EDURAD: Educational Responses to Extremism

Full Title: EDURAD: ADDRESSING VIOLENT RADICALISATION: A MULTI-ACTOR RESPONSE THROUGH EDUCATION

Project Acronym: EDURAD
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Austria: Mapping and Research Analysis 2.3

Description of fieldwork

Ethical consent

In practice, there are content-related overlaps between the rules of data protection, good scientific practice and research ethics. Adhering to data protection regulations and protecting the personal rights of investigators is a central requirement for the archiving and reuse of personal research data.

One of the building blocks for this is the anonymisation of the research data. The term "anonymisation" here describes the process of removing that information from research data that would enable specific persons to be identified. Subjects of anonymisation are in particular: Personal and personal characteristics, personal names, location information, street names, federal states, job details, titles and educational qualifications, age, pictures and voices, indirect but specific context information, sensitive information: information on ethnic origin, political opinion, religious or philosophical belief, union membership, health or sexual life.

For the questionnaire, the data collected was changed in such a way that it is impossible to re-identify the participants. The resulting anonymised data is not subject to data protection. For the area of focus groups, we have decided to work with actual data protection. The *de facto* anonymisation aims to change the data in such a way that the person participating in the focus groups can only be re-identified with a completely disproportionate effort.

We informed all interview partners in the focus groups about the recording of the conversation and explained that further processing of the conversation contents with the greatest possible anonymity. All interlocutors have given their consent. The essential principle when collecting personal data is informed consent: Study participants must give their consent to the collection, processing and use of their personal data. The consent must be based on the free will of the participants and they must be fully informed about the reason for the data collection, the data processing and the data use.

Rationale for selection of participants

The rationale for selecting specific participants was informed by the goals of the study which involved the investigator locating representative participants from various stakeholder groups. Four characteristics were identified for the recruitment process: i. practical relevance, ii. decision-making competence, iii. innovative research approaches and iv. field experience. Experts were contacted in advance to support identification of potential participants.

Research Design and Methodology

The questionnaire aimed to meet the following criteria: comprehensible, easy, short, clear, neutral, appropriate for target groups, only one issue per question, not hypothetical, not suggestive, not retrospectively, no double negation, no allegations, take into account the difference between "program question" and "test question", correct handling of sensitive topics/questions. The

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questionnaire can also be described as "standardised survey" with scaled answer options for measuring attitudes, values, personality traits, performance, stages of development, etc.

External validity indicates the extent to which results of a measurement can be generalised and how representative they are. Furthermore, to what extent can the statements of the major actors like teachers, parents/guardians, civil society organisations, religious leaders, and policy makers be transferred to their actual behaviour? This question could not be answered in an anonymised questionnaire, therefore, more depth discussion of these questions took place in the focus groups.

With the results of a qualitative focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, the primary aim was to understand something and not just describe it. Such a research approach is thematically much more in-depth. Here the respondents have significantly more influence on the content and sequence of the interview than with standardised surveys and are allowed to deepen topics, introduce additional aspects and intensively express their opinions. At the same time, the respondent is required to have a higher level of communication skills and verbal expression.

When participating in a group discussion, the researcher becomes part of the observed scenario. Participation restricts the opportunities to observe and to note what is observed. and also influences what happens, so that the participating researcher has an effect. But even the non-participating observer will have an impact on the observed scenario. Group discussions can also bring to light those aspects of a research question that might not otherwise arise. Since group discussions usually only deal with one topic, but this is dealt with in great detail, it is possible to examine this topic from all possible angles.

In addition, the group dynamic aspect is of particular importance in a group discussion. The group members constantly give each other new impulses to look at the topic from different perspectives and can thus, through the discussion, gain deeper insights into their actions, their motivation or their needs.

Recruitment of participants

The German speaking questionnaire was disseminated as an online survey on Microsoft Forms. This online survey represents an internet-based survey method in empirical social, educational and opinion research. In this regard, we engaged with a wide range of schools, NGOs, advice centres, municipal, regional and national institutions in the formal and non-formal area in order to optimise the virtual dissemination of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to different target groups, in order to achieve a wide spread of the results, including actors who are active in both school and non-school education. Groups of different age groups were targeted. The aim was to achieve a balanced relationship between interview partners from the city and from the country.

Participants were approached passively through the publication of the link on a website and actively via e-mail. Given the high level of representation, it follows that the properties of the sample is indicative of some of the perspectives of wider cohorts.

For the focus groups, great importance was attached to diversity of points of view. Preliminary meetings were set up with people who have a good deal of expertise in the field of extremism

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prevention and de*radicalisation* in Austria to ask for recommendations. Gatekeepers with administrative positions or detailed inside information were very helpful in gaining access to specific community settings. In several meetings we organised a group discussion in which the participants could exchange their different perceptions, approaches and backgrounds. The focus group discussions were more or less strictly focused discussions between a group of selected people on the research topic of interest. The participants came from the following areas: school, open youth work, youth care, social work, street work, policy consultancy, interest groups. The discussions in the focus groups took place both offline and online with basis of zoom meetings. 65 respondents took part in the questionnaire survey and 11 participants took part in the focus groups. The discussions and interviews were audio recorded. Excerpts from the conversations were transcribed and analysed using the framework method to identify key themes.

Methods (offline/online)

Strategies and possible activities were developed for the initial dissemination about the project in order to sensitise target groups and interest groups to the project and its results. In the first phase, project communication involved distributing an online questionnaire. In a second phase, discussions in focus groups (offline) were set up in order to familiarise specific interest groups with our project goals and topics.

The dissemination strategy about the research component of the project coincided with a communication strategy. The dissemination strategy included a project-based definition of the dissemination goals, it identified relevant target groups and stakeholders, it described the dissemination measures to be carried out and it identified specific tools that have to be developed in order to ensure effective communication.

