiritual life within a caliphate).

The preceding categories of enabling conditions are of course not mutually exclusive, and it is highly likely that in any single case, an individual will be radicalised through exposure to propaganda that aims to meet a large number of these needs at the same time. For example, a single piece of propaganda might simultaneously offer the spectator a sense of belonging, a narrative that helps them to interpret their political grievances, a sense of purpose and empowerment, self-esteem, and the additional lure of adventure, excitement and heroism.

In addition, it needs to be emphasised once again that individuals are rarely radicalised through the operation of just a single predisposing or enabling condition on its own. Instead, radicalisation is more often a consequence of a combination of several conditions that interlock in different and sometimes complex ways depending on the specific circumstances of the individual concerned. Furthermore, different subsets of conditions are operative for different individuals. However, individuals can be equipped with internal resources that confer resilience to these conditions. If this is done, then even if a large subset of conditions applies, radicalisation will not occur. The Framework provides a means of building the resilience of individuals to both the predisposing and enabling conditions of radicalisation.

Although the current chapter focuses on the individual level of analysis (because this is the level at which the Framework can be used to build the resilience of learners), it must not be overlooked that institutional structures, inequalities, discrimination, racism and poverty play a significant role in fostering the conditions that lead to radicalisation. This is especially the case when institutional structures fail to address problems of disadvantage and poverty, when they are biased in such a way that they exclude disadvantaged individuals, or when they target specific minority groups in a discriminatory and unjust manner. In other words, institutional structures themselves can contribute to the marginalisation of individuals, to their sense of alienation, and hence to their radicalisation.

Resilience to radicalisation
The concept of resilience

The term "resilience" refers to situations where individuals develop normally or function effectively, even though they have experienced significant disadvantage or adverse conditions. Human resilience is common because many people manage to find strategies for coping with the conditions which they encounter even when these are highly unfavourable, and socially desirable outcomes are therefore often achieved despite the presence of serious adversity. Negative or socially undesirable outcomes occur when individuals fail to find suitable strategies for dealing with adverse conditions. This may happen if those conditions are exceptionally hostile, if an individual lacks sufficient social support from other people in their environment, or if an individual lacks the psychological resources that are required for finding suitable strategies for dealing with the adversity.

Developing resilience to radicalisation

Resilience to radicalisation therefore occurs when people are exposed to one or more of the predisposing or enabling conditions for radicalisation but do not make the transition into violent extremism or terrorism. Research has revealed that there are numerous actions that can be taken to enhance people's resilience to radicalisation. These include the following.

De-glamorisation of violent extremism and terrorism

Violent extremism and terrorism can be de-glamorised by stripping away its mystique and by explaining what it is really like to be a member of a violent extremist or terrorist organisation. This can include explaining how such organisations manipulate their members, distort the truth and promulgate falsehoods, how they incite their members into committing violent acts, and explaining the effects that joining such an organisation has on recruits' everyday lives and their relationships with families and friends. However, simply equipping individuals with knowledge of the harsh realities of violent extremism and terrorism may be insufficient by itself to build resilience to radicalising ideology and propaganda – individuals also need to critically reflect on how involvement in violent extremism and terrorism would fundamentally change and impact on their own lives and the lives of their loved ones if they themselves were to go down that path.

The deconstruction of violent extremist narratives and the provision of counter-narratives

Resilience can also be built by deconstructing the oversimplistic "us versus them" narratives that are typically advocated by violent extremist and terrorist organisations, and by providing counter-narratives, especially concerning the grievances and injustices that often provide the motivation for joining such organisations. Counter-narratives need to employ forceful counter-arguments against violent extremist ideas, explain why they are wrong, and if appropriate they need to provide rigorous theological refutations of violent ideology. Counter-narratives are unlikely to be effective if they are delivered by public agencies or authority figures in whom there is a low level of trust – they are much more likely to be effective if they are delivered by respected and trusted community figures who are perceived to be independent of government and the state.

