

EX POST PAPER

The challenge of resocialisation: Dealing with radicalised individuals during and after imprisonment

Introduction

This paper aims to provide policymakers, NGO practitioners and prison governors, as well as prison and probation staff, with valuable new input for dealing with radicalised individuals. The paper has a special focus on radicalised individuals during and after imprisonment. Both the questions of how to resocialise and reintegrate extremist offenders, who have served their prison sentences, and how to prevent recidivism of these individuals are becoming more pressing. A significant number of convicts will be released in the near future in several EU Member States. In this context, it is important to understand that rehabilitation of prisoners is not only about preventing recidivism after release, but that emphasis should be put on continuing work, which should already start during imprisonment. Rehabilitation is about processes of change on the behavioural level and the offender questioning his or her own extremist values, positions or opinions. Only long-term approaches and strategies have the potential to ensure successful reintegration. These long-term approaches should be kept in mind, as the consequences of political decisions regarding the issue need to reflect a long-term view in their planning and duration. This paper

identifies key issues affecting the reintegration of former radicalised individuals: the goals and deliverables, challenges and barriers to reintegration, transition management, risk and resilience assessment and multi-agency cooperation, as well as staff training. The paper emerged from the RAN Policy and Practice event of the RAN Prison & Probation working group and the EXIT working group in Vienna on 6 November 2018, attended by practitioners, government representatives, probation and prison staff, and policymakers from 20 European countries.

This paper is written by **Till Baaken** (research fellow at the Violence Prevention Network), **Judy Korn** (Founder and CEO of Violence Prevention Network and Co-Chair WG EXIT of RAN), and **Dennis Walkenhorst** (Scientific Director of Violence Prevention Network).

Goals and deliverables

Achieving resocialisation is about achieving change within the person: **arrests** in the absence of rehabilitation approaches **will not change mindsets**. This also holds true for prison settings. Building long-term trust relationships that are strong and resilient is necessary to start a process of change; incarceration in a prison setting is not enough. In the same way, it has become clear that recidivism rates cannot be the sole indicator for success. Other indicators need to be taken into account. Especially in working with violent extremist offenders (VEOs), setting small, short-term goals, or milestones, may be a more suitable way to proceed (e.g. connect somebody with his family, trauma therapy, offer education, mirror conversations by imam). **As deradicalisation processes will take years, these small steps are motivational for both practitioners and offenders alike.** They also build trust in the relationship, in the process, and within the individuals themselves that they can achieve their aims. Setting small goals is also taking into account the individual's needs, as they differ greatly. Setting aims for a 17 year old cannot be compared to imagining the future of a 45 year old. Diverging life experience, family situation and educational needs have to be

addressed. Individual solutions need to be found. **Providing the offender with hope and a future is necessary** in any case, while boredom and sense of limited perspective can be counterproductive. Following this logic, an overall grand strategy to resocialise offenders needs to be flexible, low-level and include all actors over an extended period of time. Additionally, these strategies are difficult to evaluate, mainly because individual deradicalisation and distancing are long-term processes. Simultaneously, the political pressure to measure success (or impact) in the short term is often extremely high.

Challenges and barriers to reintegration

With only limited existing research on VEOs post release⁽¹⁾, there is much to be learned from decades of research on recidivism of non-extremist violent offenders⁽²⁾ and risk assessment approaches in the criminal justice system⁽³⁾. Regarding non-violent extremist offenders (EOs), research is even scarcer, which leads to the conclusion that more exploration is needed. Including studies from adjacent fields, like cults or gang studies and exit work, could help in

⁽¹⁾ Bryans, S., Barzanò, P., Meissner, P., Handbook on the management of violent extremist prisoners and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons. Criminal Justice Handbook Series (UNODC), 2016; Council of Europe. Directorate General I - Human Rights and Rule of Law, Handbook for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism. Strasbourg, 2016; Dean, C., Feve, S., Kessels, E., Countering violent extremism in prisons: A good practices guide. Washington, D.C., 2018; Hoffmann, A., Illgner, C., Leuschner, F., Rettenberger, M., Extremismus und justizvollzug: Literaturlauswertung und empirische erhebungen, Wiesbaden, 2017; Silke, A., Veldhuis, T., Countering violent extremism in prisons : A review of key recent

research and critical research gaps. Perspectives on Terrorism, Vol. 11, Iss. 5, 2017, 2–11.

