

**Annual Virtual
EENeT Conference 2021**

**“Three Max”
Most Important Issues of Radicalisation
in selected European Countries
07. – 08.10.2021**

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About the European Expert Network on Terrorism Issues (EENeT)

The EENeT is an independent, non-partisan consortium of terrorism experts from European law enforcement agencies / relevant authorities and the field of science.

It is dedicated to a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency analysis and research approach which is seen as a prerequisite to providing comprehensive insights into the complexity of the phenomenon "terrorism".

For more information, visit www.european-enet.org

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Content

PREFACE	6
----------------	----------

1.PANEL 1: “THREE MAX” / MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES OF RADICALISATION IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AT PRESENT	8
---	----------

1.1 Belgium

Mr. Gert Vercauteren

Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis (CUTA), Belgium

1.2 France

Dr. Nacer Lalam

National Institute for Advanced Studies of the Ministry of the Interior (IHEMI),
Military School, France

1.3 Germany

Dr. Uwe Kemmesies

Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

1.4 Greece

Dr. Nick Petropoulos

The Center for Security Studies (KEMEA), Greece

1.5 Italy

Barbara Lucini

Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Italy

1.6 The Netherlands

Dr. Jeanine De Roy van Zuijdewijn

Leiden University, The Netherlands

1.7 United Kingdom

Dr. Richard Warnes, Research Fellow, UK

2. Panel 2: Presentations of EENeT Members **14**

2.1 Weaponizing People: (Cyber-) Social Security Threats in a converging scenario

Prof. Arije Antinori, “Sapienza” University of Rome, Italy

2.2 Islamist Radicalization:

Radical Thought, Ideological Beliefs and Processes

Radicalization Re-conceptualized in Islamist Radicalization

Mr. Andrin Raj, Director of the Nordic Counter Terrorism Network, Helsinki, Finland

2.3 Islamist/Salafist Radicalization in Prisons: The German case

Terrorism/Extremism Research Unit,
Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

**2.4 The Gamification of far-right terrorism –
Implications for research and practice**

Prof. Kevin McDonald,
Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom

**2.5 Three approaches to break the circle –
Tackling radicalisation in Germany today**

Dr. Sybille Reinke de Buitrago,
Police Academy Lower Saxony (IKriS), Germany
Dr. Nina Käsehage,
University of Rostock, Germany

3. World Café: Presentations of EENeT Members **19**

- 3.1 Research
- 3.2 Prevention
- 3.3 Repression
- 3.4 EU-Initiative RAN PS

4. EU-Initiative “RAN Policy Support” (RAN PS) **21**

**Technical Support to Prevent and Counter Radicalisation –
Achievements and Outlook**

Mr. Alberto Contaretti,
CIVIPOL, France

5. Conclusion and Outlook **23**

Dr. Nacer Lalam,
National Institute for Advanced Studies of the Ministry of the Interior (IHEMI),
France
Dr. Uwe Kemmesies,
Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

PREFACE

Dear readers,

This brief report reflects the previous

Virtual EENeT – Conference 2021

with the focus on research in the fields of radicalisation, extremism, terrorism and its prevention.

Due to the pandemic situation of COVID 19 it was the first time in the history of the EENeT that the conference was not conducted as a face-to-face event. Even though we believe that networking and informal information exchange is essential for EENeT conferences we chose to host an online event to keep in contact with our network members.

By choosing a modern virtual platform we tried our best to offer a suitable information tool with opportunities of presentations, Q&A sessions, World Café discussions and chatrooms.

The event was organised by our EENeT Secretariat at the BKA Wiesbaden in liaison with the Steering Committee members, again generously funded by Germany's Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community in the framework of the "National Prevention Program against Islamic Extremism (NPP)" and logistically supported by the Fresenius University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden/Germany, where the coordination center of the conference was located.

We thank everybody who made this event possible, including the presenters and the active participants, ensuring the conference was a successful event through their valuable contributions including the responsible persons of the Radical Awareness Network Policy Support (RAN PS), Mr. Alberto Contaretti and Prof. Peter Neumann, who represented this EU-Initiative in which the EENeT is involved as a partner.

Regarding the content of this year's program, we emphasized the subject of radicalisation research. The 'conceptual' idea of our conference was the 'Three-max-concept' which focused on the current situation. What are the most challenging current developments on the subject of radicalisation in the fields of *research*, *repression* and *prevention*?

In the opening session we offered short presentations on this topic from different national, institutional and disciplinary perspectives. However, due to the limited time frame, only spotlights on a *maximum of three* hot topics *in these three areas* were delivered in the following presentations.

After the “Three Max” presentations we continued with different topics presented by EENeT members and the world café discussion that dealt with prevention, repression, research and the RAN PS.

