

# EUROPE

Ensuring Unity and Respect as Outcomes for People of Europe



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<b>Abstract</b>	Literature review and definition of the core analytical dimension in the construction of guidelines for empirical research for implementing inclusive education and preventing violence through well-being.
<b>Keywords</b>	Inclusive education, Preventing violence, Well-being, Core analytical dimension, Guidelines empirical research



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## 1 Aim of the Report

The aim of this report is to understand the core analytical dimensions of the construction of guidelines for empirical research by providing a systemization of the theoretical basis that will enlighten the exploration and critical analysis of the empirical data in relationship with the objectives of the EUROPE project.

To achieve this goal, firstly, proper attention is given to the root causes of extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism, as well as the different strategies to combat violent extremism. The reason to expound on this is to situate our innovative approach within current strategies to combat violent extremism.

Secondly, the project is also concerned with creating an inclusive learning environment, while at the same time fostering mutual understanding and respect among people with different ethnic or religious backgrounds, beliefs or convictions (a second objective of the project). As will be explained it is very much related to combating radicalisation and violent extremism.

Thirdly, within a whole school approach the teachers and management staff also need to be supported, while parents as major stakeholders should be involved as well.

Based on these considerations, proper research questions and ways of how to answer these questions are formulated.

## 2 Background and motivation

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Paris and Denmark in the beginning of 2015, the basic question was: What can we, in Europe, do to prevent it? Alava et al. (UNESCO, 2017) for example, conclude in their report on Youth and Violent Extremism: *“It is clear that the strategic solution to violent extremism lies, inter alia, in education”* and already in March 2015, the Ministers of Education (MoE)<sup>2</sup> of the European Union defined a role for education in their Paris Declaration (European Commission, 2015) in the prevention of extremism, racism, and radicalisation:

*We must combine our efforts to prevent and tackle marginalisation, intolerance, racism and radicalisation and to preserve a framework of equal opportunities for all.*

The common action plan of the ministers of education called for:

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<sup>2</sup> In different countries another name may be used – e.g. in England: it is known as the Department for Education, but for simplicity a single name ‘MoE’ is used throughout this document.

1. *Strengthening the key contribution which education makes to personal development, social inclusion and participation [...];*
2. *Ensuring inclusive education for all children and young people which combats racism and discrimination on any ground [...];*
3. *Strengthening children's and young people's ability to think critically and exercise judgement [...];*
4. *Combating geographical, social and educational inequalities, as well as other factors which can lead to despair and create a fertile ground for extremism, [...];*
5. *Encouraging dialogue and cooperation among all the education stakeholders, in particular parents, families and associative structures, [...];*
6. *Empowering teachers so that they are able to take an active stand against all forms of discrimination and racism, [...].*

After the terrorist attacks in November 2015 again in Paris and in March 2016 in Brussels, the European Commission communicated specific actions (European Commission -2016b). This communication outlines the role of education in preventing radicalisation leading to violent extremism. Based on this and an earlier report on common European values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (European Commission, 2016a), the Commission elaborated a roadmap for promoting social inclusion and common EU values through formal and non-formal learning (European Commission, 2017).

In addition, in 2016 the Commission funded a number of projects in the area of "Social inclusion through education, training and youth". The EUROPE project, of which results are reported in this document, is one of them subscribing to the general objective of preventing radicalization, and the specific objectives of (a) fostering mutual understanding and respect among people with different ethnic or religious backgrounds, beliefs or convictions, (b) creating inclusive learning environments, and (c) supporting teachers and educators in handling conflicts and dealing with diversity.

Against this back drop, the EUROPE project implemented in several schools in Europe an innovative approach, known as Quiet Time based on Transcendental Meditation (QT/TM), that addresses the root cause of violence and violent extremism by directly promoting the psychophysiological well-being of all students, while at the same time strengthening the teachers so that they can deal with diversity and combat racism, extremism, and violence.

### 3 Extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism

Extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism are a worldwide phenomenon. According to the US Department of State, a total of 328 groups and organizations were in 2017 identified as perpetrators of 8584 terrorist attacks worldwide (National Consortium, 2018). But what do we mean by extremism, terrorism, and radicalisation and how do we tackle it?

