

TERRA

Terrorism and Radicalisation; European network based prevention and learning program

TERRA set out to make a practical contribution to the prevention of radicalisation and political violence in a European context. Over the last two years, the period during which TERRA has been running, security problems due to radicalisation and terrorism within Europe have become increasingly pressing, implying that European professionals are both more frequently exposed to radicalisation in their professional context, and even more crucial to identifying and combating it. Within this context, TERRA's approach is directly relevant in contributing towards addressing a pressing European need.

TERRA's objectives were to support target groups who were coming into professional contact with individuals and groups who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by providing practical tools for them to use in their daily work. Our first activity under this project was to identify these target groups on the basis of scientific literature on this subject. We focussed upon teachers at secondary school level, youth workers, social workers, police officers, especially at community level, prison, probation and parole officers, journalists, religious leaders and policy makers, both at local and national level. TERRA also laid an emphasis upon reinforcing the role that victims of terrorism and former radicals can play both in prevention and de-radicalisation.

TERRA's concrete objective was to create a toolkit which target groups could use in their daily work. In order to create these tools, we gathered a number of components together:

- **State of the art knowledge on this subject from academic literature on the subject.** Our research began with a comprehensive literature review. This review was intended to clearly define exactly which professional groups were most likely to be involved in a radicalisation process, and how they could best use their influence to help the vulnerable group or individual in question. It also looked closely at theories around radicalisation processes, examining whether certain characteristics might be seen to render a group or individual vulnerable, what a radicalisation process tends to entail, and which interventions may be well timed at certain points of it. De-radicalisation as a process was also considered, along with interventions which had or had not been successful during either the radicalisation or the de-radicalisation process. This literature is presented in a literature review, which lays emphasis on translating the theoretical, scientific research on the subject into a format which can be meaningful for practical interventions.
- **International Conference.** In its role as a network learning programme, TERRA held a conference in June 2013, which was attended by victims of terrorism, former radicals, academics, and representatives from all of the target groups, including law enforcement, the NGO sector, policy makers, teachers, journalists and social work. The findings of this conference were noted and included in the design of the tools.
- **Needs Assessment.** Having identified the target groups which are central to TERRA through the literature review, we then carried out a needs assessment amongst these groups. This covered questions on what the most pressing problems are around radicalisation, and what TERRA as a project could most usefully provide – including

both content and format. Through this research, we identified that these target groups felt a strong need for documents which guided them on how to recognise potential indicators of a radicalisation process, and what they could do should such a process be identified in one of the individuals or groups which they came into professional contact with. They also indicated that a clear picture of other professional groups who could be contacted on this subject would also be very helpful. In terms of format, they suggested that guidelines, folders, and visual materials such as documentary films would be the most helpful. Once fully informed about the needs of our target groups, we were able to tailor the design of our tools to include them

- **Testimonials of victims and former radicals.** Including the experiences both of victims of terrorism and former radicals in TERRA's materials is key to the design of the project. This material was gathered in the form of interviews, and the results used as a crucial ingredient in writing the tools. The interviews were filmed, and are presented as part of the toolkit.
- **Expert Advice.** TERRA is supported by a number of experts in the field of terrorism, mostly from the academic world. They have offered their input at every stage of the process of writing TERRA's tools, mostly in the context of TERRA's advisory board. We were also able to consult victims of terrorism and former radicals on whether the tools correctly reflected their own experiences and expertise.
- **Feedback from a pilot among front liners in three European locations.** Once the tools were developed in first draft we launched pilots, in which experts from the target groups above could provide feedback and commentary on the content, relevance and format of the tools. Pilots took place in London, Copenhagen and Amsterdam. This feedback was given during interviews and focus groups. Small adjustments were made to the content and format of some tools as a result of the feedback we received.

With this information, and using these materials, TERRA has produced Manuals for:

- Teachers and Youth Workers
- Community Police Officers
- Prison, Probation and Parole Officers
- Religious Leaders
- Journalists
- Policy Makers from Local Government
- Policy Makers from National Government

Short, tip sheet style folders were also produced for Teachers and Youth Workers, Community Police Officers, Prison, Probation and Parole Officers and Religious Leaders.

A short, 6 minute awareness raising film and a 30 minute documentary with instructive information on 'The staircase to terrorism' accompanies these materials, and 15 individual interviews with experts, representatives from all of the target groups and testimonies of victims and former radicals complete the whole toolkit.

A website has been created to house these materials, so that they are openly available, and the written tools are all in print friendly version, so that they can be reproduced Europe wide.

During the course of it's work, TERRA has created a substantial European network of professionals, experts, victims of terrorism and former radicals. We look forwards to working further with this group during TERRA II. This project was launched in August 2014, and will develop a citizenship curriculum for European secondary students, deliver research based policy advice to European governments on radicalisation and de-radicalisation, and roll out TERRA's toolkit in the form of trainings to professionals Europe wide.