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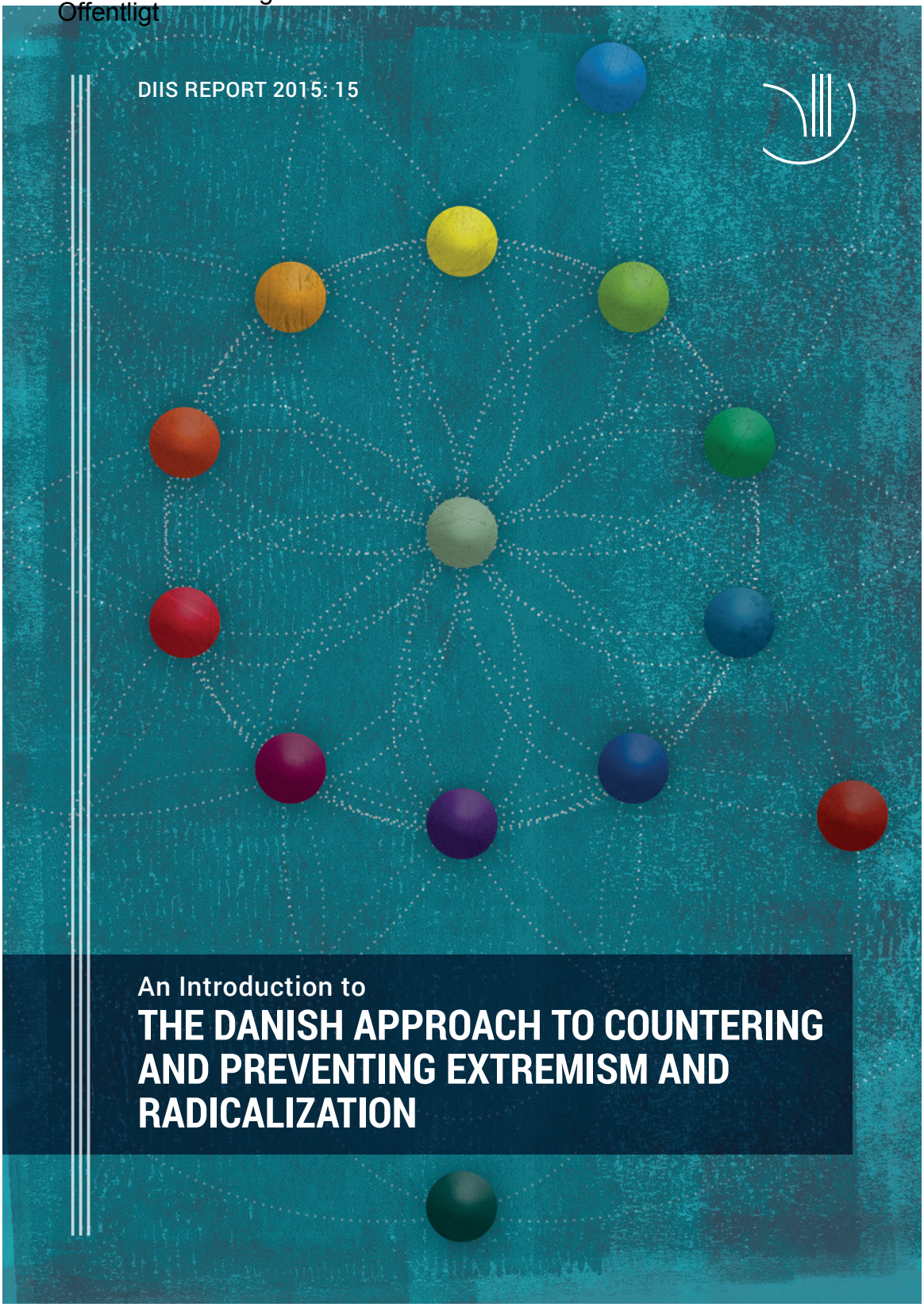

An Introduction to

THE DANISH APPROACH TO COUNTERING AND PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALIZATION

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Contents

Abstract **5**

Introduction **6**

Background **10**

Structural arrangements and ideological foundations **14**

Main elements and actors **22**
The General level **24**
The specific level **26**
The Targeted level **27**
Info-houses bringing together police and municipalities **27**
The Centre for Prevention of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service **29**
The Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, and the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration **30**
The Danish Prison and Probation Service **30**
Municipalities **31**
Cooperation networks **33**
Expansion **33**

Dilemmas, challenges and criticisms **34**
Fundamental criticism **36**
Political criticism **38**
The risk of creating self-fulfilling prophecies **39**
Lack of consensus, clear definitions and evaluations **40**
Practical challenges **42**
Civil society **44**

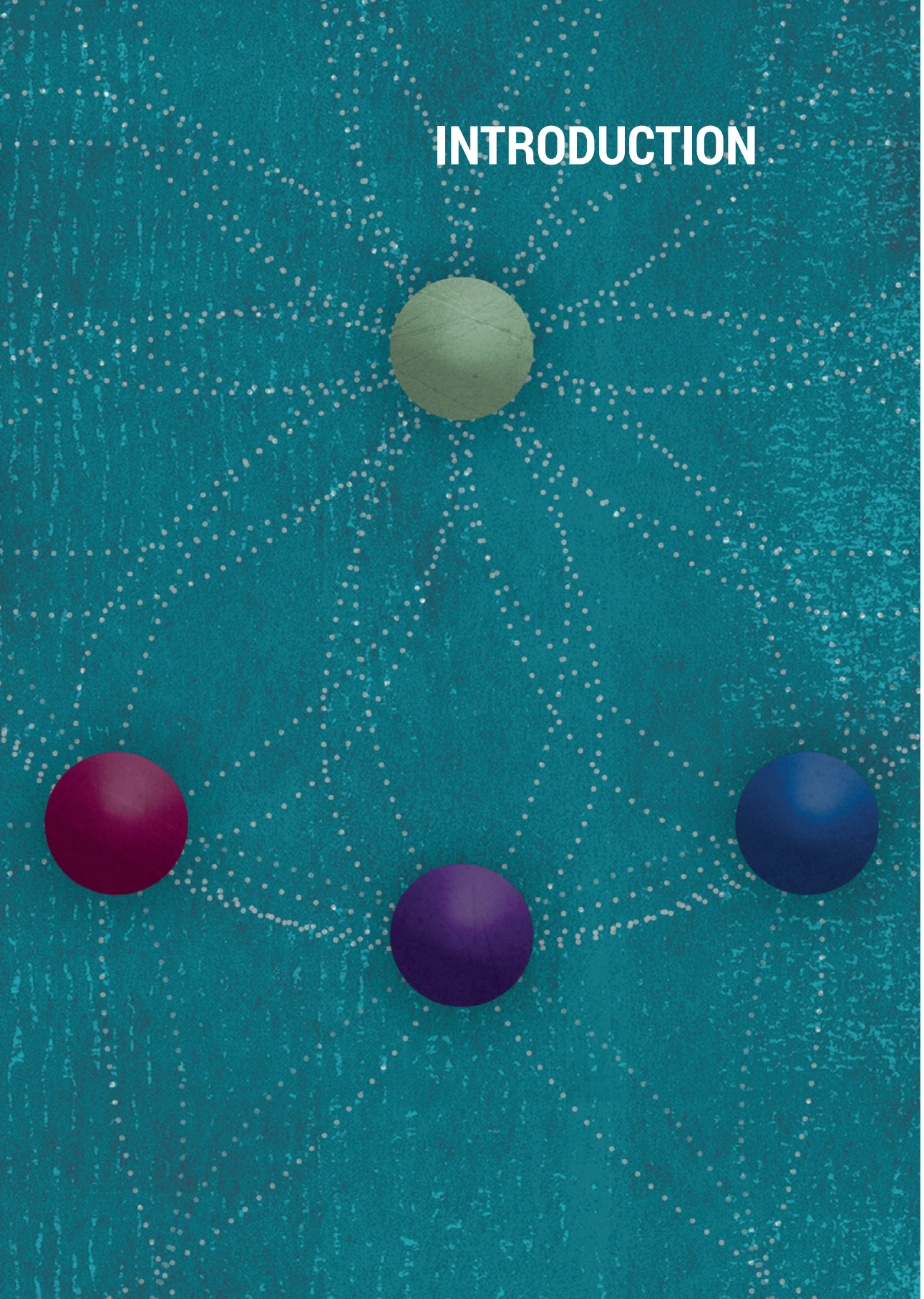
Notes **47**
Literature **50**

ABSTRACT

Preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization is increasingly gaining momentum as a supplement to more traditional counterterrorism activities in the efforts to protect societies against terrorism. The Danish approach has attracted attention not least because of its gentler approach to returnees from Syria and Iraq and the fact that it has been developing for nearly a decade. The present report provides an introductory overview of the main actors and initiatives in the Danish approach and an introduction to the foundations on which it is build. It also discusses the main dilemmas, challenges and criticisms with which the approach is faced with the aim of contributing to its further development.

The Danish approach to preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization is based on extensive multi-agency collaboration between various social-service providers, the educational system, the health-care system, the police, and the intelligence and security services. It benefits greatly from existing structures and initiatives developed for other purposes. It includes state, regional and local actors and is structured around efforts targeted respectively at the wider Danish society, extremist individuals and groups, and individuals involved, or in imminent danger of becoming involved, in illegal activities. Concrete methods are continuously being developed , both top-down and bottom-up, to meet contemporary challenges, but the approach in its entirety rests on a set of fundamental premises ranging from understandings of the welfare state to understandings of crime and of how behaviour can be changed. In order for other countries to determine whether there are lessons to be learned from the Danish approach, knowledge is required about these understandings and the existing structures into which the efforts are incorporated.

INTRODUCTION



Since the mid-00's, preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization (CVE) has increasingly gained momentum as a supplement to more traditional counterterrorism activities (CT) in the efforts to protect societies against terrorism. The Danish approach has attracted international attention not least because of its emphasis on preventing individuals from travelling to Syria and Iraq and its take on receiving returnees from those countries, often referred to as the Arhus model. In February 2015 the mayor of Aarhus, Jacob Bundsgaard, made a presentation at a White House summit to counter violent extremism in Washington, and by the fall of 2015 almost 300 international news media[1] had reported on what is sometimes framed as a typically Scandinavian soft-handed approach. However, the Aarhus model is one local component of a comprehensive national approach, which is about more than simply 'warmly welcoming home Isis Fighters', as the *International Business Times* put it.[2]

The Danish approach to preventing and countering all types of violent extremism and radicalization, be they political or religious, is based on systematized multi-agency collaboration between various social-services providers, the educational system, the health-care system, the police, and the intelligence and security services that has evolved over a decade. The sharing of information necessary for such collaboration is regulated by the Danish Administration Justice Act, which limits the use of shared information.[3] The Danish approach draws on decades of experience with similar collaboration from other areas and benefits from already existing structures and initiatives developed for other purposes than specifically preventing extremism and radicalization.

