



## **2<sup>nd</sup> CEP EXPERT MEETING ON RADICALIZATION**

**Tuesday 13 June 2017**

**DBH Offices, Aachener Strasse 1064, Cologne, Germany**

### ***Report***

Willem opens the meeting by welcoming everyone and by giving a short presentation on (the work of) CEP. You can find this presentation attached.

After him Daniel Wolter tells about the situation in **Germany**. This is a quite complex situation since Germany consists of 16 federal states ("Länder"), who all have their own way of working with radicalization. However there are also projects and programmes on a national level. The topic of radicalization in the field of probation is very new for German experts and policy makers – the experience up till now lies only in the prison world.

As second speaker Lars Rau Brysting reports on the situation in **Denmark**. He says that in his country the topic of radicalization needs to be integrated in the normal criminal justice procedures because a lot of attention nowadays goes to the subject. This might sound strange because actually the numbers are small: of the total number of 2400 inmates in the country 75 are reported for radicalization, and only 19 of them have actually committed a terroristic act.

The Prison and Probation departments work closely together with the police, the security agencies and the local authorities in order to prepare prisoners for their release. The process of having to work with radicalization and implementing this topic in the criminal justice field started in 2015, after the terrorist act that year in Copenhagen. At that moment it became crystal clear that something needed to be done and that judicial staff had to be trained in order to deal these new type of criminals. A government's national action plan was launched, the implementation of which is still ongoing. Experts are involved, risk factors are measured and better trainings are set up. At the moment Denmark is in the third stage of the total number of 4.

After Lars, Carl Beckers explains the situation in **Belgium**. Here the work with radicalization and radicalized offenders started at the moment of the attacks in Paris in which Belgian terrorists were involved. At that moment a registration was set up for radicalized cases, both people who were really convicted as well as the so-called "side-liners": people convicted of other crimes, but showing signs of radicalization during their treatment. All of them were put together in one large database, consisting nowadays of around 600 names. At the moment also "home grown terrorists" (those who have never gone abroad but do show signs of Jihad/radicalization) and "hate preachers" are added to the list.



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The question now is: is all this work done enough to handle radicalization and radicalized offenders?

Unfortunately the answer is "no"... And this has to do with several things:

- Verification: the difficulty to verify if offenders follow their conditions. There are different tools for this in different parts of Belgium, so they need to be unified.
- Probation workers do not know how to react to signs of radicalization: lack of training
- There are no specific treatment models. Models and programmes are organized locally, depending on where the offender lives because it turns out that local details are very important and distinctive. Unification however is needed.
- Staff trainings need to be updated and assessment tools must be developed (VERA?)
- New partnerships must be sought, especially with (reliable!) partners in the Islam community.
- There are problems with offenders without conditions, i.e. those who do not go to probation. These offenders end up on the street and often need help in looking for a house and a job (as well as psychological support) in order to prevent re-offending.

The next presentation, by Martin Lardén and Fredrik Wilhelmsson, is about **Sweden**.

Probation in Sweden is both for offenders directly convicted to probation as well as those coming out of prison after release. The Prison and Probation services share one and the same database (system and case plans), which is a great advantage since it guarantees the continuity of details and reporting. In this database all information about offenders is saved for at least 15 years after release in case someone re-offends and returns to prison.

The Swedish opinion is that radicalized people basically need the same treatment and programmes as offenders convicted for other crimes, but that it is very important for prisons not to "produce" radicalized people (i.e. facilitating the start of radicalization inside the prison). This is being taken care of by splitting specific groups of offenders, not allowing internet access etcetera.

For people that need to leave organized crime and/or radicalization a special individual programme has been developed, called "*Entré*". In this programme almost always cooperation with the police and the general security department is involved, and if needed specific risk & need assessment tools can be used as well.

At the moment in the Swedish prisons there are a little less than 70 Islamic radicalists, 25 right wing extremists (with number increasing) and very few left wing extremists.