Radicalisation in general, and terrorism in particular, are still hot topics and continue to present complex social challenges. It is the aim of the EENeT and this year’s conference to enhance broad international, interdisciplinary, and interinstitutional exchange of information and views to better understand the processes of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism on an individual and collective level. We continue to invite you, the experts in the diverse working fields of academia and practice, to make use of our network: The EENeT is nothing, but also not less, than an informal, creative and extremely diverse and inspiring think tank in the challenging field of radicalisation and terrorism.

Dr. Uwe E. Kemmesies

Federal Criminal Police Office of Germany

Panel 1:

“Three MAX” / Most Important Issues of Radicalisation in selected European Countries at present

Presentations on a maximum of 3 most significant current challenges in selected European countries regarding radicalisation, ideally in all three aspects: Research, Prevention and Repression

1.1. Belgium

Mr. Gert Vercauteren

Coordination Unit of Threat Analysis (CUTA), Belgium

Most Important Threat

The most important extremist/terrorist threat for our country still emanates from the jihadist scene. This threat recently received extra attention in the aftermath of the resurgence to power by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Although this threat is still responsible for the bulk of our threat files, its intensity has been decreasing over the years. Specific trigger events with a strong emotional impact still have the potential to give a boost to the scene, which was clearly illustrated by the range of terrorist attacks that occurred after the re-publication of the Mohammed cartoons in France recently – and that also led to a spike in threats reporting in Belgium.

A lot of attention in our country now goes out to the continuing rise of right-wing extremism, a rise that is reinforced by the side effects of the Covid-19 crisis, which led to a surge of conspiracy theories and general anti-government sentiment, feeding the already widespread societal polarization. The most visible manifestation of this phenomenon was the Jurgen Conings-crisis (armed runaway right-wing military with psychological problems) embodying all the aforementioned elements.

Most Important Research

For 2021, CUTA stressed the analysis of right-wing extremist radicalization, focusing on the use of the internet and social media. Especially in times of Covid-19, when people have much more time and opportunity to spend online, radicalization in general, and especially its right-wing manifestation, is happening in the virtual space. Most striking about this trend is the fact that right-wing extremist circles seem to target a continuously younger audience. One of the useful tools to do so is the gamification of their publicity and recruitment tactics. By using language and images from world known games, adapting existing popular games and building simple new games from scratch, right-wing extremists are exploiting the worldwide popularity of games for their own agenda.

Most Important Tools

Considering that CUTA continues to invest significantly in Countering Violent Extremism tools, to be successful in preventing youngsters from being sucked into the right-wing extremist world, we need a whole of society and multi-disciplinary approach, including a dialogue with internet/social media providers, effective counter narratives and awareness campaigns, preferably through education programs.

1.2 France

Dr. Nacer Lalam

National Institute for Advanced Studies of the Ministry of the Interior (IHEMI),
Military School, France

Prevention

In this exercise, we shed light on the topic of the release from prison of terrorist offenders. Indeed, the public authorities are facing a significant challenge to rehabilitate these offenders, during and after their release, and with many expected to be released from prison in the next years, to prepare their families and local communities for their reintegration into society. In May 2021, 469 people were detained in French prisons for acts of terrorism linked to the Islamist movement. Approximately 162 former terrorist offenders (of different levels) are going to be released in the coming four years.

Repression

Attention should be drawn to the tendency to make greater use of administrative measures rather than judicial tools to combat the terrorist threat... in measures infringing on liberties. We observe that enacting or amending anti-terrorism legislation to counter the evolving phenomenon results in a normative mille-feuille lacking evaluation. This is, particularly, the case with the administrative measures taken in application of the state of emergency (coercive measures).

Research

Revitalizing research on radicalization with the challenge of temporalities (the necessity of long-term production of science vs urgency of public action). A specific issue deals with the protection of researchers and access to sensitive data. With the creation of the scientific committee on radicalization processes (Cosprad), France is setting platforms of exchange and dialogue between researchers and policymakers on radicalization issues.

1.3 Germany

Dr. Uwe Kemmesies

Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

Research

Scientific Approaches – About the impossibility to keep track of the current state of research

In Germany current and ongoing research in this area is very dynamic, fluid and only partially accessible via the given research databases.

Recently, three research networks funded by the government have started to research a large variety of topics related to the field of radicalisation. These are MOTRA and RADIS, both dealing with the risk of radicalisation, and the “Research Institute for Social Cohesion” which researches resilience factors against radicalisation. Several other research initiatives have additionally been launched.

The current situation of the research landscape is barely manageable due to its constant change. This could lead to the assumption that the research field might be partially over- researched.

Repression

Repressive Approaches – Radicalisation beyond religion and somewhere between left and right

It seems as if a new radicalised protest movement is emerging during the COVID-19 pandemic, recruiting its supporters from various radical milieus.

