



Towards a Cohesive Society



Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism

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Tekijät: (toimielimestä, toimielimen nimi, puheenjohtaja, sihteeri) Asiantuntijaryhmä, puheenjohtaja Tarja Mankkinen, sihteeri Tiina Piipponen

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Tiivistelmä: Kansallisen toimenpideohjelman väkivaltaisen ekstremismin ennalta ehkäisemiseksi tavoitteena on tunnistaa ja ennaltaehkäistä väkivaltaisia tekoja, joiden motiivina on edistää ekstremistisiä aatteita tai ideologioita. Ohjelma on laadittu ja se toimeenpannaan osana valtioneuvoston periaatepäätöstä sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelmasta. Toimenpideohjelmassa väkivaltaisella ekstremismillä tarkoitetaan radikaalia ideologiaa, oppia tai ääriajattelua, jonka keskeisenä sisältönä on luoda demokraattisten periaatteiden vastaisiin, perusteellisiin yhteiskunnallisiin muutoksiin tähtääviä laittomia toimia ja politiikkaa. Ekstremistisellä väkivallalla toimenpideohjelmassa tarkoitetaan ekstremistisestä maailmankuvasta motivoitunutta laitonta toimintaa tai väkivaltaa, joka voi äärimmillään johtaa jopa terrorismiin.

Toimenpideohjelmassa esitetään arvioita väkivaltaisen ekstremismin tilanteesta laajemmin Euroopassa ja Pohjoismaissa. Suomen osalta arvioidaan, että ekstremistinen väkivalta ei muodosta uhkaa valtion rakenteille. Väkivaltaiset, radikaali-islamistiset näkemykset eivät Suomessa liity yhteisöihin vaan ne ovat yksilötason ongelmia. Ääri-vasemmistolainen ja anarkistinen liikehdintä on Suomessa ollut varsin maltillista ja rauhanomaista verrattuna muuhun Eurooppaan. Kuitenkin vuoden sisällä on tapahtunut useita tuhopolttoja ja sabotaasiluonteisia vahingontekoja, joista anarkistit ovat ottaneet julkisesti vastuun.

Väkivaltaisen ekstremismin ennaltaehkäisyn kannalta on tärkeää vähentää erityisesti nuorten syrjäytymistä yhteiskunnasta, yhteiskunnan jakaantumista ja alueellista segregaatiota. Kansainvälistyminen lisää ennaltaehkäisyn haasteita, sillä ääriliikkeet saavat vaikutteita ulkomailta. Kansainvälinen kehitys voi myös radikalisoita kotimaisia ääriliikkeitä. Ohjelma sisältää seuraavat toimenpiteet väkivaltaisen ekstremismin ennaltaehkäisemiseksi:

- Asetetaan kansallinen yhteistyöverkosto väkivaltaisen ekstremismin ennaltaehkäisemiseksi sekä paikalliset yhteistyöverkostot Helsinkiin, Turkuun, Tampereelle ja Ouluun

- Vahvistetaan nuorten luottamusta demokraattiseen järjestelmään ja sen kautta vaikuttamiseen edistämällä demokratiaan liittyvää keskustelua nuorten keskuudessa, vahvistamalla nuorten osallisuutta sekä valitsemalla vuosittain nuori demokratialähteiläs
- Pilotoidaan toimimallia, joka mahdollistaa nopean pääsyn terveydenhuollon piiriin silloin, kun arvioidaan että yksilöllä on suuri riski toteuttaa väkivaltaisia tekoja muita ihmisiä kohtaan
- Lisätään järjestöjen tuottamia matalan kynnyksen palveluja, esimerkiksi mentorointia, jotka edistävät yksilön irtaantumista väkivaltaisista ajatuksista ja väkivaltaisiin tekoihin liittyvistä fantasioista
- Järjestämällä aiheita käsitteleviä yhteistyötapaamisia median kanssa
- Vahvistamalla nettipoliisitoimintaa
- Laatomalla ennaltaehkäisyn tueksi puolivuositain väkivaltaisen ekstremismin tilannekatsaus
- Kokoamalla väkivaltaisen ekstremismin ennaltaehkäisyn hyvät käytännöt ja muu käytännön työtä tukeva aineisto sähköiseksi työkalupakiksi sekä
- Raportoimalla toiminnasta vuosittain sekä liittämällä raporttiin suosituksia jatkotyössä huomioon otettavaksi Toimenpideohjelmaan on liitetty tunnusluvut, joiden avulla seurataan väkivaltaisen ekstremismin taustalla vaikuttavia tekijöitä ja tilanteen kehitystä.

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Abstract: The National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism seeks to identify and prevent violent acts aimed at promoting extremist ideas or ideologies. The Action Plan has been prepared and will be implemented as part of the Government Resolution on the Internal Security Programme. In this Action Plan, violent extremism refers to a radical ideology, doctrine or extreme idea, devoted to fomenting anti-democratic, illegal acts and policies aimed at achieving fundamental social change. In the Action Plan, extremist violence refers to illegal activities or violence motivated by an extremist view of the world that can, at its most extreme, also lead to terrorism.

The Action Plan presents evaluations of the wider state of violent extremism in Europe and the Nordic countries. In Finland, extremist violence is not considered a threat to state structures. Violent, radical Islamic views are not connected with communities in Finland, but are problematic at individual level. Left-wing extremist and anarchic movements in Finland have been fairly moderate and peaceful compared to other European countries. However, a number of arson attacks and other, sabotage-like acts of vandalism were carried out last year, for which anarchists have publicly claimed responsibility.

To prevent violent extremism, it is important to reduce social exclusion among young people in particular, along with social polarisation and regional segregation. Internationalisation adds to the challenges of prevention, as extremist movements are influenced by other countries. International developments may also radicalise domestic extremist movements. The Action Plan contains the following measures to prevent violent extremism:

- Establishing a National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and regional cooperation networks in Helsinki, Turku, Tampere and Oulu

- Strengthening young people's trust in the democratic system and using it to make a difference by promoting democracy-related discussions among young people, enhancing young people's participation, and selecting a Young Democracy Ambassador every year
- Piloting an operating model that enables fast access to health care services for individuals assessed as being at high risk of committing violent acts against other people
- Increasing low-threshold services provided by organisations, such as mentoring, to support an individual in relinquishing violent ideas and fantasies about acts of violence
- Organising meetings with the media
- Strengthening Internet policing
- Preparing a biannual situation overview on violent extremism, in support of preventive work
- Collating an electronic toolbox of good practices and other material supporting practical work in preventing violent extremism
- Producing an annual report on activities, including recommendations for further action. The Action Plan includes key indicators for monitoring the background factors affecting violent extremism and the development of the situation

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To the reader

Finland is a relatively safe country. Key contributors to the safety of Finnish society include strong social cohesion, and trust in institutions and other people. Thanks to its strong social cohesion, Finland has been a harmonious country. People living in Finland have had a sense of belonging, working not only for their personal benefit, but also for the common good. This may be part of the reason why Finland has been placed among the world's top countries in various welfare comparisons.

