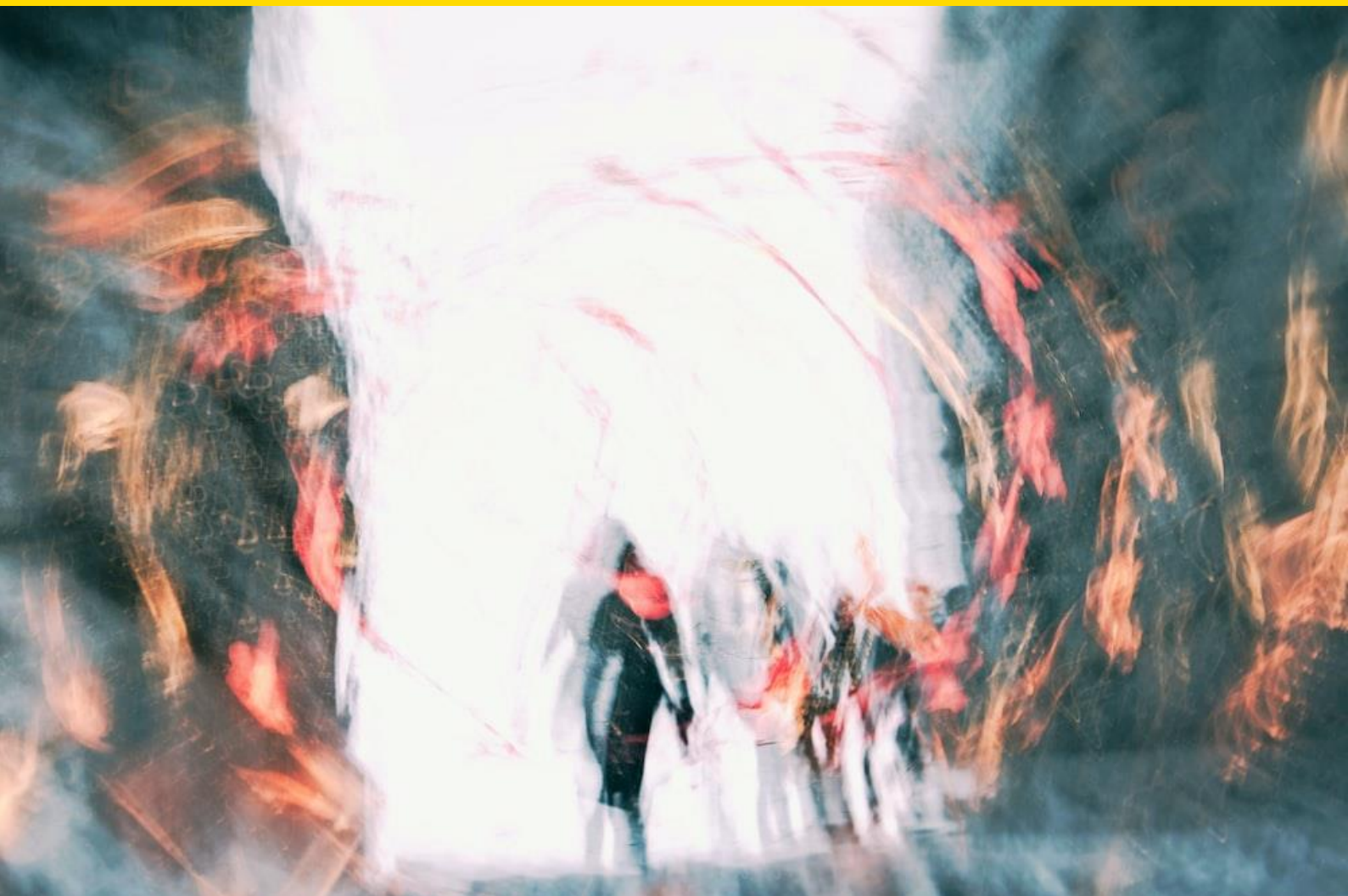NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL RESEARCH (NIBR)

Risk assessment and reintegration of radicalised individuals in the Nordic countries

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Abstract:	In this report, we explore risk assessment and reintegration initiatives carried out in the four Nordic countries Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland. We have interviewed practitioners and other public officials with particular experience of this type of work in the Nordic countries and reviewed research and other literature. On this basis, we cast light on central practices and measures related to risk assessment and reintegration, as well as evaluations of how they work in practice. We highlight key challenges and make recommendations that can serve to improve efforts in these two areas.

Preface

This report provides the findings from the project 'Risk assessment and reintegration of radicalised individuals in the Nordic countries'.

The research project was initiated by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security as part of the follow-up to the national counterterrorism strategy. One of the priority measures in the strategy is to facilitate a knowledge-based approach to method development and the exchange of lessons learned on risk assessments and effective reintegration measures. This project is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The project has been carried out by the researchers Stian Lid from the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), OsloMet and Tina Wilchen Christensen from Human Culture.

Stian Lid is a criminologist and has wide knowledge on countering violent extremism (CVE). He has particularly studied CVE in the police and municipal authorities. Lid was co-editior of Routledge's handbook of deradicalization and disengagement (2020). For more information and access to articles, book chapters and reports, see OsloMet.

Tina Wilchen Christensen is an experienced researcher, consultant, and train-the-trainer within the field of P/CVE. Christensen has expert knowledge of the rehabilitation and reintegration processes of former violent extremist as well as risk assessment and the Scandinavian multi-agency approach across the Nordic countries. For more information and access to articles, book chapters and reports, see www.humanculture.dk

We would like to thank all the informants who have shared their experiences and insights through interviews and/or workshops in Oslo. Their contributions have been crucial to highlighting important experiences, challenges and issues in a demanding field. We would also like to thank all of you who read the draft report and provided important feedback. Our thanks also go to Linn Andrea Meinert Schøning from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security for the good project follow-up.

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Summary

This report explores the work on two key topics in the prevention of violent extremism: risk assessments of radicalised individuals, primarily in the preventive work carried out by the police and the health and welfare services, and the reintegration of radicalised individuals.

We cast light on central practices and measures related to risk assessment and reintegration, and evaluations of how these practices work. We have interviewed practitioners and other representatives of the authorities in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland, in addition to reviewing previous research and other literature. The aim is to provide decision-makers and practitioners with a basis for further developing the work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals and initiatives to reintegrate radicalised individuals.

The Nordic countries all adhere to the Nordic welfare model and have much in common in terms of ideology, legal system and culture, as well as similar organisational structure and service provision. In addition, the emergence of security and risk thinking in recent decades has contributed to fundamental changes in the public administration, such as the securitisation of the health and welfare services, as well as proactive policing based on an increasing degree of security logic.

Across the Nordic countries, we are seeing a significant change in practitioners' and public officials' understanding of what causes radicalisation and who is radicalised. The field has become 'psychologised', and it is becoming increasingly unclear who is perceived as a radicalised individual and what their specific needs are. These days there is little talk of politically, religiously or ideologically convinced individuals; instead people are almost exclusively referred to as a mentally ill 'lone actor'. From this perspective, it is also very unclear when and how radicalisation differs from other crime.

While the authorities often define *radicalisation* as a process in which a person increasingly accepts the use of violence to achieve ideological, political or religious goals, there is a general tendency for initiatives to combat radicalisation to be decontextualised and depoliticised, by according little weight to political, ideological and international factors. By contrast, unhappiness, neglect, traumatisation and exclusion are widely cited as the main causes of radicalisation. These factors may be of decisive importance in relation to the individual's participation in an extremist environment. At the same time, we believe that greater importance should be attached to how participation in an extremist environment can transform the participant. This means that regardless of the underlying causes of the individual's recruitment to and identification with the environment, there should in practice be a focus on the underlying reasons for their participation, the length of time the individual has participated in the environment, the position(s) the individual has assumed, and the individual's ideological orientation.

Risk assessment

Individual risk assessment can be understood as both an assessment of the possibility of a person committing a terrorist act, but also work to identify the needs and characteristics of the individual that can be addressed through interventions. Assessments of people's future actions will always be laden with great uncertainty, and they entail significant methodological, ethical and practical challenges.

The analyses of the work done by the police and the health and welfare services on risk assessment of radicalised individuals in the Nordic region tend to focus in particular on *legislation, organisation and methods.* We distinguish between Denmark and the other three Nordic countries, as there are marked differences in the work in Denmark.

Risk assessment work in Denmark

Denmark has different legislation, organisation and risk assessment tools than the other Nordic countries. The main reason for these differences is the Danish legislation. Section

115 of the Administration of Justice Act (*Retsplejeloven*) gives public authorities the opportunity to pass on information about individuals to other authorities if it is deemed relevant to the case. Risk assessments are carried out in an inter-agency crime-preventive forum called Info-houses, where representatives from various local government services and the police share relevant knowledge they possess about an individual's personal circumstances and life. A dialogue-based assessment tool has been developed to help the parties in the Info-house collaboration maintain focus and direction in the analyses of an individual's situation. The assessment tool helps structure the practitioners' assessment of risk and protective factors on the basis of nine dimensions. This organisation has been implemented throughout Denmark, and the Danish authorities have developed their own manuals and guidelines for this work.

The practitioners and public officials we interviewed in Denmark stated that when different authorities collaborate on joint assessments, the different actors' understanding and interpretation become more nuanced, resulting in a more holistic assessment of the individual. The method also contributes to the participants feeling that the responsibility for the assessments is shared. The assessment tool systematises the discussion between the representatives from the different sectors and helps the various actors develop a common language over time, by defining the dimensions and associated concepts. A systematic review of the individual under assessment serves as a 'baseline', which then forms the starting point for assessing changes at subsequent progression meetings. The tool's focus on risk and protection factors helps ensure a balanced assessment of the person, in addition to mapping what can be done to improve the situation. However, some practitioners highlighted that the assessment process using the tool is very extensive and time-consuming, and that the structuring of the analysis can lead to "tunnel vision".

Risk assessment work in Sweden, Norway and Finland

There are many similarities in the risk assessment work in these three countries. The work is not very standardised or formalised, compared with Denmark, resulting in large variations in how this work is done internally within the countries. The legislation, organisation and methods also differ markedly from Denmark.

In Sweden, Norway and Finland, the legislation places extensive restrictions on information sharing among the various services. Health and welfare services can only share information about individuals with the police in cases where they believe that the information may prevent serious crime, such as terrorism. Many practitioners in these countries are also uncertain about how the law should be interpreted, meaning practices for when it is considered necessary to share information also vary among the services.

Risk assessments are mainly carried out by the police and/or security services, and to a lesser extent together with representatives from the health and welfare services. The organisation of this work within the police also varies. Police officers report that the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the police would benefit from being formalised, standardised and differentiated. Ideally, tasks and responsibilities should be differentiated, such that intelligence work, risk assessments and intervention work are distributed among several persons. It was held that this kind of organisation would strengthen the information base for the assessment, improve the actual risk assessment, and help reduce uncertainty and anxiety among the people involved in the work.

The growing collaboration between the police and the security services in recent years was perceived as important by police employees. Sweden appears to have the most formalised collaboration, through the establishment of Redex. There is variation in the extent to which these kinds of collaborative groups are used simply to exchange information between the police and the security services, or whether the services also work together to prepare joint risk assessments. Police officers continue to experience challenges in the collaboration, such as the security services' limited sharing of information with the police.

No national guidelines or standards have been drawn up for the collaboration between the police and the health and welfare services in these three countries. Formalised collaboration has been developed locally to varying degrees. In some places, the contact between the police and relevant services takes place on a fairly ad-hoc basis, while in other places permanent teams have been established with representatives from the police and the health and welfare services. In some of the teams, the health and welfare services and the police assess the risk together in cases where personal data may be shared.

Nor is there any standardisation regarding which methods are used to carry out risk assessments of radicalised individuals. Until very recently, the police have primarily used their traditional intelligence methods for collecting, analysing and assessing risk in their work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals. These methods appear to vary, from relatively unstructured to highly structured risk assessments. In Sweden, some police districts have recently started using the risk assessment tool TRAP-18 for lone actors. Training in the tool is now offered in all police districts. However, it is unclear whether TRAP-18 is only intended to be used to assess lone actors or whether this tool can also be used for non-lone actors. Some police districts in Norway are also considering starting to use TRAP-18.

Experiences and evaluations of the risk assessment work in the Nordic region

By comparing experiences from the work on risk assessments in the four Nordic countries and previous research, we can draw a number of important conclusions that will be central in the further development of this area in the Nordic countries.

The work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals is very demanding and is fraught with great uncertainty. Risk assessments face significant methodological, ethical and practical challenges. No assessment can judge with certainty the risk of whether a person will commit terrorist acts or not. The work must also strike a balance between society's need for protection and the individual's rights and freedom. At the same time, legislation, organisation and choice of method all lay down constraints for risk assessment work.

Legislation

The degree of information sharing among public authorities is decisive for the degree of nuance that can be achieved in risk assessments of radicalised individuals. Legislation also sets important premises for the collaboration among the actors and the choice of risk assessment tools. It is the broad opportunities for information sharing in the Danish legislation that enabled the establishment of the Info-house collaboration and the development of the dialogue-based assessment tool.

The Nordic countries' differing legislation on information sharing entails differences in the countries' weighting between protection of citizens' individual freedoms and protection of society against violent extremism, with Denmark attaching greater importance to the protection of society and less importance to protection of the individual citizen's privacy, compared with the other Nordic countries.

Practitioners' uncertainty about when personal information can be shared between services is a recurring challenge, particularly in Sweden, Norway and Finland, that needs to be addressed. At the same time, the police and the police security services' ability to request personal information from the health and welfare services without consent needs to be defined more clearly.

Organisation

A key finding in this study is the significance of organisation for both the quality of the assessments and the safeguarding of the employees who perform them. Differentiation of tasks and areas of responsibility, where actors who possess different information, knowledge and competence gather to perform a systematic, coordinated and qualified analysis and assessment appears to promote high quality in the assessments and spread the responsibility for the assessment among employees. This applies in the organisation of work

internally within the police, in the collaboration between the police and the security services, and in the collaboration between the police and the municipal authorities/health services.

Risk assessment methods

Methods for risk assessment of radicalised individuals are controversial, also in the Nordic countries. However, there is widespread consensus, both among the people we have interviewed and in the research, on certain aspects of these risk assessments. Risk assessments are not a tool for predicting acts of violence, but rather a tool for prioritising between cases and gaining knowledge about the individual's needs, in order to be able to implement relevant preventive measures. Risk assessments are a 'snapshot', and changes in the person's situation may render the assessment less relevant. Considerable expertise is needed to carry out risk assessments. Many people perceive unstructured assessments as a vulnerable approach, as they are more likely to miss aspects of significance and are highly dependent on the assessor's exercise of judgement.

Structured risk assessments, which are a combination of a structured evaluation and professional judgement, are the recommended method for risk assessments of violence and violent extremism. The Danish risk assessment tool and TRAP-18 are examples of structured risk assessments. Most of the interviewees prefer the use of structured risk assessments to unstructured risk assessments. They pointed out that structured assessments help establish a framework for the risk assessment, and that the key topics that ought to be highlighted in the assessment have been identified on the basis of existing research. Structured risk assessments serve to professionalise the assessments and reduce the likelihood of decisions being made based on gut instinct. Standardisation of risk assessment methods could also make practices more similar across the country and reduce the responsibility that local employees currently experience as a result of having to develop their own methods for risk assessment.

Nevertheless, opinions differ regarding the extent to which the assessments should be structured. Some of the people we interviewed – as well as previous research – have voiced a number of major objections to standardisation and structured assessments; for example, that standardisation increases the assessors' sense of security, places responsibility elsewhere, and limits alternative perspectives and solutions. The risk outlook can often change rapidly, which calls for diversification rather than standardisation. Specific risk assessment tools also require training, which takes resources. When the outcome of the assessments is so uncertain, specific risk assessment tools are of limited value.

When considering which types of risk assessments to use, the possibilities for undesirable results of the various approaches must be assessed. In our opinion, which is consistent with other research on risk assessments of violence and violent extremism, the disadvantages ensuing from a lack of standardisation of methods for risk assessments and the use of unstructured assessments in risk work outweigh the disadvantages of standardising the methods and using structured assessments. However, standardising the methods and using structured assessments requires great awareness of the potential negative consequences and implementation of measures to counteract them.

The choice of method must also be aligned with the purpose of the risk assessments, the type of risk the assessment is intended to identify, and the target group. In addition, factors such as who is going to perform the risk assessments, how much training is required to develop sufficient expertise, and what kind of information it is possible to obtain must also be taken into account.

Based on the experiences mapped in this study and the findings of previous research, there is considerable potential for improvement in risk assessment work in all the Nordic countries. The improvements pertain to protection of the citizens' legal rights, understanding of the legislation and when actors can share information, the organisation of the work, and methods for risk assessments.

Reintegration

Initiatives to promote reintegration emphasise both protecting society and supporting the individual. The goal is to offer support that helps create real opportunities for the individual to participate in education, work and/or other forms of activities with a view to becoming integrated into society.

Successful reintegration depends on a holistic approach that entails both supporting the individual in developing alternative social and professional competencies, at the same time as society enables their return. The process is complex and can involve all aspects of a person's life. The forms of support the individual may need can be divided into six overarching domains: mental health needs, cognitive needs, social needs, needs relating to behaviour correction, functional needs and needs relating to security.

The practitioners' mandate, institutional logic and the approaches they employ are contingent on the welfare state's weighting of the individual's opportunity for inclusion and participation in society, as well as the state's investment in the individual.

How is it done?

The work on reintegration appears to be relatively uniform in all the Nordic countries. The local authorities and social services are responsible for providing housing, financial benefits when needed, work and/or education. The health services are responsible for providing health care. The police are responsible for the safety and security of individuals, in addition to monitoring developments in the risk associated with individuals. The correctional services are charged with preventing new crime through rehabilitation.

This study finds that the practitioners develop the goal for the process in collaboration with the individual concerned. However, the study also shows that practitioners' logic of action – and thus their perspective on the goal of the process – is informed by the laws that apply and their respective mandates. In addition, conscious and subconscious understandings of radicalisation come into play. Practitioners act in this way on the basis of the implicit theory of change that underlies all welfare state thinking in the Nordic countries. At the same time, the efforts are also shaped by an understanding of radicalisation that reduces it to individualised psychosocial problems.

Collaboration and lawful sharing of information, the development of common goals and action plans, and clarity in the coordination of case work and the division of responsibilities are essential for the successful reintegration of radicalised individuals. However, despite the fact that objectives are important for the work in any given case, research also shows how difficult it is in practice to conceptualise many of the intertwined aspects that come into play in a reintegration process and that enable the definition of operational goals that work in practice.

Challenges and recommendations – a brief summary

There are many good initiatives in the Nordic countries to help individuals develop a non-criminal life and reintegrate into society. However, despite the multifaceted initiatives, there are grounds to consider various aspects.

Our study found that practitioners across local authorities and NGOs all called for a 'holistic' approach, without linking this to clear, concrete goals.

The kinds of problems ensuing from participation in extremist environments seem to present different challenges than are addressed by existing practices. The Nordic schemes to promote reintegration stem from existing practices in social work, and there is a tendency towards non-alignment between the initiatives and the needs of the individual in practice. It may therefore be important to take steps to identify the limitations in the established schemes.

Moreover, an unclear understanding of the target group can lead to some negative consequences in practice. While alienation and social and psychological factors may be one of the reasons for participation in extremist environments, the current initiatives do not seem to take into account the impact of participation in these environments on the participant. As a result, some of the causes, perceptions, and actions linked to the individual's radicalisation, socialisation and involvement in an extremist group remain unidentified, ununderstood or unaccommodated.

The practices seem to attach less importance to ideologically informed models of explanation and how politicised feelings of dissatisfaction can shape the individual's perspective, identity and potential repertoire of actions. At the same time, it is also important to recognise that participation in extremist environments is an expression of a search for something and/or an experience of socially created conditions, which has led to involvement in a specific social milieu and an associated political cause. It may be important to support this involvement in a reintegration process, but now interpreted and exercised within the rules of democracy. However, the pivotal question is whether initiatives that are mainly based on a psychosocial understanding of the target group also focus sufficiently on, and thus contribute to, the individual developing tools to act politically within the bounds of a liberal democratic society.

This study has also identified a difference between public-sector initiatives and initiatives run by NGOs. The initiatives run by NGOs that participated in the study are based on detailed insight into the practices, culture and socialisation norms in the environments in which their target group has been involved. They thus have detailed knowledge about the context and especially emotions related to the exercise of violence, ideology and participation. We therefore argue that increased interaction between the various actors in the field could serve to strengthen the initiatives in this extremely complex field, by including multiple different forms of knowledge.

Ideology constitutes a unique element in this work. The arguments for and against working directly on ideology are numerous, and there are many different approaches. Based on our previous research and this survey, we hold that work on ideology is important. This work is pivotal to create initiatives aimed at making the individual aware of ideologically informed assumptions and that can help develop the radicalised person's perspectives and ways of thinking and promote social and professional skills and patterns of behaviour that are compatible with the values and practices of a liberal democracy.

An ideologically informed perspective that divides people up into friends and foes can – if these aspects are not addressed – quickly impede inclusion in a workplace, isolate the person in education, and otherwise disrupt the reintegration process.

We therefore regard it as essential that much greater focus is placed on the background for the individual's perspectives and also on how ideology works – that is, how each ideology categorises and subdivides the world, and how the practitioners can discuss the consequences of ideologically conditioned arguments and perspectives – without this degenerating into a confrontational discussion about the pros and cons of a given point of view.

Based on our findings in this study, we believe that reintegration efforts can be strengthened through the development of clear theories of change, strategies and goals for the reintegration process. This would help clarify whether the various practitioners agree on the issues in this specific case and on which initiatives will be best suited to help. This may also serve to establish more uniform practices among the various practitioners. Clearer goals for the work may also make it easier to identify the employees best qualified to do this work and to evaluate whether the initiative is working as intended – or why it did not work as intended. In addition, reintegration initiatives would benefit from stronger collaboration between the authorities and NGOs, with a view to ensuing more nuanced knowledge and initiatives.