The increasing crime and violence in this protest environment suggests that we should keep an eye on this protest movement.

These are, for example, crimes that were registered in the context of demonstrations, for example resistance against state power or attacks on political opponents. The killing in Idar-Oberstein on the 18th of September this year represents a sad climax so far. A gas station attendant was shot dead by a customer because he had informed the customer of the requirement to wear a mask due to the Corona rules. In 2020, politically motivated crime was at an all-time high according to statistics. Associated with this statistic could be various types of registered crimes related to all kinds of COVID-19 measures. Therefore, this movement must be attentively observed in the future.

Prevention

Preventive Approaches –How should the interaction between civil society and state institutions be optimized?

The threat associated with Islamist radicalisation remains one great challenge for internal security. There is a need for more preventive approaches in the field of Islamic radicalisation bearing in mind the increasing number of detained Islamist terrorists that will be released in the near future or have already been released from prison. These developments require more preventive measures in the future. This is a task for society as a whole and requires a balance between repression and prevention. A more fluent communication between police officers and social workers is crucial to the solution of this problem.

1.4 Greece

Dr. Nick Petropoulos

The Center for Security Studies (KEMEA), Greece

In Greece, the term “radical” is differently perceived and defined by the general public and society compared to the rest of Europe – mainly the Western European nations- often pointing to a novel or creative idea; that said, it has very little, if any, negative connotation.

Greek terrorist groups have been operating their attacks for decades and therefore collected a lot of experience, including using various techniques to radicalize and recruit new members. Since the phenomenon of radicalization was until recently

under-researched in Greece, public authorities and research institutions have tried over the last few years to use the extensive knowledge of individual researchers and try to develop tools and techniques to be used for training purposes in the general public, among other things. Several projects and initiatives have been initiated focusing mainly on the field of prevention.

A major initiative coordinated by KEMEA is RADICALISATION, a project that prioritized the identification of the needs of Law Enforcement Agencies in order to recognize and assess the threat of radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism, the preparation and implementation of workshops for the staff of Law Enforcement, the creation of a specific methodological framework for risk assessment, the creation of a simulation game, the preparation of specific identification indicators and questionnaires on indexing techniques, and, finally, the preparation and leading of training sessions along with the organization of awareness campaigns. This action was expected to further strengthen the capacity of the law enforcement community in Greece and also bring the LEAs closer to the public through the awareness campaigns, a tool that was of particular importance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5 Italy

Barbara Luicini

Catholic University of Milan, Italy

According to a general analysis and consideration of the current situation in Italy and Europe, it is possible to state that the three most important issues in the research and practice of radicalisation in European countries concern an interrelationship among the multiple forms of extremism that emerged with the impact of the pandemic caused by the Covid -19 virus.

In particular, it is interesting to explore the relationship between the pandemic defined as a social ecosystem context in which conspiracy theories developed or started and preexisting models and processes of radicalisation.

It is estimated that current challenges in research and practice may relate to the relationship between these forms of conspiracy and other extremist phenomena such as right-wing extremism.

The three most significant current challenges/topics in Italy are the following:

1. The development of conspiracy theories such as for instance QAnon in Italy and the peculiarities linked to political and economic instability as well as social vulnerability;
2. Communication dynamics, narratives and ways in which these forms of extremism and radicalisation spread, that can take place both in the online and in the offline domains. It is interesting to examine the new dynamics of online radicalisation as a pandemic effect linked to the increased use of social networks, especially during a lockdown;

3. The threat posed by these theories and their practical application, which can lead to social tensions and even violent political clashes especially with the involvement of other extremist groups such as right-wing and far-right groups. This country-based reflection can be useful to open comparisons of the same phenomenon in other European countries, in order to better understand its peculiar social and communication dynamics as well as the possibilities to tackle it in the post – pandemic future.

Finally, considering the valuable opportunity of the EENeT Conference both as a stimulating environment and as a possibility of comparison with other colleagues and experts, it is considered useful to be able to deepen the characteristics of these phenomena with the purpose of comparison by also looking at the experiences of other European countries.

1.6 The Netherlands

Dr. Jeanine De Roy van Zuijdewijn
Leiden University, The Netherlands

New developments in the field of

Research

1. The widening of topics that we consider to be part of the terrorism domain. For instance, Covid-19 protests and the rise of ‘anti-government terrorism’. Also, the issue of “subversion” (“ondermijning” in Dutch): drug-related crimes that might be hard to classify or that seem to cross the line into politically-motivated acts. For example, thinking of the assassination of Peter R. de Vries, a journalist and confidential counselor to the key witness in a large trial against one of the leading drug gangs. This is seen as a rising threat, now also targeting representatives of the rule of law.
2. Beyond incident-driven research. Research into more fundamental issues that are not directly related to incidents, for instance, resilience or impact management or non-involvement in terrorism.
3. Critical reflection: for instance, the evaluation of counterterrorism policies twenty years after 9/11

New developments in the field of

Prevention

1. The NCTV is working on a New Dutch Counterterrorism Strategy 2022 – 2026 which might potentially cause a shift of measures related to terrorism.
2. Debates on the legal basis of different counterterrorism actors. For example, the use of anonymous accounts to look at radicalisation in online communities.
3. The need for sustainable networks with local partners in the fight against terrorism now that the threat might be seen as less acute. In the past, this has led to an erosion of such networks that had to be rebuilt when the foreign fighter wave hit Europe, which was unprepared.