Training in the use of a more complex thinking style

As was noted earlier, a common characteristic of those who embrace violent extremism is that they employ a style of thinking that is overly simplistic. Such individuals have a tendency to prefer simple answers to questions rather than ambiguous or qualified answers, to make overly broad generalisations, and to reject alternative or competing views. It has been found that people who employ simplistic thinking can be trained to use a more complex style. For example, one such training

initially requires participants to identify multiple viewpoints about an issue, then to think about the values that underpin all of the viewpoints that have been identified (which may include violent extremist viewpoints), and then to construct an overarching framework that makes sense of why people maintain a variety of differing views on the issue. It has been found that this kind of training can significantly increase the complexity of people's thinking about social issues. To be successful, the training needs to be non-prescriptive, it should allow individuals to develop their own independent thinking, and it should encourage them to gather their own information, to be open towards and to explore a wide range of views, to subject those views to critical evaluation, and to tolerate and accept the lack of clear-cut answers to complex social and political questions.

Education on the identification and deconstruction of propaganda

Resilience to radicalisation can also be built by providing more specific education on how to recognise and deconstruct political and ideological propaganda. The deconstruction of propaganda requires skills in accessing and evaluating other independent sources of information, especially sources that provide alternative narratives to those that are provided by the propaganda. In addition, individuals need to be able to deconstruct the underlying motives, intentions and purposes of those who have produced the propaganda, which in turn requires understanding and interpreting the broader political and social context in which the propaganda has been produced. Individuals also need to be able to draw the results of the analysis together in a coherent manner in order to evaluate the propaganda that is under scrutiny. Educating learners about propaganda can be used to equip individuals with these important competences.

Education in digital literacy

As has been noted already, the internet is a key source of information and propaganda for violent extremist and terrorist organisations, and it is also used to communicate directly with potential recruits. The internet can function as an "echo chamber", amplifying and confirming violent extremist and terrorist beliefs. Education in digital literacy is vital to enable individuals to engage not only with the literal meaning of the materials which they encounter on the internet but also with the communicative purposes of those materials. In addition, they need skills for identifying fabricated news stories on the internet (by, for example, checking the authorship, checking whether the sources of information cited within the story really do support the views that are being expressed, checking other independent sources of information to corroborate the story, checking the dates of photos that have been used, etc.).

Individuals also need skills for recognising the online grooming techniques that are used by violent extremist and terrorist organisations. Online grooming by such organisations often entails the use of graphic language and images to generate high levels of anger in the viewer, and the provision of carefully tailored information that has been deliberately designed to address the personal needs of potential recruits (for example, their need for a sense of belonging, self-esteem, social status or adventure). The online grooming process typically leads on to interactive communications through chat rooms, forums or social networking sites, which allow the organisation to vet potential recruits and to gradually adjust their communications in a manner that increases their appeal to new recruits and progressively draws them in. Education in digital literacy is essential for equipping individuals with the competences that are needed for dealing appropriately with materials and communications from violent extremist and terrorist organisations that may be encountered online.

A further action that can be taken to build individuals' resilience to radicalisation is to provide them with education in how to examine and explore complex social and political issues, how to use non-violent democratic means for the expression of political views, frustrations and grievances, and how to organise politically and take action in order to improve society. In many cases, the grievances that are held by young people (for example, concerning violations of human rights, countries' violations of international law, a lack of action over blatantly discriminatory policies) can be well-founded, and young people need to learn how to critically explore and understand the issues involved, and how to take meaningful political action over these issues. Education for democratic citizenship (EDC) and human rights education (HRE) have a vital role to play in fostering the competences that are required for these purposes.

