

DRIVE

Resisting Radicalisation Through Inclusion

8.3 Practitioner's Guidance (‘Toolkit’)

Authors: Tahir Abbas, Cátia Moreira de Carvalho, and Inés Bolaños Somoano



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Executive Summary

Overview of the DRIVE Project

Launched in January 2021, the European Commission funded **DRIVE project** examines the complex interplay between social exclusion, identity and belonging, and vulnerability to radicalisation among Muslim and white nationalists in four Northwestern European countries: **Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands and The United Kingdom**. The project aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors that shape social cohesion and foster inclusivity within diverse communities. The DRIVE project focuses on preventing radicalisation through a holistic approach that involves social inclusion, community engagement, and multi-agency collaboration. It aims to empower practitioners by providing comprehensive guidelines and practical tools to support their efforts in fostering social cohesion and inclusion, as well as community safety, in their everyday work.

Purpose of the Practitioners Guidance

The “*Practitioner’s Guidance*” is designed to support front-line professionals with actionable guidance and tools to identify radicalisation signs and to design strategies through the promotion of social inclusion. The core objective of this guidance is to provide a structured and comprehensive resource that aids practitioners in understanding, identifying, and addressing the multifaceted factors contributing to radicalisation in diverse settings. By offering practical insights from the fieldwork, the toolkit aims to enhance the effectiveness of interventions and support mechanisms deployed by practitioners in their respective fields.

Structure of the Partitioners Guidance

The “Practitioner’s Guidance” is structured as follows:

- 1. Introduction:** This section will briefly introduce the DRIVE project and highlight the necessity of this guidance, reflecting on today’s sociopolitical landscape and trends in radicalisation, and important roles of front-line practitioner’s in promoting social inclusion to foster resilient societies.
- 2. Understanding Radicalisation:** This section provides an overview of ‘radicalisation’, touching on its complexities, and outlines some of the core risk factors and indicators of potential vulnerability to radicalisation and protective factors to mitigate these risks.



- 3. Core Domains & Indicators:** This section will detail the four core domains critical to understanding and addressing radicalisation –individual factors, social relationships, community dynamics, and broader societal influencers– identified by the DRIVE project.
- 4. Role of Practitioners:** The fourth section outlines the specific role that practitioners can play in identifying and mitigating risks of vulnerabilities to radicalisation and provides practical advice on positive engagement, mitigation, and intervention approaches.
- 5. Practical Guidance:** This section delves into the best practices for effective intervention strategies, emphasising multi-agency collaboration and community-based approaches.
- 6. Practitioners Observations – Fieldwork:** The seventh section presents some of the key observations and crucial insights from practitioners engaged in the DRIVE project in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.
- 7. Contextual and Ethical Considerations:** The last section highlights a few key challenges and considerations for practitioners in this field, as well as provides an overview of other useful resources linked to this guidance.



1. Introduction

Introduction to the DRIVE Project

The DRIVE project, formally known as “Determining multi-level led causes and testing intervention design to reduce radicalisation, extremism and political violence in North-Western Europe through social inclusion,” is an ambitious initiative funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Actions programme. Launched on 1 January 2021, and set to conclude on 30 June 2024, the DRIVE project seeks to unravel the complex, multi-level causes of radicalisation and to design and test interventions that reduce extremist tendencies and political violence through the promotion of social cohesion and inclusion.

The project’s multidisciplinary approach combines rigorous academic research with practical intervention strategies, aiming to bridge the gap between theoretical and academic insights and their practical application. By focusing on social inclusion, the DRIVE project emphasises the need to address the underlying socio-economic, political, spatial, and psychological factors that contribute to radicalisation, rather than merely countering extremist ideologies.

Purpose and Relevance

Radicalisation is a pressing global challenge that undermines community safety, social cohesion, and democratic values. Practitioners across various sectors—including education, social work, and community services—are on the front lines of identifying and mitigating the risks associated with radicalisation. Therefore, this toolkit is designed to support front-line professionals by providing them with a deeper understanding of potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation, including more common factors contributing to the radicalisation process, the associated risk and protective factors, and effective intervention strategies.

In today’s socio-political landscape, where individuals may feel increasingly alienated from society and disenfranchised, the role of practitioners in fostering resilience and social cohesion is more critical than ever. By equipping practitioners with the necessary tools and knowledge, **this toolkit aims to promote a whole-of-society approach to creating safer, more inclusive communities where the potential vulnerabilities to engage in radicalisation paths are less likely to manifest.**

Importance of Addressing Radicalisation through Social Inclusion

Radicalisation is often rooted in feelings of social exclusion, marginalisation, and a lack of belonging. Individuals who perceive themselves as being on the fringes of society may be more susceptible to extremist ideologies that offer a sense of purpose, identity,



belonging, and community. Therefore, fostering social inclusion is paramount to preventing radicalisation, including potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation.

Social inclusion involves creating environments where individuals feel valued, respected, and connected to their communities. It encompasses efforts to promote equity, access to necessary resources, and opportunities for meaningful participation in social, economic, and political life. By addressing the root causes of exclusion and fostering inclusive communities, practitioners can help mitigate factors that may contribute to radicalisation processes and the appeal of extremist ideologies.

This guidance highlights the critical role of social inclusion in preventing radicalisation and provides practical guidance on how front-line practitioners can further incorporate inclusive practices into their work. By promoting social cohesion and resilience, practitioners can create protective environments that reduce the risk of individuals turning to extremism as a solution to their grievances.

The **“Practitioner’s Guidance”** is an essential resource for front-line professionals that are either in key positions and/or are dedicated to countering radicalisation through proactive, inclusive approaches. It builds on the extensive research and findings of the DRIVE project, offering practitioners accessible and practical tools to support their existing efforts to make more tangible and positive impacts in their communities. Through understanding, engagement, and intervention, this toolkit aims to support efforts to foster safer, more inclusive societies where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and contribute positively.



2. Understanding Radicalisation

Understanding radicalisation requires a comprehensive approach that considers the interplay between various risk and protective factors across different levels. By addressing these factors through targeted interventions and protective policies, it is possible to mitigate the potential risks of radicalisation and promote a more inclusive and resilient society.

Definition and Process

Radicalisation is a complex process through which individuals adopt extreme views, including the willingness to support or engage in violence to achieve ideological goals. It is not a linear or uniform process but rather involves a variety of pathways influenced by individual psychological factors, social and familial influences, economic conditions, spatial dynamics, and broader societal and political contexts. Although there is no common understanding regarding the definition of radicalisation, it can be understood as both the process through which individuals develop extreme views and the outcomes of adopting such ideologies. This dual focus helps in recognising that preventing radicalisation requires addressing both the gradual progression of extremist beliefs and the consequential actions that result from these beliefs.

Online Radicalisation

The role of the internet and online communities in relation to radicalisation (as well as the spread of extremism and violent extremism) has become increasingly significant. For one, it is significant because of vast access the internet and online spaces affords – from individuals, young and old, to radical sympathisers, recruiters, and extremist groups, and beyond. Online platforms and spaces play an important socialisation roll today, acting as a space for identity and community building. Although there are many inherent positive attributes to this –e.g., young people who struggle socially in-person can find solace in socialising via online spaces instead– it also comes with the potential for negative and harmful use –e.g., vulnerable individuals lacking a sense identity or those seeking belonging may be exploited and drawn into radical discourses, communities, and/or groups.

