DRIVE

Resisting Radicalisation Through Inclusion

Radicalisation in North-West Europe: The State of the Art

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DRIVE project information

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Part A: State of the Art in Radicalisation Research

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1. Introduction

This report outlines the current state of the art knowledge and practices in contemporary radicalisation research. It focuses on the gaps in our understanding of the causes and processes that lead to radicalisation, in particular in the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and the UK.

In this introduction, we will first outline the premises on which the DRIVE project is based and the research that has informed its rationale. In the second section, we present the results from six months of desk research into four hypotheses that explore enabling factors that thus far remain underexplored: spatial dynamics, identity politics, intergenerational change and reciprocal radicalisation. The third section will focus on the main knowledge gaps that were identified, such as the importance of understanding the role of social exclusion in radicalisation. The fourth section translates these gaps into concrete research and policy questions that will allow researchers and policy makers to develop new strategies of investigation and intervention by exploring new avenues in understanding the social context of radicalisation. The final section will explain how the DRIVE project seeks to address these knowledge gaps, how it influences the project's methodology and how it will address the most urgent research questions at the nexus of radicalisation, extremism and social inclusion.

This report focuses on four countries in North-West Europe, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK, which were chosen because of their significant and comparable patterns of post-war migration and the occurrence and intensification of far right and Islamist violence in the last two decades.

Variables of radicalisation

Existing research on radicalisation processes has identified a variety of variables from the individual to the structural levels: Socio-economics (United States Agency International Development 2009), gender (Ness 2008), psychological (Horgan 2005), religious (Laqueur 1999), ideological (Hussain 2007), theological (Baker 2011), the impact of globalisation (Devji 2008), Islamophobia (Abbas, 2019), cultural (Roy 2002), political (Change Institute 2008), the

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social movement theories (Wiktorowicz 2005; Sageman 2008), and sociological accounts (Roy 2002; Mythen 2012). Most of this knowledge has been acquired in a short space of time, between 2004 and today. Much of the literature identifies differences among three levels, the micro-, meso-, and macro-level. Scholarship on violent radicalisation has primarily focused on processes at the individual level/micro factors. The micro-level focuses on individuals and relies principally on psychological explanations as to why individuals become radicalised. Various models have emerged with micro-level factors at the centre. For instance, the staircase model identifies 'perceived deprivation and the perception of (un)fairness' as the basis for radicalisation (Moghaddam 2005). There are also models around the concept of 'personal grievances' and 'emotional motivations', which echo perspectives on meaning and meaning-making as being the main driver of radicalisation (Du Bois 2019; Jasper 2018; Goodwin and Jasper 2004). Overall, motivational factors at this level include a sense of purpose, adventure, belonging, acceptance, status, material enticements, fear of repercussions and expected rewards in the afterlife.

Dominant models of radicalisation

One of the other dominant models in the field focusses on how individuals become radicalised within social groups and networks, using, amongst others, social movement theories (Diani and McAdam 2003; Wiktorowicz 2003; Sageman 2011; Assche et al. 2017). The meso-level directs attention to the wider social milieu, or groups, that may influence the radicalisation process (du Bois et al. 2019). This level highlights the key role of group interrelationships, intrarelationships and leadership in radicalisation. Radical groups develop a strong in-group identity that contrasts with an 'inferior' out-group, which is 'perceived as accountable for grievances of the in-group' and as such, a legitimate target (Avramidis et al. 2019).[1] Such groups can emerge in different settings, such as schools, places of worship, prisons, friend groups, and increasingly, virtually. Even though calls for embedding group and network dynamics have become increasingly common (e.g. Gunning and Baron 2013; Della Porta et al. 2017), social movement theorists are regularly criticised for not systematically integrating macro-, meso- and micro-level analysis. Whereas all three levels have been expanded upon separately, most studies fail to incorporate a multi-level and relational perspective (Zald and McCarthy 1979; Platt and Williams 2002). As a result, most perspectives remain unable to offer sufficient empirically-based explanations as to what makes some individuals more susceptible or resistant than others to engage in violence (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010).

Another dominant model focusses on the structural/macro motivations that can impact violent radicalisation. Traditional social movement theorists, for example, focussed on explaining the

[1] These perspectives borrow from and build on social identity theory (e.g. Brewer 2001; Gamson 2009)

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political opportunity structures that facilitate or obstruct mobilisation and radicalisation (Meyer and Minkoff 2004; Arzheimer and Carter 2006). These factors typically include perspectives on repression, corruption, unemployment, inequality, discrimination, (relative) deprivation, histories of intergroup hostility, war, conflict and external state interventions and tutelage (Khalil and Zeuthen 2016; Mythen, Walklate, and Khan 2009). A combination of these factors can reinforce a mind-set characterised by 'cognitive closure', 'clear-cut answers', and 'an intolerance of ambiguity' (or low cognitive complexity), which cognitive orientations are believed to be overrepresented among those who seek extremist solutions (Gambetta and Hertog 2009). The most dominant macro accounts come from the field of sociology (Roy 2002; Mythen and Walklate 2015) and history (Devji 2008), which have highlighted the role of globalisation and modernity in transforming religious and ethnic minorities in Europe.

Rather than focusing solely on individual factors, researchers also integrate specific environmental factors at the social, economic, cultural or political level when 'examining the emergence of political mass violence at a collective' level (Veldhuis and Staun 2009). Supranational and national socio-political contexts should be considered when studying radicalisation. Processes including 'globalisation, migration, and virtualisation' (546) have created new tensions, and identities are increasingly relevant politically (van Stekelenburg 2014). As a result, the current context is one where conflicts are both rooted in local grievances or tensions within wider (supra) national systems. Frustrated groups caught at the crux of these conflicts 'demand changes in their own (radical) way' (van Stekelenburg 2014, 548). In this way, radicalisation can be interpreted as a failure of the modern state to peacefully channel these demands. These accounts describe the macro-social conditions that support the radicalisation of some individuals well, but they do not explain why only a (very small) group of individuals seems sensitive to these conditions (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010). Not only do they not explain why violence is the preferred option by some individuals, but their accounts also do not adequately explain the relationship between the enabling factors and micro-level mechanisms. It is therefore a highly important relationship to study, as there 'is a tension between the relatively fast changes at the macro level and the slower pace of change at the psychosocial level' (van Stekelenburg 2014, 548).

The entanglement of online and offline spaces

Another crucial factor today is the role that the Internet plays in radicalisation. The Internet is central in radical engagement, both amongst extreme right and jihadist groups. Communicating through the Internet is easy and cheap (Koehler 2014). The Internet has also enabled the creation of online networks of like-minded individuals. This gives individuals the feeling of inclusion in a community and a way out of isolation for many youths (Crettiez and Barros 2019, 18). The idea of collective identity is vital when researching the Internet and radicalisation. Furthermore, Internet communities reinforce the 'echo chamber' effect where Internet users

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see their own ideological viewpoints 'in a cohesive network of people' (Odag, Leiser, and Boehnke 2019, 276). In addition, the Internet allows extremist communities to share important information. In the case of jihadist communities, it enables receiving information on, in the times of Islamic State, routes to reach the Caliphate or information on how to build explosives. Materials that reinforce the bond of the community through shared suffering, such as videos of deaths can also be shared. The in-group identity is in this way strengthened. Similarly, right-wing extremist communities also share information central to their lifestyle, including 'banned literature, music, clothes and manuals' (Koehler 2014, 119). Indeed, 'one of the most pronounced features of right-wing extremist websites is their potential for a collective identification that goes beyond local geographies' (Odag, Leiser, and Boehnke 2019, 268). However, building a translocal identity is challenging, especially for right-wing extremists, as national interests are at the crux of right-wing ideology. In studying the transnationalism of far right discourse on Twitter, only two topics garner a transnational audience, which is 'anti-immigration and the economy' (Froio and Ganesh 2019), the rest of the activity is focused on national issues.

It appears that the online jihadist communities are much more transnational than right-wing extremist communities (Odag, Leiser, and Boehnke 2019, 272). However, research on the role of the Internet in radicalisation is often focused on recruitment mechanisms. There is a lack of research on the user perspective and the mechanisms behind online radicalisation, where it is important to study 'both the users of the websites as well as the potential causal relationships between the websites and user radicalisation' (Odag, Leiser, and Boehnke 2019, 277). An important avenue of research, therefore, is to look into how local grievances translate online and how offline factors of radicalisation translate online. There should be a greater focus on the perspective of the consumers of these Internet spaces (Koehler 2014, 116). There are, however, those who have expressed their doubts regarding the impact of the Internet on radicalisation. Despite the Internet playing a non-negligible role in jihadist radicalisation in France, it continues to rely primarily on physical meetings and the 'direct attendance of a universe that legitimises the jihadist armed struggle – through the prison, family, place of worship or affinity groups – remains more predictive' (Crettiez and Barros 2019, 17). The internet does not cause radicalisation, but there is an increased need to understand the intersection of micro-levels, meso-dynamics and structural factors.

The interplay between individual and structural factors

Radicalisation is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon, emerging from the interaction of micro-individual, enabling environment (socio-cultural) and macro-structural factors. Yet there is a glaring gap in our understanding of violent radicalisation in the analysis between structural motivations on the one hand and individual-level incentives on the other hand. The enabling factors bridge the gap between structural motivations and individual incentives in processes of

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violent radicalisation. Analysis of the enabling factors has hitherto examined the presence of radical mentors (including religious leaders and individuals from social networks), access to radical online communities, social networks, access to weaponry, a comparative lack of state presence and an absence of familial support (Khalil and Zeuthen 2016). Missing from the field, therefore, is empirical data on the enabling factors of spatial formations, identity politics, and intergenerational change and reciprocal radicalisation. DRIVE will test these four variables concerning structural motivations that are enhanced by wider issues of social inclusion at the micro-level.

2. Four hypotheses on radicalisation

Four original hypotheses on enabling factors of radicalisation

The DRIVE project seeks to innovate radicalisation research by focusing on the 'enabling factors' that link individual, biographical, interpersonal or social factors to macro-level, community or structural factors.

The central aim of DRIVE is to develop an enhanced understanding of specific social exclusion related enabling factors and their relationship to space, identity, intergenerational and reciprocal radicalisation at the structural level as drivers of violent radicalisation to develop enhanced CVE policy responses. The DRIVE project is a social science, public mental health promotion-focused multi-disciplinary research project that will increase understanding about the role of enabling factors and how these interact with structurally shaped and supported motivations in the creation of 'supply-side' mechanisms in the processes of violent radicalisation. Understanding of the enabling factors, the bridge between 'push' and 'pull' factors, between the structural and the individual, remains underdeveloped, with prevailing models failing to produce a scientifically supported and conceptually coherent model of violent radicalisation.

The DRIVE project will provide the evidence base describing how the individual is affected by enabling factors within particular situational contexts that lead to patterns of radicalisation in societies that are demonstrating various forms of social exclusion. By gathering primary data in four Western European cities, from a total of 640 participants, DRIVE will not only test existing theories in the field it will also provide original grounded findings in this area, which can be used to inform policy on integration, social cohesion and countering violent extremism.

The project is based on the assumption that we need a better understanding on the enabling factors that mediate among individual, social, and structural factors to understand why, individual, social and macro-level structures being relatively similar, in some cases we can

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observe the emergence of extremist violent behaviour while in other cases we do not. These enabling factors are investigated through the following four hypotheses:

Working hypothesis 1: Spatial Formations

The features of post-industrial towns and cities can operate as radicalisation enabling factors when they combine with individual and community experiences of structural social exclusion to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent extremism.

In post-industrial spaces, groups cluster in specific urban areas, utilising social, economic and cultural capital of the group for advantage. The spatial concentration of deprived marginalised majorities is also an opportunity to protect group norms and values associated with the group identity, which, in the light of present politics, may feel threatened by the dominant other (Nayak 2010). These spaces play an important role, in some instances, in the evisceration of the local in favour of global nodes of identification. Strong group identities can sever the link between mainstream society and individuals hailing from minority communities, potentially nurturing individual and collective ('low IC') mindsets that resist flexible, open thinking styles able to engage pro-socially across social boundaries. This is important as the presentation of evidence in Denmark differentiates between social and other forms of exclusion.

Working hypothesis 2: Identity Politics

Identity politics2 can operate as a radicalisation enabling factor when it combines with individual and social experiences of social injustice3 to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation.

Identities are fluid, dynamic and context-specific. In an era of globalisation, identities are more fractured than ever, leading to conflict within nations based on questions of loyalty, citizenship

2 One of the first uses of the term 'identity politics' was in the statement of the Black feminist socialist *Combahee River Collective* (Combahee River Collective 1982), affirming the need to base emancipatory political projects in the gender, racial, class and other identities that are structurally oppressed. We understand identity politics as political formations that base political claims on particular groups. This can include making race, gender, class, nationality and religion key elements of political contestation in both minority and majority situations (Heyes 2020).

3 'Social justice' is understood here, following Iris Marion Young, as 'the degree to which a society contains and supports the institutional conditions necessary of the realisation of … two very general values: (1) developing and exercising one's capacities and expressing one's experience … and (2) participating in determining one's action and the conditions of one's action (Young 1990, 37). Injustice is defined through two social conditions: 'domination, the institutional constraint on self-determination' and 'oppression, the institutional constraint on self-development', particularly the 'five faces' of oppression: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence (ibid, 38-65).

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and belonging. A new 'tribalism' has arisen, one that also shapes how young people can use the internet to become radicalised. For example, the context in which second and third-generation European Muslims and ethnic majorities find themselves can elicit discomfort among some young people as they engage in the normal developmental search for their own identities. A sense of being caught in a void between civic identity and ethno-religious identity can create a significant point of turmoil, or what has been termed a 'double sense of non-belonging (Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010). Notably, groups like Islamic State and National Action in the UK have become adept at manipulating this kind of identity crisis and offering a solution with existential meaning through inflexible, closed group membership and political violence (Feldman 2015).

Working hypothesis 3: Intergenerational Change and Continuity

An experienced tension between intergenerational change and continuity can operate as a radicalisation-enabling factor that combines with experiences of structural social injustice to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation. Here, intergenerational change refers to the measure of differences in prevailing attitudes and perspectives between generations typically characterised as two decades apart. Social injustice refers to instances of discrimination and disadvantages that impact on some groups more than others.