New developments in the field of

Repression

1. The issue of returning foreign fighters and their families.
To what extent is the Dutch state obliged to bring back some of the foreign fighters and their families for prosecution? Courts are now also issuing verdicts that might affect national policies. The Dutch CT and social system will face many challenges related to this issue in the next few years.
2. Issues about the limits of freedom of speech versus threats or fake news.
This also surfaced regularly in relation to Covid-19 protests and threats to well-known scientists, politicians and other authority figures.
3. Discussion of the revocation of nationality as a tool of counterterrorism (law introduced in 2017): is this an effective and legitimate measure?

1.7 United Kingdom

Dr. Richard Warnes, Research Fellow, UK

The threat of Islamist radicalisation in the light of recent events

- The withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan might serve as an inspiration to young people who are vulnerable to radicalisation. Furthermore, there is a concern regarding the number of terrorist offenders who will be released shortly - having served their sentence – who are known to still harbor terrorist ideas.
- Linked to this, there are also concerns regarding ‘false-positives’. These are individuals who maintain their terrorist attitudes and continue to pose a threat, despite participating in prevention programs. Not only do such individuals pose a tremendous threat to the UK, but to the EU as a whole. Effective measures of identification of such ‘false-positive’ individuals are still lacking.

The increasing threat of extreme right-wing groups

- The storming of the capital building and the COVID-19 pandemic served as catalysts to the extreme right wing. Current topics exploited by them are the anti-vaccine, anti-Jewish and anti-Asian conspiracies linked to COVID-19. There has been a shift from older age groups constituting the right-wing movement to younger, more socially mobile individuals. The use of non-hierarchical structures and exploitation of the internet by right-wing groups make their identification by Law Enforcement and Intelligence Services much more difficult.

Irish republicanism after recent events

- The fear is that a ‘hard border’ and impact of Brexit might function as a ‘force multiplier’ to Republican extremism. The rise of dissident republican elements such as the New Irish Republican Army (NIRA) is of big concern to the government.

Panel 2: Further Presentations of EENeT Members

2.1. Weaponizing People:

(Cyber-) Social Security Threats in a converging scenario

Prof. Arije Antinori,
“Sapienza” University of Rome, Italy

The global spread of Covid-19 pandemic is not just causing large-scale loss of lives and severe human suffering throughout the world. The impacts on the economic, as well as on political and social systems are and will be devastating. This is followed by infodemic and the dissemination of mis- and disinformation, which foster the increase of anxiety and uncertainty, both individually and collectively. At the same time, governments are still fighting the spread of false beliefs, along with the distrust in institutions and the subsequent stigmatization of groups and communities exposed to social avoidance, rejection and violence, since the beginning of the crisis. In the post-COVID-19 crisis scenario, completely new (cyber-)social threats and cognitive vulnerabilities will emerge in different strategic sectors and areas. The (cyber-)social ecosystem is characterized not only by a relevant infrastructural evolution, but also (and mainly) by a substantial cognitive, socio-relational and experiential change, which provides violent extremism and terrorism groups with new resources in terms of re-shaping reality and target-engagement capabilities. The new challenges to national security and public safety will primarily depend on the multi-dimensional capacity to prevent, counter and anticipate both one-shot operations and long-term campaigns, in the (cyber-)social ecosystem. Such campaigns are led by hostile entities, both symmetric and asymmetric, that aim at “weaponizing” people to contaminate the geopolitical confrontation and exploit social inequalities, with the aim to ignite violent internal and external conflicts to shatter the EU member state's societies. Therefore, we are quickly moving from hybrid-warfare to post-truth warfare in an “onlife” hybrid world. Here the (cyber-) social security has to be considered the new paradigm, to grasp the threats given by the convergence of new types of propaganda strategies. Such convergence calls into play violent extremism and terrorism, new forms of conspiracy thinking as well as multi-dimensional information warfare tactics fostered by the rise of the “informational radicalization”.

