

PREVENTION AND DEALING WITH RADICALIZATION THAT CAN LEAD TO
VIOLENT EXTREMISM

**HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
AND TOOLS FOR EARLY DETECTION AND ACTION**

Recognize, Prevent, Act

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*“EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON YOU CAN USE
TO CHANGE THE WORLD”.*

- Nelson Mandela

IMPRESUM

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Preface

Following the international¹ and regional practices in opposing radicalization that leads to violent extremism and terrorism, as priority security challenges of today's world and in the direction of a preventive process, a Manual for prevention of radicalization that leads to violent extremism for the teaching staff from the secondary schools in Republic of Macedonia has been developed (Recognize, Prevent, Act).

The Manual highlights the importance of educational values and principles in opposing radicalization that leads to violent extremism. The holistic and pragmatic approach in the education system

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¹ UNESCO (2016), Teacher Guide for Prevention of Violent Extremism, [hp://unesdoc.unesco.org/imag-es/0024/002446/244676e.pdf](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/imag-es/0024/002446/244676e.pdf).

may contribute to the promotion of tolerance and development of mechanisms for “early recognition” of phenomena and ideologies that promote violent extremism.

The Manual is in accordance with the basic priorities laid down in the Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia for the Prevention of Violent Extremism for the period 2018-2022² and the strategic goals: (1) improving the capabilities and institutional capacities for identification and mapping of individuals, groups, and other factors with radicalizing effect on

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² National Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia for dealing with violent extremism 2018-2022. page 34. http://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/sne_nacionalna_strategija_2018.pdf

their surroundings, and (2) improving the capabilities and institutional capacities to reduce the effects of radicalization drivers leading to violent extremism and ultimately to terrorist activities.

The basic methodological tool in the creation of the Manual is the analysis of positive international practices in opposing violent extremism and radicalization adopted in other countries, and adapted

and integrated into the educational context of the Republic of Macedonia. This Manual is part of the activities of the “Educate to Prevent” project, and within the aforementioned project, in order to ensure relevance in different geographical and socio-cultural contexts a research process was previously implemented in several high schools in Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar on the basis of which a baseline study was drawn up.

Introduction

The threat of violent extremism and radicalization leading to violence are challenges and phenomena with an international dimension, of which the region of the Western Balkans, including the Republic of Macedonia, is not exempted. Confirmation of that is the large number of departed and returned foreign fighters in/from the conflict zones in Syria and Iraq in the past years, mainly young population, indoctrinated and radicalized under the influence of various factors and causes. These global phenomena can undermine the stability of every country, especially the multinational ones, with occasional polarization and divisions, most often on an interethnic and religious level, which is specific for our background.

The manifestation of these phenomena does not know discrimination on any grounds, but experiences show that the younger population, as the most vulnerable, can be an easy target group that succumbs to the messages of violent extremists and terrorist organizations. Hence, formal education as a social institution has a key role to the influence and development of positive attitudes, values and opportunities for developing knowledge, skills and attitudes among young people that will help them build resilience towards extremist propaganda.

The preparation of the Manual “Recognize, Prevent, Act” aims to encourage the teaching staff in under-

standing and recognizing the above-stated global phenomena, reducing or minimizing the harmful consequences.

The manual offers support and direction for secondary school teachers to recognize early signs of

extreme behaviour and radicalization among students, showing useful, practical advice and response options in an appropriate pedagogical and professional manner to specific challenges and situations.



“No one was born with hatred towards another person, simply because this person has a different colour of skin, different origin, or different religion. People learn how to hate, they can also be taught how to love, loving is more natural for the heart of man than the opposite.”

- Nelson Mandela

Methodology

The manual for teachers in secondary schools and tools for early detection and action was developed by a team of two professional experts for the prevention and control of violent extremism, and it was approved by the donor of the project Hedaja Excellence Center from Abu Dhabi, the Arab Emirates and the Bureau for the development of education within the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The preparation of the manual is within the framework of the project **“Educate to Prevent - Strengthening the teaching staff and parents for building resistance among young people from violent extremism”**. It was implemented by the Center for Research and Policy Making from Skopje in a partnership with the Center for Development of Education from Tearce and the Citizens’ Association NEKSUS - Civic Concept from Skopje.