Second and third-generation Muslims have to reconcile between the new and the old, the past and the present, between a plethora of values and practices. Majority youth are experiencing downward pressures on social mobility, leading to a sense of injustice, which is then racialised. Learning to navigate between multiple cultures can often be an arduous experience. The lack of capacities to think flexibly while navigating social and cultural tensions and experiencing social exclusion can sometimes result in a cultural void. The individual becomes displaced from their original heritage and the dominant culture of the host society (or perhaps never felt placed within the dominant culture) and is estranged from the symbols and practices of either culture. This particularly affects substrata of youth grappling to secure employment but also struggling to come to terms with changing gender norms in post-industrial societies (Sassen 1998). They typically lack a sense of purpose and existential meaning in their lives (i.e., impairment of this fifth ADAPT ecosocial pillar or life system). This sense of alienation creates the conditions by which sub-cultures with strong normative boundaries and charismatic personalities fill in the generational and cultural void.

Working hypothesis 4: Reciprocal Radicalisation

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Far right and Islamist groups can contribute to the radicalisation of each other through mutually reinforcing verbal and behavioural expressions of hate, intolerance or indignation toward one another, both individually and collectively.

A range of sociological issues underpins far right and Islamist reciprocal or cumulative radicalisation in the Western European context. That is, these groups can radicalise each other through verbal expressions and actions that mutually reinforce their hate, intolerance or indignation towards each other (Pratt 2015). The nature of reciprocal radicalisation between far right and Islamist extremist groups reflects a range of sociological phenomena affecting political identities, citizenship and questions of nationhood in relation to young men experiencing social alienation and cultural discontent (Bailey and Edwards 2006; Bartlett and Birdwell 2013; Ebner 2017). These social fissures can lead to oppositional group formations in a climate of widening structural inequality, political polarisation, and direct structural and cultural racism and racialisation. Thus, it is important to grasp the landscape of extremism, radicalism and political violence from below, to assess the importance of local area urban social issues, where the problems of radicalisation are local in the making—and so, therefore, are the solutions.

Evaluating evidence for the four hypotheses

Working hypothesis 1: Spatial formations

The features of post-industrial towns and cities can operate as radicalisation enabling factors when they combine with individual and community experiences of structural social exclusion to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent extremism.

Overall, existing research supports the hypothesis that there are specific spatial formations that provide hospitable contexts for radicalisation. This is true in particular for highly diverse post-industrial large and small urban centres, where we can find most evidence of Islamist extremism. Far right extremism, in contrast, shows a significantly lower concentration in urban areas. Instead, middle and small-sized towns and rural areas often show significant activities of far right groups across the four countries. Socio-economic marginalisation that is concentrated in specific areas, urban, semi-urban or rural, correlates with occurrences of extremism in the UK and the Netherlands, however, much less so in Denmark and Norway. The relatively high degrees of the wealth of the majority of the population in Norway, and to a lesser extent in Denmark, means that spatialised socio-economic marginalisation is not necessarily a key indicator for the occurrence of far right extremism. This means that explorations of the spatialities of far right activities in Norway and Denmark require us to think in much more networked ways, focusing in particular on the importance of online networks.

In **Denmark,** various forms of exclusion are probably conducive to radicalisation, but post-industrial blight is less significant than in some other European countries. Denmark does not

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have major problems with post-industrial towns or cities. In general, the response to globalisation and outsourcing was well-managed, and towns that had relied on textile and garment manufacturing, for example, made a successful transition into the knowledge economy, and have since been flourishing. The knowledge economy has, however, favoured larger towns and cities at the expense of smaller towns, and has also favoured the better-educated at the expense of unskilled labour. To the extent that there are problems of classic post-industrial blight, these are found in the smaller towns of North and North-west Jutland, the area around Randers, Southern Jutland, and the belt of islands south of Ærø (Bitsch Christensen 2005). These are areas where, until very recently, there were very few immigrants. It should be stressed that Southern Jutland as a whole is far from being a blighted area: it contains several major businesses and is, in general, wealthy.

There has been much research on the rise of the Danish People's Party (Marker 2020; Rytter 2019; Siim and Meret 2016; Green-Pedersen and Odmalm 2008; Wren 2001). This shows that support for the Danish People's Party is strongest among the less educated and in Southern Jutland. Support for the Danish People's Party, however, is not the same as nationalist radicalisation. There has been less research on the profile of voters for the two extreme-nationalist parties, voting for which is a good proxy for extreme-nationalist radicalisation. Votes for these parties, which together won 4.1 per cent of the national vote in 2019, came mostly from former voters for the Danish People's Party (Kosiara-Pedersen 2020) and electoral figures show that they were especially strong in Southern Jutland. They achieved their best result in the small and apparently prosperous village of Øster Lindet in Southern Jutland, where 128 of 479 votes were cast for nationalist parties, divided approximately equally between the centre and extreme parties.

These patterns may indicate that features of post-industrial blight can operate as enabling factors for turns to nationalist radicalisation. However, there may also be other factors at work. Southern Jutland is distinguished from the rest of Denmark not only in being somewhat exposed to post-industrial blight but also in having been involuntarily annexed to Germany between 1864 and 1920. Danish nationalism has been historically strong in Southern Jutland for reasons that have nothing to do with economics.

There is some nationalist radicalisation in Copenhagen, but no evidence of any connection with post-industrial blight, which is not found. There was also some historical nationalist radicalisation in Denmark's second city, Aarhus, during the 1990s and early 2000s that emerged from the milieu of football supporters and established a presence on the streets (Holmsted Larsen 2018). The football-supporter milieu is typically less educated, but in Aarhus did not reflect post-industrial blight, which Aarhus did not suffer from. Post-industrial blight, then, may be one factor in nationalist radicalisation. However, social exclusion understood in the classic sense is probably not an important factor.

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Even though post-industrial blight is not an issue for Denmark's major cities, they still have areas of poverty and disadvantage, areas that are classified as 'especially vulnerable public housing areas' (EVPH areas). These are inhabited mostly or even almost exclusively by families of Muslim-immigrant origin; areas with less than a 50 per cent non-Western immigrant population would not meet government criteria for classification as EVPH areas. The EVPH areas and their inhabitants have been the subject of much research. It is widely accepted that conditions in these areas are conducive to radicalisation. The Aarhus police, however, found that reports of suspected radicalisation among young Danish Muslims that they received and processed did not only involve residents of the EVPH areas, as they had expected, but also residents of middle-class areas (Johansen 2020). They also found that the reports that did involve residents of the EVPH areas clustered in one particular EVPH area, and were not evenly distributed between the EVPH areas (Hjelt 2020). The implication, then, is that what is conducive to radicalisation in the EVPH areas is not social exclusion in the classic sense, but rather something else. Since fully 25-30 of the 35-40 Aarhus Muslims who are known to have travelled to Syria came from the youth group of one particular predominantly Arab Salafi mosque (Hjelt 2020), the implication is that what mattered most was that youth group, not the EVPH area where the mosque was located.

These reports of suspected radicalisation, which are not publicly available, are the closest proxy there is for Muslim radicalisation, comparable to voting patterns as a proxy for extreme-nationalist radicalisation. They are still an inadequate measure, though.

Hemmingsen (2011) has argued strongly for the importance of concerns about social justice as a cause of Muslim radicalisation. During interviews with Danish Muslim friends of Danish Muslims who were being tried for terrorism offences, she found 'indignation over injustices, social inequality, unequal distribution of goods and power, exploitation, destruction of the environment and the materialistic and capitalist world order' (ibid., 1211). Similarly, the authors of a study based on interviews with former foreign fighters who had returned from Syria were struck by how much narratives of exclusion fill the individual stories in relation to immediate communities (friends, school, work, housing) and society in general (value-wise, politically) (Lindekilde and Bertelsen 2015). Exclusion, then, is important, but it is multiple forms of exclusion that have been identified, not just forms associated with post-industrial blight, i.e., social exclusion in the broadest sense. One study (Goli and Rezaei 2011) found that socio-economic factors such as income and renting or owning property did not correlate with Muslim radicalisation, though it should be noted that the adequacy of the operationalisation of 'radicalisation' in this study has been questioned. Schools may be especially important. A study of resilience against radicalisation identified the importance of 'personnel continuity, cultural sensitivity, and freedom from prejudice' (Dalgaard-Nielsen and Schack 2016, 318), and anecdotal evidence indicates that these are not always present. Putting it the other way around, many Danish Muslims probably encounter cultural insensitivity and prejudice at school, which is also a form of exclusion. There are indications

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that various forms of exclusion are conducive to radicalisation, though not necessarily social exclusion.

In the **Netherlands**, we observe that much research operates with definitions that are out of date and no longer fully viable (see below for further exploration of this). This means much of the literature on extremism in the Netherlands has not caught up with significant socio-geographical changes that have manifested in the past few years. With the unfolding of the Syrian conflict, several key figures in the Dutch jihadi Salafist networks left for Syria and Iraq, abating existing organisational networks in the Netherlands. The status of these networks and the coming into existence of possible new ones (like ProjectA) is largely uncharted, leaving a significant gap in knowledge. Since the mid-2010s, the far right in the Netherlands has flourished in fragmented directions, making it difficult to assess scope and scale. Additionally, both Islamist and far right groups are making increasing use of online spaces to meet, share ideas and organise events. The offline and online have become integrated parts in a distorted reality. These observations necessitate further probing into where networks are and how they are organised. Additionally, in the Netherlands as in the other countries in this study, online spaces need to be conceptualised as embedded spaces of the offline world (H. A. Horst and Miller 2020; Kozinets 2015; Boellstorff et al. 2012). Together, this necessitates a deeper understanding of the theory, praxis and locality of multi-sited fieldwork, in which different spaces of organisation and socialisation are assessed in conjunction (Falzon 2009).

A major lacuna that is the result of the fragmentation and diversification of spatial arrangements is a theoretical perspective that can combine these different forms of spatiality. For instance, the TPSN approach developed by Bob Jessop and colleagues (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008) urges us to think about the socio-spatial arrangement as constituted through different spatial dimensions, for example, Territory, Place, Space and Network (TPSN) (Müller 2021). A recent special issue in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* points out how different dimensions of space, and their relation to affect, materiality, and multi-sensorial assemblages can help us to think through the nexus of space, religion and politics (Taleb, Müller, and Moses 2021). DRIVE could take up these ideas and develop a space-sensitive theory of radicalisation that offers a more refined understanding of space, going beyond conventional differentiation of urban/rural, dispersed/concentrated, domestic/transnational, global/local.

In **Norway**, despite the substantial number of analyses of drivers of far right support, there are gaps in the literature impeding our understanding of the character, dynamics and attractions of radicalisation processes in contemporary Norway. Much existing scholarship on far right actors in Norway focuses on actors bounded in space despite the growing evidence of transnational networking, both physical and online within and beyond Europe. Young users are digital literate. They are involved at multiple platforms in the rapid formation of online communities and the production and circulation of ideas across borders. We need more research to understand how radicalisation processes occur online. The rise of the online environment influences any aspect of our life. We need more knowledge on the digital component, lives and

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communities of far right and radical Islamist actors. What do we know about how activists are connected with their online and offline environment? How are notions of masculinity and femininity within these milieus used to mobilise?

For the young activists that DRIVE will work with, it might be that actual material deprivation and marginalisation over time and across generations can be a driving factor in radicalisation processes. Norwegians of non-Western immigrant background growing up in economically disadvantaged households, that are discriminated in the labour market and face everyday prejudice from the white majority population can experience social exclusion that is conducive to radicalisation, thus supporting DRIVE hypothesis 1.

For the **United Kingdom**, existing research and empirical evidence indicate that there are regions and cities within the UK that are relatively prone to segregation along cultural, ethnic and religious lines and this raises the probability of extremist organisations gaining traction in specific locales. This poses tangible and multi-layered dilemmas for institutional decision-makers, policy developers and practitioners seeking to challenge extremism and to build resilience against it.

In general, there is limited research that relates spatiality to extremism. The literature that does in the UK is limited. The literature that does focus on this topic primarily focuses on the relationship between socio-economic factors and extremism and has been oriented to austerity measures, poverty and social exclusion. The global financial crisis of 2008 had a significant impact on the British welfare system and the economy, impacting markedly on urban areas that were already blighted by problems of poverty, social exclusion and inadequate institutional infrastructure. There appears to be a link between marginalised areas and radicalisation processes. In some low income, low employment predominantly White British communities, a sense that non-white communities have received preferential treatment has been common, reinforcing an 'us vs. them' way of thinking (Abbas, 2020a; Abbas, 2020b).

This kind of scapegoating is visible in the radicalisation processes of both the far right and Islamist movements. Many far right organisations posit that people from a non-British background are trying to colonise their country and 'take over' British society. Typically, local political, social or economic problems are projected onto 'out' groups who become receptacles for tensions and perceived grievances (Allen, 2011; Abbas & Awan, 2015). These processes and issues are directly relevant for the DRIVE project. Nevertheless, the extant literature does not directly make a correlation between spatiality and these community dynamics. Two decades ago, the Cantle Report (2001) reported a link between physical segregation and deepening polarisation between different ethnic groups, but the nature of this link remains under explored in the literature. In more recent times, Bailey's (2015) study investigating far right and Islamist extremism, found that particular cities and neighbourhoods in which tensions between different communities are palpable may be prone to problems of radicalisation and extremism.

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Bailey and Edwards (2017) conducted a later study that found that respondents from far right extremist and Islamist backgrounds tended to attend certain spaces more frequently, such as bingo sessions or Islam-related street stalls, contributing to what has been called 'micro-radicalisation'. Although this study does not draw conclusions, which are related to spatiality *per se*, the study suggests a correlation between specific spaces and how radicalised groups and individuals organise themselves. Existing research thus seems to indicate that urban spaces can create enabling conditions for radicalisation. At present, very little research has explored instances of extremism and radicalisation in rural and semi-rural spaces.

Working hypothesis 2: Identity Politics

Identity politics can operate as a radicalisation enabling factor when it combines with individual and social experiences of social injustice and support or generates motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation.