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The approach has been developed in practice, through learning-by-doing and trial-and-error, rather than sitting behind a desk. This means that there have been changes along the way and that mistakes have been made. It also means that there has been a willingness to listen and learn – and make adaptations – as practical experiences were collected and scientific research was conducted. To this day, the approach and its specific methods are not dictated by the state but rather have been developed in cooperation between different and equally important actors. Local practitioners may receive guidelines from the state and after testing them in

actual conditions may then provide feedback which is used to refine the guidelines further. Alternatively the local practitioners may develop concrete initiatives or methods and put them into practice, after which they are adopted on the state level and copied in other local contexts. The approach and its concrete methods are therefore continuously being developed both top-down and bottom-up, a process allowing them to be adapted to changes in challenges and perceptions of threats.

Many of the initiatives developed revolve around help to self-help through, for example, mentoring, counselling and exit programmes. Crucial to this approach is the fact that participation is voluntary. This implies, for example, that engagement in an exit programme is not a way of reducing a prison sentence.

However, the approach is not only based on the development of new initiatives and methods specifically designed for the purpose of preventing and countering extremism and radicalization. It is also very much a question of coordinating and using already existing components that may serve a purpose. An example of this is the numerous cost-free offers of assistance for anything from careers advice to psychological counselling or assistance with housing, as is available to all citizens of the welfare state.

The approach should not be seen as an alternative to punitive or other repressive measures, but as a supplement. If it is an alternative to anything, it is to doing nothing when repressive measures are not warranted.

The approach should therefore not be seen as an alternative to punitive or other repressive measures, but rather as a supplement. If it is an alternative to anything, it is to doing nothing when punitive and other repressive measures are not warranted.

Although the policy and the concrete methods and initiatives associated with it are continuously being developed to meet contemporary challenges, the approach in its entirety rests on a set of fundamental premises ranging from understandings of the welfare state to understandings of crime and of how behaviour can be changed. In order for other countries to determine whether there are lessons to be learned from the Danish approach, knowledge is required about the understandings and structures into which it is incorporated.

The present report therefore provides an overview of the main actors and initiatives in the Danish approach and an introduction to the foundations on which it is build. For the sake of clarity, compromises have been made with regards to complexity and the descriptions should be viewed as simplified ideal types. The report also discusses the main dilemmas, challenges and criticisms with which the approach is faced with the aim of contributing to its further development. The report does not deal with the legislative or administrative foundations of the approach, nor with punitive or other repressive measures, nor with international cooperation.

Moreover, it is not the report's aim to evaluate the Danish approach or to compare it with other countries' approaches, nor to unravel the tangled web that haunts the approach of a lack of clear definitions and consensus. When looking at anything to do with terrorism, extremism or radicalization, one must always be aware that these are political and context-dependant concepts that are unlikely ever to find commonly accepted definitions. The objective of the present report is not to provide an account of the many definitions or uses of these concepts either currently or historically, either internationally or for Denmark itself. [4] However, in the process of providing an introduction to the Danish approach to countering and preventing these ill-defined categories, the author *also* aims to show that challenges do arise from the lack of clear definitions.

The report is based on open source material, much of which is only available in Danish, combined with the author's observations from eight years of advising government, municipalities and authorities and teaching courses for frontline staff engaged in concrete initiatives, supplemented by conversations with policy makers as well as practitioners working with the approach. All analyses, conclusions and flaws are solely the responsibility of the author.[5]

BACKGROUND

As in many other countries, individuals travelling to Syria and Iraq have been a key concern in Denmark since 2012. When the government drafted a new action plan, *Prevention of radicalisation and extremism*, in September 2014, such individuals were identified as "[o]ne of the most urgent issues".[6] The two other main issues identified were the "increasing use of the internet and social media to spread extreme propaganda and recruit followers"[7] and "criminals, including people associated with gangs" with "close links to extremist circles".[8]

In February 2015, Denmark was struck by the first attack defined as terrorism in which victims were killed. Omar Abdel Hamid el-Hussein, who was known to have a violent criminal past and had recently been released from prison, shot and killed two civilians and injured six police officers at a cultural centre and a synagogue in Copenhagen. During his imprisonment el-Hussein had expressed sympathy for the group Islamic State, which had led prison staff to warn the Prison and Probation Service and to the latter warning the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET).

More traditional counterterrorism measures, however, attract most of the funding.

These events emphasised the concerns about criminals expressed in the 2014 action plan, but it also led to a critical examination of what was being done to prevent terrorism. Following the shootings, the authorities' efforts before, during and after the events were evaluated.[9] These evaluations did not lead to any paradigm shifts but rather to a strengthening of already existing initiatives as could be expected, the shootings also led to an increased focus on the role of the Prison and Probation Service and on prevention on the ground, meaning that municipalities that had not faced any concrete challenges felt the need to launch the same initiatives as more troubled municipalities.

More traditional counterterrorism measures, however, attract most of the funding. In February 2015, after the shootings but prior to the evaluations, the government launched twelve new initiatives against terrorism,[10] to be funded to the tune of DKK 970 million (EUR 130 million) over the next four years. Most of the funding was to the two Danish intelligence services' more traditional efforts to counter and prevent terrorism, such as surveillance, analyses, intervention teams and bodyguards; relatively little was reserved for the efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalisation[11] that have been developing since the mid-00's.

It was particularly the murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, the bombs in Madrid in 2004 and the bombs in London in 2005, combined with several terrorism-related arrests in Denmark since 2005 and the so-called "cartoon crisis" which followed the Danish daily *Jyllands-Posten*'s printing of twelve cartoons in 2005, that put the prevention of terrorism on the Danish agenda. From the beginning there was focus on the need for more than repressive measures, and already in 2008 Denmark accepted the invitation of the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gilles de Kerchove, to act as the lead country on deradicalization, as it was called then. In January 2009 the government drafted a national action plan to prevent extremism and radicalization. In the years leading up to its drafting, attention was already being directed to these themes in the three largest municipalities of Aarhus, Odense and Copenhagen, and the Danish Security and Intelligence Service had established a special Centre for Prevention under its Preventive Security Department. Similarly, the Ministry of Refugees, Immigration and Integration Affairs had established a Division for Cohesion and Prevention of Radicalization, which "in each of their areas of expertise and in collaboration with other authorities [was to] work to prevent extremist views and radicalization among young people".[12]

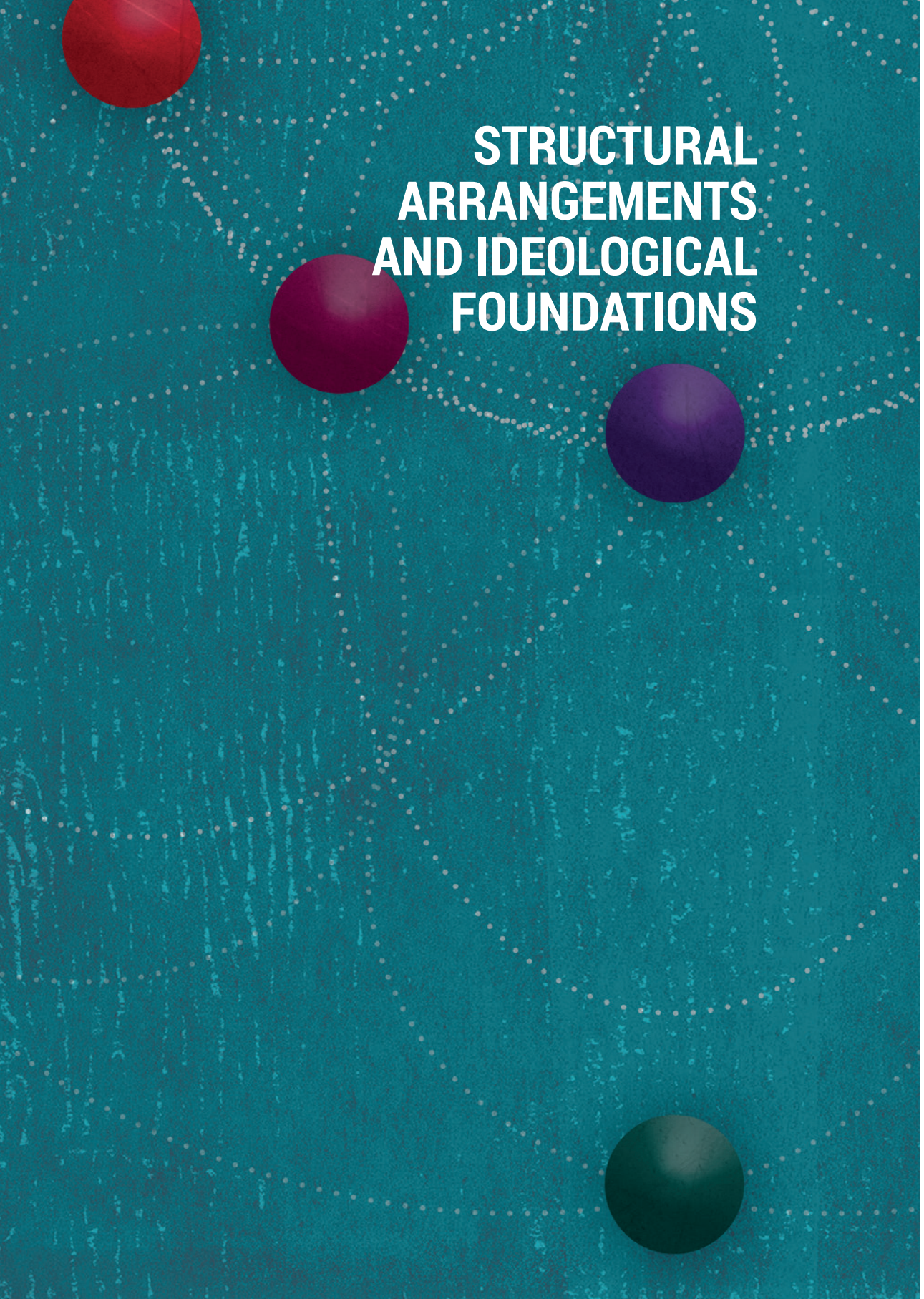
The 2009 action plan listed 22 concrete initiatives tying the "prevention of extremist views and radicalization" to a whole host of themes, including international cooperation to promote peace, development and democracy; efforts against discrimination and intolerance; access to education, jobs and equal opportunities; and integration and intercultural dialogue.[13] As was the case with the original British Prevent strategy, this led to criticism, not least because the plan was blamed for stigmatizing certain sections of the population and for confusing security threats with social challenges. When a new action plan was drafted in 2014 it was more narrowly focused and to some extent concerned with "separating the goals of counter-radicalisation from social cohesion-building and integration-agendas".[14] Both action plans address all types of extremism, but mention explicitly left-wing, right-wing and Islamist extremism.

The two action plans were drafted by different governments. The first was drafted by a centre-right government coalition between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party led by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, whereas the second was drafted by a centre-left government coalition between the Social Democrats and the Danish Social Liberal Party led by Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt. However, it would not be fair to claim that the differences between the two plans were only or primarily the results of the different governments that drew them up. Rather, they at least appear to also be the results of five years of hard-won experiences. This will be further discussed at the end of the report.[15]

But still, despite lessons learned and its narrower focus, the Danish approach is very much a work in progress and it is still controversial and being debated. The challenges arise not least from the lack of a clear common definition of radicalization and extremism and of a consensus over what the problem actually is (violence or ideology), what the roots are (politics, religion, failed integration, identity, wars, etc.), what the cure is (more religion, less religion, social changes, crime prevention, individual treatment, harsher punishments, etc.), and who can best reach the target group (soft social workers, tough police or someone not connected with the authorities at all).

