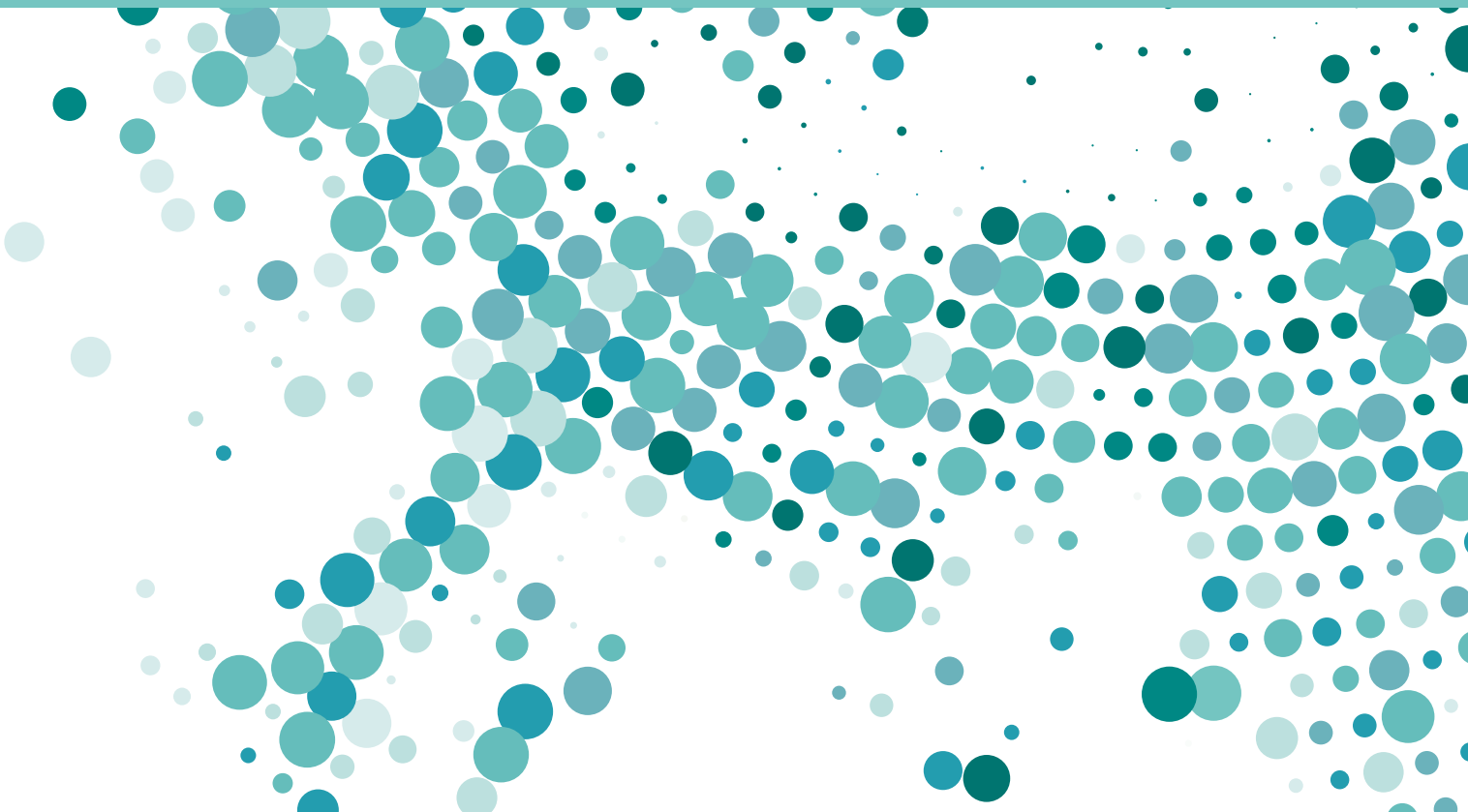


# Annual report 2017

## National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism

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Internal security





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## Annual report 2017

National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation  
and Extremism

*Suomi  
Finland*  
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## TO THE READER

Violent extremism refers to using, threatening with, encouraging or justifying violence based on one's own view of the world or on ideological grounds. Violent radicalisation is an individual process which may result in a person joining violent extremist groups or action. At its most extreme, violent radicalisation may result in terrorist acts. The prevention of violent radicalisation refers to the specific measures focused on those groups and individuals who run the risk of becoming radicalised. Prevention will target all forms of violent extremism in Finland. These include the violent far right, the violent far left and the violence used by radicalised alternative social movements, religiously motivated extremist violence as well as individual actors.

On 29 April 2016, the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice approved an Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism. The Action Plan sets out principles for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism in Finland, introduces their key definitions, describes the roles and responsibilities of different actors in preventive work and establishes short and long-term objectives. A total of 36 practical measures have been decided within the framework of the Action Plan. The Action Plan was drawn up and will be implemented through broad cooperation between different authorities and organisations. The implementation of the Action Plan is coordinated and promoted by the National Cooperation Network consisting of the representatives of different authorities, cities and organisations.

In Finland, violent radicalisation and extremism have been countered systematically since 2012. Finland is closely engaged in international cooperation, actively exchanging experiences, best practices and approaches with other Nordic countries and EU Member States and over a broader venue. International cooperation is an important part of national efforts, because violent radicalisation and extremism are cross-border phenomena where both ideologies and operating methods quickly move from one country to another.

This annual report 2017 describes the progress made with the implementation of the Action Plan. It also introduces the changes and trends that can be seen in violent radicalisation and in the operation of extremist groups and how the changes can be expected to affect preventive efforts.

The content of the report is based on the information submitted by the authorities and organisations involved in preventive work.

Tarja Mankkinen  
Head of development  
August 2017

# 1 Introduction

The National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism was approved by the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice on 29 April 2016. The Action Plan was the second plan prepared, the Government deciding on the first Action Plan in 2012 as part of a government resolution concerning the Internal Security Programme.

The Action Plan contains important definitions of relevance to the theme, the key principles and objectives of the action, as well as 36 measures with defined responsible parties.

The Ministry of the Interior coordinates and develops the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism in Finland. Its responsibility is based on the Government Rules of Procedure, according to which the Ministry of the Interior and its Police Department remain responsible for matters concerning public order and security. Violent extremism, as a phenomenon, relates to the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living and operating environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights. For this purpose, the Ministry of the Interior has established a Steering Group and a National Cooperation Network. The other ministries and their branches of administration remain responsible for actions and development within their purview, pursuant to the Government Rules of Procedure. Municipalities, organisations and communities participate in the implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with the principles of cooperation.

Information and assessments concerning the implementation of the Action Plan are collected annually, and a report on the implementation is submitted to the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice. This annual report is based on the information submitted by the parties participating in the implementation. The report has been preliminarily discussed in the National Cooperation Network and the Steering Group.

## 2 About changes in the operational environment

The National Action Plan was prepared during the second half of 2015, finalised in early 2016 and approved in April 2016. Violent radicalisation and extremism are dynamic phenomena largely affected by international developments and the changes and trends taking place in Finland. Violent extremist groups and individuals also seek to make effective use of these changes and to harness them to support their own goals both in propaganda and recruitments.

The changes that have taken place in the operational environment after spring 2016 and that affect the threat and prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism are briefly outlined below.

### 2.1 Changes in the threat of violent radicalisation

#### Increased threat of attacks

Daesh (ISIS, ISIL) is suffering defeat in Syria and Iraq. However, this does not mean that it would cease to exist. In 2016, Daesh changed the key message in its propaganda by no longer encouraging Europeans to travel to the combat zones of Syria or Iraq but rather to carry out attacks in their home countries. Terrorist attacks have increased in Europe. Inspired by Daesh propaganda, attacks can be made by Daesh-controlled attack cells, independently acting cells or Daesh-inspired individuals or small cells. The attacks are often easy to carry out (using vehicles or knives) and do not require a long preparation time, during which the risk of becoming detected would increase.

## **Propaganda, fake news, hate speech and their impact on violent radicalisation**

Changes in the position of Daesh and the military losses it has suffered do not have any appreciable impact on the threat caused by violent extremist propaganda. The scope of Daesh propaganda has decreased, though it still reaches a large number of people in Europe. Other terrorist organisations, too, are adjusting their propaganda according to the mechanisms used by Daesh. The propaganda of terrorist organisations makes efficient use of social trends and events, which are presented in a way that support their ideology. The threat of terrorist attacks in Finland is enhanced by an increase of violent jihadist propaganda focused on Finland and published in Finnish. The aim of fake news and disinformation is to weaken social cohesion and reduce trust in the democratic system, authorities and institutions. Hate speech, in turn, increases confrontation between population groups and communities and weakens the sense of security among individuals. All the above factors strengthen the seedbed for violent radicalism and extremism.