In **Denmark**, DRIVE's second hypothesis concerning identity politics is supported by existing research. Identity politics are of great importance for both nationalists and Danish Muslims. Although the primarily socio-psychological understanding of radicalisation de-emphasises identity politics, it is generally understood that identity politics is still important, especially for right-wing radicalisation. One researcher in this field, Milan Obaidi (2018) has argued that both nationalist and Muslim radicalisation processes are responding to the same factors: fear for the future of one's own culture (Kristensen and Svaneborg 2017). Aarhus police working with cases of possible radicalisation adopted the concept of 'belonging' as a risk indicator. This concept covered belonging in terms of both identity and in terms of family relationships (divorce perhaps leading to reduced belonging) (Johansen 2020).

Religiosity is, of course, an aspect of identity, and the Aarhus police found that religiosity was a common element in reports of suspected radicalisation. This raised difficult issues, given Denmark's constitutional protection of freedom of religion. As one policeman said, 'Islam has offered them a way out of petty crime, and feeling of significance, or a way into a faith community, even marriage and family' (Johansen 2020, 482). Given these difficulties, the police (understandably) preferred to use belonging as a risk indicator. It should be remembered, however, that although religiosity is an aspect of identity, there is more to religion than identity, and the impact of these other aspects of religiosity is unclear.

In the **Netherlands,** existing research suggests that dynamics of cultural, ethnic and religious identity play a central role in the polarisation of society. There is some evidence that these tensions might constitute enabling factors for extremist violence.

Since the nineteenth century, integration was viewed in the Netherlands through the prism of pillarisation and multiculturalism, in which several cultures lived alongside each other (Duyvendak and Scholten 2010, 41). At first, the strategy of integration grew out of the demands of minorities and others who pleaded for a more inclusive and accommodating

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society, but it then became a vehicle through which the segregation and isolation of ethnic and religious minorities were maintained (Eijkman, Lettinga, and Verbossen 2012, 6; Duyvendak and Scholten 2010, 41). The identities of migrants were officially considered to be equal to the identities of the Dutch, but when push came to shove Dutch hegemonic culture prevailed (Schrover 2010, 334). Moreover, Schrover (2010) argues, the successive developments of pillarisation and multiculturalism led to a reinforcement of essentialist identities. Both migrants' identities and the Dutch identity (suddenly singular) were presented in stereotypical typologies.

These tendencies were further maintained by the Dutch terms 'allochtonen' (emerging from another soil) and 'autochtonen' (emerging from this soil), which dividing terminology was intended to end the existing minority discourse. However, the terms were used to refer to a combination of national, cultural and ethnic markers (officially up to the third generation). From 2001 onwards, the terms became popularly associated with Muslims and non-Muslims (Witte 2010, 36). In 2016, the government replaced the term 'allochtoon' with 'a person with immigration background' and in April 2021 it was announced that the 'Western' and 'non-Western' distinction within the 'person with immigration background' category would be dropped (NRC 2021). Nevertheless, so far, the use of the terms has remained unchanged.

In 2004 - through a series of columns, books and discussions - the term 'Eurabia' surfaced in Dutch debates, following the international bestseller *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* by Bat Ye'or (2004). 'Eurabia' is a conspiracy theory in which the European political elite are believed to conspire with the Arabic elite to Islamise Europe (Buuren van 2016, 119; Sedgwick 2019). The Dutch authorities and the European Union are seen as villains that facilitate the rise of Islam through their policies (AIVD 2018, 5).4 In 2010, when PVV-leader Geert Wilders was in court on charges of inciting hatred (of which he was later cleared), he stated that not *he* but freedom of speech was on trial. In an apocalyptic argument, he sketched how Europe was transforming into 'Eurabia', as elites bowed to Islam, a religion he described as a 'desert-ideology that preaches murder and homicide and leads to social backwardness and impoverishment on a worldwide scale' (quoted in Buuren van 2016, 129).

The so-called 'refugee crisis' of 2015-2016 had a big impact on extreme right-wing thinking and action in the Netherlands (Wagenaar 2020, 12). In an atmosphere of societal unrest, expressions and acts of racism increased significantly, a trend that decreased again with declining refugee arrivals (Tierolf, Drost, and van Kapel 2018, 22). Refugees and Muslims were particularly targeted. Feelings of xenophobia and attitudes of Islamophobia, based on essentialised images of the 'other', are often combined with clear perceptions about the nature of Dutch national identity, disregarding the heterogeneous, changing, contested and constantly

4 AIVD stands for 'Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst' or 'General Intelligence and Security Service'.

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renegotiated ideas about Dutch identity. In his 2021 election manifesto, for example, Wilders called for 'taking back our country', in which 'Islam does not belong'.

In the 2021 parliamentary elections, Wilder's PVV was voted the third-largest party in parliament, and together with the Forum for Democracy (FvD) headed by Thierry Baudet and the new party JA21, the populist radical right has now 28 of the 150 seats in parliament. Together, these parties have repeatedly criticised the Netherlands for teaching self-hate, by criminalising its colonial pasts and questioning the appropriateness of Black Pete in the Sinterklaas holiday. The latter, that is the preservation of Black Pete (the black-faced companion of St. Nicolas during the December festivities), has become an annually recurring theme of national discord (Tierolf, Drost, and van Kapel 2018, 34). Commentators like Cas Mudde and Sarah de Lange argue that with Baudet's repeated critiques on organised democracy and veiled calls of violence, the populist radical-right party FvD is increasingly leaning into the extreme-right.

The real and perceived socially negative and ethnically exclusivist stances of majority populations, including the ones flowing from the 'war on terror' debate, are not only polarising, but they also negatively affect the national identity of minority populations. In the Dutch context, Fleischmann and Phalet (2018, 58) reveal that Dutch national identity is less strongly endorsed by Dutch-Muslim minority youth compared to majority youth. Variations across space and individuals can be partially explained by perceptions on social inclusion and exclusion, e.g., experiences of intergroup contact (for example, friendships with majority youth) can have a positive effect and experiences with discrimination can harm national identification. The centrality of one's religion is a significant mediator in this, implying that the most committed Muslim minority youth are most excluded (and/or exclude themselves) from national identities (Fleischmann and Phalet 2018, 53). Arguably, the most (visibly) committed Dutch-Muslim minorities are also least able/willing to build meaningful relations with majority populations and are most likely to experience different forms of discrimination.

A central underlying tension in Dutch contestations of ethnic and cultural identity is between a colour-blind self-narrative and a deeply engrained normalisation of Whiteness and Christianity at the core of the Dutch nation. Gloria Wekker argues that the alleged openness and liberality of the Netherlands is hiding the deeply rooted racism and colonial imaginaries that permeate Dutch society. In her book, *White Innocence*, Wekker (2016) argues that whiteness is not recognised as a characteristic at all, as it is the fully normalised position that is seen as ordinary, devoid of any meaning. Instead, she argues that the 'cultural archive' of Dutch history and society features knowledge and effects that are based on four hundred years of imperial rule which are a crucial yet often unacknowledged part of Dutch society, from the individual to the collective and national political levels.

The framing of Dutch society as colour-blind, as 'without race', in contrast to the Black-White binary in the US, according to Fatima El-Tayeb, is the smokescreen that holds whiteness as the undiscovered and un-interrogated norm. Talking about racism, therefore, violates this sceptic

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view of Europeanness, which allegedly considers itself to be free of race, and hence racism. This is connected to the selective self-identification of the Netherlands, and Europe more broadly, as defined through falling victims to Nazi Germany. This almost exclusive centring on the Holocaust has contributed to sidelining the hundreds of years of Dutch dominance over many people of colour around the world, their exploitation, slavery, and subsequent socio-economic oppression, which is imbued into Dutch society. Thus, she argues that three paradoxes permeate Dutch society and are crucial to understanding the nexus of race, nationhood, gender and capitalist imperialism.

First, the majority of Dutch people do not want to identify with immigrants despite the fact almost one in four Dutch people has migrant ancestry (CBS 2021). Second, the dominant self-narrative paints the Netherlands as innocent victims of German occupation, neglecting the complicity of some sectors of Dutch society with the holocaust and the atrocities committed by Dutch colonial administration, even after the Second World War, in Indonesia. Third, even though the Dutch imperial presence stretches back as far as the sixteenth century, there is almost a complete absence of this history in national curricula, monuments and public self-presentations.

These paradoxes form the background against which conflicts around race and identity unfold today. Because of the lack of critical reflection on the racist genealogies of Dutch society, talking about racism in Dutch society can have polarising effects, lending credibility to narratives of the far right as both victims (of the white leftist elites and their non-white allies) and as superior (in ethics, culture and economic productivity). The lack of adequate reflection on Dutch colonial history thus provides a fertile breeding ground for polarising identity politics and narratives of the far right, which in turn creates different forms of resistance, some of which turn to political Islam as a counterweight to the hypocrisy of the colour-blind and ahistorical liberal mainstream.

Research on identity politics in **Norway** is limited and in need of further analysis, yet some preliminary observations can be made. Identity politics in Norway is fuelled in many ways by fear. Many Norwegians are fearful and insecure about the impact of immigration-generated ethnic and religious diversity on identity. This fear has given rise to anti-immigrant populist parties in Norway over recent years, such as the Progressive Party. Muslims are at the centre of this anti-immigrant discourse, as their belief has been securitised as a threat to national identity. The line between the perception of the Norwegians and the non-Norwegian Other is based on a territorial idea of identity, culture, heritage, and origin. Religion and identity are connected, yet religion here should be understood as an aspect of belonging and not the belief itself (Marzouki 2016).

Research on identity politics in the United Kingdom has highlighted issues surrounding belonging, inter-generational change, and societal and political alienation. The UK can be described as a country in which there are discernible differences between areas in regions, in terms of employment, income, wealth access to resources and longevity. This is highlighted by

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the current discourse of the Conservative government about the need for a process of 'levelling-up' in Britain (see, Recent media and political narratives have focussed on religious identity and ethnicity, in some instances exacerbating tensions. For instance, Boris Johnson compared Muslim women in the burqa to 'bank robbers' and 'letterboxes' in his 2018 *Daily Telegraph* column. While no causal link between this and acts motivated by racial hatred can be made, there was a 375% rise in anti-Muslim incidents in the following week (Johnson 2018; Edwards 2021, 84). Johnson was cleared of breaching the Conservative Party's code of conduct and has since gone on to become Prime Minister of the UK.

Disagreements abound around the extent to which the United Kingdom can be said to have embraced a multicultural ethos. The Runnymede Report published back in 2000 asserted that British identity needed to be de-racialised or disassociated from whiteness, such that those from ethnic minority communities can call themselves not just 'British citizens', but simply British (Runnymede Report, 2000, 36-39). The Brexit referendum demonstrated the overlaps in terms of racial politics and understandings of nation between Conservative and UKIP voters and Far-Right groups such as Britain First.

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Working Hypothesis 3: Intergenerational change

An experienced tension between intergenerational changes and continuity can operate as a radicalisation enabling factor that combines with experiences of structural social injustice to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation.

In **Denmark,** DRIVE's third hypothesis concerning intergenerational changes is not supported by existing research. Intergenerational changes are not considered to be important for right-wing radicalisation, though it has been noted that there is more support for the nationalist parties among the young. Much European research shows that intergenerational changes are a factor behind the growth of Salafism, as European-born Muslims frequently reject their parents' understanding of Islam as 'cultural Islam' and look instead for 'pure Islam', often ending up with some form of Salafi Islam. This is also the case in Denmark. The question, however, is to what extent this constitutes radicalisation, given that while most Jihadis are Salafis, most Salafis are not Jihadis.

One study of Muslim radicalisation (Obaidi 2018) found that, in comparison with first-generation immigrants, Muslims born in Denmark 'more strongly identified with Muslims, perceived Western foreign policies as more unjust, felt more group-based anger and showed stronger intentions to support Muslims by nonviolent means'. The study did not, however, discuss possible causes of this. It may be the case that second-generation Danish Muslims are more exposed to radicalisation because the first generation generally never considered itself Danish, and so could not feel excluded on that basis, while the second generation might consider itself Danish, and so might feel excluded when it discovers that it is not considered Danish by many members of the majority population.

In the **Netherlands**, existing research suggests that intergenerational dynamics play an important role in the social exclusion that is possibly linked to violent extremism. Two particular studies suggest that due to racialised discrimination and labour market marginalisation men from non-white migrant backgrounds face some of the most severe obstacles to social mobility in Dutch society. This in turn can lead to relationships within the family that can be conducive to violent extremism.

Despite relatively low-income inequality in the Netherlands, the Centraal Planbureau (2019) notes that there are important income differences between people with and without a migration background. These inequalities have persisted over generations and seem to persist within the current unchanging structures. For example, a child, whose parents have a Moroccan migration background and earn in the lowest income class, reaches on average the 28th step in the income distribution (on a scale from 1 to 100, with 100 being the highest income step). A child, whose parents do not have a migration background but earn in the same low-income class, rises on average 13 steps higher. Even if the parents have a higher income, a child with parents with a Moroccan migration background is more likely to have a lower income compared to a child

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without parents with a migration background. These statistics reveal both patterns of structural discrimination and unequal social mobility for children with and without migration backgrounds. Children with a Turkish, Surinamese or Antillean migration background also have average lower incomes compared to children without a migration background.

In 2015, Sieckelinck and de Winter published a study on right-wing, Islamist and left-wing radicalisation amongst youngsters in the Netherlands, Denmark and the United Kingdom entitled 'Formers and Families'. The Dutch sub-study focussed mainly on the interaction between parents and children. The 'Formers and Families' study is one of few studies to explicitly address inter-generational dynamics in radicalisation processes. Although almost no one sees the influence of family as a direct cause of radicalisation, the study revealed the mediating impact of family environments on the complex process of radicalisation. The study explained how neither the kind of ideology adopted by youngsters nor the strength with which they were adopted was correlated with the ideas and ideals of parents (Sieckelinck and de Winter 2015, 31). However, about two-thirds of the interviewed families had to cope with divorce, an absent father, lack of emotional support, psychiatric issues, illness or death. In addition, several families witnessed violence and abuse. The study concludes that family difficulties in themselves do not explain the process of radicalisation, but they can form a fertile breeding ground for it (Sieckelinck and de Winter 2015, 6-7). The strength of the 'Formers and Families' study is its in-depth and comparative character, including a range of interviews with former radicalised youths and their families. The low number of interviewees could be regarded as a weakness in the study.

