



# Denmark's deradicalisation efforts

## Fact sheet

Deradicalisation is part of the Danish Government's preventive efforts, as described in the Government's National action plan, "A Common and safe future", which was presented in January 2009.

Deradicalisation is also a key element of the preventive efforts in the EU which Denmark contributes to.

In the present context, the term "deradicalisation" is understood as denoting the mechanisms which can help individuals to leave extremist circles or dissociate themselves from extremism. Thus, it refers both to the concepts of deradicalisation and disengagement.

### *Denmark as EU lead country*

In 2008, Denmark accepted the invitation of Gilles de Kerchove EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator to act as lead country on deradicalisation. This means that Denmark has undertaken the tasks of gathering knowledge and research within the area, and sharing this knowledge with the other EU member countries. On the basis of a study among EU countries, the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs in 2010 published the report: "*The challenge of extremism – Examples of deradicalisation and disengagement programmes in the EU*".

Furthermore, the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs has launched two larger EU projects that contribute to knowledge and development within the field of deradicalisation.

### *Project: "Deradicalisation – targeted intervention"*

In 2009, the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs was given EU approval for a 3-year pilot project on deradicalisation. Thus, in co-operation with the municipalities of Copenhagen and Aarhus, East Jutland Police District and the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the Ministry launched the project.

The project was launched because of several and recurring instances in Denmark, where professionals involved in the local cooperation between schools, social services and the police (SSP) and other actors voiced growing concerns about young people expressing extremist views or exhibiting a

discriminatory behaviour towards other groups in their environment. At the time the authorities who received such reports, or became aware of such occurrences, often seemed to lack the relevant tools or measures to help the young persons in question.

The aim of the project is to develop tools which can be adapted to the individual needs of such youngsters and give the individual young person the long-term support and advice that is needed in order to break with and stay out of extremist circles.

One part of the project aims to develop a concept for exit talks targeted at young people who are part of extremist groups. The other part of the project aims to develop a concept for mentoring/resource person schemes aimed at young people who socialize with extremists, express extremist views and/or exhibit discriminatory behaviour towards other groups in their immediate environment.

The mentoring/resource person schemes and the exit talks are intended as voluntary offers to young persons. Therefore, a central aspect of the project is to develop methods for reaching these young people and motivating them to participate in a scheme with the objective of helping them find constructive social alternatives to extremist groups.

### *Competency development*

A group of 20 mentees/resource persons and a group of municipal employees from Copenhagen and Aarhus have undergone training in order to be able to supervise and support the mentees. There is an ongoing focus on competency development of mentees/resource persons and municipal employees.

### *Focus on experience and knowledge*

The project is concerned with gathering and sharing experiences on a continuous basis, so as to attain a greater level of know-how that can strengthen the future preventive efforts in Denmark as well as internationally. In addition to this, an international Workshop has been conducted, where experiences with reaching and motivating young people, who show signs of radicalisation or are part of extremist groups, were shared and discussed. Furthermore,



two studies have been launched, a handbook containing tools and information on how to handle radicalisation targeted at staff with youth contact has been composed, and funds have been allocated for both a national conference in October 2011 and a final international conference during the Danish EU Presidency in May 2012.

#### *Project: "Deradicalisation – Back on track"*

In May 2011 the Danish Prison and Probation Service and the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs were given EU approval for a 3-year project on deradicalisation in prisons.

Research and experiences show, that there is a risk of inmates being influenced by radical and extreme positions. In the distinctive environment of the prisons, identity issues often arise, meaning for instance that inmates may seek new social relations and solidarities. Hence, a prison may be a conducive setting for radicalization and extremism.

As part of the Government's action plan "A common and safe future", the Danish Prison and Probation Service is responsible for a number of initiatives concerned with preventing radicalisation in prisons. However, none of these initiatives target individuals, who are already involved in extremism.

The aim of this project is partly to reduce the risk of inmates who are either convicted under the Danish anti-terror legislation or involved in extremist environments, to relapse into illegal behaviour or recommence the contact to extremist networks. In order to reduce the long term risks, individual support will be offered to inmates through mentoring schemes as well as involvement of families and social networks who can play a key role in supporting and re-integrating the person/group in question into the society.

The key activities will be selecting and training a group of mentors with specific focus on cognitive skills and dialogical techniques, developing tools for involving relatives and social networks. Furthermore, the project focuses on exchange of knowledge and experience e.g. through participation in study tours and conferences.

#### **"Deradicalisation – targeted intervention"**

##### *Project partners*

The project's working group and steering committee includes representatives from the municipalities of Copenhagen and Aarhus, East Jutland Police District, the Danish Security and Intelligence Service and the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs. The mandate of the working group is to develop the project and tackle the professional challenges of the project. Personal data of individuals are not exchanged in the working group and the steering committee. In addition to the formal partnerships, there is a close co-operation with the Danish Prison and Probation Service, universities, and other relevant partners.

##### *Financing*

The total budget for the project is € 1,158,154  
The EU supports the project with € 747,133  
Additionally, the project is financed by the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs and the Danish Security and Intelligence Service with € 100.000

##### *Contact*

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#### **"Deradicalisation – Back on track"**

##### *Project partners*

The Danish Prison and Probation Service and the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs develop and implement the project in close collaboration. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service will continually be involved in an advisory group to coordinate the project.

##### *Financing*

The total budget for the project is € 334.644  
Hence the EU supports the project with € 267.715  
The Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs and the Danish Prison and Probation Service each finances the project with € 33.464

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