Extremism has become a nebulous term with many different interpretations and definitions of what the term constitutes and, dependent on what meaning is given to the term, practical consequences, for example in terms of prevention, may differ. For our purpose we use the following definitions given in a report of the UK government (HM Government, 2011), paraphrasing where appropriate:

- **Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental European values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Violent extremism can then be defined as active opposition making use of violence.
- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

### 4 Risk factors critical to radicalisation and violent extremism

The view that one should deal with the root cause of violence and violent radicalization, instead of repression, has received more support in the last decade. For example, a communication of the Commission (European Commission, 2016b) reads:

*Violent radicalisation is not a new phenomenon; however, its most recent manifestations, its scale, as well as the use of new communication tools present new challenges that call for an approach addressing both the immediate security implications of radicalisation as well as the **root causes** (own emphasis), bringing together all relevant actors across society.*

In search of the root causes, many authors have tried to identify risk factors associated with radicalization and violent extremism but there seems to be no general agreement as to how to identify potential terrorists before they act.

The current understanding is perhaps best formulated by Webber and Kruglanski (2018), who state that most terrorists are *psychologically normal*, but reviewing the literature, they identify three factors critical to radicalization:

1. the individual need that motivates one to engage in political violence. This first factor is a motivational factor. Dandurand (2015) refers to some form of personal crisis, mentioned in many models, that initially energizes and drives the whole process of radicalisation. Humans have a fundamental need to feel worthy or significant—to feel important, valued, and respected in the eyes of others and many factors can contribute to the lack of feeling worthy or significant including disenfranchisement, discrimination, or occupation of one’s homeland by a foreign entity, personal failure, personal victimization, loss of a loved one at the hands of an enemy, or a social stigma within one’s community.
2. the ideological narrative that justifies political violence. The ideology identifies an enemy and portrays violence against it as a legitimate course of action. This frees adherents of the ideology to act violently without the burden of guilt typically attached to perpetration of violence. This second factor is an opportunity factor. Opportunity factors are factors that clear the pathway to radicalization (Precht, 2007).
3. the social network that influences one’s decisions along the pathway to extremism. Helfstein (2012), for example states that many radicals have a history of social contact or reaching out to develop relationships with like- minded individuals. This second opportunity factor
  - (a) increases an individual’s willingness to deviate against normative pressures,
  - (b) validates the correctness and appropriateness of the ideology, and
  - (c) creates a strong collective identity.

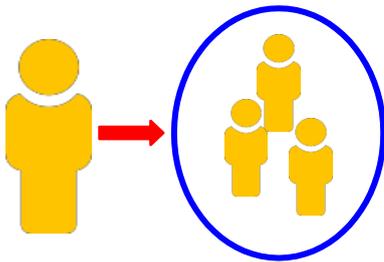
How these factors can be influenced, preventing violent extremism, is explained further in section 6.

## 5 Strategies to tackle violent extremism

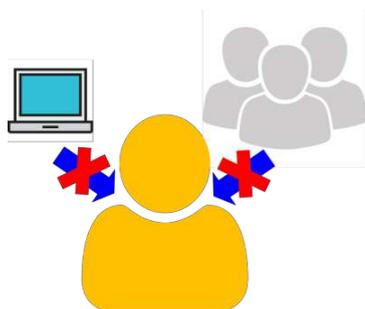
Extremism, terrorism, and radicalisation have been tackled by different strategies which we categorize as follows:



**Repression.** While repression of terrorism, is legitimate in any democratic judicial system, it is also known that it is not so effective. First of all, it is an a-posteriori measure. Harm has been done, with possibly loss of lives and people that are injured and traumatised. In addition, when perpetrators have been caught and sentenced, often prisons are the fertile soil for the two opportunistic factors explained before: acquiring an ideological narrative and social networking. Even repression to incitement of terrorism can be problematic. For example, the International Peace Institute notes in their 2010 report: *“The repression as a result of the legislation might become a source of radicalisation or allow detainees to be seen as heroes or martyrs to their cause”*.

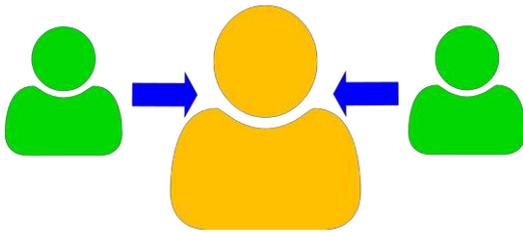


**Shielding.** A first preventative approach is shielding, building a protective ring against terrorist attacks. For example, the metal detectors at airports and governmental buildings, police and soldiers in the streets, detection of terrorist threats and preemptive strikes, etc. However, it is generally accepted that shielding has its limitations. Many authors refer to emergence of lone wolf terrorism and the choice of so-called soft targets in response to the increasing shielding approach. Recent examples are the Nice (France) truck attack in July 2016, the truck attack on the Christmas market in Berlin (Germany) in December 2016, the Las Vegas (US) massacre of October 2017, dubbed the “deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history”, and the Christmas market attack in Strasbourg (France) in December 2018.



