



NATIONAL REPORT GERMANY

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1. Background on National Context:

Since the beginning of the MATES project in December 2016 the context around Islamist radicalization has undergone several transitions in Germany. In 2015, a number of terrorist attacks across Europe had alerted the public and growing numbers of young men and women decided to join the jihad abroad. The number of followers of the Salafist movement has doubled since 2013 and by 2018 has reached over 11.000.¹ By mid-2017 an estimated 960 persons had left Germany to the ISIS territories in Syria and Iraq.²

By the summer of 2018 the trend of departures towards Syria had stagnated and it is estimated that about 300 returnees have come back to Germany. With the decline of the ISIS territories the focus is less on those leaving Germany for Iraq and Syria but rather on the returnees and so called “home-grown” terrorist activity and political and legal implications of accommodating returnees. The perceived threat of terrorist attacks grew in some segments of the political and public sphere over the past three years with more than 1 million refugees from predominantly Muslim countries entering Germany during this time frame.

Anti-Radicalisation National Programs and Level of Implementation

The policy reactions to a growing threat of religiously motivated radicalization are manifold and date back to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in New York. In 2001, a Counter Terrorism Group (CTG) was launched based on a decision by the EU council of ministers of Justice and Interior. The CTG was created to promote the collaboration between intelligence services on a national and European level.³ In 2004, a Common Terror Defense Center (Gemeinsames Terrorabwehrzentrum GTAZ) was founded in Berlin. The center does not represent a new government agency but rather

¹ <https://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/themen/sicherheit/extremismus-und-terrorismus/bekaempfung/islamismus-und-salafismus/islamismus-und-salafismus-node.html>; <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/was-ist-islamismus/salafismus-in-deutschland>

² Deutscher Bundestag (2017): 2

³ <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/counter-terrorism-group-ctg>



a platform for cooperation and communication between 40 national agencies of internal security.⁴ In particular, the collaboration between intelligence services and the police – formally separated by law - has been further reinforced in the context of this platform. Since 2007, an additional entity has been launched with the Common Internet Center (GIZ). The Center is attached to the Common Defense Center (GTAZ) and is in charge of monitoring, evaluating, and analyzing Islamist websites and related internet content.⁵

With its 16 states (*Bundesländer*) Germany's administration is based on a decentralized federal system. While the new structure of the Common Terror Defense Center (GTAZ) attempts to increase cooperation on a national level and to promote the exchange of best practices and theoretical reflections on prevention and deradicalization observers have stated that implementation will eventually fall into the responsibility of the federal states with their respective legislations. Therefore, the scope of the nation entity has its limitations with respect to concrete steps of intervention.⁶

Apart from investing into the security aspect of countering extremist movements, the German government has expanded educational projects fostering prevention and disengagement. In 2016, the federal government launched a "Strategy of Preventing Extremism and Fostering Democracy."⁷ The intention of the national strategy is to foster prevention efforts through political education, civic engagement, counseling, media and internet, monitoring, academic research and international cooperation. The strategy extends to the two most prevalent types of extremism in Germany at the time: religiously motivated extremism and right-wing nationalist extremism. The strategy is targeted towards initiatives on the local and regional levels. In 2017, the "National Prevention Program Against Islamist Extremism" was launched with an explicit focus on Islamist radicalization. With this strategy the federal government committed to an investment of 400 Mio. Euros for prevention programs until 2020.⁸ One of the focal areas of the prevention program is dedicated to "prevention and deradicalization in criminal justice and probation." As the

⁴ <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/gemeinsames-terrorismusabwehrzentrum-gtaz>

⁵ https://www.bka.de/DE/UnsereAufgaben/Kooperationen/GIZ/giz_node.html

⁶ Interview No. 1, see "6. List of Interviews" at the end of the document

⁷ https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/veroeffentlichungen/2016/strategie-extremismuspraevention-und-demokratiefoerderung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

⁸ https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/veroeffentlichungen/themen/sicherheit/praeventionsprogramm-islamismus.pdf;jsessionid=AE9DA40E599FFB6A6647AE04E726ACC.1_cid364?__blob=publicationFile&v=2

implementing entity the national initiative „Demokratie Leben“ (*Living Democracy*) funded through the federal Ministry of Families, Seniors, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) is financing model projects around the country which promote prevention and intervention in the context of criminal justice. To this end, each federal state is eligible of receiving up to 500.000 € per year.⁹

Terrorism Law and Law Enforcement

Since the terror attacks on September 11, 2001 several anti-terror laws have been passed in Germany. The most comprehensive legislation was passed with the “Law to Combat International Terrorism” (Terrorismusbekämpfungsgesetz) on January 9, 2002, also known as the security package II. Amongst the areas of intervention facilitated under this legislation are¹⁰:

- Documents of identification are based on computerized means of identification and biometric features.
- Extremist religious communities can be forbidden after the renewal of the law of association
- The competencies of various security agencies have been extended
- The German Federal Bureau of Investigation has the competency to pursue supporters of foreign terroristic organizations and can act upon cybercrime.
- The Federal Office of State Protection has received the additional task of observing activities against peaceful domestic and international cohabitation and understanding.
- Police and intelligence services have received access to anti-terror files and additional “fusion centers”

When the „Law to Combat International Terrorism“ was under revision for renewal in 2011 there was significant controversy on the duration of retention of telecommunication data.

In 2004, the new terminology of “Gefährder” was introduced by a working group of state and federal crime authorities. The term is not grounded in police legislation but is frequently used in the context of risk prevention and describes individuals who have not yet committed a terrorist

⁹ https://www.demokratie-leben.de/fileadmin/content/PDF-DOC-XLS/Leitlinien/180228_Aktualisierte_Foerderleitlinie_PB_J.pdf, for a detailed list of model projects funded through “Demokratie Leben” see: <https://www.demokratie-leben.de/modellprojekte.html>

¹⁰ Bundesministerium des Inneren, für Bau und Heimat (2002)



crime but give reason to suspect them of planning a criminal offense of significant scope justifying a surveillance of their (tele-) communication channels.¹¹ The legal parameters are defined in § 89a StGB of the German Criminal Code which was introduced to describe the sanctions for “the preparation of a severe subversive criminal offense”. The preparation of a subversive act also includes travel activities outside of Germany into territories which support the planning process of such criminal offenses. The sanctions for preparatory acts could range from 6 months to 10 years of detention. By the end of 2017, an estimated 720 “Gefährder” were residing in Germany. However, according to a three level risk scale assessment tool developed by security authorities only half of the so-called “Gefährder” constituted a societal risk.¹² As a new tool of surveillance the electronic footrest was introduced for “Gefährder” in June 2017 under § 20z BKAG. Apart from the extension of police surveillance competencies, stricter rules on repatriation of “Gefährder” and potential extremists were introduced based on § 58 AufenthG (residence law). An estimated 62 Islamist “Gefährder” is obliged to leave Germany.¹³ In light of these new legal regulations the number of “Gefährder” in jail is steadily increasing and has reached about 150 in 2018. This number is expected to increase further with more than 1000 terrorist related legal proceedings initiated in 2017 alone.¹⁴ Parts of this caseload are being transferred to the state level by the Attorney General in Karlsruhe. Consequently, the higher regional courts are also faced with an increase of cases. While there was one for the state of Hamburg in 2014 this number has increased to over 40 in 2017.¹⁵

Probation Systems and Intervention Approaches with Young Persons in Probation

The German prison system currently accommodates around 65.000 offenders. Inmates with a Muslim background constitute around 20% of the prison population and in larger cities like Hamburg, Bremen and Berlin almost 30%.¹⁶ To address potential risks of Islamist radicalization state justice ministries have introduced a number of measures. In Hessen and Baden-Württemberg “structural observers” were introduced in correctional facilities to observe signs of

¹¹ § 100 StPO Surveillance of Telecommunication

¹² Zeit-online (2017): Hälfte der Gefährder womöglich nicht so gefährlich wie gedacht, 17. Dezember 2017

¹³ Handelsblatt (2018): Schärfere Gesetze gegen Gefährder. Neues Sicherheitspaket stößt auf geteiltes Echo.