1   Introduction

Conducting risk assessments of radicalised individuals has become a key instrument for preventing violent extremism.[1] Another important measure is to reintegrate radicalised individuals by providing support that helps them back into society based on liberal democratic principles.[2]

In this report, we explore risk assessment and reintegration initiatives carried out in the four Nordic countries Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland. The report primarily looks at preventive work carried out by the police and the health and welfare services on risk assessments of radicalised individuals, but the descriptions of initiatives aimed at reintegrating radicalised individuals also cover the work of civil society organisations and the countries' correctional systems.

We have interviewed practitioners and other public officials with particular experience of this type of work in the Nordic countries and reviewed research and other literature. On this basis, we cast light on central practices and measures related to risk assessment and reintegration, as well as evaluations of how they work in practice. We highlight key challenges and make recommendations that can serve to improve efforts in these two areas. The aim is to provide decision-makers and practitioners with a basis for further developing the work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals and initiatives to reintegrate radicalised individuals. This report was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.[3]

Risk assessments and the reintegration of radicalised individuals are complex and challenging tasks. At the same time, little research has been carried out in these areas and there are significant knowledge gaps.[4]

It is challenging to assess what acts a person will commit in the future, regardless of what type of risk we are assessing. Risk assessments of radicalised individuals are further complicated by the fact that there are many different paths into violent extremism.[5] This has made it difficult to reach consensus on which risk and vulnerability factors are particularly important and how different risk, vulnerability and protective factors should be weighed against each other.[6] Furthermore, identification of such factors can easily lead to stigmatisation of population groups. The authorities may also have limited access to relevant information. Several specialised tools have been developed internationally to assess the risk of individuals becoming involved in terrorism-related activities. Different countries have implemented different tools.[7] In the Nordic countries, such specialised risk assessment tools have not yet been used to any great extent.[8] Assessments are associated with great uncertainty, regardless of how they are made. The assessments will also depend on the professionals' own exercise of judgement, and it will always be possible to question the validity and characteristics of assessments and the consistency between assessments made by different people.[9] Methodological and contextual issues complicate the work on risk assessments.

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[1] Cherney et al., 2022; Gill, 2015; Borum, 2015
[2] Bjørgo, 2015; Hansen & Lid, 2020; Kohler, 2016; Marsden, 2017
[3] National counterterrorism strategy. Version 2022. Ministry of Justice and Public Security
[4] In the Nordic countries, however, considerable research has been conducted on assessments of concerns about radicalisation (e.g. the Nordic research project 'Handling extremism – Nordic Approaches' (HEX-NA), Førde et al., 2023, Lid et al., 2016). However, concerns about radicalisation are cases at a lower level of concern than the topic of investigation in this report, which focuses on already radicalised individuals.
[5] Borum, 2015
[6] Gill, 2015
[7] RAN, 2018; Lloyd, 2019; Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020; Knudsen & Stormoen, 2020
[8] Knudsen & Stormoen, 2020, Christensen et al., 2023
[9] Salma & Gill, 2020, Cherney, 2022

Exiting extremist groups and mindsets and becoming reintegrated into society at large involves complex psychological, social and physical processes. These processes have been the subject of considerable research in recent decades.[10][11] Yet although we know more about the challenges involved in abandoning extremism and reintegrating into society, we lack knowledge about the effect of measures. Studies on exit and reintegration processes show that exit and reintegration interventions can be significant factors.[12] Few primary studies have been conducted internationally that have produced empirical data on whether, how and why interventions aimed at promoting exit and reintegration have any effect. Therefore, our knowledge is still limited when it comes to aligning efforts to help radicalised individuals out of extremism and back into the wider society.[13]

1.1   Issues, delimitations and data basis

The issues we wish to address in this report are:

1) What measures have been taken and what practices are being applied in the Nordic countries in the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals?

2) What measures have been taken, and what practices are being applied in the Nordic countries in their efforts to reintegrate radicalised individuals?

3) What are perceived as core challenges in this work?

4) Which methods and measures are effective?

We have employed a broad approach to answering these questions. We have studied concrete measures and practices used in the Nordic countries and looked at other key factors that affect approaches to this work in the individual countries. The analyses of the work on risk assessments and reintegration will be centred around three issues: *legislation, organisation* and *methods*.

The governments of the Nordic countries have chosen to use a broad strategy and assigned authority to a number of actors, which through interagency collaboration are tasked with preventing radicalisation and reintegrating radicalised individuals.[14] In order to shed light on the breadth of challenges, methods and measures in risk assessment and reintegration in the Nordic countries, our survey has aimed to include the key actors involved in the field. However, the different actors have chosen varying degrees of participation in the study. We have gained little knowledge about the police security service[15] and the work of the correctional services.[16]

The section of the report on risk assessment work mainly highlights the risk assessment work carried out by the police in cooperation with the police security services and the health and welfare services. However, the distinctions between the responsibilities of the police security services and the police are unclear, and, in part, overlapping. Clear guidelines are lacking for where the line is drawn between the security service's and the police's responsibilities in preventive work, at least in Norway.[17] However, the division of labour

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[10] Hansen & Lid, 2020; Kohler, 2016; Mattsson & Johansson, 2019; Moghaddam, 2009; Rabasa et al., 2010; Christensen, 2015, 2019; Altier et al. 2014, 2021; Feddes, 2015; Bjørgo, 2009

[11] Pistone et al. 2019; Feddes & Gallucci, 2016; Ministry of Justice & Public Security, 2021

[12] Marsden, 2017, Altier et al. 2021

[13] Pistone et al., 2019; Feddes & Gallucci, 2016; Ministry of Justice & Public Security, 2021

[14] Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2014, 2020; Dalgaard-Nilsen & Ilum, 2020; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019; Lid & Heierstad, 2019; Johansen, 2018; Fangen & Kolås, 2016; Fangen & Carlsson, 2013

[15] In this report, we will use the term police security services for all the Nordic police security services, i.e. the Police Security Service (PST) in Norway, Denmark's National Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO) and the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (SUPO).

[16] Risk assessment work in the correctional services is highlighted in a number of other reports; see Knudsen and Stormoen (2020), Bjelkerapport (2020), and Cornwall and Molenkamp (2018)

[17] 25 June Committee (2023), Al-Noor Committee (2020)

appears to be determined by the degree of threat. The police security services' preventive activities are mainly aimed at known threats, i.e. people, groups or networks that are believed to have an intention (willingness) and a capacity (ability) to carry out a political extremist act of violence. The police's responsibility is to prevent people who are believed capable of developing the intention and capacity to commit extremist acts of violence from actually developing such a willingness and ability. In their work with these people, the police assesses whether there is intention and capacity to carry out a political extremist act of violence.[18] For this reason, the report mainly addresses the risk assessment work that takes place as part of the police's preventive activities – risk assessment work that is at the level below the police security services' risk assessment work, but above the police's initial mapping of whether there is a concern about radicalisation. In general, this risk assessment is carried out before an individual has been involved in terrorism-related activities, i.e. in a pre-crime phase, but risk assessment work may also take place in connection with the reintegration of, for example, people who have returned from fighting in the Syrian war.

The section of the report on reintegration includes the work carried out by the police, the health and welfare services, civil society organisations and the correctional services. This includes reintegration work related to people convicted of terrorist acts and people who have been radicalised but who have not been involved in terrorism-related activities. The section does not cover the reintegration of the children of radicalised individuals, e.g. children who have returned from Syria. The section of the report on risk assessment and reintegration deals with somewhat different target groups.

The term *radicalised individuals* is strictly speaking understood here to encompass people who are considered to have the willingness and ability to commit political extremist acts of violence, and, as such, is a somewhat imprecise term, particularly in the risk assessment work we describe. We nonetheless choose to use the term *radicalised individuals*, but in the sense of people who are considered to have a willingness and ability to commit political extremist acts of violence, or who are considered to have a significant risk of developing such a willingness and ability.[19]

1.1.1   Source data

The data collection process has been determined, to a significant degree, by the project's limited financial framework, as well as our remit to shed light on risk assessment and reintegration – two somewhat separate themes – in four Nordic countries. Overall, we perceive that the data provides in-depth knowledge of key challenges, practices and measures in both risk assessment and reintegration in the individual countries and across countries, but that it to a lesser extent provides knowledge about the variations in practice within each country.

The data collection has consisted of document analysis, interviews and a workshop. The document analysis has comprised analysing legislation, publicly available guides, manuals and guidelines, as well as published national and international reports and academic articles. We conducted a total of 26 interviews in the four Nordic countries, most of which were in-person group interviews, comprising close to 50 people in all. Some interviews took place digitally. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the interviews conducted in the project.

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[18] 25 June Committee (2023)

[19] With this, we have wanted to delimit our work to exclude assessments of concerns about radicalisation, for example assessments of notifications of concern from schools based on pupils' individual statements. The latter will be an assessment of lower concern, which has been extensively investigated in previous research projects, most recently and most extensively in the HEX-NA project (2018–2022).

Table 1.1:   An overview of interviews in the Nordic countries.

	National				The police		Municipal authority	NGO	Total
	National centre	Police	Correctional services	Health and welfare	Security services	Local police			
Norway	Regional Resource Centres on Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention (RVTS)	Norwegian Police Directorate	Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service	Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV)	No	2 interviews (4 police districts)	1 interview (coordinators from the Local Drug and Crime Prevention Scheme (SLT) in 3 municipalities)	No	7
Denmark	Centre for Documentation and Counter Extremism CDE	The Danish National Police	No	No	No	1 interview (1 police district) 1 interview Info-house (coordinators in municipal authorities and the police)	1 interview (coordinators in 2 municipalities) 1 interview Info-house (coordinators in municipal authorities and the police)	No	5
Sweden	Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism	Department of National Operations	Swedish Prison and Probation Service	No	RedEx team 1 police district	1 interview RedEx team 1 Municipal police	1 interview in 1 municipality (3 representatives)	1 NGO	7
Finland	Does not exist	Ministry of Justice	No	Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare Psychiatric Prison Hospital	No	1 interview (1 police district)	No	2 NGOs	6
Total	3	4	2	3	1	6	4	3	26

We have interviewed practitioners who work *in particular* with risk assessment and reintegration in the police, the correctional services, local authorities, health and social services and civil society organisations. The interviewees have primarily been coordinators. We have also interviewed employees in directorates responsible for further developing practices within their agencies, and in the national centres for the prevention of violent extremism. Essentially, these employees work with both risk assessment and reintegration. In Sweden and Finland, we have also interviewed representatives of NGOs that work specifically with exit and reintegration of radicalised individuals.

In Norway and Denmark, we have mainly recruited practitioners who we knew worked in particular in these areas. In Sweden and Finland, practitioners have either been recruited through researchers and practitioners we know and who relayed our inquiry, or through direct contact with the institutions at the central level.

Which actors we have succeeded in interviewing in each country varies, as shown in Table 1.1. This is partly due to the fact that different types of actors are relevant in the different countries. In Denmark and Norway, for example, there are no civil society organisations that are particularly involved in this work, while Finland does not have a national centre for the prevention of violent extremism. It is also partly due to variation in which actors agreed to be interviewed. At the national level, only the Norwegian and Swedish correctional services agreed to be interviewed. The data material from the correctional services was too limited to account for the agencies' risk assessment work, but the knowledge from interviews with correctional service representatives is used in the chapter on reintegration. With the exception of Sweden, where the security service participated in a group interview with the local police (Redex team), the police security services in the other Nordic countries declined the request to be interviewed.

Around 15 practitioners from the police, local authorities and health services,[20] in addition to four researchers from the Nordic countries, participated in a workshop on risk assessment and reintegration of radicalised individuals in Oslo in spring 2023. The goal of the workshop

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[20] These were mainly practitioners we had interviewed previously in the study.

was to strengthen the practitioners' expertise, as well as to be an arena for data collection for the research project. The workshop consisted of plenary presentations and discussions and group assignments. We prepared a short memo setting out the main results from the interviews. This memo formed the basis for the topic of the workshop and was sent to the participants in advance. We took notes from the group work and the plenary discussions, and these notes are used as a data basis for the report's analyses.

1.2   About the report

The report is structured as follows: In chapter two, we elucidate some common underlying factors in the Nordic countries that affect risk assessments and reintegration efforts. In chapters 3 and 4, we describe the work on risk assessments and reintegration, respectively. In each of these chapters, we first highlight current work and challenges, and then summarise and discuss key experiences from the Nordic countries. We present our recommendations in the conclusion. However, the structure of chapters 3 and 4 is somewhat different. Work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals varies between the countries, and there are different perceptions of how the work should be carried out. In order to highlight these differences across countries and perspectives, we go into more detail about the practices, challenges and measures in each of the respective countries. Reintegration efforts, however, are much more similar across the Nordic countries, and there are more similar perceptions of how the work should be carried out. We have therefore chosen to provide a more comprehensive presentation of the reintegration work in the Nordic countries.

2 Prevention of violent extremism in the Nordic countries

The Nordic countries all adhere to the Nordic welfare model and, as such, have much in common in terms of ideology, legal system and culture, as well as a similar organisational structure and service provision. This means that there are several common factors across the countries that we believe influence risk assessments and reintegration efforts. At the same time, the Nordic countries are affected by changes at the international level.

In this chapter, we will shed light on some general factors that we believe are important in the work on risk assessments and reintegration in the Nordic countries. We firstly highlight key aspects of the prevention of extremism in the Nordic region, before looking at new trends in police work, and finally, examine the understanding of the target group and summarise how this affects practice.

2.1 Nordic extremism prevention

The Nordic governments' main strategy for preventing violent extremism has been similar. It is based on assigning authority to key public institutions such as the police, correctional services, municipal authorities and health services. These institutions' work on preventing violent extremism builds on their existing crime prevention work and is coordinated through cross-sectoral collaboration.[21]

Welfare institutions, together with the police and correctional services, have become crucial in the authorities' efforts to counter violent extremism. These institutions can offer important welfare services such as social, health and financial services.[22] In the Nordic countries, the work of the police and correctional services is also influenced by the fact that the agencies operate within the Nordic welfare state. The Nordic police's preventive work involves providing help and support to individuals and their families with the goal of creating change.[23] One of the most important objectives of Nordic prisons is rehabilitation.[24] In the Nordic countries, the prevention of violent extremism is thus clearly rooted in, and part of, the Nordic welfare state's context and systems,[25] and the preventive strategies have a clear social, preventive profile based on inclusive processes dominated by dialogue, support and assistance.[26]

However, security measures, control and criminal law measures are also key to the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism in the Nordic countries. Several of the Nordic countries have expanded their national penal codes to provide greater opportunities to prosecute participation in and support for terrorist organisations.[27] The police and security services have been allocated more resources and policy instruments. In addition, the welfare services have increasingly been involved in control tasks, including helping to identify people in the risk zone and sharing information with the police in order to prepare risk assessments of radicalised individuals.[28] We therefore see some overlap in the Nordic countries between the various institutions' tasks, and that their original institutional logics are mixed.

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[21] Lid & Heierstad, 2019; Johansen, 2018; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019
[22] Lid & Heierstad, 2019; Dalgaard-Nilsen & Ilum, 2020; Johansen, 2018; Fangen & Kolås, 2016; Fangen & Carlsson, 2013; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019
[23] Gjelsvik & Bjørgo, 2019; Lid & Heierstad, 2019c; Gundhus, 2014, Førde et al., 2023
[24] Smith & Ugelvik, 2017
[25] Gundhus, 2014; Johansen 2018; Lid & Heierstad, 2019; Christensen et al., 2023; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019
[26] Gundhus, 2014
[27] Høgestøl, 2018
[28] Lid & Heierstad, 2019; Haugstvedt & Tuastad, 2021

Institutional logics means that the practitioners have different perspectives on the fundamental goals, strategies and areas of focus that have been developed precisely on the basis of different professions, institutional orders and objectives as well as different organisational norms. An institutional logic constitutes the formal and informal norms that govern or guide practitioners' actions, interactions and interpretations of situations. Such norms are developed through education and practice, so that basic institutional approaches, professional norms and logics within, for example, the police system are different to those of teachers or social workers.[29]

Based on the various actors' remits and legislation, it could be said that the effort is roughly organised by two dominant forms of *institutional logic*: (1) a social security logic (SSL), which focuses on the protection of citizens, public facilities and the rule of law, and (2) a social care logic (SOL), which focuses on aspects such as individual well-being and the need for support and on relational work.[30]

Our study and previous research also indicate that the prevention of violent extremism in the Nordic countries has undergone a significant transformation.[31] Previously, a social worker acted based on a clear social care logic (SOL), while the police acted based on a social security logic (SSL). However, the introduction of 'holistic solutions and models' has meant that the institutional logics that were previously clearly separated have become much more mixed, with institutional boundaries becoming more blurred.[32] Our study, together with other research, shows that in, for example, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, practitioners, including the police, place great emphasis on social factors such as social exclusion, family problems, unemployment, substance abuse, negative social networks and relationships as an explanation for someone becoming involved in violent extremism. This means that the police may also describe violent extremism as being a result of, for example, 'vulnerability'. Similarly, the social administration and teachers recognise the need to assess and discuss the extent to which individuals can be considered 'a risk'. This mix of institutional logics in risk assessments was most pronounced and institutionalised in the Danish context, where a formalised risk assessment tool ensured a constant double perspective on the cases.[33]

Interagency cooperation, which is a mainstay in the preventive work against radicalisation and violent extremism, is challenging, as the various actors each work according to their own remit, their own legislation and their own logics. This entails different terms for sharing information, which is of great significance to how risk assessments and reintegration work are carried out in the different Nordic countries. Previous studies, however, show the importance of standardised solutions for collaboration. The less standardised the practices, the more difficult it will be for the individual parties to gain an overview of and carry out their part of the task, to understand and respect the other parties' remits and the logic that follows from them, and to understand the extent of their duty of confidentiality.[34]

Sharing of information enables more comprehensive and nuanced assessments of radicalised individuals and effective cooperation between public officials. However, sharing information also creates a significant dilemma when it comes to the weighting between the *protection of the citizen's personal data and due process protection* on the one hand and the *protection of society against violent extremism* on the other. This is reflected in the notable differences between the Nordic countries in terms of legislation and the various authorities' right to share information. In all the Nordic countries, it is possible to share information between public agencies, but when you can share the information depends on the level of threat. Here, Denmark and Sweden are placed at opposite ends of a continuum. Denmark

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[29] Thorthon et al., 2012; Christensen et al., 2023
[30] Sivenbring & Malmros, 2023
[31] Christensen et al., 2023, Sivenbring & Malmros, 2023; Malmros, forthcoming
[32] Sivenbring & Andersson, 2019; Malmros, 2023; Christensen et al., 2023
[33] Christensen et al., 2023
[34] Christensen et al., 2023; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019

has the broadest opportunity for information sharing in the Nordic region, and Sweden the most limited, while Finland and Norway are somewhere in between.[35]

Overall, there has been a clear shift in the social welfare and security-oriented authorities towards a stronger focus on public security.[36] The change is radical, in that general efforts associated with the welfare state are now linked to combatting terrorism. This has also contributed to legitimising initiatives that were previously perceived as a threat to civil liberties. For example, a decentralisation of security tasks is taking place where local welfare organisations and individuals are assigned a first-line defence role tasked with identifying radicalising behaviour that gives cause for concern.[37]

The strong public dominance in the Nordic work on prevention of extremism means that civil society organisations are only exceptionally involved in interventions relating to individuals in the risk zone. This is something that distinguishes the Nordic countries from a number of other countries in Europe and internationally.[38] The dominance of central government agencies in the Nordic countries can be seen as an obstacle, as some radicalised people do not have confidence in such government organisations.[39] At the same time, the exchange of information may be easier between central government institutions.[40]

Although there are some differences between the Nordic countries, there are, overall, significant similarities in the alignment and organisation of their preventive work. In particular, the fact that the work is rooted in and part of the Nordic welfare state's context and systems forms a common framework for the Nordic countries and constitutes a key factor in the work on risk assessments and reintegration. A key difference is Denmark's far broader legislation for sharing of personal data without the person's consent, which also provides opportunities for far closer inter-sectoral cooperation.

2.2   Security, risk and risk management in police work

The emergence of security and risk thinking in recent decades has contributed to fundamental changes in the public administration. The objective of determining risk in order to anticipate catastrophes has become a dominant logic in the risk society.[41] Security and arguments for continuous tightening of control in order to strengthen security are also presented as an indisputable good, especially after the terrorist attack on 11 September 2001 and as a result of the increased terrorist threat. The prevention of crime, threats and terrorism have thus become a primary objective, which has led to increased efforts to stop potential attacks in time.[42] This emergence of security and risk thinking has not only contributed to the 'securitisation' of the health and welfare services, but has also led to significant changes in the work of the police.[43] The changed practices in police work are also driven by new technology, logics of rationalisation, global pressure and increased professionalisation.[44] We consider these changes in the police's institutional logic to be significant to the emergence of risk assessments of radicalised individuals.

Studies of changes in the Norwegian police point to three key developments: 1) Proactive police work is increasingly based on a security logic, 2) the goal is for police work to be more

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[35] Christensen et al., 2023
[36] Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019; Lid & Heierstad, 2019a
[37] Jore, 2020, p.180
[38] Hansen & Lid, 2020
[39] Christensen, 2020
[40] Christensen, 2020; Kohler, 2016; Dalgaard & Ilum, 2020; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019
[41] Beck, 1992
[42] Zedner, 2003
[43] O'Neill and Fyfe, 2017; Dahl et al., 2023
[44] Sanders et al., 2015

knowledge-based, and 3) a more interagency approach to crime prevention has been adopted.[45]

In terms of the first trend, police prevention, which in the Nordic region has traditionally taken a social prevention approach, is now increasingly based on a security logic, using intelligence and technology. Proactive police work, in the sense of prevention before a crime has occurred, has become the police's primary objective, but attention is increasingly focused on identifying what is 'dangerous'. This is related to the second of the trends.