Going further, in a 2022 report by the UK’s HM Prison and Probation Service on the radicalisation pathways of 437 convicted extremists, the analysis found that a significant portion faced mental health vulnerabilities and suffered psychological inhibitions like neurodivergence and personality disorders. Linked to that, and as a growing number of emerging research and data has also shown, the internet and online spaces served as a primary method to radicalisation, especially for individuals with mental health vulnerabilities. This is also true for young people. It is also true that online radicalisation



pathways, as well as potential vulnerabilities, are extremely complex, differ in all cases/for all individuals, and is a gradual progression.

‘Onlife’ Radicalisation

Although there has been a distinction made between offline and online radicalisation pathways in the past, emerging scholarship has argued that they should be considered in integrated ways, as peoples’ online and offline worlds are near indistinguishable today. While online spaces are increasingly significant, offline factors such as pre-existing vulnerabilities, personal crises, and social isolation contribute to radicalisation processes. Offline factors can make individuals more susceptible to online radicalisation by making them seek out extremist content and communities as a form of compensation or escape. Parallely, the internet can also accelerate the radicalisation process by reducing the time it takes for individuals to become fully radicalised. This is due to the constant and immediate availability of radical content and the rapid feedback from online communities. Thus, this interconnectedness may warrant future considerations of risk factors and vulnerabilities to not be online or offline, but instead to be ‘*onlife* radicalisation’.

Risk Factors and Indicators

Several risk factors contribute to the process of radicalisation. These factors operate at different levels—individual, social, community, and societal.

Individual Factors: Psychological vulnerabilities such as perceived deprivation, personal grievances, and the quest for significance play significant roles. Individuals experiencing identity conflicts, mental health issues, or a sense of injustice are more susceptible to radicalisation.

Social Factors: Social networks and group dynamics are crucial. Individuals are often influenced by their peers, family, and social circles. Radical groups provide a sense of belonging and identity, reinforcing in-group solidarity and out-group hostility.

Community Factors: Communities characterised by segregation, marginalisation, and a lack of community cohesion provides a more fertile ground for vulnerability to radicalisation. The absence of strong local institutions and community support systems exacerbates these vulnerabilities.

Societal Factors: Broader societal influences, including socio-economic conditions, political instability, and cultural conflicts, also play a role. Factors such as repression, corruption, unemployment, and inequality contribute to a general sense of disillusionment and alienation, which can drive individuals towards radical ideologies.



Protective Factors

Protective factors are those elements that can mitigate the risk of radicalisation. These factors can operate at various levels and include:

Individual Resilience: Developing critical thinking skills and resilience in individuals can help them resist extremist narratives. Psychological well-being and a powerful sense of self-identity are crucial protective factors.

Positive Social Relationships: Strong, supportive relationships with family, friends, and community members can provide emotional and social support, reducing the appeal of radical ideologies and groups. Engaging with diverse social networks promotes tolerance and thus also reduces the likelihood of adopting extremist views.

Community Engagement: Communities that are cohesive and inclusive, where individuals feel valued and connected, are less likely to experience vulnerability to radicalisation. Community programmes that promote social inclusion, economic participation, and cultural integration play a significant role in preventing radicalisation.

Societal Integration: Societal efforts to address structural inequalities and promote social justice are fundamental. Policies that ensure fair access to resources, opportunities, and rights for all individuals can alleviate grievances that are often factors of vulnerability which may lead to radicalisation. Promoting political stability, economic development, and cultural inclusivity are thus also key strategies.



3. Core Domains and Indicators

The DRIVE project identifies four core domains critical to understanding and addressing radicalisation: individual factors, social relationships, community dynamics, and broader societal influences. Each domain encompasses various indicators that contribute to or mitigate the risk of radicalisation. This section provides an in-depth look at these domains, including methods for assessing the relevant indicators.

Individual Factors

Indicators

Experiences of Discrimination

Racial Discrimination: Experiences of bias or exclusion based on race, which can lead to feelings of marginalisation and injustice. Indicators include reported incidents of racism, differential treatment by authorities or peers, and exclusion from certain social or economic activities.

Religious Discrimination: Prejudice or unequal treatment based on religious beliefs, practices, or affiliations. This can be indicated by incidents of religious intolerance, restrictions on religious practices, and biased representations in the media.

Socioeconomic Discrimination: Inequities based on economic status, such as barriers to accessing quality education, employment, and healthcare. Indicators include high levels of poverty, unemployment rates, and limited access to social services.

Gender Discrimination: Unequal treatment or opportunities based on gender, which can affect individuals' social and economic opportunities. Indicators include gender pay gaps, limited access to education or professional opportunities for women, and the prevalence of gender-based violence.

Identity Conflicts

Cultural Identity: Struggles between maintaining traditional cultural values and adapting to modern societal norms. Indicators include cultural clashes within families, resistance to cultural integration, and participation in culturally specific groups or activities.

Religious Identity: Conflicts arising from differing religious beliefs or practices within a society. Indicators include religious conflicts, changes in religious practices, and participation in religious groups with extreme views.

Personal Identity: Issues with self-identity and personal acceptance, often exacerbated by social exclusion or discrimination. Indicators include expressions of confusion or distress about personal identity, involvement in identity-based groups, and changes in personal beliefs or behaviours.



Social Identity: Struggles with belonging to a particular social group or community. Indicators include expressions of social alienation, changes in social circles, and involvement in socially exclusive or radical groups.

Mental Health Issues

Depression: Persistent feelings of sadness and loss of interest, which can be indicated by changes in mood, social withdrawal, and decreased participation in daily activities.

Anxiety: Excessive worry, nervousness, or fear, indicated by restlessness, difficulty concentrating, and avoidance behaviours.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Mental health condition triggered by a terrifying event, indicated by flashbacks, severe anxiety, and uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

Personality Disorders: Enduring patterns of behaviour, cognition, and inner experience that deviate from the expectations of the individual's culture, indicated by difficulties in relationships, impulsive behaviours, and emotional instability.

Assessment Methods

Personal Interviews and Surveys: These tools help gather detailed personal histories and experiences, allowing practitioners to identify grievances, perceptions of discrimination, and identity conflicts.

Psychological Assessments: Standardised tools such as the Beck Depression Inventory or General Anxiety Disorder Assessment can identify specific mental health issues.

Observational Studies: Practitioners can observe behavioural changes, emotional responses, and interactions in various settings to gain insights into the individual's mental state and social dynamics.

Social Relationships

Indicators

Family Dynamics

Parental Support: The level of emotional and practical support provided by parents, indicated by family cohesion, parental involvement in children's lives, and the quality of parent-child relationships.

Family Conflict: Frequency and intensity of conflicts within the family, indicated by reports of domestic violence, frequent arguments, and family instability.

Parental Monitoring: The degree of supervision and awareness parents have over their children's activities, indicated by parental knowledge of children's friends, activities, and online interactions.

Family Stability: Stability in family structure and relationships, indicated by the presence of both parents, consistency in family routines, and absence of major family disruptions.



Peer Influences

Peer Group Norms: Values and behaviours normalized within peer groups, indicated by peer group activities, shared beliefs, and collective behaviours.

Peer Pressure: Influence exerted by peers to conform to group norms, indicated by changes in behaviour to match peers, involvement in group activities, and resistance to authority figures.

Social Networks: Structure and quality of social connections, indicated by the size and diversity of social circles, frequency of social interactions, and strength of social ties.

Association with Radical Peers: Involvement with peers who hold extremist views, indicated by changes in language, adoption of radical ideologies, and participation in radical activities.

Social Isolation or Inclusion

Social Participation: Engagement in community or group activities, indicated by involvement in clubs, sports, and community events.

Support Networks: Availability and quality of social support systems, indicated by the presence of supportive friends, mentors, and community members.

Feelings of Loneliness: Perceived social isolation or lack of companionship, indicated by expressions of loneliness, withdrawal from social activities, and seeking solace in online communities.