Young people are not always aware of the full range of options that can be used to express their views to those in power. These include not only voting and writing to elected representatives, but also participating in peaceful demonstrations and marches, signing petitions, contacting the media, writing articles or blogs for the media, forming a new campaigning group oneself, using social networking sites on the internet for political causes, joining political lobbying and campaigning organisations, participating in fundraising events for political causes, etc. In addition, individuals who are concerned about a particular social issue or cause can organise community action groups, undertake voluntary service, engage in fundraising or other activities for a political or community organisation or NGO, make donations of either goods or personal time to charities, engage in consumer activism by boycotting or preferentially buying particular goods, and so on. In short, there is an enormous range of possibilities for expressing political viewpoints, for pursuing political and societal causes, and for fulfilling the desire to contribute. In the case of individuals who are concerned about issues in other countries, further options are also available, such as working with international charities and NGOs, which can offer the opportunity to travel and volunteer abroad. In short, EDC and HRE can be used to equip individuals with a wide range of competences that are needed to contribute and take action politically through peaceful democratic means.

The relevance of the Framework to building resilience to radicalisation

All of the preceding methods that have been found to be effective for building resilience to radicalisation aim to develop the competences of individuals so that they have the capacity to protect themselves against the predisposing and enabling conditions for radicalisation. By fostering these competences and building this capacity, the negative outcomes that might otherwise occur through exposure to these conditions are minimised and socially desirable positive outcomes are achieved instead.

The competences that are targeted by the methods

The specific competences that are targeted by these various methods are as follows. The deglamorisation of violent extremism and terrorism equips individuals with knowledge and understanding of what violent extremism and terrorism entail in practice and stimulates them into reflecting critically on themselves and on what involvement in such organisations would mean for their own personal and family relationships and future lives. The deconstruction of violent extremist narratives and the provision of counter-narratives aim to stimulate individuals to analyse and critically evaluate oversimplistic "us versus them" narratives, and to be open-minded towards alternative

narratives and explanations of social and political issues. Training individuals to use a more complex thinking style involves helping them to develop their own independent thinking – to gather their own information, to be open towards and to explore a wide range of views, to subject those views to critical evaluation, and to develop their tolerance of ambiguity (that is, to accept the lack of clear-cut answers) on complex social and political issues.

Education on the identification and deconstruction of propaganda equips individuals with skills in analysing and critically evaluating propaganda and in independently accessing other sources of information. It also builds their competence in understanding messages in the media (especially the underlying motives, intentions and purposes of those who have produced those messages), in understanding the communicative strategies that are used by those who produce propaganda, and in understanding the political and social contexts in which propaganda is produced. Education in digital literacy likewise encourages and supports the development of a wide range of competences, including the ability to understand the communicative intentions of those who post materials on the internet, the ability to analyse and evaluate the content of those materials, the ability to access other independent sources of information, and the ability to understand online language and communication processes.

Finally, education in the use of democratic means for the expression of one's own political views involves equipping individuals with knowledge and understanding of democratic processes and the law, an understanding of communication (that is, of how communication needs to be targeted and tailored for its intended audiences), and skills in adapting their own communications appropriately. Such education should also ideally equip individuals with co-operation skills and conflict-resolution skills (so that they may undertake democratic actions together with fellow citizens), and a sense of civic-mindedness (so that they are predisposed to undertake democratic action), responsibility (so that they only undertake responsible actions), and self-efficacy (so that they feel that their goals may be achieved, at least in part, by undertaking democratic action).

In short, the methods that are effective in building resilience to radicalisation are methods that enhance the following specific competences:

> Knowledge and critical understanding of violent extremism and terrorism
> Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
> Analytical and critical thinking skills
> Openness to other beliefs and perspectives
> Autonomous learning skills
> Tolerance of ambiguity
> Knowledge and critical understanding of the media
> Knowledge and critical understanding of politics and law
> Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
> Linguistic and communicative skills
> Co-operation skills
> Conflict-resolution skills
> Civic-mindedness
> Responsibility
> Self-efficacy

It is noteworthy that all of these competences, with the sole exception of the first one, are included within the Framework. The Framework proposes that there are 20 competences that individuals require to function as democratically and interculturally competent citizens (see Volume 1). These include all but the first of the competences that are listed above.