Dissemination strategies in online environments aim to disseminate knowledge and the associated evidence-based interventions on a large scale via social networks and online platforms. Dissemination was also an integral part of our survey research process. Our team sent emails to people believed to meet the sampling criteria. We also sent out recruitment notifications through established listing services, online platforms and online groups. In order to achieve a wide distribution of different respondents, we developed an online questionnaire that we distributed in digital environments. In contrast to a printed questionnaire, an online questionnaire is filled out in the web browser. In order to ensure a wide range of participants, we distributed the questionnaire on online platforms, online groups, subject-specific apps and messenger services. In this way, we identified a list of interest groups and their contact details in order to recruit discussion partners for our focus groups.

The participants in the focus groups were directly involved in the dissemination of the project or informed about the current developments and results by means of reports, newsletters and scientific publications.

The direct participation of the participants of our focus groups alongside semi-structural interviews also included engaging with contacts to set up dialogues, scientific knowledge transfer and feedback on evidence-based project developments and the content and media formats published on the website.

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Short summary and analysis of findings from questionnaires

This summary presents the findings from a questionnaire survey for the development of educational opportunities for the prevention of extremism in (non-) formal educational institutions. The aim of the questionnaire was to show the range of pedagogical ways of dealing with the topic of extremism.

In addition, the team worked with a wide range of schools, NGOs, municipal, regional and national institutions in the formal and non-formal area of education in order to optimise the virtual dissemination of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was fully completed by 65 participants. The research team of the University of Art and Design Linz collected a sample of questionnaires from 65 educational specialists between 20th August – 28th September 2020.

Field of Professional Practice

Illustration 1 shows that the vast majority of the respondents work in the formal education system. Almost half of the respondents are involved in working with young people in the non-formal education sector. This shows a range of different encounters with young people (see figure 1):

Figure 1 (n=65)

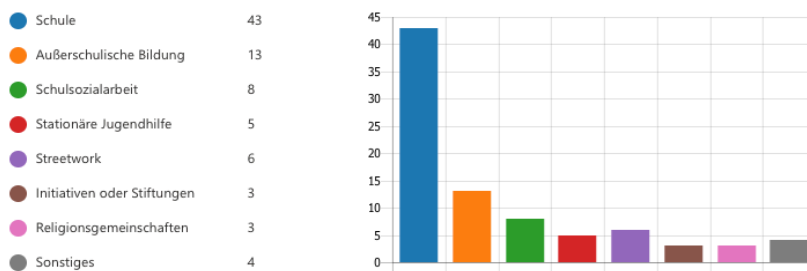Almost half of the respondents have been working with adolescents and young adults for more than ten years. (see figure 2) Thus, the respondents have extensive professional experience and good insight into the field of practice. On the other hand, the importance of the age difference in the willingness to dialogue with young people should be examined.

Experience in the field

Figure 2 (n=65)

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Age groups worked with

Most of the respondents work together with young age groups ranging from 12 to 18 years of age. Due to the high participation of teachers, young adults do not play a major role:

3. Mit welchen Altersgruppen arbeiten Sie/ engagieren Sie sich?

Weitere Details

● 10-12 Jahre	32
● 12-15 Jahre	47
● 15-18 Jahre	53
● 19-21 Jahre	15
● 22-25 Jahre	6
● Sonstiges	5
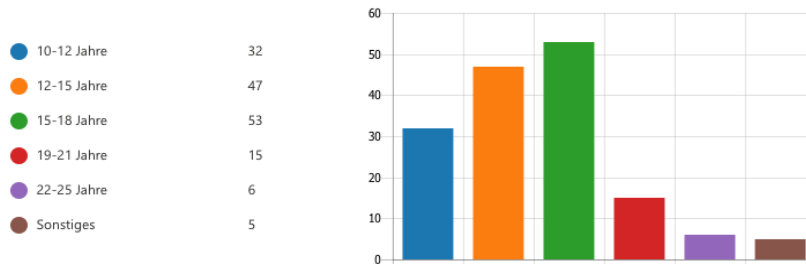
Figure 3 (n=65)

Location of Practice: Urban/Rural

Figure 4 shows that the questionnaire reached respondents from both urban and rural areas. 54 % of those surveyed work in the city and 31 % work in the countryside. This diversity is very important because it enables a more balanced assessment.

4. Wo sind Sie hauptsächlich tätig/ engagiert?

Weitere Details

● Stadt	35
● Land	20
● Beides	10

Figure 4 (n=65)

Encounters with extremist related phenomena

Figure 5 is important and significant because it shows the different aspects of the evidence-based experiences with prevention-relevant phenomena:

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5. Welche Phänomene begegnen Ihnen in Ihrer Arbeit/ Ihrem Engagement?

Weitere Details

● Rechtsextremismus	11	
● Rassismus/ Ethnozentrismus	44	
● Islamophobie	11	
● Nationalismus	33	
● Antisemitismus	11	
● Islamistischer Extremismus	16	
● Fundamentalismus	11	
● Homophobie	30	
● Sexismus	36	
● Hate Speech	38	
● Sonstiges	7	

Figure 5 (n=65)

68% of the respondents indicated that they came into contact with racism and ethnocentrism followed by hate speech, sexism and nationalism. In a cluster analysis, hatred and violence are closely relat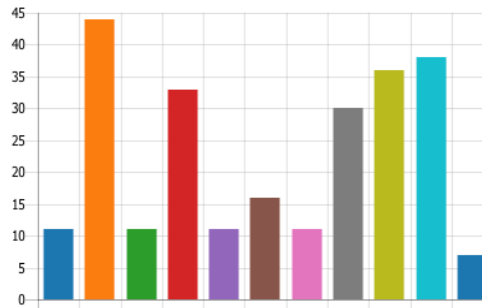ed to racism, nationalism and sexism. Gender-based expressions of hatred and threats of violence were a significant issue in educational institutions. Sexism was another very important topic. 55% of the respondents have experiences with sexism in their sphere of influence. Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are low-threshold phenomena. Other extreme positions are only perceived with a low threshold. 17% of those surveyed state that they have witnessed right-wing extremist or anti-Semitic incidents. This is the lowest value compared to all other categories. In contrast to media reporting in Austria, Islamic extremism is also not seen as a significant issue in the responses from the (non-) formal educational sector. 25% of those questioned were able to recall incidents of Islamist extremism. Comments on the questionnaire show that a close connection between hate speech and sexism, and demonstrate that these play an important role in (non-) formal educational institutions.