## **Volume of suspected crime recorded by the police**

The volume of extremist crime recorded by the police in Finland in 2015 did not increase despite the aggravated social situation and debate. However, the volume of hate crime recorded by the police increased considerably. Hate crime, including illegal hate speech, contributes to violent radicalisation and extremism. In addition to single victims, hate crime is focused on the group that the victim belongs to. It also heightens the sense of marginalisation and implies that society does not accept the group represented by the victim to be its member. As a result of all this, hate crime increases the threat of violent radicalisation.

## **People residing in the country illegally**

As a result of the situation with asylum seekers in 2015, the number of people residing in Finland illegally has increased. They are in a very poor position and are very vulnerable. They can be exploited in many ways: they can be used as cheap, even free workforce, recruited to participate in criminal action or subjected to propaganda and recruitment urging them to join violent radicalisation.

## Violent far right

A member of the Nordic Resistance Movement was sentenced to imprisonment for a fatal assault that he committed in the Helsinki Railway Square in September 2016. Due to the incident, the public became more aware of the presence of the Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland. The national socialistic ideology of the Movement aroused a lot of attention. Groups resisting immigration, immigrants and Islam are still operating quite actively and visibly. Some individuals in these groups have connections with the violent far right.

## Networks

The threat of violent action is connected with religiously motivated violent extremism as well as the violent far right. The actors involved in these may create a network in which individuals ready to commit violent acts find each other. In Finland, unlike in many other countries, the number and influence of such networks have been small, though their role has become more prominent in the last few years. According to the Finnish Security Intelligence Service, there are 350 individuals in Finland who have connections with terrorist organisations and units. The threat of violent radicalisation and terrorism increases when it no longer involves only single individuals but also networks.

## 2.2 Trends crucial in view of prevention

### Departures to combat zones in Syria and Iraq have decreased

The goal of prevention since 2012 has been to prevent the departure of individuals and families to the combat zones in Syria and Iraq. The task has been challenging, due to poor support from legislation, for instance,<sup>1</sup> and the efficient propaganda that Daesh broadly distributes over the Internet. It has been evident since the end of 2016 that travel to the conflict areas in Syria and Iraq has decreased. Some of the individuals who travelled there have returned or are about to return to their home countries. The focus of prevention has shifted to questions related to individuals returning from combat zones, such as bringing to justice those who have committed crime, and to matters related to their integration in society. In April 2017, the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice approved a proposal concerning the organisation of cooperation between the authorities in how to deal with individuals who return from combat zones, a decision that will guide all preventive actions taken in Finland. In addition, the National Police Board has issued police departments instructions on how to deal with individuals returning from combat zones and with other risk individuals. Currently there are no visible signs indicating to which area individuals will depart next.

<sup>1</sup> Travel for the purpose of committing a criminal act of terror has been punishable since 1 December 2016.

## Lone actors

Lone actors are now an even more severe challenge, and it is difficult to prevent them from committing their acts. However, according to surveys, lone actors seldom act on their own. Instead, they have connections to other individuals sharing the same ideology through social media, and information may leak about the acts they are going to commit. Individuals having performed attacks in Europe may have received instructions from persons outside Europe through chat or a corresponding medium. To prevent lone actors from committing an act of violence, the role of cooperation based on mutual trust is becoming more prominent. Important cooperation is pursued in local networks and new forms of operation based on multi-professional cooperation (e.g. the National Threats utility of the police).

## Countering hate speech and hate crime

Countering hate speech and hate crime is an important element in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The police have assigned more resources to countering illegal hate speech after the incident that occurred in Helsinki Railway Square in September 2016. Organisations are working hard to counter hate speech, racism and discrimination. From the point of view of prevention, it is important to stress the importance of countering hate speech, to develop preventive actions and to help and support its victims.

## In case of concern, there must be a contact point

Interfering with violent radicalisation at a sufficiently early stage requires that procedures to be followed in case of concern about radicalisation have been agreed locally. In practice, this means that local actors must know whom they should contact if there is concern about the behaviour or situation of a particular individual. The contact point can be the Anchor Team or a contact person indicated by the city or the police. Appropriate procedures have already been agreed upon in several localities, though there are still many localities that do not know how to deal with this. It may also be that the localities have agreed upon the procedures to be followed, but the information has only been distributed to a small group.

## Importance of case management and service coordination

International and national experiences have shown how important it is to offer alternatives to individuals who have become or are in the danger of becoming radicalised. Offering the right alternative at the right time plays a key role in order to halt the radicalisation process. For prevention, it is crucial that the individual can be directed to the necessary services at the right time. Support for regular life and ability to cope, Exit service, a job, a place in an educational institution, an interesting hobby – all of these can play a prom-

inent role in preventing radicalisation. It is also vital that smooth cooperation is ensured between the authorities and organisations in order to ensure that sufficient alternatives are available.

## **2.3 Development of national legislation and guidelines**

### **Travel with the purpose of committing a terrorist act**

Travel for the purpose of committing a criminal act of terror has been punishable since 1 December 2016. A Finnish citizen, a person permanently resident in Finland or a person departing from Finland, who travels to a state whose citizen he/she is not or where he/she does not live permanently with the purpose of committing a criminal act of terror there, is considered to commit a punishable act. Also the mere attempt to travel with the above purpose is considered punishable. Financing a travel offence is a punishable act and considered the financing of terrorism.

### **Internal guidelines of the police**

The National Board of Police has issued guidelines on how police units should cooperate in the case of individuals posing a threat of terrorism or violent extremism. The guidelines also stipulate how the local police should cooperate with the municipal authorities and organisations offering services.



### 3 Achieving the objectives set in the Action Plan

Short-term objectives extending to the end of 2018 were set for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. The progress made with the action towards the objectives is discussed below.

**Objective 1:** *National and local structures and procedures based on multi-professional cooperation are in place, which makes it possible for the authorities, organisations and communities to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism.*

All police departments run multi-professional Anchor model activities. The capability and competence of the Anchor teams to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism varies.

**Objective 2:** *The volume of ideologically motivated crime will continue to decrease year by year.*

The first survey of the volume of extremist crime was drawn up in 2015. The National Police Board has issued guidelines to the police departments on the follow-up of violent extremist crime, based on a Government decision dated 29 September 2016. It is envisaged that follow-up data on trends in the volume of crime can be collected based the aforementioned actions in 2018.

**Objective 3:** *The number of individuals departing to Finland to attend fighting/violent activities in conflict areas begins to fall, compared with the situation on 1 November 2015.*

The number of individuals travelling to the area began to fall during 2015, due to the situation in Syria and Iraq.

**Objective 4:** *Individuals returning from conflict areas are identified. Those returning from conflict areas will be identified and the ones having committed crimes will be brought to justice. All returning persons will be systematically targeted with individually tailored measures which reduce the risk of violence and help improve their ability to cope.*

On 29 March 2017, the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice approved a cooperation-based model in order to achieve this objective. The Ministry of the Interior has sent a request for action to parties who have responsibilities in the implementation of the model. Follow-up data will be collected in spring 2018, after which information on the results can be presented.

**Objective 5:** *The police will efficiently detect and investigate hate crimes. The victims of hate crime will be supported and the impacts of crime on the victim's reference group will be identified.*

On 29 September 2016, the Government concluded a decision to intensify measures to counter hate speech, violent extremism and illegal extremist movements. The 'Final Report of the Working Group Preparing an Action Plan for Countering Hate Speech and Hate Crime' by the National Police Board was published on 14 November 2016. It presents intensified actions by the police to counter hate speech and hate crime. In its supplementary budget for 2017, the Government allocated additional appropriations to the police for countering hate speech. With the financing, it has been possible to establish one police position for each police department to counter punishable hate speech. In addition, five additional positions have been established for the National Bureau of Investigation, especially in order to intensify intelligence over the Internet and to investigate tips received through the Net Tip service. A unit detecting and investigating hate crime, such as punishable hate speech, has been established at Helsinki Police Department, covering the whole country. Ten new police positions were established at Helsinki Police Department for setting up the unit. The Crime Victim Directive, which entered into force in Finland on 16 November 2015, has introduced the need for support services to the victims of hate crime. Victim Support Finland has developed support for the victims of hate crime, advising and supporting the victim at all stages of the process.

The National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism has also set long-term objectives extending to the year 2025. These will not be discussed in this first follow-up report.

## 4 Priorities for 2016–2017 and possible future priorities

The following three themes were defined for use as the operational priorities of the National Cooperation Network for 2016–2017:

- Developing the preconditions of the education sector to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism.
- Developing and expanding local operations
- Developing and launching the RADINET action

For the education sector, the operations have proceeded well, as described in more detail in the section on the follow-up of the implementation of the measures. There are also international expectations towards Finland in terms of how it can prevent violent radicalisation through measures implemented as part of teaching. The educational system in Finland has been rated to be one of the best in the world and is expected to be very active in developing best practices in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism in the region. The role of the education sector in preventing violent radicalisation is also underlined by the fact that today even younger people become violently radicalised and are suspected of terrorist crime.

For local actions, the most important thing is to extend the Anchor model to the districts of all police departments, an objective that has almost been completely achieved. Local cooperation groups established in the cities of Oulu, Turku and Tampere are working efficiently. They help form and maintain a local situation picture about violent radicalisation and extremism across different sectors. The cooperation also promotes the development of competence and the dissemination of best practices. The operation of local cooperation groups has facilitated collaboration between the authorities and with organisations, and lowered the threshold of acting together across sectoral boundaries, where necessary. For local operations, the challenge in the future is how to improve the skills of the actors engaged in the Anchor model in their efforts to prevent violent radicalisation. The capabilities of the Anchor model actors will be significantly improved by the project launched

under the National Police Board on 1 September 2017 for preparing an Anchor Handbook. Another challenge is the formation of cooperation groups in localities where there is need to intensify cooperation between the authorities and with organisations.

The RADINET exit service has been launched successfully in Finland. The customers have found their way to using the service without any major communication campaigns. The number of customers is high as compared with a corresponding service in the Netherlands, for instance, even though there the action was introduced earlier and much more resources have been allocated to it. It is evident that there is need for an organisation-based service of this kind. The challenge in the future is how to make the resources match the demand for the service. Another major challenge is to ensure the national coverage of the service by increasing the number of organisations belonging to the network. At the same time, it must be ensured that the action is reliable and adheres to the same principles regardless of the service provider.

Yet another challenge in the future is to how to involve social and health services in work on preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Both the sectors play an important role, though currently their engagement in the action largely relies on a few persons interested in the matter. Social and health services have long experience of preparing for crises and catastrophes. Currently social and health services are also developing the ability to act in the case of a terrorist attack within the framework of international cooperation. It is also important to ensure that social and health services contribute to preventing violent radicalisation and extremism.

## 5 Implementation of the measures decided in the Action Plan

A total of 36 measures to prevent violent radicalisation have been decided under the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism. The parties responsible for the various measures are indicated separately for each measure. The implementation of the measures is briefly described below.

### **MEASURE 1:**

**Coordinate prevention, disseminate best practices, increase competency and act flexibly by taking into account changes in the operating environment**

**Objective:** The aim is to make the action coherent, without unnecessary duplication or gaps. Competency and best practices are easily available to everyone. The actions are developed and reviewed according to the changes in the operating environment.

**ACTION 1:** The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will be reinstated for another term. It reports to the Ministry of the Interior and its composition reflects the priorities and focus areas of action (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior)

**Outcome:** The National Cooperation Network and Steering Group were established on 24 May 2016. The Steering Group was convened once and the National Cooperation Network six times before summer 2017. The activities are supported by four thematic networks: RADINET, local actions, research and reducing the threat of focused violence. According to the decision of the Steering Group, the priorities of the National Cooperation Network for the period 2016–2017 are: to develop the capabilities of the education sector to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism, develop and expand local activity, and develop and launch the RADINET service.

**ACTION 2:** The intersectoral early intervention model (Anchor model) operating in police departments prevents violent radicalisation and extremism and carries out individual early intervention. Organisations and representatives of communities are also involved in this activity. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board). The police have decided to establish the intersectoral Anchor model in each police department. In addition to the police, representatives of social services as well as psychiatric nurses and youth workers, among others, operate within the framework of the Anchor model. Support and participation from the other authorities is needed for the Anchor model to be established. The capacity of the Anchor model to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism is contingent upon the local operating environment and situation picture according to three levels: the minimum, basic and high level. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board)

**Outcome:** All police departments run Anchor model activities. In the supplementary budget for 2017, additional resources were allocated to the police for developing multi-professional activities, and the number of personnel participating in the Anchor model was increased accordingly. One man-year was allocated to each police department for the implementation of the activities. At the time of reporting (2 May 2017), personnel recruitments were still partly in progress. Helsinki Police Department has trained the personnel of all police departments in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. In February 2017, the Ministry of the Interior arranged an Anchor seminar, in which 130 experts from different parts of the country participated. A project financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers is currently in progress for gathering information and best practices from multi-professional work forms that are in use in other Nordic countries and are comparable to the Anchor model. The Internal Security Fund has allocated financial support for preparing material and the Anchor Model handbook and for arranging training. The project is coordinated by the National Police Board and will be launched in September 2017.

**ACTION 3:** Cooperation among the authorities, organisations and communities is carried out in an intensified manner in Helsinki, Turku, Oulu and Tampere. These localities will launch the 'Reach Out' action establishing a close-knit community uniting the authorities, organisations, communities and religious actors that work under the umbrella of preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. The participants will receive intensive support for their efforts to curb violent radicalisation and extremism. The goal is to make available everyone's expertise and experiences among all participants and to spread the word of available services and best practices in the region. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, Finn Church Aid (FCA)).

**Outcome:** The Reach Out project received financial support from the Internal Security Fund in summer 2016. With the support, Finn Church Aid hired one project employee and, in support of the project, conducted a background survey in order to assess families' need for support within the family support model. In autumn 2016, information was collected on the situation in the project's target localities and the need for increasing cooperation. Targeted cooperation meetings were arranged in order to increase knowledge of families' need for support and the related phenomena together with the authorities and civil society actors. Cooperation has been pursued in the project with the EU's Radicalization Network RAN, the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers and other international networks in order to increase the knowhow and its exchange as part of international cooperation. The project participated in the Nordic cooperation seminar in autumn 2016 and arranged an expert seminar in spring 2017 in collaboration with the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) in Helsinki. The key goal of the project is to develop support for those families whom violent radicalisation especially concerns. Developing this support calls for close cooperation and trust between different actors. To build trust, local dialogue between different actors has also been arranged during the project. Actions have been planned and implemented based on a need survey, including seminars on the theme in spring 2017. An international seminar on the project was arranged at the end of August 2017. Additional project funding was allocated from the Internal Security Fund to the work done by Finn Church Aid in order to proceed with and develop the work for a period of 18 months.

**ACTION 4:** Cooperation in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism will be increased among the cities in the capital region and their police departments to ensure that a radicalised individual living in the region, or one about to become radicalised, will not be left without the appropriate support merely because of red tape. (Responsibility: National Police Board, the Cities and Police Departments of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa).

**Outcome:** The chiefs of police and mayors of the capital region established a cooperation network in 2016 in order to prevent violent extremism. The purpose of the working group is to ensure that effective structures are in place to monitor and tackle violent extremism and to exchange information in the capital region, including the municipality of Kauniainen. Two meetings were held in 2016 and a third one in January 2017. Single cases involving individuals returning from conflict areas, for instance, are dealt with together with the cities and police departments of the capital region in accordance with the model of dealing with returning individuals, which was approved by the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice on 29 March 2017.

**MEASURE 2:****Launch the RADINET (exit) service**

**Objective:** Develop a service which supports the disengagement of radicalised persons from violence and from the sphere of influence of violent groups. Simultaneously, this will reduce the threat of violence to society and people.

**ACTION 5:** Launch the RADINET (exit) service It is systematic action targeting the individual and its aim is for the person in question to renounce ideologically motivated violence or disengage from it. Entering the process is voluntary. The objective of the Radinet service is to reduce the threat of violence and it is a supplement to criminal justice instruments. It is impossible to reduce the threat of violence posed by violent extremist movements or criminal gangs to people and society by tackling the problem of violence through a criminal justice response alone. In the first phase the action targets the radicalised supporters of religiously motivated violence and in the second phase the radicalised supporters of violent right-wing groups. Participation in the Radinet service is voluntary. The action is coordinated by the Vuolle Settlement, and many organisations, supported by religious communities, participate in organising services. While the Radinet service is supported by local grass-roots organisations and representatives of religious communities, the steering group also includes the key authorities regarding this action. (Responsibility: Vuolle Settlement, organisations, Ministry of the Interior).

**Outcome:** The Radinet (exit) service was launched at the beginning of 2016 through financial support from the Finnish Slot Machine Association (now the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA)) in 2015. In the financing decision of December 2016, financial support was allocated to the action for the following three years. With the support, it is possible to hire two employees, which is half of what was proposed. More personnel resources are needed in view of the need for the service. Link to STEA's article on the Radinet service: <http://www.stea.fi/-/radinet-yhteistyota-radikalisoitumisen-ennaltaehkaisemiseksi>.

The Radinet service has been developed in the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network and through Nordic cooperation. A seminar focusing on the exchange of experiences was arranged with the Netherlands in spring 2017. Based on this benchmarking, it can be said that the Radinet service has been launched superbly in Finland. Through Radinet, the customer work has reached specific individuals, and long-term customer relationships have been established with some of them. In addition, the project workers have consulted and guided professionals from different sectors on the work done with the target group. The customers represent the violent far right and religiously motivated violent extremism. Vuolle Settlement's Via



Vis anti-violence services (Oulu), Settlement Puijola's Aggredi anti-violence services (Kuopio) and Helsinki Mission's Aggredi anti-violence services are involved in the Radinet anti-violence network. Efforts to are going on to attract new organisations to the activities, with the aim of increasing the national coverage of the network. Other key development targets in progress are the development of customer guidance from the police to Radinet and making sure that the autonomous actors in the network adhere to jointly agreed operating principles. The national coverage of the network should be better. Developing a model for preventing the radicalisation of minors and referring them to treatment is also being considered.

Information on the RADINET service 2016–2017:

- a total of 37 customers and 108 customer meetings
- 13 consultations and guidance sessions
- 24 customers met personally
- 19 male customers, 5 female customers
- 13 customers with 1–3 appointments
- 9 customers with 4–10 appointments
- 2 customers with more than 10 appointments
- 13 customers met due to religious ideology
- 11 customers met due to political ideology
- customer age distribution 17–58 years

**ACTION 6:** Prevent radicalisation in prisons. Prisoners are in many ways vulnerable and, hence, particularly susceptible to the propaganda and recruitment of violent extremist groups. Radicalisation in prisons is one of the greatest concerns in European countries. In line with the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union, Finland commits to implement a considered and tailor-made policy to prevent radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism in prisons. This policy is adapted to national circumstances and the needs of the individuals involved, which could include elements such as: developing risk assessment tools and tools to detect early signs of radicalisation; training prison staff to recognise radicalisation; offering inmates opportunities for learning and developing critical thinking skills in prison, etc. The policies of the Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) on radicalisation and extremist violence, a subordinate body to the Council of Europe, and the experiences of the Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence (RAN) will be taken into account in planning and implementing the activities, with active participation in the operation of the network. Finland will also participate in the operation and development of the RADINET (exit) network insofar as the action concerns remand prisoners (detainees) and sentenced prisoners. (Responsibility: Ministry of Justice, Criminal Sanctions Agency).

**Outcome:** The Vantaa prison in Finland is presently implementing a project aimed at developing methods for identifying radicalisation in prison and violent extremism in prison. The aim is to identify radicalisation and violent extremism in prison as early as possible in order to efficiently prevent and tackle the phenomenon. The question is not of an Exit project, however. During the project, more than 70 persons were identified in prisons who can be considered to be prone to violent extremism or some degree of radicalisation based on their behaviour or the observations made of them. After the project, the methods and policies used in it will be recommended for use as permanent practices for the Criminal Sanctions Agency. The personnel of the Criminal Sanctions Agency were trained during the project to identify violent extremism and radicalisation in prison. The training was arranged nationwide for the personnel of twelve (12) prisons, seven (7) community sanctions offices, five (5) assessment centres, two (2) prison clinics and one (1) psychiatric prison hospital. Participation in the training was voluntary, and the personnel were motivated and interested in the subject. More than 200 persons participated in the training. The employees of the Criminal Sanctions Agency have also been trained in the use of the violent extremism assessment tool VERA2/2r.

### MEASURE 3:

**Launch the Helpline service to support the family and friends of the radicalised people**

**Objective:** Support the family and friends of the radicalised people in situations where a family member or friend has, or is about to, become radicalised.

**ACTION 7:** The families and friends of those who have become radicalised need support. The support can be pre-emptive when the individual is only considering joining some ideologically based extremist group or movement. Likewise, support is also needed when the individual has already joined such a group or movement. For example, support can materialise in the form of expert counselling and guidance on how to act in a given situation and to whom one can turn for the required services. Support can also be provided for a family whose child has departed for a combat area. According to preliminary experiences, individuals that abandon their action in a combat area and return home do so as a direct result of family influence. Yet another objective of the support is to help the family overcome the crisis. It must be ensured that the other family members do not become radicalised because of pressure or shame. The organisations are expanding their action in supporting families and individuals who suffer from radicalisation and violent extremism by launching the Helpline action, which assists families and friends in questions related to radicalisation. The expert assistance and support of the EU's Radicalisation Awareness

Network Centre of Excellence (RAN) will be utilised when the action is being developed. (Responsibility: organisations, Ministry of the Interior).

**Outcome:** The Action is part of the Reach Out project (Action 3). The situation of families was investigated in autumn 2016. The results indicated that the families are almost completely outside of any services and support measures, which increases their risk of becoming marginalised. The situation can also lead to radicalisation of the individual family members. Based on the investigation, plans are currently being drafted for further work.

#### **MEASURE 4:**

**Promote the actions of organisations in developing services to which violently radicalised people can be referred**

**Objective:** Everywhere in Finland there are organisations that have violence-prevention services that facilitate disengagement from violence, including ideologically motivated violence. The authorities, especially the police, are aware of these services, and case management and service coordination function in an efficient and comprehensive manner.

**ACTION 8:** Even in spite of the fact that young men are over-represented among the perpetrators and victims of crime, there are only a few anti-violence and disengagement services available for young men in particular. Most services are provided by organisations. Only a small fraction of the young men seek out or are referred to these services. We will promote the nationwide proliferation of organisation services that support disengagement from violence occurring outside the home. We will promote the expansion of the scope of activities of anti-violence organisations to include the prevention of ideologically motivated violence through international and domestic training. The awareness of the authorities, especially the police, regarding the available services will be increased. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for preventing violent extremism, local cooperation groups, organisations, National Police Board). Grass-roots organisations are present in people's everyday life. These organisations play an especially important role when it comes to preventing travel to conflict areas and teaming up with violent right-wing gangs. We will support and promote the activities of these organisations and their abilities to participate in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Organisations also provide an avenue for non-violent social activism (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network, local cooperation groups).

**Outcome:** The RADINET network promotes an increase in the number of organisations engaged in the network. Different actors (the authorities, organisation representatives) are involved in the projects of grass-roots organisations, with the aim of increasing interaction between those participating in the activities. Local cooperation groups and the organisations involved in them cooperate in order to develop the services of different organisations. The City of Oulu's service areas pursue cooperation with organisations, especially with regard to educational and cultural services. A good example of this is Villa Victor, which supports the launch of the Forum of Muslim Youth and Student Organizations in Oulu.

#### **MEASURE 5:**

##### **Increase competency, expertise and awareness as regards the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism**

**Objective:** Professionals and the representatives of organisations who, in their everyday work, encounter people who have, or are about to, become radicalised are able to widely recognise the underlying signs of radicalisation and properly act in order to put an end to the development that leads to radicalisation. Developing competencies and professional skills is supported by information obtained from research.

**ACTION 9:** The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will annually assess the training needs upon which a comprehensive training plan will then be prepared that also takes account of the training for which specific actors are responsible. The training specifically addresses the key sectors of action: education, youth work, social and health services and the police as well as basic and high-level local cooperation groups. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network, local cooperation groups).

**Outcome:** The members of the National Cooperation Network have been requested to submit training information, and the matter is currently being prepared. To be implemented during 2017.

**ACTION 10:** Promote research that yields information supporting the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism. Actively participate in Nordic and international research activities, and effectively utilise national and international research financing sources. (Responsibility: researchers, different branches of administration, and other actors within their respective sectors)

**Outcome:** The survey 'Suomesta Syyrian ja Irakin konfliktikentille suuntautuva liikkuvuus' ('Mobility from Finland to the Conflict Areas of Syria and Iraq': in Finnish) (Juntunen, Creutz-Sundblom, Saarinen), implemented with financial support from the Government, was published in autumn 2016. It provides more information on motives and the persons who have travelled to Syria and Iraq. Finnish researchers have participated in Nordic research cooperation that has been carried out as part of the Nordic cooperation agreement on preventing violent extremism. Extensive research seminars have also been arranged on this theme in Sweden. A researcher network, whose first meeting was arranged in March 2017, is part of the Cooperation Network for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism.