¹⁴ Flade, F./Stukenberg, T. (2017): Der hilflose Umgang mit entlassenen Islamisten, in: die Welt, 22.10.2017.

¹⁵ Interview No. 8

¹⁶ https://www.huffingtonpost.de/entry/muslime-haft_de_5a2a8c24e4b073789f6910f2



forbidden networks and extremist activities. Many other correctional facilities have introduced trainings and workshops for prison staff on radicalization and prevention. The above-mentioned model projects financed through “Demokratie Leben” are instrumental in supporting these training efforts during and after detention. While most initiatives operate on a state level, the Violence Prevention Network (VPN) has a national scope and has gathered experience in deradicalization, disengagement and prevention works since 2001.¹⁷

The potential risk of extremism in a criminal justice context also constitutes new challenges for the probation system. The legal basis for the work of probation officers is § 56 StGB, which stipulates that probation should assist and support convicted individuals as well as supervise the adherence to judicial orders. In the code of youth criminal law, the task of probation is further extended to the promotion of personal growth and education of the young person.¹⁸ In addition, probation officers are encouraged to cooperate with families, legal guardians, schools, employers and others. Apart from the objective of avoiding recidivism, probation services should be geared towards the societal and professional reintegration of offenders. Methodologically, probation services are requested to promote the notion of social learning and responsibility and to generate resource-based rather than deficit oriented solutions. The precondition for a successful reintegration is the voluntary participation of the client.

Given these legal parameters the task of probation is twofold: an assignment to promote reintegration and an assignment to implement court orders. Probation officers have noted that these two tasks constitute a challenging conflict of interest particularly with respect to the target group of radicalized offenders. Trained as social workers, probation officers rely on establishing a relationship of trust to implement reintegration goals. Due to the high security concerns with respect to extremist offenders probation officers fear putting this trust at risk and mainly operating as an extended arm of security and surveillance authorities.¹⁹

¹⁷ <http://www.violence-prevention-network.de/en/publications>

¹⁸ § 24 Abs. 3 JGG

¹⁹ DBH- Fachtagung (De-)Radikalisierung: Perspektiven und Strategien im Umgang mit radikalisierten, straffällig gewordenen Personen in der Bewährungs- und Straffälligenhilfe (*National conference of probation officers: (De-) Radicalization: Perspectives and strategies for counseling radicalized offenders in probation and correctional services*)



To provide for a confidential and professional counseling of radicalized individuals the city of Hamburg has installed Legato²⁰ as a specialized agency for referrals not only from schools and families but also from probation and youth court services. The numbers are proving that the counseling services are met with a high demand. Since the inception of the program, the case load of Legato has increased from 290 cases in 2016 to 345 in the first half of 2017 alone. It should be noted however that a majority of the cases fall into the category of prevention.²¹

2 Assessment Activities:

(Summary of results of Interviews and Focus Groups with target groups to gather information about local strategies and specific training needs with Probation officers, Frontline practitioners, Representatives of Islamic Communities, Others Representatives of the Community, young people in probation.)

a) Description of Activities

Given the federal administrative system in Germany, the project partner CJD Nord decided to focus its interview activities on the city state of Hamburg. With a population of 1.8 million, Hamburg is the second largest German city after Berlin. As a metropolitan area, more than one third of Hamburg's population has a so-called "migration background" – indicating that at least one parent is born outside of Germany. An estimated 8% of the city's population or about 130.000 are Muslims.²²

In the latest report of Hamburg's City Office for State Protection it was stated that in 2017 1.565 individuals were under supervision of security services for affiliation with Islamist activities. Members of the Salafist scene in Hamburg are estimated at 780 with 420 individuals demonstrating an affiliation towards violence. The majority of these individuals are young men between 18 and 35. More than half of the Salafists in the city have German citizenship. Over the past years, 84 persons have left Hamburg for ISIS territories and 31 of them are estimated to have returned.²³

In light of the above-mentioned demographic data Hamburg has developed a network of services and resources to address the challenge of Islamist radicalization. As described above, prevention

²⁰ <https://legato-hamburg.de/>

²¹ Bürgerschaft der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg (2017)

²² Foroutan, N. (et al.) (2014):14

²³ Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg Behörde für Inneres und Sport (2018): 38.

and intervention services for radicalized youth and their families are delegated to the NGO Legato financed through the program “Demokratie Leben”. With this specialized entity in place, probation services are less at the forefront of intervention and rather find themselves in a position of referral in cases of assumed risks of radicalization. Given this division of tasks, the project partner CJD Nord decided to contact a variety of stakeholders working with at-risk youth rather than placing an exclusive focus on youth probation services. Consequently, the **following institutions/agencies** were involved in the interview phase:

- Youth probation services, youth court assistance, counseling office for youth at risk of radicalization and their families (Legato), schools, Muslim community, Muslim social organization working on radicalization and prevention (Think Social 2.0), Office of State Protection, Justice System.

A total number of 17 individuals were interviewed in **individual and small group interviews** to gather information about local interventions and specific training needs:

- Islam scientists working as social workers in prevention (2), probation officers (3), criminologists working at Counselling Office for Religious Radicalization – Legato (2), Imam (1), Islam scientists working in security services (2), Judge (1), Psychologist working in juvenile justice (1), youth court services (3), Representative of Islam community (1), Teacher (1)

In addition, **one focus group** was conducted gathering a total of 10 participants from various professions including 2 MATES project team members.

Also, the project team attended **events and conferences** to gather information about interventions and specific training needs:

- October 9-10, 2017 - Berlin:

DBH- Fachtagung (De-)Radikalisierung: Perspektiven und Strategien im Umgang mit radikalisierten, straffällig gewordenen Personen in der Bewährungs- und Straffälligenhilfe (*National conference of probation officers: (De-) Radicalization: Perspectives and strategies for counseling radicalized offenders in probation and correctional services*)²⁴

²⁴ <https://www.dbh-online.de/bildungswerk/fachtagungen/fachtagung-de-radikalisierung-perspektiven-und-strategien-im-umgang-mit>

- December 4, 2017 - Mannheim:

Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung: „Grenzenloser Salafismus – Grenzenlose Prävention? Radikalisierung, politische Bildung und internationale Ansätze der Prävention“ (*National Association for Political Education: Borderless salafism – borderless prevention? Radicalization, political education and international approaches to prevention*)²⁵

b) Assessment of Prevention and Intervention Services

Based on the above-mentioned interviews, group discussions and conferences the CJD project team has gathered quotes and statements relating to the following aspects: profile of the target group, intervention strategies, information and training needs, multi-agency approaches and counter-narrative approaches.

Profile of Target Group (young persons in probation).