The vast majority of educators had huge problems assessing attitudes of young people. 45 out of 65 respondents stated that they did not know the attitudes of the young people. Almost 66% of the respondents had no assessment of what is going on in the young people's minds and therefore could not correctly assess the tendency towards radicalisation and extremism. In percentage values this means that for almost 70% of all respondents, the attitudes of young people resemble a black box.

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The risk of radicalisation/extremism of young people

6. In Bezug auf die o.g. Phänomene: Mit welchen Zielgruppen habe Sie es in Ihrer Arbeit/Ihrem Engagement zu tun?

Weitere Details

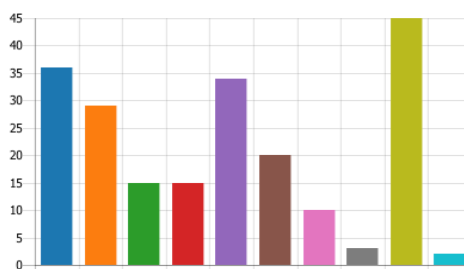|	
● Mit verschiedenen Zielgruppe...	36
● Mit Jugendlichen, die den gen...	29
● Mit Jugendlichen, die etwas g...	15
● Mit Jugendlichen, die gar nich...	15
● Mit Jugendlichen, die Sie in Be...	34
● Mit Jugendlichen, die bereits i...	20
● Mit Jugendlichen, die in ein ex...	10
● Mit Jugendlichen, die in ihrem...	3
● Mit Jugendlichen, die nicht ei...	45
● Sonstiges	2

Figure 6 (n=65)

45% of the respondents said that they rate young people as critical with regard to the extremisms mentioned, but only 2% wanted to do something about it. In examining assessment of possible radicalisation, respondents were asked "Do you see young people as at risk for one or more of these phenomena? Do you know of young people who develop extremist orientations and/or affiliations?" 52% of the respondents said that they work with children and young people who might develop extremist orientations and/or affiliations. So more than half of the respondents deal with young people who they thought could possibly radicalise themselves at some point. Even if this figure seems exaggerated and it seems difficult to draw conclusions, it shows the high level of uncertainty among educators. Only 13 respondents confirmed an advanced extremist attitude. Here, however, it must be acknowledged that the questionnaire was also filled out by youth workers who have specialised in youth work with an extremist background.

Social Media Platforms

Question: "Which social media platforms are associated with extremist attitudes, actors and content are used by your target group (s)?" The respondents were asked to give their personal impression.

7. Welche Social-Media-Plattformen, die mit extremistischen Einstellungen, Akteur*innen und Inhalten in Verbindung gebracht werden, werden Ihrer Ansicht von Ihrer/ Ihren Zielgruppe(n) verwendet?

Weitere Details

● Soziale Netzwerke	52
● Video Plattformen	31
● Chat Dienste	14
● Messenger Dienste	20
● Websiten	16
● Weiß ich nicht	24
● Sonstiges	0

Figure 7 (n=65)

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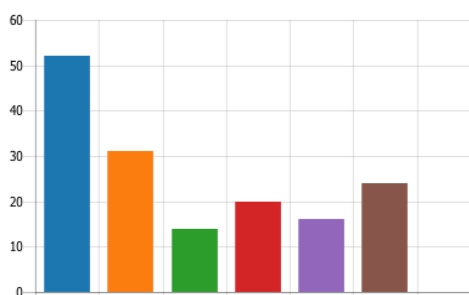
80% of those surveyed named social networks as the most relevant media channel for disseminating extremist content. If this assessment is correct, then young target groups are better reached online because the online activities of social network sites are more or less publicly accessible. However, the privatisation of communication is very pronounced in chat and messenger software and there is often no access by actors who do not belong to the groups. This assessment of the educators is possibly based only on an intuitive assumption and would require more systematic evaluation in an empirical study.

Communication of extremist content

8. Welche Medienformate, die mit extremistischen Einstellungen, Akteur*innen und Inhalten in Verbindung gebracht werden, werden Ihrer Ansicht nach von Ihrer/ Ihren Zielgruppe(n) verwendet?

Weitere Details

Kommentare	29
Persönliche Nachrichten	41
Blogs	12
Videos	33
Vlogs	8
Spiele/ Games	29
Bilder	33
Memes	25
Gifs	10
Hashtags	11
Musik/ Liedtexte	29
Social Tagging	5
Sonstiges	5
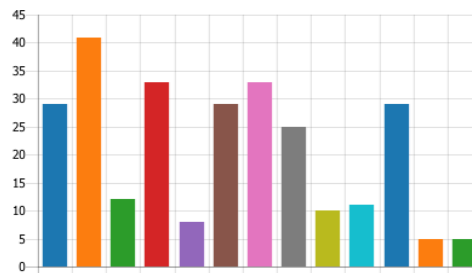
Figure 8 (n=65)

67% of those surveyed were of the opinion that extremist content is exchanged primarily through personal messages. Personal messages in this context means private messages. The exchange of extremist attitudes thus eludes public perception. Nevertheless, media formats such as videos, pictures, memes and games are rated higher. If this assessment is indeed representative, then it can be seen as a mandate to address young people more on the basis of these media.