⁽²⁾ For example: Polaschek, D. L. L., Yesberg, J. A., Chauhan, P., A year without a conviction: An integrated examination of potential mechanisms for successful reentry in high-risk violent prisoners. Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol. 45, Iss. 4, 2018, 425–446. doi:10.1177/0093854817752757

⁽³⁾ For example: Bonta, J., Andrews, D. A., Risk-need-responsivity model for offender assessment and rehabilitation. Ottawa: Public Safety Canada, 2007. doi:10.1002/jclp.20317; Andrews, D. A., Bonta, J. The psychology of criminal conduct (5th ed.). New Providence, NJ: LexisNexis Matthew Bender, 2010. doi:10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004

understanding this type of offender⁽⁴⁾. On the other hand, most of the EU Member States already have experience with EOs both within and outside of criminal justice settings. Hence, a continued exchange of good practices on preventing recidivism is vital to successfully releasing and integrating former EOs across Europe.

Reintegration into society after having served prison sentences comes with several difficulties for any person, be they economic, psychological or social. Furthermore, it is clear that individuals convicted of extremism- or terrorism-related offences face additional barriers⁽⁵⁾. These can consist of the following aspects.

Stigmatisation

The stigma of having been convicted of a terrorist offence, among other issues, can have a severe impact on the accessibility of social support services, employment or education, as well as access to housing for ex-convicts. Additionally, the social surroundings may stigmatise the ex-offender, making access and acceptance into the community difficult. This can lead to feelings of rejection and discrimination for the ex-offender. To prevent ex-offenders from falling into the “trap” of victimisation and returning to the extremist group, which in many instances will happily provide such support for the newly released individual, all actors involved in the resocialisation process must attend to this risk early on and be able to provide support wherever necessary. In light of this challenge, **it is vital to work with the communities and the social**

environment of the ex-offender to eliminate potential prejudices, which, if expressed, could otherwise reinforce oppositional and radicalised identities within the former offender.

A broader but related challenge is the possibility of extensive press coverage. This has the potential to further foster stigmatisation and complicate reintegration into communities. Preparing offenders for their public notoriety shortly after their release, without fostering it, can be a challenge for ex-convicts as well as practitioners, as the practitioners may also experience prejudice for simply doing their work.

Trust

Mutual trust of all actors involved is pivotal and the foundation of all exit work. Trust has to be established in different sectors: between the communities themselves, between security actors and NGOs and between the practitioner and the offender. Successful reintegration processes cannot be facilitated without the communities’ trust in the offenders to resocialise, or their trust in the institutions to safeguard them, or both the communities’ and the former offenders’ trust in the exit workers to be able to help him/her and the community. Additionally, if social rehabilitation efforts are being perceived as unfair by the receiving communities (i.e. spoiling the offender or giving some communities more rights and financial benefits than others), successful reintegration may well be hindered due to public disapproval or rejection of the offenders and potentially even their families. **Building strong relationships with community organisations and**

⁽⁴⁾ For example: Dubrow, R., van de Donk, M., Haanstra, W., Lessons from adjacent fields: Cults, RAN EXIT Ex Post Paper. Bordeaux, France: Radicalisation Awareness Network, June 2017, 1–10.

⁽⁵⁾ Williams, R. J., Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation, RAN P&P Practitioners’ working paper (2nd ed.). RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN P&P Working Group, 2016, p. 23.

local actors can, to a certain degree, prevent such distrust and counteract prejudices and potential backlash. Recidivism can only be reduced substantially if the offender is able to live a life according to societal norms without being discriminated against.

Prisons and prison regime

Prisons and the prison regime can greatly influence the process of resocialisation, which has to be started with the offender while he/she is still incarcerated. A fair and equal prison environment without discrimination is crucial to establish trust and gain access to the offender. For example, concerning a prisoner's cell, a prisoner needs enough space to be able to contemplate and a safe space to self-reflect. These circumstances are not available in overcrowded prisons. Physically separating VEOs from each other is not always seen as an effective approach to prevent further radicalisation in all European countries. On the one hand, providing special "terrorist wings" for VEOs has the benefit of creating a safe prison environment, protecting other prisoners from being radicalised, and specially trained prison staff can be utilised. On the other hand, it limits the possibility of learning experiences regarding ambiguity and existence of different opinions in a heterogenic population, which can foster the questioning of extremist ideology but might be more difficult to handle for prison staff.

In any case, treating the offenders fairly and with respect opens doors to starting a deradicalisation process and reaching the goal of preventing recidivism after release. At the start of the sentence, the offenders might experience emotions of anger. But these can be countered by listening and approaching them as human beings, acknowledging their needs, giving them space for labour and physical activities, and providing education. (Perceived) discrimination can be

avoided by sensitising staff to religious and cultural needs (see staff training for more details).