All interviewees stressed the diversity in socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds of young persons at-risk of radicalization – a circumstance which constitutes a challenge to the development of appropriate prevention and intervention tools. Despite this diversity, interviewees described the target group as predominantly growing up in vulnerable socio-economic conditions and some with previous exposure to the criminal justice system. According to an interviewed judge the majority of those under legal supervision in Hamburg and the neighboring state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern are German nationals with a migration background. Around 20% are Germans converted to Islam. Only a small number of suspects have a refugee background.²⁶

Reasons for Radicalization

As one of the most prevalent reasons for radicalization interviewees named the **search for identity**: “it has to do with identity in a society of immigration, with participation and experiences of discrimination”.²⁷ A representative of the Office of State Protection stated: “I would place a question mark behind the term ‘religiously motivated radicalization’. To me, Fundamentalist

²⁵ <http://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/dokumentation/262282/fachtagung-grenzenloser-salafismus-grenzenlose-praevention>

²⁶ Interview No. 8

²⁷ Interview No. 5

Islamism is a political ideology (...) it is basically about politics. It is a form of protest against society and about constituting a new identity.”²⁸

In particular, youth with a migration background often tend to **lack a sense of belonging**. Schools as a fundamental place of socialization have failed to provide a space for exploring children’s Christian or Muslim identity, religion is often treated as a taboo. Migrant families in their second and third generation might have refrained from religious education yet youth are identified primarily as Muslim and non-German in society. In this context, the search for new figures of identification and empowerment emerges: “The old imam who is imported from Turkey is less of a role model than Pierre Vogel,²⁹ who is a cool guy, a boxer who has charisma. I rather go to him to listen to his nonsense because I can identify with him.”³⁰ Religion and Islam in particular allows for a horizontal relationship between human beings: “You were a ‘nobody’, now you are a ‘brother’.”³¹ This desire for group adherence also seems to apply to **German converts**, although their narrative is different in that they rather emerge from middle and high income households and have not experienced discrimination based on their religious or ethnic background.³²

Manifestations of Radicalized Behavior

Recognizing the degree of radicalization and its implications is amongst the most difficult tasks for professionals. Interviewees have reported on significant insecurities amongst prison staff with respect to the assessment of potential signs of radicalization. A social worker in charge of working with migrants in juvenile justice has observed severe signs of hatred against German society especially from those realizing that their opportunities are limited and risking repatriation to their countries of origin after their release. Over the past 5-10 years growing numbers of unaccompanied minors from Maghreb countries have entered Germany and based on bilateral agreements these countries have been declared as “safe countries of origin”. These inmates feature a “**deep resilience against the West**” which at times manifests itself in fantasies of violence and provocation. Images and references of the IS are frequently introduced – partly to test boundaries and instill fear, partly to give voice to deeply rooted frustration. “Some inmates

²⁸ Interview No. 1

²⁹ Pierre Vogel is a convert and one of the most prominent Salafists in Germany addressing youth in public meetings and various youtube videos in a “youth friendly” language

³⁰ Interview No. 3

³¹ Interview No. 6

³² Interview No. 5

are searching for a justification for their life crisis. Something needs to explain why the world is so mean and I am locked up in here.”³³

In the debate around causes and manifestations of radicalization interviewees have discussed to which extend perceived “radicalization” in fact is a recent **manifestation of youth culture**. According to one interviewee “Salafism has become the new gangster rap”³⁴ and a teacher stated: “you could hardly provoke more attention than entering the classroom with a niqab.”³⁵ This moment of provocation has commonly been part of various youth cultures and has been an impetus for change. An interviewed imam suggested recognizing the **potential of radicalization** which tends to be linked to an **idealist moment** and with that to a utopian vision of a better society. Young people should be heard and taken serious in their dreams and critical views and not be made “lukewarm through deradicalization projects.”³⁶

Intervention Strategies with Vulnerable Young People

The above mentioned assumptions lead to the question of appropriate intervention strategies for the target group. The head of the counseling office legato in Hamburg observed that “the expectation that young people involved in Islamist activities will reach out to counseling offices searching for assistance in leaving the movement does not only ignore the fact that radicalization is linked to individual soul searching but also ignores the realities of contemporary youth culture.”³⁷

The notion that those already radicalized are hardest to reach was supported by most interviewees. To improve access to vulnerable youth and generate effective intervention strategies some interviewees called for a more differentiated view of the phenomenon of radicalization: “there is a difference between somebody who radicalizes himself because of a violent father and somebody who is motivated by political considerations. These two motivations can overlap or transform into the other but there is a big difference. And we need to be more specific – where does **prevention** end and where does **intervention** begin? It makes a difference where somebody comes from, if somebody is socialized in Germany and which future prospects are awaiting him (...) I have frequently observed that youth have been declared as radicalized but

³³ Interview No. 9

³⁴ Interview No. 5

³⁵ Interview No. 7

³⁶ Interview No. 6

³⁷ Taubert/Hantel (2017): 242.

yet they were in the midst of political opinion building but never found a context to exchange their ideas.”³⁸

This being said, interventions require a profound understanding of the causes of radicalization rather than a “one-size-fits all” approach. In this context, interviewees have discussed if intervention models implemented with **right-wing nationalist youth** could apply to this target group. Michaela Glaser compared the two phenomena and identified the following commonalities with respect to first entry and engagement processes: experiences of personal crisis and disintegration, experiences of exclusion both in social as well as interpersonal relationships, attraction to the movement based on diffuse ideological visions and the search for a sense of belonging to a group or community.³⁹ Beyond these commonalities Islamist radicalization is related to new challenges for the socio-educational practice. Intervention and preventive approaches in this realm are guided by security concerns leading to challenges around confidentiality and trust. Given the potential societal threat of the target population social services tend to be reluctant to engage in intervention/tertiary prevention.

In addition, the knowledge and understanding of the **role of religion** and the **involvement of the Muslim community** are key factors to be considered with respect to Islamist radicalization. Interviewees have discussed to which extent religious knowledge was a precondition to promote disengagement. According to a social worker who simultaneously is an Islamic scholar it is not “about getting engaged in a ping-pong of Koranic verses but to engage in human relationships and interact at eye level and to be open for the subjects relevant to the protagonists (...) In prevention work, you don’t need to be a theologian, but in the more precarious cases I believe that you can’t reach the youth anymore if you don’t speak their religious language (...) I have benefitted tremendously from being an Islamic scholar who knows the history and culture of the Orient (...) and therefore could decode Salafist propaganda.”⁴⁰ On the other hand, interviewees have stated that there often is a “father trauma...that is classic youth work, young people in puberty with the respective needs.”⁴¹

The NGO and counseling office legato stresses the youth specific aspects of radicalization and pursues a **systemic approach to intervention** according to which an individual is a psycho-social

³⁸ Focus group – interview No. 10

³⁹ Glaser (2016)

⁴⁰ Interview No. 5

⁴¹ Interview No. 5

system with a conscious mind and personal needs. Individuals are not considered as autonomous but rather as parts of a larger environment. Therefore, the systemic approach does not define a personal problem as a result of a particular cause but rather as a disruption in the larger system that needs to be addressed and solved. With respect to the disengagement of radicalized youth, an important focus of intervention is on the youth's support network and the professionals working with the young person. According to the systemic approach it is essential that relevant stakeholders in the systemic environment understand the context of the youth's radicalization and their own potential role in the process of radicalization. For an analysis of the social system therapists and counselors rely on a variety of tools including special interview techniques and the visualization of biographies. According to the system approach it is not only relevant what happens today but even more so what happened before. Which ruptures or moments of crisis can be observed? How is a young person embedded in his or her familial environment?⁴²