Inclusion in Social Groups: Sense of belonging to a social group, indicated by participation in group activities, acceptance by peers, and involvement in collective initiatives.

Assessment Methods

Family and Peer Interviews: Understanding the nature of influence on the individual through discussions with family members and peers.

Social Network Analysis: Mapping and analysing social networks to identify key influencers and the structure of social connections.

Community Engagement: Engaging with community groups to understand social interactions and support systems.

Community Dynamics

Indicators

Community Support Structures

Social Services Availability: Accessibility and effectiveness of social services, indicated by the presence of community centres, availability of counselling services, and outreach programs.

Educational Institutions: Role and impact of schools and universities, indicated by school engagement, educational support programs, and involvement in community education initiatives.



Healthcare Access: Availability and quality of healthcare services, indicated by the presence of healthcare facilities, access to mental health services, and community health programs.

Recreational Facilities: Availability and utilization of recreational spaces, indicated by the presence of parks, sports facilities, and community centres.

Community Cohesion

Trust and Solidarity: Levels of trust and mutual support within the community, indicated by community cooperation, collective problem-solving, and mutual aid networks.

Intergroup Relations: Quality of relationships between different groups within the community, indicated by intergroup interactions, collaborative initiatives, and absence of intergroup conflicts.

Community Engagement: Involvement of community members in collective activities, indicated by participation in community meetings, volunteer work, and civic engagement.

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms: Availability and effectiveness of conflict resolution processes, indicated by the presence of mediation services, community forums, and restorative justice programs.

Broader Societal Influences

Indicators

Socioeconomic Conditions

Employment Opportunities: Availability and accessibility of jobs, indicated by employment rates, job vacancies, and opportunities for skill development.

Income Levels: Distribution of income and economic stability, indicated by average income levels, income inequality, and poverty rates.

Educational Attainment: Levels of education and access to educational opportunities, indicated by graduation rates, literacy levels, and availability of educational programs.

Housing Conditions: Quality and affordability of housing, indicated by housing availability, living conditions, and rates of homelessness.

Political and Legal Framework

Government Policies: Impact of policies on different communities, indicated by policy reviews, public opinion surveys, and policy implementation outcomes.

Political Rhetoric: Nature and impact of political discourse, indicated by analysis of political speeches, media coverage of political issues, and public reactions.

Law Enforcement Practices: Fairness and effectiveness of law enforcement, indicated by community trust in police, incidence of police misconduct, and effectiveness of law enforcement strategies.



Legal Framework: Adequacy and fairness of legal protections and rights, indicated by reviews of legal statutes, public access to legal aid, and outcomes of legal cases.

Media and Cultural Narratives

Media Portrayal: Representation of different groups in the media, indicated by content analysis of media sources, media bias studies, and public perception surveys.

Cultural Attitudes: Prevailing societal attitudes and stereotypes, indicated by cultural studies, public opinion polls, and analysis of social media trends.

Public Discourse: Nature of public conversations and debates, indicated by analysis of public forums, debate platforms, and social media discussions.

Social Media Influence: Role of social media in shaping opinions and attitudes, indicated by social media analytics, influence of online influencers, and trends in social media usage.

Assessment Methods

Socioeconomic Data Analysis: Analysing data on employment, income, education, and housing through statistical methods and economic models.

Policy and Media Content Analysis: Reviewing policies, political statements, and media content to understand their impact on societal attitudes and behaviours.

Cultural Assessments: Conducting surveys and interviews to understand cultural attitudes and prevailing narratives in society.



4. Role of Practitioners

This section outlines the specific roles that practitioners can play in identifying, engaging, and intervening with individuals potentially vulnerable to radicalisation or “at-risk” of radicalisation. It aims to provide practical advice on building trust and effectively communicating with potentially vulnerable or at-risk individuals, based on insights from the DRIVE project and related studies.

WHY YOU MATTER

As a practitioner working closely with potentially vulnerable individuals, you hold a unique position of influence. Whether you are a teacher, youth worker, social worker, or law enforcement officer in communities, your regular interactions with individuals enable you to observe changes in behaviour, appearance, and social interactions that may indicate a potential vulnerability to radicalisation and shifts towards extreme ideologies. Your role is pivotal in the early detection of potential factors related to radicalisation processes and positive intervention strategies.

Your Role in Addressing Potential Vulnerabilities to Radicalisation

In your profession, you fall within the inner circles of influence, where you can observe and interact with potentially vulnerable and/or at-risk individuals on a daily basis. Your responsibilities can include:

Identifying Potential Signs of Radicalisation: Recognise signs indicating potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation in individuals and communities. Look for behavioural changes, new influences, and shifts in ideology.

Engaging Effectively: Build trust and open lines of communication. Establish rapport through consistent, empathetic, and non-judgmental interactions.

Intervening Constructively: Develop personalised support plans, collaborate with other front-line professionals, and foster resilience. It can also involve implementing strategies to provide constructive support and help in fostering resilience to potential radicalisation factors.

Recognising Radicalisation

Identifying signs of potential vulnerability to radicalisation is a critical first step for front-line practitioners. This involves recognising behavioural changes and indicators that may suggest an individual is becoming more vulnerable to radicalisation and/or radicalised. Key signs can include:

Behavioural and Ideological Changes: Look for rapid and drastic changes in behaviour, such as adopting new and fringe ideologies, withdrawal from previous social



groups, and increased use of extremist language. These changes might indicate a potential shift towards more radical beliefs.

Influence of Social Networks: Monitor the influence of new social groups or networks that promote extremist views. This includes both online and offline interactions. Be aware of the individual's social circles and any new influences that may be promoting radical ideologies.

Personal Circumstances: Factors such as experiencing discrimination, personal trauma, or social isolation can make individuals more vulnerable to radicalisation. Consider these personal circumstances when assessing potential signs of vulnerability or risk factors.

Building Trust and Engagement

Engaging with individuals experiencing potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation involves building trust and opening lines of communication. Effective engagement strategies can include:

Establishing Trust: Building a rapport with vulnerable and/or potentially at-risk individuals is crucial. Trust is the foundation for any subsequent positive intervention efforts.

Open Dialogue: Encourage open dialogue, allowing individuals to express their views and grievances. Active listening and validating of their feelings can help in understanding their perspective and de-escalating potential radicalisation processes.

Community Involvement: Engaging with the broader community, including families, peers, and community leaders, can provide a support network for individuals showing signs of, or experiencing, factors of vulnerability to radicalisation. Community-based programs and activities can foster a sense of belonging and mitigate feelings of isolation and alienation.

Intervening with Care

Intervention strategies aim to provide constructive support and alternative pathways for individuals demonstrating signs of polarisation, vulnerability to radicalisation, and at-risk to radicalisation. Effective intervention methods can include:

Personalised Support Plans: Develop individualised support plans that address the specific needs and circumstances of the person showing signs of vulnerability. This may include counselling, mentoring, educational support, and vocational training. Personalised plans ensure that the support provided is relevant and effective.

Collaborative Approach: Collaborate with other front-line professionals such as social workers, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and educators. A multi-agency approach ensures a comprehensive support system that can address the multifaceted nature of radicalisation.

Resilience Building: Foster resilience through programs that enhance critical thinking, media literacy, and conflict resolution skills. These programs and efforts can help individuals critically evaluate and potentially identify dis/misinformation,



conspiracy theories, radical narratives, and extremist ideologies on their own, and develop more positive problem-solving skills.