Another research project that focussed on the role of family environments in radicalisation is Komen's article 'Homegrown Muslim Extremism in the Netherlands'. Komen (2014) studied the impact of upbringing in radicalisation processes amongst second-generation Moroccan youths in the Netherlands. The study explained fathers in traditional ethnic families to be the main losers of modernisation, having lost power to their wives and adolescent children (Komen 2014, 49). Komen contends that Dutch-Moroccan fathers are more likely to operate through draconian discipline and punishment styles compared to Dutch fathers. Komen (2014, 50) links the socialisation that takes place in so-called 'command families' to 'greater risks of coercive and violent extremism, especially when combined with societal inequality and discrimination. In reference to the foreign fighter phenomenon in the Netherlands, Bergema and San (2019, 649) note that of the 114 people they were able to collect data on, 29 were recruited through kinship ties, through relationships with parents, siblings, cousins, uncles or aunts. Other studies suggest that parents can also halt radicalisation, by sharing early concerns about their children with various authorities (e.g. Fadil and Koning 2019, 177; Koning de, Becker, and Roex 2020, 64). All studies seem to suggest a weak and dynamic relationship at best, but more research is needed to deepen reflections on the impact of intergenerational dynamics.

In a personal conversation with the DRIVE research team at the University of Leiden in April 2021, Martijn de Koning, who is probably the person with closest links to Salafist networks in

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Dutch academia, argued that these groups were scattered and the possibility for violence was extremely low. This was also due to intergenerational dynamics, since the older and more experienced generations of leaders in these groups, many of whom had already significant experience with the criminal justice system, would try to dissuade the younger recruits from openly calling to violence, let alone committing acts of violence, for fear of repressive repercussions. Similar evidence concerning the far right is still lacking and an important lacuna for future scholarship.

A 2017 population survey in **Norway** revealed that the Norwegian population showed that non-Muslim Norwegians display significant subjective distance toward Muslims, although less than in other European countries (Hoffman and Moe 2017). Although Norway is striving to reduce inequalities and subsidises low-income families, first, second and third-generation immigrants are still more likely to live in disadvantaged households and to experience discrimination in the labour market (Midtbøen 2013). Norwegians with an immigrant background from Africa and Asia also are more likely to experience financial struggles with housing and spend large proportions of their low-income on rent or housing debt (Omholt 2019).

There is a gap in research regarding whether socio-economic disadvantages transmitted from one generation to another could be a factor for radicalisation. This deserves to be investigated further, since growing up in economically disadvantaged households, being marginalised by the white majority population and experiencing discrimination in the labour market could lead to social exclusion and grievances towards the majority group. These elements could potentially then act as driving factors towards violent radicalisation. In this context, the role played by intergenerational interaction remains unexplored. Intergenerational change or continuity in far right extremism in Norway also remains largely unexplored and deserves further investigation.

In the **United Kingdom,** the evidence around DRIVE's third hypothesis regarding the impact of intergenerational changes is mixed, with the data being inconclusive. It remains unclear whether there are significant differences in political outlook between first, second and third generation Muslims in the UK. Some studies focusing on constructions of belonging towards Britain amongst British Muslims of different generations suggest that second generation Muslims are more likely to construct themselves as affiliating with Britain than first-generation Muslims, who show greater attachments to their traditional culture and religion (see Anjum et. al., 2019).

The existing research in the United Kingdom exploring the interplay between identity and religion within Muslim communities demonstrates that the Islamic religion and faith remain a powerful influence in shaping identity. However, relationships to Islam vary between individuals and communities and remain diverse, and differ between and within generations (Sartawi and Sammut 2012). Some British Muslims, especially second and third-generation Muslim youth, are challenged by the internal struggle of finding a proper balance between reconciling the values of their Muslim identity as ethnic and religious minority members, with

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their British identity, the categories of which, are often viewed as separate, incompatible and at odds (Hunt, Franz, and Nigbur 2021; Sartawi and Sammut 2012). Such 'in-between' or half-generation of European-born Muslims are challenged with a dual identity and have to deal with contradictory discourses concerning multiculturalism and diversity, as well as the prejudice, exclusion, stigmatisation and marginalisation (Haw 2009; Hunt, Franz, and Nigbur 2021).

Research by Sartawi and Summut (2012) explores the pragmatic problems that first-generation British Muslims face when negotiating their Muslim identities in a British context. While in the public life some young British Muslims may downplay identification with Islam in domestic and home settings the reverse is often the case. Many second and third-generation young Muslims identify strongly with their Islamic roots, while others that challenge traditional notions of being Muslim can find it challenging to incorporate Muslim identities into a 'Western' way of life (see Sartawi and Sammut 2012).

Diaspora-born Muslims face particular challenges in identity construction and have to navigate and make choices between the ethnic heritage of their Muslim parents and the predominantly secular way of life of Western society. Combined with routinised experiences of Islamophobia, marginalisation and discrimination, a sizeable number of young Muslims have chosen to '(re)turn' to their idea of religion (Abbas 2019). The intergenerational transmission of Islam remains relatively strong even in a primarily secular UK context (Scourfield et al. 2012).

However, conversely, the operationalisation of the Prevent strategy has proven to be a key source of grievance for young Muslims in particular (see Mythen and Walklate, 2013). Further, there are some signs that the targeting of young Muslims manifesting in counter terrorism initiatives such as Prevent, couple with disgruntlement regarding the implementation of stop and search policing tactics, has facilitated stronger forms of attachment to Islam and the Ummah and the manifestation of reactive pride (see Mythen, 2012). Similarly, in relation to Far-Right extremism, the connections and disjunctures between generations adopting nationalistic and/or racist values is not fully understood, making this an important point of focus for the DRIVE study in the UK (see Pilkington, 2016; Winlow et al., 2017).

Working hypothesis 4: Reciprocal radicalisation

Far right and Islamist groups can contribute to the radicalisation of each other through mutually reinforcing verbal and behavioural expressions of hate, intolerance or indignation towards one other, both individually and collectively.

In **Denmark,** DRIVE's fourth hypothesis concerning reciprocal radicalisation is supported by existing research. Radicalisation in Denmark. Muslims, or at least majority *perceptions* of Muslims, radicalise members of the majority population, and the nationalism of the majority population, or at least Muslim *perceptions* of it, radicalises members of the Muslim community.

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Research on nationalist radicalisation in Denmark invariably notes the importance of immigration. Karpantschof and Mikkelsen note that violent actions against Danish Muslims peaked in the aftermath of 9/11, and of the Cartoon Crisis of 2005–06 (Karpantschof and Mikkelsen 2017). They do not describe this as reciprocal radicalisation, but this is what is indicated. Most research, however, points to the impact of Muslims in general, not of radicalised Muslims in particular. Some sections of the majority population understand all Muslims as radical by definition, as Islam is seen as inherently radical. It has also been noted that areas where the concentration of Muslims is highest—the big cities—are also the areas where votes for nationalists are lowest. It is often said that the typical nationalist voter has probably never actually met an immigrant, and therefore has no personal experience of Islam. *Nationalist radicalisation, then, is not fed by inter-group violence but is fed by inter-group perceptions.*

One study in 2017 (Bang Petersen and Osmundsen 2018) asked a representative selection of Danes to say how true they thought a selection of imaginary newspaper headlines were. Fifty per cent of respondents were fully or partially convinced that 'Muslim imams encourage non-Western immigrants to commit social-security fraud so that they can avoid working and contributing to Danish society', a proposition that only 29 per cent of respondents were fully or partially convinced was untrue. Thirty per cent of respondents were fully or partially convinced that 'Danish media deliberately hide facts about how widespread violence and crime are among young immigrants', and 28 per cent were fully or partially convinced that 'Leading figures in mosques are forcing young Muslims to commit burglary to raise money for holy war'. Admittedly, similar numbers were happy to believe imaginary stories about corrupt Danish politicians, but majority perceptions of Muslim behaviour are not good.

One special case of radicalisation relates to freedom of expression. Actions arranged in defence of freedom of expression range from the well-known case of the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad commissioned by *Jyllands-Posten* to organised marches through the EVPH areas and public desecration of the Quran in Muslim-majority areas, most often by Rasmus Paludan, a well-known anti-Islamic activist. Those who carry out such actions understand them as a response to Muslim attempts to restrict freedom of expression.

Many of Denmark's experiences of violent Muslim extremism have been in response to actions in defence of freedom of expression. In 2008, two Danish residents of Tunisian origin were expelled on suspicion of planning to kill Kurt Westergaard, one of the more prominent cartoonists. In 2010, a Danish resident of Somali origin was arrested outside Westergaard's house, armed with a knife and an axe. Several planned attacks on the offices of *Jyllands-Posten* have been intercepted, mostly outside Denmark. In 2013, a Dane of Lebanese origin attempted to murder Lars Hedegaard, a prominent anti-Muslim journalist. In 2015, a Dane of Palestinian origin attacked a meeting in Copenhagen that was hosting Lars Vilks, a Swedish artist who had drawn some extra cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad that were considered offensive by many

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Danish Muslims. Most recently, in 2020, a Danish resident of Palestinian origin was arrested for approaching Rasmus Paludan while holding a kitchen knife.

It can be safely assumed that other Danish Muslims who were not sufficiently radicalised to pick up a knife were, despite this, also radicalised by actions in defence of freedom of expression, and the whole phenomenon may therefore be understood as a form of reciprocal radicalisation.

Some research on Muslim radicalisation also notes the importance of mainstream anti-Islamic political discourse, which is itself a consequence of some form of nationalist radicalisation. A Muslim informant working in counter-radicalisation told one researcher 'every time I do something, some politician makes some strange comment whereby everything we have done, or the people working with integration and making these people become part of the community [is undermined]. My opinion on that is that you ruin all the effort then' (Dalgaard-Nielsen and Schack 2016, 317). There is also research that shows the impact of majority attitudes on identity, if not precisely on radicalisation. One researcher who interviewed 20 Danes of Middle-Eastern origin in Danish high schools and universities found a variety of identity positions, ranging from those who were sure that they were Danish to those who were sure that they were not. All agreed, however, on the three major boundaries: appearance, language, and Islam.

One interviewee who belonged to a very serious sports club where even the non-Muslim Danes did not drink alcohol had decided that it was possible to be Danish and Muslim, but the general feeling was that to be Danish one had to look and dress Danish, go to parties, and drink alcohol—and not speak a foreign language in public. For some, especially some young women of Turkish origin, this was an option. For others, skin colour made it impossible. Many of these others talked of the way that members of the majority society looked at them (the majority 'gaze'), of how they would be congratulated by strangers on speaking such good Danish (why should they not?), of how they would go to lengths to present themselves as 'good immigrants', not the 'criminal, radicalised troublemakers' that they thought most people suspected them of being (Bakkær Simonsen 2017). This is the Muslim equivalent of nationalist radicalisation that is fed not by inter-group violence but by inter-group perceptions. Just as there are people from the majority society who think that all Muslims are radical, so there are Danish Muslims who think that all people from the majority society think they are 'the other'.

The negative perceptions that members of the majority and minority communities have of each other may be fed by a form of social exclusion that has received little attention: the absence of cross-community social contacts. Many members of the majority community do not know any Muslims well, and many Danish Muslims do not know any members of the majority community well. As has been noted, it is often said that the typical nationalist voter has never actually met a Muslim.

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One study in Aarhus found that EVPH areas with higher radicalisation were distinguished from EVPH areas with lower radicalisation by their degree of internal social cohesion, which implies an absence of cross-community social contacts with the wider city community (Hjelt 2020). *The more isolated, the more radical*. A survey of Danish Muslims (Goli and Rezaei 2011) found that 81 per cent of those who seemed radical had no close non-Muslim Danish friends, and the same was true of 39 per cent of Danish Muslims who did not seem radical. Interestingly, only 49 per cent of radical Danish Muslims had never had a non-Muslim Danish girlfriend or boyfriend, as against 60 per cent of non-radicals. As has been noted, the adequacy of the operationalisation of 'radicalisation' in this study has been questioned, but even so, the overall results are still striking.

It is unclear whether radical Danish Muslims avoid non-Muslim Danes, or whether Danish Muslims who do not know non-Muslim Danes become radical, but it is clear that the two groups are often socially distant from each other. This is also true at school: in 2009, 64 per cent of non-Muslim Danes attended schools where fewer than 5 per cent of the pupils were Muslim, while 44 per cent of Danish Muslim pupils attended schools where more than 25 per cent of the pupils were Muslim, and 22 per cent attended schools where the majority of the pupils were Muslim (Sedgwick 2014). The situation may be different today, but 64 per cent of non-Muslim Danes and 44 per cent of Danish Muslims who were at school in 2009 probably had few or no schoolfriends in the other group.

In the **Netherlands**, there is clear evidence that far right groups use the alleged or real threat of Islamism for purposes of mobilisation. In contrast, extreme Islamist groups rarely talk about the far right per se but rather refer to the overall discriminatory and morally abject nature of Dutch and European society.

Extreme right-wing groups have actively mobilised against what they perceive to be hotbeds of Islamism. In 2018, Identitair Vezet organised a protest in the Schilderswijk in The Hague, also against the foundation of a mosque (Wagenaar 2020, 39). Four years earlier, Geert Wilders had called for demonstrations in the neighbourhood to communicate that that the Schilderwijk 'is also the Netherlands' (NOS 2014). In a response to this call, several extreme-right movements arranged 'marches for freedom', in which they protested against religious fundamentalist laws and sympathisers of the Islamic State (NOS 2014). On several occasions, protesters were met with counter-protesters. After much unrest and intermittent escalations, the municipality decided to ban protests in the neighbourhood, a decision challenged by extreme-right movements but affirmed by a judge (Wagenaar 2020, 39). In 2018, Pediga was obstructed from demonstrating in front of mosques, being allocated alternative locations instead (Wagenaar 2020, 50). In June 2017, the As-Soennah mosque received a toy lorry in the post, with an accompanying letter that suggested that worshippers would risk being run over. The issuers of such threats are often difficult to trace (AIVD 2018, 15).