**ACTION 11:** The National Police Board provides guidance and remains responsible for pre-emptive action and the systematic training of the Anchor model as regards matters associates with violent radicalisation and extremism. The Anchor model actors will network with each other and disseminate best practices and lessons learned. The expertise of the police will be utilised in training local networks and other authorities. The Anchor model actors will remain responsible for providing training at minimum-level localities. (Responsibility: National Police Board, Anchor model actors).

**Outcome:** The Helsinki Police Department arranged training for all police departments on the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism between late 2016 and early 2017. All police departments have capabilities and materials to train local stakeholders in addition their own personnel. The networking of the Anchor model actors was promoted through a seminar arranged by the Ministry of the Interior in February 2017, in which a total of 130 experts participated. It was expressly hoped in the seminar that a corresponding event would be arranged annually in future. The volume and scope of the stakeholder training arranged by the police has varied according to police department in the early part of the year. Training has primarily been arranged for specific target groups, such as education services, where requested, and the theme has also been discussed in connection with specific operative cases together with private sector security experts, for instance. Based on the information that the National Police Board has received from police departments, an important target group in the training has been persons working with reception centres and asylum seekers. Among other things, the National Police Board has trained the immigration officers and contact persons of Employment and Economic Development Centres, TE office employees, managers and experts working with asylum seekers, and social and health care actors in Uusimaa. It has also given speeches on the subject in special regional defence courses and standby officer meetings.

**ACTION 12:** The National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism will organise annual seminars and other events which gather the different actors together. 'Tietotalo' seminars will be continued. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network).

**Outcome:** Seminars and other occasions arranged in 2016:

- three seminars on hate speech and violent radicalisation, arranged in different parts of the country in collaboration with the Central Administration of the Church
- two 'Tietotalo' seminars in Seinäjoki
- the Kick Off seminar of the National Action Plan in Helsinki
- a national seminar on the RADINET service in Helsinki
- a community seminar in Tampere in collaboration with Finn Church Aid
- round table discussions with the Uskot Forum
- a Nordic seminar on preventing violent radicalisation as part of the chairmanship of the Ministry of the Interior in the Nordic cooperation network

Seminars and other occasions planned and arranged in 2017:

- Anchor seminar at the Police University College in Tampere
- a round table occasion convened by the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Education with regard to the Safari camp arranged in summer 2016
- four REACH OUT project seminars
- a national seminar on Violent Radicalisation and Extremism The Ministry of the Interior and the University of Helsinki will together arrange a seminar in September 2017 in which the first seminar day is devoted to the theme 'Fears Related to Terrorism and How to Control Them - Research Data and Perspectives' and the second day to 'How to Improve the Effectiveness of the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism?'
- round table discussions with the media (Autumn 2017)

**ACTION 13:** Actively participate in international events and training with the objective of obtaining new information and disseminating best practices and lessons learned. The goal is to evenly provide training among all regional and local actors while taking into account the local level of the threat of violent extremism, and the need for training. In addition to the authorities, also promote the possibility of the representatives of organisations, cities and communities to participate in the training. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network).

**Outcome:** Actors involved in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism have participated in the seminars and occasions arranged by the sub-working groups of the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network RAN. Representatives from national and local networks engaged in the action have participated in the Nordic Safe Cities network operating in connection with the Nordic Council of Ministers. The network published 'The Nordic Safe Cities Guide' in spring 2017, which is intended for cities. Finland is engaged in the Policy Planners Network PPN whose meeting in London in autumn 2016 centred around the theme of preventing violent radicalisation in education. A seminar of the RAN Education sub-working group was arranged in Helsinki in March 2017. Together with the seminar, a meeting was arranged on how to deal with individuals returning from combat zones, and experiences were exchanged on this theme. A Nordic project targeted at preventing violent radicalisation was launched during Finland's chairmanship period in the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2016. The purpose of the project is to provide tools and competency for preventing violent radicalisation in educational institutions. The project has disseminated best practices and shared experiences. During Norway's chairmanship period, a Nordic workshop for teachers was arranged at Utöya near Oslo in May 2017 to improve their capabilities to take up controversial issues with their pupils ('Teaching Controversial Issues'). The intention is that the participating schools and teachers would disseminate best practices in their areas, supported by the national coordinators of the Finnish National Agency for Education. In addition, EU working groups have discussed issues related to individuals returning from combat zones, for example. In spring 2017, the EU introduced the Network of National Prevent Policy Makers, the aim of which is to develop cooperation between experts responsible for the activity at the national level and to utilise the best practices evolved and developed in the RAN network in the preparation of national programmes. Finland acted as the chair of the Nordic Cooperation Network for preventing violent extremism in 2016–2017. In this context, a Nordic seminar was arranged in October 2016 and a meeting of ministers responsible for the theme in Helsinki in January 2017. In addition, best practices and experiences have been shared. Minister Risikko visited the UN in May 2017 and was invited to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee to explain the practices that Finland has employed to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism. The model applied by Finland to individuals returning from combat zones has been presented in several international occasions (e.g. in Düsseldorf, New York, Washington).

**ACTION 14:** As the focus areas of the supplementary training provided by the Finnish National Agency for Education and the Regional State Administrative Agencies are being determined, increasing the instruments and competency in identifying and handling propaganda and violent radicalisation and extremism in schools and educational institutions will be taken into account. (Responsibility: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, Regional State Administrative Agencies).

**Outcome:** To date, supplementary training has been piloted for teachers three times in 2016 and 2017, coordinated by the Southern Finland Regional State Administrative Agency and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Training has also been arranged regionally. At the beginning of 2016, the Northern Finland Regional State Administrative Agency arranged two training occasions for education and youth service employees, one in Oulu and one in Kajaani. The instructors were members of the local cooperation group, Radinet/Via Vis and the local regional office of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service.

The Ministry of Education has allocated a discretionary government grant for educational personnel training to the University of Helsinki Centre for Continuing Education HY+, to be spent on supplementary training for teachers for the prevention of radicalisation in schools. A total of 75 persons will be trained in the project by the end of 2018.

In spring 2017, the Finnish National Agency for Education published the handbook 'Interaction - Guide to Strengthening Democratic Involvement and Preventing Hate Speech and Violent Radicalism' (in Finnish), [http://www.oph.fi/download/182479\\_rakentavaa\\_vuorovaikutusta.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/182479_rakentavaa_vuorovaikutusta.pdf).

The handbook contains ideas concerning ethics, human rights, democracy competencies, strengthening involvement, reconciliation and cooperation between schools and the police. The key idea is that schools should also learn to take up difficult, controversial topics constructively, critically and showing respect to others. The school should be a safe place where every member of the school community feels that he/she is recognised and capable of influencing common issues. Schools do not accept any hate speech or bullying. A school community supporting pupils prevents individuals from becoming marginalised and supporters of extremist movements.



**ACTION 15:** In the primary phase, the ‘electronic toolbox’ will be taken into use. The toolbox, designed for professionals, will be further developed to meet the demands of the changing operating environment, the focus of activities and the information needs of the practitioners. The toolbox will become an integral element of nationwide prevention (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior).

**Outcome:** The Ministry of the Interior decided in autumn 2016 that work on developing the toolbox will be discontinued. It was replaced by a Facebook site entitled Eroon Extremismistä (Get Rid of Extremism) that was adopted at the beginning of 2017.

#### **MEASURE 6:**

**Efficiently detect and investigate hate crime, and support the victims and the target communities of hate crime**

**Objective:** The police and the other law enforcement authorities will improve their action on detecting and investigating hate crime. One objective is to reduce the underlying causes of violent radicalisation and extremism.

**ACTION 16:** Hate speech and hate crime are linked to violent radicalisation and extremism. Hate speech can egg on those that are particularly vulnerable to commit hate crime or to link up with violent extremism. Individuals and groups targeted by hate speech and hate crime run a high risk of becoming radicalised, especially when they feel that society and the authorities do not sufficiently intervene and protect their rights. As part of their everyday work the police detect and tackle suspected hate crimes reported to the police and, when required, carry out criminal investigations. The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior will prepare a report on how the process of detecting and investigating hate crimes should be intensified, and what kind of research and data support are needed. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior).