Despite lessons learned and its narrower focus, the Danish approach is very much a work in progress and it is still controversial and being debated.

This means there is room for opinions and assumptions based on political and/or personal preferences. To add to the challenges, there are no evaluations of the effects of initiatives, only evaluations of their implementation,[16] which means that there is not a lot of knowledge on the basis of which informed decisions can be made. These challenges are not unique to the prevention of extremism and radicalization, but accompany most policy areas in their early years of development. At the end of the report, the dilemmas, challenges and critiques facing the Danish approach will be discussed.



STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS AND IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

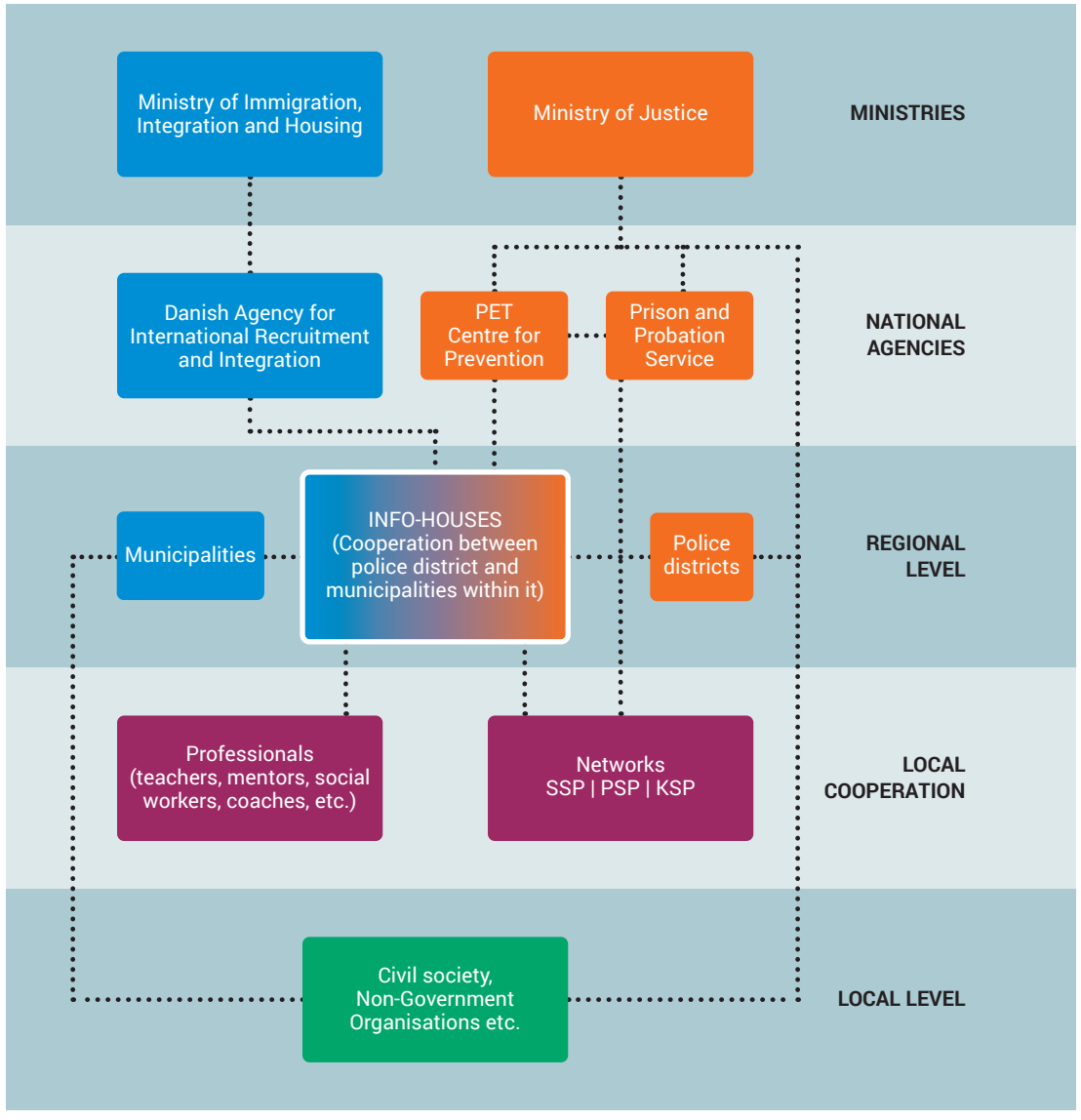
The Danish approach to countering and preventing violent extremism and radicalization has from the very beginning involved incorporating the activities of many agencies into existing structures, relying heavily on cooperation and benefitting from the trust that is an integral aspect of Danish society. Not only do agencies trust each other enough to work together, the population also trusts the state and its agencies, and each other for that matter.[17] Such multi-agency cooperation and its necessary sharing of information is regulated by § 115 of the Danish Administration Justice Act, which stipulates that authorities can share information about an individual if necessary to cooperation in crime prevention or to cooperation between the police, the social services and social psychiatry and mental health authorities in their efforts to help socially vulnerable individuals. Information may not, however, be shared for the purposes of criminal investigations.

From the beginning, the Danish approach has been anchored in two agendas. One is the protection of the state and society against terrorist attacks, while the other is the welfare state's responsibility for the individual's well-being, which obliges it to protect the individual against self-harming behaviour.

From the beginning, the Danish approach has been anchored in two agendas. One is the protection of the state and society against terrorist attacks, while the other is the welfare state's responsibility for the individual's well-being, which obliges it to protect the individual against self-harming behaviour. The combination of these two agendas also reflects the understanding that there is a need for more than repressive measures. The combination is present throughout the approach, from the national to the regional and local levels. See Figure 1 on page 16.

Figure 1. Main actors

The roles and activities of the individual actors will be described in the section "Main elements and actors".



Main actors (T. Gemmerli & A. Hemmingsen)[18]

Nationally two main actors cooperate and to some extent coordinate regional and local efforts, but also engage directly. One is a centre for prevention at the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), which focuses primarily on security and on preventing illegal activities. The other is a division for prevention at the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, which has a broader focus on preventing extremism and radicalization, including a focus on more social aspects.

Although the Centre for Prevention at PET has certainly developed and changed over the years, it has remained organisationally in place. The other leg of the efforts has been subject to greater changes, illustrating how politically sensitive this subject is. As indicated, it was initially located in the Ministry of Refugees, Immigration and Integration Affairs, but in October 2011 a change in government led to the abolition of this ministry, and the Division for Cohesion and Prevention of Radicalization was moved to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration. Subsequently, the division was divided into a policy-oriented branch that remained in the ministry and a more practice-oriented branch that was placed under the National Board of Social Services, a government agency within the ministry, where coordination with efforts aimed at vulnerable youth, including the prevention of gang membership, was facilitated.

Following a change of government after the elections in June 2015, the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing was established and the divisions were moved there, thus retaining a policy-oriented division in the ministry, with a more practice-oriented division now being placed in a newly established Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI) within the same ministry.

> **These actors cooperate and to some extent coordinate or at least advise efforts on the regional and local levels, where the approach also revolves around collaboration between the police and the security and intelligence service on the one hand and agencies responsible for the relevant social services on the other hand.**

These actors cooperate and to some extent coordinate or at least advise efforts on the regional and local levels, where the approach also revolves around collaboration between the police and the security and intelligence service on the one hand and agencies responsible for the relevant social services on the other hand. There is ample room for adjustments to regional or local needs, resources and existing

structures, and methods are developed top-down as well as bottom-up. An example of top-down development is a series of handbooks entitled *Prevention of extremism*, published by the ministry in 2012.[19] An example of bottom-up development is the contingency plan to intervene and stop individuals travelling to and from Syria and Iraq, which was developed by means of already existing cooperation between the city of Aarhus and the east Jutland Police in late 2013.[20] This plan was based on individual guidance and advice for individuals considering travelling to Syria or Iraq and after-care for returnees, including debriefing, medical care, consultations with a psychologist and mentoring. It also offered guidance and advice for relatives and dialogue with local communities. In 2014 this approach was adopted nationally, the government's action plan effectively making what is often referred to as the Aarhus model part of the Danish approach.

Such multi-agency approaches to prevention, based on cooperation between the police and social service agencies and revolving around information-sharing to spot potential future problems and launch preventive measures as early as possible, are not new in Denmark. Since 1977, networks of schools, social services and the police (SSP) have existed in most municipalities. These were established primarily to prevent young people under the age of eighteen from engaging in crime, and since then other networks have been established to focus on other target groups. In 2009, networks involving the police, social services and psychiatric health care (PSP) were created primarily to prevent individuals with psychiatric problems from engaging in crime, and in 2010 similar networks involving the police, social services and the Prison and Probation Services (KSP) were launched primarily to prevent individuals released from prison or other institutions from (re)engaging in crime. All these networks facilitate cooperation and information-sharing between different authorities and aim simultaneously to protect society from crime and to protect individuals from engaging in crime.

From the very beginning, Danish efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalization were incorporated into these existing structures. As this indicates, transferring the Danish approach or elements of it to contexts where such structures and overall trust in them do not exist may prove difficult. As this also indicates, the understanding of terrorism as a crime comparable to other types of crime, and of extremism and radicalization as risks especially to vulnerable young people, rather than as an existential threat to the state and the existing order or a political challenge, is crucial to the Danish approach. As a consequence, preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization was incorporated into existing conceptualizations of the prevention of crime, with radicalization becoming "Yet another 'parameter of concern'" for the ordinary crime prevention system.[21] As an extension, it was therefore also incorporated into existing understandings of crime and of early prevention. Early prevention is an integral part of the Danish approach to anything from crime prevention to health care and child care, in which all new parents are offered health visits at home for the first year of a child's life to provide advice on the health and welfare of the children and thus prevent future problems. This is seen as more cost-effective in the long run than remedying problems in the future if they should arise.[22]

It can be difficult to find out exactly what is this extremism and radicalization that must be prevented and countered.

However, it can be difficult to find out exactly what is this extremism and radicalization that must be prevented and countered. In the action plan from 2014, extremism and radicalization are defined as follows:

Extremism can be defined in various ways. In this publication, the term is used to describe groups that can be characterised by their:

- simplistic views of the world and of "the enemy", in which particular groups or aspects of society are seen as a threat.
- intolerance and lack of respect for other people's views, freedom and rights.
- rejection of fundamental democratic values and norms, or non-acceptance of democratic decision-making processes.
- use of illegal and possibly violent methods to achieve political/religious ideological goals.

Radicalisation is not a clearly defined concept. It is a process that takes various forms. Sometimes it happens relatively quickly, sometimes it is long and drawn-out. There are no simple causal relationships – radicalisation is triggered by different factors and leads to different forms of involvement. It can assume forms such as support for radical views or extremist ideology, and it can lead to acceptance of violence or other unlawful acts as a means to achieve a political/religious goal.[23]

It should be clear that these definitions are not easily operationalized, as they do not clearly define what is and, perhaps more importantly, what is not extremism or radicalization. Although there is no clear, commonly agreed definition of radicalization or extremism, it is possible to identify the contours of an understanding upon which the Danish approach rests. This understanding focuses on the individual and to some extent de-politicizes extremism and radicalization, although the two are always linked to (the future risk of) terrorism – a category that is intrinsically political.