Release conditions

The release conditions can have a negative impact on the reintegration efforts engaged in by practitioners, but may also be an opportunity. As terrorism-related sentences often include additional or different release conditions compared to other types of sentences, and might include provisions such as ankle monitors and house arrests, the potential for stigmatisation based on such measures and its consequences for reintegration must be considered when planning reintegration. On the other hand, the intensified contact such extraordinary requirements entail offers more possibilities to continue the work with ex-offenders, particularly with regard to questioning the extremist ideology. On a limited scale, there may be a possibility to learn from reintegration and probation programmes of equally strict release conditions (e.g. for sex offenders).

Providers of exit work

Who delivers exit work and at which point a transition, if at all, between security and NGO providers of exit work, should take place, depends very much on the system in place in the different countries. Both kinds of actors need to see themselves as part of a greater cooperative structure, in which each one has to play their individual role. On the one hand, information flow between the involved actors may work better in practice, between the different security actors and prisons plus their staff due to the strict data protection laws in the European Union. On the other hand, NGOs have the distinctive advantage of not being seen as part of any governmental institution, which facilitates trust building and starting the work with the offender and his/her social surrounding. Depending on the national

context of exit work, different solutions have been found to tackle this challenge.

Transition management (post release planning)

Rehabilitation and resocialisation processes should begin as soon as possible and definitely while the person is still incarcerated. In addition to offering deradicalisation and desistance programmes, a long-term plan for the transition from a prison environment to life outside is imperative for successfully reducing recidivism rates of (V)EOs. These programmes have to be transferred from the prison environment to the outside world, while the ex-convicts try to apply their newly learned competences. To achieve the best outcome, the practitioners working with the ex-offenders *inside* the prison also continue to fulfil their counselling role *outside* of it, to secure a lasting, trustful relationship and to maintain stability. A prisoner is very vulnerable leaving the prison setting, and certain extremist groups capitalise on this by waiting and picking up the individual at the gate right after their release. This can challenge and endanger all the progress accomplished in prison. Hence, the transfer has to be carefully managed by the practitioners, prison staff and all other actors (multi-agency approach) to prevent a window of opportunity from opening up for extremist groups. It is important to clearly divide roles based on competencies, areas of operations and responsibilities to avoid confusion and things falling through the cracks (i.e. no one feeling responsible and the ex-offender building a relationship with the extremist groups). Especially, each actor's responsibilities have to be clearly defined, since trust, aims and many other factors

may vary significantly depending on the lead actor (whether they are, inter alia, security agencies or non-security government or state actors, or civil society organisations).

The following list of possibilities for support is important to reduce recidivism rates among former offenders. Where available, RAN papers for further reading have been added as a footnote.

Social support and support structures (social networks) ⁽⁶⁾

"Families of radicalising individuals can be perpetrators [...] as well as victims [...]" ⁽⁷⁾. This means that **the social support structure (family, friends, teachers, etc.) of the offender has to be included** in the pedagogical systemic approach of practitioners as soon as possible. Building trust is a long-term process and gathering significant information on the family situation by talking to the offenders themselves, their families and other supporting actors is important to assess where bonds have to be strengthened, where conflicts lie, and which relationships should (and can) be counted on to support rehabilitating offenders during and especially after their prison terms. Involving their families can pose considerable challenges as a result of families themselves withholding information (sometimes with the best intentions of protecting their loved ones), or as a result of the offenders prohibiting contact between professionals and their families out of fear of retribution by the extremist group. **Cooperation based on mutuality and respect across all stakeholders** (such as intelligence services, police, child and social welfare services, employment agencies, local authorities,

⁽⁶⁾ Molenkamp, M., The role of family and social networks in the rehabilitation of (violent) extremist

and terrorist offenders, Ex Post Paper. Utrecht, the Netherlands: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.
⁽⁷⁾ Ibid., p. 2.

community organisations, probation services, judicial agencies and prisons) can lead to gaining valuable insight into family structures and the chances and challenges lying therein. However, one must be able to ensure that family and social relations are not obstructed by “good faith” cooperation with security agencies, which would undermine remaining trust in such agencies ⁽⁸⁾. As **only social surroundings with healthy dynamics can truly provide necessary help in preventing recidivism** of ex-offenders, RAN has identified the following levels of support to families before and during the transition period:

- Providing information that helps the family to deal with stress resulting from insecurities.
- Helping families maintain a positive relationship with the ex-offender.
- Helping families deal with other issues, including possible psychological challenges and mental illness. For promising practices in different EU Member States and more information, we recommend the RAN Ex Post Paper “The Role of family and social networks in the rehabilitation of (violent) extremist and terrorist offenders” ⁽⁹⁾.