Although the far right is well-documented in its identification and mobilisation against the image and presence of the Muslim minorities in the Netherlands, extreme Islamist communities

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do not identify and mobilise against the far right as such. Some individuals within (extreme) Islamist groups have mentioned a perceived 'crusade on Islam', but the far right is rarely mentioned directly. This begs the question about the nature of possible 'reciprocal' radicalisation in the Netherlands. Is there a bi-directional relationship? And does this relate to polarisation or radicalisation? Additionally, it is unclear whether both groups mobilise against the physical presence and/or imagined presence of the 'other'. We could even ask to what extent physical interaction exists between the two groups. Delving deeper into the formations of in-group and out-group identities (Brewer 2001; Erikson 2001; Gamson 2009; van Stekelenburg 2014), both offline and online, will help to evolve understanding on reciprocal radicalisation processes.

In 2014, as the formation of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria was unfolding, opinion polls by the Counter Extremism Project (2020) revealed how 61 per cent of the Dutch population believed Islamic extremism to represent the greatest threat to Dutch national security. Additionally, the periods directly following domestic or international 'terrorist' attacks saw higher incidents of anti-Islamic slurs and attacks in the Netherlands (Donselaar van and Rodrigues 2006, 86, 96; Tierolf, Drost, and van Kapel 2018, 28). As a consequence of negative public opinions, Islamophobic attacks and essentialised political narratives, Dutch-Muslims feel that Western countries have revealed hypocrisy, in which they presented themselves 'as champions of freedom and democracy but betrayed that claim when it came to Muslims' (Koning de, Becker, and Roex 2020, 243).

There exists little academic evidence of reciprocal radicalisation in **Norway**. Reports and studies dealing with both far right (Bjørgo and Ravndal 2019) and Islamist (Bjørgo and Gjelsvik 2015) extremism do not mention this phenomenon. Rather, other push and pull factors have been highlighted as a proxy for violent radicalisation in Norway (Rogelio et al. 2008; Bjørgo 2009; Bjørgo 2011).

While there is no clear evidence that Islamist and far right extremisms feed off each other in Norway, Bangstad (2016) found that organisations such as *Stopp Islamiseringen av Norge* (Stop The Islamisation of Norway, SIAN) rely on what Abbas (2020) refers to as the 'othering' of the opposing group. By denouncing organisations such as Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, it can be argued that SIAN was indirectly fuelled by Islamist extremism, despite this not being related to the Norwegian context specifically.

While events such as the Oslo terrorist attack in 2011 perpetrated by a right-wing extremist might have triggered reactions from anti-racist groups, no patterns of reciprocal radicalisation among Islamist extremists have been observed in existing scholarship. International events have so far been considered more important factors of radicalisation (Enstad 2017).

Furthermore, in 2020, violent escalation between far right and Islamist extremists was reported after a woman ripped off pages of the Quran at a rally organised by SIAN (Staudenmaier 2020). Such clashes might indicate reciprocal radicalisation, but the current state of the art and a lack

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of empirical research have not yet allowed us to pinpoint the scope of this phenomenon in Norway.

In the **United Kingdom,** in relation to the final DRIVE hypothesis concerning far right and Islamist groups radicalise one another by reinforcing hate, intolerance or indignation towards each other, the existing research and literature endorses this assumption. As knowledge about the process of reciprocal radicalisation grows (see Lee and Knott, 2020; Macklin, 2020), it is becoming clear that individuals adopting extreme Far-Right viewpoints and those affiliating with Islamist ideology which promotes violence, not only have geographic and socio-economic characteristics in common, they also fuel and feed off each other's rhetoric and activism.

In responding to this hypothesis, the UK team will seek to excavate knowledge which has policy utility. The process of cyclical generation of extremism is acknowledged in the academic and policy literature but remains sparsely explored. By directly probing the relational dimensions of extremism and seeking to excavate the dynamics of ideologies of hate as they flourish in discord and ideational interaction between those gravitating to Far-Right and Islamist extremist milieus, we will seek to illuminate the factors that encourage inter-group violence to escalate.

In this regard, it has been acknowledged that many of the underlying framing mechanisms of attribution and exclusion that are propagated by Islamist and Far-Right organisations are inextricably similar and incline toward establishing absolutes (Smith, Stohl and al-Gharbi, 2019). Irrespective of the similarities and differences between the ambitions and objectives of Islamist-inspired and far right groups a common thread exists in terms of amplifying difference, attributing blame and inciting hatred. Extant research indicates that there are regions and cities within the UK that are characterized by segregation along cultural, ethnic and religious lines. This raises the probability of extremist organisations gaining traction and popularity within specific locales.

The concept of reciprocal radicalisation emerged in the United Kingdom following the 2001 riots in Northern England and the creation of the English Defence League (EDL) in the aftermath of the 2009 demonstrations organised by Islamists in Luton. Research on reciprocal radicalisation in the UK has been growing since this point, with empirical contributions investigating various manifestations of this phenomenon in different contexts (Macklin 2020; Bailey and Edwards 2017) and the role of online communication and dialogue in facilitating the exchange of extremist perspectives (see Lee and Knott 2020).

While the existing research does not provide any clear-cut conclusions, the studies completed do indicate that Far right and Islamist groups feed off each other's rhetoric. While events such as the 2001 disturbances and the 2017 attacks in London and Manchester seem to have influenced political behaviours (Trilling, 2021) and triggered online violence (Lee and Knott 2020), there is no clear empirical evidence that they have indeed triggered reciprocal radicalisation. In addition, most of the existing literature focuses on how extreme Far right

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movements such as the EDL feed off Islamist extremism, but not so much on the reverse dynamics. More empirical research is clearly needed in order to grasp the scope of reciprocal radicalisation in the UK.

3. Identifying further knowledge gaps

Apart from issues pertaining to spatiality, identity politics, intergenerational change, and reciprocal radicalisation, what further gaps in knowledge remain?

Terminology

All four country reports above have revealed the limitations of the current conceptualisation of key terms such as 'extremism', 'far right' and 'Islamism'. In Norway, for example, police security services and the government rely on a definition that approaches extremism as a particular behaviour that is politically motivated within a democratic system where the state has a monopoly on violence. In contrast, the Dutch security service (AIVD), defines extremism as 'the active pursuit of/or support for profound changes in society which could pose a threat to (the continuity of) the democratic legal order' (C-REX 2020). Additionally, in the Netherlands, the terms 'jihadi Salafism' and 'Salafism' continue to be used interchangeably, despite repeated criticism that not all forms of Salafism are jihadist in orientation (Welten and Abbas 2021). The terminologies associated with the far right (including the extreme right, radical right, and populist right) are employed as interchangeable terms by all four country's security services, while their differences in appearances and goals remain largely unexplored. Despite differences in conceptualisations, different security services and state institutions have two things in common. First, their take on extremism has been relatively static, even though the contexts in which extremist groups form and the manners in which they express themselves have changed and remain diverse. Second, ambiguous terminological generalisations have affected security services' threat analyses, governmental policies, and public discourse – especially when it comes to Islam and Islamisms (Bonino and Ricucci 2021). On the one hand, this has caused the securitisation and consequential marginalisation of certain groups. On the other hand, it can lead to the self-isolation of these groups.

The terminologies used by different security services, state and civil society actors are an important part of our empirical field and of the discourse in which we intervene; however, they should not necessarily be the basis for scholarly analysis. This means that the terminologies used by the state should be objects of scrutiny rather than lenses through which we blatantly view the world. We need to be critical towards the definitions offered by state actors, as these are often motivated by certain political ideologies (see Müller 2017). In the past, government

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discourses and policies on extremism had severe iatrogenic effects, as the country report on the United Kingdom points out, resulting in stereotyping, Othering and racialising different communities. What current research does not fully answer, is the *extent* to which government terminologies have had iatrogenic effects and how these can be avoided. Scholars need to be clearer about what kind of phenomena they are interested in without it being pre-configured by the *Deutungsmacht* (power of interpretation) government-defined labels and the political motivations that undergird them.

The role of the internet

Much existing scholarship on far right and Islamist actors has focussed on actors in a bounded space, despite the growing evidence of transnational networking, both physical and online, within and beyond Europe (e.g. Conway 2017; Nesser 2018). Young users are very much digitally literate. They are involved at multiple platforms in the rapid formation of online communities and the production and circulation of ideas across borders. We need more research to understand how radicalisation processes occur online. The rise of online environments influences many aspects of social life, including the formations and communications within extremist milieus. We need more knowledge on the digital components, lives, and communities of far right and Islamist actors.

In talking about the impact of online spaces, it is important to take into account certain asymmetries between far right and Islamist online milieus. Whereas Islamist online networks have suffered heavily from social media crackdowns, Europol (2020, 73) reports that right-wing online networks have not been targeted in the same manner. Consequently, right-wing individuals and groups have enjoyed much more freedom online compared to extreme Islamist groups. The content relating to the far right is much more publicly visible, whereas content relating to Islamist milieus has been pushed into encrypted apps that are less visible. It is a desideratum of further research to understand how these asymmetrical counter-extremist policies have affected young people's online engagement, both within far right and Islamist milieus.

The state and social marginalisation

The impact of the state on social marginalisation in relation to extremism is another important element that has received scarce attention, including in most northwest European countries (an exception includes Koning de 2020). The state, however, cannot be neglected in an analysis centred around social inclusion and exclusion. Looking at the extremist Islamist realm of belonging, the Netherlands has seen an increasing trend in which voting is discouraged, making the opinions, grievances and desires of some Dutch-Muslim communities underrepresented within the political system (AIVD 2015, 10). Preliminary empirical observations of the

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research team, which will be explored with more empirical evidence in the project, extreme Islamists are disenchanted with the Dutch political order to the extent that some prefer to politically retreat altogether. At the far right end of the spectrum, an opposing trend is identified, in which individuals are encouraged to vote in order to ensure political representation and safeguarding a white majority. In other words, whereas both extreme Islamist and far right groups perceive to be marginalised by mainstream politics, the former seems to retreat in disenchantment and the latter seems to aim for a radical change from within.

In a similar vein, Danish voting patterns for extreme nationalist parties are a good proxy for extreme-nationalist radicalisation, but there are no equivalent publicly available measures of Muslim radicalisation. In other words, there are vast asymmetries between voting behaviours and political representations between far right and Islamist milieus. DRIVE will engage with these country-specific observations and will try to analyse their impact and their underlying motivations within country settings as well as across the northwest European borders. How young people perceive and interact with the state, their grievances concerning the state and society, what motivates young people to vote or why they abstain from voting will be explored alongside how young people feel whether they have the power to instigate change and to what end.

The state and relative deprivation

Relative deprivation – the perception that oneself or one's group receives less valued resources than others – is another state mediated aspect of social exclusion. In Norway, research has shown that living in city districts with high-income inequality to some extent lowers the probability of Norwegians of immigrant background having contact with mental healthcare services (Finnvold 2019). The Dutch country report highlights how the standardised costs for specialised mental health care are 45 per cent higher for men with a non-Western migration background compared to men without a migration background (CBS 2020). These observations should be explored further by DRIVE. If young adults are struggling with experiences of social exclusion or poor physical and mental health, there could be untapped potential in terms of early prevention. The structural economic drivers seem less salient for far right activists than the Islamist activists, but more research is needed to make more conclusive and comparative observations. Researchers should explore how the social exclusion that flows out of relative deprivation is interpreted and experienced by young people.

State extremism

In addition to exploring the responses and attitudes of young people to the state, we still have a scant understanding of how the state is entangled with the production of the phenomenon of 'extremism'. As extremism is a relational concept that has changed significantly over the last

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decades (Backes 2009), the state is key in determining what 'mainstream society' is perceived of and what groups and political ideas are cast out of the self-definition of liberal democracy. As a regime that does not prevent but manages violence, the state chooses to try to prevent some kinds of violence while ignoring to face others. This is also true for the counter-terror state in its manifestation in northwest Europe. This raises the question, to what extent has the nature of the state changed in the last two decades, and how does the proliferation of the discourse, bureaucratic capacity and political attention paid to extremism change the nature of the modern state?

If we accept the self-definition of the state as liberal and democratic, we might miss some of the most important dynamics, such as the increased pervasiveness of surveillance capitalism (Zuboff 2019), the calamitous destructiveness of the high intensive carbon economy and the resurgence of nativist and racist nationalism as the mainstream of politics in northwest Europe. In this way, we need to ask to what extent the focus on extremism is also a centrist ideology that seeks to reassure its moral superiority in face of the destruction it is heralding over the planet and the possibility of autonomous living for future generations. Like turning the gaze towards state-sponsored terrorism in the critical study of terrorism (Abbas 2021), we need to turn our gaze towards the extremism amid mainstream politics, for instance, the xenophobic 'hostile environment' in the United Kingdom or the white supremacist refugee politics of the European Union, strongly endorsed even by countries with social democratic traditions such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway.

Life histories

In addition to paying closer attention to the role of the state in the production of extremism, researchers need to investigate in greater detail the perspectives and experiences of the young people that grow up in, are part of and/or develop milieus that are considered extreme. Even though issues of space and individual agency are widely acknowledged to be key in understanding far right and Islamist mobilisation, ethnographic studies that analyse the life-worlds and life histories of the young people engaged in far right and Islamist milieus in northwest Europe are strikingly rare. If we hypothesise that radicalisation is a response to social marginalisation, relative deprivation, various 'crises' of globalisation and critical socio-political events we need to pay closer attention to local experiences of crisis as well as activists' and community actors' understandings of what crisis means for them.

Similarly, much work has been done on nationalist and Islamist ideology, but less on why people find it appealing—why it resonates or, in the terms used by Peter L. Berger, what its 'plausibility structures' are (Berger 1967). Research would benefit, for example, from integrating subjective measures on Muslim young adult experiences with discrimination, their aspirations and attitudes. Ethnographic fieldwork is well suited to investigate micro-processes of how radicalisation processes might be driven both by local structural factors and sets of

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circumstances, transnational events, social structures emerging from digital space and factors in individual life trajectories (see Blee 2007; Coleman and Hellermann 2012).