**Preventing “bad influences”.** This strategy aims at preventing the opportunity factors, i.e. the ideological narrative and the social network, would coming into play. It requires detection of these factors and influences, and their prevention. For example, hate preachers or terrorist network recruiters are identified and expelled or locked up.

Websites giving a voice to these people or extremist social networks are shut down. Major IT companies (Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Google+, Snapchat and Dailymotion) have signed up to the Code of Conduct of the European Commission (2019). These companies have committed to assess and remove, if necessary, the illegal xenophobic and racist content swiftly (a majority within 24h), to help users notify illegal hate speech, and improve their support for civil society and coordination with national authorities. While such measures definitely had an effect it also causes the extremist networks and the ideological narrative to go underground (e.g. in closed network groups), which makes them more difficult to detect.



### **Promoting “good influences”.**

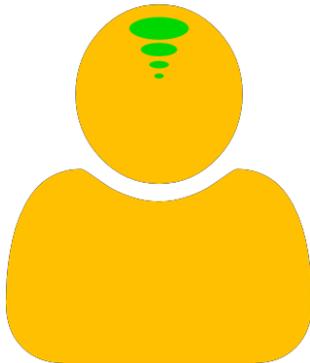
The main instrument in this strategy is to work with a counternarrative that aims to cancel the ideological narrative that justifies political violence. The promoting-good-influences strategy is found to be particularly relevant in the context of education. Already in 2015, the ministries of education of the European Union, emphasized that education can and should play a role in preventing radicalization and violent terrorism. The call for project proposals of 2016 of the Erasmus+ programme includes amongst others the following objectives:

- *Improving the acquisition of social and civic competences*
- *Fostering knowledge, understanding and ownership of democratic values and fundamental rights*
- *Preventing and combating any form of discrimination and segregation in education*
- *Promoting gender equality in the learning environment, combating gender stereotypes and preventing gender-based violence*
- *Fostering mutual understanding and respect among people with different ethnic or religious backgrounds, beliefs or convictions*
- *Addressing stereotypes and promoting intercultural dialogue*

All the above has certainly a place in education. However, with respect to violent extremism, delivering counternarrative is difficult. For example, Weert and Eijkman (2018) note: “..., despite training and increased knowledge, the question remains whether youth workers are sufficiently equipped to assess potential risks in youth who show no concrete plans for criminal action”. Therefore, specialists and counsellors are called in, in order to help in the detection of radicalization and mitigate polarized

points of view. At the same time, it has been observed that the mere detection and handing over to specialists and counsellors can be counterproductive as it may be perceived as handing over to the enemy, especially if counsellors and specialist are linked to security establishments.

Furthermore, prevention of violent extremism is a matter of preventing violent behaviour (what people do), which is different from prevention through a counternarrative which is targeting ideas on the intellectual level (what people say they feel and think). See also Weert and Eijkman (2018) who state that using counternarrative, “*prevention targets ideas rather than violent behaviour.*”



**Self-balancing.** The self-balancing strategy aims to prevent negative experiences such as disenfranchisement, discrimination, personal failure, personal victimization, or a social stigma within one’s community, etc from becoming a motivational factor for violent extremism. Self-balancing works at two levels: (a) it reduces the instances that would lead to such negative experiences, and (b) it increases the coping ability of those individuals that would be subject to negative experiences. Self-balancing improves well-being and promotes holistic development whereby a person is able to live and express his/her full potentialities and fulfil of his/her goals, which is the very essence of education. As such, self-balancing does not address the symptoms of violent extremism but the root cause. Not all the above strategies are suitable for upscaling in education.

*Repression* is not applicable in the educational context. *Shielding* is very costly and is only used in specific situations in Europe, e.g. the Jewish schools in Antwerp, Belgium. *Preventing bad influences* is only effective during school hours.