Understanding Risks and Building Resilience

Understanding the risk and resilience factors is essential in addressing polarisation and radicalisation. Some individuals are more vulnerable due to various factors, including:

Identity Seeking: Young people often seek a clear sense of identity. Radical groups can offer a pre-packaged identity with clear rules and belonging, which can be attractive.

Connection to Radical Groups: Individuals with close connections to existing radical members (family, friends) exposed to increased vulnerabilities to radicalisation and are, therefore, at higher risk of radicalising themselves.

Experiencing Discrimination: Those who have experienced or perceive to experience discrimination may feel alienated and seek solutions for their grievances, which can include radical ideologies and groups.

Social Isolation: Lack of social connections or being bullied can push individuals towards groups that offer acceptance and belonging.

To Build Resilience, Practitioners Should

To build resilience, practitioners should employ a multi-faceted approach that addresses various aspects of an individual's life, fostering a stronger sense of identity and support. Here are key strategies to enhance resilience:

Support Positive Identity Formation

Encouraging involvement in positive activities such as sports, arts, and other extracurricular pursuits is crucial. These activities provide a sense of belonging and personal development, which are essential for building a strong, positive identity. Practitioners should:

Encourage Participation: Actively motivate individuals to engage in activities that interest them. This not only helps in developing skills but also in building social connections.

Highlight Strengths and Talents: Recognise and celebrate the unique talents and abilities of individuals. By focusing on their strengths, practitioners can support individuals to develop a more positive self-concept and a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

Facilitate Access to Opportunities: Ensure that individuals can access resources and new opportunities that allow them to pursue their interests. This might include connecting them with community programs, mentorship opportunities, or financial support for participation in activities.



Provide Support and Advice

Being a reliable source of support and guidance is vital for practitioners working with individuals who are potentially vulnerable to radicalisation and/or are at-risk of radicalisation. Practitioners should:

Be Available and Approachable: Create an environment where individuals can feel more comfortable sharing their concerns and seeking advice. This involves being present, approachable, and non-judgmental.

Listen Actively: Pay close attention to what individuals are saying, showing empathy and understanding. Active listening helps build trust and demonstrates genuine care.

Offer Practical Guidance: Provide practical advice that can help individuals navigate their challenges. This might involve helping them set goals, offering strategies to cope with stress, or connecting them with additional resources and support services.

Address Discrimination

Actively working to understand and mitigate experiences of discrimination is essential in promoting a sense of fairness and justice. Practitioners should:

Identify and Address Instances of Discrimination: Be vigilant in recognising signs of potential discrimination and take prompt action to mitigate and address them. This might involve advocating on behalf of individuals, mediating conflicts, or raising awareness about the harmful impacts of discrimination.

Promote Inclusivity and Fair Treatment: Work towards creating inclusive environments where all individuals feel valued and respected. This involves promoting policies and practices that ensure fair treatment for everyone.

Educate and Empower: Educate individuals about their rights and empower them to advocate for themselves. Providing information about legal protections against discrimination and offering strategies for self-advocacy can help individuals feel more confident and capable of challenging unfair treatment.

Dealing with Youngsters Potentially Developing Sympathy for Radical Ideas

Young people may start sympathising with radical ideas due to frustration with their current social groups' perceived ineffectiveness in combating discrimination. This stage is marked by several behavioural and attitudinal changes:

Questioning Authority

At this stage, young individuals may begin to question the legitimacy and effectiveness of traditional authorities, such as educators and school staff, law enforcement, government and families. This questioning often stems from personal or observed experiences of injustice, marginalisation, or discrimination.



Use of “Us vs. Them” Terminology

A heightened awareness of group identities often develops, where young people start to perceive social dynamics in terms of an “us vs. them” perspective. This can lead to a sense of competition and animosity between different groups, namely between ones an individual considers their “in-group” vis-à-vis their “out-group”. For example, Muslim and nationalist youths both reported feeling socially alienated and discriminated against by mainstream society and other groups, reinforcing an “us vs. them” mentality.

“Polarisation is the process where groups in society become adversaries when there is a sharp psychological division between ‘us and them’. Alienation and hostilities are growing, resulting in a political climate where prejudices, hate speech and even hate crime flourish.”

(RAN Issue Paper: Tackling the Challenges to Prevention Policies in an Increasingly Polarised Society)

Seek New Influences

Young individuals can become especially receptive to new influences, particularly those that share their sense of disenfranchisement and offer potential solutions. They may start associating with groups that provide, even if an illusion of a sense of belonging and purpose. For example, former far-right activists described how they were drawn to extremist groups that offered camaraderie and a clear identity, often following personal traumas and feelings of social isolation.

Propose to:

Maintain Open Communication: Engage in open, non-judgmental dialogue to understand their perspectives and feelings. This helps in building trust and can provide insights into their perceived or real grievances and thought processes.

Challenge Misperceptions: Address and challenge their perceptions of discrimination when appropriate, helping them differentiate between actual and perceived injustices. This can involve discussing real-world examples and providing alternative perspectives.

Connect with Role Models: Introduce them to positive role models from their community who have successfully navigated similar challenges. This can help them see viable and constructive paths forward.

Promote Positive Group Activities: Encourage participation in community groups, sports, arts, or other pro-social activities that can offer a sense of group belonging and identity, as these equip individuals with great resilience to vulnerability to radicalisation factors.

Avoid:

Singling Them Out: Avoid making them feel targeted for special negative attention, as this can reinforce their sense of alienation and victimisation.



Intervening Alone: Always collaborate with other front-line professionals, such as teachers, social workers, and community leaders, to ensure a comprehensive, supportive, and whole-of-society approach which increases the likelihood of interventions with long-term impacts.



5. Practical Guidance

Intervention Strategies

Effective intervention strategies for countering radicalisation require a supportive and constructive approach, emphasizing multi-agency collaboration, community-based initiatives, and tailored individual support plans. These strategies ensure that interventions are comprehensive, inclusive, and responsive to the unique needs of individuals and communities.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

Multi-agency collaboration is crucial in addressing radicalisation, as it brings together diverse expertise and resources. Practitioners from various sectors, including law enforcement, education, social services, and mental health, can work together to create a holistic support system for at-risk individuals. This collaboration facilitates the sharing of information, best practices, and coordinated action plans. By working in tandem, agencies can provide a unified response that addresses the multiple facets of radicalisation, from early identification to intervention and support. Effective multi-agency collaboration requires clear communication channels, defined roles and responsibilities, and regular coordination meetings to ensure all stakeholders are aligned and informed.

Community-Based Approaches

Engaging community resources and support systems is vital for sustainable intervention. Community-based approaches leverage the strengths and assets within communities to create a supportive environment for individuals at risk. This involves partnering with local organizations, religious institutions, and community leaders who can offer insights and support tailored to the community's cultural and social context. Community-based initiatives can include mentoring programs, youth clubs, and community dialogue sessions that foster a sense of belonging and resilience. These initiatives help to build trust and rapport within the community, making it easier to identify and support individuals at risk of radicalisation.

Individual Support Plans

Tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of individuals is essential for effective support. Individual support plans should be personalized, considering the unique circumstances, challenges, and strengths of each person. This involves conducting thorough assessments to understand the individual's background, risk factors, and protective factors. Based on these assessments, practitioners can design interventions that address the root causes of radicalisation, such as providing mental health support, educational opportunities, and skills training. Support plans should be flexible and adaptable, allowing for adjustments based on the individual's progress and changing needs. Regular monitoring and follow-up are critical to ensure the effectiveness of the interventions and to provide ongoing support.



EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Foster an Open Dialogue: Engage in consistent, empathetic, and non-judgmental conversations. By showing genuine interest in their perspectives and concerns, you create a safe space for individuals to express their thoughts and feelings. This helps in building trust and understanding their motivations and grievances.