The main goal of the project is to develop community resilience from radicalization and violent extremism.

The specific objectives of the project include, as follows: 1) To encourage the teaching staff and parents of students to recognize the early signs of radicalization; 2) To raise school awareness of Internet risks and the use of education to increase resilience against extremist propaganda and recruitment; 3) Strengthening the capacities of the municipalities to establish an early warning system for radicalization.

Through the realization of these goals, the following results are expected: 1) Capacity building of the teaching staff and parents for the need to recognize the early signs of radicalization; 2) Strengthening the teaching staff and resilience of students against extremist propaganda and recruitment; 3) Developed system for preventive violent extremism for the needs of municipalities for early detection of radicalization.

Within the project, the following activities are foreseen:

- ✓ Preparation of basic study and analysis;

- ✓ Development of the assessment of the needs of the teaching staff;
- ✓ Development of a guide and tools for early detection of signs of radicalization;
- ✓ Capacity building (training programs, training) for teaching staff, parents and municipal officials;
- ✓ Development of early warning system and re-direction of identified problems (reference systems) at the municipal level.

Based on the conclusions from the basic study of the perceptions of teachers, pedagogues and psychologists about the phenomenon of radicalization that can lead to violent extremism conducted in the period May-June 2018, including 505 teachers from 22 secondary schools in the region of Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar, there was a need to develop this Manual for teachers in secondary schools that will enable easier and faster recognition of early signs of radicalization among students. At the same time, the Manual offers tools for proper action to prevent the radicalization process that could lead to violent extremism.

The Manual in its content defines the specific objectives to be met: 1) Raising awareness among the teaching staff about the risks of radicalization; 2)

Getting acquainted with the risks and factors that could make young people vulnerable to radicalization leading to violence; 3) Offer of teaching staff tools for identifying early signs of radicalization leading to violence; and other purposes provided by the Manual.

The Manual defines the basic concepts that the teaching staff should be familiar with when assessing and identifying early signs of radicalization among students. In correlation with the basic study and analysis, the factors for radicalization that can lead to violent extremism are determined.

Depending on the segregation in the stages of student behavior changes, such as: Problem behavior, worrying behavior and alarming behavior, the Manual offers a set of indicators that will enable the teaching staff to easily recognize behavioral changes in students and identify them appropriately with each of the phases. Indicators presented in this Manual can be considered as possible signs of a radicalization process leading to violent extremism if the individual manifests a combination of several indicators at the same time or for a continuous period. Also, these indicators should not replace the full evaluation of the identification process of a radicalized individual, and should not be taken as the only source of drawing conclusions.

Taking the role of the dominus litis, the teacher should initiate his/her own initiative to remove such

phenomena. In addition to standard teaching guidelines, teachers should create suitable conditions and a safe learning environment and open discussions on issues related to current government policies, various controversial issues, and topics such as radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism. The Manual offers a set of protocols for dealing with different student behavior for each phase separately and examples of advice of how teachers should act if things that can lead to conflicts and violence between individuals or a certain group of students happen in the classroom and school.

Objective

The key objective of this Manual is to raise the awareness of the education sector and institutions working in this field, to assist the community and to build institutional capacity to better address the challenges they face. More specifically, to raise the awareness among educators and parents about the risks of radicalization, that can lead to violent extremism, by providing knowledge and resources to help protect students from those risks. This manual is in accordance with the “2018-2022 National CVE Strategy” which emphasizes the need for readiness

and resilience at local and national level through early warning with the inclusion of educational staff in the early identification of radicalization among students, this manual offers ways to serve this purpose.

Educational programs, initiatives and activities for prevention and management of radicalization leading to violent extremism should foster and develop social justice, interculturalism and respect for universal human rights.

Specific objectives of the manual

- ✓ raising awareness among the teaching staff about the risks of radicalization leading to violent extremism;
- ✓ getting to know the risks and factors that could make young people susceptible to radicalization that leads to violence;
- ✓ an incentive to develop practice among teachers to stimulate debate and discussion on the topics of violent extremism and radicalization; to promote tolerance, community cohesion and shared values in society, in order to create a positive climate for open discussion and critical thinking;

- ✓ provision of tools for the teaching staff to identify early signs of radicalization leading to violence;
- ✓ presentation of the assumed scenarios that the teaching staff can face and options for undertaking actions for dealing with the specific case.

Target group

- ✓ School teaching staff
- ✓ The other educational and pedagogical support staff in the schools (psychologists, pedagogues, sociologists, defectologists, etc.)
- ✓ Parents.



Terms, definitions and causes of radicalization leading to violence

There are no consistent and generally accepted definitions of extremism, violent extremism, radicalization and radicalization leading to violence. Below are the definitions recognized by UNESCO³ and other relevant authors⁴ and they are designed to enable the teaching staff to more easily understand the concepts and processes of radicalization leading to violent extremism.

³ UNESCO (2016), A Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002446/244676e.pdf>

⁴ Schmid, Radicalization, De-Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization, 26. <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf>

Extremism

Believing in and supporting ideas that are far from what most people think is right or reasonable. Therefore, "extremism" refers to attitudes or behaviors that are considered to be outside the norms.

Violent extremism

Violent extremism refers to the beliefs and actions of persons who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals.

Radicalization

Radicalization is a process through which an individual/group accepts extreme social, political or religious attitudes, that is, an ideology through which they seek to make a significant change in society.

Radicalization leading to violent extremism

A process through which an individual or group is considering using violence as a legitimate and desirable means of action, in order to make a significant change in society.

Indoctrination	<i>Adoption of a certain doctrine (beliefs), efforts of an organized force to impose certain understandings, beliefs and ways of behavior.</i>
Terrorism	<i>Process of violent behavior of individuals and groups due to political or ideological motives aimed at destroying, damaging and intimidating people and the critical infrastructure, with significant negative consequences.</i>

Push factors	<i>Push factors are the negative social, cultural and political characteristics of one's social environment, which help in "pushing" vulnerable individuals on the path of violent extremism.</i>
Pull factors	<i>Pull factors are those that show "positive characteristics and benefits of a [violent] extremist organization that "pulls" vulnerable individuals to join.</i>

Reasons - radicalization factors leading to violence

There are various reasons and factors for instigating violent extremism and radicalization leading to violence, and there is no single indicator that with certainty reveals that one person is vulnerable. Traditionally, the drivers of violent extremism are divided into two categories: Push factors and Pull factors that must be perceived and addressed in the context of prevention. Understanding of these factors is important in order to avoid generalization that can cause labelling of the entire population, create a sense of collective dissatisfaction, or additionally stimulate violent extremist attitudes.

Push Factors include: social, political and economic complaints; feeling of injustice and discrimination; personal crisis and tragedies; frustration; alienation; fascination with violence; search for answers to the meaning of life; curiosity; identity crisis; social ex-

clusion; marginalization; denial of rights and civil liberties; historical narratives; disappointment with democratic processes; polarization, etc.

Pull Factors include: a personal quest, a sense of belonging to some groups that provide various benefits when joining or participating in them: employment, money, or other material benefits, the promise of greater ideals in addition to material things - freedom, adventure, spiritual comfort, ideology or social network; power and control; a sense of loyalty and dedication; a sense of excitement and adventure; a romantic view of ideology and cause; the possibility of heroism, personal redemption, distortion and abuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences (attracting simple world views that separate the world into “us vs. them”), etc.