The organisational level

All four country reports highlight that it remains unclear whether what matters in the evolution of an extremist milieu is any particular organisation or person, or a general milieu located within a particular structure. Additionally, many of the organisational structures that make up extremist milieus have been pushed into the margins of society, retreating from the scrutinising eyes of the security services, and thereby becoming less visible for researchers and other observers. Given the withdrawal of extremist Islamist organisations from the public spheres and given the secrecy surrounding far right organisations, which organisational structures matter in Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom is regularly and shift in. This requires constant re-evaluation of the significance of any type of organisation and a methodology that focuses not only on organisations but emerging milieus, networks and personal relations.

Gender and masculinities

A major lacuna of knowledge and significant potential for original contribution is a better understanding of the role of gender and masculinities in processes of radicalisation and in extremist milieus more broadly. What is known is that there is a clear reciprocity between misogynist attitudes and values, violence, and the use of violence seen as a feature of all kinds of extremism. This reciprocity is demonstrated across a wide range of countries including the United States, Australia, Norway and the UK (McCulloch et al. 2019). It is also clearly evident in the overlap in the use of violence against women in private and the display of violent behaviours associated with extremist incidents in public (Smith 2019). These observations point to the importance of reflecting on (young) men and their relationship with masculinity(ies) as a constituent element of their identity formation and cultural milieu. Unfortunately, most articles and policy reports on radicalisation in northwest Europe have explicitly dealt with gender and where they have taken this to mean women. This focus has also reflected a tendency to depict women in stereotypical terms (Moors 2019, 246), portraying them as victims rather than perpetrators and as emotively moved rather than rationally motivated. At the same time Jihadism has frequently been understood as an almost exclusively male phenomenon. Bakker's (2006, 36) sample on jihadist terrorism in Europe in the period 2001-2006, for instance, identified a mere 2.1 per cent of sympathisers to be women. Yet the kind of masculinity and/or femininity associated with such attitudes and values have not been fully explored. With the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, however, this trend has drastically changed (Bergema and San 2019, 642–48). The role of gender in extreme-right movements needs further inquiry.

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While it is to be welcomed that there is increasing research about women in extremist movements (e.g. Farris 2017; Allen and Goodman 2021; Blee and Linden 2012; Huckerby 2015; Saltman and Smith 2015), it is remarkable that the concept of gender and the critical apparatus developed by feminist and intersectional scholars remains largely unexplored when analysing men's identities, lifeworlds and actions. The field of critical masculinity studies (Connell 1995) and ongoing work within feminist informed criminology and political economy offers key insights that might help to understand the motivations of people to endorse violence against a perceived outgroup. Drawing on critical, intersectional studies of masculinity, we need to ask, what forms of masculinity are conducive to political violence? How does the 'crisis of masculinity' in contemporary Europe contribute to people seeking to associate themselves with hierarchically organised, patriarchal organisations that support extremist behaviour? How do troubled relations to the body, sexuality, self-worth, insecurity, mental health, family, craving for recognition and meaning-making contribute to people being prone to radicalisation or choosing to commit acts of political violence?

4. Key research and policy questions

What are the main research and policy questions that need addressing?

Definitions

- How broadly should we understand 'extremism'?
- How can disputes around definitions of key terms that feed directly into practitioner application/intervention, including the 'far right' and 'Islamist', be overcome?
- How can new discourses and vocabularies that avoid stigmatisation and racialisation be developed and utilised?

Multi-level analysis

- How can macro-, meso- and micro-level analyses of extremism and radicalisation be combined in relational, emergent, and multi-level frameworks?
- What are the primary motivations expressed by individuals for being attracted to extremist perspectives?
- How do young people express the balance between individual, familial, community, nation, and global factors in explaining sympathy with extremist values and beliefs?

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- Which resources - economic, social, cultural, educational - do those attracted to extremist milieus feel are lacking in their lives?
- What is the balance between ideational, affective/emotional and material factors in inclining young people toward extremist ideas and milieus?

Unexplored/evolving research areas

- What role does the internet play in the socialisation and evolution of far right and Islamist milieus in northwest Europe?
- In what ways can social exclusion (through alienation, discrimination, economic hardship, local marginalisation, positional deprivation, nostalgic deprivation, and recognition gaps) impact the development of extremism in society?
- Which channels of dialogue and shared forums for discussion for young people can be established between those sympathising with far right and Islamist extremism to foster a greater understanding of the conjoint challenges of isolation, marginalisation and exclusion in everyday life?
- How do relationships to the state affect the push and pull factors of extremist milieus?
- What new knowledge can a gender-informed appreciation of the lives of young men and women who are drawn to extremism provide and how can this be indexed to expressions of violence across different contexts?

Policy

- To what extent do the reasons that participants offer for their attraction to extremist perspectives align with the explanations for this process occurring amongst practitioners and community/civic actors?
- What might constitute more progressive context-sensitive alternatives to risk-based pre-emptive modes of intervention?
- Can more inclusive modes of engaging with young people around the problem of extremism be experimented with and developed?
- Which policy measures can be introduced to bolster the collective development of stronger support infrastructures and networks within local communities?
- How can avoidance of iatrogenic effects be more firmly factored into the implementation of future tools and interventions designed to reduce the risk of extremism?

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5. Implications for DRIVE

The identified gaps in knowledge and remaining questions guide DRIVE's research directions and research tools. This section seeks to present a synopsis of these research selections.

Terminology

Whereas definitions of 'far right' and 'Islamist' commonly used in political science and political philosophy are important, DRIVE is more interested in groups defined in sociological terms. While we are still developing our approach, we aim to ground our perspective in real types. Terrorist violence has been committed in DRIVE countries in recent years. Some perpetrators have been identified as far right, including David Copeland, Darren Osborne and Thomas Muir in the UK, and Anders Behring Breivik in Norway. Others have been identified as Islamists, including Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein in Denmark, Mohammed Bouyeri in the Netherlands, and the 7/7 bombers in the UK. All these individuals have acted according to their affiliation with and representation of either a religious or ethnic group, for example, non-Muslim Norwegians, Europeans and Americans, or Muslims in Denmark and beyond. Majority and minority religious and/or ethnic groups can be identified in all DRIVE countries, though as always, any particular individual's ethnicity, identity and belonging is complex, nuanced and not captured by any one label.

DRIVE is not primarily interested in either the level of individual violent extremists or of large religious or ethnic groups but in what lies between them. DRIVE will focus on the *milieus*[5] that contribute to societal polarisation. DRIVE seeks to understand the dynamics that give rise to milieus, organisations, and direct action. These conditions include economic and political frustrations, perceptions on society, identity, ideology, faith, gender, inter-generational change, inter-group polarisation, existential anxiety, and locality. It also includes conditional dynamics that have hitherto been less researched, including experiences of social exclusion, relations to the state and public mental health. The focus is on the interaction of these factors as well as relationally emerging conditions, rather than on the violent individuals who may originate from them.

Milieus in multi-dimensional spaces

This terminological positioning necessitates an operational approach that focuses on the changing conditions and milieus from and in which extremist ideas, organisations and

5 A milieu is defined as a (1) social environment, connecting ideological, religious, material, spatial, virtual and/or affective dimensions, (2) in which questions of existential meaning and identity are addressed, (3) that feature counter-hegemonic mobilisation against the perceived mainstream of society, the state and other milieus.

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individuals evolve. To achieve a relational and dynamic approach, one that acknowledges the space of a milieu to be unbounded, connecting, amongst others, offline and online environments, we will build on two bodies of literature: multi-sited fieldwork (C. Horst 2009, 120) and 'digital ethnography' (H. A. Horst and Miller 2020; Kozinets 2015; Hine 2015; Markham 2013; Boellstorff et al. 2012). Multi-sited fieldwork allows the researcher to transcend geographical place and instead observe the field 'as a network of localities' (C. Horst 2009, 120) in which boundaries are constantly flux. The challenge with multi-sited fieldwork is to explore local and global linkages, online and offline dynamics, and the flows that create and maintain linkages between social structures and agentic forces (C. Horst 2009, 122; H. A. Horst and Miller 2020). The opportunity with multi-sited fieldwork is to see the social world, including its extremist milieus, in their emergent and relational expressions.

Digital ethnography more specifically challenges the traditional notion of a fixed field-site by pointing out that digital and media technologies are part of people's daily lives (Markham 2013, 438). DRIVE researchers will engage in an open and collaborative process, interrelating with various online spaces, to produce knowledge of mediated everyday experiences and relate these to offline sentiments and behaviours. This approach is directed at understanding online and offline sensory meaning-making practices, which are 'constituted and maintained through cultural definition and social strategies' (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019, 3). Digital ethnography will be utilised as one data gathering instrument within the multi-sited field to map how digital platforms are used to foster ties within and between far right and Islamist milieus across neighbourhoods, cities, and countries. Together, these research practises allow for a more holistic take on the multiple and interrelated conditions on the formation and maintenance of extreme milieus.

Theoretical Approach

By viewing the milieu as a multi-dimensional analogue-cum-virtual space, we need a theoretical approach that is both multi-layered and firmly informed by the life experiences of those that make up the milieus we are trying to understand. DRIVE aims to develop a variable and relational approach, in which different levels of analysis are combined to form a holistic perspective on extremist milieus and radicalisation processes. With this ambition in mind, life histories obtained through interviews will be connected to observed and reported group dynamics, online and offline, which we will be looking at from a critical and embedded societal perspective and a gender lens. Within the framework of laminated foci, DRIVE proposes an elastic and variable mechanism to bridging these different dimensions, seeking the interactive, reciprocal, and emerging relationships between young people, organisational dynamics, online and offline environments, and societal structures. This is important because researchers of extremism and radicalisation are regularly criticised for not systematically integrating the different and changing contexts in which extremist milieus, extremist ideas and extremist

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individuals originate and evolve, even though calls for integration have become increasingly common (see McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). The multi-levelled approach will overcome many of the separate shortcomings associated with single perspectives and yield a richer understanding of the conditions that are conducive to extremist milieus and radicalisation processes.

Connecting the state to experiences of social exclusion

DRIVE focuses on a diverse range of topics that it believes to impact radicalisation processes, including economic and political frustrations, perceptions on society, identity, ideology, faith, gender, inter-generational change, inter-group polarisation, existential anxiety, and locality. It also includes two conditional and interrelated dynamics that have received less attention in extremism research, namely experiences of social exclusion and relations to the state (noteworthy exceptions include Bonino and Ricucci 2021; Harteveld et al. 2021; Abbas 2019; Burgoon et al. 2018; United Nations Development Programme 2016). In studies on extremism, Martijn de Koning (2020, 123) argues, attitudes towards the state have remained both underexamined and under-theorised. This is surprising, as the impact of the state on extremist milieus and the relationships between those within extremist milieus and the state shed light on the real and perceived conditions of social exclusion, by assessing people's sense of social recognition and societal power in relation to their environment. DRIVE considers these dynamics to constitute core elements within a multi-sited and societally informed study on extremism and therefore sees significant potential for original contribution.

Comparing asymmetries

Our preliminary research highlighted that far right, and Islamist milieus can have quite different expressions, conditions to which they react, and contexts in which they evolve. DRIVE seeks to compare far right and Islamist milieus and additionally sets out to analyse the possible patterns of reciprocal polarisation and radicalisation between the two milieus. Within this comparative and reciprocal model, similarity cannot be assumed. DRIVE takes seriously the asymmetries between the two milieus, taking into account, amongst others, majority and minority perspectives, biases in policy, diverging historical trajectories, different experiences with racism and discrimination, and societal inequalities.

Evidence-based policy advice

DRIVE aims to provide evidence-based policy advice, grounded in community engagement and societal understanding. Given the reluctance within state institutions to engage with a plurality of voices, dismissing rather than engaging with criticisms of counter-extremism and

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counter-radicalisation strategy, the development of a more reflexive and inclusive mode of evaluating the efficacy of policy seems appropriate. On the basis of the evidence marshalled here it is our view that, in order to fully understanding what may ostensibly be depicted as individual proclivities toward violence, the role of structural (primarily gender, class, age and ethnicity) institutional and environmental factors is paramount. We contend that these factors need be at the centre of any understanding of extremism and processes and practices implemented to reduce the risk of harm.

The backlash against critical scholarship

Recent events across northwest Europe have caused concern for the practise of field research and critical reflection. A recent phenomenon that has rocked British and French academia is the backlash against scholarship that critically investigates colonial and racist formations of knowledge and power in Western societies. In Britain, certain elements of right-wing media and pundits are mobilising against academics that seek to uncover Black histories and colonial histories of violence that are frequently still prevalent in society today. In France, the term 'Islamogauchisme' has been used by the highest level of government and society to criticise the alleged unscientific conflation of left-wing and Muslim scholarship and political projects, targeting in particular researchers of colour and those that are critical of the racist dimension of contemporary scholarship and politics. Recent incidents at Dutch and Norwegian universities indicate that this kind of right-wing backlash exists also in these countries, with several academics being targeted by right-wing parties, intellectuals and anonymous extremists (Hoger Onderwijs Persbureau 2021; Siebelink 2021). This phenomenon must be understood in the larger context of an anti-intellectual and neo-nativist sentiment pushing back against the kind of critical scholarship DRIVE seeks to undertake. These events have led the research team to adopt strict security protocols and safeguards, which are detailed in DRIVE's ethics application.

Despite this backlash, DRIVE remains committed to the cause of researching the role of social exclusion in processes of societal polarisation and extremism. The fact that our disciplines and fields of research cause such reactions by different political actors, particularly on the right, shows its societal relevance and the complex societal tension that underlie our work. It also shows that the far right is trying to assert its legitimacy and normalise its presence in Europe is to personally attack people who challenge their beliefs and political convictions and try to help society to find adequate responses that enhance the capacities of communities to uphold the values of equality, liberty and democracy. As researchers, we have a unique responsibility to carefully analyse these processes, ensure the safeguarding of researchers and participants, and contribute to providing the public with critical assessments of current and emergent violent extremist groups.