The second trend is that the police and police work should be knowledge-based. Intelligence-based police work is future-oriented and aims to help police officers prevent and anticipate incidents[46] by means of proactive security, surveillance and risk management.[47] This type of knowledge-based police work, in turn, employs a risk-based logic, where data collection and analysis with the help of information technology are key. The purpose is to use intelligence to make knowledge-based decisions.[48]

This shift to knowledge-driven police work has led to major organisational changes, such as professionalisation, specialisation and standardisation of the police. Tasks and processes are specialised. Managers and specialists are responsible for management and control, while first-line employees are responsible for taking action. Data collection, analysis and decisions are standardised, which limits the police officers' exercise of judgement.[49] In Norway, these changes have manifested themselves in the intelligence doctrine implemented in 2014.[50]

Several studies have problematised these changes in the police. The result is greater fragmentation of tasks and responsibilities, changed power relations in the organisation in that analysts and managers have gained greater influence, increased emphasis on abstract police work, and more 'policing at a distance'.[51] This risk-based prevention logic is also in contrast to the previously dominant social crime prevention,[52] which was built on personal relations, trust-building, context adaptation, and professional discretion and expertise.[53]

Studies of preventive police work aimed at child and youth crime show that knowledge-based police work, intelligence and a risk-based approach are understood differently by officers in intelligence and prevention departments, respectively, in relation to what constitutes relevant knowledge, how the knowledge should be assessed and how it can be used. However, the intelligence and risk logic has not become all-encompassing throughout the entire police organisation. Those working with prevention further down in the organisation have fought to ensure that there is still room for autonomy and exercise of discretion.[54] One consequence of knowledge-based police work is the 'politification of social problems'.[55] The consequence is that social problems could be redefined, particularly through intelligence taking over for prevention.[56]

The third trend is that an interagency approach to crime prevention has developed, where a number of public bodies are assumed to be responsible for preventing such acts.[57] We have found this to be particularly prominent when it comes to the prevention of radicalisation and

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[45] Dahl et al., 2023
[46] Ratcliffe, 2016
[47] Sanders et al., 2015
[48] Gundhus, Talberg & Wathne, 2023
[49] Dahl et al., 2023
[50] National Police Directorate, 2014
[51] Dahl et al., 2023
[52] Gundhus, Skjevrak & Wathne, 2023
[53] Terpstra & Salet, 2019
[54] Gundhus, Skjevrak & Wathne, 2023
[55] Millie, 2014 in Dahl et al., 2023
[56] Dahl et al., 2023
[57] Dahl et al., 2023

violent extremism.[58] One consequence of such interagency collaboration is that the boundaries between the bodies are less emphasised, and that sources of information and sanctions are regarded as part of a common toolbox for fighting for what is 'good'.[59]

In our opinion, this increasing influence of security and risk logic in the public administration in general and the police in particular, which has contributed to key organisational changes, is a key factor in the work on risk assessments and reintegration in the Nordic countries.

2.3   Understanding of the target group

How we define radicalised individuals and understand who they are is crucial to who we believe poses a risk, what risk we believe they pose and what we consider relevant interventions for reintegration.

2.3.1   Radicalised individuals – an unclear and psychologised target group

By *extremism* is meant political ideologies and movements that believe it is legitimate to use violence to achieve ideological goals, and that reject and overstep the legal principles of a liberal democratic society. By *radicalisation* is meant the process of developing extreme views. Radicalisation and extremism are generally used to describe attitudes, values, norms and practices that are in contrast to the majority's positions in a given context.[60] Both radicalisation and extremism are relative terms that are used despite persistent criticism from academia, policymakers and practitioners.

The criticism is directed at the concept of extremism's implicit normativity, as what is considered extreme in one context is not necessarily so in another.[61] Another key criticism is that even if attitudes, values and norms are categorised as deviant by the majority society, they are often protected by democratic civil rights, and those who have such views or attitudes do not usually resort to violence.[62] However, extremism becomes an anti-democratic practice when paired with the favouring of the use of violence – hence the term *violent extremism*.[63]

An individual is considered *radicalised* when they accept, incite or perpetrate violence as a means of achieving political goals, or change behaviour and become involved in extremist groups and their activities. Radicalisation is most often linked to an ideological training that arises in dialogue with others, be it online or offline.[64]

Context and legislation have an impact on what can be categorised as radicalised. This can be illustrated by Rasmus Paludan's burning of the Quran, since while Paludan can burn the Koran with police protection in Denmark, Quran burning in Finland is categorised as incitement to hatred against population groups and thus a criminal act. This example shows both the relative aspect and the complexity that prevails in our understanding of radicalisation and the assessment of radicalised individuals.

However, the focus of the discourse of extremism and radicalisation has shifted. Until the beginning of the 2000s, an individual was categorised as 'radicalised' on the basis of a larger societal context, a political ideology and belonging to a group. Terrorism and/or extremism was thus interpreted with reference to an ideologically based political struggle. In the 2000s,

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[58] Lid & Heierstad, 2019c, Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019; Solhjell et al., 2022, Christensen, et al., 2023
[59] Dahl et al., 2023
[60] Schmid, 2013 in Svinbring & Malmros, 2023
[61] Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013 in Svinbring & Malmros, 2023
[62] Horgan, 2008 in Svinbring & Malmros, 2023
[63] Svinbring & Malmros, 2023
[64] Bjørgo, 1997, 2011; Christensen, 2009, 2015, forthcoming

however, there is a tendency to link 'radicalised' to a psychosocial and socio-economically marginalised and individualised framework without reference to an ideology, a social context, a conflict or a struggle. These aspects are toned down, disregarded or ignored – the 'radicals' are portrayed as rebels without a cause.[65]

As mentioned earlier, it is still – in research and in practice – impossible to identify the root causes of radicalisation or determine whether the individual's involvement will lead to violent extremism.[66] The final action appears to be the result of an extremely complex interplay of individual competences, relationships, contextual factors and coincidences. Despite this uncertainty, radicalisation is understood and applied in a wide range of contexts related to risk assessment, security and reintegration, but often in different ways. This amplifies the confusion about what we actually mean when we talk about 'radicalisation', the causes of 'radicalisation' or about someone having become 'radicalised'.[67]

These problems, which are continuously documented in research, are also found in practice. In the interviews we conducted, *radicalisation* often seems to be a detached way of diagnosing a dangerous problem in the daily discourse. A tendency that also emerged in the interviews is that efforts to combat radicalisation are generally decontextualised and depoliticised by political and international factors being, at best, played down or, at worst, ignored altogether. Even when we were clear in the interviews that this project was about radicalised individuals, it was far from clear who the target group actually comprised. However, the majority of the practitioners and other public sector employees we interviewed focused almost exclusively on the mentally ill 'lone actor'. They spoke little about politically, religiously or ideologically convinced individuals when they talked about radicalised individuals. They instead referred to people who have mental health issues/diagnoses. Traumatisation, dissatisfaction, neglect, victims of a dysfunctional family structure or exclusion were considered to be key underlying causes of radicalisation.

It therefore seems psychologised and unclear who is perceived as radicalised individuals and what their specific needs are. From this perspective, it is also very unclear when and how radicalisation differs from other crime.

Trauma, dissatisfaction and exclusion can have a decisive impact on the individual's participation. At the same time, we would point out that people can change in unique ways when they participate in and identify with extreme environments or groups, whether online or offline. Participation in any social environment entails learning related to that specific environment. The individual – insofar as the person identifies with the environment – becomes part of a context in which particular understandings and social practices are already established and prevail.[68] Over time, these perspectives and practices will influence the individual's identity, perspectives, actions and ethics.[69] This is how identity and repertoires of action are developed *based on participation* in a group.[70] Often, ideology is therefore *not the reason for participation* in an extreme group, as also argued by the practitioners. Yet it is important to emphasise that participation means that the individual in the environment is introduced to certain signs, actors, attitudes and actions that are given importance in contrast to others, which are toned down, ignored or sanctioned.[71] Participation may thus lead to the development of an ideologically informed framework of understanding and interpretation and a changed basis for reflection. Emotions and experiences are understood through ideological explanations and an interpretative

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[65] Christensen & Mørck, 2017, p. 40; Jore, 2020
[66] Christensen & Mørck, 2017; Sivenbring & Malmros, 2023
[67] Christensen & Mørck, 2017
[68] Lave & Wenger, 2003
[69] Holland & Lave, 2001; Christensen 2009, forthcoming
[70] Bjørgo, 1997; Christensen, 2009, 2015
[71] Holland et al., 1998; Christensen, 2009, 2015, forthcoming

framework and therefore play out in new ways.[72] From this perspective, participation leads to the participant being transformed and undergoing a radical change. In the same way, the individual's actions may undergo a change when violence is accepted, encouraged and potentially triggers prestige in the environment.

This means that regardless of the reasons why the person has been recruited and identifies with the environment, it seems important in practice to be aware that participation may have changed the person, and to investigate whether and how this is the case. Thus, in practice, there should be a focus on the underlying reasons for participation *as well as* on how long the individual has participated in an extreme environment, on their position(s) in the environment(s), and on their ideological orientation and perspective.

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[72] Bjørgo, 1997; Christensen 2009, 2015; Porta, 2013

3   Risk assessment

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, we describe the risk assessment work carried out by the police, sometimes in cooperation with the security services and the health and welfare services, on radicalised individuals in the Nordic countries. We primarily highlight risk assessment work within the police's preventive activities, i.e. work that takes place before a person becomes involved in terrorism-related acts during what is known as the pre-crime phase.

We start the chapter by describing what risk assessment[73] is, and how they can be carried out. Based on international research, we will elucidate why the work on risk assessments is so difficult and contentious. We will then describe work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals in the Nordic countries. Our starting point is the authorities' descriptions of this work in public documents, and in interviews with practitioners and officials in the police and health and welfare services with particular experience with risk assessment of radicalised individuals. The analyses deal in particular with the three aspects of risk assessment work: *legislation, organisation* and *methods.* We go on to explore the effect of the various measures and practices based on the interviewees' experience and assessments. We have chosen to distinguish between Denmark and the other three Nordic countries, as the practice in Denmark is markedly different. We conclude the chapter with a summary and discussion of the practices and challenges, and conclude with recommendations.

3.1.1   What is risk assessment?

Risk has been defined as the likelihood of something going wrong.[74] Risk assessment is an assessment of how likely it is that a negative occurrence will take place. However, Borum[75] argues that an individual risk assessment should also identify which actions are appropriate with a view to limiting the identified risk and reducing the potential danger. As such, an individual risk assessment serves two purposes. The first is to assess the possibility of an individual committing a terrorism-related act, and the second is related to identifying the needs and characteristics of the individual that can be addressed through interventions.[76] Based on such a twofold objective, Borum[77] defines individual risk assessment as

> 'the process of collecting and considering information about a person and the situations and contexts that person is likely to encounter in order to describe and evaluate the potential that the person will engage in jeopardous behavior and prevent or mitigate the behavior and its adverse consequences'.

Such an understanding of individual risk assessment, which includes an assessment of both individual risks and needs, is a mixed management model that incorporates different policy orientations, and where risk merges with rehabilitation. This kind of assessment differs from a risk-management approach, which focuses exclusively on risk and risk management.[78]

A key aspect of individual risk assessments for radicalised individuals is identifying how risks, motivations, vulnerabilities and protective factors interact at a given time and within a given

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[73] After the work on this report was completed, a very relevant anthology was published, edited by three key researchers in risk assessment work. The book 'Violent extremism. A Handbook of risk assessment and management' (Logan, Borum & Gill, 2023) brings together key knowledge in the field of risk assessment work on violent extremism.
[74] Pressmann & Davis, 2022
[75] Borum, 2015
[76] Pressmann & Davis, 2022
[77] Borum, 2015
[78] Hannah-Moffat, 2012

context.[79] This includes an assessment or an attempt to map the person's ideological orientation, their justification for using violence to achieve the desired goals, their intentions to engage in such violence and their capacity to plan and act at a given time.[80] In addition to such risk factors, several key researchers argue that risk assessments should also be based on protective factors in order to obtain as comprehensive an image of the individual as possible. The challenge, however, is assessing the importance of the identified protective factors.[81] Other recent studies on risk assessments in violent extremism also point out further specific challenges for risk assessments of radicalised individuals. An individual's risk of becoming involved or re-engaged in violent extremism cannot be summed up based on a compilation of possible risk factors. We know from the literature that there are many different paths into violent extremism.[82] In addition, only certain risk factors can give rise to a significant risk of violent extremism.[83] A previous history of violence also appears to have less significance for individuals' involvement in violent extremism, even though such history often constitutes a risk factor for 'ordinary' violence.[84] What is considered radicalisation is also contentious and challenging to define. This makes risk assessments difficult,[85] and it becomes problematic to obtain an information basis that can provide credible risk assessments. There is, furthermore, the overarching challenge that the assessments must, on the one hand, safeguard the population's safety and, on the other hand, may lead to individuals being unjustly identified as radicalised. Risk assessments must therefore take a holistic approach that includes both of these perspectives.[86] The limitations of risk assessment mean that it is not an aid for predicting acts of violence, but rather a tool that makes it easier to prioritise between several cases with worrying signals.[87]

3.1.2   Ways of conducting a risk assessment

There are generally said to be three ways of conducting individual violence risk assessments, and these have varying degrees of support.[88]

- Unstructured assessments

Unstructured or semi-structured assessments are made by experts in the field who use their experience, knowledge and expertise to assess the risk someone represents. The method is significantly criticised, as its unstructured approach means that important indicators/factors can be missed. In addition, the dependence on the expert's professional judgment makes the method vulnerable to their prejudices and limitations.[89] An advantage of the approach is that the experts are very familiar with such exercise of professional judgement and assessment. The approach is based on established knowledge and techniques practised by the experts.

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[79] Lloyd, 2019
[80] Pressman, 2009; Roberts & Horgan, 2010; Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020
[81] Borum, 2015; Gill, 2015
[82] Borum, 2015; Christensen & Mørck, 2017
[83] Pressman, 2009
[84] Lloyd, 2019
[85] Knudsen, 2020; Christensen et al., 2023
[86] Christensen et al., 2023
[87] Gill, 2015
[88] Borum, 2015; Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020
[89] Borum, 2015; Cherney et al., 2022

- Actuarial assessments

The most structured method for conducting risk assessments is actuarial assessments. Actuarial risk assessments are statistically based assessments of an individual's risk. An expert in the field answers a set of specified questions, and gives a score for each indicator, followed by an overall score that forms the basis for the risk assessment. As such, these assessments are formal, algorithmic and objective. In general, they are criticised for overlooking individual variations and do not include risk management as part of the assessment. They are also criticised for being too static and for lacking sensitivity to changes. Because of this, actuarial risk assessment is considered less suitable for assessing the risk of violent extremism.[90]

- Structured assessments

Structured assessments are a combination of a structured evaluation and professional judgment and attempt to close the gap between actuarial and unstructured professional approaches. The assessments are carried out based on an assessment of specific topics and/or questions, or lists of criteria that must be assessed. These indicators/topics have been developed on the basis of existing knowledge. However, the assessments must not be limited to the identified factors, and must also draw in other relevant factors. The decision on risk is made on the basis of an overall assessment, which builds on both the assessment based on the predetermined factors and on the expert's exercise of professional judgement. This approach is often described as a 'guided approach', yet there is often no description available of how the final assessment should be conducted, including how the various factors should be weighted.

An advantage of the approach is that it uses both static and dynamic risk factors based on current knowledge. It is structured, but retains a role for the expert's professional assessments and provides flexibility and individual adaptation to the target groups. At the same time, there is a clear link between risk factors and risk management strategies. Commonly criticised disadvantages are that the method is time and resource intensive to carry out, and that, in addition to training, it requires in-depth understanding of risk assessments and of the specific field. Another criticism is that although the method aims to structure and standardise assessments, thereby reducing the expert's exercise of judgement, such professional judgment remains a key part of the method, with the uncertainties this entails. Experience shows that those conducting the assessment do not necessarily follow the guidelines and rather emphasise their own assessments, potentially based on personal limitations, prejudices, etc. In addition, it can be argued that simplifying complicated tasks such as assessing a risk by splitting it up into individual assessment operations can lead to bias or errors in the assessments.[91]

Structured assessments are the approach with the strongest position in clinical environments internationally when it comes to assessing the risk of violence in general. In the risk assessment of terrorism-related acts, a number of researchers also consider it the preferred approach.[92]

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[90] Borum, 2015; Cherney et al., 2022
[91] See, for example, Gill et al., 2020 for a review of vulnerabilities in the exercise of professional judgement in structured assessments.
[92] Borum, 2015; Gill et al., 2020, Cherney et al., 2022; Lloyd, 2019; Pressmann, 2009

3.1.3 Terrorism-related risk assessment tools

Several specialised[93] risk assessment tools have been developed internationally to assess individuals' risk of becoming involved in terrorism-related activities.[94] Of the more than 15 different risk assessment tools that have been developed, the vast majority can be categorised as structured assessment instruments. The tools have different purposes. Some instruments are used in the work to prevent individuals from committing terrorist acts, while others are used for those who are suspected or convicted of some form of violent extremism to assess the prison security classification and/or the risk of new terrorist acts upon release. The Violent Extremism Risk Assessment (VERA-2R) is one of the more widely used risk assessment tools, particularly for terrorist convicts in the correctional services.[95] The Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18), which was developed to assess people who independently plan to carry out terrorist acts (lone actors), is used during the pre-crime phase.[96] Different countries have implemented different risk assessment tools and to varying degrees.[97]

The use of such tools is disputed. As described above, it is challenging to identify which risk and protective factors should be considered, and not least how the different factors should be weighed against each other. Specific risk assessment tools are also disputed due to the many methodological issues, not least difficulties with validating such tools. The frequency of cases, known as the base rate, is very low, which makes it difficult to test the reliability and accuracy of the tools. There are also issues related to inter-rater reliability, i.e. whether two different employees investigating the same case come to the same conclusion. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of clear guidelines for what information should be recorded and how the various factors should be weighted. In addition, the final assessment will be influenced by the exercise of professional judgement.[98] Marsden (2017) also points out that such tools atomise the individual into separate and distinct factors. Despite all these challenges, the use of specified terrorism-related risk assessment tools is spreading internationally.

Research on risk assessments of radicalised individuals has mainly dealt with the content of the assessments. However, much more attention should be paid to the process of preparing the risk assessments, and to those conducting them and their exercise of judgement. Regardless of whether they use risk assessment tools or not, risk assessments depend on the assessor's exercise of judgement. Studies of how those working with risk assessments actually make the assessments, and what experiences they have with different methods, can provide important knowledge.[99] In addition, the field of public security in general and the prevention of terrorism in particular has been characterised by governance challenges such as fragmentation, pulverisation of responsibility and weak coordination between responsible institutions.[100] An inadequate division of labour and responsibility, including between the local police and the security service, has also been one of the main conclusions in all the evaluations of the three terrorist attacks in Norway.[101]

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[93] Risk assessments have been widely used to assess the likelihood of perpetrators of violence committing violence again. However, these risk assessment tools are considered less suitable for assessing the risk of an individual engaging in violent extremism (Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020; Knudsen & Stormoen, 2020).

[94] For an overview and a more detailed description of the most important risk assessment tools, see Lloyd, M. (2019) and Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst (2020)

[95] Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020

[96] Meloy, 2015

[97] Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020

[98] Gill et al., 2020; Knudsen & Stormen, 2020

[99] Salman & Gill 2020; Gill et.al., 2020; Cherney et.al., 2022

[100] Boin et al., 2005; Ansell et al., 2010; Christensen et al., 2015, 2016

[101] NOU 2012:14, Al-Noor Committee (2020), 25 June Committee (2023)

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the work on risk assessments in the Nordic countries, we have chosen to focus on both the content of the risk assessment itself and on the process of preparing the assessment.

3.2 Terrorism-related risk assessments in the Nordic countries

There are some similarities between the Nordic countries when it comes to how terrorism-related risk assessments are carried out, but also some significant differences. In the following, we distinguish between Denmark and the other Nordic countries, as the practice in Denmark is markedly different than in the other countries. Danish legislation provides different opportunities when it comes to information sharing and the organisation of the work, which has consequences for how assessments are actually made. As mentioned in the introduction, we will emphasise three issues: legislation, organisation and risk assessment methods. Following the descriptions of the work on risk assessments, we discuss certain challenges and make recommendations.

3.3 Denmark

Danish legislation, organisation and risk assessment tools are different to those of the other Nordic countries. The Danish legislation is the main reason for these differences. Section 115 of the Danish Administration of Justice Act gives public authorities the right to 'pass on information on the purely private circumstances of individuals to other authorities if doing so may be considered necessary with regard to crime prevention cooperation (the SSP cooperation)'. As long as the information is considered necessary for the cooperation to prevent violent extremism, the police, social and health authorities, schools and other municipal agencies have a right to share relevant personal data. In 2020, the Ministry of Justice published guidelines on the exchange of personal data as part of the effort against radicalisation and extremism.[102]

The way in which the work is organised in Denmark is closely linked to the agencies' opportunities to share information and collaborate. On the basis of Section 115, Denmark has established 'Info-houses', which is an interagency crime-prevention collaboration mainly consisting of representatives[103] of the municipal authorities and the police. They also have the right to call in other actors who are considered relevant to the case, such as health personnel or a local teacher, if this person is considered to have knowledge of particular relevance to the case. The overall purpose of the Info-houses is to create a collaboration that coordinates local authorities, where relevant expertise is brought together to provide systematic, coordinated and qualified analysis and assessment of concerns. The purpose is to ensure that people who are at risk of committing criminal acts based on extremist motives are identified in time so that preventive efforts can be initiated.[104] The police and the relevant local and central government authorities work together through the Info-house collaboration to jointly prepare an overall assessment of the concern. The individual authorities participating in the Info-house meetings present relevant information regarding the person concerned, so that the concern can be assessed on an informed basis.

