



IO2 – In-service Training for Front-line Educators

Training Needs Analysis Report for Portugal

The Focus Group with local members in Portugal was held in 2 sessions in Lisbon between the 8th and the 24th of October.

The different IO1 materials designed in the project, namely Videos, infographics and Comics were presented in order to have feedback from the members; the tutor manuals accompanying these videos were given in summary, as well as the Guidelines for Parents and Peer Guideline for Young People.

The following report summarizes the findings of this focus group exercise.

1. To what extent participants were knowledgeable on radicalisation of youth?

Violent extremism is increasingly a challenge for all societies, including Portugal. There is concern and some light knowledge of how terrorists use cyberspace. ... however, we note that we still have a departure and lack of knowledge of this problematic, perhaps by our position in Europe, in the extreme southwest of Europe, where Portugal is bordered by only one country, Spain and also because the country does not deal directly with terrorist threats.

2. What additional information would they like to acquire / learn in relation to youth radicalisation.

In Portugal there isn't a harmonized and national policy, preventing youth radicalization and inspired in positive psychology approaches, neither in schools, neither online.

The fact that the country does not deal directly with terrorist threats and it's at a corner of Europe, as well as the fact that the most problematic schools are endowed with a high level

of autonomy when structuring prevention (and reaction) measures to these problems, are some of the factors that can explain this current scenario.

However, different participants showed interest in knowing more about how Portugal can be affected by a growth in Islamic radicalism, given the wave of tourism growth in Portugal, and this may represent in some way a threat to our security and our borders.

3. How could the HEADS UP resources help them understand better the issue of youth radicalisation and be able to support their students.

To effectively understand the drivers of violent extremism, we must have access to different types of approaches and understanding for these issues.

With commitments to learn, in partnership, we are ready to face violent extremism.

Extremism and radicalization are complex issues and there is no remedy that will prevent young people from engaging in extremism, including violent extremism. However, this project focuses on the perception of radicalization and how it operates with different target groups, allowing us to respond to this risk and to detect early signs of radicalisation and to offer alternatives.

The participants of these sessions, after watching the simulation videos and other materials such as comics and infographics, stated that although Portugal still does not suffer a high level of concern in terms of growth of Islamic radicalism in Portugal, they would be very interesting to use these resources in a prevention and information perspective for young people and educators and families.

Having a better understanding of risks can help us to improve and understand radicalization.

4. What additional training do they believe front-line educators require in order to be able to better deal with the issue of youth radicalisation, especially in online environments.

Schools are increasingly being a key battleground against terrorism. But the new guidelines place teachers, both as extreme-belief monitors and their challengers in the classroom.

Since it is difficult to predict when someone is at risk of radicalization, we wonder if teachers and front-line educators should look for depressed children, popular children, children interested in politics or religion, or children who feel marginalized and discriminated against?

This idea that we can "detect radicalization" is difficult because there is no simple "radicalization" model with signals that are easy to detect. Suggesting otherwise puts unsustainable pressure on teachers and front-line educators to recognize something in its early stages that others find almost impossible to identify or predict.

It seems to us crucial to encourage students to develop critical thinking skills - and the way they use the Internet, question religious authority, critique and challenge ideas.

It is vital to have different and diverse initiatives to help parents as well as schools to encourage their children to confidently debate difficult topics and to critique and challenge information by giving them different supports (digital, visuals such as videos, comics, leaflets information) that give them material to think about and to question.

5. Topics that they would like to be included in trainings for adult educators

No	Topic	Brief Explanation (1-2 sentences each)
1	Engage students to the critical thinking	A critical thought leads to the elaboration of questions, to a deeper analysis and through this way to a lesser external influence.
2	How to strengthen the emotional ties between parents and children	A closer bond between parents and children is crucial so that young people realize that they are not alone. A good family support is fundamental.
3	Motivate youth for the multicultural society	In many cities, people do not live with one another but are close to each other in archipelagos of monocultural societies, and it is extremely important to prevent the infoexclusion
4		