

# Newsletter

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

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## Educational Responses to Extremism in Germany

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### 1. What is the context in which PVE-E has developed in Germany?

Due to the federal character of the German state Germany's prevention policy is less centralized than in other European states. National policy activities mainly focus on funding programmes, dedicated to the development of prevention-related structures and the testing of new approaches.

Strategies promoted by these programmes range from promoting participation in civil society and strengthening democratic counter forces through preventive educational work

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with children and young people, their parents and other reference persons, through political education work, knowledge transfer and strengthening multipliers' competences to the provision of counselling services.

NGO's from the welfare, social work and youth work sector are important stakeholders in PVE-E politics: they are the main recipients of funding and shape the preventive landscape by developing own approaches.

## 2. What role does education currently play in preventing extremism in Germany?

Germany has a fairly long tradition in addressing political extremism with educational means. National programmes against juvenile extremism had been set up since 1992, all of them showing a clear educational profile. These funding activities have promoted a broad range of PVE-E approaches, covering different phenomena and prevention levels, the existence of numerous networks and a solid knowledge among specialized practitioners. Existing approaches show a clear profile in non-formal education. A stronger integration of the school sector, the establishment of long-term funding perspectives and reaching out to young people already showing tendencies of involvement are remaining challenges in this policy field.

## 3. What issues of extremism did educators identify?

A survey of a range among professionals from different pedagogical fields dealing with educational responses to extremism.

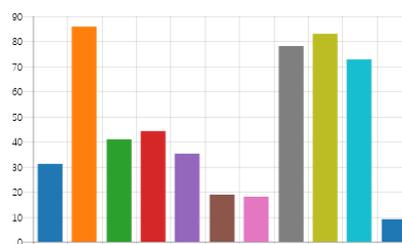
*What issues of extremism do educators face?*

These educators identified a wide range of forms of intolerance and extremism that they encountered in their practice, with the most common form of intolerance being racism and ethnocentrism identified by 83% of those who participated, followed by anti-Semitism (identified by 34%).

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

[Weitere Details](#)

Rechtsextremismus	31
Rassismus/ Ethnozentrismus	86
Islamophobie	41
Nationalismus	44
Antisemitismus	35
Islamistischer Extremismus	19
Fundamentalismus	18
Homophobie	78
Sexismus	83
Hate Speech	73
Sonstiges	9



Although the phenomena of racism, ethnocentrism and Antisemitism cannot be considered forms of extremism in themselves, they are key elements of extremist ideologies that dehumanise others and undermine the democratic order. Phenomena of Extremism encountered by the participants in their practise are right-wing extremism 30% and Islamist extremism 18%.

### *The role of education*

All educational approaches positively mentioned by experts aim at strengthening trustful relationships with young people, at empowering them and strengthening their self-efficacy. According to the questioned professionals all these elements can be regarded as key elements to successful educational prevention approaches. The reported experiences also show that addressing discrimination issues works particularly well if young people are given the opportunity to reflect on these issues in a safe space, either at or outside school. Cross-phenomenon approaches allow to discuss these issues in a wider societal context and without focussing on one social group alone, thereby avoiding stigmatisation.

### **What seems to be needed to strengthen pedagogical responses to extremism in Germany?**

Due to the single states' sovereignty in school politics the German school system is still comparatively weakly integrated into prevention activities.

In addition to strengthening trustful relationships with young people the following measures need to be further developed and implemented to strengthen particularly school-related educational responses in Germany:

- Qualification of teachers and social workers in recognising and dealing adequately with extremist tendencies
- Long-term anchoring of pedagogical-preventive objectives and activities in school-related services and interlocking them with regular activities at schools
- Quality management regarding the anchoring of prevention activities at schools and the permanent monitoring of these activities
- Greater networking of educational staff with other actors relevant to prevention of extremism
- Further development of cross-phenomenon prevention approaches

## Partners:

