
One Size Does Not Fit All: Exploring the Characteristics of Exit Programmes in Europe

Vítor Costa^{a,b,1}, Pedro Liberado^{c,d}, Graça Esgalhado^{b,e,f}, Ana Isabel Cunha^{b,e,g}, Pedro das Neves^h

^aResearcher, University of Beira Interior, ^bResearcher, BSAFE Lab - Law Enforcement, Justice and Public Safety lab ^cChief Research Officer, Innovative Prison Systems, ^dPhD Candidate in Criminology, University of Granada, ^eAssistant Professor, University of Beira Interior, ^fResearcher, Institute of Cognitive Psychology, Human and Social Development (IPCDHS), ^gResearcher, Research Center in Sports Sciences, Health Sciences and Human Development (CIDESD) ^hCEO, Innovative Prison Systems

Abstract

This paper presents findings from semi-structured interviews with 17 practitioners representing 14 exit interventions in 7 European countries. Drawing from the literature, the study identified analytical dimensions that provided the semi-structured interview script's analytical framework (e.g., programme characteristics, implementation team, type of intervention, contact approach, programmes' duration, the use of risk and needs assessment tools, follow-up/monitoring strategies/aftercare procedures).

Results suggest that the goals, role of ideology and contact approach differ considerably across exit programmes. The use of risk and needs assessment tools is inconsistent across the programmes. The programmes' evaluation was unstructured and primarily qualitative.

The study has practical implications, namely the significant effort required to train exit practitioners in risk and needs assessment tools. A multi-agency approach will help improve the follow-up and aftercare practices.

Article History

Received Mar 2, 2021

Accepted Sept 16, 2021

Published Sept 24, 2021

Keywords: Exit programmes, Disengagement, Deradicalisation, Interventions, Evaluation

Introduction

Radicalisation and violent extremism are not new phenomena. Since the 1990s, countries in Northern Europe have been continuously implementing exit programmes² to tackle this issue

¹ Corresponding Author Contact: Vítor Costa, Email: vitormvc@ubi.pt, Department of Psychology and Education, Estrada do Sineiro, s/n, 6200-209 Covilhã, Portugal

(cf. Bovenkerk, 2011), and European Union (EU) policies on the topic have recently been reinforced (European Commission, 2015, 2020a). For example, the EU Security Agenda for 2015–2020 prioritised the development of effective disengagement and deradicalisation strategies to rehabilitate violent extremist and terrorist offenders (VETOs) (European Commission, 2015). Additionally, the current EU Security Strategy for 2020–2025 also considers “work on [...] disengagement, as well as rehabilitation and reintegration in society” a priority (European Commission, 2020a, p. 16). Notably, the new EU Counter-Terrorism Agenda (European Commission, 2020b) focuses on three strategic areas to effectively implement disengagement initiatives: prisons, rehabilitation and reintegration. Drawing from the Radicalisation Awareness Network Rehabilitation Manual (cf. Walkenhorst et al., 2019), the Agenda highlights the requirement for “a methodology with common standards and indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of reintegration programmes” (European Commission, 2020b, p. 8).

On a tertiary-level, exit programmes help counter violent extremism (Harris-Hogan et al., 2016), and aim at disengaging (i.e., promoting behavioural changes; refraining from violent action) and deradicalising individuals (i.e., promoting cognitive/psychological change, such as work on a new identity) (Radicalisation Awareness Network [RAN], 2018). Moreover, such programmes often include rehabilitation and reintegration goals (Gielen, 2017, 2018; Horgan & Braddock, 2010).

Numerous exit initiatives have been implemented in Europe. The Radicalisation Awareness Network identifies several inspiring practices, listing, to date (May 2021), 24 exit strategies targeting violent extremists. While some programmes have previously undergone evaluation (cf. Daugherty, 2019; van der Heide & Schuurman, 2018), a comprehensive analysis of these interventions is lacking. More broadly, according to various authors (e.g.,

² Throughout the paper, the term exit programme is used in reference to an intervention programme that aims to “provide support to individuals wishing to leave a violent extremist group and/or to abstain from radical thoughts” (van de Donk et al., 2020, p. 28).

Bovenkerk, 2011; Cherney, 2020; Lewis et al., 2020), the quality of exit programmes remains understudied.

This research aims to describe exit programmes implemented in Europe. The authors explore the structure of these interventions and their primary characteristics, using semi-structured interview questionnaires. The questionnaires were based on structural indicators for quality assessment regarding deradicalisation programmes suggested in the literature (Koehler, 2017a).

The manuscript is comprised of four sections. Literature review presents relevant literature for a conceptual understanding of the exit programmes, their evaluation and potential success indicators. The method section then introduces the research method, explains how the programmes were identified and which dimensions formed part of the semi-structured interview protocol. The subsequent section presents the results of 14 exit programmes from which the data were gathered. The programmes undergo comparison based on the pre-existing dimensions. The discussion explores aspects of the programmes that can be improved, including the use of risk and needs assessment (RNA), follow-up and evaluation.

Literature Review

Conceptual understanding of exit programmes

Exit programmes usually form part of a broader set of counter-terrorism architecture and policies (Harris-Hogan et al., 2016; Lewis et al., 2020). They can be implemented pre- and post-imprisonment and during incarceration (Gielen, 2018). In a prison or probation context, they typically aim to disengage and/or deradicalise VETOs, promoting a “transition from being an outsider to belonging” (Barrelle, 2015, p. 134). Considering the multiple approaches, the actors involved, and the importance of the ideological component, these interventions can take different forms. Therefore, disengagement and deradicalisation are intertwined with successful reintegration.

Koehler (2017b) considers seven types of programmes. The first six result from the different possibilities regarding governmental versus non-governmental, passive versus active and with versus without ideological components. A seventh option emerges in programmes run by governmental and non-governmental actors (public-private partnerships with a passive approach and targeting an ideological component). Additionally, the author details the three characteristics of individual intervention strategies. The first (i.e., actor) refers to who runs the programme, such as governmental actors or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). According to Koehler (2017b), the type of actor running the action can “significantly influence the perception of the programme, its potential target group and its long-term success” (p. 71). The contact approach feature can also be analysed dichotomously. When the programme develops proactive communication strategies to reach potential participants, it is referred to as an active approach. Differently, a passive approach means that the programme works “almost entirely with those persons who express an interest in leaving a group” (p. 72), that is, people with some degree of cognitive opening and willingness to critically reflect on their actions. Lastly, programmes can also vary according to the importance given to the ideological component. Some programmes aim to directly challenge the participants’ ideology, while others regard the achievement of a cognitive change as a positive indirect effect of disengagement.

The different intervention methods range from specific conversation techniques, family support and community engagement, individual counselling (mental health care and religious/ideological), and reintegration and employment services, to specific interventions, such as the removal of tattoos (if applicable), the use of different tools (i.e., films, books and speakers) and visits to specific, relevant locations, arts or sports (RAN, 2018). Individual mentoring and resilience training (e.g., working on critical thinking, relationship skills, empathy, self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to self-reflect) also represent typical intervention methods.