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Pedagogical Strategies

Almost two-thirds of respondents say they use their own educational strategies to address the issues of extremism and radicalisation. 72% of the respondents *only* use their own strategies

9. Was nutzen Sie bereits erfolgreich in Ihrer Arbeit/ Ihrem Engagement?

Weitere Details

● Eigene pädagogische Strategien	47
● Unterrichtsmaterialien	32
● Fortbildungen	18
● Beratung	23
● Supervision	6
● Sonstiges	4
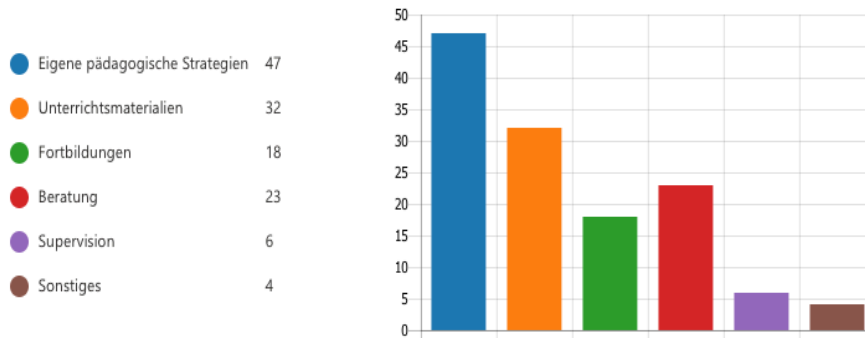
Figure 8 (n=65)

In addition to their personal strategies, most educators also use internal exchange formats and networks of their own organisation. Here, too, there is considerable need for optimisation.

Networks and exchange of practice and knowledge

It is clear from the responses that there is a great need for advice and training on the part of the educators:

11. Welche Unterstützungs-/ Entwicklungsbedarfe sehen Sie in Ihrer Arbeit/ Ihrem Engagement?

Weitere Details

● Eigene pädagogische Strategien	18
● Unterrichtsmaterialien	37
● Fortbildungen	40
● Beratung	46
● Supervision	27
● Sonstiges	2

Figure 9 (n=65)

The majority of those questioned would like greater networking with actors outside of school, social workers and more efficient networking with educational providers.

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Supports needed

13. Wo sehen Sie die Grenzen Ihrer Handlungsmöglichkeiten in Ihrer Arbeit/ Ihrem Engagement?

Weitere Details

- Zeitliche Ressourcen — 47
- Finanzielle Ressourcen — 22
- Institutionelle Rahmenbeding... — 44
- Gesellschaftlicher Diskurs — 34
- Befürchtete Sanktionen/ Bedr... — 6
- Eigene Positionierung im gese... — 6
- Sonstiges — 4

Figure 10 (n=65)

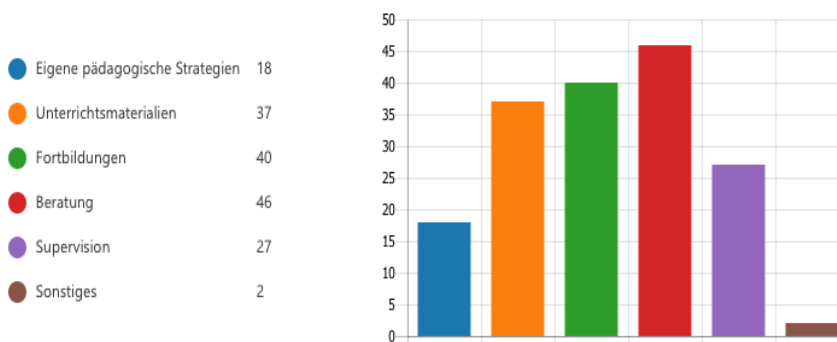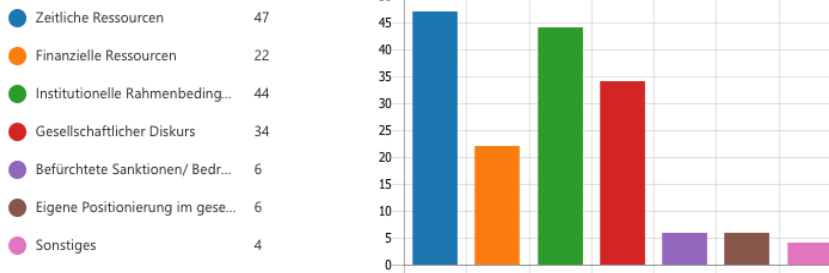Educators said that they need more personal time and infrastructural framework conditions in order to adequately provide extremism and radicalisation in educational spaces.

Engaging with extremism

14. Glauben Sie, dass die Ansprache extremistischer Phänomene fester Bestandteil Ihres Berufsbildes/ Ihres Aufgabenspektrums in Ihrem Engagement sein sollte?

Weitere Details

- Ja — 56
- Nein — 7
- Sonstiges — 2

Figure 11 (n=65)

The vast majority of educators (86%) were in favour of making extremist phenomena visible and believed that extremism and radicalisation should be part of their educational agenda.

Summary

The questionnaire offered an opportunity for individual comment and feedback, which was accepted by over 90% of all respondents. This is a very high level of approval and an extremely positive signal for sustained interest in further development and change. The analysis focused on arguments that were used by almost half of the respondents. Almost 50% of respondents argued that students' critical ability to deal with radicalisation and extremism can be strengthened through improved political and media literacy. Educators have also argued that this is a truly educational response, as opposed to a restrictive approach that sees "vulnerable students" as a risk and tries to "isolate" them in order to "protect" the other students. Half of all respondents indicated that they wanted to integrate educational concepts, networks and infrastructures more strongly into the curriculum and into everyday school life. The following overview presents a collection of comments from the respondents who deal with the need for educational answers.

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Curriculum and Pedagogy

- Accessible and understandable discussions in public space, integration into official teaching and learning materials.
- Provide democracy training programmes for teachers and for young people who can act as models
- Temporary dissolution of the rigid timetable, information material that does not come along with a strict pedagogy, material on basic and impact research
- I would like more teaching materials that deal with topics related to social networks, the Internet, because I can better pick up the students with them!
- The students as well as the teachers should be confronted with this difficult topic from the start.
- Time and financial resources for long-term project work, the expansion of teams relevant to education with regard to the clarification of extremist tendencies as well as modern and educational didactic teaching materials that relate to current phenomena and events.