2.2 Islamist Radicalization:

Radical Thought, Ideological Beliefs and Processes

Radicalization Re-conceptualized in Islamist Radicalization

Mr. Andrin Raj, Director of the Nordic Counter Terrorism Network, Helsinki, Finland

An individual or collective approach by a community in its belief system that is linked to ‘strict Sharia’ compliance and radical belief system in an upbringing of a Muslim. Its narratives decide on the ‘Thin Red Line’ that moves an individual towards religious radicalism and extremism, irrespective of the region. It is a thought process that is systematically separating the individual from non-Muslims.

Deviant clerics and scholars alienate the true teachings of the Quran and interpret the narrative accordingly to a Sunni-Salafi mindset without it being identified as a radical form of Islam. It allows the belief that the Ummah is the core and that any attack on it by means of verbal or otherwise is deemed for 'Jihad' to take precedents. The Jihad can be interpreted as the use of non-violence and or acts of violence to justify the Jihad which may now be described as the 'sixth pillar of Islam'. The 'Militant' Jihad is now seen as an act of martyrdom in the struggle it claims to achieve. This alienation process is driven to separate itself from the mainstream towards radical and extremist beliefs and provides an alternative to a political order existing that is no longer recognized as the leadership of the religion itself and to undermine any political dominance that is not Islamic centric.

The presentation describes the process that is misunderstood in Europe on Islamist radicalization and extremism. It provides an alternative approach to understanding Islamist radicalization and that the current European 'pull and push' factors are not entirely the main drivers to radicalization.

The presentation provides some explanations as to why some Muslim states which are not in any economic or conflict related state, still evolve in their radicalization processes. This includes countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and some Islamic countries where poverty, marginalization or other factors are not a major key driver for Islamist radicalization. The presentation addresses moderate Muslims who hold strict Radical beliefs that don't understand it being radical in form. A case study of Muslim moderates in Malaysia highlights individuals interviewed.

2.3 Islamist/Salafist Radicalization in Prisons: The German case

Research Unit of Terrorism/Extremism,
Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA/FTE), Germany

Islamist Radicalization in prisons has received a lot of attention - from researchers, politicians, practitioners and the media. Concurrently, the number of empirical studies that specifically deal with Islamist Radicalization in prison – in contrast to more general studies on radicalization – is limited (King et al. 2018, Kruglanski et al. 2016, Useem & Clayton 2009, Trujillo, Jordán, Gutiérrez & González-Cabrera 2009). The quality of the data used in such studies is limited (Veldhuis & Kessels 2013) and many of these are case-studies, based on a limited number of observations pertaining to a specific context (e.g. Hamm 2009; Jones 2014; Khosrokhavar 2013; Marone 2017).

The project SaRa-JVA collected data on Islamist Radicalization in German prisons. The presentation presents how the surveys were conducted.

2.4 The Gamification of far-right terrorism – Implications for research and practice

Prof. Kevin McDonald,
Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom

We are witnessing a ‘re-assemblage’ of far-right violent extremism in Europe today, such that it is no longer credible to understand this violence in terms of ‘populism’ and ‘the left-behind’. This paper considers three recent cases of extreme violence in Europe: the neo-Nazi attack on a Synagogue in Halle in October 2019; the deaths of 11 people in Hanau in February 2020; and the Incel-related killing of five people in Plymouth in August 2021. In these cases, the pathway to radicalised violence did not take the form of ‘recruiters’ manipulating ‘vulnerable people’, nor can this violence be framed in terms of an opposition between ‘lone wolf’ and ‘organisation’. While none of these violent actors was a member of an organisation, they were active participants in networks of exchange, communication and imagination. While each of these attacks is different, they possess significant overlaps, including an imaginary framed in terms of gaming and conspiracy, the search for violence that will reveal a hidden truth, and a pathway to violence where communication is shared, and needs to be understood as the embodied action of world building.

Several conclusions emerge from the analysis of these violent actors.

1. Populism does not explain the passage to extreme violence.
2. We must move beyond the ‘organisation’ versus ‘lone wolf’ paradigm. The violent actions we have explored were livestreamed, signalling a social world. In complex societies, communication is organisation. The ‘propaganda’ paradigm is of less value to understand such communication.
3. Gamification is much more than radicalisation through playing online games.
4. Radicalisation is less recruitment, more a process of becoming part of ‘world building’, in many cases becoming part of a conspiracy that is experienced in terms of excitement and awe, where conspiracy is less about ‘ideas’ but takes the form of an alternate reality game. To understand such radicalisation pathways, we must move beyond the recruiter/propaganda/vulnerable person model and engage with the agency and affects involved in radicalisation.
5. Digital technologies are important. Social media does not ‘cause’ radicalisation, but digital technologies and communications appear to make the whole world accessible and controllable. This is central to the re-composition of far-right extreme violence in Europe today.
6. This requires a focus on the experience of radicalisation and extremism, and new collaborations between researchers and LEA practitioners to map the new reality in Europe.