Info-houses are only tasked with considering cases where there is concern that persons will become involved in violent extremism (criminal acts with an ideological motive). However, the police or the police security service may decide that, for security reasons or for the sake of the police investigation, a concern should not be brought to the Info-house, but be handled

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[102] Vejledning om udveksling af personoplysninger som led i indsatsen mod radikalisering og ekstremisme (Justitsministeriet.dk)
[103] Referred to as *Info-house coordinators*.
[104] The Info-house collaboration model (2020).

by the police and the security service independently.[105] There is as such a lower and upper limit to the types of cases an Info-house may handle. Representatives (Info-house coordinators) from the local authorities and the police in the Info-house network collect existing knowledge about the person and, on this basis, assesses whether the nature of the case is relevant for an Info-house meeting. If this is the case, all relevant information is brought to a joint meeting with other relevant authorities, where an overall analysis of the person's situation is carried out.

An assessment model has been developed with the aim of systematising the approach to and process for holistic assessments of concerns about extremism in the interdisciplinary collaborations in all twelve Danish police districts.[106] The overall assessment model consists of three phases with associated tools (tools/forms): 1) receipt and description of concern, 2) analysis of the person's situation, and 3) holistic assessment and recommendations. In this context, phases two and three are the most relevant.

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[105] The Info-house collaboration model (2020).
[106] The assessment model was developed by the Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism in cooperation with other national authorities, a number of local practitioners and researchers. The assessment tool is the result of an extensive mapping and systematisation of international research and already existing assessment tools, as well as mapping of practical knowledge, legislation, needs among the prevention actors and a development camp with key practitioners, researchers and experts (Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism. *Manual Assessment model for concerns about extremism*). haandbog-til-vurderingsvaerktoj.pdf (stopekstremisme.dk)

A dialogue-based assessment tool has been developed to help the parties in the Info-house collaboration maintain focus and direction in the analyses of an individual's situation, as described in more detail in Box 1. It is a structured assessment tool that assesses both risk and threat, as well as the individual's resilience, well-being and potential for change.

Box 1. Denmark's dialogue-based assessment tool

The assessment tool consists of two parts. The first part is an analysis of the risk and threat, and aims to analyse whether the concern about ideologically motivated violence and crime is legitimate. This part consists of four dimensions: 1) readiness to use violence, 2) criminal record, 3) concerning convictions and rhetoric and 4) concerning socialisation and relationships. For each of the dimensions, a range of attention points have been defined, which are observable actions that may indicate that an individual is involved in networks and/or groupings – whether online or offline – of a violent extremist nature. These points are not exhaustive and should not be understood as a check list, but can be used in the dialogue and analysis of the individual dimension.

Part two analyses the person's welfare and resilience and aims to provide a picture of the person's resilience and potential for change with regard to concern about violent extremism. It consists of five dimensions: 5) personality factors, 6) mental vulnerability, 7) family, 8) network and spare time and 9) education and employment. The dimensions are based on a resource perspective and are analysed with a view to uncovering both protective factors and risk factors for each dimension.

The participating authorities must give a score from 0 to 4 for each of the nine dimensions, with an explanation of why they have scored them this way. In part one, they give a score for how concerned they are, and in part two for the degree of resources. All nine dimensions are discussed at the meeting, but the threat of violence, an active history of violence, and experience with – or/and access to – weapons via networks are the dimensions that determine whether a concern becomes a case for the Info-house network. If there is a lack of substantial information with which to assess the concern, the relevant authorities must obtain additional information.

In phase three, overall assessment and recommendation, a form has been developed to make a holistic assessment based on the analysis of and dialogue about the concern. In addition to analysing the risk and threat of violence, the holistic assessment must identify and map what needs, problems and strengths the person has that can be addressed in order to create change.

3.3.1 Experience and perceptions of risk assessments in Denmark

The interviews we conducted with representatives (Info-house coordinators) from the local authorities and the police in the Info-house collaboration, employees of the Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism and employees of the Danish National Police highlight a number of key experiences and perceptions of the Danish approach to risk assessments. We distinguish between experience and perceptions of legislation, organisation and risk assessment methods.

Legislation

In the experience of the practitioners we interviewed, the Danish Administration of Justice Act gives the police, social and health authorities, schools and other municipal agencies relatively broad opportunities to share personal data through the Info-house collaboration. In their experience, there is significant sharing of personal data in the process of assessing concern about violent extremism. However, they point out that according to the law, information sharing should be limited to cases where it is reasonable and necessary, but that

what should be understood as reasonable and necessary, and thus how much can be shared, may be perceived differently among practitioners. The Ministry of Justice's guidelines on the exchange of personal data as part of the effort against radicalisation and extremism[107] are perceived to be helpful in understanding what information can be shared and when.

While most of the interviewees were mainly positive about the broad powers Section 115 of the Danish Administration of Justice Act gives the public authorities to share personal data, some felt that these powers challenged citizens' due process protection. The Danish authorities in general have a broad right to collect detailed information about citizens, and since the authorities are allowed to share much of this information, several employees will be in possession of a significant amount of knowledge about an individual.

Organisation

- Ensuring a more holistic assessment of an individual

Since representatives from different parts of the municipal authorities and potentially other health and welfare services, as well as the police, can bring the knowledge they possess about a person's life to the same meeting, it is possible to achieve a much more holistic assessment of the person. Firstly, the various actors can present knowledge about the person that the other representatives do not possess. In addition, different actors from a range of professions will bring in other ways of understanding and interpreting this knowledge, helping to nuance to the various actors' understanding and interpretations. The need to bring together different agencies, also from outside the municipal authorities, is particularly prominent in cases involving people over the age of 18, where the municipal authorities can to a lesser extent illuminate 'all' aspects of the person.

- The experience of shared responsibility reduces fear

The informants consistently believed that the institutions' right to share information and make risk assessments together contributes to the fact that the representatives involved in the Info-house collaboration do not feel alone in their assessments. They also expressed that the holistic assessment they are able to make of the person strengthens the quality of the assessment. Overall, this leads to less anxiety and fear among the professionals involved of conducting a risk assessment of poor quality. The tool at their disposal and the thorough process mean that the practitioners feel confident that the case has been thoroughly assessed, and they can refer to the assessment and documentation should the worst-case scenario occur and the person commits a terrorist act. In addition to this, the informants also explained how this way of organising the work makes it clear who is responsible for taking the matter further in the system and for initiating the processes considered appropriate for supporting the person in a positive development at the meeting.

- Lack of expertise to assess the information

Some pointed out that there may be a lack of relevant expertise in the Info-house collaboration to assess relevant information. Info-houses can invite relevant professionals who possess relevant information, in addition to the dedicated representatives from the local authorities and the police. However, their experience is that the services provide information to the dedicated representatives from the local authorities without these representatives actually participating in the meetings themselves. The professionals may also have limited expertise to assess the significance of the information to the person's radicalisation process and their ability and willingness to commit terrorist acts. This applies in particular to assessments of individuals' mental vulnerability. Some Info-house coordinators pointed out difficulties with interpreting the relevance of the information about an individual's mental

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[107] Vejledning om udveksling af personoplysninger som led i indsatsen mod radikalisering og ekstremisme (justitsministeriet.dk)

vulnerability to the risk of committing a terrorist act. Some regions are considering whether to affiliate psychologists/psychiatrists to the Info-houses.

Risk assessment method

- Structuring and standardising work provides a common language

The assessment tool helps to systematise the dialogue between representatives from different sectors. The tool allows the various actors to develop a common language over time, by defining the dimensions and associated concepts. Common language makes communication easier between the actors. The tool's nine dimensions structure the conversation about the person, and it is clear which part of the person's life they are discussing at any given time. It also ensures that all the most important dimensions of the person's life are explored, and that, if necessary, the dimensions that are not sufficiently illuminated are identified. The tool helps to reduce the possibility of omitting core dimensions about the person that should be elucidated. A systematic review of the individual under assessment serves as a 'baseline', which then forms the starting point for assessing changes at subsequent progress meetings.

The assessment tool, reception forms and the centre's courses and guidance of practitioners in the use of tools also help to standardise work across municipalities/regions. As such, a methodology has been developed for assessing a concern. The work is standardised and professionalised, and assessments are to a lesser extent based on 'gut feeling'. Standardisation also makes it easier for other actors to contribute to the assessments. However, research indicates that the standardised method entails a risk of tunnel vision.[108] Our study shows that this criticism has been taken into account in some municipalities by offering guidance to Info-house participants and ensuring that other employees check the assessments.

- Shedding light on protective factors provides opportunities for help

The tool not only focuses on risk factors, but also highlights the person's resources, and what works well. The practitioners find that this helps them to develop a more balanced and holistic assessment of the person. They have experienced that concerns are 'reduced' quickly, or that problem areas and challenges are identified in the citizen's life that increase concerns. Some practitioners also pointed out that the protective factors helped to soften the threat picture and nuance it. If a person is considered to be of great concern, the identification of good social relations and stable school attendance could, for example, help to present the concern from a different and more balanced perspective.

The tool's mapping of protective factors in the person's life means, firstly, that you do not look blindly at what does not work and potential risk factors, but also take account of what works. In this way, attention is also drawn to what aspects of the person's life can be built on to prevent further radicalisation. By using the tool, it is also possible to identify what can be done to address the situation.

- Documentation provides an opportunity to assess progress

The interviewees perceive the documentation of the first assessment to be a 'baseline', forming the basis for the assessments conducted in progress meetings (preferably every three months). It was highlighted that documentation of all dimensions provides an opportunity to see progress within each of the dimensions. As previously pointed out, the practitioners felt that having documentation of the assessments is important, not only to assess the development, but also to be able to refer to the assessments that have been made, should the person end up committing political extremist acts of violence.

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[108] Christensen et al., 2023

- Comprehensive and time-consuming

Some practitioners emphasised that the entire assessment process and the assessment tool are comprehensive and time-consuming. A great deal of information needs to be obtained before the joint meeting, and it takes time at this meeting to shed light on all nine dimensions and the associated sub-questions. Some of the practitioners felt that the assessment tool was important to have and use it in its entirety in some cases, but in other cases they did not follow the form systematically. They instead used the dimensions as 'attention points' in their assessment. Some would have preferred a simplified version that is easier to apply in practice.

A number of representatives pointed out that they do not use any risk assessment tools in other problem areas they work on under the crime prevention cooperation (SSP), but instead use general social work knowledge about risk and protective factors. They considered this sufficient in these other problem areas, and felt that it would also be sufficient for conducting professional assessments of concerns about radicalisation. At the same time, they pointed out that extremism is more 'fluffy', that some people may be reluctant to become involved, and that this is a more serious type of case. As such, even though they considered their original methods for assessing concern about social problems to be sufficient from a professional point of view, they felt that the processes and the risk assessment tool that have now been developed to assess concern about extremism were appropriate.

- Limited knowledge of reality

One limitation of the process and the assessment tool is what information is available. The assessment is based on the information the authorities possessed, but there may be cases where the authorities have limited or no knowledge of the person. The information that already exists in the municipal and police registers is more easily accessible, while private matters such as the persons' close relationships and reactions to events in life can often be far more challenging to gain knowledge of if the person does not want to talk to the authorities. At the same time, such private matters will be extremely significant. This highlights that although there are significant opportunities for exchanging information and the assessment tool helps to highlight many relevant aspects of the person's life, there will in many cases be important dimensions that are difficult to gain more information about.

- Is the assessment tool a risk assessment tool?

The assessment tool that has been developed is not referred to in either public documents or by the persons we have interviewed as a risk assessment tool. It is referred to as an assessment tool that is used for concerns about radicalisation and (violent) extremism. Representatives from the centre who have been central in the development of the tool pointed out that it was not designed to assess the risk of terrorism. The goal is not only to assess risk. The tool was designed to assess preventive measures and give people alternatives. The Danish tool is an example of such a tool that includes both an assessment of individual risk and an assessment of needs, and it differs from risk assessments with a sole focus on risk and risk management.[109] Several of the interviewed practitioners did not describe the tool as a risk assessment tool. They pointed out that for them, risk assessment is closely linked to the security assessments that the police and security services are responsible for. As previously mentioned, the police or the police security services can decide that, for security reasons, a concern should not be brought to an Info-house, but be handled by the police and the security service independently.[110] We have not gained knowledge of which risk assessment methods the police or the security service use in such cases.

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[109] Hannah-Moffat, 2012
[110] The Info-house collaboration model (2020)

Summary of the Danish approach and some experiences

Based on the broad powers to share personal data between authorities, the Danish authorities have developed a distinctive organisation, a distinctive division of responsibility and a distinctive collaboration system. They have also developed a dedicated assessment tool. Assessments of a concern about extremism are therefore made in a collaboration between the police, municipal authorities and other public services with the help of the assessment form. In general, the actors involved who we interviewed considered the Danish approach to be good. It provides opportunities for holistic and thorough assessments, allows them to identify what more can be done to improve the situation, and divides the responsibility between the actors.

3.4   The other Nordic countries

In Sweden, Finland and Norway, the work on risk assessments has only to a limited extent been standardised and formalised by the authorities in the same way as we have seen in Denmark. The lack of standardisation means that there is considerable variation within the countries in how this work is conducted. The limited scope of this study has also made it difficult to map variations in practices. We do not therefore have a basis for providing a detailed and precise description of the work in the three countries. Primarily, the descriptions below address certain key issues related to legislation, organisation and methods that we have gained knowledge of.

3.4.1   Sweden

Swedish legislation places significant restrictions on the health and welfare services' right to share personal data with the police without the individual's consent.[111] In general, the social, health and other public authorities can only share personal information with the police in cases where they believe there is a risk to life and health, and that the information can prevent serious crimes such as terrorism.

In Sweden, risk assessments are mainly carried out by the police and/or security services, and not in collaboration with representatives from the health and/or welfare services. In 2019, the Swedish police established RedEx[112], which is a model for unified regional cooperation between the Swedish Security Authority and the Swedish Police Authority to combat violent extremism.[113] The model involves in-depth intelligence cooperation between the security police and the police authority with a view to improving the local situation, which in turn will form the basis for planning and implementing measures and assessing their effects. In addition, the model helps strengthen coordination and cooperation, and clarify the division of responsibilities and roles between the security police and the police authority. In RedEx, representatives from the police and the security service work together on a daily/weekly basis, and joint offices are currently being established for the RedEx teams in certain police districts.

The RedEx model consists of two parts: an intelligence component and a measures component. Together, the components comprise a forum for prioritising, planning and assessing measures. The intelligence component consists of analysts from the police and the security service who conduct intelligence work relating to individuals and groups. The

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[111] For a more detailed description of the legislation in the various Nordic countries, see Chapter 5 of Sivenbring & Malmros (2019).
[112] Tidningen Svensk Polis (2019)
[113] RedEx's area of responsibility is broader than the prevention of violent extremism. RedEx is also responsible for what the Swedish police refer to as 'lone actors' (*ensamagerande*), such as school shooters. This is in part to avoid the police losing crucial time in an initial investigation by defining which section of the police will be responsible for the case, based on whether the person is driven / not driven by ideological or political motives.

collaboration between the security service and the police is mainly used to exchange intelligence/information. The security service and the police conduct risk assessments individually based on their respective methods, but the knowledge from these assessments is, where possible, shared between the services to create the best possible overall picture of the situation that can be used to assess measures. Whether the security service and the police can carry out risk assessments jointly in the future did not seem to have been resolved.

The measures component consists of preventers (administrators/coordinators), who are responsible for implementing measures. RedEx does not initiate measures itself, but supports other operational units in the police service in the implementation of operational measures, such as surveillance or dialogue with the radicalised person. The knowledge acquired by the operational units is fed back to the RedEx team for new assessments of the situation, priorities and measures. As such, RedEx has a clear distinction between the intelligence and measures components.

Sweden has not drawn up national guidelines or standards for the collaboration between the police and the health and welfare services. The RedEx teams, especially in the larger cities, have established contact with the local health and welfare services to ensure local coordination of efforts in the individual cases. RedEx also assists in strengthening local cooperation on the prevention of violent extremism between the local police and municipal authorities, which varies significantly. Different forms of more or less formalised collaboration have been developed locally. In some places, permanent teams have been established with representatives from the police and the health and welfare services who meet regularly and/or when necessary, while in other places, contact takes place on a more ad hoc basis between the police and the relevant services. In these collaborations, personal information is shared between the police and the health and welfare services if the severity of the case is deemed to justify this.

Until very recently, the Swedish police have primarily used their traditional intelligence methods for collecting information, analysing and assessing risk in their work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals. In recent years, some police districts have used the risk assessment tool TRAP-18 for the assessment of lone actors; see the box below for a more detailed description of TRAP-18. In 2023, the Department of National Operations (NOA) began offering training in TRAP-18 to all police districts. However, it is unclear whether TRAP-18 is only intended to be used to assess lone actors or whether it can also be used for non-lone actors. The Swedish police have also developed a dedicated assessment tool (CHECK-15) for the assessment of violence against people who are threatened. The police are increasingly using various forms of structured risk assessment tools.[114]

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[114] The Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism has also developed a digital tool.

TRAP-18 – Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol

TRAP-18 is a risk assessment tool developed by the Canadian forensic psychologist Reid Meloy. The tool is designed to assess individuals who independently plan to carry out terrorist acts, but it is now also being tested for use with individuals participating in extremist groups.

The tool consists of two sets of indicators: The first eight are indicators of proximal warning behaviours, designed to identify patterns of risk of intentional or targeted extremist violence. These are followed by ten distal characteristics of individuals who engage in individual acts of terrorism. These were developed on the basis of what studies of empirical and theoretical research on terrorism have shown to be particularly relevant personal characteristics (Meloy & Gill, 2016).

The warning behaviour indicators are:

1) Pathway, preparing for an attack
2) Fixation, increasing preoccupation with a person or cause
3) Identification, desire to carry out mass killings without concern for personal consequences, warrior mentality, great interest in weapons etc.
4) Novel aggression, testing of own ability to use violence
5) Energy burst, increased interest in a possible target
6) Leakage, selective communication
7) Last resort, perception that there is no other solution than to be violent toward the target
8) Directly communicated threat, communication of a direct threat of violence

Indicators of distal characteristics:

9) Personal grievance and moral outrage
10) Framed by an ideology
11) Failure to affiliate with an extremist group
12) Dependence on the virtual community
13) Thwarting of occupational goals
14) Changes in thinking and emotion
15) Failure of sexual-intimate pair bonding
16) Mental disorder (connection between ideology and degree of mental illness)
17) Greater creativity and innovation
18) Instrumental violence in the subject's past

The method also allows for other dimensions to be considered.

The dimensions are answered with yes / no / don't know. Based on the 18 dimensions, a risk scenario is prepared along with risk management measures.

3.4.2 Norway[115]

Norwegian legislation is similar to Swedish legislation and it only allows the health and welfare services to share personal information with the police without the individual's consent in cases where there is believed to be a risk to life and health or the information can prevent terrorism and other serious crimes. To improve information sharing and cooperation between the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and the police, Norway has established a national competence team in NAV. The purpose of the team is to provide advice and guidance to local NAV offices and be a contact point for the police and the police security service (PST). This is with a view to strengthening the NAV offices' expertise on the phenomenon and on the opportunities for sharing personal data provided in the legislation.

In Norway, risk assessments are mainly carried out by the police and/or security services. The organisation of the police's work seems less formalised in Norway than in Sweden. However, the Police Directorate has initiated a collaboration model between the police and the security services that will strengthen cooperation between these services, including by greater sharing of information and clarification of the division of responsibility and roles in individual cases. In these collaboration forums, the parties discuss existing cases of concern and any new concerns, what measures, if any, should be taken at the tactical level, and evaluate measures that have been put in place. The collaboration between the police and PST appears to vary from district to district, both in terms of how often they meet, and who participates from the police districts. Some collaboration forums meet weekly, and others about every three weeks. In some districts, only those specialised in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism, referred to as radicalisation contacts, attend meetings. In other districts, employees (often managers) from intelligence and prevention, and, if necessary, investigators and legal advisers, also attend.

The differences in who attends the meetings appears to be linked to differences in the internal organisation of the police services. In some police districts, as good as all phases and processes of the intelligence work are carried out by the radicalisation contacts. They receive the case, obtain information from the police systems, partners and the person concerned, and they analyse and assess the information. They also implement a number of the measures and evaluate them. In districts with such an organisation, the work on violent extremism and radicalised individuals appears to be less supported by the police intelligence department and management. In other districts, more actors contribute to the various phases of the intelligence process. The intelligence department's analysts contribute to the collection of information and assessments. The managers from the intelligence and prevention sections also participate in the joint meetings with PST and can provide direction and prioritisation. These differences between the police districts in the degree to which roles and tasks in the intelligence process are differentiated appear significant to the work on risk assessments, as we will return to.

The extent to which such collaboration between PST and the police is used solely to exchange intelligence/information or to also jointly make risk assessments seems to vary. In some places, the main aspects of the collaboration appear to be the exchange of information and clarification of who should have the main responsibility for the case, while in other places, the risk assessments themselves are carried out jointly between representatives from PST and the police.

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[115] In Norway, two other relevant works were carried out in parallel with this study, which we did not have insight into before the completion of this report. The first work is an evaluation of the police's radicalisation contact scheme (*Evaluering av politiets radikaliseringskontaktordning* – Tandberg & Ravndal, 2023). The Norwegian Police Directorate, Correctional Services and Police Security Service (PST) have, on behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, prepared an internal report with proposals for how the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals should be developed going forward. This is part of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security's follow-up of measure 21 in the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, on 'knowledge-based method development and experience sharing on effective measures in reintegration and risk assessment'.

As in Sweden, no national guidelines or standards have been drawn up in Norway for the collaboration between the police and the health and welfare services, but more or less formalised collaborations have been developed locally. In some places, the contact between the police and relevant services takes place on a fairly ad-hoc basis, while in other places permanent teams have been established with representatives from the police and the health and welfare services. Joint risk assessments are made in some of the local interagency teams, where long-term and trusting relationships have been established between the representatives from the police and the health and welfare services. Police employees take these assessments back to the internal discussions in the police services and to the dialogue with PST. The case is discussed anonymously when there is not considered to be a legal basis for sharing of personal data.