Networking, Continuous Professional Development and Wider Supports

- Better institutional integration, better networking with similar educational institutions.
- The topic will remain with us in the years to come. We absolutely need a better exchange, regular workshops, common strategies, an online platform!
- Social workers and psychologists in schools. More supervision.
- More extra-curricular networking. Training & coaching!
- Practical advice and crisis management (contact persons in the school who are not teachers and grade, but who accompany the students who have problems outside of school - e.g. street workers).
- Above all, more external support is needed here (e.g. permanent social workers at every school) to uncover the blind spots in the system and, above all, the financial means for it.
- More information, training, education.
- We are left alone with this topic in everyday teaching! More training, networking platforms, workshops!
- One-week intensive workshop
- Experience reports from 'victims', social workers who deal with it every day and thus direct confrontation of the students with the effects of their behaviour.
- Extra-curricular networking - coaching, advice, supervision.
- Possibility of supervision, professionalisation of one's own professional field, (paid!) Institutionalization of team meetings with problem students.
- More training, networking, online!

This overview shows that the need for teaching materials, advice and extracurricular exchange is very relevant. The greatest challenges and dilemmas in their work are identified: insufficient funding for further education initiatives, trainings, workshops; Insufficient support from educational institutions; too little extracurricular exchange with experts, school social workers, street workers.

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Short summary and analysis of findings from focus groups

The data were collected by means of evaluation interviews with the advisors of the Beratungsstelle Extremismus, Vienna and the Projektstelle für Zuwanderung und Integration, Dornbirn, and the analysis of the advisory protocols available in the Bundesweites Netzwerk für Offene Jugendarbeit (BOJA). In addition, confidential background discussions were held with representatives of various Austrian security authorities who either work directly with the federal BOJA or whose fields of work intersect. Further confidential background discussions took place with representatives of state coordination offices for deradicalisation programs (*Think Difference*). In addition, there was an exchange with (international) experts from practice and science on the field of deradicalisation as well as a literature analysis.

In addition to the review of the scientific literature and a questionnaire survey among specialists, in-depth discussions, or "focus groups", were held with selected experts.

The focus groups dealt with the fields of action in formal educational settings (lessons) as well as in non-formal school-related or school-based provision of youth and social work (school social work, violence advice, political advice, extremism advice). Thematically, in the in-depth discussion rounds, the challenges, possibilities and needs of actors in regular work in the pedagogical discussion of extremism were addressed.

Representatives from the following institutions to the focus group discussions were invited.

- Nationwide Network of Open Youth Work (Bundesweites Netzwerk Offene Jugendarbeit), BOJA, Vienna
- Extremism Information Centre (Beratungsstelle Extremismus), BE, Vienna
- Association of Vienna Youth Centres (Verein Wiener Jugendzentren), WJZ, Vienna
- Institute for Social Services (Institut für Sozialdienste, Gewaltberatung Feldkirch"), ISG, Feldkirch
- Think Difference. Agency for Society, Organisation and Development (Büro für Gesellschaft, Organisation und Entwicklung"), TD, Vienna
- Open Youth Work and Development (Koordination für Offene Jugendarbeit und Entwicklung"), KOJE, Bregenz
- Secondary School Scheibbs, Lower Austria (AHS Scheibbs, Niederösterreich) (SS1)
- Secondary School Kirchberg an der Raab, Styria (SS2)
- Secondary School Polgargasse, Vienna (SS2)
- Secondary School Waldorfschule Mauer, Vienna (SS3)
- Secondary School Laaerberg, Vienna (SS4)

Focus group 1 began with an open introductory question that was used as a basis for mutual exchange: *"Please tell us about your experiences in the pedagogical examination of extremist phenomena. About opportunities, challenges and needs that you have experienced or have experienced in your everyday work. Please talk through the individual experiences in detail"*

Focus group 2 began with an open introductory question that was used as a basis for mutual/mutual exchange: "I would like to ask you to speak about your experiences in pedagogical preventive work

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with young people. Please tell us about individual experiences in detail. I will not interrupt you for now, I will take notes and then ask a few more questions."

Participant description of their educational context

Teaching in School

The teachers participating in the focus groups argue for a socially integrative educational approach. (FG 1 & 2, SS1-SS4, 17/08/2020, 18/09/2020). They agreed that poor inclusion in society, a lack of personal perspective and orientation always have been a breeding ground for extremism. The teachers talked about the perception of victims and described the extent to which victims of radicalised young people suffer from trauma and suffer from peer pressure on social media. All teachers gloss over their own perception in school in the first few minutes. When we ask questions and talk longer, all the teachers tell of cases of students at risk. They tell of cases of Islamist radicalised students who travel as combatants to Syria, Pakistan or Afghanistan.

It appeared that teachers tended to defend their school's living space. There was a discussion about about sanctions, rules and disciplinary suppression of the phenomena of extremism and radicalisation, however teachers were seen as having a specific role in the educational system. This involved taking responsibility for certain tasks, suppressing certain statements, and ensuring that teaching continued undisturbed and efficiently. It was felt they have no time to get involved with individual perpetrators and their enemy images. Teachers agreed that they were needed in keeping teaching going. They want to protect the victims and encourage those students who want to learn to do so undisturbed. However, all teachers in the focus groups also wanted support, relief and are interested in advice, further training and supervision.

Youth Work

The context of youth work was outlined as follows. One representative from the BOJA says about its educational context: *"Our organisation BOJA is a nationwide network of open youth work, works in the field of open youth work in Austria and sees itself as a competence centre for open youth work, as a service or networking point, as a platform for knowledge and information exchange and as a specialist point for quality development in the field Open youth work."* (FG 1, BOJA, 17/08/2020)

Another organisation, the *Agency for Society, Organisation and Development*, *Think Difference*, analyses the dynamics, potentials and challenges of immigrant societies. They advise, accompany and empower politics as well as state and private organisations in the future-oriented management of social change. As a place of knowledge and competence, they contribute their expertise, carry out application-oriented studies and analyses and develop practice-relevant strategies, concepts and solutions. (FG 2, TD, 18/09/2020)

In contrast to the ethics of the classroom, open youth work is less about protecting victims than about the understanding that one can bring in speaking with young people: *"It is a quite demanding and ambitious challenge behind this principle, namely take and accept the youngsters as they are, with all their opinions (also those narrow-minded, downgrading and pejorative ones). Give them some safety but at the same time do not let them take over and exploit the whole youth club. Active*

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participation of the youngsters and taking over responsibility by them are an important part of this principle." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

Approaches to practice

The following describes the diverse approaches of youth work.