Theological support and support from religious communities ⁽¹⁰⁾

Whether religion should play a role in the prison, probation and reintegration context is highly disputed. Some programmes in Europe adopt theological modules or elements, or **question the politicised extremist ideology of the offender,**

while others solely focus on biographical or individual frustration and anger, which they perceive as underlying issues. Hence, the focus does not lie on religion as such, but on critical engagement with the extremist ideologies and the abuse of religion itself. Extremist groups use religion as a pretence and as a way of legitimising a politicised extremist ideology supposedly based on its original belief system. However, simply asserting “religion has nothing to do with it” is too easy a conclusion. Hence, using individually tailored approaches is deemed necessary in the RAN paper ‘The role of religion in exit programmes and religious counselling in prison and probation settings’. To highlight the role of religion in preventing recidivism, in October 2017 RAN recommended coordinating exit and probation workers, family and social surroundings, and religious centres. **Religious support is usually not part of the exit programmes themselves, but can be a supportive parallel structure to be included when necessary.** As long as they are vetted carefully and sensibly, religious actors or institutions can lend much support and stability to families and ex-offenders alike, not only through spiritual guidance but also by starting (re)inclusion of ex-offenders into faith communities and fostering forgiveness and hope in both the receiving communities and ex-offenders. In case religious or spiritual support is necessary, it is important to begin implementing such support during the prison term and to continue during transition periods and beyond.

⁽⁸⁾ For example: Williams, M. J., Horgan, J. G., Evans, W. P., The critical role of friends in networks for countering violent extremism: Toward a theory of vicarious help-seeking. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Vol. 8, Iss. 1, 2016, 45–65. doi:10.1080/19434472.2015.1101147

⁽⁹⁾ Molenkamp, M., The role of family and social networks in the rehabilitation of (violent) extremist

and terrorist offenders, Ex Post Paper. Utrecht, the Netherlands: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.

⁽¹⁰⁾ RAN CoE, The role of religion in exit programmes and religious counselling in prison and probation settings, Ex Post Paper. Madrid, Spain: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017.

Material support

Upon their release, ex-offenders often stand before the shambles of their former lives ⁽¹¹⁾. If no material support is provided by organisations such as housing agencies, employment agencies, educational institutions, healthcare providers or family services, recidivism is a likely outcome for all forms of offenders, regardless of the extremist or non-extremist nature of their offences. **If ex-offenders do not receive material support, extremist groups may in turn provide those services, drawing the ex-offender in again as a recruit to their cause.** The form of this support has to be planned long before release in a detailed transition plan, as well as focused on by all actors during the transition period. Ex-offenders should not leave prison feeling hopeless and without realistic prospects, but need a support structure in place, which can act as a safety net in case of future crises. A multi-agency approach to this material support is critical to achieve the best possible outcome and reduce recidivism rates.

Mental health ⁽¹²⁾

Several studies suggest that there might be a connection between a percentage of radicalised offenders and mental health issues. Mental health services and assessments are therefore needed as part of the prison and probation setting to ensure that the offenders receive support during their sentence and after the release period.

⁽¹¹⁾ For example: Western, B., Braga, A. A., Davis, J., Sirois, C., Stress and hardship after prison. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 120, Iss. 5, 2015, 1512–1547. doi:10.1086/681301; Harding, D. J., Wyse, J. J. B., Dobson, C., Morenoff, J. D., Making ends meet after prison: How former prisoners use employment, social support, public benefits, and crime to meet their basic

Co-owning the process

Offenders should be involved from the beginning in defining and establishing realistic goals and aims for their life after their release. It is important for the success of reintegration to let (ex-)offenders participate in the process. Including them in the transition planning and establishing a plan for action after release, not *for* but *with* the (ex-)offender, are seen as highly successful in different countries. However, it is also vital to reflect on any negative consequences like a possible perception that being a VEO produces any kind of privileges when it comes to participation or material support. Co-owning does not mean that VEOs can define everything in the process. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that most of them were involved in highly hierarchical groups, where decisions were made not by but for them. So, finding out who they are and creating a new narrative is important. Offenders have to explore themselves with guidance to form their own opinion. By giving agency to the individuals and encouraging them to think of their own solutions for education or employment, but also think through more basic needs like housing and their social surrounding, the (ex-)offender is put into the driver's seat. Hence, he or she is made a co-owner of the process. This drives motivation as the terms are self-defined and an intrinsic motive emerges. Co-owning the process can also foster self-esteem if the goals that were set are reached, which gives every human being a sense of achievement and self-worth. Experiences have shown that feeling part of a community (by studying or working) in combination with a feeling of self-worth considerably reduces recidivism

material needs. Ann Arbor, MI: Population Studies Center, 2011, p. 39.