> Instead of solid conceptualization and empirical grounding, it seems the authorities operate with a pragmatic model, a heuristic working model that describes radicalization in a formulaic manner as a process in which an individual moves from a phase of showing normal behavior (without further definition) to phases where the individual gradually but increasingly diverges from normal behavior until he or she reaches a so-called 'tipping point', described as the point where the radicalized individual transgresses the boundary between radical thinking and violent action, that is, from thoughts to action. This "tipping point" is conceptualized as a point reached not by all individuals but by those few with somehow vulnerable minds. [… This] universalistic approach to a heuristic understanding of radicalization beyond time and space is grounded in an individualistic interpretation of the phenomenon, which leads to a socio-psychological model of 'identifying radicals' beyond the political context: de-politicization.[24]

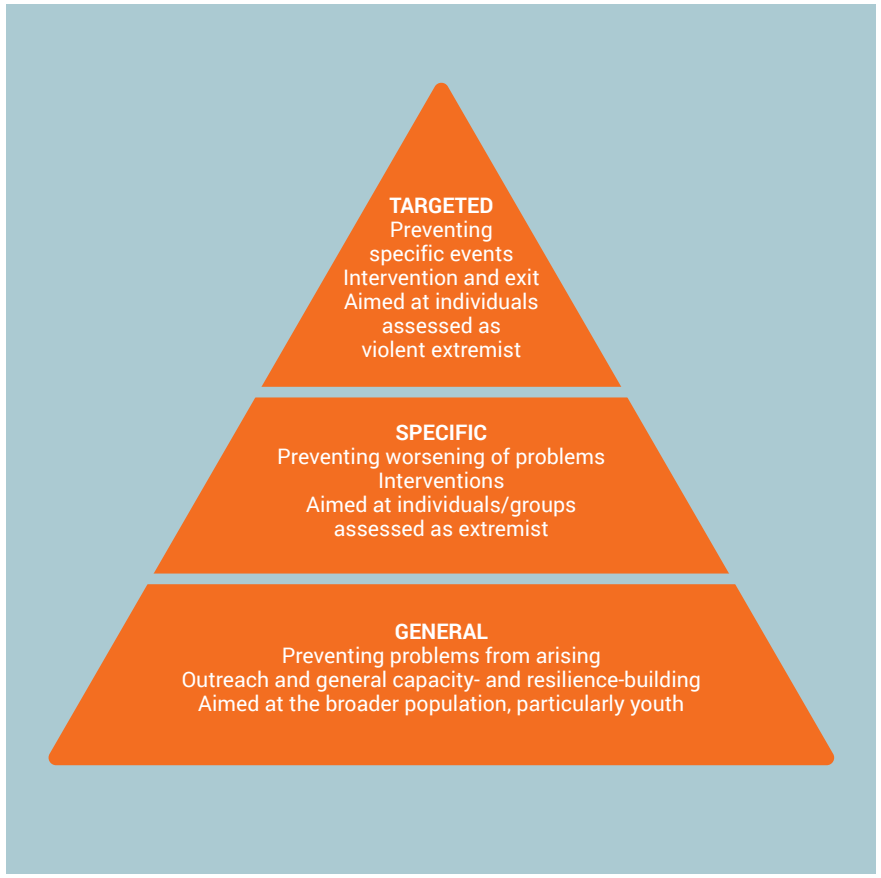
The focus on the vulnerable individual and on socio-psychological explanations leads in practice to a focus on pull factors rather than push factors. Instead of looking at what is wrong with the world that pushes people to rebel, it looks at what individuals gain from becoming involved and then attempts to provide this in other ways or to give the individual something to lose (e.g. education, a job, re-established family ties). The approach seems to rest on a basic understanding that Danish society is so good that it does not make sense to oppose it and therefore opposition must be the result of misunderstandings. This means there is an underlying understanding of the target group as misguided or as unaware of its own possibilities and potential, in just the same way that ordinary crime prevention views individuals who are vulnerable to involvement in risky behaviour such as crime or substance abuse. As a consequence the approach relies heavily on mentors, coaches and therapy to open the individual's eyes to enable and build capacity and to achieve his or her inclusion into mainstream society.

The Danish approach is increasingly being understood as existing within the same framework as efforts to prevent other risky behaviour.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTORS

The prevention of crime as well as of health and social problems in Denmark is often framed within the so-called "Prevention Pyramid", which is also used by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This pyramid identifies different stages in which different types of activities can take place with the aim of preventing future problems or preventing existing ones becoming worse. Increasingly, preventing and countering extremism and radicalization is also framed within this model.[25]

Figure 2. Prevention Pyramid



(A. Hemmingsen)[26]

Two primary types of activities are aimed at these different target groups to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization. One type is *outreach*, where representatives of the authorities reach out to and engage with individuals or groups that are not currently in any kind of trouble but that could get into trouble in the future, as well as individuals and groups in contact with individuals and groups in trouble or deemed to be in danger of getting into trouble. The other type is *exit and intervention*, which is for individuals and groups that are already in trouble or deemed to be in imminent danger of getting into trouble. Within ordinary crime prevention this approach and its potential pitfalls are well known, so if one accepts the claim that prevention of radicalization and extremism are comparable to crime prevention, it suggests that there is experience and evidence to draw on.

THE GENERAL LEVEL

In preventing and countering extremism and radicalization, the general level is particularly aimed at young people and those considered to be in a position to have an impact on young people. The focus is on awareness and capacity-building to improve general conditions on both the societal and the individual level.

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This is the earliest type of prevention, aimed at preventing anything from ever happening. Activities include:

ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES
Building/strengthening resilience and cohesion on the societal level.	Initiatives to include all residents and strengthen general social cohesion through the educational system and locally. Increasingly not framed as part of the prevention of extremism and radicalization, but rather as general efforts that may have positive effects in this area, as well as in many others.[27]
Enlightenment about own opportunities and Danish society.	Through the educational system.
Facilitation of dialogue about controversial themes.	National corps of young Dialogue Ambassadors available for debates in, for example, schools. The aim is to ensure that sensitive topics are not debated just by extremist groups presenting only their solutions. Dialogue-based workshops for primary and secondary schools challenging prejudices and debating themes such as radicalization and discrimination.
Strengthening critical sense.	Including knowledge about, for example, manipulation and critical use of the internet in the curriculum in primary schools.
Outreach.	Dialogue with local communities about their concerns.
Training professionals.	Courses on awareness about radicalization and extremism for professionals who have direct contact with citizens. Including knowledge about extremism, radicalization and prevention in the curriculum for teachers, social workers, etc.

As mentioned, there may be valuable experiences to take from ordinary crime prevention. One hard-earned experience from this area is that on the general level, there is a risk of creating problems that would never have arisen simply by addressing them. Drawing attention to a danger or a problem that is to be prevented by directly addressing it (problem-addressing) may lead to social exaggeration or majority misunderstandings, or in other words: the audience may come to believe that what one is trying to prevent is more normal or widespread than it is and therefore begin taking an interest in it. Unlike some countries, Denmark has so far not employed publicly available counter-narrative campaigns explicitly engaging with, for example, the propaganda of extremist organizations. Most likely part of the explanation is that, in the underlying logic of the Danish approach, such campaigns would be risky because they address the problems on the general level.[28]

This reluctance to address problems directly can actually be traced throughout the Danish approach even on the individual level, such as in a mentoring or exit programme. This means that systematic engagement with ideology by, for example, using religious authorities to promote a non-violent interpretation is not an integral component of the approach. Rather, the focus is on improving circumstances, and capacity-building. As a consequence, it would be fair to say that the approach in practice, at least on the surface, revolves more around (behavioural) disengagement than (intellectual) deradicalization.

THE SPECIFIC LEVEL

The specific level includes individuals or groups who are assessed as being extremist, for example, because they circulate in problematic social environments, but are not violent. On this level, exit and intervention activities are employed. Outreach to such individuals' immediate social surroundings may also take place without sharing the concerns about specific individuals. The focus is on capacity-building for the individual and his or her immediate surroundings and on preventing problems from arising or becoming worse. Activities include:

ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES
Guidance to individuals.	Individual mentors. Coaching regarding education, careers, relations, or other factors that may improve the individual's situation. Individual guidance on gaining access to services that are available to all Danish citizens.
Guidance to relatives.	Networks for the parents or other relatives of individuals considering travelling to a conflict area or returning from one. Coaching for the parents or other relatives of individuals involved in extremism or considering travelling to a conflict area or returning from one.
Outreach.	Dialogue with communities to prevent, for example, facilitation of travel to a conflict area.

THE TARGETED LEVEL

The targeted level is aimed at individuals who have engaged in criminal acts or are assessed as being in imminent risk of doing so. The focus is on capacity-building and the prevention of specific criminal acts. On this level it is only about intervention and exit, but when necessary and possible attempts may be made to reach out to and include the relatives of the individual in order to build their capacity to support the individual. Activities include:

ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES
Exit programmes.	Individually tailored programmes offered by the Centre for Prevention at the Danish Security and Intelligence Service, the Danish Prison and Probation Service, and municipalities and/or local police coordinated by the Info-houses (described in the next section).
Mentoring and coaching programs.	Capacity-building (life skills, education, etc.), mentoring, assistance with housing, therapy, medical help, etc. coordinated by Info-houses. Individual guidance on gaining access to services that are available to all Danish citizens.

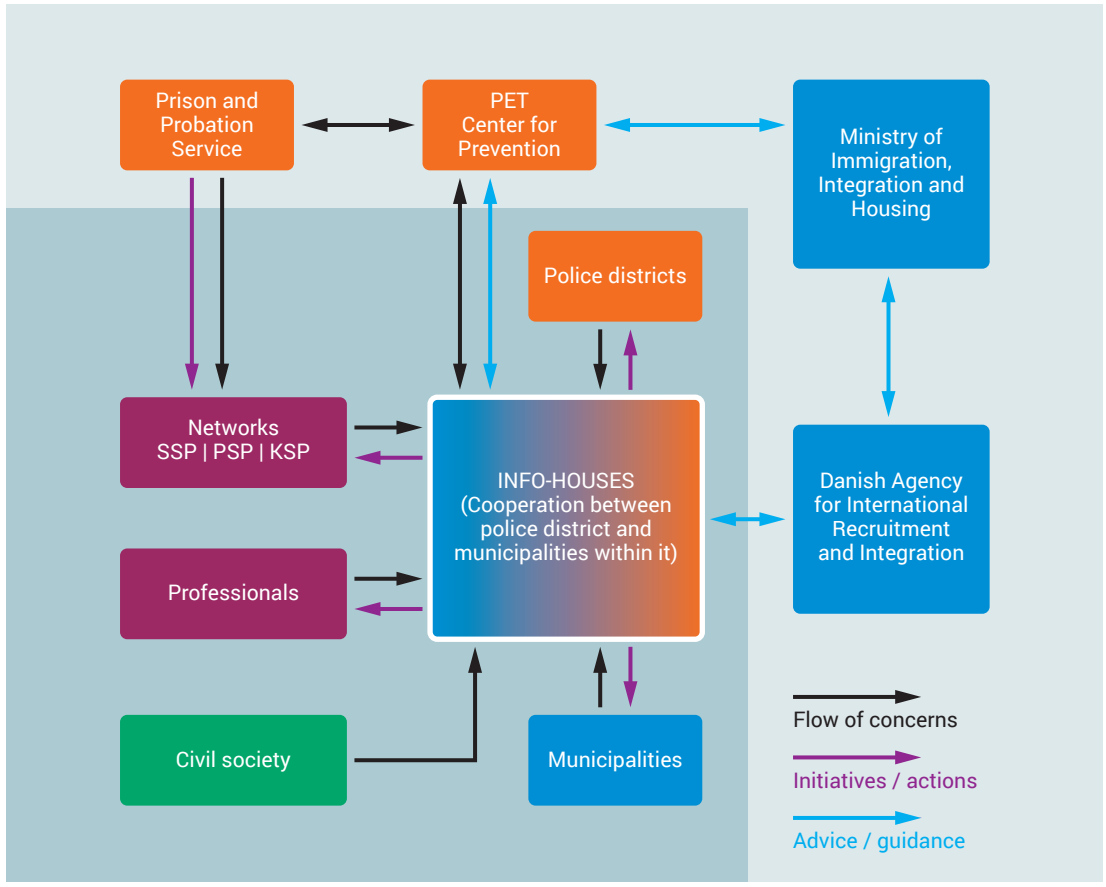
In the following the main actors, their activities and cooperation and the procedures regarding coordination are described.

INFO-HOUSES BRINGING TOGETHER POLICE AND MUNICIPALITIES

Central to the Danish approach is the so-called "Info-house" structure. Info-houses are not physical houses, but are perhaps most accurately defined as a framework for local cooperation between the police and municipal social service administrations and providers and as centres of excellence concerning extremism and radicalization.

Such Info-houses have been established in all twelve Danish police districts to assess concerns about radicalization and extremism that may originate from agencies, services, professionals or civilians, to coordinate cooperation between all the relevant actors and to refer to preventive efforts specifically designed for the purpose or developed for other or general purposes, provided by the police or municipality. The details of the cooperation vary according to local needs, resources and the existing structures into which they are incorporated.

Figure 3. Procedures



Procedures (T. Gemmerli & A. Hemmingsen)[29]

The Info-houses collect incoming concerns and assess whether they are warranted. If they find there are grounds for concerns, they assess whether these are primarily related to (and best dealt with as) social challenges or whether there are any security aspects. This process may also involve the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's Centre for Prevention. The model could therefore represent a unique possibility for the service to gain access to a wealth of information, which some local authorities are very aware of. As previously mentioned, information-sharing between different Danish authorities is regulated by § 115 of The Danish Administration Justice Act.

Having assessed the concerns, the Info-houses decide if action is to be taken and if so by whom. If the concerns are rated as a threat to security, the case is passed to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's Centre for Prevention. Cases may also be referred back to the Info-houses from the Centre after its assessment. If there is no threat to security, the case is referred to the initiatives offered by the police or the municipality. These may be initiatives specifically designed for the prevention of extremism and radicalization, or more general ones that are available to all citizens, such as career counselling, assistance with housing or therapy. If possible, the case is referred to an actor who the individual in question already knows and trusts. This can mean anything from a specially trained mentor to a soccer coach or a teacher who already knows the individual in question, depending on a concrete assessment in each case. As is the case with all initiatives, participation is optional.

In September 2015 the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing announced a tender for a national hotline offering assistance to "parents, relatives, and others concerned that a child, a young person or an adult is at risk of radicalization or already part of an extremist milieu".[30] The hotline is to be established and run in connection with one of the existing Info-houses and will offer immediate advice and information about where and how more assistance can be found. This is an extension of the local hotlines already established in Copenhagen and Aarhus. If successful, the national hotline will most likely strengthen the Info-house structure, ensuring the desired flow of information.

As mentioned, the main coordinating powers nationally are the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's Centre for Prevention and the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration within the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing. In addition to coordinating and advising others, these actors also have concrete initiatives of their own.

THE CENTRE FOR PREVENTION OF THE DANISH SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

The primary focus of the Centre for Prevention of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) is the targeted level, but the Centre engages on all levels through both outreach and intervention activities. On the general level, the Centre engages in outreach to "civil resourceful persons and other partners for dialogue that may contribute to ensuring the local community's resilience and cohesion in the face of radicalization and violent extremism".[31] On the specific level, the Centre

collaborates with the Ministry in training key frontline staff to be aware of signs of concern, to work within the structures of the Danish approach, and to handle concrete preventive efforts. On the targeted level, the Centre engages with individuals convicted of crimes related to violent extremism or terrorism or where there is an increased concern for national security.[32]

THE MINISTRY OF IMMIGRATION, INTEGRATION AND HOUSING, AND THE DANISH AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT AND INTEGRATION

The Service's counterpart, the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, with the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI), primarily focuses on the other two levels of the pyramid. As already mentioned, they collaborate with the Service in offering training for key frontline staff, and in addition they engage in advising and supporting the Info-houses, as well as concrete initiatives regionally and locally, developing methods and producing educational material, and serving as an entry point with regard to gathering and disseminating knowledge. The Ministry also administers funding for practical initiatives, as well as research.

THE DANISH PRISON AND PROBATION SERVICE

In addition to being involved through the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the Ministry of Justice also takes part through the ordinary police and the Danish Prison and Probation Service. The latter attracted a great deal of attention following the Copenhagen shootings in February 2015 because the suspect had been imprisoned, and their efforts are likely to be strengthened and given additional funding in the near future. Already in February they were promised new funding for a continuation of their pilot programme "Deradicalization - Back on track", initiated in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration in 2011 and supported by the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme of the European Union. The programme is based on mentoring for individuals convicted under terrorism legislation, individuals convicted of hate crimes and individuals convicted or in custody who are considered vulnerable to radicalization.

Since 2012 the Danish Prison and Probation Service has cooperated with the Danish Security and Intelligence Service in training prison staff in issues of radicalization and extremism to better enable them to meet their obligation to be aware of signs of concern and to report the to the Prison and Probation Service, which may then lead to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service being warned or to increased security measures.

MUNICIPALITIES

As mentioned, Info-houses have been established in all twelve Danish police districts to structure cooperation between the police and social services. In addition to already existing efforts developed for other or general purposes that may be relevant to preventing extremism and radicalisation, most municipalities have also developed or adopted targeted efforts. Prior to the ministerial level's recommendations about implementing the Info-house structure, some municipalities had already developed their own targeted initiatives, which continue. The two most visible efforts can be found in the two largest municipalities of Aarhus and Copenhagen.

Aarhus

Following the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's campaign, "Police against Terrorism", in all Danish police districts in 2005, the municipality of Aarhus and the East Jutland Police established a pilot project to prevent violent radicalization in 2007, drawing inspiration from the Dutch project Wij Amsterdammers. In 2011 the project was anchored in SSP Aarhus. Aarhus' efforts include:

- Info-house. Assessing concerns and planning and coordinating the prevention of radicalization
- Counselling and advising professionals about radicalization
- Providing information about radicalization to the public
- Specialised mentoring for prevention of or intervention in radicalization
- Counselling, advising and exit programmes for individuals considering travelling to Syria or returning from there
- Outreach to local communities and other actors in contact with such individuals
- Counselling and advising the parents of radicalized young people and facilitating networks between them
- Dialogue-based workshops for primary and secondary schools about radicalization

The efforts related to individuals travelling to Syria or Iraq are preventive and are aimed at either dissuading individuals from travelling or ensuring that they return safely and without being a threat to security. To dissuade individuals from travelling, individual guidance and advice is offered, which for returnees includes debriefing, psychological therapy, medical assistance, individual mentoring and tailored exit programmes. Participation is entirely optional.

Copenhagen

In 2009 the municipality of Copenhagen established its VINK division as a pilot project to gather knowledge and provide advice for professionals in the municipality working with the early prevention of radicalization and extremism. The aim was primarily to work with early prevention by educating professionals as well as the broader public to engage with young people, counter prejudice and facilitate dialogue in order to strengthen the inclusion of young people attracted to extreme communities and provide them with alternatives.

In 2011 these efforts were more closely tied to SSP Copenhagen, but unlike Aarhus they were not organizationally anchored in this structure. As a consequence of increased demand and a focus on the area, as well as a request from the Danish Security and Intelligence Service to include a preparedness group related to returnees from Syria or other conflict areas, VINK was provided with additional resources for the period 2015-18 in 2014.

In January 2015 the municipality of Copenhagen's Committee for Employment and Integration appointed an expert group to prevent radicalization tasked with making recommendations for how the City of Copenhagen can strengthen its efforts against the radicalization of young people.[33] Following the expert group's recommendations,[34] the efforts were further strengthened and given additional resources.[35] Copenhagen's efforts include:

- Info-house. Assessing concerns, and planning and coordinating prevention of radicalization
- Centralization of knowledge and methods made available to professionals and the wider public
- Advise and counselling for professionals
- Providing information about radicalization to the public
- Coaches and mentors for young people and their families
- Support, advice, counselling and mentoring for returnees who wish it
- Outreach to local communities and other actors in contact with such individuals

An example of how the info-house structure may be implemented in different ways by adapting it to existing structures, needs and resources, is a group of municipalities around Copenhagen that as of late 2015 are working on developing a joint programme with the relevant police districts, thus sharing their resources rather than creating individual programmes in each municipality.