Social change has been rapid in the last few decades. Urbanisation has continued and the population has become more diverse. Generation gaps have become wider, and increased immigration has significantly changed the face of larger cities in particular. For some of the population, globalisation has created significant new opportunities, while others may feel left on the sidelines in this fast-changing society. Citizens feel that social differences have become greater. The Government has therefore set itself the goal of narrowing the income, welfare and health gaps. Polarisation within a society can form a basis for extremist ideas. International examples show that extremist thinking can also lead to violent acts against society and other individuals.

Violence and terrorism justified by extremist ideologies or ideas are not new phenomena. Throughout history, there have been individuals, groups or states that have tried to influence politics or society through the threat or use of violence. For decades, the threat of terrorism has been a part of everyday life in many European countries. In Finland, the threat of violence posed by extremism has been minimal. However, Finland has not been entirely untouched by this phenomenon. There have been two school attacks in Finland, in which the offenders and motives were very different from homicides in general.

In the last twenty years, globalisation and the development of communication technology have meant that, for better or worse, Finland has become more closely entwined in the international community. Violent extremism is an international phenomenon. Preventive programmes similar to the one under discussion have already been prepared in many Member States of the European Union. Preventing and combating violent extremism is a European-Union-wide challenge; responsibility for preventive action lies with each Member State.

The objective of this Action Plan is to prevent violent extremism at the earliest possible stage, before it leads to acts of violence. Effective prevention requires extensive cooperation between the authorities and civic society. Prevention is important for the sake of individuals and the whole of society. Participating in the activities of extremist groups that commit violent acts, or promoting these ideologies through violence may, in the life of an individual, lead to a situation where returning to a normal life proves difficult, if not impossible. A situation where individuals and institutions live in fear is dangerous in terms of society's overall development. This could lead to the use of social resources for security purposes rather than enhancing society's well-being and competitiveness.

Success in preventing violent extremism is important both to society at large and to each individual member of society. This Action Plan provides a solid basis for cooperation between various authorities and representatives of civic society in the prevention of violent extremism.

Helsinki, 31 May 2012



Päivi Räsänen

Minister of the Interior



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1. Introduction

In its programme of 17 June 2012, Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government decided on the preparation of the third Internal Security Programme. In accordance with the Government Programme, the core content of the Internal Security Programme consists of measures to help prevent and resolve key security issues in terms of their influence on everyday life. The Government Programme requires improved prevention of both violence and violent radicalisation.

On 3 November 2011, mandated by the Government Programme Resolution, the Government set up a project for the preparation of the Internal Security Programme. As part of this Resolution, an expert group was appointed to draw up a Programme of Measures for the prevention of violent extremism. Such a Programme of Measures will be implemented as part of the Internal Security Programme.

For their part, measures determined in the Internal Security Programme will promote the prevention of violent extremism. The Programme of Measures to prevent violent extremism will complement the Internal Security Programme.

Since 2005, several European countries have prepared programmes to combat violent extremism. At the moment, the contents of these programmes are being reviewed to take better account of extreme right and left-wing groups that use violence. In Finland, the second Internal Security Programme included some preventive measures against violent radicalisation, but this is the first Programme of Measures to comprise extensive measures for the prevention of violent extremism. It also covers school killings and similar acts of violence.

The objective of the Programme is to prevent all violence predicated on ideas and ideologies. The Programme of Measures to prevent violent extremism will be complemented by the Counterterrorism Strategy mandated by the Government in 2010. It will also be updated in accordance with the resolutions of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government Programme.

Violent extremism does not necessarily lead to terrorism. As a rule, preventive measures are public, and implemented by representatives of civic society as well as the authorities. The Counterterrorism Strategy focuses on uncovering and preventing terrorist activities. It also ensures that the authorities remain fully functional in the case of a terrorist attack. In Finland, the main responsibility for counterterrorism lies with the police. When the nature of the assignment is cast as crime prevention, the prevention of violent extremism becomes counterterrorism under the responsibility of the law enforcement authorities.

Extensive measures for improving security have been included in the Internal Security Programme. Some of these measures, such as addressing bullying at schools, improving the safety of young people and immigrants, preventing serious violence, and improving trust and participation, are also central to the prevention of violent extremism.



2. Objective of the Action Plan

The Government Programme of 17 June 2011 set out its internal security objective as follows:

The objective of internal security is to make Finland the safest country in Europe, one in which people feel that they live in a fair and equal society regardless of how they identify themselves

The Programme of Measures for preventing violent extremism seeks to identify and prevent violent acts aimed at promoting extremist ideas or ideologies. Preventing violent extremism is a key part of strengthening our democratic system. The Programme of Measures for preventing violent extremism is being implemented extensively by the authorities, organisations and communities.

3. Violent extremism and its prevention

3.1 Violent extremism

No single, clear, internationally accepted definition of violent extremism exists. In this Action Plan, extremism refers to a radical ideology, doctrine or extreme idea, devoted to fomenting anti-democratic, illegal acts and policies aimed at achieving fundamental social change. Extremist violence refers to illegal activities and violence motivated by an extremist view of the world that can, at its most extreme, also lead to terrorism.¹

Radical ideas in themselves do not constitute extremism. Radicalism can be a positive, developmental and socially progressive force. Extremist activities, on the other hand, are in principle totalitarian, anti-democratic, extra-parliamentary, and often illegal. Non-violent extremism that refrains from violence is not, in itself, objectionable, although in terms of social cohesion extreme thinking arising from intolerance and hate is a cause for concern.

¹ Terrorist offences are described in Chapter 34 a of the Criminal Code of Finland.

The individual radicalisation process² may take years or can be very rapid. Extremism is characterised by a clear-cut, black-and-white image of the opposition, based on which individual issues and people are viewed as representatives of a larger group or unit. Violence springing from extremist ideas can be targeted at ethnic, sexual, or religious minorities, specific occupational groups, or anyone the extremist considers wrong-thinking and thus the enemy. Extremism can motivate acts of vandalism, or threatening or intimidating behaviour, which damage society and disrupt its functioning.

Very few of those who have adopted extremist thinking, and even of those who approve of the use of fear and violence, ever attempt serious acts of violence against other people. Still, just one person drifting into extremism can lead to extreme, and, in terms of society and its citizens, very serious acts of violence.