Mentoring can be developed by professional and volunteer practitioners, depending on the type of person and the given context (e.g., in or outside prison). The mentor’s background

variability can prove beneficial in ensuring a mentee-mentor match (cf. Orban, 2019; Spalek & Davies, 2012). A prerequisite is that the mentor constitutes a credible role model who can build trust with the mentee. Other intervention methods are also used, such as implementing stabilisation coaching, as a post-release measure in a deradicalisation in prison programme (Violence Prevention Network [VPN], 2019). The different methods offer strategies on how to approach participants and enhance the development of an exit worker-VETO relationship. Consequently, the implementation of intervention methods aims to initiate a higher tolerance of ambiguity to encourage deradicalisation, thus ensuring disengagement from violent actions. However, these programmes' (practical) consequences require observations through a holistic lens. Van den Berg et al.'s (2018) proposed knowledge base highlights that intervention programmes (such as exit programmes) tend to focus on the outcomes of eight dimensions: (1) strengthening one's self-identity; (2) decreasing an individual's affiliation with terror-related groups; (3) reducing negative emotions; (4) enhancing self-esteem; (5) supporting social reintegration provisions; (6) promoting confidence in local authorities and communities; (7) reinforcing ties with family and friends; and (8) improving overall knowledge and social skills.

Due to the complexity of setting up an exit programme, the literature (e.g., RAN, 2017) provides key recommendations regarding operational procedures. These recommendations include the structural definition of the organisation responsible for its implementation (i.e., governmental body, NGO or a public-private partnership), the programme's expected setting (e.g., prison, probation, juvenile detention facility, community) and the type of intervention (e.g., project, programme, standard praxis) (RAN, 2017). A clear rationale of the programme's objectives (e.g., disengagement, deradicalisation) and target group (right-wing extremism, Islamist extremism) (Veldhuis, 2015)—including if it should encompass a gender dimension (Brown, 2019; Gielen, 2018; Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2019) or be attentive to Foreign Terrorist Fighters' special needs (e.g., Levy, 2018)—should also undergo integration into the programme's initial concept phase.

The choice of staff is also crucial (RAN, 2017): their professional (e.g., researchers, criminal justice professionals, chaplains) or life (e.g., former VETOs) experiences can play a substantial role in establishing a trusting relationship with the participant (Schuurman & Bakker, 2016; Speckhard, 2011). Of particular importance are staff with significant knowledge about the radicalisation process and the cognitive/behavioural steps that potentialise deradicalisation/disengagement (RAN, 2017). This is particularly relevant for those staff dealing with VETOs and individuals vulnerable to the radicalisation process (Council of Europe, 2019; European Commission, 2020b; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2016, 2020; Williams, 2016). Thus, staff training programmes should increasingly shift their focus towards a practitioner-oriented approach instead of an academic-centred one (Koehler & Fiebig, 2019).

Additionally, it remains critical to set up topics that exit workers should be aware of, such as what (not) to discuss with the participant and avoiding moral judgement. Setting up an environment that supports deradicalisation or disengagement by creating alternatives for the participant (e.g., building social networks outside the extremist group) is likely to prove beneficial (cf. Hedayah & International Centre for Counter-Terrorism [ICCT], 2013; van den Berg et al., 2018).

The previous development of communication guidelines can also play a significant role, since ensuring a strong relationship with the media enables the sharing of success stories. This approach not only raises awareness and attracts (future) participants and funds (i.e., guaranteeing the programme's sustainability over time) (RAN, 2017) but also prevents/avoids stigmatisation (Veldhuis, 2015).

Although inter-institutional and multi-agency collaboration amongst different actors is deemed beneficial (Baaken et al., 2018), it cannot be dissociated from the EU Directive 2016/680 and the EU Regulation 2016/679 on data protection. Therefore, an additional pivotal requirement lies in safeguarding confidentiality and protecting detailed and sensitive data according to national and European legal frameworks. Lastly, a thorough

conceptualisation of evaluation procedures to effectively measure the intervention's success should be settled in advance (see subsection *Measuring success: a challenging task*).

Evaluating exit interventions: design, focus and instruments

The evaluation of exit programmes presents a great challenge. According to Horgan and Braddock (2010), the expectation is that negative outcomes are not made public by a governmental organisation implementing these programmes. It is also challenging to ensure that evaluators have the necessary access to the relevant outcome data (Williams & Kleinman, 2014). According to Lipsey et al. (2006), when evaluating anti-crime programmes, information may be difficult to access because programme managers may not share the outcome data with the evaluators for numerous reasons (e.g., ethical issues; outcome data as proprietary), and individuals may fail to answer to evaluation questionnaires or provide incomplete data. Additionally, since data collection can occur before the programme starts, it remains integral to consider the evaluation procedures since the programmes' design phase.

Although various methodologies could assess exit programmes (see subsection *Identification of evaluation dimensions*), the available evaluation design options, as well as the foci of the evaluation being implemented, are relevant aspects to address, considering the purpose of this paper. The five common types of evaluation designs mentioned in the literature (Helmus et al., 2017) are: (1) retrospective pre-/post-intervention evaluation; (2) pre-/post-intervention evaluation; (3) interrupted time-series analysis; (4) pre-/post-intervention evaluation with comparison group; and (5) pre-/post-intervention evaluation with a control group. Lewis et al. (2020) mention additionality (e.g., the use of recidivism rates as a single measurement for deradicalisation), quasi-experimental, longitudinal and randomised control trials as evaluation designs applicable in the field of preventing or countering violent extremism. However, not all these evaluation designs are considered in the context of exit programmes since several challenges can occur (e.g., identification of control groups). A current review of 112 publications reporting P/CVE interventions, showed that only 38 documents present clear and evaluated intervention outcomes. However, the evaluation

primarily took place (28 out of 38) with qualitative analysis with or without collecting primary data (Pistone et al., 2019).

Regarding the focus of the evaluation, according to Feddes and Gallucci (2015), four different foci can undergo consideration: (1) impact, when the evaluation focus is on the effect of the intervention; (2) mechanism, when the intervention focuses on “why the intervention was considered effective” (p. 12); (3) process, when the assessment focuses on the implementation of the programme (how); and (4) economic, when the assessment of the programme considers the underlying financial costs.

A distinction between impact and process evaluation appears in Koehler’s (2017a) report, in which the author states that “whilst an impact evaluation pursues the aim of verifying whether a specific project actually achieved the desired effect (e.g., deradicalising individuals), process evaluation aims to ascertain whether the programme does effectively what it was designed to do” (p. 21). According to the author, establishing objective quality standards is required to develop an appropriate process evaluation. Implementing such guidelines will avert an evaluation based solely on inputs which is likely to show bias, particularly since they represent only one possible view of the programme’s success.

Process evaluation data can include satisfaction surveys, tracking participation or intervention attendance, collecting sociodemographic data and other implementation-related measures (e.g., adherence to the programme curriculum). In turn, impact evaluation has been measured with constructs, such as support for extremism, outgroup hostility, anger, depression and social support (Helmus et al., 2017).

Regarding the instruments used in the assessment process, exit programmes seem to undergo evaluation using questionnaires, interviews, observation and techniques such as focus groups (Feddes & Gallucci, 2015). According to the literature (e.g., Feddes & Gallucci, 2015; Manzano, 2016), it remains essential to use more than one instrument to assess a programme, for instance, combining the use of questionnaires and interviews. The literature compiles multiple options for evaluating individual characteristics and processes (cf. Baruch et al., 2018; Scarcella et al., 2016).

Measuring success: a challenging task

To understand how success might appear in these interventions, Marsden (2015) interviewed practitioners working with ex-prisoners convicted of terrorism offences. The author identified the following markers of success: (1) no reoffending – that is, lack of recidivism; (2) successful reintegration into society; (3) a more balanced, prosocial, non-offending identity; and (4) alternative ways of responding to grievance – that is, finding legal and prosocial ways to address participants’ concerns. However, these markers can hardly be transformed into measurable indicators of success, and other push and pull factors can explain the abandonment of extremist behaviour (cf. Altier et al., 2014, 2017).