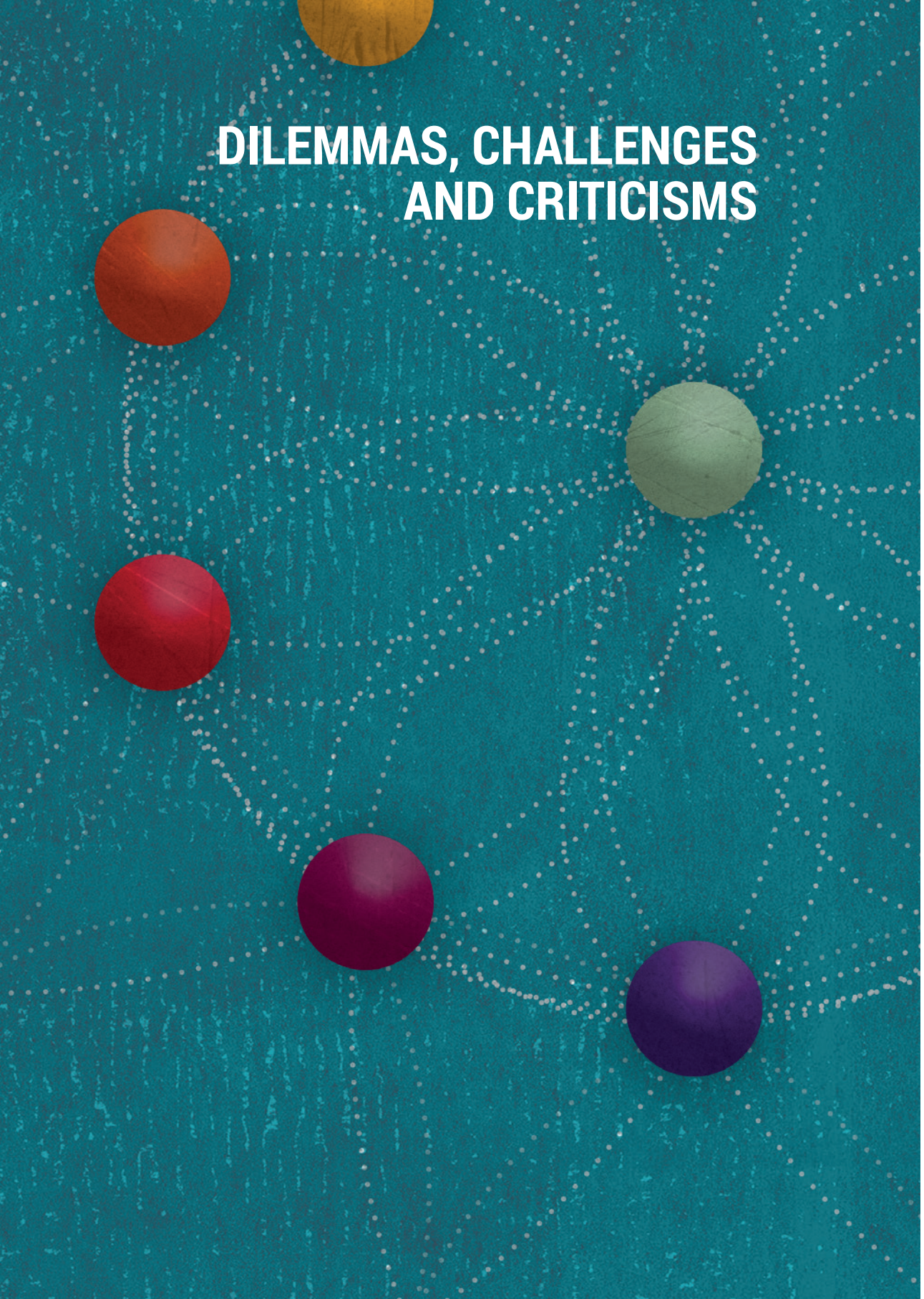
COOPERATION NETWORKS

As previously mentioned, a crucial part of the Danish multi-agency approach is the already established networks of School, Social Services & Police (SSP), the networks of Prison and Probations Services, Social Services & Police (KSP), and the networks of Psychiatry, Social Services & Police (PSP). As described, in some cases the Info-houses are anchored in these, while in others they closely cooperate with them.

In addition, the networks also contribute substantially by having direct contact with the general public and individuals at risk, thus enabling them to spot signs of concerns as key personnel have been trained to do on courses arranged by the Centre for Prevention at the Danish Security and Intelligence Service in cooperation with the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing.[36]

EXPANSION

Increasingly the responsibility to spot signs of concern also involves the educational sector, including primary and secondary schools and universities and social service providers such as housing, unemployment benefits, pensions, employment services and health care. Finally, there is an increasing ambition to include civil society in more organised ways.[37]



DILEMMAS, CHALLENGES AND CRITICISMS

As might be expected, the Danish approach to countering and preventing extremism and radicalization has been and still is faced with dilemmas, challenges and criticisms. As mentioned in the introduction, the approach has developed by trial and error in tandem with the entire new policy area being developed, practical experiences being made and knowledge being produced. Important changes resulting from these developments are the nuancing of understandings of radicalization and extremism, the narrowing and focusing of efforts and the disassociation from other agendas (such as integration or the promotion of liberal values) among the professionals directly involved. But outsiders are not necessarily following. Particularly when concrete events, such as terrorist attacks, put radicalization and extremism at the top of the public agenda, some voices in the debate revert to less sophisticated conceptualizations. The discourse created by such debates cannot be ignored, as it shapes the perception of initiatives to counter and prevent extremism and radicalization and may shortcut any progresses made, leading to the initiatives being received and perceived as if they were part of the discourse. Putting it more bluntly, a strong omnipresent public discourse that links extremism to Islam or Muslims may spill over and lead to initiatives being perceived as doing the same thing. Until such a day when there is a complete consensus on what extremism and radicalization is, those working in the area will have to be aware of such dynamics and constantly develop their ability to manoeuvre in a context shaped by events beyond their control.

> **Until there is a complete consensus on what extremism and radicalization is, those working in the area will, have to be constantly develop their ability to manoeuvre in a context shaped by events beyond their control.**

In an excellent article from 2015, Lindekilde[38] tracks the development of the Danish policy to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization by comparing the action plan from 2009 to the action plan from 2014. Lindekilde identifies three key improvements:

The first is the professionalization of the initiatives, the sophistication of techniques and organizational maturing resulting in, among other things, frameworks for individual interventions that rests on a sound psychological foundation and frameworks for local cooperation between municipalities and the police, that create the organizational foundation necessary for the training of frontline staff.

The second improvement is the disassociation of policies regarding integration or discrimination and policies regarding security, thus creating a less ambiguous security agenda and increasingly replacing the notion of a battle of ideas with a focus on preventing violent acts.

The third improvement is the inclusion of a more complex and nuanced understanding of radicalization than the simple phase-models with their identifiable stages through which an individual is believed to pass in the process of transforming from 'ordinary' to 'terrorist', models which were popular in the early years.[39]

However, although improvements have been made, the Danish approach is still faced with challenges, dilemmas and criticisms. There are, of course, practical challenges such as the inherent difficulties of cooperation. In addition to these, there are challenges related to the lack of a fundamental consensus and clear definitions and to the lack of knowledge about whether or not the approach and/or its specific components actually work.

There are also dilemmas emanating from differing views on what radicalization and extremism are and how they are best prevented, which are shaped by both political positions and fundamental views of humanity.

A more practical dilemma is the question of whether the approach or aspects of it may in fact create counterproductive side-effects. In addition, there are dilemmas related to proportionality: at what costs should attempts be made to prevent radicalization and extremism? What strange bedfellows are societies willing to risk ending up with in making these efforts? Finally, there is a more fundamental criticism of the entire understanding of radicalization as revolving solely around the individual.

FUNDAMENTAL CRITICISM

The Danish approach, like many others, is very focused on the individual because it takes its point of departure in radicalization. As indicated above, this leads to a de-politicization (in the words of Andersen and Moe) of phenomena that are intrinsically linked to terrorism which in its very nature is political and of an area that is hyper-politicized. "One could argue that, by lumping together the fight against extremist ideas and drug abuse, we are obscuring the political nature of de-radicalisation work – the attempt to 'normalise' and battle political and religious attitudes and practices that are not unlawful as such but that are deemed risky by authorities".[40]

This criticism is by no means only raised in connection with the Danish approach: it is also made in connection with other countries' approaches and with the entire discourse on radicalization.[41] Nor is the criticism purely intellectual. The ways in which challenges are understood shape how we are able to imagine responding to them. If we see radicalization solely as an individual matter, as irrational and as the result of misunderstandings, there is a risk that we ignore responses that might prove productive. One example of such a response could be to address the political issues of actual violent conflicts and suggest alternative and socially more acceptable ways to engage in them. Another could be to enter into dialogue with the immediate social environments and constituencies of the individuals in question to understand their grievances, be they real or perceived, be they related to domestic or international politics, and then attempt to find non-violent ways to address them.

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On an individual level, socio-psychological processes indisputably play an important role as mediators between political indignation and ideology on the one hand and engagement in activities on the other hand. But although socio-psychological processes are highly relevant from an individual perspective, as well as in individual mentoring or exit programmes, leaving out the political aspect entirely would be problematic. On both the conceptual and practical levels, as when designing an individual programme, there is a need to acknowledge the possibility that real political agendas, real indignations and real grievances exist.

This criticism can also be found among the professionals involved in the efforts to counter and prevent radicalization and extremism: "Although such a strategy [of de-politicization] may help to legitimise de-radicalisation interventions in the eyes of some frontline workers and target groups […] a substantial share does not accept the analogy between ordinary crime prevention and de-radicalisation interventions. This group sees a huge difference between protecting youngsters from crime and drug abuse, and protecting them against certain political and/or religious views".[42]

POLITICAL CRITICISM

As indicated, even in Denmark there is disagreement over the details of the approach. Much of this originates with political positions and personal preferences. One contested theme is whether the soft-handed incentive approach is effective and just and whether there should be a greater focus on punitive measures. Such criticisms are not unique to the prevention of extremism and radicalization. They regularly arise in relation to ordinary crime prevention too, and they tie into fundamental debates about the welfare state, where some subscribe to a more conservative version in which punitive measures are preferred to regulate behaviour, others to a liberal version in which incentivized measures are preferred.

Practical dilemmas also emanate from these differences of view, as the threat of punitive measures may complicate incentivization or even make it impossible. One example of this might be the increased criminalization of travels to Syria and Iraq. The threat of prosecution or eviction may make it difficult for representatives of the Danish authorities to earn the trust of individuals returning from these countries, which is crucial to their engagement in volunteer exit and disengagement programmes, or the relatives of individuals who are considering travelling.

How important the prevention of radicalization and extremism is compared to other challenges and what price society should be willing to pay for it is a political choice.

Another political theme is how important the prevention of radicalization and extremism is compared to other challenges and what price society should be willing to pay for it. These questions have been raised in relation to Aarhus' dialogue with the board of the Grimhoj Mosque in Aarhus in an attempt to minimize the number of Danes travelling to Syria and Iraq, as well as in relation to Copenhagen's cooperation with the organization Islamisk Trossamfund, which runs the Wakf Mosque in Copenhagen. In both cases political voices have demanded that all contact be ended on the basis that the Mosque and the organization were both in conflict with fundamental Danish values, which were so important that the potential benefits of the contact did not justify the compromise it involved making. In November 2015 the municipal council of Copenhagen decided that all contact with Islamisk Trossamfund was to be ended. This meant that the efforts the prevent radicalization and extremism no longer involved engaging in dialogue with the organization.[43]

Finally, there are also political aspects to the efforts to prevent and counter extremism and radicalization that tie into a broader debate about the extent to which the welfare state should be allowed to intervene in the lives of citizens. This debate also affects issues such as smoking, substance abuse and drinking. One example is a heated debate in Denmark in 2015 about whether or not the state should be allowed to confine pregnant women with a substance abuse in order to protect (them against harming) the foetus, following the national Ethical Council recommending increased possibilities.[44] In relation to the prevention of radicalization and extremism, the dilemma became obvious in early 2015 when the media reported that in late 2014 a fifteen-year-old boy had been removed from the care of his father for fears that the latter was raising him to engage in war. The decision was criticized for being an example of the efforts to prevent radicalization going too far. [45]

THE RISK OF CREATING SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECIES

Another challenge is that the Danish approach is being criticized for creating self-fulfilling prophecies by stigmatizing or ostracizing parts of the population, thereby contributing to polarization and potentially to subsequent radicalization.

The increase in awareness and extended networks among both professionals and members of civil society who have been trained and/or encouraged to spot early signs of concern can be effective elements in any type of prevention, but they also carry with them the risk of being perceived as detailed surveillance networks monitoring everybody's actions everywhere or, perhaps more damagingly, particular parts of the population alone. "When this awareness network is expanded especially to target those identified as 'at-risk communities' – typically communities with a majority of Muslim immigrants – it is obvious that citizens of these communities may feel exposed to increased surveillance and selected targeting just because they are Muslim immigrants. […] In other words, outreach and awareness programs that are implemented in order to create safety and trust in society, as well as to prevent radicalization and extremism, risk the unintended consequence of creating a society of mistrust, with the additional danger of laying the ground for more radicalization rather than preventing it."[46]

A continued effort to delimit the concepts of radicalization and extremism, to dissociate them from specific parts of the population and to disseminate empirically based knowledge about them will contribute to minimizing the risk of creating or laying the ground for future radicalisation, but other potential side effects should not

be overlooked. The creation of mistrust and polarization is in itself a problem even if it does not cause radicalization.