This list of competences includes a range of attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding. Notably, however, it does not include values. However, values are integral to the Framework. In addition, EDC and HRE are aimed precisely at empowering learners to value human rights, cultural diversity, democracy and the rule of law. Thus, the Council of Europe's (2010) Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education defines EDC as education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities that aim to empower learners to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law. The Charter likewise defines HRE as education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities that aim to empower learners to contribute to the building and defence of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The use of a whole-school approach to foster the development of the competences

Research has revealed that EDC and HRE are most effective in achieving their goals when they are delivered using a whole-school approach. This approach involves integrating democratic and human rights values and principles into all aspects of school life, including curricula, teaching and learning methods and resources, assessment, leadership, governance and decision-making structures and processes, policies and codes of behaviour, staff–staff and staff–student relationships, extracurricular activities and links with the community. A whole-school approach creates a learning environment in which democratic and human rights values and principles can be explored, understood and experienced by learners in a safe and peaceful way.

There are numerous actions that need to be taken when implementing a whole-school approach to EDC and HRE. These include, inter alia:

➢ Introducing an open classroom climate within the school. This is a climate in which learners are able to raise issues that are of concern to them, are allowed to discuss controversial issues, are encouraged to express their own opinions and to listen to one another and are allowed to explore a variety of different perspectives. The classroom is treated as a safe space which is open, participative, respectful and inclusive, with learners participating in the setting and implementation of the ground rules which provide the necessary codes of conduct if discussions become overheated or if there is serious disagreement over an issue.

➢ Introducing a rights-respecting ethos into the school, in which policies and practices based on the principles of human rights and responsibilities are placed at the core of the school's activities and teaching and learning approaches, and are applied across all school relationships including learners, teachers, parents and governors, and to the wider local and global community.

➢ Requiring learners, as part of their formal education, to undertake organised service-learning projects or action projects in their communities. Such projects require learners to participate in organised activities that benefit their communities, with the activities being based on what has been learned in the classroom; afterwards, learners are required to reflect critically on

their service experience to develop their academic learning, gain further understanding of course content, and enhance their sense of personal values and civic responsibility.

➢ Providing opportunities for learners to participate in formal decision making both at school and in the local community, for example, through student councils, representation on working parties and policy groups, etc.

Further actions that may be taken when implementing a whole-school approach are described in Guidance Document 5 in this volume on the whole-school approach.

There is now an abundant body of research evidence which shows that when learners experience an open classroom climate, attend a school that has a rights-respecting ethos, undertake service learning and participate in school councils, they are more likely to:

➢ have higher levels of civic knowledge;
➢ support democratic values;
➢ develop an understanding of their own rights as well as their responsibilities towards other people;
➢ become supportive of the rights of others;
➢ develop higher-order critical thinking and reasoning skills;
➢ develop positive and socially responsible identities;
➢ develop positive and co-operative relationships with their peers based on listening, respect and empathy;
➢ accept responsibility for their own decisions;
➢ develop positive attitudes towards inclusivity and diversity in society;
➢ become engaged with political and social issues;
➢ feel empowered as citizens who can challenge injustice, inequality and poverty in the world;
➢ engage in democratic activities in the future.

In other words, EDC and HRE, delivered through a whole-school approach, help learners to become knowledgeable, thoughtful, responsible, engaged and empowered citizens (for details of the research evidence supporting this conclusion, readers should consult the relevant sources listed at the end of this document in the Further reading section).

Building resilience to radicalisation using the Framework

The Framework has been developed as a comprehensive, systematic and coherent means for implementing EDC and HRE using a whole-school approach to build the competences that learners require to defend and promote human dignity, human rights, cultural diversity, democracy and the rule of law. Through its competence model, descriptors and guidance on curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, the Framework provides the materials that are needed for systematically implementing EDC and HRE in the formal education system, ranging from pre-school through to higher education. Furthermore, as we have seen above, if it is implemented appropriately, the Framework also provides a means to equip learners with the competences that confer resilience to the wide range of predisposing and enabling conditions for radicalisation that were outlined earlier in this document.

The Framework notably provides a more comprehensive and systematic means for equipping learners with the competences required for resilience than any of the individual methods that were reviewed in the Resilience to radicalisation section above. In fact, education based on the Framework necessarily incorporates four of the six methods that were reviewed in that section (that is, fostering

complex thinking, education about propaganda, digital literacy education, and education in the use of democratic means), and there is no reason why education grounded in the Framework cannot also be supplemented and enhanced by the use of the other two methods (namely, de-glamorisation of violent extremism and terrorism, and the deconstruction of violent extremist narratives and the provision of counter-narratives).

In short, the Framework provides a comprehensive system for building the resilience of young people to the conditions that can lead to radicalisation. There is abundant evidence that individuals who are equipped with the competences specified by the Framework will have the resilience to withstand the very wide range of predisposing and enabling conditions for radicalisation that have been outlined in this guidance document.

Practice – How to achieve these objectives

Those wishing to build young people's resilience to radicalisation should consider introducing a competence-based curriculum into the formal education system that will foster the development of the 20 competences contained in the Framework. Guidance on how the Framework can be used to audit and revise an existing curriculum, or to plan a new curriculum, is provided in Guidance Document 1 of this volume on the curriculum. This competence-based curriculum needs to be delivered through a whole-school approach if its impact on learners is to be maximised. Guidance Document 5 on the whole-school approach explains how the Framework can be implemented using this approach.

In addition, a competence-based curriculum should be delivered using appropriate pedagogical methods, and learners 'progress in mastering the competences should be assessed using appropriate assessment methods. Guidance on such methods is provided in Guidance Documents 2 and 3 on pedagogy and assessment, respectively. Teacher education provision also needs to be adjusted to ensure that teachers have the necessary capacities and expertise to deliver the competence-based curriculum. Guidance Document 4 on teacher education provides guidance on this topic.

The Framework therefore provides a comprehensive set of materials which, if used to guide education policies and practice, can enable the formal education system to build learners' resilience to radicalising influences and violent extremist communications, propaganda and rhetoric.

Recommendations

To political decision makers and policy makers with responsibilities for democratic governance, public authorities, social integration, social cohesion, policing, security and education

> ➢ Review, revise and renew formal education systems in your country to ensure that these systems are consistent with the Framework and enable learners to be equipped with the competences that are required to strengthen their resilience to radicalising influences and to violent extremist and terrorist communications.

To political decision makers and policy makers with responsibilities for education

> ➢ Ensure that suitable education in the principles and practices of the Framework is provided for all education professionals – including teacher educators, head teachers, teachers and trainee teachers.

➢ Ensure that suitable education is provided for all education professionals in the problem of radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism and in how the Framework can be used to combat such radicalisation.

➢ Provide the material support and resources that are required for the implementation of the Framework throughout the formal education system of your country.

To education practitioners, the police, members of security services and other state actors involved in the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism

➢ Ensure that you are familiar with the principles and practices of the Framework.

To political decision makers and policy makers with responsibilities for democratic governance, public authorities, social integration, social cohesion, policing and security

➢ Use the Framework as a basis for co-operating with education policy makers to ensure that policies on social integration, social cohesion, policing and security do not undermine the education objectives of the Framework and the methods that can be used to foster learners' competences for democratic culture (for example open classroom climate, rights-respecting ethos).

To political decision makers and policy makers with responsibilities for democratic governance, public authorities, social integration and social cohesion

➢ Ensure that the structures of state institutions are responsive to the concerns of citizens and strengthen their legitimacy through deliberative dialogue and robust democratic engagement.

➢ Provide systems and structures to ensure that learners can influence decisions that affect them.

➢ Take action to address the broader problems of disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion that are experienced by marginalised populations.

Resources

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