In a systematic review, Feddes and Gallucci (2015) identified 55 papers (from 1990 until 2014) reporting interventions aiming to prevent radicalisation or promote deradicalisation. The results showed that most of the analysed manuscripts (88%) did not present any quantitative/qualitative empirical data related to the programmes’ evaluation. The cited authors added that the “instruments and methods used were often not specified. Cross-sectional methods have been used most often. This is problematic as many interventions have a long-term prevention or restoration focus” (p. 17). Another critical aspect corresponded to the use of a single method, as “existing interventions mainly focus on the individual level whereby attention for effects on a group level is lacking” (p. 17), which justifies more rigorous, multi-method approaches to the assessment of deradicalisation programmes. Therefore, triangulation (i.e., a combination of multiple methods and data sources) represents a possibility to increase the evaluation findings’ validity (Mathison, 1988). Reporting findings related to interventions in the field of P/CVE, Pistone et al.’s (2019) conclusions align with Feddes and Gallucci’s (2015) work, with the authors stating that no evidence-based intervention exists in the field.

In this topic, the Swedish approach towards disengagement and deradicalisation of right-wing extremists, ‘Exit Sweden’, is worth noting (The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, 2001). In a sample of 133 individuals, 125 (94%) were believed to have stepped back from a radical/extremist viewpoint (Demant et al., 2008), and five were in the

programme for approximately one month; whereas only 15 had been engaged for longer than a full year (Daugherty, 2019). Therefore, the long-term effects of the programme could not be ensured without a longitudinal emphasis on evaluating success, as one could not “truly say that they have completely disengaged and deradicalised [and] a re-examination of their situations after the passage of more time is warranted” (Daugherty, 2019, p. 248). However, the impossibility of storing sensitive and detailed data without violating the Swedish Personal Data Act leads to an inadequate (or impossible) follow-up strategy (Lodenus, 2010). According to Daugherty (2019), “the lack of data prevents both internal and external evaluations of the overall programme and its specific parts, which could lead to changes that improve [its] efficacy. While protecting the personal data of citizens is a noble and worthwhile goal, [...] it interferes with auditing the programme and decisions on funding the programme would be made with only partial, unverifiable data” (p. 252).

Van der Heide and Schuurman’s (2018) evaluation of the Dutch Probation Service programme emphasised these concerns. Only measuring recidivism while individuals are under the probation authorities’ supervision hinders the assessment of success, as it presents an unclear picture of whether they are likely to (re)engage in radical/extremist viewpoints afterwards. The inexistence of long-term monitoring procedures “precludes effective outcome measures, [leaving] the impact evaluation too dependent on the subjective interpretation of programme staff” (p. 225).

Different measures of success were considered in the Norwegian project Exit. The evaluation focused on both a qualitative analysis of success stories with young right-wing offenders, as well as on the number of encounters that police officers had with this very same target group after the programme’s implementation (i.e., decreased polarisation) (Daugherty, 2019; Organisasjonen Voksne for Barn, 2000).

These examples show that a series of challenges can arise when trying to ascertain the success of such interventions. Lewis et al. (2020) suggested that these challenges can be divided into analytical and practical groups. While analytical challenges comprise, among others, the multitude of individual and contextual factors affecting disengagement and the

lack of agreed metrics on programmes' success, practical challenges include the identification of viable control groups, the lack of robust secondary data against which the evaluation results can be triangulated, and logistical, ethical and even security challenges when accessing data.

Method

Identification of exit programmes and inclusion criteria

Available information was searched on the Radicalisation Awareness Network "Collection of inspiring practices" database, to determine current exit programmes in Europe targeting violent extremists. Together with practices identified through authors' and project partners' networks, a total of 26 exit interventions were identified. Contacts of programme representatives were obtained in 21 cases. Five did not answer the first contact, and two declined the invitation for an interview. In total, representatives from 14 programmes agreed to participate in the interview phase.

Participants

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The 17 participants represented 14 organisations that implement exit interventions in prison/probation/community contexts from 7 European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway and The Netherlands). Interviewees ranged from top-level positions responsible for the exit programme's implementation (e.g., heads of Counter-Terrorism Units, NGO directors) to frontline exit workers (e.g., psychologists, social workers). All participants signed a consent form and agreed to voluntarily participate in the research. Participants were informed about the goals of the study, their right to leave the interview at any point, and the collection and storage of their personal data. Participants were also informed that there were no mandatory questions and could allow or refuse the recording of the interview (done solely for transcribing purposes). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics regarding the analysed

programmes (e.g., countries with implemented programmes, the actors, settings, programmes' age and targeted ideology).

Table 1- Descriptive statistics of the programmes.

	<i>n</i>
Country	
Belgium; Denmark; Finland; France; Norway; The Netherlands	1 each
Germany	8
Actor	
Public Body	4
NGO	10
Implementation Setting	
Prison and Probation	8
Community	6
Programme Start Date	
2000-2009	4
2010-2015	5
2016-	1
Target Ideology	
Right-Wing Extremism	3
Islamist Extremism	3
Non-specified	8

According to the table, the programmes explored in the current study are primarily implemented in Germany (57%), by NGOs (71%) and in a prison and probation context (57%). Considering the ten programmes that provided information about their duration, data shows that only one programme began in the previous five years. Most programmes target no specific ideology and are open to radicalised individuals from different ideologies.

Identification of evaluation dimensions

Before developing the interview protocol, several methods and techniques suitable for evaluating intervention programmes underwent exploration. Namely, the multi-attribute evaluation (MAUT; Edwards & Newman, 1982), theory-based evaluation (Gielen, 2017), contribution analysis (Mayne, 2008), realist evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) and structural integrity assessment (Koehler, 2017a) were considered as potential methods of exploring intervention programmes. Considering the type of programmes under study (i.e., exit programmes) and despite the merits of the MAUT technique (cf. Horgan & Braddock, 2010) and the realist evaluation (cf. Gielen, 2017, 2018), the current study utilised Koehler's (2017a) structural quality standards due to their practical suitability (and applicability) for the research purposes.

Interview Protocol

Drawing from Koehler's (2017a) structural quality standards, a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix 1) was developed to collect data on the programmes' robustness. The following dimensions were considered: type of intervention; actor; design and conceptualisation; team; contact approach; type of participation; ideology (role of); duration; programme characteristics; multi-agency approach/cooperation; RNA; monitorisation/follow-up/aftercare; transparency; assessment and quality assurance; fine-tuning; and evaluation.

Data collection and analysis

Data collection occurred in the context of the European Project "Integrated Exit Programme for Prison and Probation" (WayOut; Grant Agreement nr. 823690). Among other goals, this project aimed to develop a common framework to assess exit programmes. Activities were developed from December 2018 to February 2021 by the project partners, including a set of interviews to explore exit programmes. The findings of these interviews - carried out between August 2020 and January 2021- are reported here. Whenever possible, interviews took place in the participants' native language (e.g., German, French) by WayOut

project partners (cf. acknowledgement). For participants from Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Norway, the interviews took place in English. Thirteen participants gave their consent to record the interview. Interviews were then transcribed, or the interviewer provided an extended summary of the answers, which the first author then analysed and coded, following a hybrid (primarily deductive) coding approach. According to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), a codebook was created a priori (i.e., before commencing an in-depth analysis of the data) and slightly adjusted after a preliminary analysis of the interviews. Considering the importance given to the structural quality indicators explored in the interviews, by both the interviewers and the participants, some codes benefitted from larger data features, while others received fewer elements. The asymmetric content of the themes presented in the results section reflects these issues. When quoting participants, American Psychological Association ethical considerations were followed, leading to the assignment of pseudonyms to participants and obscuring all information that could identify the interviewee/programme. The data elements extracted from the interviews' transcripts/extended summaries underwent assessment using the qualitative data analysis software Taguette, Version 0.11 (Rampin et al., 2021), allowing a comparison of data elements gathered in the different interviews.