A street worker from the *Extremism Advice Centre* talked about their main approach and work in the field: *"One of my professional activities as a youth worker is digital youth work. It has been part of everyday work with children and young people in Vienna for many years: YouTube videos, video games or an Instagram presence by a Vienna youth centre are just a few examples. The lockdown, which was set in Austria in the course of the Corona crisis, meant a radical expansion of the previous offers in the online area for many youth work facilities. We were able to discover some advantages that offer an important extension to the traditional methods of youth work. Digital youth work does not only take place online, however, it includes all youth work activities that include digital media and technologies."* (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

The BOJA association is an important competence centre for Open Youth Work in Austria: *"We see ourselves as a service and network agency for Open Youth Work in Austria. On the other hand, we are also active as an expert office for quality development in the field of Open Youth Work.* " (FG 1, BOJA, 17/08/2020)

"A special role in working with young people that are vulnerable to extremism is connected to the principle of the Biased Mandate. Open Youth Work generally acts with regard to the interests, rights, competences and needs of the youth. In cases of conflict, open youth work is on their side. In the context of radical and extremist views, many youth workers see this as leading to a number of contradictions. Firstly, many of the viewpoints of the youth are contrary to the individual values of the youth workers and also those outlined and propagated in the youth work conception. And secondly, the behaviour of young people is also often connected with verbal and physical violation of other youth. Those others must also be protected and supported by the youth worker. Often it is hard to keep track with those who offended and also not to neglect those who were their victims." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

"Open youth work is positioned directly in the daily life of youngsters and holds credibility and authenticity. Open youth work can offer support for individual deradicalisation." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

"I can recommend not to work with opposite poles. One power against the other brings talks to an end and creates the impression of an imbalance. Be careful not to create a "you are wrong/you are wrong" feeling. Try to get into conversation with the person without having a "persuasion mission" in mind. I recommend parents/teachers/siblings/professionals that they allow enough time for a conversation." (FG 2, ISG, 18/09/2020)

"Half of young Afghans and Syrians and four out of ten young people with Chechen and Turkish migration backgrounds reject homosexuality. Religiously connoted anti-Semitism in the form that Israel as the enemy of all Muslims is considered by two thirds of young Afghans, four in ten of young

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people with Syrian and Turkish migration backgrounds and one in three young people with Chechen and Bosnian backgrounds. The devaluation of women, in turn, affects traditional roles related to status and power and is more widespread among young Afghans, Syrians and among young people with a Turkish migration background. In contrast, devaluations by Muslims are most common among young people without a migration background. A final aspect in connection with basic democratic attitudes concerns the attitude of young people to violence: For the vast majority of them, violence is not a legitimate means of establishing respect and honour" (FG 2, TD, 18/09/2020).

Analysis of practices and values by participants

The following outlines statements made in respect of the values underpinning prevention and education.

"The fundamental difficulty of the prevention concept is that certain people, defined as a problem group, are assumed to have a possible negative development, which represents a kind of general suspicion." (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

"In the public debate preventive measures or deradicalisation measures are described as a simple solution from outside, which is problematic in several respects. On the one hand, there is a risk that a market for deradicalisation experts will develop without democratic legitimation. On the other hand, due to a lack of social definition of radicalisation and different forms of extremism, actual dangers are not recognized. The constant focus on this topic can also lead to prevention being misunderstood as a task for everyone. Ultimately, there is a risk that the differences and otherness of young people as well as behaviour appropriate for young people will be dramatised and classified as extremist." (FG 1, BOJA, 17/08/2020)

"Openness in the form of a "positive welcome culture" for everybody, combined with the voluntariness in participation, is the structural key, the entrance to Open Youth Work. It enables the youth worker to get into contact and relationship with groups who are often no longer approachable for anybody else. This is also facilitated by an absence of any formal barriers, no pressure to commitment." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

"Religiousness is sometimes placed above the democratic state by the young people we surveyed in our studies, and indeed when it idealised the young people's need to belong. Above all, the young people from Afghanistan and Syria, but also some of the young people with Turkish and Chechen migration backgrounds, have the impression that they are not being accepted by society in Austria." (FG 2, TD, 18/09/2020)

"Extremism always wants to overcome the system. Extremists are minorities. They stir up conflict. They provoke so that they look bigger than they are." (FG 1, KOJE, 17/08/2020)

Description of pedagogical approaches

BOJA is the pedagogical centre for the field of open youth work, with the aim of positioning the perspectives and needs of open youth work and the young people who use their services in the national and international (youth) political debate: *"We have access to the different areas of youth*

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work (e.g. mobile youth work, youth centres). Since 2014, the association has also housed an advice centre (hotline) that provides information and advice when educators or relatives are confronted with the subject of extremism. It offers a free helpline, personal advice and workshops on topics such as anti-discrimination, racism, jihadism and right-wing extremism." (FG 1, BOJA, 17/08/2020)

"Key tasks for Open Youth Work are enabling self-expression, self-efficacy and creating an appreciative environment." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

"Open youth work enables youth in this sense by making space, time and relationships available and, in particular, focusing on the emotional component, pleasure and fun in the matter, in encounters and discussions." (FG 2, WJZ, 18/09/2020)