Norway has not standardised what methods should be used to carry out risk assessments of radicalised individuals. The methods used in the police districts seem to vary from unstructured to more structured assessments. Some police districts use the three-factor model, which assesses threat (the person's intention, capacity and capability), values and vulnerabilities. Based on this, it is assessed what risk the person poses, and what risk mitigation measures have been implemented and can be implemented. Other districts do not actively use the risk triangle, and focus primarily on vulnerability factors. Another district has tried to develop a separate standard/template with a pertaining user guide on how to conduct risk assessments. They have incorporated elements of the police's traditional intelligence methods, such as the threat actor's intention, capacity and capability, as well as elements that are particularly relevant to assessing the risk of violent extremism, inspired by international risk assessment tools. Some police districts are also considering starting to use the risk assessment tool TRAP-18.

3.4.3 Finland

Finnish legislation on the sharing of information from the health and welfare services to the police is similar to that of Sweden and Norway. Without the individual's consent, there is a high threshold for these services to be able to share personal data with the police.

As in Norway, the organisation of the police's work in Finland seems less formalised. As far as we know, no national collaboration model has been established between the police and the security services. In the regional police districts, employees responsible for the prevention of violent extremism conduct assessments of the degree of risk. They share information with the police security services if they consider the risk to be so high that it falls under their responsibility. In Finland, the National Bureau of Investigation also plays a central role in both intelligence and prevention of violent extremism.

However, Finland has formalised the collaboration between the local police and municipal authorities through what is known as the Anchor model (*Annkkuri*), where professionals from the police, social administration, health care and youth services cooperate in multidisciplinary teams (the composition of the team varies from case to case).[116] Healthcare professionals are more integrated into this team in the Finnish model than in the other Nordic countries.[117]

Finland has not standardised what methods should be used to carry out risk assessments of radicalised individuals. The police have previously developed some indicators for forms of behaviour that should give particular cause for concern about the risk of violence (warning behaviours / red flags). These are not designed specifically for violent extremism, but to assess the risk of violence in general. The police officers we interviewed felt that this had become integrated knowledge after working in the police for a long time, and they no longer used these indicators specifically. This indicates a practice where the local police use

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[116] https://ankkuritoiminta.fi/en/anchor-work-in-finland
[117] Solhjell et al., 2022

unstructured risk assessments, in that the assessments are made based on the police officers' experience, knowledge and expertise.

3.4.4 Experience and perceptions of risk assessment work in Sweden, Norway and Finland

As the review has shown, there are many key similarities in the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals conducted in Sweden, Norway and Finland. The right to share personal data between different actors is very limited, and the work is to a limited extent standardised and formalised. Few common models have been developed for organisation and collaboration and for which risk assessment methods should be used. This limited standardisation leads to notable differences within and between these countries. Interviews with representatives from the local authorities, health services, the police and national centres in Norway, Sweden and Finland highlight a number of key experiences with and perceptions of risk assessments.

Legislation

Common to Sweden, Norway and Finland, in addition to the strict legislation on the sharing of personal data, is the uncertainty among the health and welfare services with regard to how the law should be interpreted. The practitioners pointed out a need for clarification of the legislation, and that the services' knowledge about when you can share information with the police and security services must be strengthened. Practitioners in Norway pointed out that the guidelines to information sharing provided little help in understanding the law. The guidelines were too complicated, and did not help them to any extent to understand in what situations they can share information with the police.

This uncertainty about how the law should be interpreted means that practices differ from place to place when it comes to information sharing between the health and welfare services and the police. The practitioners we interviewed pointed out that, in general, many services do not share information until they believe there is a risk that the person will commit ideologically motivated violence. Many felt that this created too many limitations on the possibility of preventing violent extremism. This perception was particularly prominent among police officers. Most practitioners appreciated the need for health and social services and other municipal services to be able to share relevant information with the police before the situation becomes so precarious that there is a genuine risk that someone will carry out an ideologically motivated attack. At the same time, the practitioners reported that the threshold for information exchange was somewhat lower in some of the services. Here, information was shared in cases with high severity and where the information was considered important in order to assess the risk and be able to implement relevant preventive measures. The perception in places with such experience was that relevant information is exchanged in many of the cases when necessary. It was also pointed out, as previous studies have shown,[118] that good and trusting relationships between the services and the individual employees contribute to increased information exchange.

Some practitioners were uncertain about whether amendments to the law were necessary, or whether it was only necessary to clarify the possibilities in the current legislation. Some practitioners, especially in the police, wanted a section modelled on Section 115 of the Danish Administration of Justice Act. They pointed out that increased information sharing between relevant government agencies would strengthen the preventive work. Such a legislative amendment could also make it possible for the health and welfare services and the police to conduct assessments together, as is the case in Denmark. However, employees in the health and welfare services were more uncertain about whether they wanted such an

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[118] Solhjell et al., (2022), Christensen et al., (2023).

extension. They would like opportunities to share information somewhat earlier in the process than in connection with preventing a terrorist act, but were more reluctant to an extension as broad as that provided by Section 115 of the Administration of Justice Act. They pointed out the importance of strict rules for information sharing so that patients could be sure that private information would not be shared. They feared that a significant extension of the law would reduce citizens' trust in the authorities, and thereby make them less likely to seek help and/or be open about their challenges. The introduction of legislation modelled on Section 115 of the Administration of Justice Act would also be a violation of other legislation and long traditions in public administration, which could make it challenging to implement.

Representatives of the health and welfare services also pointed out that the police must be much clearer in their requests to the municipal authorities about what they need information about and why they need it. If the health and welfare services are to make an exception to the overall principle of not sharing personal data without the person's consent, they must be able to make an assessment on the basis of specific and clear information. The police's assessment of the risk that the person will commit violent extremism is crucial information. They were critical of the police or security services phoning the case officers in the health and welfare services to obtain personal information, as had been the case.

Experience of obtaining consent from the person to share personal data with other actors was divided. Police officers described both positive and negative experiences of asking the individual for consent to public agencies sharing information. Some pointed out that they found it difficult to obtain such consent, and that it could easily have a counterproductive effect. Police employees feared that should the police or other services confront the person with their concern about radicalisation, the concern could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some police districts had the best experiences from cases where the person was not aware of their concern. Other districts referred to positive experiences of asking for consent. They pointed out that some police officers had particularly suitable personal traits that led to the person giving their consent, and that such requests did not have a counterproductive effect. At the same time, they highlighted the importance of having something concrete to offer that the person finds relevant to them.

Organisation

When it comes to organising the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals, we see some differences between the three countries in terms of formalisation, standardisation and differentiation of tasks and responsibilities. Sweden has to a greater extent than Norway and Finland formalised, standardised and differentiated the tasks and responsibilities of the police. The organisation of the collaboration between the police and the local authorities has only been formalised in Finland.

Police officers report that the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the police would benefit from being formalised, standardised and differentiated. Ideally, tasks and responsibilities should be differentiated, such that intelligence work, risk assessments and intervention work are distributed between several persons. In addition, it was considered preferable that the risk assessment itself was conducted jointly. Such an organisation was perceived to strengthen both the information basis for the assessment and the risk assessment itself.

Employees who had generally worked alone on the intelligence work, risk assessments and intervention work were far more critical of such and organisation and they considered it vulnerable. Their time and resources for making good risk assessments were too limited and there was also a risk of blind spots and consequential errors in their work. The employees felt that such an organisation entailed too much responsibility. It is possible that the practitioners are afraid of being wrong in their assessments and fear being held responsible if the person they have assessed actually commits a terrorist attack. After the terrorist attacks in Norway, evaluations of the work in each individual case have been carried out with the aim

of learning.[119] However, this study shows that the consequence of such evaluations is increased fear among the employees of making incorrect assessments.

Police employees also highlighted the importance of the growing intelligence collaboration between the police and the security services in recent years, particularly in Sweden and Norway. This has helped to clarify the division of responsibilities, strengthened the sharing of intelligence information and in some places led to better discussions of measures. However, some police employees we interviewed still pointed out challenges in their collaboration with the police security services. A persistent challenge is the security services' limited sharing of information with the police, especially in cases where they ask the police to perform tasks. For example, the police may, based on the information they possess, consider that there is no basis for continuing to monitor the person, while the security service says that the police should do so. The challenge for the police is as such that they are asked to act on the basis of information they do not possess. Some police districts are of the opinion that the security services themselves should pursue such cases. Another example is that the security services want the police to contact the health and welfare services to obtain information about a case, while the security services do not share information about the case themselves. The police is then unable to explain to the health and welfare services why they want this information, and the contact with these services becomes a matter of 'fishing without a fishing permit', as some people put it.

The police in all three Nordic countries wanted to work as a multi-professional team based on the Danish system, where the police and relevant representatives from the municipal authorities and the health services can jointly carry out risk assessments and assess and implement appropriate measures. Their argument for establishing such an interagency team was the experience from Denmark. Such an interagency team, where each actor contributes relevant information about an individual, will provide a much more holistic assessment. The team can also make better assessments of appropriate measures and it will be easier to create links with the actors who can implement relevant measures. Several people also emphasised that such interagency cooperation, where several actors were involved in taking responsibility for the assessments, would also reduce fear and anxiety, especially among police employees, who have experienced having to conduct the assessments alone. However, several of the interviewed municipal employees were of the opinion that risk assessments of radicalised individuals were the responsibility of the police. They were most comfortable sharing personal data with the police and letting the police make the final assessment themselves. We will later discuss the possibilities of also establishing such interagency collaboration in Sweden, Norway and Finland.

Perceptions of risk assessment methods

As described above, there are no common ways of conducting risk assessments in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The methods vary from relatively unstructured to highly structured risk assessments. The need for standardisation and what constituted the best risk assessment methods were core topics in the interviews we conducted in these countries and in the Nordic workshop.

When it comes to standardisation of risk assessment methods, most of the practitioners and some representatives from the national authorities agreed on the need for standardisation. In Norway in particular, where risk assessment methods are not standardised, the practitioners were clear that they consider it a national task to determine/develop risk assessment methods that practitioners in the various police districts can use. They would like more guidance on how the assessments should be conducted, and greater cohesion across the police districts. They pointed out that developing methods to assess the risk of radicalised individuals locally was too much of a responsibility. They also indicated that some of the

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[119] NOU 2012:14, Al-Noor Committee (2020), 25 June Committee (2023)

methods and tools that have been developed are not suitable for their purpose. They felt, for example, that the set of indicators for committing an act of terrorism developed by extremism researcher Paul Gill is at too high a risk level – a level where the person's risk of carrying out terrorism-related acts is imminent. The objection is that it makes preventive work difficult since much preventive police work takes place at least as much with individuals during the earlier phases. They emphasise the need for research-based knowledge and indicators at a somewhat lower level than the indicators currently used.

There was also broad consensus on a number of overarching challenges in conducting risk assessments of radicalised individuals, which are also emphasised in previous research:

- It is impossible to make reliable predictions of whether a person will carry out terrorism-related acts or not. There will be great uncertainty associated with the assessments, regardless of the methodology used.

- A risk assessment is an assessment at a certain point in time, and the person's situation can quickly change, making the assessment less relevant or entailing the need for a new assessment.

- Actuarial risk assessments alone are considered an unsuitable method for risk assessment of radicalised individuals, as the complexity to be assessed is too extensive.

- Risk assessments are demanding, and those conducting them require considerable expertise.

In addition to these factors, there was a broad consensus that the best information about the risk a person poses can be obtained by talking to them. Approaching this target group requires good relational skills and laborious efforts to build trust and alliances. It also requires good verbal and non-verbal communication skills. It was considered important to safeguard the person's integrity as well as to see the individual and apply a bottom-up approach. The importance of applying a resource focus, rather than just a risk focus, from the very start, was also emphasised. This makes it easier to gain trust, and the individual can to a greater extent own their own process and change.

In addition to this more general consensus, what were considered the most suitable methods varied. The majority of our interviewees, and of the workshop participants, considered structured risk assessments to be most appropriate, but, on the basis of limited knowledge, said they would wait and see whether they wanted to use specified terrorism-related risk assessment tools. They pointed out several strengths associated with using structured risk assessments, which have also been referred to in previous research.

- Structured risk assessments help practitioners establish a risk assessment framework.

- Key topics that should be elucidated are identified, based on what existing research says are key indicators of the risk of committing terrorism-related acts. At the same time, the topics that, according to the tool, should be explored should not be considered exclusive, as there is always room to consider other factors of relevance to the individual case.

- Structured assessments help to professionalise the assessments. We are seeing a shift away from conducting assessments and making decisions based solely on the exercise of judgement and gut feeling. This reduces the possibility of overlooking key factors and the assessments become more objective and more uniform across the services and bodies.

Of the practitioners we interviewed, only a very few argued against structured assessments. Their argument is that structured assessments, including the use of risk assessment tools, are no better suited than discretionary assessments, as some violent extremists will not

show, or it is very difficult to identify, any risk factors before carrying out terrorism-related acts. Furthermore, many of those who are considered to be at risk of carrying out terrorism-related acts will never commit such acts. The benefits of using structured methods for risk assessments is therefore considered limited. Some employees we interviewed at the national level who were critical of structured risk assessments, and in particular risk assessment tools, pointed out some additional limitations:

- The weakness of the risk assessment tools in actually being able to predict the risk of terrorism-related acts. Even in cases where there is a lot of information that can shed light on many aspects of an individual, such risk assessment tools will not be able to provide a set answer, and are subject to considerable uncertainty. The value of such tools is limited, while confidence in them is too high.

- In general, due to the low number of cases, it is difficult to validate specific risk assessment tools for terrorism-related acts. Testing the validity of the tools in different contexts, i.e. in different countries, is further complicated by the fact that there are so few cases in each country. Additionally, there are challenges related to inter-rater reliability, i.e. whether two different employees investigating the same case come to the same conclusion.

- In many cases, the police's information will be too limited to actually be able to answer the topics in the structured terrorism-related risk assessment tools. The police have limited access to relevant information from the health and welfare services.

- In order to use such risk assessment tools, significant resources must be allocated to training and maintaining skills. Another danger is that the practitioners initiate risk assessments in order to practise the method, in a way that is potentially harmful, with people who are not really in the target group.

- Risk assessments in the 'pre-crime' phase are associated with particular challenges. A risk assessment mapping of a person conducted by the authorities can be counterproductive in that the person in question feels greater distrust of society and the authorities and develops more hatred. Risk assessments can thus become a self-fulfilling prophecy. This is a particular challenge in the prevention of violent extremism, as some worrying activities, such as posting on social media, can quickly lead to a need for the authorities to conduct a 'full scan' of the person. There are also ethical challenges when it comes to deciding what information the police and security services should receive from the health and welfare services in order to assess people, when the assessments are in any case so uncertain.

- The use of risk assessment tools increases the risk of false positive findings, i.e. that individuals who will not actually commit terrorism-related acts are considered to be at risk of committing such acts. The chances of more people being considered a risk without actually posing a risk increases when you are looking for the next terrorist and have confidence in the tools.

- Practitioners' need for risk assessment tools or checklists is related to their own lack of confidence. Those who have worked in the field for some time handle the uncertainty differently and have less need for checklists.

- The belief in standardised ways of conducting risk assessments is often associated with a strong belief in standardised programmes, such as those used in England. In the Nordic countries, and in Norway in particular, more confidence is placed on individualised approaches.

- The objection to using structured risk assessment tools developed specifically for one target group applies in particular to the police, which has to work with several target groups simultaneously. Specialised risk assessment tools can only be applied to a small portion of the target group they work with. TRAP 18, for example, is specially

designed to assess lone actors' risk of carrying out terrorism-related acts. The police also work with lone actors who may exercise violence alone, but without being ideologically or politically motivated. They also work with radicalised individuals who are part of extremist groups and are not lone actors.

In the three countries, there are thus varying perceptions of which methods are best suited for assessing the risk of radicalised individuals, and specified terrorism-related risk assessment tools are particularly disputed. At the same time, there seems to be a growing recognition that the work should be more standardised and structured.

3.5 Summary and discussion of the risk assessment work in the Nordic region

What can we learn from the four Nordic countries' work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals? To conclude, we will summarise and discuss some of the key experiences by looking at the work in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland as a whole.

The insight this report provides on the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the four Nordic countries confirms what previous research has highlighted. Risk assessments are demanding work and associated with major methodological challenges. No assessment can judge with certainty the risk of whether a person will commit terrorist acts. At the same time, the work is demanding as it must balance both society's need for protection and the individual's due process protection. This study also helps to highlight the importance of how the work is organised for both the quality of the assessments and for the employees working with risk assessments. The further development of the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals should emphasise society's need for protection, the individual's right to privacy and the process of developing risk assessments. We have seen that the different approaches employed in the Nordic countries place different emphasis on these dimensions.

We will now point out some key lessons from the Nordic countries related to national governance, legislation, organisation and risk assessment methods. Table 3.1 provides an overview of key differences in practices between the Nordic countries within these areas.

Table 3.1: Practices in risk assessment work in the Nordic region.

	National governance	Information sharing		Organisation			Method
		Sharing of personal information	Uncertainty about the legislation	Differentiation of duties and responsibilities within the police	Standardised cooperation between the security services and the police	Standardised cooperation between the police and the municipal authorities	Use of structured risk assessments
Denmark	High	High	Low	Unknown	Unknown	High	High
Norway	Low	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Sweden	Medium	Low	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
Finland	Low	Low	High	Unknown	Unknown	High	Low

National governance vs. local autonomy

One overall difference between the Nordic countries is what responsibility the national authorities have assumed to develop the work on risk assessments and the degree of standardisation of national practices. In comparison with the other Nordic authorities, the Danish authorities have taken a far greater responsibility in developing and standardising their work on preventing violent extremism in general and on risk assessments in particular. In Denmark, the organisation of the work and the risk assessment tool have been tailored to

current legislation, previous practices and the practitioners' needs. The assessment tool, in particular, was prepared based on extensive development work.[120]

The Danish authorities' significant development work stands in contrast to the limited responsibility assumed by national authorities in the other Nordic countries. Here, the responsibility for developing practice has primarily been left to the regional or local level, and, as a result, practices vary significantly across the respective countries. In addition, the employees find the responsibility for developing risk assessments tough. Practitioners in these countries demand that national authorities take more responsibility for developing common practices and methods for the work on risk assessments.

We have not thoroughly studied the background for the introduction of TRAP-18 in the Swedish police system, but based on our interviews with central employees from the Swedish Department of National Operations, the tool was chosen because it met one of the police's needs, because lone actors are an increasing challenge that is difficult to assess, and because the tool was economically affordable compared to other tools. The fact that there were professionals with special expertise in structured risk assessments, both within and outside the Swedish police, may also have contributed to the tool's introduction. However, key professionals at the national level in Norway appear far more reluctant to use specialised risk assessment tools. This illustrates how various processes and decisions affect the development of the work on risk assessments. Knudsen & Stormoen (2020) also refer to other factors that can determine the choice of risk assessment tools, including policy initiatives (showing that you are 'doing something' when it comes to counterterrorism efforts) and market dominance.

In our view, this report shows that risk assessments are an area of the prevention of violent extremism that should be standardised by the authorities developing clear guidelines on how the legislation on information sharing should be interpreted, how the work should be organised and the preferred methods. We believe that this would strengthen public security; the assessments would be of higher quality, the individual's due process protection will be safeguarded because the sharing of personal information between actors will be more in line with applicable law, and employees will be better safeguarded. As we will come back to, however, increased standardisation could potentially entail significant challenges that will require particular awareness.

Legislation

If we compare the four Nordic countries, it becomes very clear that the degree of information sharing between public authorities determines how comprehensive and nuanced the risk assessments of radicalised individuals become.[121] Legislation on the sharing of information is not only significant to the extent of personal data sharing, but also lays the premises for cooperation between the actors and the choice of risk assessment tools. The broad opportunities for information sharing in Danish legislation enabled the establishment of the Info-house collaboration and the development of the dialogue-based assessment tool.

The differences in legislation that applies to information sharing in the Nordic countries also means that their weighting between citizens' due process protection and the protection of society against violent extremism differs, with Denmark placing greater emphasis on the protection of society and less on citizens' privacy. This is reflected in some of the criticism of the Danish legislation, the organisation of the work and assessment tool we have seen in this study, as well as in previous studies.[122] The issue is the opposite in the other Nordic countries, where the question is rather whether the threshold for the exchange of information is too high, meaning that citizens' protection of privacy is too strong in matters that threaten

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[120] See Section 3.3 for a more detailed description.
[121] See also Christensen et al., 2023
[122] Christensen et al., 2023

public security. Jore[123] and Lid[124] argue that there has been little public debate about the trade-offs between security and citizens' individual freedoms in Norway, which is related to the fact that the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism is presented as an extension of the Norwegian welfare state model.

A critical discussion of the weighting of citizens' freedom against the protection of society is key to further developing the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in all the Nordic countries.

Another key challenge, particularly in Sweden, Norway and Finland, is that employees in the health and welfare services and the police find it challenging to understand the existing legislation concerning the sharing of personal data between actors. This uncertainty results in different practices when it comes to information sharing. Uncertainty about legislation that leads to different practices is a recurrent challenge that has been documented in many previous studies.[125] There is a need for more clarification of how the legislation should be interpreted, and local practitioners' knowledge must be strengthened. Relevant measures include developing good written guidelines that actually help local actors to understand the legislation, and making it possible for local practitioners to receive advice from regional/national experts. Such regional/national advisory services have been established in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. It may be relevant to evaluate the use of these services to find out how well known they are, who uses them and in what areas local practitioners need guidance. Systematisation of this knowledge can provide important knowledge when further developing the field of practice.

At the same time, the police and the police security services' ability to request personal information from the health and welfare services without consent needs to be defined more clearly. For the health and welfare services to be able to assess whether there are grounds for sharing personal data with the police and security services, the requests must be specific and clear about the need for information and the level of threat. The police and security services' skills in requesting information must be strengthened. As these skills are so closely linked to the needs of the health and welfare services, joint development work between the police, the security services, and the health and welfare services would seem appropriate.