Results

In this section, the results are organised according to the overarching themes identified throughout the qualitative data analysis.

Type of intervention

The analysis shows that all 14 programmes can be considered individual interventions. The programmes use one-on-one counselling, mentoring, psychotherapeutic rehabilitation and the exploration of participants' biography as intervention techniques. Five programmes also offer group interventions in the form of educational measures (e.g., teaching democracy; anti-aggression training) or group dynamics (i.e., participants define targets and determine what

they want to change and how to achieve those changes). In these cases, one-on-one interventions adapted to the participants' risk level can complement group activities.

Role of families and social networks

Nine programmes refer to the importance of family members, who were contacted to obtain more information about the participant to tailor the intervention. It is also recognised that keeping a connection with the families is integral, considering their role in emotionally and socially supporting the participants after the intervention. Involvement of relatives in the intervention sessions (e.g., counselling, mentoring, training) is rare, with only three interviewees referencing their inclusion.

Team skills and composition

Multidisciplinary teams, involving different specialists depending on pre-established programme's goals, implement these interventions. The team members' educational backgrounds include fields such as criminology, law, political science and education/pedagogy. Caseworkers with other academic and professional degrees, such as psychology, security/police, social work, healthcare, Islamic studies, social anthropology and gender studies, are also common. Therefore, the experience and competence of these professionals comes from different fields, ranging from clinical social work, mental health, violence, counselling/systemic therapy, and forced migration and refugee health, to risk-assessment, theology/religion and cultural diversity, radicalisation and hate crimes. The involvement of former extremists in the team is foreseen by two programmes. In one of these programmes, the interviewee clarified that former VETOs work under supervision, and are only involved if they no longer relate to the extremist movement and are not at risk of relapse. Teams can have as few as two persons ($n=1$) but typically involve three to seven professionals ($n=12$). One wider state-run programme, involving a municipality, involved a larger team of approximately 50 professionals.

While valuing previous personal experiences and education, three programmes mention the existence of initial training for staff members. One of these three programmes, implementing group interventions, requires trainers who have consulting experience with groups.

Since the programmes' teams are composed of multidisciplinary members, the designation of individual caseworkers can be based on the match between the participants' needs assessment and the caseworkers' skills (e.g., ability to make contact, be authentic, show empathy). The following quote from Mike (director of an exit programme) illustrates the change in the intervention team over time, according to the participant's stage:

“We try to provide to the people we are following a tailor-made approach, inclusively with a specific member of the team who is going to work with them at that precise moment. So at the beginning, maybe the need is to have a social worker or a legal advisor (...). And later, maybe the need will be more a psychologist, because they need assistance at that level, or a criminologist (...). So, the first person who is going to follow our user is probably not the same at the end.”

Contact approach

The type of contact approach (i.e., active versus passive) varies across programmes. Six programmes reported an active approach. Preliminary calls are made, and letters to potential participants (when they are accessible, such as inmates) are sent. The active contact approach can also see potential participants referred to the programme by other professionals (particularly in the prison and probation contexts). On the other hand, some interviewees ($n = 3$) identify their programmes as passive and rely on the potential participants' interest in the programme. A third type of contact approach (i.e., mediated) was also found in two programmes, and sees families either providing potential participants with information about the programmes or taking them there.

Type of participation

The interviewees indicated their preference for voluntary participation, recognising that a willingness to join the programmes is a prerequisite for the intervention's success. However, four programmes involve participants under judicial mandate, meaning they are obliged to take part or the programme is a prerequisite for further interventions/measures (e.g., applying for probation). Voluntary participation is preferable but not without drawbacks. Contrary to mandatory participation (which allows the intervention to start as soon as a decision has been made in that regard), voluntary participation can result in months or even years of effort to engage with participants. This situation was observed in an exit programme implemented in prison where active communication efforts (e.g., face-to-face communication; written letters) attempt to attract participants but do not ensure their immediate entry into the programme. That is, prisoners know about the programme, but since they are not obliged to join, they can take their time to decide if they want to participate or not. However, voluntary participation ensures that members of the target are not sanctioned if they do not agree to participate or wish to withdraw from the programme.

The challenges of mandatory participation/incentives for participation are well illustrated by the following quote:

“It is voluntary, but the incentives for being able to apply for probation is, do you want to have one or two more years in prison or you can apply for probation? So people participate, but then the next step is that we need to monitor, so to speak, their willingness to go into this fully hearted.” (Mark, director of an exit programme)

Role of Ideology

In these programmes, ideology tends to play a secondary role. Only 5 programmes refer the ideological discussions as an integral aspect, while half ($n = 7$) refer to ideology as playing a minor role. That is, ideology is not the main focus of the intervention but can be addressed, usually after establishing a trusting caseworker-participant working relationship.

Otherwise, ideological discussions can be counterproductive, leading to a potentially relationship-damaging confrontation. Therefore, exploring why the participant felt attracted by extremist ideologies requires careful addressing. Programmes tend to intervene in the realms of biographical work and disengagement (i.e., trying to achieve behavioural change). However, ideology can also play a central role, such as in programmes focusing on deradicalisation. In these cases, additional training on the topic may be required for the implementation team. The role of religious experts/leaders is also more prominent in programmes targeting the participants' ideology.

Two programmes reject the inclusion of ideology as a topic during the intervention. From one of these programmes, Michael (member of a team implementing an exit programme) stated that “We never try to change their ideology. Never. We do not do that, because we think that it is not going to work anyways. So, we focus only on violent crimes and violent behaviour”.

Duration

The length of the implementation period varies according to the type of intervention and on a case-by-case basis. Programmes applying a group or pedagogical intervention usually have a shorter, better-defined implementation period of six to seven months, while individual programmes have a longer duration, usually from one to three years, or even higher, depending on the needs of the participant, their willingness and the length of the sentence (in the case of the programmes implemented in a prison setting).

Risk and needs assessment

The analysed programmes used the RNA tools differently. Four out of the 14 programmes report no use of RNA. Of the remaining 10, four use their own strategies such as (1) a risk (and credibility) assessment of participants to protect staff and avoid attempts to infiltrate people in the project; (2) an anamnesis sheet developed for the programme; and (3) the assessment of risk regarding the work relation with the participant, the safety of team

members and the risk for the participants during the programme (e.g., in their environment, the circumstances surrounding their situation).

The remaining six programmes use published needs and/or risk assessment tools such as: KISSeS-strategy (Nolde et al., 2020); Level of Service Inventory (Andrews et al., 2004); The Hexagon tool (cf. Metz & Louison, 2019); VERA-2R (Pressman et al., 2016); HCR-20 (Webster et al., 1997); NOORAPPLI 3D (Bouzar & Bénézech, 2019); Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol-18 (TRAP-18; Meloy, 2018); Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA; Kropp & Hart, 2000); and Assessment of Honour Based Violence (PATRIARCH; Belfrage et al., 2012).