Only the last two strategies are the better choices as a general approach in an educational setting. In addition, research shows that enhancing positive factors, also known as a strength-based approach, is easier than mitigating negative conditions, also known as a deficit-based approach (Carr, 2014). The strength-based approach highlights the importance of developing individual and societal resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism. (Zimmerman et al., 2013). From the two strength-based approaches the EUROPE project has chosen *self-balancing - fostering well-being* - for further investigation. The other approach - *promoting “good influences”* through explanations and discussion certainly has its merits. However, as we will see in the next section, if certain conditions are not met, for example if stresses and strains prevail, the effect of promoting good influences will remain limited. Moreover, it is not the intellectual understanding of, for example, tolerance, discrimination, segregation, and human rights that counts, but the spontaneous unfolding of these values from within. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

## 6 Inclusive learning environments and the prevention of violent extremism

A second objective of the EUROPE project is to contribute to the creation of *inclusive learning environments*. While this seems disjointed from our general objective of preventing radicalization through education, it isn't.

Inclusive learning environments are learning environments that address the needs of all learners. These needs may differ. Traditionally, these are understood as physical or health-related needs such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD, disease or surgery on account of which students cannot attend classes, etc. However, more recent views extend this to disadvantaged children because of social reasons, children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who suffer from any form of social exclusion, which has been established as a contributing factor for violent extremism by researchers from different fields including political science, criminology, and neuroscience.

For example, Pickering et al. (2008) recommend after a 3-year empirical study to adopt a 'Social Cohesion' approach to counter-terrorism policing with a commitment to social inclusion, equality, political accountability and the rule of law. Wright-Neville and Halafoff (2010) state that social exclusion is a causal factor to terrorism and that social exclusion can be remedied by inclusive, participatory and deliberative measures. Pretus et al. (2018) provide supporting evidence in their neuroscience study relating a 'willingness to fight and die', to social exclusion in young and vulnerable individuals. In addition, social exclusion can lead to xenophobia and intolerance (see Aydin et al. - 2014) which in turn aggravates discrimination.

These findings fit very well with the model introduced by Webber and Kruglanski (see section 3) where social exclusion in the form of being disenfranchised, discriminated, or treated unjustly are the motivational factor for violent extremism. Likewise, Van Driel et al. (2016) note "*Research shows that the combination of structural inequalities, exclusion and intolerance compromises the future life-chances of many young people from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds.*"

However, by aiming to support inclusive learning environments, the EUROPE project not only seeks to decrease social exclusion as a means for reducing the risk factor to radicalisation and violent extremism, but seeks also to increase the well-being of learners, teachers, and staff in the schools. This element of well-being is now recognized as being an integral part of an inclusive society and of inclusive education. For example:

- the report of the World Bank group (2013) argues that *“inclusion has both intrinsic and instrumental value: it is integral to human well-being and social justice, ...”* (underlined for clarity).
- the General Comment made by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, states that inclusive education is *“a principle that values the well-being of all learners”*.
- Sen (2001, page 74) writes, *“Inclusion is characterized by a society’s widely shared social experience and active participation, by a broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals and by the achievement of a basic level of well-being for all citizens.”*
- A report of the European Commission (2004) defines social inclusion as *“a process which ensures that those at risk of being left out gain opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life and enjoy a standard of well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have a voice in decisions which affect their lives and access to markets, public services, and their fundamental rights.”*
- Boushey et al. (2007) stated that *“Social inclusion is based on the belief that we all fare better when no one is left to fall too far behind and the economy works for everyone. Social inclusion simultaneously incorporates multiple dimensions of well-being. It is achieved when all have the opportunity and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, and cultural activities which are considered the societal norm.”*

## 7 Inclusive education seeking well-being for all learners

Since well-being is a major goal of inclusive learning, it deserves a closer look. An interesting definition in the context of education, is offered by Dodge et al. (2012), who after having analysed many theories and dimensions of well-being, define it as “*the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced*”. It is illustrated in figure 1.1. In essence, stable well-being is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their well-being, and vice-versa.

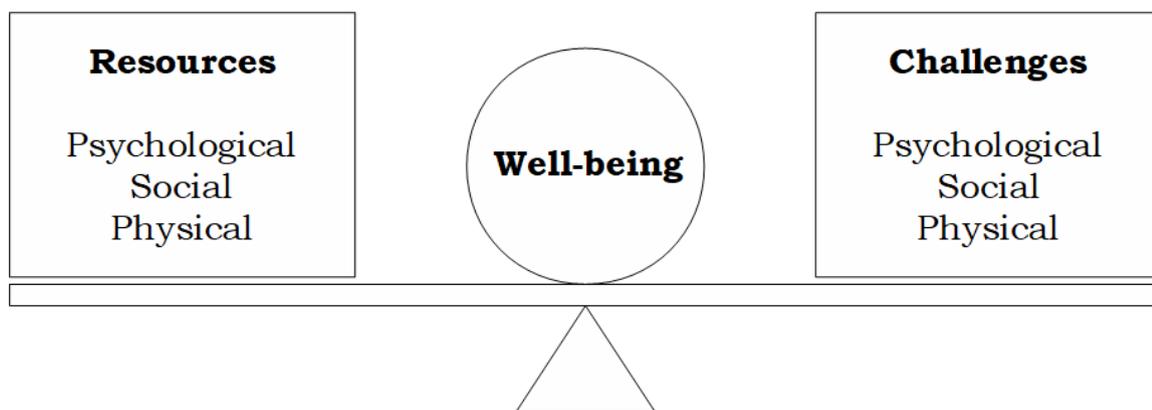


Figure 1 Definition of Well-being

This definition allows us to explain a number of aspects of radicalisation and inclusive learning in terms of (lack of) well-being as well as measures that can be taken.

*Motivational factors for radicalisation* such as disenfranchisement, discrimination, occupation of one’s homeland by a foreign entity, personal failure, personal victimization, loss of a loved one at the hands of an enemy, a social stigma within one’s community, or loss of identity are all *challenges*, that may create a well-being imbalance.

Forms of *social exclusion* are well-being challenges that may play a role in radicalisation and are recognized as challenges in the context of inclusive learning.

An *ideological narrative* that puts such challenges in a logical perspective, at least for the subject experiencing the challenge, is one of the *well-being resources* that can be used by such subjects. Unfortunately, this does not mitigate the challenge. It only changes it to a feeling of injustice, justifying possibly the use of violence in order to restore balance.

A *social network* is another factor contributing to radicalisation and one can see that it can serve as a social *well-being resource* in any situation including radicalisation. Social networks and hence, social identification is important in the process of radicalization and more generally in the decision to join potentially violent radical, extremist or criminal groups, so it makes sense to include that particular dimension in any discussion of violence prevention (Dandurand, 2015). She emphasizes that it is important to think in terms of facilitating the development of alternative social networks to support individuals who might then be able to resist radicalization.

*Stressful events* are mentioned in the FBI report (FBI, 2018) as a trigger for radicalisation. Stress can be understood as the result of a well-being imbalance, where challenges cannot be handled by well-being resources causing emotional distress. Of particular interest to the EUROPE project and the motivational factors of radicalisation, are studies showing significant improvements in symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). “*Mental health professionals have long recognized that trauma and PTSD increase the risk of aggression*” (Tull, 2018). Symptoms of PTSD are often found in children who have suffered from the traumas involved in becoming a refugee. Studies of Congolese refugees found that after 10 days of TM practice their PTSD symptoms decreased and after 30 days symptoms had decreased to a non-symptomatic level in contrast to control subjects whose symptoms increased

There are also a number of well-being challenges that are typically addressed in an inclusive learning environment. In the Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy – in the field of youth (European Commission, 2014), we find the following obstacles described:

- *Disability (i.e. participants with special needs): young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.*
- *Educational difficulties: young people with learning difficulties, early school leavers, lower qualified persons, young people with poor school performance.*
- *Cultural differences: immigrants, refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties.*
- *Social obstacles: young people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, young people with limited social skills or anti-social or high-risk behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers, young and/or single parents, and/or orphans.*

As mentioned before, some of the ‘social obstacles’ are also motivational factors in radicalisation. The above list is not exhaustive but provides an indication of well-being challenges that can play a role in education.

## 8 QT/TM: an innovative approach for students

The well-being model (see figure 1.1) not only explains the well-being concepts, but also shows how one can cope with challenges pertaining to radicalisation as well as inclusive learning in a better way. Well-being balance can be restored by mitigating the challenges or by providing well-being resources that ideally are not harmful for the individual nor society. For example, in the educational sector, appropriate lessons can help mitigating the social exclusion challenges (e.g. physical disabilities, mental disabilities such as dyslexia or dyscalculia, another skin colour, or coming from a different social back-ground) that students are facing. An example of a well-being resource that can be used in a school is to educate students how differences in opinion can be dealt with respectfully instead of using physical or psychological violence.

The well-being resource that the EUROPE project provides as an innovative approach is a simple scientifically documented psycho-physiological technology (QT/TM) that has been found to be effective for the development of brain functioning, cognitive performance, personality integration, and positive social behaviour. This technology, the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique, is a non-sectarian, natural and effortless technique that has been learnt by millions of people of all religions, cultures, and educational levels.

This innovative practice is a self-balancing prevention strategy as explained in section 3. At the same time, it is a strength-based approach to inclusive education addressing both sides of the well-being see-saw of figure 1.1. Firstly, this psycho-physiological technique serves as a well-being resource. As such, it reduces stress and has many other positive effects on mind, body, and behaviour (see D.5.1). Secondly, the fact that QT/TM is practised by multiple students and teachers, reduces the negative well-being challenges as illustrated by the following quote that comes from a 2017 evaluation report by Ofsted, the independent school watch dog in the UK. This is about a school in Skelmersdale, Lancashire (UK) that has applied QT/TM already for many years.

*“Children behave well and show respect for each other. They understand about taking turns and helping when a classmate is struggling or upset. ... They are very keen to learn, they listen well and are able to express their carefully considered views respectfully. Pupils care for each other and make a major contribution to ensuring that their school is cohesive, safe and orderly. Pupils are happy and content.”*

What is remarkable is that the pupils of this school fulfil naturally the earlier mentioned general human need to feel worthy or significant—to feel important, valued, and respected in the eyes of others. As such, it reduces the motivational factors that can lead to violent terrorism and it is the basis for inclusive education.

## 9 The involvement of teachers and school climate

As part of this innovative practice, teachers are also invited to be part of the QT/TM programme, for the following reasons:

Firstly, in an inclusive classroom the principle is to make all students feel welcomed, appropriately challenged and supported in their efforts. In order for the teachers to be able to create such a caring, positive, stimulating, secure and fair learning and teaching environment, it is also critically important that the adults are supported too. This includes the regular education teachers and the special education teachers as well as all other staff and faculty who are key stakeholders, including parents, whose positive connection with the school influences children's attitudes and achievements in education. Therefore, developing the well-being of teachers and their ability to deal with diversity is crucial.

Secondly, various studies show that very often teachers themselves have negative attitudes towards immigrants and minorities, see diversity as a problem and feel that newcomers should assimilate completely (Chircu and Negreanu, 2010). As for students, some teachers can also grow in combating any form of discrimination, segregation in education, and stereotypes, by applying the QT/TM technique.

Thirdly, some teachers feel that dealing with diversity in the classroom is not their core task and not their responsibility, but rather the responsibility of students themselves with the support of counsellors and other educational specialists (Coronel and Gómez-Hurtado, 2015). The problem of dealing with diversity as perceived by those teachers can be mitigated by QT/TM, but, in addition, research shows that the ability to cope with difficult situations (and avoiding burnout) is increased by QT/TM. Thus, it is also in the interest of the teachers to join the QT/TM practice.

Fourthly, specifically to our innovative approach, the involvement of teachers makes a difference in the acceptance of QT/TM in the classroom. It would be odd if the students were practising a technique which the teachers had not experienced for themselves.

A growing number of studies evaluate the impact of meditation as a path to achieve a positive school climate, as a cognitive-behavioural intervention for vulnerable students, improves the physical, social, emotional, psychological, and cognitive functioning and has the potential to enhance psychosocial strengths and coping abilities. It also includes enhanced attention, concentration and decrease of anxiety (for revision, Wisner, Jones, & Gwin, 2010).

From several types of meditation, Transcendental Meditation has proven to be efficient. Specifically, previous studies demonstrated adolescents practicing TM reduced incidence of school absenteeism, rule infractions and suspensions, in contrast to control groups (Barnes, Treiber, & Johnson, 2004). Similarly, in Rosaen and Benn's (2006) qualitative study, students reported that meditation had helped them to be more socially skilled and to calm their antisocial tendencies.

The school can also have a negative impact in general health and well-being due to negative social interaction. Schools have been widely documented to have problematic interpersonal relationships (Debarbieux & Blaya, 2002) that involve not only individuals, but also the entire school community (Ortega-Ruiz & Núñez, 2012). The school climate is often associated with victimization and violence, in case of a negative polarization and associated with school persistence and achievement having in a positive perspective (Galand, Hospel & Baudoin, 2012).