**Outcome:** As a result of the fatal assault committed at Helsinki Railway Square in September 2016, the Government decided, on 29 September 2016, on intensified steps to tackle the operation of violent extremist movements and to counter hate speech. For the relevant actions, the Government allocated financial support to the police from the supplementary budget for 2017 with the purpose of intensifying actions to tackle hate speech and hate crime. The actions are indicated in the Final Report of the Working Group Preparing an Action Plan for Countering Hate Speech and Hate Crime, which was published by the National Police Board on 14 November 2016. The police consistently and efficiently tackles all types of punishable hate

speech connected with violent radicalisation, agitating anti-foreigner hate speech or bullying between pupils. Especially children and adolescents should be protected from hate speech. The authorities seek to tackle hate speech primarily using preventive means. The focus in criminal investigations is on actively detecting punishable hate speech in the Internet and tackling any actions related to it. A special group has been set up within Helsinki Police Department for countering hate speech. It combines visible police presence in the social media with other police operations. In addition, the investigation of web crime has been intensified, police presence in the social media is being increased, communications in countering hate speech and hate crime is being intensified, and training and research on the theme increased. The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior will prepare a report, to be launched in 2017, on how the process of detecting and investigating hate crime should be intensified, and what kind of research and data support are needed. The first supplementary training entitled 'Identifying and Encountering Hate Crime in Police Work' was arranged at Policy University College in 2016. In 2016, the National Police Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) for arranging TACHCLE hate crime instructor training at the Policy University College. 42 police officers from different police departments completed hate crime instructor training in two training occasions during spring 2017. The instructors train the personnel of their police departments.

**ACTION 17:** Hate crime has been defined as a crime against a person, group, a person's property, institution, or a representative of these, motivated by prejudice or hostility towards the victim's real or perceived ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or appearance, or disability or some similar characteristic. When it comes to hate crime, the individual targeted by the crime is not the only victim. Rather, it is the entire community the victim represents. If the victim does not receive any support, the general willingness to report further hate crimes to the police may decrease. This, in turn, increases cynicism and the notion that hate crimes are not taken sufficiently seriously and that the victim will not receive justice. Together with Victim Support Finland (VS) the Ministry of the Interior has implemented the EU's 'Good Practice +' project which creates the practices for supporting the victim of racist and hate crime. The best practices created through the project, and potential follow-on projects, will be implemented. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board, Victim Support Finland).

**Outcome:** The Good Practice + project ended at the end of 2016 and the actions decided in it were implemented according to plan. The work will be continued in the G3P - Good Practice Plus Project Reloaded project, which will be launched in September 2017 and in which the Ministry of the Interior is involved. The various organisations have continued the activities and arranged different types of occasions on the theme. The police intend to participate in the regional 'How to Help Hate Crime Victims?' training that will be arranged by the Finnish Red Cross and the 'Against Racism' project during 2017. Victim Support Finland and the Office of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman will also attend the training.

**ACTION 18:** Religious communities and religious premises can also become the targets of hate speech and hate crime. Finn Church Aid (FCA), working with religious communities, develops action in which said communities will support each other when threatened or faced with a concrete danger. The 'Shoulder to Shoulder' action will be further developed and implemented. (Responsibility: FCA, religious communities).

**Outcome:** The activities have been launched and the project coordinator has started work in Finn Church Aid on 1 September 2016. The aim is to provide grass-roots support to cooperation between local religious communities, promote good relations between population segments and create capabilities to work together to counter phenomena strengthened by social polarisation, such as hate speech and hate crime. During the autumn, the project coordinator visited different religious communities in order to investigate their cooperation needs and wishes with a view to developing an action model, promoting local cooperation and building trust in the capital region, Oulu, Turku and Tampere. The action model has been considered necessary, though the active development of the activities has been considered challenging. The work calls for resources that communities relying on voluntary effort cannot allocate to systematic cooperation in addition to their basic activities. Finn Church Aid has been promoting the action and its dissemination through seminars and events during the spring but has not been able to secure resources for the further development of the action.

**MEASURE 7:****Actions resulting from the increased number of asylum seekers**

**Objective:** Prevent the dissemination of violent radical propaganda and recruitment to violent extremist movements among asylum seekers, and efficiently carry out integration. The action will take into account the recommendations of the document 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:1).

**ACTION 19:** More than 32,000 asylum seekers arrived in Finland in 2015. According to estimates, the number of asylum seekers in Europe will remain high for the coming years as well unless the root cause of the problem, i.e. wars and conflicts around the world, can be resolved. Owing to their vulnerable status and uncertain future, asylum seekers can be particularly susceptible to extremist propaganda. Asylum seekers and reception centres are also targeted by vandalism and crimes. The aforementioned facts, coupled with problems in integration as well as misgivings and discrimination on behalf of the majority population may also increase the risk of individual radicalisation. Reception centre staff and others working with asylum seekers will be trained to identify violent radicalisation and extremism and to prevent it. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board).

**Outcome:** The Ministry of the Interior arranged a meeting in autumn 2016 for planning training for reception centres. In addition to representatives from the Ministry of the Interior, the National Police Board, the Finnish Immigration Service and Finn Church Aid were present. The content of the training was drafted in the meeting. However, necessary resources have not been available for implementing the training (money, people). Other reasons making it impossible to implement the training scheme are the abolishment of reception centres and the situation within the centres due to tension caused by negative decisions on asylum. The National Board of Police and some police departments have trained reception centre staff and others working with asylum seekers to identify violent radicalisation and extremism. The police will participate in the TURVA project arranged by the Finnish Immigration Service at the Oulu reception centre, the purpose of which is to improve asylum seekers' perceptions about basic and human rights and to prevent crime. In spring 2017, the Ministry of the Interior and key experts together investigated the situation with minor asylum seekers and the way in which they could be subjected to violence-urging propaganda and recruitment.

**ACTION 20:** Pursuant to the goals of the Government action plan on asylum policy (8 December 2015), Finland will effectively promote integration for those who have been granted a residence permit, proactively prevent feelings of social exclusion among young people and ensure safe growth and education paths, particularly for unaccompanied minors. The action will take into account the recommendations of the document 'The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions' (Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2016:1). (Responsibility: Ministries and authorities responsible for integration).

**Outcome:** The Ministry of Education and Culture has prepared a new report (2017:5) on the theme, which describes problematic areas in the action, including proposals for actions.

**ACTION 21:** The security of all persons and employees involved with the integration process will be guaranteed. (Responsibility: Ministries and authorities responsible for integration).

**Outcome:** The various actors take care of security issues as part of their basic duties.

#### **MEASURE 8:**

##### **Prevent violent radicalisation and extremism through good, balanced and clear communications**

**Objective:** Use words, in writing and in speech, in a manner that does not offend, label or radicalise any individuals or groups as supporters of violent extremism or, at the extreme, as terrorists.

**ACTION 22:** Speech and words are important in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Poorly chosen words and expressions may exacerbate radicalisation and heighten the sense of marginalisation, which is often an important catalyst for violent radicalisation. A glossary for 'violent radicalisation and extremism' will be prepared that will encompass the kinds of terms that are positive and constructive and whose use will not foment radicalisation. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism).

**Outcome:** To be implemented during 2017.

**ACTION 23:** Improve and clarify communications regarding the goals and means for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. Attempts will be made to engage in dialogue and interaction with different groups with the aim of achieving a sense of having shared goals and means. Prepare up-to-date material to support communications which increase awareness among those working to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism as regards messages between violent extremist groups, the means of dissemination and the focus groups of the messages. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism).

**Outcome:** In connection with the completion of a National Action Plan, key messages were prepared for the plan, posted on the website of the Ministry of the Interior and disseminated to the members of the Cooperation Network. Discussions on the matter have been held with different groups. The representative of the Ministry of the Interior has participated in the activities of the SSCAT project (ESCN as of autumn 2016), which is pursued under the EU, with the aim of developing, clarifying and improving communications related to violent radicalisation and measures to prevent propaganda. ESCN experts visited Helsinki in May 2017 and had discussions with experts of key importance to the theme. In autumn 2017, ESCN experts will arrange workshops on the theme for different actors. Experts have participated in communication seminars arranged by the RAN network that operates under the EU.

**ACTION 24:** Further advance the situation overview arrangements on violent extremism. The goal is to disseminate up-to-date situational information on violent extremism in Finland. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism).

**Outcome:** New guidelines were drafted in autumn 2016 for preparing situation overviews, and discussed in the National Cooperation Network. The Situation Overview published in 2016 discussed extremist crime in 2015. Preparing the Overview required a lot of work, so another overview was not compiled. An overview on trends in 2016 was published in February 2017.