Therefore, 57% of the programmes either do not implement RNA or lack structure. Thus, the data regarding participants is collected with unreliable, non-validated tools.

However, the practical-oriented approach followed by the programmes is well illustrated when, regarding a “credibility diagnosis”, Rachel (member of a team implementing an exit programme) stated that it is important “to check the seriousness of participants and thus protect project staff from assault attempts as well as clients from violent reactions of the extremist group.”

Monitoring / Follow-up / Aftercare

The results show that three programmes do not follow their participants post-intervention. Two of those three programmes are implemented in prison and probation, and the interviewees stated that they could no longer collect information following the participants’ release. Two other programmes involve no active follow-up of participants, who they can return to the intervention if they wish. Such a situation occurs when former participants face personal challenges, according to the interviewees.

Eight intervention programmes implement monitoring, follow-up or aftercare measures. Follow-up of participants varies across different interventions. Four different formats can be identified: 1) two programmes implemented a fixed-term aftercare of six months and 12 months; 2) two other programmes contact former participants at periodic

intervals or when information from former participants is lacking; 3) two programmes refer participants to other organisations/partners at the end of the programme, for additional support; and 4) two programmes have a structured follow-up strategy, involving handing the cases over to municipality services or probation teams.

Evaluation

Concerning the internal evaluation of these programmes, all interviewees refer to qualitative evaluation indicators. These indicators encompass the practitioners' perceptions regarding the participants' favourable evolution throughout the programme's implementation (i.e., reducing violent behaviour, abandoning ideological extremist viewpoints) or, on the contrary, refusal to participate and lack of motivation to engage in the intervention. Illustrating the latter, Andrew (manager of exit programme) states that "There are also interventions that are unsuccessful, for instance if participants never show up and clearly do not want to participate. Difficult dynamics occur if participants are very resistant and uncooperative or if they see themselves as troublemakers."

Michael (member of a team implementing an exit programme), mentioned more tangible outcomes (but still subjective) considered in the evaluation, stating that:

"If a client who had a long history of violence and was jailed many times got out and came to [programme name], and a few years later he gets a job, a good apartment, and education, that is also a result. But the main result is of course, changing the violent behaviour."

Therefore, evaluation includes collecting feedback from the participants on the programme's activities, assessing their motivation and openness to start and stick with the programme, periodical evaluation of cases by the implementation team and the caseworkers' perceptions about the quality of the relationship with the client/participant. The following quote from Mark (director of an exit programme) illustrates the qualitative evaluation previously mentioned:

“They do a kind of assessment because they talk with the inmate, but (...) it is just anecdotal evidence in the sense that they tell about how they think things are going. But we do not do a post-hoc evaluation of the effectiveness measured in, say, recidivism.”

In quantitative terms, practitioners have little to no evidence that the programme worked. Only three of the analysed programmes use quantitative indicators (recidivism rates) to evaluate their success. Reflecting on the topic of recidivism, an interviewee from an exit programme implemented in prison considers that despite being the only measure of success, the participants’ recidivism rates tend to be low even without an exit-based intervention. Therefore, the programme’s impact is difficult to be measure.

Additionally, evaluation can be connected to the RNA tools used in the intervention. When analysing the interventions’ success in terms of personal change and behavioural changes (e.g., being less aggressive) achieved by the participant, the results from the RNA indicate the programme’s success.

One interviewee (Mark, director of an exit programme) mentioned characteristics of the population and reflected on the evaluation of exit programmes:

“The population is simply too small, so even though we actually would run experimental criminological experiments, I think our population would be so small that it would take a long period of time to be able to have a population big enough to actually assess the effectiveness of the programme.”

Publicly available evaluation reports are rare ($n= 4$) and only available in the national language of the country in which the exit programme took place. Four exit programmes also underwent evaluation by external organisations. Regarding the evaluation of the programmes’ cost-effectiveness, participants did not consider it relevant.

Discussion

The analysis of the interviews with the representatives of 14 exit programmes allowed a more comprehensive understanding of their characteristics. Despite their heterogeneity (e.g., geographical location; objectives), it became clear that some aspects of their structure are similar, such as their duration, type of participation and the number and profile of the staff implementing these programmes. However, the analysed exit programmes tend to drastically differ in other aspects, such as the use of validated RNA tools, the role played by ideology, the type of intervention (individual mentoring/counselling versus group training) or the contact approach (passive versus active).

The programmes' duration means individual interventions can last several years and shows how complex the behavioural (and, sometimes, cognitive) changes are (and the difficulty in reaching them), even when these interventions are tailor-made and applied by multidisciplinary, specialised teams. Participation in these programmes is principally voluntary, which is essential considering that "individuals' positive attitudes toward rehabilitation affect [the intervention] outcomes" (Milla et al., 2020, p. 25). Contrarily, as stated by Cherney et al. (2021), participants can see mandatory participation "as an example of authorities treating them unfairly (...) thus increasing the grievances about how they are treated" (p. 20). These grievances and feelings of unfair treatment by authorities are known drivers of radicalisation (Campelo et al., 2018). Therefore, mandatory participation seems counterproductive in programmes aiming to disengage and/or deradicalise individuals.

Results regarding the use of RNA tools suggest that substantial efforts need to be made concerning the practitioners' use of these instruments, including awareness-raising about their importance. Using RNA should be an inseparable part of an exit programme's implementation process since it can adapt and customise the programme to the participants' needs and risk levels. These RNA procedures divert time and resources from low-risk participants to those at a higher risk (cf. Monahan & Skeem, 2016). This assessment can also contribute to the quantitative data used to measure the short-term impact of the intervention

while improving the staff's security. The use of measurement tools/tests identified in previous literature to assess specific violent extremist attributes (cf. Baruch et al., 2018) or broader psychological constructs (i.e., extremism, terrorism, fundamentalism, radicalisation and authoritarianism) (Scarcella et al., 2016) can reduce this identified weakness in the implementation of exit programmes.

In terms of follow-up and aftercare strategies, results show that current practices require improvement. Although staff in some programmes stay in touch with the former participants who, in turn, can return and search for help or get back into contact with their mentor/counsellor, other initiatives have no follow-up or aftercare procedures, which may result in a lack of support for the former participant in times of personal crisis. Additionally, such a situation may hinder the interventions' mid- and long-term success evaluation since the programme's staff are likely to lose contact with the former participants. Here, the programme's resources can play an integral role, with limited resources leading to the impossibility of ensuring an efficient follow-up strategy. Cases are also likely to be handed over to other institutions, as reintegration tends to involve a long process that may result in a loss of contact with the client/participant. In the current study, the fact that ten (out of the 14) programmes are implemented by NGOs might explain the unstructured follow-up procedures. Arguably, these actors might lack the required budget to implement follow-up measures. However, in terms of monitoring participants and cooperating with other agencies, it is vital to highlight that during the intervention and when the exit programme finishes, whenever there is a public security threat (e.g., risk of committing terrorist-related offences), current legislation in the European Union (cf. Directive (EU) 2016/680, 2016; Regulation (EU) 2016/679, 2016) allows the sharing of personal data with national authorities. Therefore, organisations implementing exit programmes can share personal data under certain circumstances and should show awareness and comply with national and EU current legislation to ensure public security.