Considerable research has been performed on violent extremism and the recruitment process of extreme movements. However, researchers have been unable to identify any particular reason for the radicalisation of an individual to the point where he or she is willing to use violence against other people. Identifying, preventing, counteracting and researching the phenomenon are challenging, since it ultimately concerns an internal change within a person.

Possible causes of violent extremism may include issues related to a young person's development, such as seeking an identity and direction in life. Experiences of discrimination, racism, or feelings of exclusion may render a young person more vulnerable to extremist messages. When a person begins to act in order to rectify his or her exclusion and seeks a new direction in life, he or she becomes receptive to different ideas and influences. For a young person feeling excluded from society, an extreme movement may be the first community to offer appreciation and status, whether in or outside the movement. According to research, social and communal reasons are key factors in seeking out such groups; ideological commitments follow after actual membership has been established. Extremism offers a strong, full identity and the social support of a community that thinks alike. Common thinking within a group creates a feeling of "we" who are in the right, while the rest of society is in the wrong. Social support and group dynamics often play key roles in the radicalisation process. This tight-knit community of people who think alike can also be formed in the virtual world.

Radicalisation can be motivated by isolated events that provide the initial spark for extremist thinking, or encourage it further. Experiences that create vulnerability to radicalisation are often related to injustice and discrimination. Identifying with the suffering or humiliation of others through the media or Internet may also enhance the attraction of extremist messages.

Extremist movements actively recruit new members. Young people in search of an identity, and who feel frustrated and vulnerable, can be susceptible to these messages. Extremist movements also target their recruitment activities at such youngsters. Radicalisation-motivating topics, such as experiences of injustice and the image of a common enemy, are used in the recruitment process. People often join extremist movements through someone they know. The Internet is increasingly important as a tool for recruitment and spreading extremist propaganda.

² In the Action Plan, radicalisation refers to violent, extremist radicalisation.

3.2 Preventing violent extremism

Responsibility for preventing violent extremism lies with the whole of society and all authorities who, as part of their work, are capable of identifying and preventing the early signs of violent extremism. Preventing violent extremism also requires the involvement of civic society. Violent extremism poses a threat to the democratic system and the rights established under the constitution, such as being treated equally, the right to life, personal freedom and integrity.

Feelings of hatred provide a foundation for extremist thinking. The key to preventing extremist thinking fuelled by hatred is trust in a functional democratic system, where every citizen has the opportunity to influence issues that he or she perceives as important. Social exclusion, lack of prospects, and feelings of marginalisation, all create a breeding ground for extremist thinking. Measures implemented extensively within society to prevent social exclusion are vital to preventing violent extremism. In particular, measures taken to prevent the social exclusion of young people, by reducing the number of school drop-outs, preventing unemployment, and promoting successful integration, education and language skills, enhance social cohesion and prevent extremist thinking.

In addition, prevention of violent extremism requires targeted measures which can have an impact on the lure of extremist ideologies and ideas, and identify, help and support those at high risk of committing violent extremist actions.

4. Violent extremism in Europe and the Nordic countries

4.1 Violent extremism in EU Member States

Every year, Europol, the European Police Office, publishes a report on the threat posed by terrorism in the European Union.³ In this report, extremist thinking and the terrorism it inspires are divided into five categories: religious, separatist, left-wing extremist and anarchist, right-wing extremist, and single-issue terrorism, such as the radical animal rights movement.

³ EUROPOL TE-SAT 2012. *EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*. Every year, based on contributions of the Member States, the European law enforcement agency (Europol) collates a situation and trend report describing the current state of terrorism and extremist movements, and the threat they pose. The situation and trend report is collated on the basis of contributions from the EU Member States and third countries, along with Interpol and Eurojust. This so-called TE-SAT Report provides law enforcement authorities, decision makers and the general public with a broad understanding of the status and development of terrorism and extremism in Europe.



The EU Member States' law enforcement authorities quantify the greatest threat facing Europe as terrorism inspired by radical Islamic and the al-Qaida ideology, whose objective has generally been large-scale attacks claiming several victims. Within the European Union, 122 people were arrested in 2011 for crimes related to radical Islamic terrorism. A considerable number of these were either members of a small autonomous extremist group or radicalised individuals acting independently. No radical Islamic terrorist attacks were carried out in Europe during 2011.⁴ The year before that, there were three such attacks or attempts. Two took place in Denmark and one in Sweden. Europol estimates that the threat against the Nordic countries and Germany grew during 2011.

Radical Islamic propaganda instigating violence is actively distributed on the Internet. Propaganda on the Internet and discussion forums can have a strong contributory impact on the radicalisation of a vulnerable individual. Such material is abundant and easily available in several European languages. Violent messages are specifically targeted at radicalising and recruiting young Western people. In terms of prevention, it is a cause for concern that propaganda is encouraging people to act and strike alone, without the support of a group.

In terms of quantity, separatist extremist thinking springing from nationalism and ethnicity is the largest form of extremism behind terrorist attacks within the European Union. In 2011, 110 separatist-motivated terrorist attacks and 247 arrests were reported. Separatist extremism and the threat of it mainly concerns France, Spain and Ireland; 235 such arrests took place in these countries.

Within the European Union, 37 terrorist attacks related to left-wing or anarchic extremism were carried out in 2011. The number of attacks was down slightly on 2010, but the number of arrests made was higher than the previous year. Most of the 42 people arrested in 2011 belonged, or were suspected of belonging to, an organisation categorised as terrorist. The activities of anarchic groups have become more violent and attacks have been aimed at government operators. In 2010, left-wing extremist and anarchic terrorism claimed six lives in Greece.

Anarchic groups are most active in Greece, Italy and Spain. Their operations are increasingly international and there is mutual solidarity between anarchic groups in different countries. In 2011, several letter bombs were sent across Europe. An Italian anarchic group, FAI, claimed responsibility for these attacks, stating that the bombs represented a display of solidarity for a Greek group of anarchists. The economic downturn has also increased anarchic movements in other Member States of the European Union, but these groups have so far mainly aimed to cause financial damage and to gain publicity for their activities. Violence by Northern European anarchic groups has traditionally been targeted at right-wing extremist groups and individuals. In recent years, confrontations between right-wing extremist and anarchic groups have become more severe and violent.

In 2011, a terrorist attack motivated by right-wing extremism took place within the European Union⁵, with five people being arrested for crimes related to such terrorism.⁶ According to a Europol estimate, terrorism motivated by right-wing politics does not pose a threat to the state structures of European Union Member States. However, the activities of such groups may be detrimental to the social cohesion of local communities. Violence by right-wing extremists is displayed in statistics as hate crimes against ethnic, religious and sexual minorities. Violence is also evident in confrontations with left-wing extremists or anarchists, the so-called anti-fascist groups. Left-wing extremist activities are becoming more professional and active in terms of online propaganda.