Then Oriana Larashi reports on the situation in **France**. In France radicalization came into picture with the 2 attacks in 2015, one of them on Charlie Hebdo. After these events the government launched a counter extremism programme and recruited new staff like judges, security service colleagues, analysts and rehabilitation experts.

Everything around radicalized offenders (mainly Islamic inspired extremists) is centralized in Paris: the court for radicalization is here and also most of the terrorist prisoners> However after the judgement or if their family is in a different district they are being transferred there since is the choice of France not to keep them all together.

The penitentiary administration counter extremism programme consists of:

- Collecting all the information regarding radicalized inmates and vulnerable inmates
- Reinforce staff training
- Developing an assessment procedure (in special units)
- Prevention and rehabilitation under specialized programmes for radicalized inmates and inmates vulnerable to radicalization or individual approach.

It is an ongoing programme, with now 2 years of experience and 4 special units in Paris. At the moment the rehabilitation and prevention programs are both for vulnerable inmates, radicalized inmates and common law inmates. If a participant refuses to join the program, this decision is respected because the key element of the program is to try and develop a new way of thinking, i.e. a more solid critical thinking through different elements like



relationship with family and others, geopolitics knowledge, being able to deal with conflict situation, cultural & sport activities etcetera.  
Also individual rehabilitation programmes (“taylor-made”) are used.

The last country presentation is for **Italy**, done by Mr. Francesco Cascini. He tells that in Italy a series of counter terrorism measures have been introduced through the development of investigation coordination tools and the improvement of prevention systems, the latter mainly in relation to the exchange of information, web propaganda and funding of terrorist organizations. A very important body is the so-called “*Anti-Terrorism Strategic Analysis Committee*”, which meets every week and brings together the top managers of police forces and intelligence agencies. The Committee (of which Mr. Cascini was a member for 7 years) constantly examines all available information on terrorism and carries out specific activities, even in financial and penitentiary fields. It is therefore a fundamental body for the prevention of terrorism and the increasing of knowledge on what works in Italy. For this purpose the former “*Anti Mafia prosecutor office*” has now been re-named in “*Anti Mafia and Anti Terrorism prosecutor office*”.

Italy is quite a young country in the sense of migration flows. Most foreigners come from North Africa and if they end up in prison (because many of them are illegal) this creates a great risk of radicalization. Therefore (and also based on other experiences) the Italian authorities are convinced that working with radicalized offenders works much better outside than inside prison since then the family and other social contacts/matters can be involved. For this reason the authorities want to invest in more staff training and specific treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

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After lunch the programme continues with 2 impressive presentations: Maarten van Leyenhorst presents on “*The characteristics of radicalized offenders, and the VERA 2R assessment tool*” and Nina Käsehage on her “*Field research in the German environment: the Salafi scene*”.

Maarten presents a study that in 2015 has been done with 26 offenders. Important outcomes are that the average age of the offenders is now much lower than 10 years ago (when at the time of Al Qaida fighters offenders were typically 26-27 years old) and that there are so many kinds of violent extremists (i.e. offenders differ so much) that it is impossible to identify a “*standard extremist offender profile*”.

The second part of the presentation treats the VERA 2 R instrument. This instrument is an assessment tool that can be used for all kinds of violent extremism, not only religious extremism. It consists of 34 indicators divided in 5 domains, asking for and checking on a large scale of issues. What finally counts is not only the number of outcomes per domain, but also the fields and categories in which the (high) scores are registered.

At the moment many psychologist use the tool and also prison staff is trained, but on a lower level since they do not need to be aware of all exact “ins and outs”. For them the largest area of importance is the learning of awareness in recognizing and interpreting signs of radicalization when working with prisoners.

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At the end of the afternoon Willem closes the meeting with a short round to collect the participants’ feelings, opinions and remarks. All agree that it has been an inspiring day and that a follow-up event would be definitely interesting and useful.

Mirjam will send an email around with the report, so everyone has each other’s email addresses and contact details.