Address and Correct Misunderstandings: Work with individuals to help them distinguish between actual discrimination and perceived slights. This involves exploring the root of their beliefs and gently challenging any misconceptions. Providing accurate information and alternative viewpoints can help them see a broader picture and reduce feelings of victimisation.

Introduce Positive Influences: Connect at-risk individuals with mentors or role models who have positive and relatable life experiences. These role models can offer guidance, support, and an alternative narrative to the extremist ideology. Highlight stories of resilience and success within their community to inspire and motivate them.

Encourage Involvement in Community Activities: Promote participation in local groups, clubs, or activities that foster a sense of belonging and purpose. Engaging in sports, arts, volunteer work, or other community projects can provide constructive outlets for their energy and a supportive network of peers.

Develop Personalised Support Plans: Tailor interventions to the individual's specific needs, interests, and circumstances. This personalized approach ensures that the support provided is relevant and effective, addressing the unique challenges and vulnerabilities of each person.

Promote Critical Thinking and Media Literacy: Equip individuals with skills to critically analyse information, especially online content. Teaching them to question sources, recognize bias, and understand the impact of propaganda can empower them to resist extremist narratives.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

Avoid Singling Out Individuals: Do not isolate or stigmatise those showing signs of radicalisation. Special negative attention can reinforce their feelings of alienation and victimization, pushing them further towards extremist groups. Treat all interactions with sensitivity and respect.

Do Not Act in Isolation: Always collaborate with other professionals, such as social workers, law enforcement, educators, and community leaders. A coordinated approach ensures that all aspects of the individual's life are considered and addressed, providing a more comprehensive support system.

Refrain from Confrontational Tactics: Avoid direct confrontation or aggressive questioning about their beliefs. Such approaches can entrench their views and create resistance to change. Instead, use open-ended questions and active listening to encourage self-reflection and dialogue.

Do Not Ignore Early Warning Signs: Pay attention to subtle changes in behaviour, ideology, or social interactions. Early intervention can prevent the escalation of radicalisation. Even minor signs should be taken seriously and addressed promptly through appropriate channels.

Avoid Over-Reliance on Law Enforcement: While law enforcement plays a crucial role, over-reliance can be counter-productive. Emphasize preventive measures and community-based interventions over punitive actions, especially



6. Examples of Youth Vulnerable to Radicalisation Pathways

The experiences of youth across different countries offer valuable insights into the processes and indicators of radicalisation. The following examples, derived from field interviews, highlight the multifaceted nature of radicalisation among young people in the UK, Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark.

United Kingdom

In the UK, young Muslims frequently reported experiencing visible discrimination tied to their religious practices, such as wearing hijabs. This overt exclusion often occurred in public spaces, educational institutions, and workplaces, fostering a sense of alienation. One participant noted how these experiences pushed them towards online communities where they found solidarity and validation of their grievances. These online spaces, however, also exposed them to radical ideologies that capitalised on their feelings of injustice and exclusion. The shift from personal experiences of discrimination to seeking solace in potentially radical online communities illustrates a critical pathway towards radicalisation.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands, young Muslims faced a similar dual-layered experience of discrimination. At the personal level, 68.4% reported verbal and physical racist actions. This discrimination was not limited to individual interactions but extended to community-wide targeting. Their communities often lacked resources and were viewed with suspicion, exacerbating their feelings of marginalisation. This pervasive sense of exclusion drove some youths towards groups that offered a semblance of protection and belonging. For instance, several young Muslims mentioned how community centres and mosques became places where they could freely express their identity and find support, albeit sometimes encountering radical perspectives that promised to address their grievances more forcefully.

Norway

In Norway, both young Muslims and nationalists exhibited strong feelings of exclusion but from different sources. Young Muslims faced discrimination at multiple levels, including personal racism and structural exclusion. Despite these challenges, many expressed a strong sense of belonging to Norway, although daily discriminatory experiences heightened their vigilance and sometimes led to radical thoughts. On the other hand, young nationalists felt excluded due to perceived state favouritism towards immigrants. This perception drove their political engagement and activism, often centred around nationalist ideologies that opposed multiculturalism. The dual experiences of



these groups underscore how different forms of exclusion can lead to radicalisation through distinct pathways.

Denmark

In Denmark, the radicalisation process among youth often began with personal grievances related to identity and belonging. Young people, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds, reported feeling disconnected from mainstream Danish society. This disconnection was both personal and structural, as they faced barriers in education and employment that reinforced their sense of exclusion. A notable example involved young Muslims who, feeling marginalised by their school environments, turned to local community groups where they encountered radical narratives that framed their exclusion as part of a larger societal conspiracy against Muslims. This narrative not only validated their feelings of injustice but also provided a clear, albeit dangerous, path for addressing their grievances.



7. Practitioners Observations – Fieldwork

The DRIVE project has gathered extensive observations from practitioners across various countries, shedding light on the nuanced and context-specific factors contributing to radicalisation. These insights are crucial for tailoring interventions and understanding the diverse landscapes in which radicalisation occurs. Here, we present the key observations from practitioners in the UK, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.

United Kingdom

In the UK, practitioners identified several factors influencing radicalisation, focusing on urban decline, identity politics, intergenerational change, social exclusion, and online radicalisation:

Urban Decline: Practitioners noted that urban decay in post-industrial towns and cities significantly contributes to radicalisation. Areas suffering from economic deprivation and social neglect provide fertile ground for extremist ideologies to take root. For instance, young people growing up in environments with high unemployment rates, poor housing, and limited access to services may feel disenfranchised and turn to radical groups that promise change and a sense of purpose.

Identity Politics: The search for identity and belonging is a powerful driver towards radical ideologies. In many cases, individuals who feel marginalized or disconnected from mainstream society find solace in the clear, albeit extreme, identities offered by radical groups. For example, extremist groups often offer a sense of community and agency, which can be particularly attractive to those who feel invisible or undervalued by their broader society.

Intergenerational Change: Family influences and early life experiences have a profound impact on the likelihood of an individual gravitating towards extremism. Practitioners observed that young people who experience domestic violence, neglect, or other forms of familial trauma are at higher risk. Educational institutions and digital environments sometimes step in to fill the void left by inadequate family support, but these substitutes can also be breeding grounds for extremist ideologies if not effectively managed.

Social Exclusion: Systemic inequalities and discrimination are critical factors that push individuals towards radicalisation. Austerity measures, such as cuts to social services and community programs, exacerbate feelings of isolation and disenfranchisement. For instance, when young people perceive that their community is unfairly treated or neglected by authorities, they may be more likely to seek validation and support from radical groups.

Online Radicalisation: The internet and social media play a crucial role in the spread of radical ideas. Practitioners emphasized that young people, in particular, are highly susceptible to online influences. Radical groups use sophisticated online propaganda to recruit and indoctrinate individuals. This highlights the need for



comprehensive digital literacy programs to help youth critically assess the content they encounter online.

Denmark

In Denmark, the focus was on urban and societal decline, identity politics, intergenerational differences, social exclusion, and the impact of political discourse:

Urban and Societal Decline: Social exclusion is more pronounced in urban settings, with practitioners noting that Muslims in big cities often feel alienated due to media and political narratives. This alienation is compounded by the physical and social decay of their environments. Practitioners reported that many Danish Muslims do not feel integrated into society, which makes them more susceptible to extremist influences.

Identity Politics: Danish Muslims frequently feel disconnected from Danish society, driven by discrimination and a crisis of national identity. For example, a Muslim youth may struggle with their dual identity, feeling neither fully Danish nor fully accepted in their ethnic community. Conversely, nationalists often find a strong sense of belonging in their political ideologies, which can also lead to radicalisation.