⁽¹²⁾ Williams, R. J., Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation, RAN P&P Practitioners' working paper (2nd ed.). RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN P&P Working Group, 2016, p. 21.

rates, not only with extremists, but with every type of offender. Co-owning the process might also be significant in a different dimension, after processes of deradicalisation have already taken place. As long as they have a clear definition of their role as professionals and are not instrumentalised, former VEOs can play an important role as practitioners in deradicalisation processes.

Risk and resilience assessment ⁽¹³⁾

In several European countries, a number of different risk assessment tools are utilised both for general ex-offenders and specifically for VEOs (e.g. Vera 2R). These most often focus on the security threat posed by offenders during and after their release and serve different purposes. They can be used either as organisational tools for information, as decision-making tools (for instance, regarding placement of prisoners in a particular prison or section), as rehabilitation tools (to inform plans to help rehabilitate individuals and explore resources), or as reviewing tools (to evaluate and assess individuals during their detention, and to update their profile accordingly) ⁽¹⁴⁾. Especially in the field of rehabilitation of VEOs, clients with high security relevance must be considered. NGOs in particular take immense risks by working with radicalised persons, often without the ability to carry out effective risk analysis. On the other hand, these entities also often have better access to these ex-offenders – since they are *not* perceived as state representatives. Hence, **close cooperation**

between practitioners and security agencies is essential in order to decide whether specific cases are relevant to national security.

Risk assessment tools can entail harmful effects – such as stigmatisation of the former extremist – if used carelessly or incorrectly, and may contribute to alienation as well as threaten reintegration. **Especially during rehabilitation and transition periods, tools should focus on resilience factors and include an assessment of needs and how these can be met.** This is important for any type of offender, but in the case of (V)EOs supplementary factors need to be addressed. An assessment of needs in the case of (V)EOs may, for example, reveal that additional and intensified contact with family and/or social surrounding could be helpful (if they do not pose a threat to their deradicalisation or reintegration process), or show how deepening the offender's knowledge of religion could heighten his or her ability to tolerate ambiguity within theological or political discourse ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Capacity building: Another way to address risks

Capacity building is relevant in two aspects: first, by helping the receiving communities and social environment to build resilience and capacity to deal with the challenges posed by the (re)integration of an ex-offender (e.g. financial or staff capacities for train-the-trainer programmes or other support structures). Second, it is necessary to enhance internal capacities and resilience of the ex-offenders to enable them to tolerate ambiguity within their societies and lead

⁽¹³⁾ Cornwall, S., Molenkamp, M., Developing , implementing and using risk assessment for violent extremist and terrorist offenders, Ex Post Paper. Brussels, Belgium: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Ibid., p. 3.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Williams, R. J., Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation, RAN P&P Practitioners' working paper (2nd ed.). RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN P&P Working Group, 2016, p. 12.

a self-determined life, while being able to accept help and rely on the wider community, if need be.

Hence, a risk–need model of assessing the dynamic factors that would contribute to recidivism of an ex-offender is another way to understand risk assessment. An example is the good lives model as proposed by Tony Ward and Shadd Maruna, which is a strengths-based approach and seeks “to give offenders the capabilities to secure primary human goods in socially acceptable and personally meaningful ways”⁽¹⁶⁾. It includes the hopes, goals and sense of purpose of ex-convicts and identifies risk factors and obstacles that might hinder ex-offenders in reaching these goals. If the latter are not removed, the potential for recidivism grows. **Shifting away from seeing the risk posed by former offenders towards seeing the risks posed to them, helps in reducing recidivism by way of successful reintegration.** This does not mean that a security approach to risk assessment is not necessary. However, a one-sided approach of any kind always runs the risk of neglecting elements that might be vital to ensure overall societal benefit of working with (V)EOs. Hence, both security agencies and reintegration practitioners have to understand and respect the respective other’s perspectives and approaches. They need to approach each other on equal footing and work hand in hand to secure the best outcome and keep the former offender as well as the community safe.

Multi-agency cooperation⁽¹⁷⁾

In the probation and reintegration setting, multiple actors need to be involved, as the large

variety of needs that most ex-offenders exhibit cannot be catered to by one actor alone. **Working together and keeping a steady stream of information flowing between all professionals involved is essential.** While multi-agency cooperation in most cases simply means professionals working together, it is also **important to include families, grassroots organisations and religious communities**, so as to avoid misunderstandings, feelings of helplessness, or sense of being abandoned within the social surroundings or within the ex-offender him/herself. Including the ex-offender in the process has added benefits (see ‘Co-owning the process’). Such a holistic approach is a prerequisite to fully reintegrate the special target group of former VEOs in society. The support and collaboration of both professionals and social surrounding permit the essential access to the ex-offender, which is not necessarily given if only certain parties assist the individual. In the correct setting, a multi-agency approach reduces friction in flows of information, as well as costs of the rehabilitation of the ex-offender. In light of the pre-existing core structures present in most Member States, such additions based on community engagement to a coordinated multi-agency approach could be implemented quickly.