⁴ Two US soldiers were killed in a religiously motivated attack at Frankfurt Airport in March 2011. However, this was not considered a terrorist attack under German legislation.

⁵ Arson attack in Spain.

⁶ Arrests were made in Germany and were related to a politically motivated series of murders during 2001–2007.

The serious terrorist attacks of July 2011 in Norway were not motivated by traditional, National-Socialism-idolising right-wing extremism. The perpetrator's world view has been characterised as an individual and unique mix of extreme conservatism, xenophobia, and anti-"Islamisation" of Europe. The events in Norway can nevertheless be viewed as reflecting a certain trend. Right-wing extremist groups in Europe are seeking new supporters by profiling themselves as the opponents of "Islamisation" of the continent. Although these types of groups send a radical message based on intolerance, many European countries have decided to treat them as legal civic actors.⁷

The main responsibility for the prevention of radicalisation in the European Union lies with the Member States. Radicalisation is being prevented at national, regional and local level. It is the task of the European Union to promote the exchange of information and experiences regarding the prevention of violent extremism between Member States. The European Union Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism was completed in 2005.⁸ In their preventive strategy, the European Union Member States have committed themselves to preventing recruitment to terrorism, and to ensuring that the voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism. Other objectives include promoting security, justice, democracy and equal opportunities for all. In 2009, the European Council endorsed a multiannual programme of legislative and internal affairs for the period 2010–2014. The so-called Stockholm Programme confirms the significance of preventing radicalisation, as part of counterterrorist efforts. The European Union's Internal Security Strategy of 2010 emphasises the importance of prevention. In the autumn of 2011, together with the Committee of the Regions, the Commission launched the Europe-wide Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). The purpose of this network is to spread awareness of radicalisation and provide information on the production of counter-narratives, alongside communications that challenge the terrorists' narrative.

⁷ For instance, the English Defence League, which is permitted and legal, but conveys hard-line, confrontational messages.

⁸ 14781/1/05. The wording of the strategy has since then been revised to no longer stigmatise a specific group of people or religion.

4.2 Violent extremism in the Nordic Countries

4.2.1 Sweden

The Swedish Secret Service (Säpo) has estimated that Sweden has around 200 active individuals motivated by violent Islamism.⁹ In December 2010, a Swedish man with an Iraqi background blew himself up in the centre of Stockholm, during the pre-Christmas rush. At worst, the attack could have caused substantial casualties, but his two bombs did not explode as expected. The man justified his terrorist act on the basis of the cartoons published in Sweden and Denmark and perceived as derogatory, as well as military action being taken in Afghanistan.¹⁰

Organised right-wing extremist groups with National Socialistic ideologies have operated for some time in Sweden. Examples of these include Svenskarnas Parti (SvP) and Svenska Motståndsrörelsen (SMR). The two main annual events of right-wing extremists – known as the White Power groups in Sweden – the so-called Salem March and the National Day parade, are attended by an estimated thousand people. There have been several violent clashes between right-wing and left-wing extremists – known as the autonomous movement – at various meetings and marches.

In December 2011, Sweden published a programme against violent extremism.¹¹ In accordance with the programme title – Action plan to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism – this focuses on defending democracy against violent extremist thinking. In preventing extremism, the emphasis is on right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism, and violent Islamism. The objective of the programme is to increase awareness of democratic values and violent extremist movements.

⁹ *Violence-promoting Islamist extremism in Sweden. Swedish Security Service 2010.*

¹⁰ *Annual Report of the Swedish Security Service 2010.*

¹¹ *Government Publication 2011/12:44. Action plan to safeguard democracy against violence-promoting extremism.*

4.2.2 Denmark

Denmark has for long been targeted as an enemy by radical Islamic, violence-instigating propaganda, since a Danish newspaper published cartoons that were perceived as derogatory. The authorities in Denmark have uncovered several planned attacks on cartoonist Kurt Westergaard and the newspaper that published the cartoons, Jyllands Posten. Throughout the 2000s, they have also uncovered plans for terrorist acts, formulated by persons born or raised in Denmark.

In Denmark, right or left-wing extremist violence has focused on confrontations between right-wing and so-called anti-fascist groups. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) has estimated that confrontations between the two groups will increase and escalate. Left and right-wing extremist propaganda has also actively instigated violence against opponents' marches, concerts and meetings. Both groups have international connections and their activities often cross national borders.

The Danish action plan against extremism was published in January 2009.¹² This action plan has two main objectives. The first is to directly and specifically address the reasons and processes leading to a young person's joining an extremist movement. The second objective is to strengthen Danish democracy and root out the structural factors underlying extremism.

¹² *A common and safe future. Action plan to prevent extremist views and radicalisation among young people.*

4.2.3 Norway

The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) estimates that radical Islamic groups still pose the greatest extremist threat in Norway. According to the PST, a few charismatic leaders are active in promoting radicalisation and praise the use of violence as a tool for gaining political power. People have been arrested in Norway for planning terrorist activities, for example the arrests made in the summer 2010. According to PST, the threat issues from persons who have grown up in Norway, but view the country as their enemy.

The threat from right-wing extremists is still considered fairly minor in Norway, and groups have mainly failed in their recruitment efforts.

At the end of 2010, an action plan to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism was published in Norway.¹³ The action plan evaluates the existence of extremist movements in Norway and the reasons behind them. The action plan emphasises trust in the authorities as the key prerequisite for the prevention of extremist operations. It lists the responsibilities of and opportunities for the judicial system and police, alongside other sectors, to prevent extremism, while highlighting the use of foreign policy tools.

¹³ *Collective security - a shared responsibility. Action plan to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism.*



5. Violent extremism in Finland

5.1 Threat posed by violent extremism to Finnish Society

In Finland, extremist violence poses no threat to state structures. It can be evaluated as mainly posing a potential security risk to individual people and actors. Such a threat may also be targeted at certain foreign interests located in our country, such as embassies. However, the possibility of a single, radicalised individual carrying out an act of terrorism or violence cannot be ruled out in Finland.

School killings have occurred around the world, the majority of them in the United States. There have been two school killings in Finland; one in Jokela in November 2007 and the other in Kauhajoki in September 2008. Mental health problems and school bullying can almost always be found in a school killer's background. The killer's way of thinking has often been found to contain references to rather extreme ideas and misanthropy. School killings and similar acts of violence differ in many ways from the most common types of homicide; their prevention and the prevention of violent extremism share common features.