Intergenerational Differences: There is a noticeable gap between the ‘cultural’ Islam of parents and the more personal religiosity sought by younger generations. Practitioners observed that younger Muslims often seek a more individualized and resilient form of religious identity, contrasting with their parents’ more traditional practices. This generational divide can lead to friction and increase vulnerability to radical influences.

Social Exclusion: Structural inequalities and discriminatory policies push young people towards radicalisation. Government measures, such as strict immigration laws and public discourse targeting Muslim communities, exacerbate feelings of exclusion. Practitioners noted that experiences of discrimination in schools, workplaces, and public spaces significantly impact the sense of belonging among young Muslims.

Political Discourse: The political and media portrayal of Muslims significantly impacts their sense of belonging. Practitioners highlighted that political rhetoric often unfairly targets Muslim communities, fostering a sense of division and alienation. This environment creates a fertile ground for radical ideologies that promise to address these grievances.

Norway

Norwegian practitioners highlighted issues related to social exclusion, identity politics, intergenerational change, and online radicalisation:



Social Exclusion: Social exclusion and systemic discrimination are major drivers of radicalisation. Practitioners emphasized that addressing these root causes is crucial for preventing extremism. For instance, young people who feel marginalized due to their ethnicity or religion are more likely to be drawn to radical groups that offer a sense of belonging and purpose.

Identity Politics: The search for identity and belonging is a common theme among individuals at risk of radicalisation. Practitioners noted that extremist groups often exploit the insecurities and identity crises of young people, providing them with a clear and compelling narrative that explains their place in the world and their role in fighting perceived injustices.

Intergenerational Change: Family dynamics and early life experiences significantly influence the likelihood of radicalisation. Practitioners observed that gaps in parental guidance and the influence of digital environments can either mitigate or exacerbate the risk. Schools and community programs play a critical role in offering alternative narratives and support systems that counteract radical ideologies.

Online Radicalisation: The internet remains a powerful tool for spreading extremist views. Practitioners highlighted that young people are particularly vulnerable to online radicalisation, with social media platforms being used to disseminate propaganda and recruit members. This underscores the need for targeted interventions that address online activities and promote digital resilience.

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, practitioners observed the influence of social exclusion, identity politics, intergenerational change, and online radicalisation:

Social Exclusion: Structural inequalities and discrimination are prevalent issues driving radicalisation. Practitioners pointed out that government policies and societal attitudes towards minorities significantly contribute to feelings of alienation. For example, ethnic minorities often face barriers in education and employment, which can lead to frustration and a search for alternative forms of identity and community.

Identity Politics: The search for identity and belonging is critical for understanding radicalisation. Practitioners noted that young people who feel disconnected from mainstream society are more likely to be attracted to extremist groups that offer a clear sense of purpose and community. These groups often exploit feelings of injustice and discrimination to recruit new members.

Intergenerational Change: Differences in the understanding and practice of Islam between generations contribute to radicalisation. Practitioners observed that younger Muslims often seek a more personal and resilient form of religiosity, contrasting with the more cultural practices of their parents. This generational gap can lead to conflicts and increase vulnerability to extremist ideologies.

Online Radicalisation: The role of online spaces in radicalisation is significant. Practitioners emphasized that young people are particularly susceptible to extremist



content on social media and other online platforms. This highlights the need for comprehensive digital literacy programs and targeted online interventions to prevent radicalisation.

Final Remarks

These observations underscore the complexity of radicalisation and the importance of contextual, and differentiated approaches in prevention and intervention strategies. Understanding the specific factors and granular dynamics at play in different countries is fundamental for the practitioners to develop more effective and tailored strategies to counteract radicalisation.



8. Contextual and Ethical Considerations

Adapting the DRIVE project’s “*Practitioner’s Guidance*” to various cultural, national, and ideological contexts is essential to ensure its effectiveness and relevance across diverse settings. Each context brings unique challenges and opportunities, requiring practitioners to be culturally sensitive and ethically grounded in their approach. Cultural sensitivity involves understanding and respecting the distinct cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and practices of individuals and communities. This includes being aware of cultural norms, communication styles, and the socio-political landscape that influences people’s lives. By tailoring interventions to align with cultural values and traditions, practitioners can build trust and foster meaningful engagement with at-risk individuals and their communities.

Ethical considerations are paramount in all aspects of assessment and intervention. Practitioners must ensure that their actions respect the dignity, rights, and autonomy of individuals. This involves obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and avoiding any form of discrimination or bias. Interventions should be non-coercive and supportive, focusing on empowering individuals rather than imposing solutions. Practitioners must be vigilant about potential power dynamics and strive to collaborate with individuals and communities, valuing their input and perspectives.

Moreover, adapting the guidance requires an awareness of national and ideological contexts. Different countries have varying legal frameworks, social policies, and political climates that can impact the implementation of counter-radicalisation strategies. Practitioners should be knowledgeable about these factors and adapt their approaches, accordingly, ensuring compliance with local laws and regulations while advocating for policies that promote social inclusion and justice.

While this guidance, and the accompanying resources and tools developed under the DRIVE project, are of immense value, it is important to also mention the general resource constraints and challenges that front-line practitioners face in trying to utilise and implement these strategies in their every work. In this respect, the DRIVE project’s findings highlight the need for governments to further invest in training and capacity-building programs that equip practitioners working in different sphere –including educators, social workers, youth workers, and more– with enhanced knowledge, skills, and resources to recognise and respond to potential vulnerabilities and risk factors of radicalisation. Furthermore, it is realistic that front-line practitioner’s working in all sectors will face some (context-specific) constraints in applying certain tools, approaches, and intervention strategies due to legal and institutional limitations. It is thus important to advocate for the development, or enhancement, of organisational/institutional guidelines to mitigate the impact of potential limitations and alternative tools/approaches that can be applied in specific operational context in different professional groups.



Resources and Tools

To support this “*Practitioner’s Guidance*” document, the DRIVE project has also developed a range of other resources for practitioners, as well as other relevant stakeholders. This includes a collection of assessment tools, training materials, and information on support networks. The objective of these additional resources is to ensure practitioners have all the necessary resources to effectively use the guidance and the insights shared.

Analysis and Assessment Tool: Checklists, questionnaires, and other tools for assessing risk and resilience (D8.2).

Training Course: The DRIVE project’s Training Course is designed to provide comprehensive insights and practical skills for front-line practitioners working in environments where potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation can become evident, and who has a key role in mitigating risks through fostering social cohesion and inclusion, individual resilience, and safer communities. Based on extensive fieldwork and research, the objective of the training course is to enhance practitioner’s understanding of the complex factors that can contribute to radicalisation pathways and to equip participants with additional prosocial tools to address these challenges effectively.

- **Training Manual (accompaniment to course):** The Training Course’s accompanying Training Manual handout serves as a reference guide, providing theoretical and practical dimensions of better understanding the complexities of radicalisation and extremism to equip front-line practitioners in developing more effective strategies to prevent and counter potential manifestations of radicalisation, thereby fostering safer and more resilient communities. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the handouts, presentations, and practical exercises provided during the workshops, offering a robust framework for developing and implementing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Summary Fiches: The DRIVE project produced four country-specific Summary Fiches summarising the analysis of the findings from interviews and focus groups with Muslims and nationalists in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands, exploring national experiences and perspectives on social exclusion, identity politics, intergenerational change, and reciprocal radicalisation. The summary fiches provide insights into the key themes and hypotheses derived from the data, highlighting the varying dimensions and experiences of social exclusion and radicalisation among these groups.