Lastly, the results regarding the programmes' evaluation align with previous research (cf. Koehler, 2017a; Lewis et al., 2020; Pistone et al., 2019; van der Heide &

Schuurman, 2018). Internal evaluation procedures are unstructured, largely descriptive and tend to rely on anecdotal evidence and practitioners' subjective perceptions regarding the participants' evolution. Such a situation aligns with previous reviews of intervention programmes in the P/CVE field (cf. Pistone et al., 2019; van den Berg et al., 2018). The programmes explored in the current study revealed few examples of the process (e.g., satisfaction surveys) and impact evaluation (e.g., practitioners' perception that participants are less supportive of extremist ideologies/groups). These results, consistent across different studies, show the urgency for implementing common standards and indicators to evaluate the interventions' effectiveness, as highlighted in the most recent EU Counter-Terrorism Agenda (European Commission, 2020b). The current flaws in evaluating these programmes can pose a risk, especially if they require the provision of evidence-based results regarding their effectiveness (i.e., to raise funds to ensure their continuity and sustainability). This approach is particularly integral in the case of the economic assessment of the programmes, referred to by the participants as irrelevant and not carried out, aligned with previous research findings (cf. van den Berg et al., 2018). However, the economic assessment represents an intrinsic evaluation dimension towards higher transparency and quality assurance. Therefore, it remains crucial that organisations implementing exit programmes overcome the current practical challenges to understanding their success.

Limitations

This study has some limitations. Interviews involved different persons with diverse backgrounds. Since some interviews were conducted in the interviewees' native languages and others in English, interpretation and translation issues can occur. Interpretation of current findings should consider the qualitative and explorative nature of the study, which focused on the description of a limited number of exit programmes and may not represent other realities (e.g., other exit programmes or other interventions). The fact that the current findings are based on the participants' perceptions constitutes a limitation considering that no other data was collected for use in triangulation validation. Additionally, participant's points of view

and/or discourse about the programmes can suffer from a positivity bias. Despite these limitations, the semi-structured interview constituted a viable method of collecting information about the exit programmes' characteristics and structural integrity, which allowed the comparison of different programmes and generated conclusions and suggestions.

Practical Implications

Despite the numerous analytical and practical challenges (Lewis et al., 2020), this study draws implications for both researchers and practitioners in the field of exit programmes. Researchers can contribute their technical knowledge to the design and implementation of robust evaluation methods to assess the exit programmes' success, thereby improving current practices. Considering the different typologies of exit programmes, the evaluation should conform to the goals, specific characteristics and underlying theories of change on which they are based (Baruch et al., 2018). An improved evaluation design means exit programmes will be able to collect data throughout the process, which will be vital to ascertain their successful implementation.

Training practitioners on how to use validated RNA tools can potentially increase the participants' assessment rate. This approach can have consequences in terms of time and resources allocated to each case. The implementation of a pre- and post-intervention can improve current evaluation designs, with a longitudinal or quasi-experimental approach being preferred. The use of multiple data sources (i.e., practitioners, stakeholders, families), evaluation methods (e.g., questionnaires, interviews) and secondary data (i.e., data already collected by other sources), if available, can also provide additional evidence to the programmes' evaluation.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the following persons for their contribution to the interviews: Catarina Abrunhosa (Innovative Prison Systems), Sara Afonso (Innovative Prison Systems),

Chafiaa Djouadi (Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès), Robin van Halderen (Avans Hogeschool), Sophie Scheuble (Violence Prevention Network), Eduard Matt (Bremen Ministry of Justice) and Ivo Lisitzki (Bremen Ministry of Justice).

Funding

This research was partially funded by the European Union Internal Security Fund (ISF) – Police, Grant Agreement: 823690 — Integrated Exit Programme for Prison and Probation (WayOut)

References

- Altier, M. B., Boyle, E. L., Shortland, N. D., & Horgan, J. G. (2017). Why they leave: An analysis of terrorist disengagement events from eighty-seven autobiographical accounts. *Security Studies*, 26(2), 305–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1280307>
- Altier, M. B., Thoroughgood, C. N., & Horgan, J. G. (2014). Turning away from terrorism: Lessons from psychology, sociology, and criminology. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(5), 647–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343314535946>
- Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J., & Wormith, S. J. (2004). *The Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI)*. Multi-Health Systems.
- Baaken, T., Korn, J., & Walkenhorst, D. (2018). *EX POST PAPER The challenge of resocialisation : Dealing with radicalised individuals during and after imprisonment*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_dealing_with_radicalised_individuals_06_112018_en.pdf (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Barrelle, K. (2015). Best student paper society for terrorism research annual conference 2014: Pro-integration: disengagement from and life after extremism. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 7(2), 129–142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2014.988165>
- Baruch, B., Ling, T., Warnes, R., & Hofman, J. (2018). Evaluation in an emerging field: Developing a measurement framework for the field of counter-violent-extremism. *Evaluation*, 24(4), 475–495. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389018803218>
- Belfrage, H., Strand, S., Ekman, L., & Hasselborg, A.-K. (2012). Assessing Risk of Patriarchal Violence with Honour as a Motive: Six Years Experience Using the PATRIARCH Checklist. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 14(1), 20–29. <https://doi.org/10.1350/ijps.2012.14.1.250>
- Bouzar, D., & Bénézech, M. (2019). Practical Guide of Assessment of Disengagement from Jihadist Violent Extremism: Indicators of deradicalization. *Journal of Current Medical Research and Opinion*, 02(10), 256–284. <https://doi.org/10.15520/jcmro.v2i10.211>
- Bovenkerk, F. (2011). On leaving criminal organizations. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 55(4). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-011-9281-x>

-
- Brown, K. (2019). Gender Mainstreaming Principles, Dimensions and Priorities for PVE. In *UN Women*. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/gender-mainstreaming-principles-dimensions-and-priorities-for-pve-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1240> (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Campelo, N., Oppetit, A., Neau, F., Cohen, D., & Bronsard, G. (2018). Who are the European youths willing to engage in radicalisation? A multidisciplinary review of their psychological and social profiles. *European Psychiatry*, 52, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurpsy.2018.03.001>
- Cherney, A. (2020). Evaluating interventions to disengage extremist offenders: a study of the proactive integrated support model (PRISM). *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 12(1), 17–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2018.1495661>
- Cherney, A., De Rooy, K., & Eggins, E. (2021). Mandatory participation in programs to counter violent extremism: A review of evidence for and against. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 27 (Summer), 1–33.
- Council of Europe. (2019). *Guidelines Regarding Recruitment, Selection, Education, Training and Professional Development of Prison and Probation Staff*. <https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-training-staff/1680943aad> (Accessed 13 February 2020).
- Daugherty, C. E. (2019). Deradicalization and disengagement: Exit programs in Norway and Sweden and addressing Neo-Nazi extremism. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 21 (Winter), 219–260.
- Demant, F., Slotman, M., Buijs, F., & Tillie, J. (2008). *Decline and Disengagement: An Analysis of Processes of Deradicalisation*. Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies.
- Directive (EU) 2016/680. (2016). *Protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free*. <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/680/oj> (Accessed 1 March 2021).
- Edwards, W., & Newman, J. R. (1982). *Multiattribute evaluation*. SAGE.
- European Commission. (2015). *The European Agenda on Security COM(2015) 185 final*.
- European Commission. (2020a). *The EU Security Union Strategy COM(2020) 605 final*.
-
- Costa, Liberado, Esgalhado et al.: Exploring the Characteristics of Exit Programmes in Europe