Although the systemic approach is a proven and well-established approach in social work some interviewees have stated that it might not be sufficient to reach radicalized youth or youth at risk of radicalization. A representative of the Muslim community observed "...a new phenomenon. It is no longer about the classic Turkish family with strong family ties. It is rather about young people who completely reject their families, because they consider their families as non-believers. This is why the systemic approach might not work because these young people have already isolated themselves from this system."⁴³

To address the spiritual needs of inmates in correctional facilities interviewees have addressed the role of **spiritual counseling** and **Muslim Chaplaincy**. Radicalized offenders – or those at risk of radicalization – tend to look for answers to questions concerning their religious beliefs and their expected behavior. Addressing these questions requires Islamic teaching and education that stimulates a positive Muslim identity that is "immune" to the missionary attempts of extremists. Apart from Muslim counseling it is equally important to address feelings of discrimination, social justice, and identity crisis prevalent amongst young inmates, especially amongst second and third generation migrants. Jail imam Husamuddin Meyer defines this comprehensive task as providing "**anger prophylaxis**".⁴⁴ According to Meyer, a holistic approach to spiritual counseling or Muslim

⁴² Taubert/Hantel (2017)

⁴³ Interview No. 2

⁴⁴ Meyer (2017): 350.



chaplaincy therefore needs to address multiple dimensions: 1.) questions of identity, 2.) general Islamic education, 3.) global political education, 4.) individual counseling.

This leads to the **role of the counselor**: who is sufficiently qualified to be accepted by the inmate population? In the Hamburg correctional system Islamic education and counseling is currently provided by volunteers and not on a consistent basis. Authorities have preferred to use the term “open forum of discussion” rather than “Muslim chaplaincy” to place a focus on preventive measures. However, voluntary engagement of selected imams will not suffice to address ideologies of hate. Muslim chaplaincy rather needs to be professionalized through targeted education and training, supervision of staff and sufficient funding. While Christian chaplaincy has been well-established there is only a slow emergence of academic programs at selected universities in Germany to train Imams. Apart from the scarcity of academic programs, security concerns constitute another challenge with respect to providing access for imams to correctional facilities, especially if they are trained outside of Germany.⁴⁵

Most interviewees agreed that disengagement work should include religious education as well as socio-educational counseling and political education. “There is so much frustration emerging from their social context. They are being discriminated in their job search because they have a foreign name, they listen to the headscarf debate...these daily experiences of discrimination are of political nature. Young people might not be aware of this correlation but they have a sense of a general malaise.”⁴⁶ To address this malaise interviewees involved in prevention and disengagement saw their role as political educators enabling youth to analyze these phenomena, to develop their own opinions and to articulate these opinions. Learning to give voice to their sentiments also includes developing “tolerance towards ambiguity” and reflecting controversial issues holistically.⁴⁷ However, interviewees stressed that disengagement work should also involve spiritual counseling – if needed and asked for. To achieve this task, Muslim communities need to be more involved in this field – not only in the realm of prevention but even more importantly in intervention. Cooperation with the Muslim community seems to be challenged by a number of factors. Interviewees have observed that representatives of the Muslim community need to have

⁴⁵ Interview No. 1

⁴⁶ Interview No. 5

⁴⁷ Focus group, interview No. 10

the sufficient “authenticity” to approach youth and gain their trust. In a correctional context inmates have accused “chocolate imams” of collaborating with authorities.⁴⁸

Sensitivity/Awareness about the Risk of Radicalization and Training Needs

With respect to the scope of radicalization in the correctional system a representative of the office of state protection in Hamburg refers to very low numbers. While German states as Hessen or Nordrhein-Westfalen might face larger challenges “the situation in Hamburg is overseeable...Al-Quaida members in jail are an absolute exception. If anything inmates enter jail being already radicalized but they do not radicalize themselves in detention. Inmates entering as non-extremists and leaving as extremists – I have not seen a single case of that in Hamburg.”⁴⁹ According to the interviewee the City of Hamburg pursues a policy of “serenity”. While some challenges might be similar to the ones faced in other German states, Hamburg addresses them with less media attention. Instead of installing “structural observers” as in Nordrhein-Westfalen, the office of state protection works closely with security advisors already installed within the correctional institutions. Overall the interviewee describes the relationship between inmates and correctional staff in Hamburg and Germany in general as “cooperative” compared to a more hierchical and militaristic approach which can be observed in France or the US. According to the interviewee this leap of trust towards inmates is amongst the causes for lower occurrences of radicalization in detention facilities.

Despite these parameters in the German correctional system the above mentioned expected increase of “Gefährder” in legal proceedings constitute new professional challenges for front line practioners in probation and detention settings. According to a psychologist in juvenile justice “youth are radical per definition. The difficulty is to develop a sensitivity for when things are becoming too much. However, not to be guided by one’s fear of doing something wrong. One needs to develop a sensor to differentiate between a normal rebellious reaction and radicalized behavior.”⁵⁰ To assist front line staff in addressing these insecurities and finding a balance between rigidity and chaos is a principle task of supervisors and psychologists in a correctional setting. According to the psychologist, front line practitioners are under enormous pressure

⁴⁸ Interview No. 9

⁴⁹ Interview No. 1

⁵⁰ Interview No. 4

because they feel the responsibility of “detecting” radicalization without having the appropriate tools. Justice staff are expected to be experts for this population when in reality they are not much more informed than the general public.

The office of state protection offers regular trainings in detention facilities on the subject of Islamism and also offers their expertise to justice staff when they detect suspicious objects or behavioral patterns amongst inmates. In addition, they have developed a handbook for the justice system. This handbook suggests instructions of developing a hierarchy of responsibilities. Experts need to be nominated and the revision team inspecting the cells and taking photos need to be trained to identify relevant signs of Islamist extremism just as they do when it comes to drug and weapon detection.⁵¹

Interviewees discussed to what extent a front line practitioner needs to become an expert on radicalization. After all, the exposure to this target group only constitutes a very small share of his or her daily professional routine. Also, front line practitioners in a correctional setting have to navigate between monitoring the sanction of the offender, ensuring the safety of other inmates and promoting the reintegration of the offender into society.⁵² As described above Hamburg has decided to delegate a significant share of responsibility to legato as an external NGO with expertise on social counseling and training of justice stakeholders and front line practitioners. Probation officers and representatives of youth court services that were interviewed stated a sense of relief that they could refer cases of potential radicalization to legato.⁵³ According to social workers at legato correctional officers in a detention setting have been more skeptical with respect to the benefit of their intervention.

Have Multiagency Strategies been Revisited to Work with Radicalized People?

Although multi-agency cooperation has been widely recognized as beneficial in promoting prevention and disengagement the prevalence of security concerns has led to blind spots in the shared analysis of causes, motivation and processes of radicalization. According to Biene et al.