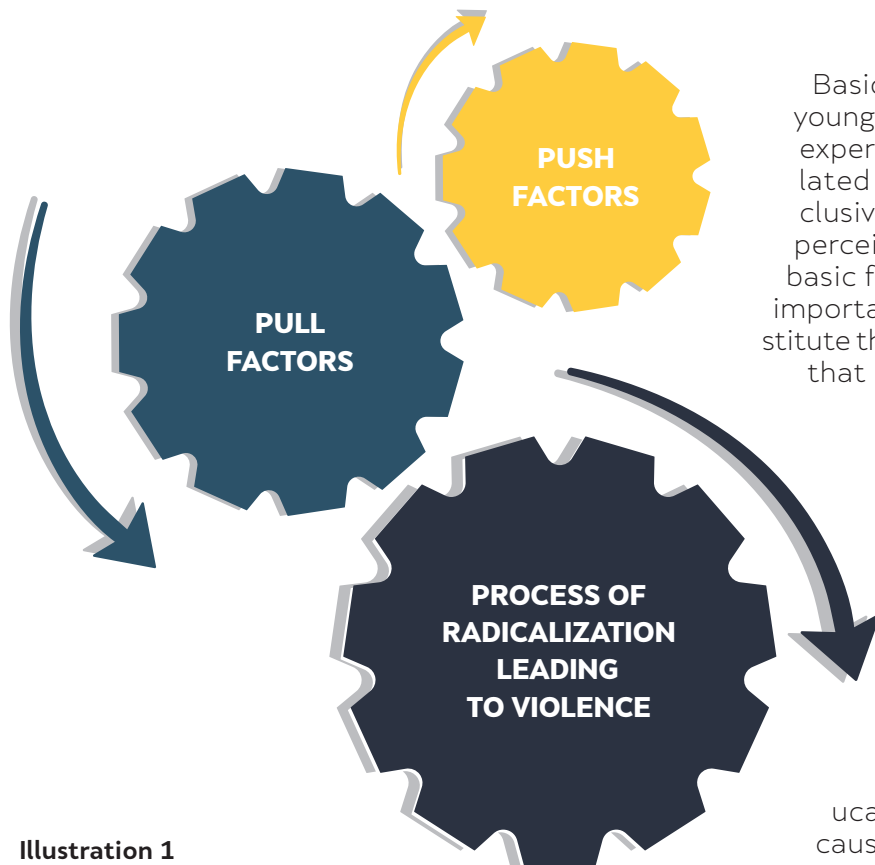


Illustration 1
Push and Pull
Factors

Basically, the process of radicalization of the young population can have several factors: the experience of relative deprivation, factors related to identity, such as discrimination, inclusiveness and integration, uncertainty and perceived physical or symbolic threat. These basic factors (root factors) are to some extent important for different radical groups. They constitute the psychological and structural conditions that encourage the radicalization process.

Social factors which act as a reason for increasing the suitability for the development of violent extremism are also important: weak state regulation, lack of rule of law, corruption and crime. These factors are complex, multiple, intertwined and closely related to structural elements of the environment that can encourage radicalization and violent extremism. Most often, there is a combination of these factors, but education, awareness and familiarity with the causes of radicalization leading to violent extremism can be the first steps to counter the phenomenon.

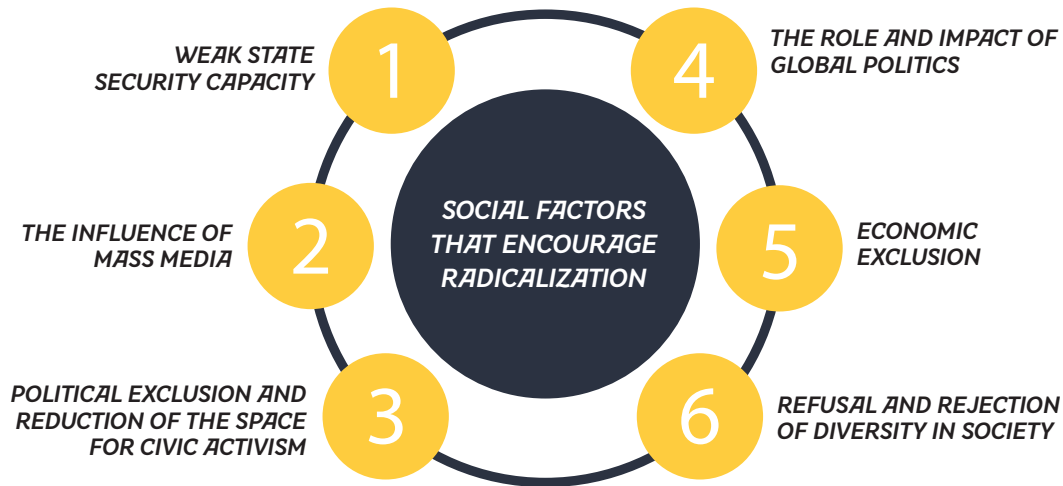


Illustration2 Social factors that encourage radicalization

These factors should not be considered individually. Individual factors should also be taken into consideration (Deterrence and exclusion, anger and frustration, personal weaknesses, search for one's own identity and dignity, revenge due to previously experienced traumas, humiliation, disrespect and abuse, etc.) that contribute to the radicalization of persons.