2.5 Three approaches to break the circle – Tackling radicalisation in Germany today

Dr. Sybille Reinke de Buitrago

Police Academy Lower Saxony (IKriS), Germany

Dr. Nina Käsehage

University of Rostock, Germany

The three most significant current topics and challenges in Germany in the fields of research and practice regarding radicalisation (and violent extremism) are seen in:

- 1) Artificial intelligence
- 2) Gendered extremism
- 3) Online recruitment

Artificial intelligence can support P/CVE approaches by predicting and limiting extremist recruitment and protecting vulnerable groups in view of radicalisation. Tools exist and further instruments are thinkable that aid in evaluating existing and rising threats in political extremism, in radicalisation trends and who is being addressed in which manner, with which narrative, etc. At the same time, it is necessary to underline possible ethical issues in this area. These ethical issues pertain, among other things, to important, also rule-of-law-related questions on who generates data and in which ways, who controls data, and who is accountable for potential problems in data application.

Gendered extremism becomes more and more significant in view of all extremist milieus across Germany. Gender is playing an active role, that is, extremists target recruiters also based on gender and gender-related narratives and concerns. Findings show that women are not only being targeted more and with tailored narratives, but that women are also becoming more active in extremist groups, serving potentially as a sort of multiplier. Therefore, making gender matter is not only a societal approach in terms of gender equality but also with regards to the increasing impact of women in radical recruitment.

Against the background of social distance as one consequence of Covid-19, young and vulnerable people tended to turn to social media in a larger extent. But also, before the pandemic's onset, social media have become a key source for information as well as entertainment for many people and in particular young people. Social media enable a virtual reality, at times quite apart from the offline world. The many means of exchange of networking online, in open and closed channels, are also increasingly a space for recruitment efforts and extremist narratives. This virtual space must therefore be seen as an important ground for radicalization in order to prevent online radicalisation becoming even more real in the offline world.

The contribution will deal with these aspects and explain contemporary German approaches in this area with the help of selected examples.

Recommended literature on all three topics are e.g.:

Council of the European Union. 2021. Council conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. Available at:
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/44446/st08868-en20.pdf>

European Parliament. 2021. Artificial Intelligence Act. Available at:
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/694212/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)694212_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/694212/EPRS_BRI(2021)694212_EN.pdf)

Käsehage, Nina. 2022. Frauen im Dschihad. Salafismus als transnationale Bewegung. [Women in Jihad. Salafism as transnational movement]. Springe: zuKlampen.

<https://zuklampen.de/buecher/sachbuch/politik/bk/958-frauen-im-dschihad.html>

Reinke de Buitrago, Sybille. (Ed.). Radikalisierungsnarrative online: Perspektiven und Lehren aus Wissenschaft und Prävention. VS Springer. To be published in 2022.

UNCCT & UNICR. 2021. Countering Terrorism Online with Artificial Intelligence. Available at: <http://unicri.it/sites/default/files/2021-06/Countering%20Terrorism%20Online%20with%20AI%20-%20UNCCT-UNICRI%20Report.pdf>

Closing Remarks Day 1 by Jeanine De Roy van Zuijedewijn

The EENeT Forum is known for its informal aspect, for networking and exchanging views. Since the conference is taking place online this year, the Evening Lounges will offer a place for conversations later on this evening. Four different lounges will be open from 8.00 pm until 9.30 pm.

Opening Remarks Day 2 by Dr. Richard Warnes

The Three MAX presentations on the first conference day focused on the key topics *Research, Prevention and Repression* for each represented country. Some areas overlapped, others diverged.

1. The main emerging issues that came out from the area ‘Research’ in the presentations were that all countries need a wider, deeper and more adaptive approach. The lack of tracking and transfer of research and the need for better networking between researchers and practitioners was also often mentioned.
2. The main emerging issues that came out from the area ‘Prevention’ were the problematic exploitation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the online world by extremist groups, the potential effects of the recent events in Afghanistan and the increasingly young age of recruits in extremist groups.
3. The main emerging issues in the area of ‘Repression’ were the need for clearer legal definitions both nationally and internationally, the joint consent in a number of countries about the danger of terrorist offenders who are now on the verge of being released and still pose a threat to society and the problems associated with the return of foreign fighters and their families.

The following issues emerging from the afternoon-sessions were mentioned by Dr. Richard Warnes:

- The exploitation of the online world, especially gaming platforms, for both networking and as a tool for radicalisation of younger people.
- A need for greater granularity when looking at Islamist radicalisation and moreover a focus on all topics related with terrorist offenders' release and post-release
- The impact of gender on terrorism and counter-terrorism.