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Part B: Public Mental Health Overview Report

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Background

This short Overview Report accompanying the '*State of the Art' Report* is from the Public Mental Health team (PMH) of researchers working with the DRIVE project and highlights a selection of the central points that relate to public mental health and public health research in the research area of radicalisation and violent extremism. First, it will present an overview of the research on this topic, and second, it will briefly present how the primarily social science research findings in this project will be tested in a final research phase using community participatory research methods and public mental health-wellbeing models. This dual focus will be expanded into a larger PMH report during the 36-month DRIVE project, as an extra deliverable, and this Overview Report is provided now to highlight the unique contribution that this research will make.

One of the important challenges that the DRIVE project has undertaken is to investigate this complex research topic of radicalisation and violent extremism from an interdisciplinary perspective. An interdisciplinary approach offers the most comprehensive means of gaining new knowledge about lived experiences of social exclusion and their relationship to a variety of structural dimensions as enabling factors and drivers for radicalisation among far right and extreme Islamist groups in four countries (Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK). The structural dimensions include space, identity, intergenerational conflict and reciprocal radicalisation. Through this interdisciplinary approach and focus, DRIVE aims to contribute to the development of enhanced CVE policy responses.

Though research studies from different disciplines have touched upon mental health and health-related factors for radicalisation, and multi-disciplinary designs have been used, there has been no research study to date that links public health research to social science research as intended in the DRIVE project. This includes public health contributions to all levels of empirical data gathering and analysis in the project's unique and comprehensive mixed-methods research design. This ambitious design presents opportunities and challenges as the intention is to create an inter-disciplinary framework wherever possible while being mindful of the accountability issues raised in the respective disciplines as to conceptualisation, theoretical transparency, and methodological rigour. In addition to the ambitious multi-disciplinary nature of the project and its inter-disciplinary goals, there are also challenges raised by the specific limits of political and legal structures in each of the countries that, in part, guide how public mental health and health systems are shaped and how they relate to understanding and engaging with the larger topic of radicalisation. Yet, these challenges, amongst others that cannot be elaborated here, also present opportunities for the DRIVE project. The most important opportunity is to work

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collaboratively as researchers and with communities to increase the knowledge base that can expand the understanding and assessment of needs, capacities, and resources for decreasing radicalisation and countering violent extremism (CVE).

Public health perspective of social justice

'Perspective-taking' (a form of social cognition that recognises the existence of different perspectives) is essential for public health in any given research project or programme development. As has been well argued (Powers & Faden 2008), numerous historical and contemporary perspectives have been used to frame public health. The reasoning behind and the resulting theory proposed by the bioethicists Powers and Faden (2006, 2019) emphasising considerations of social justice, and not utilitarian aims as applied narrowly to health outcomes, have together become an important and empowering perspective for public health. As Tol (2020) notes, this perspective makes the case for social justice as the moral foundation for public health, in contrast to the more usual considerations of bringing about the greatest health benefits from limited public health resources. Powers and Faden's theory is a 'nonideal' theory, but functions as a real-life approach providing a framework for analysing which inequalities matter most in the real world, where very large populations and groups have unmet basic needs and no secure liberties, and human rights violations are commonplace. This social justice perspective asserts that the greatest moral urgency should be given to populations who fare badly on multiple dimensions, those who are most at risk. An essential part of the job of social justice is to identify the interlocking patterns of disadvantage that systematically marginalise population groups (Powers & Faden 2006, 2019). This overarching social justice perspective provides the theoretical background to the public health and public mental health promotion framework for this project.

Public mental health as an integral base of public health

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 'Public health refers to all organised measures (whether public or private) to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole. Its activities aim to provide conditions in which people can be healthy and focus on entire populations, not on individual patients or diseases. Thus, public health is concerned with the ecological system and not only the eradication of a particular disease' (WHO 2016a, 2016b).

An approach to public health that includes public mental health with a health promotion focus recognises protective factors for mental health and wellbeing as well as broader determinants, including the lifelong impact of mental ill-health and other risk factors. Good mental health, as the World Health Organisation has noted (WHO 2004), is the basis of all health. Positive mental health results in health, psychosocial, and economic benefits, which are not due simply

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to the absence of mental disorder. Moreover, the promotion of mental wellbeing can both prevent mental and somatic disorders as well as assist in the recovery from these disorders: Promotion and prevention are important for the sustainable reduction of the burden of mental disorders since once it has arisen, treatment can only reduce a relatively small proportion of such burden due to a lack of treatment facilities and the fact that often there are many years from the first symptoms to treatment-seeking behaviour (partly due to stigmatisation) (Boyd-MacMillan & DeMarinis 2020). The challenge is to incorporate such interventions into non-clinical and clinical practice as well as engaging with a range of other service providers including public health and primary care physicians' (Campion et al. 2012, 68).

DeMarinis (2018) argues that this orientation has not played a central role, due to various factors, including but not exclusive to training focused primarily on diagnosing and managing mental disorders; insufficient resources; the lack of coordinating strategies between ministries, institutions, agencies, and sectors; and the lack of operative models that can assist with the coordination of the prevention and promotion foci. Public mental health, therefore, needs to incorporate various strategies, ranging from the promotion of mental wellbeing to primary prevention and other forms of prevention and intervention. Planned strategies need to focus on individual, societal, and environmental aspects. Targeted interventions concerning individuals will also need to focus on and assess the levels of function in the whole population. Kalra et al. (2012) propose a nested approach with the individual at the centre, surrounded by family, carers, and significant others, and educational and other local networks, surrounded by society at large, as the most suitable way to this approach.

A public mental health-wellbeing orientation focuses on both challenges (e.g., psychosocial impairment, distress) and strengths (e.g., wellbeing, resilience) no matter when or where one enters the process (DeMarinis & Boyd-MacMillan, 2019). In research among displaced populations or disenfranchised populations, mental health, wellbeing, daily functioning, family cohesion and community members' interaction, in general, appear to benefit from integrated models of clinical and community care programmes, yet evidence regarding their implementation among such populations remains limited (Tol et al. 2011). When considering the implementation of care services that foster local agency, an ecological approach may promote culturally appropriate care (Ager et al. 2005). This kind of approach fits well with the Bronfenbrenner (1979) model that has become a standard reference.

It can be argued that though humanitarian organisations routinely conduct psychosocial needs assessments (Wells et al., 2016), an ecological assessment goes further, in terms of examining the context and culture for accessing services to address identified needs (Wells et al. 2018).

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Public mental health promotion and resilience

Public mental health promotion is coupled to the promotion of resilience throughout the lifecycle. A public mental health promotion approach focuses on protective and salutogenic factors that can contribute to resilience (DeMarinis 2014).

Resilience is a complex concept and continues to be both defined and approached in research in different ways. Generally, it is accepted that resilience is inherently related to the resources that an individual can draw on to overcome adversity (e.g., Richardson 2002). These protective or promotive factors are understood ecologically and come in a wide variety of forms that combine to make a person resilient. Three interacting levels are involved.

Level 1 – Individual factors: Focus is on psychological and neurobiological factors that can play a role in maintaining and recovering wellbeing after traumatic events or setbacks. This level of resilience typically involves investigations of personality and coping styles that mediate the relationship between adversity and wellbeing, but it can extend to include investigations of physical and cognitive abilities as well as neurocognitive structures and neural responses to stressors (Reinelt et al. 2015).

Level 2 – Social factors: Focus is on the social relationships one has and whether an individual can call on and expect support in times of crisis. Social support is widely construed to contain both affective (emotions and feelings) and instrumental components. This level of support is primarily in the form of either emotional support (e.g., listening and providing empathy) or instrumental support (e.g., tangible assistance aimed at solving a problem) (Adams et al. 1996).

Level 3 – Community factors: The focus here goes beyond individual capacities and takes into account economic, institutional, ecological, and infrastructure capacities when evaluating which communities are most likely to be resilient in the face of tragedies either natural or human (Cutter et al. 2008).

As the above typology conveys, a person's resilience is not only an individual process but also an interpersonal one, that is, a human resource that develops and thrives in a culturally defined group and community context (Kirmayer et al. 2011). Therefore, assessing resilience only on an individual level with intrapersonal measures would not provide an adequate picture of the actual situation and level of resilience; a fuller understanding of resilience requires consideration of interpersonal (social and community) resources (Cetrez et al. 2021).

Consequences of choosing between mental health models

The model of mental health using only one continuum and featuring mental health and mental illness at opposite ends has been replaced by a model that frames mental health as two distinct yet interacting ‘domains’ (i.e., areas of experience, depicted as two separate continua), mental ill-health and subjective wellbeing (Cetrez et al. 2021; DeMarinis & Boyd-MacMillan, 2019;

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Boyd-MacMillan & DeMarinis, 2020). Increasing evidence shows relatively weak correlations between mental ill-health and subjective wellbeing alongside findings that many experience high-functioning wellbeing in the presence of symptoms of mental ill-health (Patalay & Fitzsimons 2016; Kalra et al. 2012). Mental disorder/illness and mental health/wellbeing are distinct although related domains to the extent that the absence of either mental health or mental disorder does not imply the presence of the other. Campion et al. (2012) find that prevention of mental disorder is closely related to and can occur as a result of the promotion of mental health and associated resilience. This finding supports a two-domain view of mental health where mental ill-health and subjective wellbeing are distinct constructs that are in some studies only moderately associated (Patalay & Fitzsimons 2016).

The two-domain model permits a more complete understanding of mental health and focuses on numerous interacting factors that can affect actual daily function. The model is not static but fluid and reflects the growing evidence of interaction between the two domains (Patalay & Fitzsimons 2016; DeMarinis and Boyd-MacMillan 2019; Kalra et al. 2012). A two-domain model does not underestimate the important contributions to understanding risk factors for negative mental health consequences of, for example, war-related violence and other traumatic losses while addressing the important critique that Betancourt and Khan (2008) raise: that the focus on trauma alone has resulted in inadequate attention to factors associated with resilient mental health outcomes.

Public mental health and radicalisation research

The need for a new paradigm emerged from an analysis of the results of the first-wave CVE by Weine and colleagues (2016, 2017a). The first wave focused on a criminal justice perspective and community policing strategies meant to foster collaborative partnerships between law enforcement and impacted communities. However, not all programs led to the intended results. As an example, some applications were having the effect of portraying Muslims as a ‘suspect community’ and ‘viewed in a homogeneous and unified in a way that other ethnic/religious communities are not’ (Thomas 2008 4–5). The emphasis in the first-wave CVE was intended to have a proactive joint problem-solving approach to build trust and cooperation and address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues. Though a necessary component, as the example provided illustrates, there have been many drawbacks documented regarding community isolation and group stigmatisation. Not infrequently the framework of criminal justice involved a specific type of engagement; as Peter Romaniuk has noted, ‘Community engagement on CVE can yield unintended negative consequences’ (Romaniuk 2015, 16). The paradigm shift has been to a second-wave CVE with activities focused more specifically on prevention and intervention components. Prevention activities here involve programs, policies, and interventions that are intended to promote the inclusion of individuals and communities at risk, diminish exposure to the causes and promoters of

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violence and reduce the progression to violence. Additionally, these strategies are intended to increase access to support and resources that promote individual and community well-being and resilience.

The argument for a paradigm shift has focused on the need for a framework that will accommodate the individual, social, community and structural factors involved in radicalisation and extremism and public health has been nominated to fill that role. In a public health framework, primary prevention aims to prevent disease or injury before it ever occurs. Intervention activities, when applied to CVE, refer to programs, policies, and interventions that serve youth and adults who are believed to be at risk but are still in a pre-criminal space. These activities can involve both primary and secondary prevention in public health terms–aiming to reduce the impact of a disease or injury that has already occurred–or tertiary prevention that aims to soften the impact of an on-going illness or injury that has lasting effects. These types of interventions have the impact of introducing further distrust between the state and its citizenry. However, public health involves diverse disciplines relevant to CVE such as psychiatry, psychology, sociology, anthropology, communications, education, and public policy. Public health professionals carry out their work through many relevant approaches, including developing and implementing community-based programs, administering services, conducting research and evaluation, and recommending policies. All these characteristics make public health a potentially beneficial multi-disciplinary framework through which to understand the multiple aspects of violent extremism–as opposed to looking at it from a single perspective.

Public health has not heretofore played a significant role in the program planning or discourse on CVE, despite some prior calls for greater public health involvement in CVE (Bhui et al. 2012). However, there is a growing movement in the US and Europe that is approaching violence prevention and intervention from a public health point of view. With the presence of a PMH team in the project Consortium, DRIVE joins this movement with a particular focus on radicalisation and violent extremism.

Caution areas for public health and public mental health frameworks

Within the public mental health research area in relation to radicalisation and CVE, there are several cautions to be heeded. Aggarwahl (2019) has been the most prominent of such voices. He notes that the attempt to identify psychological and mental health risk factors remains incomplete. As Bhui and Jones (2017) note, there is the need to promote an evidence base, for now the majority of incidents have little to do with mental illness, and the extent of modifiable psychological process or vulnerability is yet to be determined. The problematic orientation of other mental health professionals views the public health sector as filling a void between suspected and known active militancy. Weine and colleagues (2017b) identify a gap in social services for those at risk for violent extremism who have not yet committed a crime. This ‘pre-

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criminal space' becomes their public health focus: 'Intervention activities of CVE refer to programmes, policies, and interventions that serve youth and adults who are believed to be at risk of committing a violent act but are still in the pre-criminal space' (Weine et al. 2017b, 210). Like Bhui and colleagues in relation to psychological and mental health factors, Weine and colleagues acknowledge (2017) the lack of an evidence base that points clearly to risk and protective factors which could drive public health programme planning (Weine et al., 2017b, 212). Aggarwahl (2019) emphasises that Weine and colleagues (2017b) note that there is no way to measure the construct of 'violent extremism' because there is no consensus definition to begin.

In addition to scientific concerns, ethical concerns also emerge when uncovering information related to violent extremism that could jeopardise public health screening altogether. There is an urgent need to balance civil rights with public safety in CVE programmes: 'It is necessary for stakeholders to proceed with great sensitivity in seeking community buy-in and collaboration and to assure that civil liberties are protected' (Weine et al. 2017b, 54). Certain CVE efforts and their results have once again raised longstanding apprehensions over the relationships of mental health professionals to state governments. In 2016, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association observed that counterterrorism measures have resulted in the 'closing of space for civil society in the UK,' admonishing that 'Prevent is having the opposite of its intended effect: by dividing, stigmatising and alienating segments of the population' (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner 2016). Of 7631 people referred to British law enforcement from April 2015 to March 2016, 4997 (65%) were for 'Islamist' versus 759 (10%) for 'right-wing' extremism (The Home Office 2017), with Muslims referred forty times more than others (Versi 2017).