⁵¹ Interview No. 1

⁵² Interview No. 8

⁵³ Interview No. 11 and 12



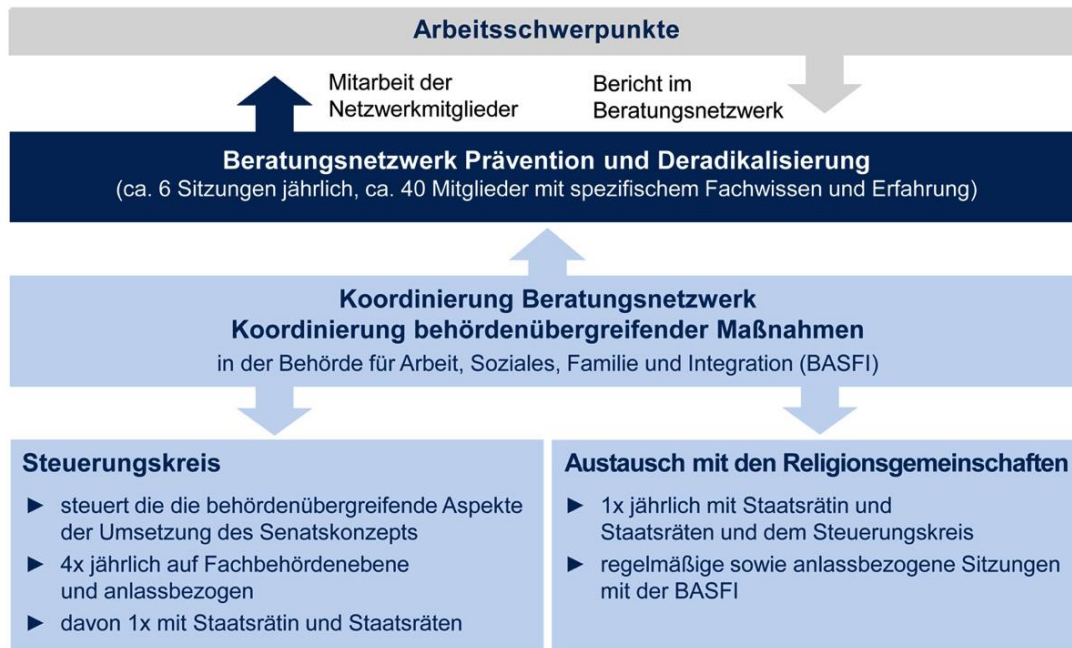
there are “islands of knowledge”, however the transfer of knowledge has not yet been sufficiently institutionalized.⁵⁴

Within Germany, there is significant variation with respect to the configuration of multi-agency cooperation and the sharing of knowledge. In Bavaria, prevention and intervention are based on a police centered structure. Attached to the state’s criminal police office is a competence-deradicalization center and a branch of the NGO Violence Prevention Network (VPN) which cooperates with security services. In the state of Hessen and Nordrhein-Westfalen deradicalization projects are affiliated with the Ministry of Interior however equipped with a certain degree of independence. Hamburg is the only state in which prevention and deradicalization fall in the responsibility of the Ministry for Social Affairs (BASFI). This decision reflects a philosophy which gives a greater role to social service agencies. Although security concerns are prevalent, under this approach service providers are entrusted to conduct their own risk assessment and to decide whether a case requires a referral to police and state protection. With this delegation of responsibility to social service providers the City addresses the fact that the majority of counseling cases fall into the realm of prevention requiring social counseling instead of intervention requiring security measures.

The senate of the City of Hamburg has called upon the Ministry of Social Affairs (BASFI) to establish a city-wide multi-agency “network on prevention and deradicalization”. The network has a scope of 40 members including various city agencies, religious communities, intervention and prevention projects and meets 6 times a year.

⁵⁴ <https://www.sicherheitspolitik-blog.de/2016/02/24/wissen-schaffen-durch-wissenstransfer-zum-dialog-von-forschung-und-praxis-zu-salafismus-in-deutschland/>

Struktur Beratungsnetzwerk Prävention und Deradikalisierung



Mitglieder des Beratungsnetzwerks Prävention und Deradikalisierung

Behördliche Stellen	Religionsgemeinschaften	Präventionsprojekte (primär-präventiv)	
Behörde für Arbeit, Soziales, Familie und Integration Amt für Arbeit und Integration, Amt für Familie, Sozialpädagogisches Fortbildungszentrum (SPFZ)	SCHURA – Rat der islamischen Gemeinschaften in Hamburg e.V.	SCHURA e.V. Koordinierungsstelle Brückenkopf zum Netzwerk, Jugendarbeit	Basis & Woge e.V. Resilienzförderung im Kindesalter
Behörde für Inneres und Sport Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz (LFV) und Landeskriminalamt (LKA)	Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland e.V.	Alevitische Gemeinde Hamburg e.V. Koordinierungsstelle Brückenkopf zum Netzwerk, Jugendarbeit	Bündnis Islamischer Gemeinden in Norddeutschland e.V. (BIG) Medienkompetenz, alternative Medieninhalte
Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung Landesinstitut für Lehrerbildung und Schulentwicklung (LI), Hamburger Institut für berufliche Bildung (HIBB), Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Beratungsstelle Gewaltprävention	DITIB-Landesverband Hamburg e.V.	AJS e.V. Fortbildung von pädagogischen Fachkräften	Fachrat Islamische Studien e.V. (FIS) Peerarbeit in Moscheen
Justizbehörde Justizvollzug	Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren (VIKZ) e.V.	7 Lokale Partnerschaften für Demokratie Tragfähige Beziehungen von lokalen Akteuren, Zusammenhalt stärken	Islamisches Wissenschafts- und Bildungsinstitut e.V. (IWB) Qualifizierung und Vernetzung von Fachkräften im Sozialraum, Jugend-Workshops
Bezirksämter Lokale Partnerschaften für Demokratie, Kinderschutzkoordinatoren der JÄ	Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Norddeutschland		
	Angehörigen- und Ausstiegsberatungsstelle		
	Legato – Systemische Ausstiegsberatung, Fachstelle für religiös begründete Radikalisierung		

The Muslim community is represented in the multi-agency network with a variety of stakeholders. However, their designated role is mainly in the area of prevention. When it comes to intervention or tertiary prevention Muslim communities tend to be more reluctant to become involved because it could require collaboration with security services – potentially leading to a conflict of interest.⁵⁵

c) Counternarrative Approach Targeting Individuals:

In 2017 the German Federal Bureau of Investigation has launched an evaluation of various types of counter-narratives against Islamist propaganda. In its report the bureau comes to the conclusion that there is hardly any empirical evidence as to the effectiveness of counter-narratives. In general counter-narratives are geared towards discounting extremist propaganda and deconstructing its legitimacy through video, youtube and various other media channels.⁵⁶ Interviewees have been skeptical with respect to the term of “counter-narratives”. They conceded that in a democratic and pluralistic society narratives cannot be combatted through counter-narratives and rather suggested to use the term of “alternative narratives”.⁵⁷

What is the Message we are Countering?

An important precondition for the development of alternative narratives is a profound understanding of the narratives of Islamist extremism. Interviewees have identified messages or narratives that attract followers and address the following needs:

Social Justice

- Radicals challenge the status quo, they search for something to fight for
- A young person gets the sense that he or she can save the world
- Desire to reverse discrimination against Muslims around the world
- Theory of liberation, mobilizing ideas...religion offers arguments for idealism, the language of the left is no longer attractive
- We live in this society but we are not welcome, we are being discriminated against, are second-class citizens, we don't feel comfortable in this society, don't find jobs, everyday refugee camps and mosques are being attacked.

⁵⁵ Interview No. 2

⁵⁶ Rieger et al. (2017)

⁵⁷ Interview No. 2

- Refugees feel misunderstood from their surrounding society, they develop anger in their shelters
- Radicals often know that what attracts them to the movement has nothing to do with Islam. They are against the state, they celebrate violence and video games. They like the idea to 'bang away' in real life as well. The IS has detected this pattern and recruits exactly these individuals.