The following topics were discussed in the Evening Lounges:

- Fireside Room: Various hot topics were discussed. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on society as a whole and especially more vulnerable individuals. Also, a possible link between drug milieus and radical world views.
- Hotel Lounge: Radicalisation in South Asia and South-East Asia
- Sunset Beach: Aspects of climate change and its impact as an aggravating factor to already naturally occurring events. Climate change might increase ecological protests that could turn violent and increasingly aggressive. A 'them and us' perception between the countries and an increased perception of exploitation of the western world in more impoverished parts of the world.

Lastly, Dr. Richard Warnes thanked all the participating members of the EENeT Forum and the BKA as a host under these difficult pandemic circumstances.

3. World Café Sessions

Dr. Richard Warnes offered a brief explanation of the methodology of the World Café and outlined the systematic use of the four break out rooms with the subjects Research, Prevention, Repression and EU-Project RAN PS.

World Café 1: Research moderated by Prof. Marco Lombardi

1. The bandwagon syndrome

We are pushed to join the mainstream, driven by media and public opinion more than a real evaluation of threats.

- In the last years, we eventually started to over-focus on radicalization and forgot about the link to terrorism.
- Defining radicalization has become overestimated and over-researched. We restart with defining radicalization each time all over again instead of just creating several definitions for different fields of research (reorganization of knowledge).
- The challenge for researchers is not always jumping on the latest bandwagon. But research is funded by politics etc. that has a high interest in only a small selection of topics. How can we solve that problem?
- There should be more research on emerging threats and the effects of interventions.

2. Time versus knowledge

Scientific knowledge needs time while operational needs are time constrained.

- Transfer problem from getting the 'knowledge' to the practitioners. Once they obtain the analysis, the problem analyzed is not relevant anymore (time lag problem). This time gap needs to be significantly reduced.

3. From field to theory, and back

**Researchers, operatives, policymakers' requests are often not in tune
Better communication is needed and information sharing, to make
researchers able to address realistic questions.**

- We should go one step back to the core concepts: Have we agreed on them? We should not act as if all principles were already figured out.
- What about the linking between online and offline terrorism? How can we make practical suggestions derived from our research? Results are needed.
- Question: How do we deal with pre-adolescents (as young as 11, 12 years old) that are being radicalized? A broken support system around the young person might especially during Covid19 play a bigger role.
- The local practitioners' perspective should more often be respected in research.
- Research should become much more applicable for policymakers.
- Often, the research field does not know which questions to ask.
- A lot of research is not empirically driven but just repetition. But access to relevant data (often in the hand of Intelligence Services) is not easy and should be facilitated. Straight-forward testing of hypotheses should become the basis of policymaking. Otherwise, research will not be practicable. That is feasible as examples (Belgium, Germany etc.) show.
- Terrorism research used to be conducted by researchers who were in conflict areas themselves and talked to terrorists etc. That deep connection with the research field is not always present anymore and is reflected in the research done nowadays.

World Café 2: Prevention moderated by Dr. Nacer Lalam

1. The main issues of European countries when dealing with radicalisation is the lack of transfer of knowledge due to the challenge of coordination among researchers and policy makers or practitioners. One initiative tackling this issue is the MOTRA project in Germany which aims at closing this communication gap.
2. Another issue is the high expectation of society to perfectly balance the security versus liberty controversy.
3. Cultural factors should always be taken into consideration when creating strategies against radicalisation. More evaluation is needed across Europe to bring resistance against anti-radicalisation programs to light. Since young people use a lot of online communication tools which have become increasingly important to extremist organisations, they should become the focus of research in this field.

World Café 3: Repression moderated by Dr. Nick Petropoulos

1. The right timing of measures has turned out to be a crucial factor in the repression of radicalisation. The importance of international joint action of European polices to the combat of extremism and the impact of cultural and historical factors on the choice of repressive tools should not be underestimated. Terrorist offenders released from prison are treated differently in European countries. Some are trying to reintegrate them, while others choose measures of punishment. Each country's Jointness would also be needed here.
2. The use of strict law enforcement measures or even the military against radical and violent anti-vaccine movements, for example, should be minimized as much as possible to prevent provoking society.
3. Soft repression and joint coordination among European countries, such as removing terrorist material from the internet for example, seems to be more promising than current strategies.

World Café 4: EU Initiative RAN PS moderated by Prof. Peter Neumann

1. The initiative 'RAN PS' launched by the European commission for policy makers and practitioners was discussed because it tackles the problematic time delay between the emergence of threats and the publication of knowledge.
2. Furthermore, RAN PS collects local experiences from policy practitioners dealing with radicalisation and extremism and shares them on the platform so that they are available worldwide.
3. Feedback on initiatives and policies should be provided on the platform for useful evaluation in the future.