Organisation

We have identified significant differences in the organisation of work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals, both within and across the Nordic countries. A key finding in this study is the significance of organisation for both the quality of the assessments and the safeguarding of the employees who perform them. Differentiation of tasks and areas of responsibility, where actors who possess different information, knowledge and competence collaborate to perform a systematic, coordinated and qualified analysis and assessment, appears to promote high quality in the assessments and spread the responsibility for the assessment among employees. This applies in the organisation of work internally within the police, in the collaboration between the police and the security services, and in the collaboration between the police and the municipal authorities/health services.

In the Nordic region, the newly established RedEx teams in Sweden are an example of a form of organisation that follows such principles. Analysts from both the police and the police security services contribute to the intelligence work. There is a distinction between intelligence and intervention work. The management is involved in the assessments, priorities and decisions. This organisation is also very much in line with the key principles of knowledge-driven police work, which is the ideal for police work today.[126] These principles of professionalisation, specialisation and standardisation of the police, which are closely

[123] Jore, 2020
[124] Lid, 2020
[125] Lid & Heierstad, 2019c, Solhjell et al., 2020; Christensen et al., 2023
[126] Ratcliffe, 2016, Gundhus, 2017, Police Directorate, 2014

associated with the ideal of knowledge-driven police work, have been criticised. Some of this criticism is that it has led to more fragmentation of tasks and responsibilities, to changed power relations in the organisation where analysts and managers have gained greater influence, and to a more abstract way of doing police work, or 'policing at a distance'.[127] However, when it comes to the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the police, professionalisation, specialisation of tasks and responsibilities and more standardisation appear to be factors that are important to the quality of the work. It is also a division of labour that is valued by the employees. This is probably related to the inherent challenges of assessing risk, as well as the complexity and severity of the cases. Thoroughness and objectivity become important values. In efforts to further develop the police's organisation of the work on risk assessments, it may be useful to look at the already existing ideals for the division of tasks and responsibilities in knowledge-driven police work.

Cooperation between the police and the security services has intensified over the past decade, and has led to an increased need to clarify the division of responsibilities and tasks between them. This includes determining what distinguishes the remits of the police and the security services in terms of preventing violent extremism, what target group they are responsible for, what information should be shared and how they should collaborate. The evaluations of the terrorist incidents in Norway[128] in particular, but also this study, show that there are still significant ambiguities in the division of responsibility and tasks between the police and the security services, at least in Norway, but probably also in the other Nordic countries. Clarifying the division of responsibilities and tasks between the police and the security services appears to be crucial in the further development of risk assessment work and the work to combat violent extremism in general.

When it comes to the collaboration between the police and the health and welfare services, many of the people we interviewed in Sweden, Norway and Finland, especially those representing the police, but also some from the municipal authorities, wanted to implement a collaboration model similar to that of Denmark. The differences in national legislation clearly make it impossible to implement a similar model in Sweden, Norway and Finland in less serious cases without a legislative amendment. The question is, if the Danish collaboration model is relevant in high-risk cases where the health and welfare services are allowed to share information, can the health and welfare services and the police make joint risk assessments in such cases in line with this model?

We will discuss two issues that must be further investigated. First, legal clarification is required to know what types of cases the police and the health and social services can collaborate on. Can the health and welfare services only share information when they have information that can prevent loss of life and serious crime such as terrorism, or can they share information somewhat earlier where it is still possible to carry out health and social prevention work?

In addition to the legal issue, other barriers must be investigated, in particular the institutional logic of the institutions and the employees' understanding of this logic. How the health and welfare services assess their role appears to vary in the three countries. Some services feel that their role is to share information with the police in cases where legislation so permits, but that the risk assessment itself is the responsibility of the police. Services elsewhere also participate in the assessments, for example via established collaboration teams. There are probably many explanations to these differences between the services, including whether they feel they have the expertise to conduct risk assessments, which may affect their willingness to take responsibility for them. It could also be due to variations in the

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[127] Dahl et al., 2022
[128] Al-Noor Committee (2020), 25 June Committee (2023). See also Tandberg and Ravndal's (2023) evaluation of Norway's radicalisation contact scheme, which very clearly shows a lack of clear responsibility and division of tasks between the police and security services. Tandberg and Ravndal also question the police's remit to work on radicalisation and violent extremism.

understanding of the services' remit and institutional logic. Are risk assessments of radicalised individuals the responsibility of the police or a joint responsibility between the police and the health and welfare services? Knudsen and Stormoen (2020) indicate that actors in the health and care services may find it 'particularly problematic to participate in a risk assessment process driven by security considerations rather than treatment or rehabilitation considerations'. This indicates that the purpose of the assessments can be important to whether the health and welfare services consider it legitimate to participate in the assessments. In Denmark, the purpose of the Info-house collaboration and risk assessments is not solely to assess a citizen's risk of engaging in ideologically, politically or religiously motivated violence, but also to conduct preventive work and help people out of the situation they are in. The purpose is thus linked to both public security and treatment and help. The strong focus on providing help, both in the Info-houses' work and in the risk assessments, probably contributes to legitimising the health and welfare services' participation. At the same time, a Nordic study shows that Danish social workers and teachers state that they have strong elements of social security logic compared with the other Nordic countries. One explanation that is highlighted is that the social security logic is more prominent in Danish policy documents and has been adopted by the practitioners.[129] As such, it may be legitimate for the health and welfare services to participate in the risk assessment work.

This indicates that if the health and welfare services in Sweden, Norway and Finland are to participate to a greater extent in the risk assessment process, it will firstly be based on the premise that the law allows them to share information at a stage where it is still possible to make preventive efforts rather than merely averting terrorist acts, and that the risk assessment work includes a treatment perspective in addition to security considerations. However, a key question is whether risk assessment processes should combine security considerations with treatment and rehabilitation considerations, or whether these dimensions should be considered separately? An argument for combining them is that it strengthens the mapping of the individual's needs, which increases the possibilities of deploying relevant assistance measures. The offer of assistance to solve various life challenges *could* increase the person's motivation to cooperate with the authorities.[130] Contradictions are that a mapping of the person's needs makes the assessment far more extensive and intrusive for the individual when several dimensions of their life are to be examined. A fusion of risk and assistance can also lead to several treatment-related challenges in terms of purpose, scope, confidentiality, ethics and trust. A collaboration between the health and welfare services and the police that is too close can have a counterproductive effect by reducing trust in the health and welfare services among the individuals the services want to reach. This could therefore lead to a situation where the health and welfare services are unable to attain a position where they can reach the individuals, thereby reducing both their opportunities to gain knowledge of the individuals' development and offer relevant services.[131] Closer exploration of barriers and opportunities for closer cooperation between the police and the health and welfare services appears important in the further development of risk assessment work.

The understanding of who radicalised individuals are, as described initially, has changed. Radicalised individuals are presented as an unclear and psychologised target group, where socio-psychological factors are attributed a central importance in our understanding of the causes of radicalisation and participation in extremist groups. Psychosocial challenges have become key dimensions of risk assessments. However, this places requirements on the team performing the assessment. Several teams are now considering including psychologists or others with psychosocial expertise in the interagency teams. In the further development of the work on risk assessments, it must be identified which skills and

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[129] Gøtzsche-Astrup et al., 2023
[130] Hannah-Moffat, 2012
[131] Haugstvedt & Tuastad, 2021, Lid & Heierstad, 2019b

qualifications are needed, and, not least, avoid certain professions taking over the responsibilities of other professions and 'playing' psychologists. Role confusion must be prevented.

Risk assessment methods

Risk assessment methods vary considerably across and within the Nordic countries. Some use unstructured assessments, where the collection of information and the assessments are not linked to specific topics, but are determined based on the individual case and the professional's exercise of judgement. Others use more or less structured assessments, i.e. a combination of structured assessments of specific topics and professional judgment. The structured assessments employed vary in relation to the degree of structuring and standardisation. What can we learn from the experience in the Nordic region and other international research on which risk assessment methods should be used for radicalised individuals?

In many ways, the experiences and perceptions of most Nordic practitioners coincide with what is emphasised in international research. Unstructured assessments are vulnerable as significant factors are more likely to be missed. In addition, the dependence on the exercise of professional judgment makes the method vulnerable to that professional's prejudices and limitations.[132] Our study also points out that local practitioners find it tough to conduct assessments based on limited advice and guidelines. Most of the interviewees preferred the use of structured risk assessments to unstructured risk assessments. Structured risk assessments are also the method recommended in research on risk assessments of violence and violent extremism.[133]

Previous research, experience from using the structured risk assessment tool in Denmark and interviews with other practitioners in the Nordic region point out many arguments for using structured risk assessments. Structured risk assessments help to professionalise the assessments, frame and structure the analysis and ensure that decisions are not based on gut instinct.[134] Standardisation is also important for collaboration. Standardisation makes it easier for the parties to gain an overview of and carry out their part of the task, while at the same time understanding and respecting the other parties' remit, logic and the scope of their duty of confidentiality.[135] Experience from Denmark indicates that risk assessment tools help the various actors to develop a common language that simplifies communication between them. Structured assessments that map an individual's risk and their needs, in line with those used in Denmark, provide a more holistic assessment of the individual. Identifying the person's problems and needs is also relevant to determining suitable preventive measures. This study and previous studies thus highlight many strengths of structured risk assessments.

At the same time, as highlighted in this study and previous research, there are many challenges involved with using structured risk assessments, particularly those specifically for terrorism-related risk assessment. A key challenge is that although the assessments are structured, there will always be considerable uncertainty associated with the results. The value of structured assessments is therefore limited and cannot justify the use of resources required for training and implementation. Standardisation and structuring of assessments creates a risk of tunnel vision, and increases the chances of false positives. Furthermore, structured assessments do not solve the challenges relating to the exercise of professional judgement, as such judgement remains a key aspect of structured assessments, as well as how to weigh the different dimensions in the assessments against each other.[136]

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[132] Borum, 2015, Cherney et al., 2022
[133] Gill, 2015, Borum, 2015, Cherney et al., 2022
[134] Gill, 2015, Borum, 2015
[135] Thornton et al., 2012, Solhjell et al., 2022, Christensen et al., 2023
[136] Gill, 2015, Borum, 2015, Cherney et al., 2022

In addition to the experiences and perspectives that have emerged in this study, research on risk work has raised other critical objections to the standardisation of risk work. While uncertainty is a key aspect of risk, standardisation is a tool for providing predictability, control and confidence. As such, the standardisation of security management would seem like a good idea. However, when it comes to risks characterised by complexity and diversity, standardisation can be misleading and lead to negative consequences.[137] It can provide an increased sense of confidence, place responsibility outside the person conducting the assessment and limit alternative perspectives and solutions.[138] Diversity, variation and the ability to quickly adapt to changes in the risk landscape are decisive factors in managing risk. This requires diversification rather than standardisation. A standardisation must, as a minimum, be able to distinguish between different types of risk and take into account the dynamics inherent in any type of risk. At the same time, standardisation must not shift the focus away from the normative assessments that form the core of both standardisation and assessment.[139] In addition, radicalised individuals are an unclear target group, and it is difficult to know who needs to be assessed. Which indicators are relevant is also a complicated matter, as there are many different paths into violent extremism. A danger when standardising risk indicators is therefore that people whose profile differs from the characteristics measured by the indicators are overlooked.[140]

This illustrates that there are many potentially negative consequences of standardising risk assessments. Juhl (2020) argues that when considering which types of risk assessments to use, the possibilities for undesirable results associated with the various approaches must be assessed. In our opinion, which is consistent with other research on risk assessments of violence and violent extremism,[141] the disadvantages ensuing from a lack of standardisation of methods for risk assessments and the use of unstructured assessments in risk work outweigh the disadvantages of standardising the methods and using structured assessments. However, standardising the methods and using structured assessments requires great awareness of the potential negative consequences and implementation of measures to counteract them. An example is the establishment of a quality assurance system for risk assessments at some Info-houses in Denmark, where employees other than those conducting the assessments check them to counteract the possibility of the teams developing tunnel vision in their work.

However, it is important to underline that we assume an objective and pragmatic understanding of structured risk assessments. Risk assessment tools for terrorism lack predictive value, and as Van der Heide et al.[142] point out, such risk assessment tools or other structured assessments will primarily remain a tool that professionals can use to structure information and analyses. Together with the professionals' exercise of judgement, these analyses can form a decision-making basis for prioritising cases and interventions. Such tools or structuring must not be understood as being able to provide assessments of future behaviour. Van der Heide et al.[143] argue that we need to demystify both the use of language, in that the word 'tool' can give misleading associations implying that such a tool can actually predict actions, and our understanding of what structured risk assessments can actually be used for.

In conclusion, we will briefly discuss how the Nordic countries, which on the whole use unstructured assessments, can improve their methods. Based on the experiences discussed

[137] Olsen, 2020
[138] Jore, 2020
[139] Juhl, 2020
[140] Borum, 2015
[141] Gill, 2015, Borum, 2015, Cherney et al., 2022, Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020
[142] Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020
[143] Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020

in this study and international literature, the answer is certainly not obvious. We will discuss three options.

One option is that the other Nordic countries implement the Danish assessment tool. Since this tool is specially adapted to the Danish legislation, which allows a high degree of information sharing, and is designed for the assessments to be carried out jointly between the collaborative partners, an implementation of the Danish assessment tool does not appear particularly realistic without a legislative amendment. At the same time, this survey and previous surveys in the Nordic countries show that in some places, risk assessment work in cases of high severity takes place in a similar way to Denmark, where the police and health and welfare services find that personal information can be shared. The police and the health and welfare services bring relevant information from their respective services to a joint meeting and, on the basis of this information, the parties discuss the risk the person poses and what preventive measures can be taken. If such a practice is used, the Danish risk assessment tool could seem relevant to use. This tool has been specially developed for use by the police and the health and welfare services in a preventive perspective. It assesses both the risk the individual poses and their needs, and thus differs from a clear-cut risk-management approach that focuses exclusively on risk and how to manage it. By mapping the needs, problems and strengths of the person, attention is also drawn to what can be done in the future to support the person in a positive direction. The purpose and approach of the tool are thus particularly well-adapted to the preventive mandate of both the police and the health and welfare services. One objection to using the tool is that its validity and reliability have not yet been tested, but as this and previous studies show, the practitioners' experience has, on the whole, been good.[144]

The second option is to implement one of the international specific terrorism-related risk assessment tools, even with the uncertainties that remain about their validity and reliability. Different specific assessment tools have different qualities.[145] TRAP-18 is now being implemented in Sweden, and several Norwegian police districts are considering using this tool. Is TRAP-18 the solution for these countries? Future experience from users of TRAP-18 in the Swedish police system can provide important knowledge in the long term. Our interviews provided some preliminary experience.

The tool is perceived as applicable for use in the police. It consists of 18 factors, which is fewer than some other terrorism-related risk assessment tools. It is also perceived as more manageable to implement, and it is available and relatively inexpensive. There are also training programmes available. An advantage of TRAP-18 we wish to highlight is that knowledge about the quality of the tool is rapidly growing. TRAP-18 is preferable for use in the pre-crime phase, which increases the use of the tool compared to those aimed specifically at convicts, a much smaller group. TRAP-18 is also increasingly used internationally, which provides greater opportunities for quality testing. Several tests have been carried out over the last few years. A key objection to TRAP-18 is that the tool is preferable for use in assessing the risk posed by lone actors. In general, it is not recommended to use specified risk assessment tools in other contexts and for other target groups than those for which the tool was originally intended.[146] However, TRAP-18 has now also been tested for other target groups to test its relevance.[147] If the tool is also suitable for assessing the risk of other groups of radicalised individuals, it will make it more applicable. Another crucial question is how well the tool fits the police's remit, and, where relevant, the health and welfare services' remit and logic. The tool's focus on risk management makes it seem well-suited to the police's work on assessing *whether* the person has an intention and capacity to carry out a political extremist act of violence, but only to some extent its broader

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[144] See also Christensen et al., 2023
[145] Van der Heide, der Zwan & Leyenhorst, 2020; Lloyd, 2019
[146] Knudsen & Stormoen, 2020
[147] Challacombe et al., 2018

mandate to prevent people from developing the intention and capacity to commit such acts. The purpose is primarily risk management, and the averting of terrorist acts, which is a late stage of the radicalisation process. As such, the tool is also less suited to the health and welfare service's prevention mandate.

The third option is to develop a separate method for conducting risk assessments, ideally following extensive mapping and development work similar to that carried out in Denmark. The development of a separate method could take place on two levels: Either by developing a complete specialised risk assessment tool as the Danish authorities have done, or by developing a less comprehensive method that guides practitioners in how risk assessments can be carried out and which risk and protective factors are particularly relevant to assess. For both of these variants, a number of particularly relevant factors must be identified for a structured assessment to take place. These factors can be identified by looking at other risk assessment tools (such as TRAP-18 and the Danish assessment tool) in addition to research on risk and protective factors. Guidelines for how the assessments should be conducted must be available. Both of these variants will contribute to a varying degree to structuring and standardising the assessments as compared to an unstructured assessment. At the same time, the development of a separate method will entail uncertainty about the quality of the method.

The three options have different strengths and weaknesses, which must be weighed against each other. None of them appear to be the perfect solution, but they must be assessed against the current practice of using more unstructured assessments, with the uncertainty this entails. The discussion has highlighted that different methods/tools have different approaches, and that they are suited to the user's purpose, in our case the police and the health and welfare services, to varying degrees. This leads us to some final considerations on key issues that can form the basis for decisions about which risk assessment methods should be used.

The assessment of the method must start with a clear definition of the purpose of the risk assessment. The purpose must be based on the institution's (user's) responsibility and tasks. As such, there is a correspondence between method and area of responsibility. Secondly, the type of risk the institution is interested in capturing and the target group must be defined (for example, a person who is at risk of developing the intention and willingness to commit terrorist acts, or people who have such an intention and willingness). Who is going to conduct the risk assessments (for example, police officers, social workers or psychologists) and how much training they need to acquire sufficient skills are also important factors to consider. Another factor is what information it is possible to obtain. A thorough assessment of these aspects will be essential to identify relevant risk assessment methods and whether any of the existing methods/tools will be fit for purpose.

However, this study has clearly shown that the quality of the risk assessment work does not only, and possibly not primarily, depend on the methods for the risk assessment itself, but largely on the legislation and the opportunities for sharing information, as well as how the work is organised.

Based on the experiences mapped in this study and the findings of previous research, there is considerable potential for improvement in risk assessment work in all the Nordic countries. The improvements pertain to citizens' due process protection, understanding of the legislation and when actors can share information, the organisation of the work, and methods for risk assessments. Based on the identified challenges, we will conclude by making recommendations for further developing the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the Nordic region.

3.5.1 Recommendations

Our recommendations are organised under the three topics legislation, organisation and risk assessment methods.

Legislation

- Clarify the opportunities provided for in legislation for actors to share personal information for the purpose of preventing violent extremism. This clarification must be prepared in such a way that the actors in the health and welfare services, the education and training agencies and the police understand the opportunities they have to share information.

- The police and security services' skills in requesting information must be strengthened. If the health and welfare services are to make an exception to the overall principle of not sharing personal data without the person's consent, they must be able to assess this on the basis of specific and clear requests from the police or security services. Structures and guidelines should be developed for how the police or the security service should approach the health and welfare services to obtain personal information about radicalised individuals.

- A critical discussion of the weighting of citizens' individual freedoms against the protection of society is needed when further developing the work on risk assessments of radicalised individuals.

Organisation

Recommendations relating to the organisation of the police and security services

- Clarify the distinction between the police and the security services' remits, responsibilities and tasks.

- Tasks and responsibilities should be differentiated, such that intelligence work, risk assessments and intervention work are carried out by several people. Management should participate in the final assessments and decisions on priorities and measures.

- Collaboration between the police and the security services should be formalised and standardised. Clear guidelines should be drawn up on the purpose of the collaboration, who will participate, the various actors' tasks and responsibilities, how the work will be organised and the content. It must be clarified whether the collaboration will only be an intelligence cooperation, primarily comprising the exchange of intelligence information, or whether it will also involve the services jointly preparing risk assessments of radicalised individuals in cases where it is unclear which of the services is responsible for the case.

- As part of the work to strengthen collaboration between the police security services and the police, barriers and opportunities in the collaboration should be explored.

Recommendations relating to the organisation between the police and the health and welfare services

- The national authorities in Norway and Sweden should outline how the police and health and welfare services can cooperate on risk assessment work. National authorities cannot instruct municipal authorities on how to organise their work, but they should make recommendations on how the collaboration can be organised, the purpose and content of the collaboration, as well as opportunities/limitations in information sharing between the actors.

- Norway, Sweden and Finland should investigate whether the health and welfare services and the police should prepare joint risk assessments in cases that are so

serious that the health and welfare services have an opportunity to share information with the police.

- Interagency collaborative teams should consist of employees with healthcare qualifications, given that health challenges are considered a key challenge in many of the cases.

Methods for risk assessments of radicalised individuals

- Structured risk assessments are preferable to unstructured assessments. Standardised national methods should be developed for structured risk assessments of radicalised individuals in the countries where this is not in place.

- Denmark and, in time, Sweden should evaluate the use of the implemented risk assessment tools. This can provide important knowledge for further developing the work specifically in these countries, but also internationally.

- Ensure that the employees conducting risk assessments have sufficient expertise.

At the end of the report, we present four recommendations that apply to both the work on risk assessments and the reintegration of radicalised individuals.

4 Reintegration

4.1 Introduction

Reintegration encompasses all initiatives made to help a person return to society based on liberal democratic principles. Such initiatives involve social, psychological, economic and political factors.[148] Reintegration is about supporting the individual to develop resilience and well-being that can help them develop the motivation to persistently refrain from ideologically based and violent, intimidating and hateful acts targeting special categories of people and other crimes. Reintegration initiatives thus aim to both protect society and support the individual.[149]

Compared to the work on risk assessments in the Nordic region, which varies considerably in practice and perceptions of what constitutes a good method, the work on reintegration is much more uniform. Practitioners in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland work according to a common basic understanding of what is required for a reintegration process to be successful.