The Muslim community in Finland is heterogenic and mainly moderate. Violent, radical Islamic views are not connected with communities in Finland, but are problematic at individual level. There are clear indications of attempts made in Finland to support Islamist-motivated terrorist activities in the individuals' countries of origin, or in a conflict zone.¹⁴ It is also suspected that radical Islamic individuals residing in Finland have participated in fighting carried out by terrorist groups, or in weapons training in crisis zones. People with fighting experience and combat training can generally be considered more susceptible to committing acts of violence.

Examples from Sweden and Denmark show that the situation can take a crucial turn for the worse as the result of a single triggering event. Denmark and Sweden have been targets of Islamist hate propaganda for years, since their newspapers published cartoons that were perceived as derogatory. In terms of violent extremism and the terrorist threat, it would be a cause for concern if Finland were profiled as a so-called enemy state in international, violence-instigating radical Islamic propaganda. This might also radicalise individuals and increase their willingness to take violent or even terrorist action.

As Nordic countries become targets of, rather than support regions for, radical Islamic terrorism, Finland may also be affected. Planning of attacks is often multi-ethnic and international. It is possible that radical Islamists residing in Finland will seek to participate in terrorist action in another Nordic country.

The activities of left-wing, anarchic, right-wing, or so-called single-issue extremists are not considered to pose a threat to state structures or critical systems in Finland. Left-wing extremist and anarchic movements in Finland have been fairly moderate and peaceful compared to other European countries. However, a number of arson attacks and other, sabotage-like acts of vandalism were carried out in Finland in 2011, for which anarchists have

¹⁴ The first preliminary investigation regarding a terrorist offence in Finland was launched in September 2011.

publically claimed responsibility. If anarchic movements are behind these crimes, this would mean actual radicalisation of the anarchic movement in Finland and the arrival of the militant operational models seen elsewhere in Europe.

Right-wing extremist activity has long been marginal and minor in Finland. However, some activation of local skinhead communities has been detected during the year gone by. Racist activism has been detected in regions that have received relatively large numbers of immigrants over a short period of time. Right-wing extremist violence is mainly manifested in racist-motivated assaults and encounters turning into street violence. The activities of Finnish right-wing extremists largely focus on spreading propaganda over the Internet and distributing stickers and leaflets etc. Finnish right-wing extremists also have international connections.

Individuals with hard-line, extremist views pose a security threat to society that is difficult to prepare for. Identification of such individual actors is highly challenging, as they do not form part of any extremist group.

5.2 Social factors influencing development of violent extremism

In the last decade, the security implications of social exclusion have come to the fore. Social exclusion has been defined as the greatest threat to internal security in Government Resolutions on internal security programmes and in the Government Programme of Jyrki Katainen. Finns' trust in the authorities and institutions, which is exceptionally high by European standards, has helped to prevent extremism. No significant culture of aggressive rioting has existed in Finland in recent decades.

On the whole, the level of well-being among young people in Finland is high. However, a small group of young people is excluded from society very early on. They account for approximately five per cent of those aged between 15 and 29. This means more than 50,000 young people, who are out of work and have not received any education since leaving school. Some 32,500 young people form the hard core of the socially excluded. These are not registered as unemployed job-seekers and are not included in any statistics. It is worth noting that social exclusion is a particular problem for young men. In 2010, two thirds of the young people marginalised from society were men.¹⁵

Almost a quarter of young people left outside society, and at the core of social exclusion, have an immigrant background. Their exclusion is often connected with unsuccessful integration. While the unemployment rate among young people in Finland is low compared to many other European countries, such as Spain and Greece, the exclusion percentage of young people who do not speak Finnish or Swedish¹⁶ is more than five-fold compared to those who do. It is significantly harder for a person with an immigrant background to access the Finnish education and labour markets than for native Finns. According to the Employment Report for 2011, issued by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the level of unemployment among immigrants was 2.5 to 3 fold that of the entire population. However, there are significant differences between groups, in terms of nationality and language. Finding employment is most difficult for Afghans, Iraqis and Somalis, who have entered Finland as refugees.

Finnish young people are increasingly prepared to take illegal social action. In 1999, only three per cent of young people in Finland indicated preparedness to take illegal action, but in 2009 the figure was nine per cent. This suggests that young people in Finland are clearly more prepared to take illegal action than in other Nordic countries. It is worrying that, compared to the rest of Europe, the number of young people with critical attitudes

¹⁵ *Hukassa - Keitä ovat syrjäytyneet nuoret? Analysis by the Finnish Business and Policy Forum (Eva), No 19. 1.2.2012. Myrskylä.*

¹⁶ *15-29 year-old with no post-comprehensive education and not studying or working. also approve of the use of violence*

towards immigrants, and positive attitudes towards illegal activities, has increased in Finland. These young people significantly more often than equivalent groups elsewhere in Europe. Attitudes towards equal rights for different ethnic groups are also more critical in Finland.¹⁷

In 2008, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights carried out an extensive, Europe-wide survey of discrimination experienced by minorities. In this survey, Somalis in Finland stood out in terms of their experiences of discrimination and racism. One in three Somalis had encountered racist violence, the threat of violence, or a serious threat in the previous year. Encounters of discrimination and racism often go unreported and are thus not visible in official statistics.

Violent extremist movements are influenced by other countries. They are also closely connected to their own society and problems at local level. Radicalisation of a person or group may be influenced by global events and problems experienced personally. A society's ability to resist violent extremist ideas correlates directly to the amount of control citizens feel that they have over the issues affecting them. The key counterbalance to extremism is a functioning democratic system, openness of society, and strong participation.

Social fragmentation and regional segregation are still negligible in Finland compared to many other European countries. As yet, there are no housing estates in Finland that are a cause for concern in terms of extremism; no groups in which frustration, unemployment, insufficient income, social exclusion, and lack of trust are accumulating. Education policy and political choices made within housing development have prevented the segregation of population groups and polarisation of society. In terms of the prevention of violent extremism, it is vital to retain the factors that strengthen Finnish society's ability to resist violent extremist movements.

Active non-governmental organisations have been a special characteristic of Finnish society for which the Government provides financial support. This has helped to channel activities towards legal organisations that make a difference through the democratic system. Since the Second World War, decision-making in Finnish society has been characterised by the intention to achieve a consensus and avoid confrontation.

Extreme groups operate in the same environment. They influence and feed each other. Activation of one group may be reflected in another. In other countries, left-wing or anarchic, anti-fascist movements have been activated as a counterbalance to the growing right-wing movement. Then again, the right-wing movement may gain popularity when, for example, locally increased immigration is perceived as a threat. Experiences of racism, discrimination, and feelings of being marginalised, have been identified as background factors leading to Islamic radicalisation. Economic recession, changes in Finnish society and the potential crumbling of the traditional consensus-based ideology may worsen the general atmosphere and lead to greater tension in society. This may increase the popularity of protest movements with harder-line ideologies.