-
- European Commission. (2020b). *A Counter-Terrorism Agenda for the EU: Anticipate, Prevent, Protect, Respond COM(2020) 795 final*.
- Feddes, A. R., & Gallucci, M. (2015). A Literature Review on Methodology used in Evaluating Effects of Preventive and De-radicalisation Interventions. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 5 (Winter), 1–27.
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1), 80-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107>
- Gielen, A. (2017). Countering Violent Extremism: A Realist Review for Assessing What Works, for Whom, in What Circumstances, and How? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1313736>
- Gielen, A. (2018). Exit programmes for female jihadists: A proposal for conducting realistic evaluation of the Dutch approach. *International Sociology*, 33(4), 454–472.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580918775586>
- Harris-Hogan, S., Barrelle, K., & Zammit, A. (2016). What is countering violent extremism? Exploring CVE policy and practice in Australia. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 8(1), 6–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2015.1104710>
- Hedayah, & International Centre for Counter-Terrorism. (2013). *Additional Guidance on the Role of Psychologists/Psychology in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs*. [http://www.icct.nl/app/uploads/download/file/Hedayah-ICCT Psychology Good Practices.pdf](http://www.icct.nl/app/uploads/download/file/Hedayah-ICCT_Psychology_Good_Practices.pdf) (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Helmus, T. T., Matthews, M., Ramchand, R., Beaghley, S., Stebbins, D., Kadlec, A., Brown, M. A., Kofner, A., & Acosta, J. D. (2017). RAND Program Evaluation Toolkit for Countering Violent Extremism. In *RAND Program Evaluation Toolkit for Countering Violent Extremism*. RAND Corporation. <https://doi.org/10.7249/tl243>
- Horgan, J., & Braddock, K. (2010). Rehabilitating the terrorists?: Challenges in assessing the effectiveness of de-radicalization programs. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22(2), 267–291. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546551003594748>
- Koehler, D. (2017a). *Structural Quality Standards for work to intervene with and counter violent extremism*. http://girds.org/file_download/23/final-handbook-quality-

[standards.pdf](#) (Accessed 12 August 2019).

- Koehler, D. (2017b). A typology of “de-radicalisation” programmes. In Lore Colaert (Ed.), *‘De-radicalisation’ Scientific insights for policy* (pp. 63–82). Flemish Peace Institute. https://www.flemishpeaceinstitute.eu/sites/vlaamsvredesinstituut.eu/files/files/reports/deradicalisering_eng_lowres.pdf (Accessed 7 March 2019).
- Koehler, D., & Fiebig, V. (2019). Knowing What to Do: Academic and Practitioner Understanding of How to Counter Violent Radicalization. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 13(3), 44–62. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26681908> (Accessed 19 July 2021).
- Kropp, P. R., & Hart, S. D. (2000). The spousal assault risk assessment (SARA) guide: Reliability and validity in adult male offenders. *Law and Human Behavior*, 24(1), 101–118. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005430904495>
- Levy, I. (2018). *Deradicalization Programs in Australia and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon*. https://www.ict.org.il/images/Australia_foreign_fighters.pdf (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Lewis, J., Marsden, S., & Copeland, S. (2020). *Evaluating programmes to prevent and counter extremism*. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/download/11267/> (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Lipsey, M., Petrie, C., Weisburd, D., & Gottfredson, D. (2006). Improving evaluation of anti-crime programs: Summary of a National Research Council report. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 2(3), 271–307. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-006-9009-6>
- Lodenus, A.-L. (2010). *To leave a destructive life full of hate: The Story of Exit in Sweden*.
- Manzano, A. (2016). The craft of interviewing in realist evaluation. *Evaluation*, 22(3), 342–360. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389016638615>
- Marsden, S. V. (2015). Conceptualising ‘success’ with those convicted of terrorism offences: Aims, methods, and barriers to reintegration. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 7(2), 143–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2014.1001421>
- Mathison, S. (1988). Why Triangulate? *Educational Researcher*, 17(2), 13–17. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X017002013>
- Mayne, J. (2008). Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect. *ILAC Brief 16*, 1–4.

-
- Meloy, J. R. (2018). The Operational Development and Empirical Testing of the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18). *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 100(5), 483–492. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223891.2018.1481077>
- Metz, A., & Louison, L. (2019). *The Hexagon: An Exploration Tool*. NIRN - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Milla, M. N., Hudiyana, J., & Arifin, H. H. (2020). Attitude toward rehabilitation as a key predictor for adopting alternative identities in deradicalization programs: An investigation of terrorist detainees' profiles. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 23(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.12380>
- Monahan, J., & Skeem, J. L. (2016). Risk Assessment in Criminal Sentencing. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 12(1), 489–513. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-021815-092945>
- Nolde, K., Feder, J., Möller, K., Dietrich, K., & Liedtke, S. (2020). *Erfahrungsräume öffnen – Demokratie gestalten Die KISSeS-Strategie in der Praxis*.
- Orban, F. (2019). *Mentorordningen i kriminalomsorgen: en prosessevaluering*. https://krus.brage.unit.no/krus-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2584996/Mentorordningen_i_kriminalomsorgen.pdf (Accessed 1 March 2021)
- Organisasjonen Voksne for Barn. (2000). *PROSJEKT EXIT – SLUTTRAPPORT*. https://docplayer.me/1333874-Prosjekt-exit-sluttrapport.html#show_full_text (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2019). *Understanding the role of gender in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism good practices for law enforcement*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/0/b/420563_1.pdf (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic Evaluation*. Sage.
- Pistone, I., Eriksson, E., Beckman, U., Mattson, C., & Sager, M. (2019). A scoping review of interventions for preventing and countering violent extremism: Current status and implications for future research. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 19 (Summer), 1–84. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/213> (Accessed 19 July 2021).

-
- Pressman, D., Rinne, T., Duits, N., & Flockton, J. (2016). *VERA-2R: Violent Extremism Risk Assessment-Version 2 Revised*. Netherlands Ministry of Security and Justice, Netherlands Institute for Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology.
- Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2017). *EX POST PAPER Setting up an exit intervention*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-exit/docs/ran_exit_setting_up_exit_intervention_berlin_13-14_022017_en.pdf (Accessed 22 October 2019).
- Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2018). *Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: approaches and practices*.
- Rampin, R., Rampin, V., & DeMott, S. (2021). *Taguette* (0.11). Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5075766>
- Regulation (EU) 2016/679. (2016). *General Data Protection Regulation*. European Parliament, Council of the European Union. <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj> (Accessed 10 December 2020).
- Scarcella, A., Page, R., & Furtado, V. (2016). Terrorism, radicalisation, extremism, authoritarianism and fundamentalism: A systematic review of the quality and psychometric properties of assessments. *PLoS ONE*, *11*(12), 0–19. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0166947>
- Schuurman, B., & Bakker, E. (2016). Reintegrating jihadist extremists: evaluating a Dutch initiative, 2013–2014. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *8*(1), 66–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2015.1100648>
- Spalek, B., & Davies, L. (2012). Mentoring in relation to violent extremism: A study of role, purpose, and outcomes. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *35*(5), 354–368. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2012.666820>
- Speckhard, A. (2011). Prison and community-based disengagement and de-radicalization programs for extremist involved in militant jihadi terrorism ideologies and activities. In A. Speckhard (Ed.), *Psychosocial, organizational and cultural aspects of terrorism* (pp. 11-1-11–14). NATO-Research and Technology Organisation. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.222.2350&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (Accessed 22 February 2021).
- The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. (2001). *Exit: A follow-up and*

evaluation of the organisation for people wishing to leave racist and nazi groups.
https://bra.se/download/18.cba82f7130f475a2f1800028108/1371914734840/2001_exit_a_follow-up_and_evaluation.pdf (Accessed 22 February 2021).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2016). *Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons.*
http://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Handbook_on_VEPs.pdf (Accessed 19 November 2019).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2020). *UNODC Strategy 2021–2025.*

van de Donk, M., Uhlmann, M., & Keijze, F. (2020). *Peer and Self Review Manual for Exit Work.* https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-exit/docs/ran_exit_peer_self_review_manual_for_exit_work_en.pdf (Accessed 29 March 2021).