Community and Sense of Belonging

- 70% of the visitors in mosques are under 25 years. They are young tough men who are hugging each other, who search for emotional warmth and comfort.
- Religion provides for horizontal human-to-human relationships
- Young people are searching for their roots....but also for an upgrade of their self-esteem

Spiritual Home and Authenticity

- Religion has traditionally been rooted in specific cultural settings – in Western societies however religion has increasingly become “deculturalized”
- Religion has mutated to a commodity to resolve grievances – religion to “download” based on selective preferences
- Violence in religion is a phenomenon of modernity and not rooted in tradition

Clarity and Structure

- Young people today are overwhelmed with the freedom they have. Freedom in this sense leads to loneliness
- Young people need the structure that religion can offer – they are lost in an anonymous world...they are searching for their roots
- Many young people don't like to read anymore, they don't want to deal with complex issues, they are attracted by simple 'black-white' explanation

Who are the Messengers? Which are the Channels?

These above-mentioned needs have been adopted by Islamist extremists in the development of their propagandistic narratives. The needs identified have positive connotations and reflect youth specific desires. The question becomes which catalysts come into play to transform the idealist moment or desire for identity and belonging into violent action and which propaganda channels support this transformation.

Interviewees have stressed that propaganda and outreach has become more subtle recently and become increasingly difficult to detect. A demarcation between social criticism and extremism cannot always be clearly identified. As an example, interviewees mentioned (media) content

featured by initiatives such as Generation Islam⁵⁸ or Realität Islam⁵⁹ which are predominantly criticizing social phenomena like Islamophobia but yet have a subtle extremist message. When focus group participants were presented with video clips of these initiatives they observed that important social mismatches were featured in the clip but that they left an ambivalent feeling as to what these contents could provoke in vulnerable youth who might be even more challenged with differentiating between **propaganda** and **social activism**.⁶⁰

Similarly, prominent representatives of the extremist Salafist scene package their propaganda in emotional messages. They are rhetorically well-versed, they can talk and they appeal to the emotions of the young people. As an example, the prominent convert Pierre Vogel has posted a video in which he pays a visit to his Christian grandmother, a normal German grandmother who cooks for him.⁶¹ “A young German will think, ok, he is one of us, he is normal, he has relationships with his family, he is faithful and he fights for the rights of the oppressed.”⁶²

With respect to narratives and counter-narratives or alternative narratives, interviewees have stressed the relevance of both **on-line** as well as **off-line touch points**. The first access to extremist propaganda is commonly through online content: “if a young person doesn’t have access to a mosque community or cannot understand the imam he is forced to search the internet, there is no second option. There are only few books translated in German and many young people don’t like to read much. That’s why videos are short, i.e. a video by Pierre Vogel which teaches you Islam in 30 seconds.”⁶³ Once the online recruitment through images, videos, digital/virtual relationships has been successful offline touchpoints such as info stands, conversation circles, and human relationships are provided by extremist groups. A prominent example of the interdependence between online and offline touchpoints has been the LIES campaign which distributed free Corans in various German cities announcing their initiative through online channels. When it became evident that this initiative served as a recruitment tool for Islamist extremists the German Ministry of Interior banned it in 2016.⁶⁴ In reaction to this ban Islamist groups have transformed their

⁵⁸ <http://generation-islam.de/>

⁵⁹ <http://www.realitaet-islam.de/>

⁶⁰ Interview No. 10

⁶¹ See reference in fn above, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cmpfl60KgJg>

⁶² Interview No.2

⁶³ Interview No. 2, also see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFAVJmeJuFA>

⁶⁴ <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen/me-20161115-verbot-dwr-lies>

strategy and have started to distribute biographies of the prophet Muhammad entitled “We love Muhammad”.⁶⁵

According to interviewees this duality of online and offline touchpoints should also be taken into consideration with respect to the implementation of “alternative narratives“. Offline touchpoints such as youth centers and mosques are increasingly challenged in reaching youth in general and at-risk youth in particular. “It is not a success if 50 youth are coming to attend Muslim youth groups if 500 and more young Muslims are living in the community.”⁶⁶ Youth centers and more conventional programs of political education have equally failed to attract youth. Therefore, interviewees have stressed that outreach needs to be modern and adjusted to youth needs: “get ideas from you tubers...try a hybrid form of traditional and modern methods for new target groups. You tubers show us how to do it –they have 5 million followers, they are doing it cool.” This leads to the question of content and messengers: “youth should be involved in the videos. At the end of the video there should not be the logo of a social service provider, sponsor, ministry, etc. – it needs to be conveyed that the message is from youth for youth.”⁶⁷ Within the focus group, a few innovative online efforts were introduced. Amongst them is “Datteltäter”⁶⁸ founded by a group of young Muslims and non-Muslims in Berlin who approach the subject of radicalization through **satire**. The Mohammed caricatures or Charlie Hebdo have demonstrated the sensitivity of caricature in this context. Therefore, it is important to avoid mocking the religion but rather to mock behavior patterns of those who claim to have sole definitional power of the religion. Apart from satire, **innovative methods of political education** should be explored to address the sense of social injustice experienced by many youth. Online initiative need to be matched however by corresponding offline touchpoints. According to practitioners involved in prevention and disengagement programs offline initiatives should focus on **emotional** and **social learning** rather than emphasizing **cognitive learning**.⁶⁹ In group sessions provided by initiatives such as the Violence Prevention Network or “Denkzeit Berlin” narrative approaches as an expression of personal experiences have proven to have a more unifying effect than arguments rooted in ideological discourse which tend to be more divisive.⁷⁰ According to a focus group participant,

⁶⁵ <https://www.welt.de/regionales/hamburg/article164024366/So-funktioniert-die-neue-Masche-der-Salafisten.html>

⁶⁶ Interview No. 2

⁶⁷ Interview No. 10

⁶⁸ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF_oOFgg8qwi7HRGTJSsZ-g

⁶⁹ Weillböck/Uhlmann (2017)

⁷⁰ <https://www.denkzeit.info/>

online and offline initiatives should be two autonomous entities that cooperate. One project combining both is difficult to manage: “We have followed thousands of comments, private chats and messages and hate speech attacks...that is a success. However, to make it a real success others have to get involved and offline touchpoints need to exist.”⁷¹

3. Pilot site Selection and Testing Phase

a) Reason for Selecting Pilot Site(s)

The pilot testing was conducted in two localities with very different demographic features: in the **city-state of Hamburg** and the **state (Bundesland) of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**. The demographics, extent of radicalization as well as multi-agency responses in the city-state of Hamburg have been described in the previous chapter. As a former Eastern German state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has different demographic characteristics with lower percentages of residents with migration background and most residents living in rural and small town communities. Rather than Islamist radicalization the state experienced an increase of right-wing and German nationalist radicalization – also directed towards refugees entering the state since 2015. The CJD Nord in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern looks back on several years of experience in exit programs for youth engaged in right-wing nationalist movements. In addition, the CJD Nord in 2018 has launched the new coordination office “Bidaya” for the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to facilitate the exchange of expertise on religiously motivated radicalization across the state.⁷²

Description of Participants

The participants for the pilot training were chosen based on their affiliation with the criminal justice system, their professional experiences in deradicalization and disengagement projects and their ability to read the units in English. The round of participants was constituted of both external professionals and CJD Nord staff involved in projects promoting disengagement from both Islamist and right-wing nationalist radicalization in a criminal justice context.