LACK OF CONSENSUS, CLEAR DEFINITIONS AND EVALUATIONS

As indicated several times, the lack of clear definitions of radicalization and extremism continues to be a challenge. So too does the lack of any consensus over what the problem is and what the exact aim, or success criteria, of preventive efforts is. These challenges could most likely be minimized through a wholehearted effort to evaluate the effects of existing initiatives because such a process would necessarily establish common definitions and success criteria and simultaneously flush out any symbolic gestures. As in other countries, there have been evaluations of the implementation and the output of efforts in Denmark, but so far none of the actual outcomes and effects. The need for such evaluations of efforts is continuously emphasised by the political criticisms of the approach described earlier. As long as there are no evaluations to inform the debate, it will remain open to assumptions, gut feelings and opinions that are not necessarily conducive to the development of an effective approach.

The need for evaluations of the effects of preventive efforts is continuously emphasised by the political criticisms of the approach. As long as there are no evaluations to inform the debate, it will remain open to assumptions, gut feelings and opinions.

It will never be possible to conduct a quantitative evaluation of the preventive efforts by counting the number of individuals who have not become radicalized as a result of them or the number of terrorist plots that have not been started, but it would be possible to conduct a qualitative study of exit programmes and intervention activities. In doing so, it would be extremely important to emphasize the user perspective by interviewing those involved. It would also be possible to investigate the potential side-effects of outreach efforts in particular by actually interviewing those believed to be affected and subsequently comparing the results with the worst case scenario of not doing anything and the best case scenario of what is being done to assess whether the proportions, and the cost-benefit balance, are acceptable.

In this context, it is promising that when tenders for nineteen initiatives to strengthen the efforts to counter and prevent extremism and radicalization were made by the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing in late 2015, a tender was also made to evaluate fourteen of the initiatives, explicitly stipulating that the evaluation is to be of the results, not just the implementation.

One of the strengths of the Danish approach is its flexibility, the inclusion of different types of professionals who view challenges and specific cases in different ways and the fact that it leaves room for individual assessments. But the lack of clear definitions and success criteria means that providing room for individual professional assessments carries with it the risk of leaving room for the individual professional's prejudices or (mis)understandings as well.

In an interim evaluation of the National Board of Social Services' project for the Comprehensive Prevention of Extremism, the very broad definition of the target group has been criticized because the criteria for inclusion and exclusion are unclear. This is regarded as problematic because it may lead to the project (and who is to be included in it) being interpreted differently in different municipalities: "As a citizen in Denmark one must be treated equally regardless of which municipality one happens to be residing in. […] This is particularly important in an area that may potentially have legal consequences, e.g. in relation to a trial where a previous registration of a citizen as in danger of radicalization may be seen as decisive".[47] However, it could also be argued that a standardization of criteria would increase the likelihood of such registrations being accepted as relevant in the legal system.

Another criticism that has been raised of the lack of standards is that "…the diversity of professional groups involved in assessing individual cases may also cause problems, because what counts as 'radicalisation' or 'signs of radicalisation' on the one hand and protective 'resilience factors' on the other hand – who counts as 'vulnerable individuals' – varies considerably across professional groups (Jakobsen and Jensen 2011) […] This constitutes a risk of potential under-reaction (false negatives) and over-reaction (false positives)".[48] In sum, the flexibility and multi-disciplinarily of the approach constitute both a strength and a weakness.

In the absence of clear definitions and objectively observable indicators of radicalization and extremism, the inclusion of shared procedures for assessment, not least in the Info-houses, could be a step in the direction of minimizing the risk of, for example, individual understandings or concrete events, such as attacks, affecting assessments. This would also to some extent alleviate the substantial pressure of responsibility placed on the professionals involved.

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

As has hopefully become clear, the Danish approach relies heavily on cooperation and coordination between different sectors, authorities, institutions and individuals. Such cooperation can be challenging, not least when it is not entirely clear who has the final coordinating responsibility, for example, in relation to transition from one system to another, such as prison to municipality. Following the Copenhagen shootings in February 2015, this challenge has been addressed both nationally and locally,[49] and improvements will undoubtedly be seen, but it is unlikely that all the challenges will ever be completely overcome. Cooperation, particularly between different agencies and between agencies and other actors, will always be challenging. This is in no way unique to this area and should not be seen as an argument for abandoning cooperation.

Although the challenges may never be completely overcome, experience indicates that they can be minimized. In the early years of the development of the Danish approach, there was another challenge to cooperation, namely that not all parties felt comfortable in becoming involved. The frontline staff and other local actors who were tasked with keeping an eye out for concerns and reporting them to the Info-houses and/or the authorities were often sceptical and worried that their actions would cast them as informants, this damaging the relations of trust they had built up and needed to maintain in order to do their jobs, or that their obligation to protect and help the young people, for example, would conflict with and be subordinated to the obligation to assist the authorities in protecting society against the same young people.

The general impression among the central actors seems to be that such resistance has decreased over the years, not least because the Copenhagen shootings in February 2015 and the fact that at least 125 Danes have travelled to Syria and/or Iraq, where at least a fifth have died,[50] has led to a consensus that something has to be done. One civil servant, who has been involved in these efforts since the beginning, described the change by painting the picture of civil servants, who in the early years contacted frontline staff to get them on board, being met with rotten tomatoes, whereas today the frontline staff ask for assistance.[51]

Although many of the frontline staff may have accepted the need for them to keep an eye out, some are still uncertain about exactly what they are to keep an eye out for. Following the Copenhagen shootings and the increased focus on prisons, the Danish association for prison staff conducted a survey of its representatives in all prisons. 70% indicated that the staff needed more concrete knowledge, that is, "knowledge about which signals I am to be particularly aware of" and "knowledge about why and how someone chooses to become extreme. If we do not know what is normal, how are we to recognize the abnormal?"[52]

Similarly, social educators have called for knowledge, methods and guidelines. In November 2015 the National Federation of Social Educators published a report[53] based on a survey among its members. 24% of respondents indicated that radicalization was or had been a theme in their work. Of these, more than half indicated that their workplaces did not have guidelines for addressing this theme, and almost half indicated that they needed more knowledge and supervision.

The calls are apparently being heard. The tenders mentioned above for nineteen initiatives to strengthen efforts to counter and prevent extremism and radicalization, offered by the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing in late 2015, included several initiatives aimed at qualifying current and future professionals.

In addition to more information about radicalization and extremism the frontline staff might also benefit from more information about the Danish approach and its structures. In an ideal world all would be familiar with the Info-houses and contact them if in doubt.

In an ideal world all would be familiar with the Info-houses and contact them if in doubt,

As already noted, the two main actors involved on the national level are the Danish Security and Intelligence Service, particularly the Centre for Prevention, which primarily focuses on security threats and aims to prevent illegal activities by engaging in all levels of the prevention pyramid, and the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing and its Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI), which has a broader focus on preventing extremism and radicalization, including a focus on preventing the more social aspects.

Over the years, the Centre for Prevention and the Danish Security and Intelligence Service have remained organizationally in place, whereas the other leg of the approach has been subject to more structural changes. As mentioned, the change in government in 2015 meant that the policy-oriented division in the ministry and the

practice-oriented division in the National Board of Social Services were moved respectively to the new Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing and the new Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI).

This meant that the practice-oriented division was removed from day-to-day cooperation and coordination with a division working on the prevention of gang-related crimes. Considering the increasing relevance of the intersections between terrorism and other types of crime,[54] the removal is somewhat puzzling. This was explicitly mentioned in the evaluation of the authorities' efforts in relation to the Copenhagen shootings, and closer coordination between the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's efforts against radicalization and the Danish National Police's efforts against gangs was recommended.[55] This is not a new idea: from the very beginning the Danish Prison and Probation Service has been coordinating its efforts regarding radicalization and gangs respectively, not least in their development of exit programmes. It would make sense to have such coordination reflected in both legs of the efforts.

CIVIL SOCIETY

There is increasing ambition to include civil society, not least in the shape of NGOs and private actors, in the efforts to prevent and counter radicalization and extremism in Denmark. One of the reasons for this ambition is the fact that other countries, particularly the US, rely much more on such actors. The question, however, is whether this is necessary in Denmark. In the US the inclusion of private actors as providers of social services but also of security services is widespread and an integral part of the system but in Denmark the entire system is built around such services being provided by the public sector. In addition to the questionable relevance of adopting elements of an approach that is substantially different from the Danish, there are potential risks associated with an increased mobilization of civil society.

First of all, such mobilization could in time compromise the professionalization which has thus far characterized the Danish approach and increase the risk of involving and legitimizing actors with unknown agendas, leading to problems that other countries such as the UK have previously encountered.[56] The conflicts, mentioned above, around cooperation between preventive efforts in Copenhagen and Aarhus and religious communities are examples of dilemmas related to the legitimization of actors with agendas which not everybody will agree are worth legitimizing in an attempt to prevent radicalization and extremism. Another dilemma could arise from actors with uncontroversial agendas compromising those in an attempt to reframe them as relevant to the prevention of radicalization and extremism to gain access to funding and other resources. A third dilemma could arise from, for example, programmes being designed by private providers who may be more motivated by income and therefore have an interest in boosting rather than minimizing the threat.