The role of education and the teaching staff in prevention of radicalization leading to violence

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Radicalization and violent extremism are complex topics. For these reasons, it is difficult to find a single formula for solving them. However, raising awareness among teachers can reduce and prevent the impact of potential radical actions they may have on students and young people in general. The prevention of radicalization leading to violent extremism requires enhanced cooperation between students, teachers, school management and parents. Hence, the need to involve education is inevitable, as the first and most effective way in prevention and opposition, that is, the best and non-violent method that encourages changes. Education offers proactive measures that are relatively inexpensive to combat the development

of extremist views, and it is necessary to pay more attention to schools in preventing and countering these phenomena.

In the Republic of Macedonia, this problem does not receive the necessary attention, and there is an emphasized need for continuous efforts for potential upgrading of the teaching staff, as well as for the institutional set-up.

Education itself cannot prevent individuals from resorting to violent extremism and radicalization, but can prevent the maintenance of an environment conducive to the development of these phenomena. To achieve that, schools need to:

- ✓ Be safe spaces where students can openly debate and discuss sensitive political, religious and other issues;
- ✓ Ensure inclusiveness and equity in education, as well as respect for human rights, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

In general, education (formal and informal) has the potential through the use of soft measures to help young people in the direction of:

- ✓ Developing resilience to extremist narratives, as well as acquiring socially emotional skills that they need to overcome suspicion and contribute constructively to society, without resorting to violence (through skills, critical thinking and media literacy);
- ✓ Developing communication and interpersonal skills needed for dialogue and finding a compromise for peaceful approach to change;
- ✓ Encouraging and promoting critical thinking skills;
- ✓ Promoting tolerance and respect, based on peace and dialogue;

- ✓ Media literacy to ensure that young people can efficiently process, filter and analyze large amounts of information available online;
- ✓ A sense of common civic responsibility and engagement,
- ✓ Active work and devising educational programs that will contribute to understanding extremism and radicalism as undesirable and negative forms of behaviour.

The ability to undertake proactive measures to prevent radicalization of young people lies in central and local government institutions, security institutions, religious communities, as well as schools that seek better ways to combat radicalization and violent extremism among young people. The ultimate goal should be to strengthen the resistance to this issue within the education system of the Republic of Macedonia.

The role of the teaching staff

The role of teachers in this preventive part is mainly in the focus of child and youth safety. Teachers and other school staff are in a key position to protect

students from radicalization and extremist influences despite the role they play in protecting their students in general terms (bullying, drug abuse, sexual exploitation, etc.). Their role is mainly educational, not supervisory. Since teachers are in direct contact with young people, they can freely be said to represent a model for change, as well as mediators that promote dialogue and encourage mutual respect. Furthermore, the role of the teacher while in the classroom is to be a facilitator, supporting students as they learn to evaluate evidence, negotiate, make

informed decisions, solve problems and work, both independently and with others.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to radicalization, and many at that age seek answers to various questions about identity, belonging, and at the same time seek different adventures and life satisfaction. Extremist groups, whether religious, political, nationalistic or of another type, claim that they have the answers and present themselves as shelters that can provide identity for vulnerable students.

Radicalization process of the youth

Radicalization among young people usually occurs over a longer period of time. However, in some cases it can happen much faster, as a result of a particular incident or bad news. The signs of radicalization, sometimes in young people, are manifested in a very clear and warning manner, but there are cases when changes that occur in children as a result of the process, are very little visible, or even not at all visible. It is also important to note that the execution of specific acts of violence can happen much faster, that is within a few days.