The starting point for initiatives is that the individual's identity is understood as fluid and as conditioned by the environment the person identifies with and participates in. As such, participation, change and identity development become closely linked. This starting point greatly influences how change is understood, and how, in practice, work is carried out to create change. It thereby also has a major influence on which initiatives are considered to be effective in a reintegration process. In general, the understanding of identity and applied practices in Scandinavia are determined by the principles that form the basis for the universal welfare state.

The practitioners' remit, institutional logic and the approaches they employ are contingent on the welfare state's weighting of the individual's opportunity for inclusion and participation in society, as well as the state's investment in the individual. The principle is that the state assumes responsibility for creating opportunities for, and thereby contributing to, the development of self-sufficient, autonomous and democratic citizens. The goal of a reintegration initiative is to offer support that helps create real opportunities for the individual to participate in education, work and/or other forms of activities with a view to becoming integrated into society.

Although the practitioners have a common starting point, the way reintegration work is carried out differs slightly in practice, and depends on the individual case and the actors involved in the cooperation.

This starting point means that we have generally been able to identify many similarities in practices both across and between the countries – and to a lesser extent differences. For example, we identified a difference in whether the overall description of an initiative distinguishes between a focus on action or attitude. Yet when, in dialogue with the practitioners, we have delved further into how the initiative is implemented in practice, the differences become increasingly smaller. As mentioned in the introduction, we have therefore chosen not to describe the work that takes place in each country in this chapter on reintegration, as we did in the chapter on risk assessment. Instead, we endeavour to present and elucidate the ways in which practitioners work with reintegration, regardless of country.

We have therefore divided the chapter as follows: In Section 4.2, we focus on research findings in the field of reintegration, and in Section 4.3, we focus on who is involved in reintegration in practice, how the initiatives are organised in the Nordic region, and the logics behind the work. In Section 4.4. we discuss the importance of basing the work on explicit

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[148] Torjesen, 2013
[149] Maruna, 2004:4-6, Marsden, 2017

theories of change. Clear goals contribute to different actors working on the basis of a common action plan that has a common goal in mind for the initiative. The clearer the common goals and the common action, the more likely it is that the initiative will succeed since the different actors can work towards this common objective. In Section 4.5, we focus on key challenges the individual may face in the reintegration process, before we go on to describe some of the practical work that takes place to address these challenges. The section shows a close correlation between what the research identifies as important and what is done in practice. At the same time, our survey shows that the initiatives should to a greater extent consider how participation in an extremist group potentially changes the individual's identity, repertoire of actions and ideological orientation.

In order to create a catalogue of the different initiatives, we have presented the practices in the form of bullet points based on six different domains of importance for successful reintegration. We hope that the bulleted list can provide an overview of the different ways important aspects of a reintegration process are addressed in practice. Our hope with this overview is that the different initiatives are clearly shown and can serve as inspiration for all practitioners in the Nordic region.

At the end of the chapter, we summarise the findings and make recommendations for areas where we believe it would be beneficial to strengthen practice.

4.2   Reintegration in theory

Successful reintegration depends on a holistic approach that supports the individual in developing alternative social and professional competencies while at the same time enabling a return to society. The process is complex and can involve all aspects of a person's life.[150]

The processes that result in people no longer participating in violent activities or extremist environments, i.e. a behavioural change, are often referred to as disengagement. A reduction in the attitudes and values that support the use of violent means to achieve political change is referred to as deradicalisation.[151] In this report, however, we choose to use the term *reintegration* rather than the terms *deradicalisation* and *disengagement*.[152] This word pair creates a focus on attitude and action as separate things and detaches the individual from a larger societal context. By using the term *reintegration* and thus Sarah Marsden's[153] and Kate Barrell's[154] research, we seek to clarify that this is a dual process, where the individual's motivation, drive and willingness to be reintegrated have a decisive influence on the relations the person develops with the society around them. At the same time, a successful reintegration process also depends on a society enabling the individual's return.[155]

In her Pro-Integration Model, Kate Barrelle[156] has attempted to identify different levels of engagement and attachment in a coherent process of disengagement and reintegration from violent extremism to a liberal democratic society. Barrelle argues that the extent to which people leave an extremist environment and reduce their violent extreme actions and attitudes must be seen in the context of the person's engagement with the wider society, i.e. their level of reintegration. At the same time, research indicates that people who end their participation in violent and extremist groups and activities do not necessarily reduce their extremist attitudes. They are 'disengaged without being deradicalised'.[157] In other cases, people gradually change their extremist attitudes when they no longer participate in environments

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[150] Hansen & Lid, 2020; Mattsson & Johansson, 2018, 2019; Christensen, 2015, 2019
[151] Horgan & Bjørgo, 2009
[152] Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009
[153] Marsden, 2017
[154] Barrelle, 2015
[155] Marsden, 2017
[156] Barrelle, 2015
[157] Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009: 3–5

and activities where their particular world view is confirmed by like-minded people. The individual's level of motivation and opportunity to participate in specific social communities is therefore a prerequisite for the person developing a connection to an environment that enables positive change.

Reintegration is thus about the individual being supported, but the person in question must also have the motivation and commitment required to undergo an often demanding process. However, it is just as much about society giving previously radicalised individuals and people convicted of terrorist acts the opportunity to participate in education, work and/or other activities.[158]

Barrelle[159] outlines three levels of societal engagement for people who have withdrawn from violent extremist activities or environments. At the first level, which is called the *minimal level of engagement*, we find the people who simply do not wish to engage with mainstream society, even if they have stopped using violence or other radical methods. They are 'disengaged without being deradicalised'.[160]

The next level of reintegration is the *cautious level of engagement* with society after exiting extremism. This means that the person is engaged in a limited or hesitant manner. By their own and any observer's assessment, they are not reaching their full potential for wellbeing.

The highest level, *a positive level of engagement*, represents full integration. This is the level a person is at when they have developed mutually respectful relationships with people around them. At the same time, it is important to point out that the ways out of extremism and into a connection with mainstream society are not linear, and that how a person reunites with the liberal democratic society after withdrawing from extremist environments varies from one person to the next.[161]

Our mapping of challenges, methods and measures within the field of reintegration in the Nordic countries thus builds on both Marsden's and Barrelle's holistic understanding. We will now show some of the factors that appear to be crucial to individuals' reintegration process, and what methods and measures the different actors use to stimulate the reintegration of radicalised individuals.

Risk assessments and the reintegration of radicalised individuals are two issues that have traditionally been dealt with separately in research. Our study shows, however, that risk assessments and reintegration should to some extent be seen as part of the same process, as risk assessment of radicalised individuals for the protection of society can have two purposes. The first purpose is, in addition to assessing the risk of the individual performing terrorism-related activity, to identify the individual's vulnerabilities, challenges and opportunities. In addition, risk assessment may be a tool for assessing the progress of a reintegration process. In this perspective, we would argue that risk assessments can be understood as a tool for starting an exit and reintegration process. Like other research, our study shows that a reintegration process is a two-way process: Society must allow, and ideally actively support, the reintegration of the individual, and the individual must show willingness to reintegrate.[162]

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[158] Barrelle, 2015, Marsden, 2016, 2017
[159] Barrelle, 2015
[160] Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009: 3–5
[161] Barrelle, 2015, Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009
[162] Marsden, 2017

4.3 Reintegration in practice – who is involved and what are their tasks?

The work on reintegration appears to be relatively uniform in all the Nordic countries. This is in part because the tasks of the public authorities involved are related to the authorities' original remit, which is relatively similar in the different countries. The local authorities and social services are responsible for providing housing, financial benefits when needed, work and/or education. Many emphasise the health services' responsibility for providing health care as particularly important, as a result of practitioners' tendency to interpret radicalisation and radicalised individuals as an expression of exclusion and mental ill-health, as discussed previously. The police have a special responsibility for the safety and security of individuals and are also tasked with monitoring developments in the risk associated with individuals. The correctional services are charged with preventing new crime through rehabilitation.

However, there are some organisational differences. In Finland, there are specific exit programmes in and outside prisons. Sweden has exit programmes in prisons. In addition, some NGO-based exit programmes play a central role in Finland and Sweden. Norway does not have an exit programme, but the correctional service offers mentoring programmes, and some municipalities offer mentoring. The Danish Prison and Probation Service offers people convicted of terrorist acts and radicalised inmates psychological and therapeutic assistance. The mentor comes from a corps of specially trained mentors affiliated to the correctional service, although the assistance is not part of a specific exit programme.

In addition to the specific responsibilities assigned to the individual actors, their work also coincides in several areas. A key task for all actors is to motivate radicalised individuals to change and to accept support and help. However, several practitioners also argued that safety and security, housing and financial resources for necessities such as food etc. must be in place for the individual to be able to accept support and achieve a behavioural and cognitive change. Secondly, work/education is considered particularly important, both as key arenas for acquiring new knowledge, but also social skills and new perspectives.

However, the interviewees emphasised that in many cases, close and long-term social/psychological follow-up and guidance of the radicalised individuals is required, as the persons carry with them practices and ways of thinking that could entail significant challenges in interactions with various workplaces, educational institutions, families, communities, etc. New cognitive and social skills must therefore be developed. In addition, acceptance in the family and in the local community is required for the radicalised individual to be able to reintegrate. Initiatives aimed at changing behaviour and thought patterns take time, which means it is important that the support offered to people in a reintegration process has a long-term perspective.

Like the research, the practitioners interviewed in this study point out that it is of key importance that a relationship of trust is established between the person or persons responsible for the reintegration initiative and the recipient of support and help.[163] Practitioners in all countries point out that trust is the cornerstone of any successful initiative, as it is trust that enables public and civil society organisations to help, and that allows the individual's motivation to be maintained and strengthened over time. Trust and trusting relationships and unbiased dialogue and interaction are essential for the effort to be successful.[164]

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[163] Christensen, 2015; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2018; Kohler, 2016
[164] Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2013; Christensen, 2015, 2020

4.4   The goal of a reintegration process

When is a person reintegrated, seen through the eyes of the authorities? This is a key question in any initiative that attempts to support a radicalised person and/or a person convicted of terrorist acts in their path to reintegration. The answer has an impact on 1) which initiatives are identified as relevant, 2) when the individual can be considered reintegrated, and 3) what is understood as success. Furthermore, setting clear goals and theories of change for the initiative is important for developing joint action plans across organisational boundaries, and for evaluating whether an initiative actually creates the desired changes.

Freedom of expression is one of the pillars of the Nordic societies. It has an impact on what is understood as signs and expressions of radicalisation, in combination with different actors' discretionary assessments of different statements and actions. The legislation thus influences what is considered an expression of radicalisation and violent extremism, and it also influences – in combination with an interpretation – whether a person can be understood as reintegrated.

In this area, there are nuances between the Nordic countries, as illustrated by e.g. Rasmus Paludan's Quran burning, which is viewed differently in Denmark and Finland. The example underlines the complex interaction between initiatives and legislation, which should be reflected in the authorities' initiatives in cases involving radicalisation and extremism.[165] It is therefore important to have clear goals, because it can be difficult in practice to determine whether a reintegration goal is met if the person still expresses racist and hateful perceptions of particular population categories. Despite the fact that such attitudes are disturbing and socially unacceptable, however, they are still legal in the Nordic region.

This study finds that the practitioners develop the goal for the process in collaboration with the individual concerned. However, the study also shows that practitioners' logic of action – and thus their perspective on the goal of the process – is informed by the laws that apply and their respective remits. In addition, conscious and subconscious understandings of radicalisation come into play. These factors affect which initiatives the practitioners believe are necessary and effective to support the individual's reintegration, and when the goal is reached. Practitioners act in this way on the basis of the implicit theory of change that underlies all welfare state thinking in the Nordic countries, as outlined in the introduction to this chapter. At the same time, the initiatives are also shaped by an understanding of radicalisation that reduces it to individualised psychosocial problems, a consideration we will return to in the conclusion.

In many of the goal descriptions, it is implicit that the initiative supports the individual in developing alternative networks and opportunities for participation and ultimately contribute to the person developing an alternative identity. The theories of change we have been presented with in the study, often implicit in the descriptions of the initiatives, can broadly be formulated as follows: The more the individual is immersed in prosocial contexts and activities linked to society's normal institutions, such as work, education, family, sports and prosocial networks, the less attractive it is to continue participating in extremist activities and environments, and the more the person's extremist attitudes will become nuanced and broken down.

However, our study reflects that there are variations in the descriptions of the process's goals. Some pointed out that the 'criterion for success' was that the individual ended their participation in violent extremist groups, with a particular focus on developing alternative actions and understandings. Through dialogue, the goal was to support the individual to refrain from all forms of acceptance, encouragement and practice of violence, but without it

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[165] Schmid 2013, Christensen & Mørck 2017

being crucial that they simultaneously reduced their extremist attitudes. At the same time, the objective of the dialogue about the cause of violence also seems to be to change the person talking about the violence. For the practitioners, the goal seems to be *both* to help the individual stop the acts of violence, *and* for the person to develop an alternative identity and a repertoire of actions that are deployed in practice.

Our study found that practitioners across local authorities and NGOs all called for a 'holistic' approach, without linking this to clear, concrete goals. On the contrary, the goal of the reintegration process was – in the interviews and in the workshop – described in loose terms, as 'to go from negative communities to positive communities', 'to give them so many legs to stand on that they don't fall back', 'to establish a new network' or 'to come from one world and be able to act in another'. The fact that the goals are not further specified may, however, be due to the method we used in the study and the way we conducted the interviews.

The outlined objectives all point to the goal that the person is both deradicalised and disengaged or achieves what Barrelle describes as the positive level of engagement, i.e. a level where the person is fully integrated and has harmonious relations with wider society. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that there are many levels of reintegration that are accepted in society. This means that a person can be 'disengaged without being deradicalised'. The person may also be at the level Barrelle describes as the 'minimum level of engagement', where the individual stops using violence, but without significantly – if at all – changing their political perspective.[166]

Regardless of the goal, several practitioners point to the absence of jointly prepared action plans and the problems this entails when the initiative involves more and different collaborators. The problem, as the research also points out, is that the implicit assumptions about goals and, in particular, which initiatives are believed to contribute to change, are linked to complex relationships that are often difficult to identify concerning the interaction between ideology (in a broad sense) and action. At the same time, it is relevant to ask how the initiative can be qualified when it is so difficult to identify whether the goal has been achieved. These difficulties may also make it unclear how far the authorities and the individual employee have the legal authority to go in such cases. Despite the often complex nature of these cases, it should be possible to qualify an initiative by ensuring that the objectives and/or action plan are made less ambiguous and by sharing them between the parties involved more often than seems to be the case today.

With the right initiative, previous research shows that the individual's social and professional position can be strengthened, enabling them to potentially develop a different and better life situation than before.[167] Ensuring that the person is included in alternative social environments and develops new acquaintances is essential for them to be able to develop new and positive opportunities and remain firm in a non-criminal existence. It is crucial to support the individual and create real access to opportunities for participating in activities and social networks outside the extremist environment.[168]

4.5 Defining objectives and the importance of cooperation between central and local government institutions and civil society organisations

Despite the fact that objectives are important for the work in any given case, research also shows how difficult it is in practice to conceptualise many of the intertwined aspects that come into play in a reintegration process and that enable operational goals to be defined that

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[166] Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009; Barrelle, 2015
[167] Bjørgo, 2009, 2011; Christensen, 2015; Barrelle, 2015; Marsden, 2017
[168] Barrelle, 2015; Marsden, 2017; Christensen, 2015, 2023

work in practice. It can be extremely difficult to identify motivation or how motivation is expressed. It may also be difficult to determine which initiatives support the person's transition away from violence, or to understand and conceptualise psychological and/or social change.[169] These aspects make it challenging to draw up and define clear goals for a reintegration process. At the same time, collaboration and lawful sharing of information, the development of common goals and action plans, and clarity in the coordination of case work and the division of responsibilities are essential for the successful reintegration of radicalised individuals.

Due to the complexity involved in a reintegration process, the initiative consists of many different services: sessions with a psychologist, substance abuse treatment, conflict management, job training, education, mentoring etc. A lack of common goals, meaning that the different agencies work according to their own objectives, can be a threat to a successful integration process. It therefore seems essential that a specific case coordinator manages the initiatives, and that there is a significant degree of national uniformity in case processing and initiatives.

In both the interviews and the workshop, the practitioners pointed out that successful reintegration is also conditional on successful cooperation across the local authorities, social services, health/psychiatry services, correctional services, police and intelligence services, and to some extent NGO-based initiatives. Such initiatives involve central and local government agencies and civil society organisations that work according to different remits and legislation. This makes cooperation more difficult, as both this study and other research have pointed out. The less standardised the practices, the more difficult it becomes for the individual actor to carry out its part of the task and to understand and respect the logic, remit and confidentiality of other actors.[170]

Our study also shows that while cooperation in Sweden is under development, cooperation in Denmark in particular is based on a high degree of formalisation with regard to which actors are involved and their remits. This seems to create a high level of coordination, and that the employees experienced having a reasonable overview of who was involved in the case, who was responsible for the further course of the case, and, thus, what initiatives were being used to support the individual. On the other hand, cooperation in Norway and Finland appears less coordinated, and – according to some practitioners – there is a lack of uniformity in what form the cooperation takes and what initiatives are employed in the country as a whole. This creates ambiguities and uncertainty about who is responsible for what, and who the individual actor can contact to contribute to joint efforts. Such cooperation tends to depend on personal connections and networks, making the remit for cooperation unclear and weak.

4.6   Needs and problems in a reintegration process and examples from the Nordic region

What strategies do the different actors apply when setting out to help persons convicted of terrorist acts and radicalised persons to reintegrate? And what measures do the different approaches and initiative models consist of?

The practitioners who participated in our study link the individual's renunciation of crime to the possibility of being reintegrated into a society that is perceived as open and supportive. This means that reintegration is not only conceived in theory, but also in practice, as a two-way process – a motivated person is provided support to develop alternative social and

[169] Marsden, 2017; Elshimi, 2022
[170] Thornton et al., 2012; Solhjell et al., 2022; Christensen et al., 2023

professional competencies and to be included in a society where legislation and institutions enable such reinvolvement.

The local social welfare authorities and NGOs in the survey aimed – regardless of country – to strengthen the individual's protective factors, thereby strengthening the person's sense of belonging to the general society. As the above objectives showed, the idea is that, over time, the initiatives contribute to the individual feeling that it is no longer an attractive option to seek out the old extremist and criminal environment because the price of reinvolvement is too high.

The correctional services and the social welfare authorities in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark are all based on an assessment of the individual's problems, which examines mental health, cognitive, social, behaviour correction, functional and security aspects.

Research and summaries of experience from the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) indicate that a successful reintegration process requires changing five factors in particular that focus on the individual: social conditions, the individual's capacity for social mastery, ideological perspective, repertoire of actions and self-perception/identity.[171] These aspects all come into play when the initiative also focuses on creating access to and contributing to the individual's inclusion in specific alternative communities, since this is crucial to the individual's ability to develop an alternative identity and network.[172]

Previous research[173] points out that the individual's need for support is influenced by factors such as

- how long they have been involved in the environment
- what position they held
- the extent to which they accept – and have participated in – acts of violence and violent incidents, intimidation and crime in general
- the complexity of the issues behind their involvement in the environment

However, the need for help and support is also affected by protective factors such as

- intact social networks outside the environment
- education, work experience and jobs
- housing conditions
- other factors that can support the person in developing in a positive direction

The forms of support the individual may need can be divided into six overarching domains. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that initiatives are almost always composed of different actors.

The six domains are mental health needs, cognitive needs, social needs, needs relating to behaviour correction, functional needs and needs relating to security.

Mental health needs: Are there substance abuse problems, trauma and/or post-traumatic stress or other mental and psychological problems?[174]

Our study showed that support related to mental health needs in practice consisted of

- psychological help, conversational therapy, motivational .

- substance abuse treatment.

- psychological/psychiatric follow-up: conversations and medication if relevant.

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[171] Barrelle, 2015, p. 6; Marsden, 2017; Papp et al., 2020
[172] Christensen, 2015, 2019; Marsden, 2017
[173] Bjørgo, 2009; Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2015; Christensen, 2015
[174] Papp et al., 2020

- support to deal with any psychological challenges; if these are not dealt with, the person is more likely to return to the environment. Helping the individual to be able to recognise their feelings and manage them.

Cognitive needs: Is there a need for dialogue about the violence-promoting ideology, underlying reasons for participation or anything else that can provide greater self-awareness and a more nuanced understanding of social relations in general? Is there a need to introduce grey areas into a black-and-white world view and create awareness of the importance of reflection and critical thinking?[175]

Our study showed that the support related to cognitive needs in practice consisted of dialogue

- about what the person has been involved in, why they want support, why they want to change their life, and how they want to do it.

- about violence, the use of violence and the consequences of violence.

- that initiates thoughts and reflections: What do you think about this? Why did it turn out like that? What did you do in that situation? How could it have ended differently? What were the consequences? What consequences do you think it has for your child that you look different from the other parents?

- about the person's ideological beliefs, so that they also become conscious of unreflective parts of their own ideology-based attitudes, as these can potentially develop into a problem that destroys opportunities to remain in a job or be accepted in an alternative environment.

- about what experiences the person has from a criminal lifestyle and whether these can be used in a non-criminal life.

- that seeks to shed light on the dissonance between what the person thinks and does and their overall goal. This means that, through dialogue, the intervention identifies where the person wants to go in life and what strategies they intend to use. If the person expresses that they are willing to use violence, the intervention may seek to create reflection on the consequences and, for example, place this in contrast to the goal of e.g. becoming a good father. In this way, the person can feel that they are not living the life they really want to, which can be a strong motivating factor for change.

- that gives nuances to different ways of being – and understanding the world. Through dialogue, the person can for example be shown that there are many ways to see the world, or that there are many ways to practice a religious faith.

- that creates more reflection on the consequences of their own choices. Careful consideration should go into how benefits and negative aspects of a choice are recommended or identified, so that the person does not feel guilty about the choices they make, but is made aware of the consequences of them and therefore makes an informed choice. If the initiative attributes too much value to the different choices, it could put the person in a situation where they feel that they have to end their involvement with the initiative.