The challenge lies in preventing international radical and violent operating models from coming ashore in Finland. Developments among international actors may radicalise domestic extremist movements. Global, and often unpredictable, phenomena such as wars or conflicts or isolated, highly emotive events may trigger the radicalisation of an individual or group.

¹⁷ *Youth Research 1/2012, Suutarinen and Törmäkangas.*

6. Measures to prevent violent extremism

The main responsibility for the prevention of violent extremism lies with states, their central governments, and regional and local authorities. Effective, preventive action requires extensive collaboration among authorities and cooperation with civic society.

The European Union requires that Member States take active measures to prevent violent extremism. It supports the activities of Member States by promoting the dissemination of good practices among states and supporting other cooperation between them. Member States regularly report their activities for the prevention of violent extremism to the European Union.

The objective of this Action Plan is to prevent and combat violent acts justified by extremist ideas and ideologies. Approval of the use of violence against other people, in order to further one's own goals, is common to such extremist ideas and ideologies. They also have no respect for human rights and the principles of equality confirmed in international agreements and the constitution, and do not operate according to democratic principles.

People who justify acts of violence through extremist ideas and ideologies may be members of extremist groups, or they may operate outside such groups, as so-called lone actors. Such groups may be tightly or loosely organised; they may also operate virtually, on the Internet, with members who do not meet physically. In such cases, it can be rather difficult to distinguish between a member of a group and a lone actor.

The implementation and effect of the measures set out in the Action Plan will be monitored and reported on regularly.

6.1 Enhance cooperation to prevent violent extremism

Effective prevention of violent extremism is possible through extensive cooperation between various authorities. It also requires collaboration with civic society. Open interaction between operators and the sharing of experiences and good practices are vital in preventing violent extremism. That is why it is important that the prevention of violent extremism is not subsumed under counterterrorism activities.

Prevention of violent extremism requires cooperation among key authorities. In their basic work, teachers, social workers, health care personnel, and youth workers face situations in which it is possible to identify early signs of violent extremist thinking. The police are an important expert on issues related to violent extremism and can offer specialist support to other authorities in preventive work.

In terms of preventing violent acts, it is vital that such early signs are addressed. In any given situation, an individual authority may find it difficult to take action alone. This is why networking is required, in order to provide a forum in which various professionals can discuss the situation and the most suitable methods for dealing with it. A permanent cooperation team enables the development of multiprofessional expertise in the prevention of violent extremism.

In terms of preventing violent extremism, local cooperation is supported by national cooperation with representatives of key authorities. The national cooperation network monitors the status and development of violent extremism both in Finland and internationally, and takes any action necessary to enhancing preventative measures. In the prevention of violent extremism, the national cooperation team engages in extensive cooperation with civic society.

Measures:

1. Establish local inter-authority cooperation for the prevention of violent extremism, by forming a cooperation network linked to the preventive activities of the police and represented by relevant key authorities. The pilot unit for such cooperation will be the Helsinki Police Department and cooperation teams will be established in Oulu, Tampere and Turku.

Local cooperation teams will monitor violent-extremism-related phenomena and their development in the area, and prepare the necessary measures to address any detected phenomena. These teams will distribute information and expertise on violent extremism to other authorities and interest groups. In order to prevent violent extremism, they will collaborate with the representatives of civic society that are relevant to each issue.

Implementation:

Launch of cooperation teams in 2012, after which the teams will become permanent.

Responsibility:

The National Cooperation Network of Violent Extremism, the National Police Board together with local authorities.

2. The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will be established and will comprise all of the relevant authorities. The tasks of the cooperation network include monitoring the status of violent extremism in Finland and internationally, providing information on such developments to various authorities and local cooperation teams, drawing up initiatives to enhance prevention operations, and organising seminars and other training related to the issue. The national cooperation network will promote cooperation with civic society in order to prevent violent extremism. Every year, the national cooperation network will publish a progress report, including information on the activities and results of local cooperation teams.

Implementation:

Launch of the cooperation network in 2012, after which the operations will become permanent.

Responsibility:

Ministry of the Interior, together with various authorities.

Photo: Sari Samula



6.2 Strengthen trust in the democratic system and use it to make a difference

Trust in the democratic system and the genuine opportunities it offers to effect changes, both nationally and locally, is the most important general prerequisite for preventing violent extremist ideas and ideologies from gaining support among citizens. The general prerequisites for civic activity are promoted by the Unit for Democracy, Language Affairs and Fundamental Rights at the Ministry of Justice. A democratic system that works both locally and nationally provides citizens with the opportunity to affect decisions that they consider important.

6.2.1 Strengthen young people's trust in the democratic system and use it to make a difference

It is especially important to ensure that young people regard the democratic system as an effective way of influencing their own environment and the broad development of society. In recent decades, there has been little discussion within Finnish society of the democratic system and its significance to society and citizens' welfare. Discussion of politics and politicians has often been negative and belittling. This may be a factor adding to the negative or indifferent attitude young people exhibit towards the democratic system and using it to make a difference. Presenting the democratic system primarily through the related shortcomings may eventually enhance the attraction of groups that base their activities on what are frequently very black-and-white ideas. They offer clear, simple and effective solutions to issues that are often perceived as complex.

Finnish young people are increasingly prepared to take illegal social action.¹⁸ This does not, as such, mean being prepared to use violence in order to achieve goals. It can, however, create a breeding ground that may increase the lure of violent extremist groups and ideologies, and can lead to the acceptance of violence at individual level.

Measures:

3. Strengthen young people's trust in the democratic system by initiating a democracy-focused dialogue among and with young people, as part of the activities of youth councils, for example. Use these discussions to address democracy-related issues that are important to young people. Engage in dialogues with youth councils, along with municipal and city councils. Regional Advisory Boards for Ethnic Relations (ETNO's) will also implement democracy discussions, taking into consideration specific issues related to young people with an immigrant background. These discussions will be collated into a publication communicating the views of young people collectively.

Implementation:

2012–2013.

Responsibility:

Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, municipal youth services, Finnish Youth Research Network, youth councils, Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations.

¹⁸ Youth Research 1/2012, Suutarinen and Törmäkangas.

4. In its activities, the Unit for Democracy, Language Affairs and Fundamental Rights at the Ministry of Justice will pay attention to strengthening democracy and participation, especially among young people at higher risk of being targeted by anti-democratic messages and messages fomenting violent extremism.

Implementation:

2012–2015.