Fictional Case Studies: The DRIVE project produced country-specific Fictional Case Studies (two fictional case studies per country) based on true data and information extracted from field interviews conducted in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands, to capture the experiences and insights shared by practitioners and individuals. The fictionalised case studies were designed to illustrate key concepts (also introduced in this Practitioner’s Guidance)



and bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing concrete and practical examples for practitioners on how to apply the guidelines in various situations –thereby enhancing their ability to identify, engage, and support individuals potentially vulnerable or at-risk of radicalisation. The case studies serve as educational tools that demonstrated the complexities and nuances of real-life situations, offering insights into effective intervention strategies.



D8.3. (Practitioners' Guide Toolkit)

Deliverable 8.3, the Practitioners' Guide Toolkit, represents a comprehensive synthesis of the DRIVE project's findings. It was envisioned as a resource to support practitioners in their efforts to address the complex and multifaceted challenges of radicalisation. However, as identified in the feedback, there are some areas where revisions and refinements are necessary to ensure that the toolkit achieves operational usability, clarity, and relevance for its target audience. This response outlines in detail how the consortium plans to address these concerns and enhance the toolkit.

The absence of formal piloting and practitioner review is a notable limitation of the toolkit in its current form. While the content was developed based on extensive research and engagement throughout the DRIVE project, it has not yet been tested directly by the practitioners who are its intended users due to lack of time. The tool was developed at a later stage of the project, which impeded full operationalisation. The consortium acknowledges that this step is crucial to ensuring that the toolkit is both practical and effective. **To address this, structured piloting phases in a potential follow-up project will be introduced**, allowing practitioners to use the toolkit in realistic scenarios reflective of their professional challenges. These sessions will not only evaluate the usability of the toolkit but will also gather valuable feedback on its clarity, relevance, and applicability. This iterative approach will ensure that adjustments can be made to align the toolkit more closely with the needs of its users.

In addition to piloting, the the future operational toolkit will undergo a formal review process involving practitioners and experts across various fields, including law enforcement, education, and mental health. Their input will help refine the content, ensuring that it resonates with the day-to-day realities of those working on the front lines of radicalisation prevention. For instance, mental health professionals may provide insights on the sections addressing PTSD and psychological assessment, while educators could review the guidance on addressing personal identity and social inclusion. This collaborative process will enhance the operational value of the toolkit and build confidence in its utility among its users.

The scope of the Practitioners' Guide Toolkit is another critical area requiring careful consideration. Its thematic breadth is a reflection of the DRIVE project's comprehensive approach to radicalisation, encompassing topics as diverse as socioeconomic discrimination, online radicalisation, and trauma. However, as the feedback highlights, this wide-ranging scope may be overwhelming for individual practitioners, who may lack the expertise to navigate all these domains. To address this concern, the consortium will reframe the toolkit as a modular resource. This will allow practitioners to engage with the sections most relevant to their areas of expertise while maintaining an awareness of how these themes intersect.

To complement this modular structure, the consortium will also provide practical guidance on interdisciplinary collaboration. Recognising that radicalisation is a multi-layered issue that often requires input from multiple sectors, the revised toolkit will

include specific recommendations for coordinating with other professionals. For instance, if an educator identifies signs of online radicalisation in a student, the toolkit will outline steps for engaging with law enforcement or digital specialists to address the issue. Similarly, if a community worker encounters a case involving severe trauma, the toolkit will guide them in referring the individual to qualified mental health professionals. This focus on collaboration will ensure that practitioners feel supported in navigating areas outside their immediate expertise.

The section enumerating risk factors for radicalisation, spanning pages 9 to 13, requires some restructuring to address the concerns raised in the feedback. In its current form, the extensive list of risk factors may come across as indiscriminate, potentially leading to a misinterpretation of the complexity of radicalisation processes. The consortium recognises the need to contextualise these risk factors more effectively within the broader findings of the DRIVE project. To achieve this, the revised toolkit will begin this section with a summary of Deliverable 8.2, which provides the diagnostic framework and evidence base from which these factors are derived. This summary will ensure that readers understand the rationale behind the inclusion of each factor and the methodological rigor that supports their relevance.

Furthermore, the list of risk factors will be restructured to highlight their varying degrees of significance. Instead of presenting the factors as a uniform list, they will be categorised into primary drivers, moderating influences, and context-specific elements. For instance, socioeconomic discrimination might be identified as a primary driver in certain settings, while personal identity conflicts could be presented as a moderating factor influenced by specific community dynamics. Each category will be accompanied by explanatory text and real-world examples, illustrating how these factors manifest and interact in practice. This approach will help practitioners prioritise their focus and avoid the impression that all listed factors are equally likely to lead to radicalisation.

To further enhance this section, the consortium will include an executive explanation of how the identified risk factors interact dynamically. This explanation will emphasise that radicalisation is not a linear process resulting from isolated causes but rather a complex interplay of individual, social, and structural elements. For example, socioeconomic discrimination might lead to social isolation, which in turn increases susceptibility to extremist narratives online. These interactions will be illustrated using case studies and visual aids, such as flowcharts, to provide a clear and nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

Please see below the suggestions for change in the text:

Proposed Text Changes and Insertions

Page 9: Introduction to Risk Factors

Existing Sentence: *“This section identifies risk factors for radicalisation that practitioners should monitor when engaging with vulnerable individuals.”*

Insertion:

The risk factors identified in this section are grounded in the diagnostic framework developed in Deliverable 8.2 of the DRIVE project. This framework provides the evidence base and methodological rigor underpinning these factors, emphasising their relevance in different contexts. Rather than viewing these factors as isolated causes, practitioners should understand them as interconnected elements of a complex and dynamic process. Radicalisation is shaped by the interaction of individual vulnerabilities, social conditions, and systemic issues, which this section aims to address comprehensively.

Page 10: Categorising Risk Factors

Before the Current List of Risk Factors (Starting at the Top of Page 10): Replace the opening sentences with a categorisation framework to group the factors by their significance.

Insertion:

To better guide practitioners, the risk factors are organised into three categories: Primary Drivers, Moderating Influences, and Context-Specific Factors. This categorisation helps to prioritise attention and highlights the dynamic interactions between these elements.

Follow this with the revised list, **structured and inserting** as follows:

“Categorisation of Risk Factors

*To better guide practitioners, the risk factors identified in this section have been organised into three categories: **Primary Drivers, Moderating Influences, and Context-Specific Factors**. This structured approach allows for a clearer understanding of their varying significance and impact. Practitioners can use these categories to prioritise attention, tailor interventions to specific contexts, and recognise the dynamic interplay between these factors.*

1. Primary Drivers

Primary drivers are factors that have a direct and significant impact on radicalisation processes. They often serve as foundational elements that create the conditions for vulnerability to extremist narratives and behaviors.

- **Socioeconomic Discrimination:** *Persistent inequities in areas such as employment, education, and housing create a sense of injustice and alienation among affected individuals or communities. These systemic disadvantages often fuel grievances, leading individuals to perceive mainstream systems as exclusionary or oppressive. For example, an individual facing long-term unemployment due to systemic discrimination may become disillusioned with societal structures, increasing their susceptibility to extremist narratives that promise empowerment or revenge.*
- **Identity Conflicts:** *Struggles with personal, cultural, or social identity often emerge when individuals feel disconnected from their community or heritage. This disconnection may be compounded by societal pressures, discrimination, or*

marginalisation. Such conflicts create a vacuum of belonging, prompting individuals to seek validation, meaning, or purpose in extremist ideologies that appear to address their identity struggles. For instance, a young person experiencing cultural alienation may find a sense of solidarity and purpose within a radical group that offers a strong ideological identity.