## 10 Research questions

Following the objectives of the EUROPE project, the key research questions are:

1. Is there scientific evidence that:
  - a) attitudes and behaviour associated with violent extremism of youth in schools in Europe decreases using QT/TM?
  - b) QT/TM fosters inclusive education?
  - c) QT/TM supports teachers and educators?
2. If the practice is proven to be effective, how can it be scaled up?
3. What are the policy guidelines and recommendations that can be formulated for deployment and scaling up?

There is ample evidence that QT/TM works, and this is elaborated in (D 1.1). However, because QT/TM is new to schools in most European countries, the project has elaborated its own research as a replication study, but equally important, in order to answer the above research questions 2 and 3 for the European context.

There are many ways that one can answer the first question. However, in a project where time is limited the evidence must come from tests where one can see already the difference in a few months. A second requirement is that the tests should be implementable in schools on a larger scale, with a consideration for the existence of official translations in the languages of the implementing countries. A third requirement is that standardized tests should get preference. Fourth, the tests should measure dimensions pertaining to factors related to radicalisation, inclusive learning, and the challenges for the teachers dealing with this. Fifth, from a cost-efficiency point of view it is best that research is limited to one branch of science.

Therefore, the project has chosen to use psychological instruments pre-testing and post-testing such that effects of QT/TM can be measured in dimensions including anxiety, tolerance, burn-out, strengths and difficulties, resilience, positive and negative effects.

The research approach uses three instruments for measuring the effects of Transcendental Meditation within schools. These instruments are:

1. Quantitative study: psychological tests (pre-tests and post-tests) for impact indicators such as anxiety and stress levels from one side and social inclusion, resilience and coping ability, outlook on life, satisfaction with school (students)/job(teachers), satisfaction with life and well-being from the other side. For students, an experimental study design (with a control group) was used.
2. Qualitative study: semi-structured interviews: for impact indicators such as school climate, ability to deal with diverse learners and different cultures.
3. School statistics: for impact indicators that are related to academic performance, absenteeism and suspension of students.

The data collection took place generically in two moments, a pre-test and a post-test, with a 3-month interval. The collection of quantitative data was carried out by questionnaires, which includes several standard psychological scales that evaluate the dimensions in study.

## 11 Summary conclusions

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Paris and Denmark in the beginning of 2015, Ministries of education and others concluded that education has a key role to play in preventing violent extremism and terrorism.

The contributing factors to radicalisation and violent terrorism can be categorized as motivational factors - such as disenfranchisement, discrimination, personal failure, personal victimization, loss of identity, etc – and two opportunity factors: the ideological narrative that potential terrorist buy into and the supporting social network.

While much progress has been made in understanding these contributing factors, it is important to go beyond that and establish ways of coping with radicalization and violent extremism. Different strategies to combat violent extremism are repression, shielding, preventing bad influences, promoting good influences, and self-balancing. Only the last two should be considered as valid strategies in an educational system. Moreover, these strategies, which are strength-based, are easier to implement than the deficit-based strategies, i.e. shielding and preventing bad influences.

The self-balancing strategy, which has been chosen by the EUROPE project, strengthens all aspects of the individual, and helps to restore the well-being balance. Well-being is also an integral part of inclusive education where the right resources are provided to meet physical, psychological, and social challenges.

Providing inclusive education, dealing with diversity, and preventing radicalisation poses challenges also to teachers, with a risk of burn-out and other problems. QT/TM as a general self-balancing technique can also help restoring the well-being balance for teachers.

In the context of improving education practice, therefore the basic research questions are:

- a) does it work,
- b) can it be scaled up, and
- c) what are the policy considerations?

These research questions can be answered using different branches of science such as medicine, neuroscience, criminology. The most efficient way in the context of our project setup, is using psychological tests that can measure dimensions such as anxiety, tolerance, burn-out, strengths and difficulties, resilience, positive and negative effects.

The target groups primarily involved in the implementation are:

1. the students,
2. the teachers, and school management, and 3) the wider school community, in particular the parents.

D5.4 will elaborate on this by

- a) giving an overview of existing research on QT/TM,
- b) providing an insight in and report on the practical implementation in schools,
- c) reporting on the results of our own research, and
- d) investigating the potential of scaling up the QT/TM practice with concrete policy recommendations.

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