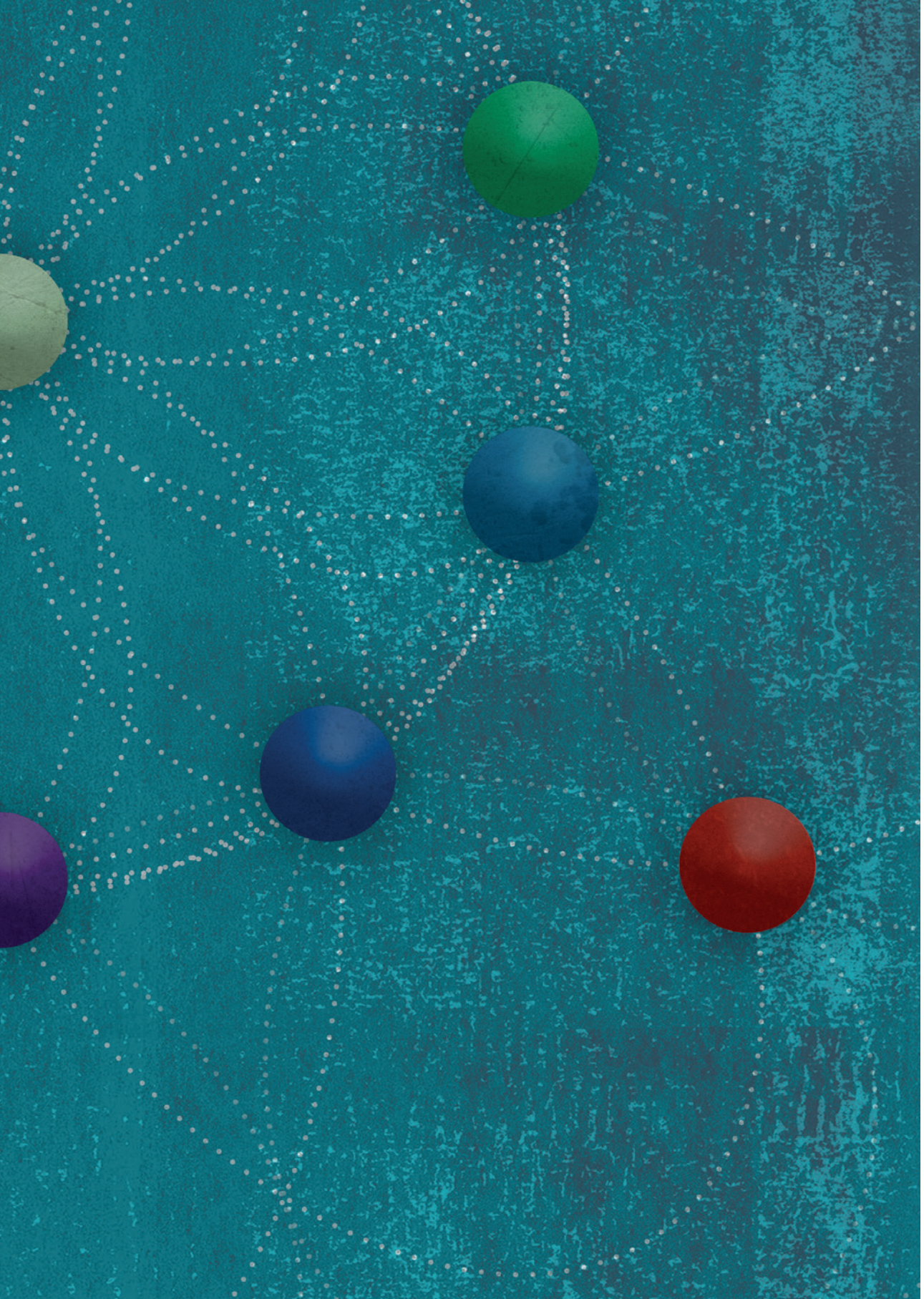
Mobilization of civil society could in time compromise the professionalization which has thus far characterized the Danish approach and increase the risk of involving and legitimizing actors with unknown agendas.

One of the greatest strengths of the Danish approach has always been the professionalization and institutionalisation of its efforts, which so far has meant that it has avoided scandals comparable to those seen in, for example, the UK where the outsourcing of tasks has led to funding going to highly problematic actors.[57]

The previously mentioned challenges arising from the lack of consensus, clear definitions and success criteria may be exaggerated by the inclusion of non-professional actors. As long as there is so much room for individual (mis)understandings, including even more actors under less strict control would be a risky path to follow.

The inclusion of civil society is often justified by reference to the fact that the authorities cannot be present everywhere and that there are individuals and groups that they cannot reach. The question is whether the need to attempt to reach those who cannot be reached through already included actors trumps any potential risks including that they are reached with something only marginally less controversial.

To answer this question, a debate about proportions is needed. A debate that addresses the importance of preventing radicalization and extremism and the importance of preventing terrorism compared to the importance of other issues.



NOTES

1 Sheikh, Aarhus: Skamrost model har huller [Aarhus: Praised model has flaws], 2015, Politiken.

2 Kinder, Denmark: Isis Fighters Warmly Welcomed Home by the Psychiatrists, 2014, International Business Times.

3 This is further explained below.

4 For more on this see, e.g., Gemmerli, Radicalisation. A politically contrived concept, 2015; Gemmerli, Online-radikalisering: en rundrejse i forskningslitteraturen. Litteraturreview af definitioner og tilgange inden for online-radikalisering, 2014:08; Gemmerli, Online-radikalisering: et uafklaret begreb. Litteraturreview af definitioner og tilgange inden for online-radikalisering, 2014:07; Gemmerli, Ny definition af radikalisering - en ligning med mange ubekendte, 2014.

5 The author is very grateful to the professionals who have taken the time to contribute and to research colleagues who have taken the time to review and discuss draft versions of the present report

6 The Government of Denmark, Prevention of radicalisation and extremism, 2014, p. 5.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Rigspolitiet, Evaluering af myndighedsindsatsen forud for og i forbindelse med terrorhændelserne den 14. og 15. februar 2015 i København, 2015.

10 The Government of Denmark, Et stærkt værn mod terror. 12 nye tiltag mod terror, 2015.

11 Ibid.

12 The Government of Denmark, A common and safe future. An action plan to prevent extremist views and radicalisation among young people, 2009.

13 Ibid.

14 Lindekilde, Refocusing the Danish counter-radicalisation efforts: an analysis of the (problematic) logic and practice of individual de-radicalisation interventions, 2015, p. 237.

15 For a comparison of the two action plans, see Lindekilde, Dansk forebyggelse af ekstremisme og radikalisering 2009-2014, 2015

16 See e.g. COWI, Midtvejsevaluering af regeringens handlingsplan 'En fælles og tryg fremtid', 2011.

17 For an interesting take on the role of trust in Scandinavian welfare states, see Bergh, A. and Bjørnskov, C., Historical Trust Levels Predict the Current Size of the Welfare State, 2011, pp. 1–19. The general trust in Denmark is also mirrored in the fact that the country continuously ranks as one of the least corrupt countries in the world; see www.transparency.org

18 For the purpose of clarity the figure is a simplified presentation. In practice there is contact between most actors, e.g. between the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration and the municipalities and between the Danish Prison and Probation Service and the municipalities. Other actors, including ministries, also play roles.

19 The series includes five handbooks: Relational work and mentoring; Antidemocratic and extremist environments; Methods for working with radicalization; Local strategies; 14 examples from working with radicalization.

20 Often referred to as the Aarhus model.

21 Lindekilde, Refocusing the Danish counter-radicalisation efforts, 2015, p. 235.

22 One could argue that such cost-benefit analyses are more in the logic of a competition state than of a welfare state

23 The Government of Denmark, Prevention of radicalisation and extremism, 2014, p. 5.

24 Andersen and Moe, Responding to Radicalization, 2015, pp. 78-79.

25 The model is occasionally depicted on the side or with more layers.

26 For the purpose of clarity, the figure is a simplified presentation. In practice, different actors work with different variations of the model reflecting their focus and area of responsibility. The Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration, for example, works with an understanding in which the general layer includes everybody, the specific layer includes individuals at risk of radicalization, and the targeted layer includes individuals in extremist environments. This version reflects the understanding that individuals assessed as violent extremists are not within the agency's area of responsibility but rather that of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service.

27 See e.g. Anbefalinger fra ekspertgruppen til forebyggelse af radikalisering, Færre radikaliserede gennem en effektiv og sammenhængende indsats, København Kommune 2015. Abridged version available in English: Less radicalisation through an effective and coherent effort. Recommendations of the expert group to prevent radicalization

28 For more on this see e.g. Gemmerli, The fight against online radicalisation starts offline. Extremism on the internet, 2015.

29 For the purpose of clarity, the figure is a simplified presentation aimed at illustrating how, ideally, concrete concerns about an individual or group are assessed in the same few centres of excellence then refer the individual or group to the most suitable initiative offered by the actors involved, and how learning and advice circulates between practitioners and theoreticians, as well as between national, regional and local level.

30 Danish Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, tender offer, September 30, 2015, accessed October 30, 2015. http://www.uibm.dk/puljer/12-puljeansogninger/55-ny-pulje-skal-forebygge-radikalisering-gennem-etablering-af-national-hotline

31 Politiets Efterretningstjeneste, Årlig redegørelse 2014, 2015, p. 15.

32 Politiets Efterretningstjeneste, Årlig redegørelse 2014, 2015.

33 The author was a member of the group.

34 Anbefalinger fra ekspertgruppen til forebyggelse af radikalisering, Færre radikaliserede gennem en effektiv og sammenhængende indsats, 2015, (Abridged version available in English).

35 Nissen, København fordobler indsats mod radikalisering, 2015, Berlingske.

36 The author has taught on these courses since 2010.

37 See e.g. Government of Denmark, Prevention of radicalisation and extremism, 2014, and Københavns Kommune, Anbefalinger fra ekspertgruppen til forebyggelse af radikalisering, Færre radikaliserede gennem en effektiv og sammenhængende indsats, 2015 (Abridged version available in English).

38 Lindekilde, L. Dansk forebyggelse af ekstremisme og radikalisering 2009-2014, 2015.

39 Some of the most widely criticized examples can be found in Silber, M. D. and A. Bhatt, Radicalization in the West (2007).

40 Lindekilde, L., Refocusing Danish counter-radicalisation efforts: an analysis of the (problematic) logic and practice of individual de-radicalisation interventions, 2015, p. 235.

41 For more on this see, e.g., Kundnani, Radicalisation: the journey of a concept, 2015; Sedgwick, The concept of radicalisation as a source of confusion, 2010; Githens-Mazer and Lambert, Why conventional wisdom on radicalisation fails: the persistence of a failed discourse, 2010; Patel, Rethinking Radicalization, 2011.

42 Lindekilde, Refocusing the Danish counter-radicalisation efforts: an analysis of the (problematic) logic and practice of individual de-radicalisation interventions, 2015, p. 236.

43 Dahlgaard and Jensen, København vil droppe samarbejde med Islamisk Trossamfund, 2015.

44 See e.g. DR, Flertal i Etisk Råd åbner for tvangsbehandling af gravide misbrugere, 2015.

45 O. Borg, Dreng tvangsfjernet af frygt for radikalisering, 2015, Jyllands-Posten.

46 Andersen and Moe, Responding to Radicalization, 2015, p. 82.

47 Oxford Research, Midtvejsevaluering af 'Helhedsorienteret forebyggelse af ekstremisme'- Mentor-, forældre- og ung-til-ung-dialogindsats, 2014, p. 29.

48 Lindekilde, Refocusing the Danish counter-radicalisation efforts: an analysis of the (problematic) logic and practice of individual de-radicalisation interventions, 2015, pp. 230-231.

49 See e.g. Rigspolitiet, Evaluering af myndighedsindsatsen forud for og i forbindelse med terrorhændelserne den 14. og 15. februar 2015 i København, 2015, and Københavns Kommune, Anbefalinger fra ekspertgruppen til forebyggelse af radikalisering: Færre radikaliserede gennem en effektiv og sammenhængende indsats, 2015 (abridged version available in English).

50 According to the Danish Security and Intelligence Agency's threat evaluation, October 23, 2015.

51 Personal conversation, October 23, 2015.

52 Fængselsfunktionæren, magazine no. 4, 2015, p. 4.

53 Socialpædagogerne, Antiradikalisering: Socialpædagogers viden, erfaringer og håndtering, 2015.

54 For more on this see e.g. Hemmingsen, A., Crone, M. and Witt, J. P., The Politicisation of Violence: An Alternative to Radicalisation. Crime and terrorism, 2015; Hemmingsen, A., Understanding and prevention after the Copenhagen shootings. Trends in recent attacks in the West, 2015.

55 Rigspolitiet [Danish National Police], Evaluering af myndighedsindsatsen forud for og i forbindelse med terrorhændelserne den 14. og 15. februar 2015 i København, 2015, p. 95.

56 HM Government, Prevent Strategy, 2011.

57 Ibid.

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