2. Moderating Influences

Moderating influences either exacerbate or mitigate the impact of primary drivers, depending on the specific context in which they occur. While not always direct causes, these factors significantly shape an individual's pathway to radicalisation.

- **Social Isolation:** *The absence of supportive networks, whether familial, social, or community-based, increases an individual's susceptibility to extremist ideologies. Without the grounding influence of positive relationships, individuals may turn to radical groups that promise belonging, recognition, and acceptance. For example, an isolated individual navigating a difficult life transition might be drawn to extremist online communities offering camaraderie and validation.*
- **Mental Health Challenges:** *Psychological conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), untreated trauma, or depression can heighten vulnerability to extremist recruitment. Individuals experiencing mental health challenges may be more susceptible to narratives that exploit their emotional pain or offer seemingly straightforward solutions to complex problems. For instance, a person coping with unresolved trauma may be drawn to extremist ideologies that provide a framework for attributing blame and seeking retribution.*

3. Context-Specific Factors

These factors vary based on the specific local, cultural, or situational conditions in which radicalisation occurs. While they may not be universally present, their influence in certain contexts can significantly shape radicalisation pathways.

- **Online Radicalisation:** *The internet has become a critical medium for the dissemination of extremist content, providing individuals with access to radical ideologies, recruitment networks, and echo chambers that reinforce extremist beliefs. This factor is particularly influential among younger populations who spend significant time online. For example, an individual exposed to extremist propaganda on social media may gradually adopt radical views through repeated interactions within isolated online communities.*
- **Political Instability:** *Environments characterised by political repression, corruption, or systemic injustice often serve as fertile ground for extremist ideologies to take root. These contexts foster grievances against governing systems, which extremists exploit to mobilise support. For example, in regions with corrupt leadership and limited political freedoms, individuals may be drawn to extremist groups promising justice or systemic change.”*

Page 11: Dynamic Interactions Between Risk Factors

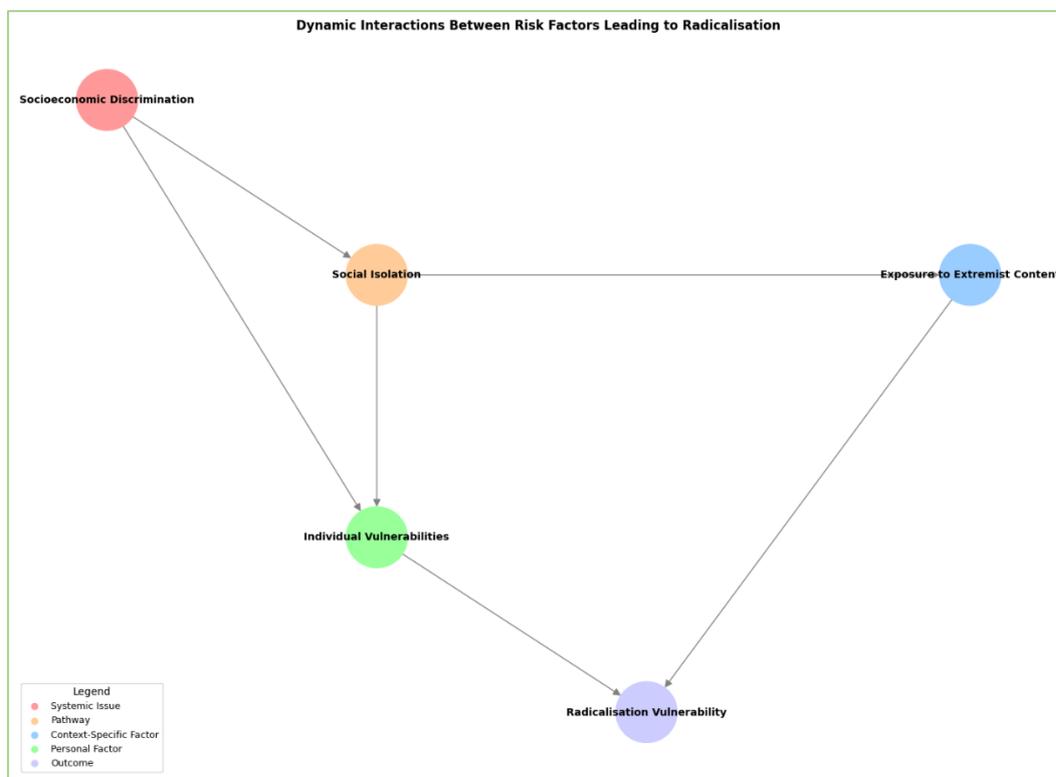
Existing Sentence: *“Practitioners must recognise that radicalisation is often the result of multiple intersecting factors.”*

Expanding this section with the following insertion:

Insertion:

Radicalisation rarely arises from a single cause. Instead, it reflects a complex interplay of individual, social, and structural elements. For example, socioeconomic discrimination might lead to feelings of alienation, which can be compounded by exposure to extremist narratives online. Similarly, unresolved trauma from adverse experiences can heighten susceptibility to groups promising validation or retribution. These factors do not operate in isolation but often reinforce one another in dynamic and context-specific ways. Practitioners must approach each case holistically, considering the unique combination of influences at play. A visual representation of these interactions is provided below.”

Flowchart:



Page 12: Real-World Examples

After the Section on Dynamic Interactions: Introduce a new subsection titled “Real-World Examples” to contextualise the risk factors with practical applications.

Insertion:

To illustrate how these risk factors manifest in practice, consider the case of an individual from a marginalised community experiencing persistent socioeconomic discrimination. Without access to education or employment opportunities, they become increasingly

isolated, spending more time in online spaces where extremist groups promise purpose and belonging. This example highlights how primary drivers, like discrimination, interact with moderating influences, such as social isolation, and context-specific factors, like online exposure, to create pathways toward radicalisation. Practitioners can use this understanding to design interventions that address both the immediate vulnerabilities and the systemic issues underlying them.

Page 13: Protective Factors

Existing Sentence: *“It is important to consider not only risk factors but also protective factors that mitigate radicalisation.”*

Expand This Section: Replace the current brief explanation with a detailed discussion of protective factors.

Insertion:

Protective factors are critical in countering the influences of radicalisation. Community engagement, for example, fosters a sense of belonging and reduces isolation, which are key vulnerabilities exploited by extremists. Positive relationships with family members and peers provide emotional support and guidance, acting as a buffer against radical ideologies. Additionally, ensuring access to education, healthcare, and fair employment opportunities addresses systemic grievances that fuel alienation and resentment. By strengthening these protective factors, practitioners can build resilience in individuals and communities, reducing the likelihood of radicalisation pathways taking root.

The feedback also underscores the need for the Practitioners’ Guide Toolkit to be more user-friendly and actionable. While the current document provides a wealth of information, its length and complexity may hinder its practical application. To address this, the consortium will streamline the content into concise, easily digestible sections, accompanied by summaries, checklists, and quick-reference guides for future real-life trainings. These additions will enable practitioners to access key insights quickly and apply them effectively in their work. For example, a checklist of signs indicating potential radicalisation could help a teacher or social worker identify early warning signals without needing to navigate the entire document.

To measure the impact of the revised toolkit, the consortium will establish clear key performance indicators (KPIs) for its future dissemination and implementation. These KPIs will include metrics such as the number of practitioners trained in using the toolkit, the diversity of sectors represented among its users, and feedback on its usability and relevance. The consortium will also track instances of the toolkit being applied in real-world interventions, documenting outcomes and lessons learned through anonymised case studies. These indicators will provide valuable insights into the toolkit’s effectiveness and inform ongoing efforts to refine and improve its content.