Different approaches have been tried and tested in EU Member States with varying foci on either the social surrounding or linking of professionals. Following are some examples of approaches for multi-agency cooperation:

- (1) Case conferences, as held in Rotterdam (the Netherlands), include local authorities, probation organisations, youth care, police,

⁽¹⁶⁾ Ward, T., Brown, M., The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation (p. 246). *Psychology, Crime and Law*, Vol. 10, Iss. 3, 2004, 243–257. doi:10.1080/10683160410001662744

⁽¹⁷⁾ RAN Prison and Probation Working Group (RAN P&P), Working group meeting - Multi-agency cooperation, Ex Post Paper. Stockholm, Sweden: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2016.

public prosecutor's office and forensic mental healthcare actors who meet on a weekly basis and assess risks and needs for an intervention plan. This ensures close cooperation and sharing and combining of information.

- (2) Social network meetings, as done in Austria, focus more on the social surrounding and try to bring together families, experts, NGOs, and probation and other actors involved to plan the release. Focusing on issues such as housing and employment, as well as on hobbies and free time, the plan is then delivered to a judge, who decides whether a conditional release can be implemented.
- (3) Case meetings, as held in Hessen (Germany), include, for example, prison staff, probation organisations and youth care workers who meet before the release of the offender to assess risks and needs for the reintegration plan. This ensures sharing and combining information.
- (4) In Copenhagen (Denmark), a Coordination Unit has been set up, which meets every 2 weeks to exchange information. It consists of the Employment and Integration Administration (VINK Programme), the job centre, the SSP (Standing cooperation between school, social services and police), various social service actors, the psychiatry unit, the gang exit unit, national prison and probation service, and the local crime prevention police. Its objective is to assess risks and needs to ultimately increase inclusion in society.
- (5) "Welcome home" meetings have been shown to be successful in the United States. These meetings consist of informal discussions with law enforcement officials, social workers and

community members who conduct motivational interviewing. This has significantly impacted recidivism rates.

Staff training and train-the-trainer approaches

A pivotal supporting element of effective and sustainable reintegration measures is advanced staff trainings, as well as train-the-trainer efforts for any professional working in prison and probation contexts. **Owing to the diversified natures of European societies and globalisation of criminal and extremist networks, prison populations too have become more heterogeneous. This development makes enhanced intercultural sensitivity and competencies prerequisites for positive and unprejudiced offender-officer relationships** ⁽¹⁸⁾. In turn, such positive relationships can have beneficial effects with regard to the prevention of radicalisation, as well as (V)EOs' willingness to cooperate with prison staff and associated social services when it comes to desistance or deradicalisation programmes. In addition to general awareness-raising work, specialist officers and agents, working in more frequent direct contact with (V)EOs during and after prison terms, are in need of more advanced training. Such training concerns factors and elements that can contribute to both radicalisation and desistance processes, in order to counteract or facilitate them, respectively. Among such specialised staff, social workers, psychologists and other professionals concerned with inmate welfare and personal development have to be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to support or

⁽¹⁸⁾ Williams, R. J., Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation, RAN P&P Practitioners' working paper (2nd

ed.). RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN P&P Working Group, 2016.

even carry out intervention programmes – an additional duty for which most of them did not receive any training during their professional education. In order to deliver such training programmes, prison authorities can benefit from the often long-standing experience of working with extremists and (V)EOs that external civil society organisations can provide (see for example the German model presented in ‘Promising practice: Train-the-trainer approaches’). Countries or regions with less experience should be enabled to share experiences with and learn from more experienced partners (see for example the PREPARE Project by the European Forum for Urban Security). As has been highlighted in the past, probation officers face exceptional difficulties when working with (V)EOs upon their release⁽¹⁹⁾. Extreme public scrutiny in combination with all other difficulties entailed in this line of work demand targeted trainings for such professionals.

All of these requirements are, of course, subject to the relevant financing institutions dedicating sufficient funds and human resources. None of the efforts, briefly described above, have a chance of significantly affecting desistance, deradicalisation and, in combination with this, recidivism if prison and probation services remain notoriously understaffed and poorly funded.