Responsibility:

Ministry of Justice/Unit for Democracy, Language Affairs and Fundamental Rights.

6.2.2 Select a Young Democracy Ambassador every year

Discussion of democracy and the related issues among young people would be effectively enhanced by a person who is also young, and thus in touch with young persons' world and way of thinking, and who can speak their language in their own forums. This is why it would be important to select a Young Democracy Ambassador every year, to actively promote discussions of democracy with and among young people. The term of 'Ambassador' would be fixed to enable different young people to take their turn in introducing various aspects of democracy-related issues.

Measures:

5. Select a Young Democracy Ambassador every year. The Ambassador's task will be to participate in the discussion of democracy and introduce themes that are important to young people. He or she will be active on the Internet and in social media, and will be present where young people discuss the social issues they consider important. The Ambassador will be selected in collaboration with key youth organisations.

Implementation:

The first Ambassador's term will begin at the beginning of 2013.

Responsibility:

Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with Ministry of Justice/Unit for Democracy, Language Affairs and Fundamental Rights, alongside youth organisations.

6.3 Create an operating model for the prevention of violent extremism, for situations requiring rapid action

A very small group of people have powerful violence-related fantasies that involve, for example, imagining serious acts of violence against other people. Although the number of these individuals is small, in extreme cases they may cause massive damage to their surroundings. The challenge is to identify individuals that can fairly be assessed as being at high risk of fantasies leading to acts of violence in practice.

After the school killings, extensive measures have been implemented to prevent their recurrence. Such measures include the reform of Finnish firearms legislation, the development of mental health and other health services, the development of pupil welfare, improving safety and preparedness for action in crisis and disruption situations at schools, and extensive safety-related training for people working in educational institutions. In conjunction with the second phase of the firearms legislation renewal project launched by the Ministry of the Interior, an assessment of requirements will be carried out regarding the regulation of storage of firearms, the permissibility of various types of firearms, and other safety aspects. The project will run until 31 December 2013.

Persons inflicting serious fear of violence in others will be reported to the police. The police can hold a person for 12 or 24 hours. After this, the person will be released if no other issues come to light. In terms of safeguarding

the security, life and health of people, it would be important, in the most serious cases, to create a procedure that provides the police with access to a consultation by a psychiatrist or other mental health specialist, to support the assessment of the threat involved. Such an assessment would enable the police to form a better idea of the threat of violence posed by the person. Similarly, a threatening person could receive a speedy referral for further treatment within the health care services, for example.

Measures:

6. To the threat assessment tool being prepared by the police, add an operating model that provides the police with access to an assessment by a mental health specialist, of the actual threat represented by, and potential for violence of, a person. In such cases, the police will prepare a threat assessment of the person, using the threat assessment tool. If required, the police could request the assistance and consultation of a psychiatrist or other specialist in drawing up the threat assessment. The assessment would not constitute a patient-doctor relationship, which would prevent use of the information in the planning of further action. Based on the assessment, the person could, if required, be referred quickly for further treatment within the health care services, for example. This procedure will begin through piloting.

Implementation:

Pilot 2012–2013, permanent operation after that.

Responsibility:

The National Police Board, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

7. It will not be necessary to refer a person for further treatment from the health care services in all cases, but he or she will require support in processing and relinquishing his or her violent fantasies. Organisations can offer help for those suffering from violence-related problems. However, the related services are fairly scarce in terms of quantity, and geographically. Organisations' opportunities to offer mentoring and other low-threshold services, to people suffering from serious violence-related fantasies and other serious violence-related problems, will be promoted. Such services will be voluntary in nature. Together, the authorities and organisations will devise a referral procedure for accessing these services.

Implementation:

Begin based on existing operating models, from 2012 onwards.

Responsibility:

Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, organisations.

6.4 Develop communications on issues and situations related to violent extremism and hate speech

The Internet is a key channel in the dissemination of violent-extremism-instigating propaganda and hate speech. Propaganda spread on the Internet is professionally produced, emotive and persuasive. It is available in a number of languages and is carefully targeted. In addition to propaganda, the Internet contains plenty of messages and discussions that damage good ethnic relations and can create a breeding ground for violent extremism. It is important to challenge hate speech and propaganda in

the environment where such discussions take place. It is also important to bring wider perspectives and diverse communication into discussions, to balance the claims made in propaganda and hate speech.

The significance of cooperation between the media and the authorities is highlighted in difficult communication situations. After the school killings, it became evident that the significance of communication must be assessed from the point of view of the victims and their families and friends, as well as the perpetrator. Ill-considered communication can increase the suffering of the victims of violence and their families.

In terms of official communication, the correct timing is important, along with the content. With respect to the Internet and social media, official communication is even more challenging. The authorities no longer hold exclusive rights to communication in situations involving a serious threat, since information and pictures spread immediately through the social media. For this reason, it is important that the authorities are prepared to communicate quickly and professionally in situations that, if prolonged and allowed to intensify, may spur the activities of groups that support violent extremism.

Measures:

8. The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will hold regular cooperation meetings with the media. Current themes related to the prevention of extremism will be discussed at these meetings, from a communicative perspective.

Implementation:

Regularly from 2012 onwards.

Responsibility:

The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism in cooperation with persons responsible for communication within the ministries.

9. The police will strengthen Internet policing, particularly among young people, through measures described in the Internal Security Programme. These operations will be complemented by an operating model that will enable Internet police officers to react to discussions on the Internet that spread messages instigating extremism and violence. Prevention of extremism will also be considered in the strategy for Internet youth work.

Implementation:

Preparation of the operating model and implementation of the operation in 2012, after which the operation will be permanent.

Responsibility:

The National Police Board, police departments.

6.5 Increase situational awareness and knowhow about violent extremism and its prevention

In Finland, there is little awareness of phenomenon of violent extremism. The issue was last publicly discussed in the 1990s, in connection with the so-called skinhead problem. In other Nordic countries, and more extensively within the European Union, all forms of violent extremism and the related problems have been in the public eye for decades.

The prevention and identification of violent extremism require current information on the phenomenon and its occurrence in Finland. Regular situation assessments are the first step in the appropriate allocation of measures. Based on the situation assessment, national and local cooperation teams are able to plan their activities.

Sharing experiences and preventative practices with respect to violent extremism increases the effectiveness of the related activities and promotes rational resource allocation. Practical knowledge about the effective prevention of violent extremism is continuously accumulating.

Measures:

- 10.** Every six months, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service will prepare a situation overview on violent extremism for the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism. This overview will describe the phenomenon, without containing details on individual people or incidents. The contents of the situation overview will be planned in collaboration with the cooperation network and will be taken into consideration when planning the operations of the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

Implementation:

1. overview in 2012, regular overviews biannually thereafter.