- that creates reflection on the society the person should become a part of. This may be about what to say to parents and at school about where they have been. It can be about how to practice your religion without being threatened and without becoming involved in extremist circles again, and without being stigmatised in the local mosque.

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[175] Christensen & Bjørgo, 2017

- about the person's dreams that also reflect a future perspective. Support to make even small dreams come true can build a bridge to a belief in a different life, belief in support from society and that change is possible.

Social needs: Exploring past and present social networks where there is potential for reconnection, exploration and strengthening family ties (in cases where the family is identified as a positive factor in the reintegration process). This may also include identifying barriers to social reintegration, such as exploring levels of isolation and stigma, as well as social skills, anger and conflict management skills etc.[176]

Our study showed that the support related to social needs in practice consisted of

- dialogue that creates reflection on how the person can handle any stigma, and how they answer and what they do.

- building a 'life story' by giving the person some 'normal' experiences. This can be done via weekend trips, activities etc. combined with conversations about how they can talk about things with others and thus participate in conversations when others talk about their experiences. The goal is to avoid the person having a significant gap in their life narrative from their time in prison or only having references from extremist movements. The idea is not that the individual should lie about or avoid talking about their past, but rather to create an awareness that how and when they tell their colleagues and new friends about their past can be important. Such an awareness can also reduce the risk that the past suddenly comes up as an unwanted topic and could lead to the person being excluded.

- establishing cooperation with the family and offering support, thereby creating a belief in the 'radicalised person' that there is a way back, and that they can have confidence in local and central government institutions. Emphasise that society has something to offer.

- dialogue that asks questions that help the person see opportunities and meaning, and that support the person in thinking new thoughts. The conversation partner should address various aspects and consequences, but without making choices.

- dialogue as part of a mentoring initiative that also seeks to facilitate access to alternative social arenas in order to help the person develop alternative perspectives and new social skills through participation and inclusion. This also makes it clear that it is possible to return to society, something several practitioners point out as important.

Behaviour correction needs: How does the person react in conflict situations or other situations that trigger difficult emotions? How can conflicted and difficult situations be resolved without the use of threats, intimidation and violence? Or is it necessary to try to help the person acquire other ways of reacting than those they have learned through participation in a violent and criminal environment (and perhaps also before they entered this environment)?[177]

Our study showed that the support related to behaviour correction needs in practice consisted of

- working on strengthening trust in others, and on reducing suspicion and fear. Here, for example, a 'reality check' can be carried out, which involves examining how big or small a threat is through conversation with the individual. Former participants in violent and extremist groups may be afraid of reprisals from other group members long after leaving the group. There are examples of a practitioner discussing with the

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[176] Papp et al., 2020

[177] Christensen, 2019

person whether and to what extent it is realistic to expect reprisals for having left the environment. In order for the assessment of the threat to be in line with reality, those who conduct the conversation must have thorough knowledge of the relevant environment.

- dialogue about behaviour. Many former participants in extreme movements have strong social skills in the environment they come from, while it can be difficult for them to behave in alternative social arenas. Here, support from a mentor can be crucial since a mentor is often familiar with other social codes and can therefore facilitate access to an alternative social environment. When the person participates and, over time, identifies with an alternative environment, opportunities are created for the person to become aware of any entrenched assumptions and perspectives related to the past and at the same time develop new perspectives and social skills. This also makes it clear that it is possible to return to society, something several practitioners point out as important. With respect to establishing a relationship with an alternative environment, research also indicates that having the support of a mentor who helps to facilitate access to specific, alternative communities can improve opportunities for inclusion in new communities by supporting the individual's development of a new repertoire of behaviour and new norms.[178]

- dialogue about what different roles the person has and wants to have, as well as the development of different perspectives on how they want to act. The person may need to think through what to do in different contexts through dialogue.

- practising using ordinary things, taking public transport, contacting the authorities etc.

- creating reflections on what it is like to go to work, and how to behave towards an employer, what kind of clothes you can wear, what you can talk to other employees about – possibly combined with the social welfare authorities having contact with the employer.

Functional needs: Need for housing, education, work, financial help, removal of tattoos, relocation, help with administrative errands etc.[179]

Our study showed that the support related to functional needs in practice consisted of

- helping the person contact the right municipal authorities, to open a bank account etc. In this way, the initiative again seeks to strengthen the relationship with and trust in society.

- support to get housing, find work, take an education or other activities.

- driving the person to the educational institution until they know how to get there themselves.

- dialogue that generates knowledge via reflection on participation in general society: choice of education, work and work identity. The idea is to create perspectives of the world and of the person's own life and the goals they set to create a future.

Security needs: Assessment of whether the participant is threatened (e.g. by former group members) and whether the person poses a threat to others.[180]

Our study showed that the support related to security needs in practice consisted of

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[178] Marsden, 2017; Christensen, 2015, 2019, 2023; Mørck et al., 2023
[179] Papp et al., 2020
[180] (ibid.)

- assessing the safety and security in the local area in terms of whether the person is threatened by members of the former group or by family members still involved in the extremist group.

- the social welfare authorities, the police and the person in question discussing whether there is a threat scenario in the areas where the person is located.

- ensuring that the person can call someone locally, such as the police or similar, when they become worried.

The last point in particular underlines the intersection between risk assessment and reintegration.

It should also be mentioned that the timing of an initiative is crucial for success. The initiative should not be started after a long assessment if the need and motivation is there *now*, as motivation is transient and cannot necessarily be re-established.[181]

4.7   Summary and discussion of the work on reintegration

This part of the report has shown some of the many good initiatives in the Nordic countries to help individuals develop a non-criminal lifestyle and reintegrate into society. At the same time, given the scope of the study, we only have limited knowledge of how reintegration work is carried out in practice by different employees in the different countries.

The descriptions we have been given also appear in some areas to be 'ideal practice' or key principles of practice. In conclusion, we will therefore point out some of the aspects we believe there is reason to assess in the practices presented to us from different places in the Nordic region.

We described initially in this part of the report that the Nordic initiatives have sprung from already existing social work practices. Despite multifaceted opportunities for applying interventions, we believe that there is reason to reassess several aspects of current practice, as it seems that the initiatives do not always meet the individual's needs in practice. We also believe that it can be questioned whether the initiatives will be vulnerable without great awareness of whether the general efforts also cover the particular needs associated with the reintegration of this target group. It is important in this respect to identify the limitations of the established initiatives to a greater extent. Therefore, in conclusion, we will raise some questions about the aspects of existing practice we believe there is reason to reassess.

In this part of the report, we have argued that common goals and action plans for all actors involved are important to strengthening efforts. Both Denmark and Sweden have national competence centres for extremism. This makes it possible to offer uniform written material and courses to practitioners at the central and local government level. The competence centres seem to contribute to a standardisation of the initiatives and a joint understanding of the problems associated with extremism. The disadvantage of this standardisation is that, as in the rest of Scandinavia, the initiatives implemented for reintegration and raising understanding of radicalisation and (violent) extremism are predominantly under the auspices of the public authorities.

As such, in a situation where practice is established on the basis of existing initiatives and the knowledge that is used is also produced by central government agencies, it is mainly such public sector organisations that are able to work with the target group. Although external researchers and other experts also participate in the centres' knowledge production, there is in practice a small group of practitioners who decide what knowledge should form the basis for the initiatives.

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[181] Christensen & Bjørgo, 2017; Christensen, 2020; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2013

Local and central government bodies have a special role to play in this field, but so do NGOs and other non-public actors, as these are positioned differently and can offer other forms of initiatives and relations. Therefore, it seems that there are several advantages to gain by including more collaboration with other non-public actors. The kinds of problems that spring from participating in extreme environments also seem to entail aspects that are not addressed by existing initiatives. Our investigations show that establishing closer cooperation between the public system and NGOs can strengthen the initiatives.

For example, the individual's window of motivation and openness to receive support is often narrow. It can therefore be of great importance whether an actor is easy to contact and available when a person from this target group is motivated to receive help. But can municipal authorities meet the individual's needs at very short notice? Or should it be considered whether an initiative can more easily be established the moment the opportunity arises, and whether the local authorities and other public bodies are best positioned to establish contact with this specific target group?

The public sector has a wide range of initiatives to offer and implement compared to an NGO. Yet a municipal employee is at a disadvantage – in this context – in that they are part of a public system. As several practitioners pointed out, being part of a system can make it more difficult to develop trusting relationships with people in the target group, because they may have negative feelings about this system. Should it therefore be considered, as we saw in Finland, to establish more joint initiatives with NGOs – without the NGOs being curtailed by demands from central and local authorities?

Generally speaking, the actors have good experience of mentor-based initiatives, regardless of whether they are NGO-based or under the auspices of the public authorities.[182] One of the reasons seems to be that mentoring is an open and multifaceted approach, where the mentor has a particularly strong opportunity to build trust, because there is often plenty of time and it is possible for the mentor and mentee to do a variety of enjoyable activities together. This means that mentors are well positioned to develop close relationships with the individuals. But are mentors and other professionals the only ones who can do so? Or should the different initiatives to a greater extent include using – to the extent that the individual is open to it – friends, family and others from the person's network in initiatives aimed at reintegration?

Despite the fact that we argue for the development of common action plans and objectives, reintegration, following participation in an extremist group, is a multifaceted issue. The question is: To what degree should the initiatives be standardised from the outset, and are there any new actors, such as NGOs, friends and other networks, that can, or to some extent should, be involved – before the action plan is drawn up?

Reintegrating radicalised individuals is based on both social security and social care logics. The initiatives entail both controlling the individuals to protect society and supporting them in their efforts to reintegrate. In practice, this is difficult to achieve because the control dimension can reduce the radicalised individuals' confidence in the initiatives, including assistance measures. The consequence may be that the support services are prevented from providing relevant services. To succeed in reintegration, there must be room to provide assistance. This means that the control dimension must not become too dominant, as some returned foreign fighters have experienced.[183] At the same time, the health and welfare services cannot get too strongly involved in control tasks. The significance of the police assuming the role of social workers, as found in this and previous studies, is also uncertain. The reintegration of radicalised individuals entails a strong mix of help and control. How this

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[182] Christensen, 2015, By a former mentor in Aarhus, Denmark, 2019, Oban, 2022
[183] Kristiansen & Lid, 2019

inherent challenge in reintegration work can best be handled should be given special attention in further work.

Our findings also show that there is an unclear understanding of the target group. Practitioners generally call for more knowledge and greater problematisation of how the target group is understood in practice. They point out that prejudice and ill-founded opinions affect people's perception of various issues. For example, they refer to different perceptions of the challenges that people who have returned from fighting in the Syrian war or in Ukraine bring back with them. The latter group, for example, is not expected to have the same type of problems as those returning from Syria, despite the fact that both groups come from wars characterised by human rights violations and war crimes.

The same problems apply to the understanding of radicalisation, for while radicalisation in the research literature refers to a process whereby the individual, via participation in radicalised and extreme political environments – be it online or offline – acquires radicalised perceptions of the world and (potentially) a violent practice, these aspects tend to disappear in practice. In this Nordic study, we have identified a clear tendency for practitioners to reduce radicalisation and involvement in violent extremist groups to an expression of individualised social and psychological issues. Specifically, this thinking seems to be particularly characteristic of public sector initiatives. This does not seem to be the case with the NGO initiatives included in this study. We will return to this discussion later.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, an unclear understanding of the target group can lead to negative consequences in practice. We assume that the diffuse perception of the target group is an expression of the complexity of the radicalisation phenomenon. It can be very difficult to identify a connection between the reasons for, and the impact of, participation and the initiatives that are most needed. However, as described in Section 2.3 on ambiguity concerning the target group, social and psychological factors may be reasons for participation. At the same time, there seems to be a tendency that the initiatives do not actively relate to whether, and to what extent, participation has changed the participant. When the initiative mainly focuses on dealing with an individualised form of exclusion and consequent dissatisfaction and mental health problems, it may not always meet its objective completely. For example, someone may travel to Syria to fight for the Islamic State due to dissatisfaction with the status quo and experience of racism and exclusion, while others become involved in right-wing extremist groups because of they have a vague feeling of dissatisfaction and are looking for excitement. Exclusion is linked to both structural issues and the individual's experience of exclusion.

In practice, neither of these issues is addressed to any great extent. Both participation in an extremist group understood as a community of practice, where the individual acquires ideologically based explanatory models, and politicised feelings of dissatisfaction – regardless of whether they are superficial or deep – can shape the individual's perspective, identity and repertoire of actions. As a result, some of the causes, perceptions and actions linked to the individual's radicalisation, socialisation and involvement in an extremist group remain unidentified, ununderstood or unaccommodated.

Participating in radicalised and extremist groups may, to varying degrees, have negative side effects. At the same time, it is also important to recognise that participation in extremist environments is an expression of a search for something and/or an experience of socially created conditions, which has led to involvement in a specific social milieu and an associated political cause. This involvement and potential desire to change the status quo may be important to investigate and endeavour to support in a reintegration process, but within the rules of democracy.

Previous research shows that participation in violent extremist groups often leads to stigmatisation of the individual, and that this stigmatisation can lead to isolation and

psychosocial challenges.[184] However, the pivotal question is whether initiatives that are mainly based on a psychosocial understanding of the target group also focus sufficiently on, and thus contribute to, the individual developing tools to act politically within the bounds of a liberal democratic society. In other words: Do the initiatives sufficiently include measures aimed at, for example, helping the individual become aware of political activities and developing democratic tools and strategies to fight racism and exclusion? More mentoring is one relevant measure, perhaps with a connection to people who 'know the feeling', who know how to deal with stigma and exclusion, and who know how a political commitment to combatting racism and exclusion for specific groups in society can be established based on a non-violent strategy.[185]

As mentioned, we have also identified a difference between public-sector initiatives and initiatives run by NGOs.[186] The NGOs work on the basis of therapy and mentoring with specifically defined target groups – right-wing extremists, fighters returning from the Syrian war and participants from other environments, such as members of motorcycle gangs and criminal gangs, where violence is considered legitimate and directed towards selected categories of people.

Some of the NGO mentors who participated in this study have previously been part of a violent and extremist group. This has contributed to one of the NGOs' strengths, namely that their initiatives are based on detailed insight into the practices, culture and socialisation norms in the environments in which their target group has been involved. This means that the NGOs have sound knowledge of ideology and ideologically justified violence. It also means that they may have more detailed knowledge of the context and, in particular, feelings related to the practice of violence, ideology and participation, than among public sector employees. As a result, the practices that are developed can be informed by the implications of participating in violent and extremist environments. That does not mean that others cannot learn about many of these matters, and nor do we mean to argue that only former participants can gain knowledge about the mechanisms that are in play when participating in extreme environments, and thus what is needed in a reintegration process. However, we would argue that the mentors who have previously participated in extremist groups have different insights and feelings than those who have not. Other types of employees will have other advantages, and combining these different forms of knowledge to a greater extent than today is precisely what we believe can strengthen the initiatives in what is an extremely complex field.

Ideology constitutes a unique element in this work. The arguments for and against working directly on ideology are numerous, and there are many different approaches. Based on our previous research and this survey, we hold that work on ideology is important.[187] As one practitioner said, it can be crucial that the work is aimed at the radicalised person's often one-sided thinking, hostile and dehumanising perceptions of others, violent practices and the experience that others do not wish them well. This work is pivotal to create initiatives aimed at making the individual aware of ideologically informed assumptions and that can help develop the radicalised person's perspectives and ways of thinking and promote social and professional skills and patterns of behaviour that are compatible with the values and practices of a liberal democracy. An ideologically informed perspective that divides people up

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[184] Bjørgo & Horgan, 2009; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2013; Papp et al., 2020
[185] Marsden, 2017
[186] This identified difference between public-sector initiatives and NGOs may, in addition to the other described factors, also be related to the specific people we interviewed. We interviewed practitioners from NGOs who themselves work as mentors, while in the public sector, we interviewed managers or coordinators who do not work directly as mentors. Mentors in the public services would possibly promote different perspectives than their managers, and it is possible that these perspectives would be closer to the perspectives of the NGO representatives.
[187] Christensen, 2015, pp. 196–221

into friends and foes can – if these aspects are not addressed – quickly impede inclusion in a workplace, isolate the person in education, and otherwise disrupt the reintegration process.

We therefore regard it as essential that much greater focus is placed on the background for the individual's perspectives and also on how ideology works – that is, how each ideology categorises and subdivides the world, and how the practitioners can discuss the consequences of ideologically conditioned arguments and perspectives – without this degenerating into a confrontational discussion about the pros and cons of a given point of view.

Another initiative of which, from what we could see, there was little awareness, was providing support to access alternative experiences. Such experiences are relevant for building a non-extremist identity and are important in social conversations at work, school etc. For instance, how should you introduce yourself at a new educational institution or workplace if you have spent the last 5 to 15 years in either a right-wing extremist group or in prison? Such issues must be made an integral part of initiatives related to reintegration.

Against this background, we have identified the following challenges:

- What do we assess and based on what criteria do we define a person as having become radicalised?

- On what background and with what knowledge are the assessments made?

- What professional knowledge do practitioners rely on when diagnosing a person and ascertaining that psychological factors are the underlying causes of radicalisation?

- How can practitioners exercising professional judgement develop more reflective skills on the causes of radicalisation?

- Exclusion is often used as an explanation for and cause of radicalisation. What do we mean more specifically when we talk about exclusion? And is the answer to exclusion a psychosocial initiative?

- Does it matter to the initiatives if we distinguish between crime and violent extremism?

- Should initiatives to a greater extent be developed in cooperation with NGOs and other non-governmental and public authorities, so as to gain greater knowledge of and easier access to the target group?

4.7.1   Recommendations

Initiatives

- Initiatives to promote reintegration must be tailored to the individual and their background, radicalisation process, needs and motivation to leave extremist environments/positions and reintegrate into the liberal democratic society. Initiatives adapted to the person's individual needs, motivation and interests create greater ownership of the process and thus better opportunities for success.

- Reintegration efforts can be strengthened through the development of clear theories of change, strategies and goals for the reintegration process. This would help clarify whether the various practitioners agree on the issues in a specific case and which initiatives will be best suited to help. It may also serve to establish more uniform practices among the various practitioners. Clearer goals for the work may also make it easier to identify the employees best qualified to do this work and to evaluate whether the initiative is working as intended – or why it did not work as intended.

- Strengthen awareness of the agent-client relationship, as this relationship is often crucial for developing trust and building relationships. It is important to consider how

employees can develop, or whether they already have, the right skills to instil trust and non-confrontational and open-minded dialogue.

- Strengthen knowledge of methods for establishing relationships and trust with the target group, so that the actors are able to offer relevant services.

- Facilitate comprehensive and long-term follow-up. Reintegration often takes a long time, and the work can be strengthened by considering from the outset how it is possible to secure housing, a job/education, financial resources and necessary social/psychological follow-up over time.

- Initiate reintegration measures before release. It is important to draw up an action plan and initiate reintegration measures while the person is still serving their sentence. The initiatives implemented in prison must also be linked to the initiatives outside the prison.

- Strengthen mentoring initiatives. Mentoring is an important initiative to promote reintegration, and appears to work well in parts of the Nordic region. The establishment of professionally trained mentoring services where they do not already exist should be considered. Consideration should also be given to how mentors can support a transition from prison to general society. At the same time, it is important to include guidance and continuous follow-up and support of mentors.

- Develop guidance, support and follow-up of the employees working on these issues. These cases can take many years and can be particularly demanding.

- Strengthen knowledge of how to prevent stigma in the local community, and how to get the local community to contribute positively to the reintegration process.

- Strengthen knowledge of the target groups' experience of the initiatives they have participated in. A better understanding of what types of initiatives are perceived as positive, for whom and under what conditions, is important for the further development of reintegration initiatives.

Collaboration

- Establish a municipal coordinator who can coordinate reintegration efforts, so that common goals and action plans are drawn up, and all actors involved know who they can contact. A coordinator will also help to stabilise the link between the different actors involved – such as between the police and local authorities. Many such links between actors, especially in Norway, Sweden and Finland, appear to be individual and dependent on personal relationships and thus vulnerable to personnel changes. A collaboration that works poorly or breaks down is a threat to a reintegration process.

- From the outset, consideration should be given to how it can be ensured that employees working on the cases are competent, and that the key partners collaborate well together. This can be particularly difficult if there are relatively few cases, which is the situation in many places. In Denmark and Sweden, competence centres have been established that work with initiatives related to violent extremism. These contribute to a standardisation of practice, but, at the same time, centres are an expensive solution. Another solution could be to establish national 'task forces' to help with the cases.

- Establish cooperation between public services and competent NGOs. Some NGOs have special expertise in the field. Public services and NGOs can have different kinds of insight, competencies and initiatives. Closer cooperation can potentially contribute to more exchange of experience and strengthen overall efforts to support reintegration processes.

Based on the results of this study, we will also provide four recommendations that apply to both the work on risk assessments and the reintegration of radicalised individuals.

- The national authorities, especially in Sweden, Norway and Finland, must take far greater responsibility for developing preventive work against radicalisation and violent extremism in general, and work on risk assessment of radicalised individuals in particular. The authorities should standardise how the work on risk assessments is organised, develop a system and methodology for risk assessments and provide clear guidelines on how to interpret the legislation on the sharing of personal data.

- Strengthen knowledge of radicalisation in order to develop a common understanding of the target group. This is in addition to raising individual practitioners' awareness of when they shift from their professional knowledge towards personal assumptions about the phenomenon, the background to the interpretation and what information is used as the basis for the assessment.

- Diagnoses should exclusively be made by qualified personnel. Through the study, we have heard that many different practitioners make diagnoses without having a background in psychology or psychiatry.

- Critically assess the potential negative effects of the police's and health and welfare services' initiatives overlapping. Our study shows a tendency towards a more holistic approach, where the initiatives and institutional logics overlap to a greater extent than before. The result, as previously described, is that the police become social workers, and the social workers take on control duties. We believe it is important to be aware of and decide – in practice – whether this is desirable, taking into account the advantages and disadvantages.

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