⁷¹ Interview No. 10

⁷² https://www.regierung-mv.de/serviceassistent/_php/download.php?datei_id=1598854

The participants in the pilot testing of the e-learning platform can be clustered into the following professional groups:

- Social workers
- Criminologists
- Criminal justice staff
- Muslim community
- State protection office
- Islamic scholars
- Psychologists

b) Difficulties Involving Participants, Steps Taken to Overcome Difficulties

Amongst the most prevalent obstacles to conducting the pilot testing was the availability of time resources. All interview partners expressed their interest in viewing the e-learning platform. However they stated that a careful review of the units would be difficult to incorporate in their work schedule. Most participants perceived the length of the individual units as too comprehensive. Also, the initial introduction of the material and the testing of units had to be conducted in English because the translation was postponed until final editing was completed. In addition, participants stated that the contents of the e-learning tool are relevant but would need to be embedded into a face to face, interactive training context given the sensitivity of the subject matter.

In order to address these mitigating factors, CJD Nord pursued the following mixed methods of introducing the e-learning units: a.) personal introduction of units as an entity with selected references to sections of the units, b.) online testing by sending the links of the training units to selected participants, c.) face-to-face training session testing the tool in addition to introductory and concluding discussion.

c) Description of Activities and Results of the Pilot Phase

Introduction of e-learning tool in Waren, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, January 19, 2018

On January 19, 2018 the CJD Nord project team introduced the first unit 1 “countering violent extremism” and unit 2 “exit strategies” to 6 professionals at the CJD head office in Waren. Participants were social workers and educators involved in prevention and intervention programs against religiously motivated and right-wing nationalist radicalization. While some participants had multiple years of experience of counseling youth at risk of right-wing nationalist radicalization others were in the process of launching prevention and deradicalization workshops in detention centers in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern supported through the state’s Ministry of Justice. In addition, professionals were involved in launching a coordination office for religiously motivated radicalization for the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. During the meeting the MATES project was introduced and print outs of the first two units were distributed. The meeting was not designed as a testing event but rather served a general exchange on the idea of an e-learning platform. Amongst the comments of participants were the following:

- Training material needs to address the professional attitude of a social worker/probation officer/justice staff – how far do I need/want to get involved in the subject of radicalization
- E-learning in this sensitive subject needs to be embedded into face to face training
- In training the issue of language is paramount – different professionals have different terminologies, these differences need to be addressed
- Glossy videos to promote counter-narratives are often not very effective
- The didactic units should include contact data for professionals

Pilot Testing at CJD office in Hamburg, April 3, 2018

On April 3, 2018 a pilot testing was launched of unit 1 “countering violent extremism” and unit 2 “exit strategies”. Participants were social workers and educators in prevention and intervention programs against religiously motivated and right-wing radicalization, probation officer, Islamic scholars and social workers launching deradicalization programs in detention centers from Hamburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (14 participants including CJD Nord project team). After an initial introduction of the project the group was separated in two and each group was provided with print-outs of both units. Each group read and studied the units for about two hours and

completed the evaluation sheets. Afterwards both groups joined each other and discussed the contents of the didactic units. A summary of the group discussion and written comments on evaluation sheets is listed below:

E-learning unit 1: **Countering Violent Extremism**

Overall Feedback

- “Radical Muslims are not portrayed as a mini-minority and as a very specific group. That’s just completely reversed and any probation officer who reads it will actually be confirmed in what he’s been thinking so far”
- “The first image already supports stereotypes”
- “In the course of the unit you realize that the author of the unit was previously not concerned with the problem”
- “As a probation officer I do not need to know which heroes there have been in the background”
- It’s rather important to deal with issues as:
 - “Where did ISIS develop? Why did it develop? (...) you should move away from the condensed statement in 90% of mainstream media. It is not a wrong representation, however a condensed one. And that’s what happens in the unit”
- “The unit is not completely free of the mainstream’s point of view. The historical, colonial and political part of the phenomenon’s causation (narrative) is missing. However, it’s important to consider these points in order to grasp the problem and to work on that. It is very much about politics (...) I don’t consider the unit holistic”
- “I would not recommend the unit to any professional. I think it is wrong to equate Salafism and Wahabism, because person x is simultaneously mentioned with person y and it is not correct to evoke the impression that they belong together (...) there is no clear distinction, it’s vague”
- “The Arabic transcription is partially wrong”
- “It is not correct to consider Sufism as the only spiritual movement of Islam. Probably it’s not the targeted goal but that’s the impression of the unit”
- “Lack of scientific way of working concerning the video material e.g. dates when the videos were activated on the internet for the last time”

- “I miss the European reference. There has been scientific literature for decades already”
- “The narratives displayed in the unit are not those which interest a young person. The narrative which addresses him is “Look, all people are against you and you are in this situation, because you are Muslim” That’s the point where they pick him up. This is the narratives we have to fight against. And when I look at this unit, well yes, nice to know, but it does not meet the point”
- “I have nothing against this module in general. And I think it’s nice to have something you can use. But I do not like the way it was transformed. First, there are too many undefined terms and it’s expected that the reader knows what they mean. At this point it would be great to have an introduction to “Islam” and a common starting point. The beginning with Salafism is problematic to me. Who knows the difference between Salafism and other movements? And in the same section you find the term “terrorism” which is also not defined. And that’s very problematic, because it is not the same. You can’t equate radicals with militant Salafists”
- “In the section “Moderate Islam” only Sufis are mentioned. Are they the only ones? No! But that’s the impression I get when I read the unit. And if you don’t have enough background knowledge you can’t do anything with that information”
- “Here we see the term “counter narratives”. From my experience it’s no longer used that way. If at all, people rather say “alternative narrative”. Nonetheless, it remains doubtful whether it should be used and if yes, how you should work with that term”
- “The unit is just a list of the “bad guys” – not more. A completely negative presentation (...) That’s the enemy – recognize him! (...) it causes fear which has direct impact on the professionals who work with radicalized youths, because it creates a negative attitude”
-

Images

- “I wonder why these images? What is the intention? It would be a better idea to have a link to an image collection or something similar. But the unit is not what it should be about. There is a risk of giving high efficacy to those images having them permanently in the background”
- “The unit is a reproduction of mainstream media and stigmatization. There is so much one could leave out and concentrate on rather important content and narratives instead of listing images of unknown persons”
- “Teachers having read this material could use the images for their work with pupils, because they think they might be important. That could be dangerous”

- “No multiple applicability – only text (YouTube videos excluded). At certain points short explanation spots would be more productive”

Suggestions

- “All the images can be put in an image library which can be very useful for example for prison staff to evaluate suspicious posters on detainee’s walls”
- “Incorporate open-ended questions as food for thoughts and which provoke (self-) reflection. That would be more constructive than test questions we find in the units”
- “The units need more references to literature and other material which help the reader to build his own differentiated point of view. In that sense, it has to be very basic and neutral and offer different perspectives”
- “The key to success of that tool is its applicability on a very practical level – recommendations for practical actions are missing”
- “The tool is only applicable in an interactive group session. Professionals must discuss on what they read and process the material in exchange”

E-learning unit 2: **Exit Strategies**

General Feedback

“I really liked the part Good Live Model. The working area of radical people is extremely risk orientated with a security concept in the background. And those resources oriented approaches remain the exception and are therefore very important and interesting to us”