**ACTION 25:** Regularly organise round table discussions with members of the media, and, when necessary, other parties, on topical issues regarding violent radicalisation and extremism. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism, local cooperation groups).

**Outcome:** No round table discussions were arranged with the media in 2016. However, the intention is to continue the action, because it is considered an internationally good practice.

**ACTION 26:** Experiences from different countries have shown that when crises associated with violent extremism occur, clear, balanced and successful communications are of paramount importance in limiting and reducing damage. A crisis communications plan will be prepared which will describe the principles of communications in situations which demand communicating information on the phenomena associated with violent radicalisation and extremism during disruptions, disturbances and crises. (Responsibility: National Cooperation Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism).

**Outcome:** The implementation of the action will start in autumn 2017.

#### **MEASURE 9:**

**Strengthen the ability of children and adolescents to identify, and guard against, violence-inducing messages and propaganda**

**Objective:** Children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, are able to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda.

**ACTION 27:** Children and adolescents, on their own and together with others, are able to counter radical and extremist messages and propaganda. Media literacy is a key skill which bolsters the ability of children and adolescents to counter propaganda and the 'alternative media' which has proliferated in recent years. In the general objectives of the core curricula for pre-primary and basic education, approved in 2014, and the objectives of the national core curriculum for upper secondary schools, approved in 2015, media literacy, as an element of across-the-board competency, is included in the multi-literacy skill set and in different subjects of basic education in a cross-cutting manner. Furthermore, the new objectives for basic education place increasing emphasis on human rights and adjustment to the democratic society. In addition to schools, also youth work, libraries and organisations, among others, promote media literacy. (Responsibility: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Board of Education, National Audiovisual Institute KAVI).

**Outcome:** The Ministry of the Interior and Finn Church Aid together arranged a socially oriented Safari camp for young people in June 2016. Implemented by DEMOS Helsinki, the camp focused on the theme of how young people can prevent violent radicalisation. As a result of the work, young people established the YAVE (Youth Against Violent Extremism) network and decided to prepare a website intended for young people. The young people who participated in the camp have also attended international activities, such as meetings of the RAN Youth sub-working group, and acted as experts in projects carried out by the authorities. The representatives of the YAVE network were invited to become members of the National Cooperation Network in summer 2017.

**ACTION 28:** Foreign policy, human rights and encounters with human rights violations as well as belittling human suffering are important underlying causes of violent radicalisation. Violent extremist movements effectively exploit these themes in their propaganda, fostering feelings of injustice and frustration. This is why many an adolescent feels that violent action is an important, or the only, means of direct influencing. We must make certain that young people have the opportunity to engage in open dialogue on topics that are important to the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism by organising youth-centred debates and other events that focus on themes such as foreign policy, human rights, etc. (Responsibility: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice).

**Outcome:** Finnish young people have set up the 2250 network that actively promotes the implementation of Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security and consists of several youth and peace organisations. Its secretariat is the Finnish Youth Cooperation – Allianssi association. The 2250 network in Finland arranged a seminar on 9 December 2016, the first anniversary of the resolution. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has met with members of the network and exchanged opinions. There are plans to arrange a round table discussion in 2017 together with Finn Church Aid and Finland's 2250 network, focusing on the theme 'youth, peace and security'.

**ACTION 29:** According to studies, Finnish adolescents, young boys especially, are extremely biased against ethnic minorities. Prejudice, and the associated fear of otherness, is often the result of ignorance. Cultural and global education will be intensified in schools and during leisure activities; opportunities for young people to visit different religious communities (e.g. churches, mosques, synagogues, etc.) will be increased and opportunities for engaging in dialogue and interaction among different religions will be created. (Responsibility: educational institutions, youth services, organisations, religious communities).

**Outcome:** Goals according to the measure are included in new curricula that were adopted in autumn 2016.



#### **MEASURE 10:**

##### **The particular responsibility of the police in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism**

**Objective:** The police are comprehensively cognisant of their special responsibility in preventing and countering violent radicalisation and extremism. This responsibility stems from the fact that violent extremism, as a phenomenon, lies at the core of maintaining public order and security: guaranteeing a safe living environment and the safety of individuals and communities as well as protecting civil rights.

**ACTION 30:** The prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism will be included as part of the pre-emptive action of the police and the Anchor model, which will be expanded. According to the decision of the National Police Board, all police departments must carry out activities as per the Anchor model. The model will include the preparedness for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. All police departments will implement the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism at the minimum, basic or high level. (Responsibility: National Police Board).

**Outcome:** The Anchor model is pursued in almost all police department districts at least at the minimum level in order to prevent violent radicalisation and extremism (see Action 2). In the supplementary budget for 2017, additional resources were allocated to the police for developing multi-professional activities, i.e. personnel for the Anchor model. One man-year was allocated to each police department for the implementation of the activities. At the time of reporting (2 May 2017), personnel recruitments were still partly in progress. Helsinki Police Department has trained the personnel of all police departments in the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism.

**ACTION 31:** Police presence on social media is a new and evolving feature. It is an element of all police work, pre-emptive activities included. Thus far it has not systematically focused on violent radicalisation and extremism because its virtual presence has varied depending on the grounds of the police departments' own capacities and focus areas on social media. The National Police Board will further develop the presence of the police on social media, at the same juncture, determine the content, goals and tasks of virtual police action on social media with regard to preventing violent radicalisation and extremism. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board).

**Outcome:** Every police unit has the obligation to arrange for supervised action of the police on social media as well as including supervised Internet presence. The action must be clearly supervised and its effectiveness developed from viewpoints that support the operation of the police, taking into consideration the joint impact of all police processes. The National Police Board has allocated resources to police departments for strengthening Internet police presence. The aim of each police department is to fill the position of at least one full-time Internet police officer. Internet police officers act as regional contact persons in a network of Internet police officers, support Helsinki Police Department's new team that focuses on hate crime and hate speech, and participate in national Internet police tasks and in local multi-authority activities (the Anchor model). On 9 June 2017, the National Police Board issued instructions on the action of the police in social media, which direct the action of police departments and individual police officers in social media.

**ACTION 32:** The individuals that pose a security risk include those who have high potential for violence but are impervious to a criminal justice response, or who cannot be committed to involuntary treatment. In order to manage the security threat, a focused threat assessment instrument – a screening instrument – is being used at the command centres of Helsinki and Oulu Police Departments, and by nearly all police units. The screening instrument has proven viable in practice. It has already helped prevent potentially serious acts of violence and massacres. The police have developed a 'National Threats' utility. The goal of concentrating this function nationally is to further hone the threat evaluation processes of the police, the screening instrument itself, to participate in international threat evaluation cooperation, to support police units in managing demanding and high-risk threats and to act as the national point of contact of the police vis-à-vis the other authorities, especially the social and healthcare authorities. The possibility of an expedited referral of risk individuals to specialised healthcare has not materialised as planned. There has been no success in establishing a uniform national model for case management. The 'national threats' model will continue developing the introduction of the screening instrument among the police authorities, the network of healthcare experts specialised in danger-level assessment and targeted violence, and a national model for referring an individual to a medical evaluation. (Responsibility: National Police Board)

**Outcome:** Measures to counter the threats of targeted violence have been developed under the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation. Police department visits were conducted at the beginning of 2017 in order to develop cooperation and activities. Work on developing the screening instrument was continued, together with participation in national and international cooperation in this sector. A thematic

network, which held an organising meeting in April 2017, has been established for reducing the threat of targeted violence. An internal seminar entitled 'Actions to Prevent Targeted Violence' was arranged at the National Police Board in May 2017.

A pilot project is being launched in the Northern Ostrobothnia Hospital District for improving the entry of violent individuals to access medical assessment and care. The target group consists of individuals that pose a security risk and who have high potential for violence but are impervious to a criminal justice response, or who cannot be committed to involuntary treatment. The aim is to create local procedures allowing violent individuals to access medical assessment and care as soon as possible. The prevailing opinion is that the number of individuals inclined towards serious violent behaviour has increased – also from the point of view of violent extremism. The question is of people whose violence potential has been assessed by an experienced professional (e.g. a special teacher or the police using their threat assessment tool) working with violent individuals. The development work involves the Oulu Police Department, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service, the City of Oulu and the Northern Ostrobothnia Hospital District.

#### **MEASURE 11:**

##### **Actions aimed against different forms of violent radicalisation and extremism**

##### **Violent far right**

**Objective:** Improve the preconditions of preventing recruitment to violent far right groups.

**ACTION 33:** So far the volume of violent far-right activities and the number of active members in Finland has been quite modest. However, recently there have been signs of increased activity among different groups. In order to prevent their membership from growing it is imperative to obtain information on the means of, and the individuals targeted by, recruitment. The police will prepare a report to support pre-emptive action. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, National Police Board, Finnish Security Intelligence Service).