"It becomes clear that prevention work must be promoted. This form of work makes it possible to empower people to think independently again. Your own resources are activated. It is therefore necessary that we do not impose opinions on, but rather clarify and allow our counterpart to be able to form opinions and learn to reflect. People's needs must be consciously perceived. If we only look at the radicalisation factor, we ignore thousands of other issues." (FG 2, ISG, 18/09/2020)

Prevention: challenges and dilemmas

In identifying these challenges and dilemmas, participants described the following:

"For both secondary and tertiary prevention, it is essential to identify both target groups and individuals in order to develop and apply measures. In this sense, prevention works with attributions, the target groups are at least indirectly assumed that they are already behaving problematically or will behave problematically in the future." (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

"Statistical evaluations show that young people are the first and particularly hard hit by the Corona crisis. Under high pressure, in constant danger of getting lost, not being able to get started, not being able to develop your talents. We want to take a resolute stance against this, orientate ourselves on resources and potential and use all our possibilities to enable young people to find their way." (FG 2, BOJA, 18/09/2020)

"Prevention is an intervention in the lives of those affected and therefore needs special justification and legitimation. Prevention becomes problematic if there is not a sufficient differentiation between permissible forms of radical social criticism protected by the constitution and anti-human and anti-constitutional statements and activities." (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

"Prevention measures often have a deficit and individual-centred view of political extremism. The causes and reasons for joining politically extremist groups are very often reduced to negative influences in the individual living environment, such as violence in the family or economic decline. By identifying target groups, such as young people, there is a risk that they will be viewed as the main source and the spreading agent of extremist ideas." (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

"In contrast to the term extremism, the term radicalisation does not include a classification of ways of thinking and acting, but processes with certain dynamics, the end points of which can, however,

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be different. This is problematic because the neo-Salafist subculture is fundamentally different from other Muslim youth cultures, such as the pop Muslims, but there on the other there are similarities in the public staging, such as the use of everyday Muslim terms. These everyday terms are also used by Islamic terrorist groups. It is not surprising that laypeople cannot identify target groups for preventive measures accordingly. The adult view of youth cultures is generally distorted anyway, which means the risk that youth cultural norms and symbols or Muslim community characteristics are misinterpreted." (FG 1, BE, 17/08/2020)

Identification of needs for support

• The need for advice is growing steadily; the case constellations are becoming more complex; the number of relevant actors in the field of deradicalisation is increasing.
• For democratic legitimation it is necessary that civil society and state experts as well as active actors in the respective area lead a critical scientific discourse about terms, target groups, access and effectiveness of preventive measures.
• The institutions that carry out prevention work must themselves be democratically organised, which, among other things, requires employees to examine their own role in relation to power relations. The basic requirements for professional prevention work are openness, respect and taking the other person seriously.

Summary

Summary of national/regional policies

According to their original concepts, the work of the deradicalisation programs in Austria have three main tasks:

1. Stabilisation of the social environment of (potentially) radicalising people;
2. To influence radicalised persons through their social environments in order to initiate or promote a process of deradicalisation;
3. Dissemination of information on relevant subject areas (Right-wing Extremism/Islamism/ Salafism/Jihadism).

The development and implementation of a comprehensive training and further education module for trainers and educators in the field of deradicalisation should be promoted.

Brief comparison of policies' aims and strategies

As the central strategic body in Austria, the *Austrian network for Extremism Prevention and Deradicalisation* aims at regular interdisciplinary exchange and knowledge transfer, at bundling preventive measures in Austria and at strategically reviewing measures in the field of extremism prevention and deradicalisation. As a first measure, the Austrian government developed an *Austrian Strategy for Extremism Prevention and Deradicalisation* in the year 2015. Based on the objectives of the Austrian Government decision, a national approach was also chosen for the creation of the *Austrian Strategy for Prevention of Extremism and Deradicalisation*. The aim was to combine the numerous individual Austrian measures in a strategic document and thus to provide

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guidance for those in Austria who deal with the topics of extremism prevention and deradicalisation. Details were examined in the text above.

Strengths and expertise identified by the field work

These factors and experiences can protect against an anti-democratic and anti-equality attitude.
1**.** Literature reviews, empirical studies and focus group discussions with experts have shown that a low social status, socialisation that is strictly based on roles and rules and family violence increase anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes.
2. The inclusion of young people in society proves to be an important protective factor, because experiences of discrimination, unemployment, a low formal education and a closed circle of friends increase anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes.
3. The psychosocial state of young people is of great relevance: if they have no person to trust and if they consider their situation to be so insecure that they consider it pointless to develop goals for their lives, then anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes rise.
4. Strict religiosity and authoritarian countries of origin are influential factors in radicalisation and extremism. Overall, anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes are more widespread among young men and strictly religious young people. Finally, some of these identified influencing factors on anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes are related to the countries of origin of the young people. The country of origin also determines which place the young people are assigned in the host society - accordingly, it also has an indirect effect on anti-democratic and anti-equality attitudes.

Needs and gaps identified by the field work

Educational efforts to prevent right-wing extremism

Once "Islamic State" propaganda started to recruit people Europe for war in Syria, the issue of Islamist radicalisation of young people became a major issue in Austrian public debate. Initially, a security policy discourse dominated, but in mid-2014 this discourse shifted towards prevention and deradicalization. However, this continued to be focussed on (Muslim) young people and did not move sufficiently beyond the police discourse on safety. Terms like extremism, Salafism, Islamism or Jihadism were either not defined at all or a range of interpretations were offered in both public and in scientific discourse.

The guideline on deradicalisation and prevention, which was sent to all schools in Vienna by the Vienna City School Council (*Wiener Stadtschulrat*), can be seen as an example of this. In this guide, radicalisation, in particular jihadism, of adolescents and young adults in the school sector is described as a socio-political phenomenon of the present.