4. Presentation EU-Initiative "RAN Policy Support" - Technical Support to Prevent and Counter Radicalisation" – Achievements and Outlook

Mr. Alberto Contaretti,
Project Manager RAN PS, CIVIPOL, France

The Mission of RAN PS is the provision of a wide range of policy support services to the European Commission, the EU Member States and priority Third Countries to:

- Support Member States in general preventive work
- Help to increase capacity in Strategic Communications
- Contribute to strengthen the evidence-base of policies

The above-mentioned policy support services are mainly aimed at:

- 1) Generating new knowledge, through policy analysis and research; and
- 2) Strengthening policy-making capacities, through knowledge transfer and sharing.

The RAN PS deliverables may include:

- Ad-hoc papers
- Consolidated/Comprehensive overviews
- Training programmes
- Study visits
- Workshops and thematic research events
- Tailor-made support services and contribution to Project Based Collaborations

Furthermore, the RAN PS can contribute to strengthening the evidence-base of policies through its wide concept of the research community on radicalisation, active within and outside the EU and including:

- Advisory Board of Researchers
- EU Research community on radicalisation (ERCOR)
- Partnerships with international research institutes and networks (IRIN)
- Annual Research Seminar
- E-library
- Quarterly Research Reviews

The RAN PS consortium is composed by 16 different entities, located in several European countries, coordinated by CIVIPOL.

Main achievements:

- A very good relationship with the European Commission as client
- A high number of requested deliverables
- Initial concrete support to MS policy makers within the Project Based Collaborations
- Coordination with RAN Practitioners (Cross-cutting events)

Achievements and outlook of the cooperation with the EENeT:

- The EENeT is already providing external support to the RAN PS
- The EENeT forum has actively contributed to the definition of the radicalisation research priorities for 2022
- One member of the EENeT is a member of the RAN PS Advisory Board of researchers.
- The EENeT members will be considered as members of the EU Research community on radicalisation
- EENeT members will receive Invitations to the Annual Research Seminar

5. Conclusion and Outlook

Dr. Nacer Lalam from the National Institute for Advanced Studies of the French Ministry of the Interior (IHEMI) announced that the next conference of the EENeT will be organized and take place in Paris on the 6/7th of October 2022. The topics that are going to be highlighted in the conference will be chosen at the beginning of next year.

Dr. Uwe Kemmesies summarised the conference by complimenting the EENeT forum's openness, challenging perspectives and informal exchange of information. Despite the challenge of organizing the EENeT conference under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EENeT forum managed to enable a fruitful and tangible communication between all participants.

Closing/Farewell Speech Dr. Kemmesies:

We thank Nacer very much for the invitation to Paris to our next EENeT Conference in 2022.

Let me close the conference with a remark or two, without trying to summarize the diverse, informative and thought-provoking presentations and lively discussions that we have had since yesterday.

Although, we could only hold this year's conference as a virtual event, the benefit of our informal network was again obvious: Without being somehow linked to a certain scientific, political and/or practical agenda, the EENeT provides an informal forum, an open space to mirror main-stream positions in both the public and expert discourse. Our Chatham-house-rules-secured discussions allow an open reflection, on whether the world of radicalisation might be driven by other causes than we usually assumed and/or heard in the diverse arenas of academia, policy or practice. I found it enriching to meet up with you in order to ponder for example the truism, the everyday wisdom that everything is getting worse and worse. Is it really the case that Islamism is still the most challenging radical milieu? Are our analytical schemes of 'left' and 'right', which we have developed over decades, still useful for understanding current developments?

I hope you share my view that this virtual meeting was a success. The conference not only clearly signaled that the idea of the EENeT as such did not fall victim to the virus, a very small creature that we call COVID-19.

Much more, the conversations over the past 24 hours made the idea of our network almost tangible. The presentations, the discussions have helped to broaden our nationally / culturally biased perspective on the subject of radicalisation.

What's going on elsewhere? Do these developments in neighboring countries possibly reflect the situation that we will have to face with a certain delay in the future in our country?

We will continue to follow these key questions in the coming conferences - thanks to Nacer Lalam and his team, the next one will take place in Paris in October 2022. You are already now invited to send us your ideas for our next annual meeting.

You all know: Our secretariat can be reached around the clock by email and we look forward to any kind of input.

Now it's time to say goodbye. We from the Steering Committee and the EENeT Secretariat would like to thank again the speakers and moderators for their input and the content-related implementation of the conference. We would also like to thank the technicians sitting here with us who made this event technically possible. But the biggest thanks go - as always - to you, the participants of our conference, the members of the EENeT. Thank you for enriching the discussions. The discursive input from you is what the EENeT is all about!

So, I think we 're all looking forward to meeting up with one another next year in Paris – then face-to-face with the possibility for the one or the other hug. From wherever you are watching us: Have a nice day and a relaxing weekend in front of you! Keep safe and healthy. See you soon, “Auf Wiedersehen” from Wiesbaden/Germany: Good bye!

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