Simply stating that CVE initiatives do not target particular communities such as Muslims does not assuage fears of religious profiling based on the types of counter-terrorism referrals in the UK and grant recipients in the US. In research on CVE, adverse experiences should also inform future initiatives. Otherwise, state governments are at risk of being charged with not conducting credible, comprehensive analyses on the effectiveness of CVE programmes, and eroding trust in the mental health system. Responsible CVE initiatives through the public health system move beyond merely creating new forms of mental health 'knowledge' about Muslims into disseminating practices across societies. (Aggarwahl 2019).

Public mental health promotion framework in community-based participatory research

So where do these important concerns leave responsible public mental health and public health research?

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One specific pathway for a public mental health promotion framework is community-based participatory research (CBPR). This research design brings together programme researchers, practitioners, and intended beneficiaries in genuinely equitable partnerships that define processes and outcomes to link local public policies with individual interventions (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008). Involving the community from the very beginning of the research process is essential as is the triangulation of data through coordinated methods in a sound mixed-methods design (DeMarinis & Boyd-MacMillan 2019; Boyd-MacMillan & DeMarinis 2020; Boyd-MacMillan, et al. 2016). Accessing knowledge at the local context and community level is essential. Existing models such as that of the model and method of Community Readiness Assessment (CRA) (Wells et al. 2019) are essential for gaining the deep knowledge and engagement of the community. Such community assessment and readiness models need also to incorporate an understanding of transnational- and other hybrid online communities that bridge global and local radicalisation strategies and identities (Atran 2021; Jones 2017).

Designing interventions to leverage change at different levels among different target groups, then, is the result of a collaborative, cumulative process linked to a deeper understanding of the interactions among push, pull, and personality factors in a community context and requires community engagement from the start (DeMarinis & Boyd-MacMillan 2019). The community context may include social, familial, personal, organisational, and structural factors. The more specific the factors identified the more that can be achieved. A collaborative, cumulative process includes an examination of the crucial area of the social determinants of health-related to violent extremism (Alcalá, Sharif, Samari 2017). This process also allows for a much needed multi-levelled focus on resilience, as outlined above. As Stephens and colleagues (2021) have noted in their comprehensive literature review on preventing violent extremism, thus far the notion of resilience to extremism has often focused on the individual, and insufficient attention has been given to the role of contextual structures and institutions, suggesting a social-ecological perspective on resilience could re-orientate the discourse on resilience to extremism.

Framing CVE community programming through a public health promotion perspective might also allow prevention and intervention programs to access new resources, as part of public health programs (DeMarinis 2018). Community safety is vital to public health as well as law enforcement. Such framing could also help embed programs in existing structures that are already integrated into community life (e.g., community organising and strengthening structures), rather than adding new structures that either are or appear to be, a part of the security apparatus. In moving to this paradigm of public health, attention needs to be placed more specifically on health promotion and the importance of context, community and the operative culture: this is a shift in perspective and focus.

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Project working hypotheses and the pilot intervention

Through observations, surveys and interviews, the DRIVE project will test four working hypotheses concerning lived experiences of social exclusion and their relationship to a variety of structural dimensions as enabling factors and drivers for radicalisation among far right and Islamist extremist groups. The structural dimensions include space, identity, intergenerational conflict and reciprocal radicalisation. Through an interdisciplinary approach and focus, DRIVE will address the following four explanatory hypotheses with the ultimate aim of contributing to the development of enhanced prevention and policy responses.

Working hypothesis 1: Spatial Formations

The features of post-industrial towns and cities can operate as radicalisation enabling factors when they combine with individual and community experiences of structural social exclusion to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent extremism.

Working hypothesis 2: Identity Politics

Identity politics can operate as a radicalisation enabling factor when it combines with individual and social experiences of social injustice to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation.

Working hypothesis 3: Intergenerational Change and Continuity

An experienced tension between intergenerational change and continuity can operate as a radicalisation enabling factor that combines with experiences of structural social injustice to support or generate motivations for turning toward violent radicalisation

Working hypothesis 4: Reciprocal Radicalisation

Far right and Islamist groups can contribute to the radicalisation of each other through mutually reinforcing verbal and behavioural expressions of hate, intolerance or indignation toward one another, both individually and collectively.

The Public Mental Health (PMH) team is contributing to the project research instruments and analyses (involving observations, surveys and interviews deployed across four countries, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and the UK) that will address the above hypotheses. In addition, the PMH team will need to formulate more exact public mental health hypotheses in these areas as the project progresses, the particular communities are identified, and initial community-related data analysed. The results from this research will inform the development of focus group questions for use with members of both target populations in two countries

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using the Community Readiness Assessment model (CRA; Wells, et al. 2019). Focus group participants will be recruited from among interviewees in Norway and the UK. The CRA model will enable the PMH team to test (and refine as needed) the findings about how people in each community (meeting in separate focus groups) relate to issues surrounding the hypotheses' key concepts. The CRA process will also identify any further information needed for effective intervention planning, for example, are they ready for change, what would change look like, who can support change? Accessing this type of information through the CRA model will create community engagement in each target group and ensure their involvement in shaping the interventions to fit with community values. The CRA model will also help each group to identify leadership requirements for consensus-building regarding problem recognition and resource needs for addressing identified problems (Edwards et al. 2000).

In each focus group, the CRA process will also test dimensions from the ecosocial IC-ADAPT model that will be the basis of the intervention design. Findings from the focus group discussions will be used to populate the pilot intervention design. Focus group members from each group who agree to participate further will experience the intervention in separate groups with evaluation protocols. From each group, those who are willing to meet members of the other group will do so in a focus group format. The PMH team will formulate hypotheses for the pilot intervention during the design process.

The IC-ADAPT model

The IC-ADAPT model will be used to design a pilot intervention to promote wellbeing and resilience at the micro, meso, and macro levels (Bronfenbrenners's model 1979) with a focus on experiences of social exclusion and injustice related to structural dimensions of space, identity, intergenerational conflict and reciprocal radicalisation. A multileveled design such as that offered by the IC-ADAPT model is required to strengthen existing and support the development of new normative capacities and skills in contexts of past and current adverse experiences. For this overview report, below is an initial orientation to the two foundational models that comprise the IC-ADAPT model.

Integrative Complexity (IC)

Over 40 years of research into the general cognitive processing model, 'integrative complexity' (IC), has explored how people (inter-personally and socially) engage with varying and diverse environmental demands, stressors and features a cross-culturally validated empirical measurement frame (Suedfeld and Tetlock 2014; Baker-Brown et al. 1992). The term 'cognitive' is used in a broad sense, to include affective (emotions and feelings) and social as well as what is more popularly thought of as 'cognitive' processing, e.g., logical thinking.

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'Cognitive processing' involves an interplay among how people think, feel, and interact with other people (individuals, groups, communities, societies).

The IC model divides cognitive processing into two measurable variables representing the fundamental developmental progression for all human beings of self-regulation: differentiation and integration. These variables are ethically *accessible*, value-neutral and therefore *acceptable* across groups and ideologies, and present in and therefore *adaptable* to all contexts and cultures. Differentiation emerges through the recognition of different dimensions or perspectives, e.g., three reasons I love where I live; two reasons I hate where I live; sometimes I love and sometimes I hate where I live and I don't know why. With the presence of differentiation, integration can emerge through complex connections among different dimensions or perspectives, e.g., knowing there are good reasons why I both love and hate where I live helps me to cope with the stress; you love where we live and I hate where we live but we can work together to improve our community (Baker-Brown et al. 1992; Conway et al. 2008).

Increased IC capacities enabling high IC communications within and across groups and societies predict more peaceful engagement, while low IC communications are a prevalent precondition for destructive social polarisation, conflict and violence (e.g., Liht, Suedfeld, Krawczyk 2005; Suedfeld 2010; Conway and Conway 2011; Suedfeld, Cross, Logan 2013; Houck, Repke, Conway 2017). As a broad measure of the developmental progression (differentiation and integration) underlying cognitive, emotional and social self-regulation (Bailey & Jones 2019), lower and higher IC has significant effects on how people learn, respond to perceptions of threat, express their values, manage and make sense of varying levels of stress, and resolve inter-group tensions.

Increased IC capacities are associated with reduced groupthink cohesion and unanimity, both of which restrict the range of information that is seriously considered and evaluated (Park & Deshon 2018). An experience of an environment as unsafe in any way, e.g., emotionally, socially, ideologically, as well as physically, is a stressor that can lead to a threat response. During a threat response, negative emotion can simplify self-regulation (less or no differentiation and integration) to focus on basic protection or defence of whatever is at stake against a perceived threat (Andrews Fearon & Boyd-MacMillan 2016). This can happen when we encounter any individual or group who we perceive as different from us or who we perceive as opposed to us in some way. Our thinking becomes inflexible, and we are closed to new information (Suedfeld 1986). Attention becomes selective with the reduced breadth of cue utilisation from our surrounding environment (Suedfeld & Bluck 1993, 127). Over time, a threat response can result in higher vigilance, exaggerated startle responses, and psychological reactivity with negative ramifications on social bonds and networks (Silove 2013).

Following a curvilinear pattern, low to moderate stress arousal heightens the need for more specialised, complex self-regulation skills, but will inhibit differentiation and integration when the stress is enduring or disruptive and eventually shatter individual, familial, and communal

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meaning-systems or worldviews (Suedfeld et al. 1998; Tetlock & Kim 1987, 708; Conway et al. 2008). Prolonged stress usually decreases the use of specialised or complex self-regulation skills (Suedfeld & Tetlock 1977, 170-171), although it can temporarily increase differentiation and integration if not knowing what to do creates excitement, information search, and new learning, i.e., the stress becomes a challenge rather than a threat (ibid., 175-176). At some point, however, a severity threshold for stress is reached and self-regulation (IC) becomes increasingly basic and generic (Suedfeld 1985, 1649). This may be adaptive for a time, but in the long term predicts destructive social polarisations, conflict and even violence.

Every social domain can be viewed as a cultural microcosm governed by its own distinctive norms and values (Fiske & Tetlock 1997). Conflicts within and between domains (e.g., between and within school, work, home, extended family, faith community, peer group) can involve value conflicts (Tetlock 1986), eliciting experiences similar to those faced by people acculturating to new cultures (Tadmor et al. 2009). Development during the teen and young adult years involves learning how to navigate domain conflicts and value conflicts while taking on new civic responsibilities in society. Yet becoming 'bi-cultural' is extremely stressful. The higher the degree of value incompatibilities among cultural meaning systems, the more stress is elicited and effortful, complex self-regulation is needed to lower the dissonance (Tadmor & Tetlock 2006, 179). Targeted interventions can leverage the development of more specialised and complex self-regulation skills (IC) to manage and resolve social and cultural tensions and lower the negative emotion (Tadmor et al. 2012, 182) while simultaneously contributing to prosocial ecological, including structural, change (Woodward et al. 2021, 24-25). IC focused pilot interventions have reported findings that support this assertion (Boyd-MacMillan, 2016; Boyd-MacMillan et al, 2016) and indicate the value of combining IC with a model such as ADAPT.

ADAPT

Although the full title of the ADAPT model (Adaptation and Development After Persecution and Torture) may suggest primary relevance to severely affected sub-groups, as an ecosocial model its relevance and value spans all groups experiencing adversity with potential for reduced functioning at the micro (individual), meso (family and group) and macro (society) levels (Silove 2013; Tay & Silove 2017). The ADAPT model organises the ecosocial environmental-societal domains of every society into five core 'pillars' (or 'life systems') that support (1) safety and security; (2) interpersonal bonds and networks; (3) justice; (4) identities and roles; and (5) existential meaning (Silove 2013). These five psychosocial pillars (or 'life systems') overlap and interact multi-directionally.

The undermining or disruption of one, a few, or all five pillars (life systems) — as experienced by those living in a particular society — is associated with core psychosocial reaction patterns at the micro (individual), meso (family, group) and macro (societal) ecosocial levels. Together,

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the five ADAPT pillars (life systems) are designed to represent universal experiences of displacement, offering an intuitive and meaningful overview not only to professionals of all kinds but to the affected people themselves (Silove & Steel 2006; Silove 2000). The provision of this meaningful overview to young people, families, and communities who may perceive themselves as displaced is itself an initial wellbeing and resilience-promoting intervention. The model as a whole has been shown to be a good fit for showing the direct effects of ongoing adversity on individuals, groups and communities while also having a moderating effect on the adverse events themselves.

The orientation to adversity and trauma in the ADAPT model is informed by research on the long-term effects of experiencing early life adversity and trauma on brain function and future mental health risk. Childhood adversity has been found to be associated with changes in brain structure and connectivity in non-clinical adolescent and adult groups. These physical changes to the brain have been shown to correlate with mental health-related traits that were likely to sensitise the individual to future life stress (Cristóbal-Narváez et al. 2016; McCarthy-Jones et al. 2017; INEE 2016).

The IC and ADAPT models are well-suited for the aims of the DRIVE project. First, they are evidence-based and multi-disciplinary. Second, they operate from a bottom-up perspective (how individuals and groups make sense of their experiences) while also providing an organising framework to provide coherence to lived experiences. Third, they are applicable across the lifecycle and have validity across cultures and contexts. From different perspectives, each model examines environmental effects on individual and group dynamics (e.g., stress effects, threat responses, cognitive resources, effects of varying levels of stress arousal - low to moderate, disruptive, shattered worldview) and report findings that post-crisis periods can be more disruptive than crisis periods. In the DRIVE project, the integrated IC-ADAPT model (Boyd-MacMillan and DeMarinis 2020) will be used by the PMH team with community members to identify the self-regulation capacities and life system dimensions most needed in their contexts and cultures with the potential of mitigating the negative effects of adverse experiences, promote wellbeing and resilience and in the long-term contribute to prosocial societal change.

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