New developments and promising practices

New development: Contest 3.0 (published June 2018)

The newly updated version of CONTEST, the British counter-terrorism strategy, focuses more on **the rehabilitation of terrorist offenders** or those charged with terrorism-related offences. It aims to enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate. To achieve this aim, new multi-agency approaches, special prisons working with returnees, and a newly developed Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) will be implemented over the course of the next 3 years.

Started as a pilot in 2017, the DDP was added to CONTEST in June 2018, and it aims to double its current capacity to accommodate up to 230 individuals until June 2019. By providing “intensive tailored interventions and practical support, designed to tackle the drivers of radicalisation around universal needs for identity, self-esteem, meaning and purpose; as well as to address personal grievances,” the programme aims to reduce re-offending and facilitate the reintegration of ex-offenders⁽²⁰⁾. The support structure will include mentoring, psychological support, and theological and ideological advice.

After identifying the risks and needs of offenders in prison and on probation, a wide range of interventions is implemented. These interventions can include psychological support, mentoring or general education. Additionally, Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service has introduced two specialist Separation Centres at HMP Frankland and HMP Full Sutton to safeguard the mainstream prison population. The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) ensures that offenders on probation are viewed both through the risk they may pose to society and their rehabilitation needs. The offenders may be

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ibid.

⁽²⁰⁾ HM Government of the United Kingdom, CONTEST The United Kingdom’s strategy for countering terrorism. HM Stationary Office, 2018, p. 40.

required to attend interventions under the DDP⁽²¹⁾. Additionally, MI5, Counter-Terrorism Policing and the Home Office established so called Multi-Agency Centres to improve information flow about local threats, aiming to improve the scale of early interventions as well as disengagement programmes. As of now, these centres are designed as pilot projects and will be evaluated in the future⁽²²⁾.

Actual outcomes of the new plan are up to the design of the specific measures, but the implementation process is certainly worth observing. It remains to be seen whether or not the continuous approach of separating supposed Islamist EOs from the rest of the prison population proves to be effective or, in a worst-case scenario, continues to foster so-called hotbeds of radicalisation. **Segregation or individual isolation of supposedly radicalised individuals and their effects on (group)radicalisation processes are highly debated topics, with some evidence suggesting such 'specialised prison units' could potentially hinder effective disengagement**⁽²³⁾.

Promising practice: Train-the-trainer approaches

There are many promising practices in the RAN network already using train-the-trainer approaches (e.g. in Denmark, Italy, Austria and Norway)⁽²⁴⁾. These focus mostly on training prison staff and often provide necessary overviews and awareness raising concerning religious and cultural differences within Islam, detection

signals, radicalisation processes and information sharing between involved actors. The approach helps to counteract potential supporting factors of radicalisation processes (e.g. stigmatisation), but also to identify already radicalised individuals, and provides staff with the necessary capacities to handle such challenges. Avoiding stigmatisation and alienation of prisoners within the penitentiary system is already an important aspect of resocialisation and probation processes upon release. In Germany, a hybrid model of both state and NGO responsibilities exists. This means that state and non-state programmes work in parallel, together, or complementarily with different foci and approaches to cover as many factors and aspects as possible. Regarding the field of deradicalisation in and outside the prison system, the exact design depends on the respective state and its chosen approach. In this regard, the organisation Violence Prevention Network (VPN) is tasked by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth with coordinating the working group of all NGOs working with VEOs and in the field of prevention of radicalisation in the German prison system. The organisation was the first NGO in Germany that developed and implemented programmes for ideologically motivated violent offenders (in today's terminology: VEOs) in prisons in the early 2000s, and as such has great expertise in the field. Besides this coordinated network of NGOs, various (state-run and multi-agency) approaches to (1) assessment to detect and treat (potentially) radicalised convicts and (2) train and support prison staff exist within the prison system in Germany. Such staff trainings often have an added

⁽²¹⁾ Ibid., p. 41.

⁽²²⁾ Ibid., p. 42.

⁽²³⁾ Butler, M., Using specialised prison units to manage violent extremists: Lessons from Northern Ireland. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2017, p. 12. doi:10.1080/09546553.2017.1388791

⁽²⁴⁾ Prison and probation interventions.

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/ran-prison-and-probation-interventions_en

focus on training of specialised personnel, such as social, pedagogical and psychological staff, who are involved in the probation and release period of ex-offenders (see for example the VPN projects 'JUST X Berlin' and 'Focus ISLEX' in Lower Saxony). Providing support and linking up agencies within and outside the justice system are important aspects of the training module to ensure a smooth transition. **Only if all actors are aware of their role within the rehabilitation processes and know those of other stakeholders can the best possible support be provided. It is crucial that the training process starts with the prison staff and continues with probation and support staff outside the prison context.** By training all actors involved, this approach shows the most potential for success.