**Outcome:** Work on preparing the report will start in autumn 2017, funded by the Ministry of the Interior/Police Department

### Violent far left

**Objective:** Increase the competency and the preparedness of the police in countering left-wing extremist violence, which especially occurs during demonstrations.

**ACTION 34:** The threat of anarchist violence is particularly prevalent during demonstrations. In these cases the violence also targets the authorities, particularly the police, as well as far-right groups and neo-Nazis whom the anarchists view as their main adversaries. The police will improve their action in countering violence during demonstrations. This includes action both before and after demonstrations. (Responsibility: National Police Board).

**Outcome:** Best practices related to the operation of the police during and after demonstrations have been disseminated to all police departments as part of the Project for Preventive Security implemented by the police. Some police departments have already visited the police departments in Helsinki to see how they deal with demonstrations. Work on developing capabilities will be continued in the national seminar on preventive security arranged by the police in May and November 2017.

### Religiously motivated violent radicalisation and extremism

**Objective:** Reduce the number of those travelling to conflict areas and establish processes for dealing with those returning from these areas.

**ACTION 35:** Per capita, and compared to similar situations in the past, quite many people from Finland have travelled to conflict areas. Especially in recent times those having departed for Syria and Iraq have mainly joined the terrorist groups operating in the region. Extensive cooperation among the authorities, organisations and communities is required to reduce the number of people travelling to combat zones. However, it is important for one actor – the Anchor model – to be able to proceed in a situation when an individual is contemplating travelling to combat areas or is about to depart. The other actors can always contact the Anchor operators when they encounter an individual who is about to become radicalised. The Anchor model, and its cooperation with other actors, will be strengthened as regards preventing travel to conflict areas. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, Finnish Security Intelligence Service, National Police Board)

**Outcome:** For more information on the Anchor model, see Action 30 and the REACH OUT project, Action 3.

**ACTION 36:** The individuals who have departed for the conflict areas in Syria and Iraq and are about to return pose a serious challenge to society. The first item of importance is to establish the identities of the people returning from the areas. Those having committed crimes must be brought to justice. Nonetheless, a number of them cannot be prosecuted for crimes: either there is not sufficient evidence or they do not pose any security threat. When it comes to these individuals, the most important thing is to reduce the risk of violence and the increasing risk of radicalisation associated with them, and to promote their re-integration into society. The procedures must be open, they must strengthen the security of society and its inhabitants and reduce the risk of violence. The processes for managing those returning from combat zones will be established. (Responsibility: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, National Police Board, Office of the Prosecutor General).

**Outcome:** The working group completed its proposal in March 2017, and the proposal was approved in the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice on 29 March 2017. The Ministry of the Interior sent a request for action to those responsible for implementation. Follow-up information on the implementation will be collected in May 2018 and reported to the ministerial working group on internal security and administration of justice thereafter.

## 6 Local cooperation groups for preventing violent radicalisation

Local cooperation groups for preventing violent radicalisation and extremism were established in 2012, based on the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism that was approved in 2012. In Oulu, Turku and Tampere, the network has been set up by the city authorities and its leader is an appointed city representative. In Helsinki, the network has been established by the Helsinki Police Department and it is led by the representative of the police.

The operation of the local cooperation groups is briefly outlined below, based on the information submitted by the representatives of the cooperation groups in a joint meeting of the local networks on 28 April 2017.

### Local cooperation in Turku

The City of Turku has established a local cooperation group that is convened four times a year. All the key actors are represented in the group. Anchor model actors are also closely engaged in the cooperation. Where necessary, outside experts, such as representatives from organisations, are invited to attend the meetings. The local situation overview is discussed in the meetings, and the members of the cooperation group share their experiences, observations and assessments about the situation and the steps that should be taken to prevent any problems. The work of the cooperation group is based on an action plan whose implementation is revised on a regular basis. The cooperation group has arranged training for different actors, and this has been considered both necessary and successful. The operation of the network is felt to be useful and the network has promoted cooperation between different actors and increased trust. The Southwest Finland Police Department has established an internal cooperation group that coordinates and develops the actions of the police in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism.

## Local cooperation in Tampere

Tampere was one of the pilot cities in the scheme for preventing violent extremism that was confirmed in 2012. However, for different reasons, the action in Tampere began somewhat more slowly than in the other cities. The City of Tampere has established a cooperation group whose operation has been quite active since 2016. The cooperation group has a broad array of representatives from different authorities and organisations. Its operation is based on an action plan that sets out from local problems. The intention is to involve different actors in the activities as well as possible, so meetings, for example, are arranged on the premises of different actors. Cooperation and activities are also pursued between the meetings. The executives of the City of Tampere are highly committed to preventing violent radicalisation and extremism, which is considered an extremely important resource. The action has an open-minded approach, and the various actors want to know the partners and increase trust amongst themselves. The work emphasises a comprehensive approach in order to extend the situational picture across sectoral boundaries.

## Local cooperation in Oulu

The City of Oulu has established a large cooperation group in which organisations, too, are involved. The group has established its operation. The members of the cooperation group know each other, and the threshold to contact and discuss matters between the representatives of different organisations is low. Another value-adding contribution by the cooperation group is that it provides an easy point of contact towards different authorities and parties. The key tasks of the cooperation group include maintaining a local situation picture of violent radicalisation and extremism, dealing with detected instances pursuant to confidentiality provisions, and arranging training. In its meetings, the cooperation group also monitors the progress of its projects.

## Local cooperation in Helsinki

The Helsinki Police Department established a local action cooperation network in 2013. The cooperation group consisted of actors representing several fields in the City of Helsinki and third sector and government actors. The network focuses on the prevention of violent extremism and its task is to monitor phenomena related to violent extremism and their trends in Helsinki and prepare the necessary actions in order to tackle the detected phenomena. The cooperation group was also responsible for disseminating information and knowledge about violent extremism to other authorities and stakeholders.

It turned out in the work of the cooperation group that the actors found it challenging to focus on the prevention of violent extremism only. They encountered highly varying concerns at the grass-roots level, which they needed to bring to the fore even though the concerns were not directly connected with violent extremism. For this reason, the opera-

tion of the network was changed in autumn 2016 to focus on the safety of cities and more broadly on people's well-being. It was considered purposeful to harness the broad expertise available in the network to detect and counter any phenomena or issues that could endanger the safety of cities.

The Helsinki Police Department established the 'Safe Helsinki' network at the beginning of 2017. The members of the network are the same as before, but a few new actors were added to it, including the representative of the City of Helsinki's Urban Facts service and the Helsinki City Planning Department, and organisational actors. The key tasks of the new network include reducing confrontation and segregation and preventing the formation of gangs and violent extremism. Therefore, the prevention of violent extremism is regarded as a challenge among other challenges, not as the spearhead of the action.

Based on the first meeting of the new network, the reform was considered important, because it allows the various actors to discuss concerns more broadly and to form a situation picture. The problems facing a rapidly changing society are complex and sometimes difficult to distinguish from each other. Among others, the members of the network hoped for critical reflection on concepts and phenomena, their causes and mechanisms so that the phenomena could be correctly understood, and for the dissemination of information on observations, concerns and tacit signals.



## 7 Links

National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism (decision 29 March 2016):

[https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/74921/Toimenpideohjelman\\_final.pdf?sequence=1](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/74921/Toimenpideohjelman_final.pdf?sequence=1)

Arranging cooperation between the authorities on how to deal with individuals returning from the combat zones in Syria and Iraq (decision 29 March 2017):

<http://vnk.fi/documents/10616/1266558/Taistelualueilta+palaavat+raportti+29032017/435a1edf-25e8-4232-b23a-aea35e0242ad>

The Radicalisation Awareness Network RAN has prepared a handbook on how to deal with individuals returning from combat zones that also takes their families into consideration. Special attention in the handbook is paid to the situation with the children of such individuals and with children born in combat zones. It contains instructions for the strategic level and for actors engaged in concrete measures, such as teachers, social workers and the police. It also presents best practices.

[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran\\_br\\_a4\\_m10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf)

‘Constructive interaction - Guide to strengthening democratic involvement and preventing hate speech and violent radicalism’ (in Finnish), Finnish National Agency for Education 2017:

[http://www.oph.fi/download/182479\\_rakentavaa\\_vuorovaikutusta.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/182479_rakentavaa_vuorovaikutusta.pdf)



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