Responsibility:

The Finnish Security Intelligence Service, in cooperation with the National Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

- 11.** Good practices and other material supporting practical work in preventing violent extremism will be collated into an electronic “toolbox”, which will then be regularly updated.

Implementation:

- Completion in 2013.

Responsibility:

The Ministry of the Interior will set up a cross-administrative working group for the preparation and maintenance of the material.

6.6 Supplementing the Action Plan

As a phenomenon, violent extremism is unpredictable and adaptable, as shown by recent developments. It is important that the implementation of the Action Plan be treated as a process, accommodating the relevant developments and good practices established along the way. In order to be effective, preventive measures must respond to the current situation and estimated future developments. In this way, the Action Plan will avoid trying to prevent the threats of yesterday. Practical work will provide additional, experiential information, based on which preventive measures can be revised and improved.

Measures:

- 12.** Every year, the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will produce a report on its activities and results. An overview of the activities of local networks will be appended to the report, along with an estimate of future developments, and action recommended for enhancing prevention work.

Implementation:

- Annual reporting.

Responsibility:

National Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.



7. Implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Action Plan

The Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism will be implemented as part of the Government Resolution regarding the Programme of Internal Security. Ministries and their administrative branches will make implementation of the measures included in the Action Plan part of their performance management and will incorporate it in their operational and financial planning.

Regional implementation of the Action Plan will be ensured in the implementation plans of the Programme of Internal Security.

Implementation of the Action Plan will be reported annually in accordance with measure 12. This report will be prepared by the National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism. It will include an overview of regional and local activities. The report will examine the implementation status of the measures agreed in the Action Plan, present the development of key figures used in monitoring, and evaluate the results achieved and recommended supplementary actions.

7.1 Key figures used in monitoring

Monitoring of the Action Plan will use key figures to monitor the current situation and the achieved results, along with evaluating the measures recommended for the enhancement of prevention work. The key figures are divided into four entities to be monitored: background factors affecting violent extremism, racism and discrimination, participation, the Internet and communication, and cooperation and the dissemination of good practices.

Background Factors Affecting Violent Extremism		
Key figure, source	2012	Source
Level of school drop-outs (%) - young people not in post-comprehensive education - secondary education drop-outs (upper secondary school and vocational education)	8,9 % ¹⁹ Upper secondary school 4 % and vocational education 9,1 % ²⁰	Statistics Finland
Number of young people aged 16–24 receiving a disability pension due to mental and behavioural problems	4,689 people	KELA
Youth unemployment rate, ages 15–24 (%)	20,1 % ²¹	Statistics Finland, Labour Force Survey
Number of young people under 25 who have been continuously unemployed for over a year	2,000 people ²²	Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Annual Employment Service Statistics
Number of minors aged 15–17 suspected of crimes - all young people suspected of crimes - young people suspected of second or more crimes	60,801 people ²³	Police

Racism and Discrimination		
Key figure, source	2012	Source
National Victimization Survey		National Victimization Survey
Number of racist crimes reported to the police (main crimes): 1. ethnic agitation 2. defamation 3. assaults	14 cases ²⁴ 177 cases 538 cases	Hate crimes reported to the police in Finland, Police College

Social Participation		
Key figure, source	2012	Source
Social participation of young people		Estimates based on reports published annually
Number of children and young people participating in activities of sports associations	424,000 people ²⁵	National Sports Survey
Number of NGOs involved in youth work applying for government subsidies	approx.132 ²⁶	Ministry of Education and Culture

The Internet and Communication		
Key figure, source	2012	Source
Number of contacts made to the Internet Police that lead to action	246 kpl	Statistics of the Helsinki Virtual Community Police
Number of meetings with the media	1-2?	The Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism

¹⁹ year 2010, ²⁰ year 2009-2010, ²¹ average for year 2011, ²² year 2011, ²³ year 2011, ²⁴ year 2010, ²⁵ year 2009-2010, ²⁶ year 2012

Preparation of the Action Plan

The task of the expert group was to draw up an Action Plan to prevent violent extremism, with extensive consideration given to extremism motivated by extreme ideas and the use of violence, as well as other serious violence.

The Government set up an expert group on 3 November 2011. The group was chaired by Tarja Mankkinen, Director, Internal Security Secretariat. Other members of the expert group:

Programme Director	Mika Aaltola	Finnish Institute of International Affairs
Senior Planning Officer	Mikko Cortés Téllez	Ministry of Education and Culture
Detective Chief Inspector	Heidi Kankainen	Ministry of the Interior
Senior Inspector	Peter Kariuki	Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations ETNO
Senior Customs Inspector	Mika Pitkänen	Finnish Customs
Immigration Director	Sirkku Päivärinne	Ministry of the Interior
Senior Specialist	Tiina Rajjas	Ministry of Defence
Major	Urpo Riissanen	Ministry of the Interior
		[substituted by Lieutenant Colonel Juha Martiskainen]
Superintendent	Seppo Ruotsalainen	National Police Board
Counsellor	Kari Veijalainen	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Researcher	Tiina Piipponen	Finnish Security Intelligence Service, Secretary
(The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities was also invited to send presentation)		

The expert group met eight times during its term. One additional working meeting was also held. In its meetings, the expert group discussed international and national strategies, programmes and decisions to be considered in the preparation of the Action Plan. The expert group drew up an assessment of the current state of violent extremism and the key security challenges related to it, along with proposals for measures to solve these challenges and to prevent problems from arising. The expert group also proposed key figures for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan.

During its term, the group heard the following experts:

Researcher	Leena Malkki	University of Helsinki
Senior Inspector	Minna Nevala	Ministry of the Interior, Police Department
Docent	Vesa Puuronen	University of Eastern Finland
Project Coordinator	Said Aden	Ministry of Employment and the Economy
Manager	Olavi Sydänmaanlakka	HelsinkiMissio
Detective Chief Inspector	Sami Lipponen	National Bureau of Investigation
Immigrant organisations		

The expert group made an excursion to Denmark on 18 – 19 January 2012. The group learnt about practical, local-level work carried out in Denmark to prevent violent extremism. The expert group held an extended brainstorming meeting at Humaljärvi on 26 January 2012. Outside experts present at this meeting were Vesa Puuronen, Docent; Said Aden, Project Coordinator; Olavi Sydänmaanlakka, Manager; and Sami Lipponen, Detective Chief Inspector.

The Internal Security Programme steering group outlined the work of the expert group in its meetings on 14 December 2011 and 12 March 2012.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

Kirkkokatu 12, Helsinki
PL 26, 00023 VALTIONEUVOSTO
www.intermin.fi