Key takeaways

Working on exit approaches in prison and probation implies a very specific setting, in which trust, time and a multi-agency approach are crucial to achieve results. Depending on the structure of the prison and the regime as well as the individual in question, the opportunities to achieve viable results from resocialising offenders exist. It is important to work *with* the offender, not over his/her head or even against him/her, and make him/her a co-owner of the process. Sharing experiences and learning from case studies, as has been done in Vienna on 6th November, are important factors that should be expanded.

Further discussions need to take place about offering programmes for the whole prison population to enhance effectiveness of primary prevention like civic education or intercultural training. Furthermore, the role of gender and tailoring programmes to women's needs should be addressed regarding the change in gender roles that can be seen within extremist groups. Finally, the influence of the media on the process of

reintegration is an important topic, which should be investigated further.

Cited literature

- Andrews, D. A, Bonta, J., The psychology of criminal conduct (5th ed.). New Providence, NJ: LexisNexis Matthew Bender, 2010. doi:10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004
- Bonta, J., Andrews, D. A., Risk-need-responsivity model for offender assessment and rehabilitation. Ottawa: Public Safety Canada, 2007. doi:10.1002/jclp.20317
- Bryans, S., Barzanò, P., Meissner, P., Handbook on the management of violent extremist prisoners and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons. Criminal Justice Handbook Series (UNODC), 2016.
- Butler, M., Using specialised prison units to manage violent extremists: Lessons from Northern Ireland. Terrorism and Political Violence, 2017, 1–19. doi:10.1080/09546553.2017.1388791
- Cornwall, S., Molenkamp, M., Developing, implementing and using risk assessment for violent extremist and terrorist offenders, Ex Post Paper. Brussels, Belgium: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.
- Council of Europe. Directorate General I - Human Rights and Rule of Law, Handbook for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism. Strasbourg, France, 2016.
- Dean, C., Feve, S., Kessels, E., Countering violent extremism in prisons: A good practices guide. Washington, D.C., 2018.
- Dubrow, R., van de Donk, M., Haanstra, W., Lessons from adjacent fields: Cults, RAN EXIT Ex Post Paper. Bordeaux, France: Radicalisation Awareness Network, June 2017, 1–10.
- Harding, D. J., Wyse, J. J. B., Dobson, C., Morenoff, J. D., Making ends meet after prison: How former prisoners use employment, social support, public benefits,

- and crime to meet their basic material needs. Ann Arbor, MI: Population Studies Center, 2011.
- HM Government of the United Kingdom, CONTEST The United Kingdom's strategy for countering terrorism. HM Stationary Office, 2018.
 - Hoffmann, A., Illgner, C., Leuschner, F., Rettenberger, M., Extremismus und justizvollzug: Literaturobwertung und empirische erhebungen. Wiesbaden, Germany, 2017.
 - Molenkamp, M., The role of family and social networks in the rehabilitation of (violent) extremist and terrorist offenders, Ex Post Paper. Utrecht, the Netherlands: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.
 - Polaschek, D. L. L., Yesberg, J. A., Chauhan, P., A year without a conviction: An integrated examination of potential mechanisms for successful re-entry in high-risk violent prisoners. Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol. 45, Iss. 4, 2018, 425–446. doi:10.1177/0093854817752757
 - Prison and probation interventions. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/ran-prison-and-probation-interventions_en
 - RAN CoE, The role of religion in exit programmes and religious counselling in prison and probation settings, Ex Post Paper. Madrid, Spain: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017.
 - RAN Prison and Probation Working Group (RAN P&P), Working group meeting - Multi-agency cooperation, Ex Post Paper. Stockholm, Sweden: Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2016.
 - Silke, A., Veldhuis, T., Countering violent extremism in prisons: A review of key recent research and critical research gaps. Perspectives on Terrorism, Vol. 11, Iss. 5, 2017, 2–11.
 - Ward, T., Brown, M., The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation. Psychology, Crime and Law, Vol. 10, Iss. 3, 2004, 243–257. doi:10.1080/10683160410001662744
 - Western, B., Braga, A. A., Davis, J., Sirois, C., Stress and hardship after prison. American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 120, Iss. 5, 2015, 1512–1547. doi:10.1086/681301
 - Williams, M. J., Horgan, J. G., Evans, W. P., The critical role of friends in networks for countering violent extremism: Toward a theory of vicarious help-seeking. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Vol. 8, Iss. 1, 2016, 45–65. doi:10.1080/19434472.2015.1101147
 - Williams, R. J., Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation, RAN P&P Practitioners' working paper (2nd ed.). RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN P&P Working Group, 2016.