- “As an overall impression, well done. It contains the most important points, well explained. Compressing different disciplines into one unit is a good approach”
- “The explanation of extremism given in the unit is not the only one in Europe, rather a facet. The multi-causal phenomenon is not entirely explained”
- “The term “exit” is very arguable. We rather use “disengagement” or “dissociation” from certain attitudes. People still think of existing organized structures but nowadays it’s not always true, because in many cases young people radicalize themselves through the internet and often don’t even belong to a certain movement. And if you talk about “exit” then it’s always the question: from what? It’s even more complex in the case of religious extremism: exit means: I’m out. From what? Religion? No, they don’t have to exit their religion. This term is schematically correct but totally unrealistic from today’s perspective”

- “An important point that unfortunately has not sufficiently come through is the scientific status quo that says that we do not know enough by now, almost nothing in the field of religious motivated extremism. And that we are still on a general discourse level rather than on scientific evidence based results. There is only few data on what works and what doesn’t. We’re are still in a learning process and that must become very clear!”
- “The list of programs is largely incomplete and not updated. Moreover, it’s absolutely unclear on which basis you chose the programs you mention”

General Structure

- “It’s not clear what is evidence based information and what are experiences, what are only assumptions, hypothesis, examples, good or bad practices, linking to other sources etc. It’s neither visible in the layout (scripture, graphics, images etc.) nor in the content”
- “The units lack numbers. In this field numbers are necessary to make clear the dimension and the relation of the target group we’re talking about (...) the fact that radical Islamists are the minority (...) and it’s even less when we see the numbers of detainees”

National Context

- “National context is important (...) lowest common denominator, general structures of the European problem as a basis followed by country-specific information and national phenomena”
- “It depends very much on the objective of the tool. If you want to have a general information tool for sensitization and a rather rough overview of the phenomenon then you don’t need any deeper insight on national level. But if it should be a tool for professionals and practitioners then it must offer strategies and methods for specifically this field of work”

Evaluation Sheet

- “The questions had to be put differently e.g. the question whether I would use the tool is not as important as whether I would disseminate it to other professionals. And my answer would be `no`, because the units are little differentiated and not applicable for beginners without any previous knowledge”
- “There are too many questions concerning layout, design and structure but few till barely concerning content”

[Department of Justice, Hamburg June 8, 2018:](#)

On June 8, 2018 the CJD Nord project team met with the advisory group on resocialization and prevention of extremism of the Ministry of Justice of the city of Hamburg. Participants were

political scientists, Islam scientists and a psychologist in charge of risk assessment. Two participants were familiar with the MATES project through participation in the focus group and various networking events. Prior to the meeting, the link to all four didactic units were sent to the participants. Due to very limited time resources linked to a high profile office of great political relevance participants were only able to screen the contents. Participants did not find the time to fill in evaluation sheets but voiced the following comments:

- Length of e-learning platform is too extensive.
- Research on jihadism has grown significantly over the past 10 years – it is challenging to maintain an overview.
- An e-learning tool on Islamist radicalization needs to be linked to face-to-face training. Without incorporating the units into a larger training context there is a risk of selected reading, misconceptions and unintended training outcomes.
- It is questionable if „front line staff“ is the right target group for the e-learning tool, particularly if not appropriately accompanied and moderated by a trainer. Previous experiences of trainings on Islamism have shown that front line staff have quickly declared themselves as „experts of Islamism“ and have seen themselves in a position of conducting categorizations/risk assessments.
- Unit 1 on countering violent extremism is too detailed for front line practitioners – too much detailed information. A central message that should be communicated in training is that Islam does not equal Islamism.
- The division on risk assessment in the justice department is interested in reviewing the training unit on psychological profiling (forthcoming).
- The Good Life Model described in unit 2 on exit strategies is a state of the art approach and very useful in the context of probation and release plans. The model describes a resource-based approach which is currently wide-spread in youth criminal justice. The department will reflect on incorporating the Good Life Model into the training units of legato, the designated provider of prevention and disengagement services.
- The multi-agency approach as described in unit 4 is positive and is being put in practice in Hamburg to some extent. However, multi-agency cooperation seems to be most effective in the phase of prevention. In the area of tertiary prevention inter-agency cooperation becomes more challenging.



July 20, 2018: Testing via e-mail:

On July 20, 2018 the link to all four units and the evaluation forms were sent to two professionals from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern via e-mail. Both participants are educators involved in disengagement programs for right-wing radicalized youth and were part of the initial meeting on January 19 in Waren. Again time constraints only allowed selective evaluations of unit 1 and 2.

All above mentioned feedback and evaluation has been documented, scanned and is attached to this report.

4. Summary and Dissemination Activities

The dissemination of the didactic units has been an on-going process but has been mitigated by some of the factors mentioned above: mainly time constraints of potential testing candidates, length of the units, delay in translation and access to testing persons. Comprehensive dissemination of the units has also been mitigated by the skepticism voiced by participants during the pilot testing. As described above, participants appreciated the idea of an e-learning platform as long as it is linked to face-to-face training. However, the relevance of the content was questioned by some testing persons who missed a stronger application to national contexts and narratives. Also, they feared that existing prejudices of front line practitioners might be reinforced by some of the contents portrayed – instead the causes and origins of the rise of Islamist extremisms should have been further highlighted. Testing persons also questioned if probation officers and front line practitioners in fact are the appropriate audience for the e-learning tool since the contents are rather directed towards an academic target group.

In addition, testing persons missed tools for practical pedagogical implementation. A positive example highlighted by many testing persons was the Good Lives Model in the didactic unit “exit strategies”. In fact, Legato in particular has requested additional information on the model and has asked for an exchange with the Portuguese partners on applying the model to the target group. The introduction of the Good Lives Model in this context has also received positive feedback from the Ministry of Justice.

Despite their criticism testing persons have expressed their interest in getting access to all didactic units in German and have requested for publication of the units on CJDs website. Ongoing dissemination will on the one hand be realized through in-house projects at CJD Nord – namely

the coordination office for religiously motivated radicalization Bidaya⁷³ and the prevention and deradicalization project PräRaDEX in detention centers funded through Demokratie Leben.⁷⁴ Both projects are located in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and involve the cooperation and training of correctional officers, probation officers and other front line staff. In addition, the results of the MATES project and didactic units will be disseminated to local and regional partners such as Legato, the Ministry of Justice as well as probation and youth court services in Hamburg.

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⁷³ <https://www.cjd-nord.de/aktuelles/detailansicht/news/detail/News/cjd-nord-eroeffnet-in-mv-landesweite-fachstelle-bidaya/ch/af7779a882424d9cee7d1b12ecb47da0/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.cjd-nord.de/angebote/migration-forschung-und-beratung/praeradex/>

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6. List of Interviews

Interview number	Interviewee	Date
Interview no. 1	Office of state protection, Hamburg	28.04.2017
Interview no.2	Youth group facilitator in Muslim community and project manager in online project on prevention	24.04.2018
Interview no.3	Educator, rap artists, Islamic scientist	01.03.2017
Interview no.4	Psychologist in juvenile detention center	05.05.2017
Interview no.5	Social worker and Islamic scientist	08.03.2017
Interview no. 6	Imam	30.03.2017
Interview no. 7	Teacher working in prevention program	28.11.2017
Interview no. 8	Judge	02.06.2017
Interview no. 9	Social worker in juvenile detention center – advisor for migration issues	24.04.2017
Interview no. 10	Focus group with professionals and stakeholders	03.04. 2018
Interview no. 11	Youth court services	09.05.2017
Interview no. 12	Youth probation services	25.04.2017