In this context, Reicher (2015) criticizes the fact that the school authorities have not addressed in any comparable way the issue of right-wing extremism. That said, various NGOs – for example - the *Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance* which provides current news on the extreme right-wing scene – have made a number of efforts to engage in prevention and information work in connection with right-wing extremist and right-wing populist movements. Nonetheless, there is still a need for a greater balance to make the different forms of extremist orientation visible. (Rajal and

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Schiedel, 2016). 'Educational efforts to prevent right-wing extremism would require political backing and the corresponding (financial) resources for schools. However, this would require a social consensus that right-wing extremism is also a serious problem in Austria - from which we are unfortunately further than ever' (Peham, 2016, np)

According to Peham and Rajal (2010, 2012), the following educational approaches with regard to right-wing extremism are relevant for educational work in Austrian schools:

Primary prevention is aimed at all pupils: contemporary history lessons, Holocaust education, pedagogy of recognition, political education (civil courage training, reflexive-intercultural pedagogy), training / prejudice reflection, education on democracy and human rights, social justice orientation, etc.), strengthening of democratic school culture (e. g. self-image in dealing with group-related enmity) and of individual tolerance for ambiguity and the ability to deal with conflict.

Secondary prevention, for example, intervention at the first signs of right-wing fanaticism, critical examination of the various forms of right-wing extremism (especially with its social and psychological functions), conflict pedagogy, building stable relationships, one-on-one discussions, work with parents, involving psychologists and social workers.

In pedagogical (anti-racism/anti-Semitism) work with (right-wing) young people, the following should generally be taken into account (Peham 2016):

- Instructions for self-questioning: To what extent does (structural) racism determine my perceptions and attitudes?
- If possible, start with concrete action situations and encourage action
- Uncertainty through inquiries: ask open questions instead of closed ones
- Identify contradictions in the articulated (fragmentary) worldviews
- Make alternative offerings to create meaning and interpret the world
- The earlier the better is a principle here. The earlier it starts, the more successful prevention will be. Once prejudices and stereotypes have been condensed into fixed attitudes, it becomes very difficult to open to change. In this respect, it is not right-wing extremism that needs to be addressed first, but its forerunner: those orientations and behaviours that promote the susceptibility to its adoption. Above all, aspects of the dominant culture, including authoritarianism, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, fascination with violence and a rigid/biological gender dualism should be addressed.
- "Turn to the subject" (Adorno): In the case of misanthropic (racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, etc.) statements, do not talk about their objects, but rather the self-image expressed in them and the projections behind them (of self-hatred, longings, wishes, etc.) at the centre of the discussion.

Promoting Democracy

In the discussions in the focus groups, stakeholders, researchers and social workers explicitly pointed out that political education is of particular importance for promoting democracy, especially in schools, since the foundations of a democratic understanding are formed in the classrooms.

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Against the background of a society that is becoming more plural, particular attention must be paid to imparting skills with regard to democracy and human rights and living together in freedom and mutual responsibility.

Pedagogical Opportunities

Education, be it formal or non-formal, can make a significant contribution to making people more resilient to radicalisation and extremism. Democracy needs people who share basic democratic attitudes and act accordingly. These are learned - in the family, among friends, at school and in a democratically organized society. Democratic attitudes are widespread among young people in the groups examined - often also among those who have so far had little or no experience with democratic-liberal systems. A society that wants to combat extremism must start with raising children and teach adolescents social skills.

Concrete measures in the area of radicalisation prevention can focus on the following content and methodological priorities.

Democratic Skills

The promotion of a democratic skills as well as resilience against the dismantling of democracy, susceptibility to fanaticism of all kinds is seen as multifactorial: personal experiences of violence, lack of prospects, a negative external perception and a lack of security, acceptance and recognition play a role. Against this background, it is necessary to strengthen the democratic and integrative narrative, which focuses on equal participation and social cohesion, in order to show alternatives to anti-democratic ideologies.

Youth Work

Virtual youth work provides an opportunity in the following ways: participatory and interactive design of creative contributions on the topic in the new media; process-oriented but not completely open-ended; peer to peer communication; public relations in the context of new media; media literacy/internet and new media; digital literacy; digital storytelling; peer-education; peer-feedback; create low-threshold access for young people; promotion of self-esteem.

Learning Points

The skills to have an open conversation, to listen attentively, and to get involved constructively on site have to be learned over and over again. In order to support the schools in the implementation of these important tasks of tolerance and democracy education, the approach of narrative discussion groups can be further developed in WP3, which can be offered as a new method of holistic political education in urban and rural areas. The analysis of radicalisation processes makes it clear that different media can promote them in many ways and in so doing facilitates the dissemination of extremist positions. However, media can also be used for countermeasures or alternative measures with the aim of preventing extremism and deradicalisation. Therefore, it is useful to reflect on the opportunities of education-related online software environments that are

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offered on the Internet at low levels and can reach target groups of radicalised educational initiatives.

Conclusion

The survey results of questionnaires and focus groups showed that the need for advice, support and networking is very high. Since there are already numerous civil society providers in the field of radicalisation prevention in Austria, the result developed in WP 3 and WP 4 should be innovative, low-threshold and practice-oriented. In the discussions in the focus groups, stakeholders, researchers and social workers have explicitly pointed out that political education is of particular importance for promoting democracy, especially in schools, since the foundations of a democratic understanding are formed in the classrooms. Against the background of a society that is becoming more plural, particular attention must be paid to imparting skills with regard to democracy and human rights and living together in freedom and mutual responsibility.

For many years in Austria civil society organisations have developed the practical work of radicalisation prevention and have a great deal of expertise. This has led to interest from scientific circles in researching these organisations and actors and their actions.

At present, university-based research institutions are largely detached from the challenges faced by specialists who are confronted engaging with radicalised people on a professional basis. The survey results of questionnaires and focus groups showed also that a development of new approaches and the questioning of practical action are necessary. The practice of preventing extremism and deradicalisation needs a theoretically founded basis on which the approaches to action are based. However, knowledge from practical work is required to develop and update this on an ongoing basis.

The extensive preoccupation with studies, evaluations and discussions with the practitioners and experts in the focus groups has shown that the constant and cooperative exchange between the active players in this field must be improved in order to increase mutual understanding of the needs and requirements of all those involved.

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