van den Berg, H., A. van Hemert, D., & J. van Vliet, A. (2018). Creating a Knowledge Base for Interventions Countering (Violent) Extremism: Intervention Goals and Mechanisms for Different Ideologies. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 15 (Summer), 43–75.
<https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/149> (Accessed 19 July 2021).

van der Heide, L., & Schuurman, B. (2018). Reintegrating Terrorists in the Netherlands: Evaluating the Dutch approach. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 17 (Winter), 196–239.

Veldhuis, T. M. (2015). *Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders: Policy Questions and Lessons Learned.* October.
[https://cchs.gwu.edu/sites/cchs.gwu.edu/files/downloads/VeldhuisPaper-Final%0A\(2\).pdf](https://cchs.gwu.edu/sites/cchs.gwu.edu/files/downloads/VeldhuisPaper-Final%0A(2).pdf) (Accessed 22 February 2021).

Violence Prevention Network. (2019). *Deradicalisation in Prison.* <https://violence-prevention-network.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Violence-Prevention-Network-Deradicalisation-in-prison-1.pdf> (Accessed 18 December 2019).

Walkenhorst, D., Baaken, T., Ruf, M., Leaman, M., Handle, J., & Korn, J. (2020). *Rehabilitation Manual.* https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ran_rehab_manual_en.pdf (Accessed 21 February 2021).

Webster, C. D., Douglas, K. S., Eaves, S. D., & Hart, S. D. (1997). Assessing risk of violence to others. In C. D. Webster & M. A. Jackson (Eds.), *Impulsivity: Theory, assessment,*

and treatment (pp. 251–277). Guilford.

Williams, M. J., & Kleinman, S. M. (2014). A utilization-focused guide for conducting terrorism risk reduction program evaluations. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 6(2), 102–146. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2013.860183>

Williams, R. J. (2016). *Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_approaches_to_violent_extremist_en.pdf (Accessed 8 March 2019).

Appendix 1

Attribute/dimension that is being evaluated	Question and sub-questions
	<p>First stage – know more about the programme</p> <p>This section can start with an open question such as “How would you describe the Exit programme you are managing/implementing/working on?”</p>
Actor	Who is running the programme (organisation)? For how long? How was the programme initially funded? Which institution (governmental / non-governmental) is funding the programme?
Exit Programme design and conceptualisation	<p>What identified needs led to the creation of the programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who was responsible for the programme design? - Was the programme design based on theoretical models in the field of deradicalisation?
Team	<p>What skills one needs to have to be part of the team implementing this programme? What kind of skills do you search for in potential team members?</p> <p>Who is implementing the programme (team)?</p>
Contact approach	Do you use any kind of proactive communication strategy in order to reach potential participants in the intervention programme?
Type of participation	(Independently of the contact approach) To what extent is the participation in the programme voluntary?
Ideology	Does the programme have an ideological component? That is, does it target inmates/probationers’ ideology?
Duration	How long does the programme takes from start to finish?
Programme characteristics	<p>Is the programme implemented on an individual or group level?</p> <p>Do you work with participants’ families and social networks?</p>
Multi-agency approach / collaboration	How does your organisation collaborate with different agencies (e.g., law enforcement) for increasing the success of the intervention? How does your organisation protect participants’ data when collaborating with other

	agencies?
Risk and needs assessment	<p>How are inmates' risks assessed at intake and during the programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there any specific risk assessment/instrument/tool under implementation? - How frequently is the assessment done? - What is done with the results of the risks assessment? <p>If no risk assessment is currently being conducted, do you expect this to change in the (near) future?</p> <p>How are inmates' needs assessed at intake and during the programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there any specific needs assessment/instrument/tool under implementation? - How frequently is the assessment done? - What is done with the results of the needs assessment? <p>If no needs assessment is currently being conducted, do you expect this to change in the (near) future?</p>
Monitorisation / Follow-up / Aftercare	<p>Do you apply any post-intervention/programme monitoring? If yes, when does the monitoring of participant's ends? Do you run a follow-up of the programme participants? How often?</p> <p>To what extent are other organisations involved in aftercare / are other organisations taking over after the exit programme?</p>
Transparency	<p>How do you ensure the right amount of information sharing with key actors/stakeholders (e.g., governmental bodies; NGOs; participants' family, friends and social networks)? How do you avoid the sharing of irrelevant/confidential information regarding the programme? Does the programme has a plan for crisis communication?</p>
Second stage – programme evaluation	
Assessment (Overall)	How do you measure the level of success of the programme?
Assessment (Mechanism)	Why was the intervention considered effective/ineffective? (e.g., the dynamic between the facilitator and the participants);
Assessment (Policy)	What is the impact of the evaluation on project funding and project

	continuity?
Assessment (Economic)	Did your organisation assess the cost-effectiveness of the programme? And if so, how has this been assessed?
Fine-tuning	Were evaluation results used to fine-tuning the programme? Is the programme reviewed according to updated scientific research?
Evaluation reports	Do you have any publicly available evaluation reports?
Closure	Would you like to add something to what was previously said? Do you have any doubts, comments or suggestions? Would you recommend us another person to be involved in a similar interview? Can you bring us into contact with a programme stakeholder?

About the JD Journal for Deradicalization

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is the world's only peer reviewed periodical for the theory and practice of deradicalization with a wide international audience. Named an [“essential journal of our times”](#) (Cheryl LaGuardia, Harvard University) the JD's editorial board of expert advisors includes some of the most renowned scholars in the field of deradicalization studies, such as Prof. Dr. John G. Horgan (Georgia State University); Prof. Dr. Tore Bjørge (Norwegian Police University College); Prof. Dr. Mark Dechesne (Leiden University); Prof. Dr. Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University Washington D.C.); Prof. Dr. Julie Chernov Hwang (Goucher College); Prof. Dr. Marco Lombardi, (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milano); Dr. Paul Jackson (University of Northampton); Professor Michael Freeden, (University of Nottingham); Professor Hamed El-Sa'id (Manchester Metropolitan University); Prof. Sadeq Rahimi (University of Saskatchewan, Harvard Medical School), Dr. Omar Ashour (University of Exeter), Prof. Neil Ferguson (Liverpool Hope University), Prof. Sarah Marsden (Lancaster University), Prof. Maura Conway (Dublin City University), Dr. Kurt Braddock (American University Washington D.C.), Dr. Michael J. Williams (The Science of P/CVE), and Dr. Aaron Y. Zelin (Washington Institute for Near East Policy), Prof. Dr. Adrian Cherney (University of Queensland).

For more information please see: www.journal-derad.com

Twitter: @JD_JournalDerad

Facebook: www.facebook.com/deradicalisation

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is a proud member of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

ISSN: 2363-9849

Editor in Chief: Daniel Koehler