Teenage years are a period of great change and young people often need to be alone, get angry easily and quickly and often do not open up for conversation, especially when something makes them distressed. Such mixed manifestations greatly make it difficult to distinguish between the normal be-

haviour of teenagers and behavioural changes that indicate that the child may be exposed to radical influences.

The young population is considered to be one of the most vulnerable groups of people who easily fall under the influence of certain radical groups practicing violence and extremism. The desire to belong to a particular group, the pursuit of identity, the disappointment in institutions, the social and family status, the search for excitement and adventure is what makes young people very vulnerable to falling under various influences and accept even violent activities, in order to fulfil their expectations and ideals. Most often, the manipulation of young people is on an individual emotional basis, where the persons, the so called “recruiters” choose young people who currently have some concern: something

lost, bad relations or disagreements with parents and school, feeling that they are not loved by both sides, lack of sufficient finances, lack of company, a

feeling that they do not belong to the community, feeling of lost hope that there is a future for them, a feeling of personal injustice and the like.

Indicators for early recognition of signs of radicalization

Teachers play a key role in the prevention of radicalization that leads to violent extremism. It is important to remember that there is no indicator or group of prescribed indicators that can determine whether the individual is radicalized. It is also important to note that, regardless of cultural or religious affiliation, any individual or student can succumb to the process of radicalization leading to violence.

The phases presented below are just a set of indicators that make young people vulnerable to radicalization and they are presented in a local context. It is of utmost importance that teachers recognize the early signs that make students

vulnerable to radicalization leading to violence, in order to respond in a timely manner and prevent further radicalization process. The stages are divided into three categories, based on the degree of behavioural change of students during the school period. The signs of identification of radicalization leading to violence described below, should only be taken as guidelines and do not constitute an overall assessment of the degree of radicalization of the individual. It is advisable that teachers reasonably judge when assessing the vulnerability of students, as well as to monitor any changes that they will notice in students for a certain period before undertaking an action.

1

FIRST PHASE – PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOR

This category is characterized by individual behaviours that represent the moments of self-identification and where the individual begins to suddenly change his/her behaviour, as well as his/her physical appearance

The student shows interest in subjects of political nature, while trying to defend his/her attitude in front of his/her family and in the school;

The student expresses his/her identity or sense of belonging by changing the outer appearance (specific tattoos, traditional clothes, shaved head, specific beard, black nail polish in male children, religious symbols, ideological symbols, etc.);

The student actively begins articulating views of social media for daily political topics in the country, region and worldwide;

The student shows a desire to join political associations, ideological and religious groups, and converts to another religion;

The student expresses the need for exciting or adventurous perceptions;

The student expresses specific views regarding the polarization of society based on social, party, ethnic, religious and racial grounds;

The student comes out of the family and school atmosphere, becomes indifferent to sports and other school activities, retreats, changes his/her habits, feels rejected and begins to isolate.

2

SECOND PHASE – CONCERNING BEHAVIOR

This category includes a group of behaviours that could be associated with the beginnings of engaging of the individual in the process of radicalization. A characteristic of this group is the already embarrassed mistrust to the outside world, the prevailing attitudes that legitimize the use of violence to achieve his/her goals or defending a particular cause for which he/she is ready to fight and/or defend.

He/she actively reads, preaches and distributes religious and ideological views and literature in the family, neighbourhood and school;

He/she refuses school rules and refuses to participate in group activities or communicate with specific people because of their religion, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation;

He/she expresses the need to dominate or control others and to create supporters;

He/she stops the relationship with his/her family and school, in order to hide and maintain the new way of life and a circle of acquaintances that is, the new company;

He/she openly speaks about the justification of using violence in the protection of a particular cause, becoming closer to violent and extremist people;

He/she manifests that he/she belongs to familiar violent and extremist groups expressing hatred towards other individuals and groups;

He/she expresses obsession with the end of the world, commenting on prophecies from religious literature, obsession with historical figures characterized by crimes of humanity.

3

THIRD PHASE - ALARMING BEHAVIOR

This category includes various behaviours that confirm the readiness of the individual to perceive violence as the only legitimate basis and a valid mean of action.

He/she participates in or initiates acts of violent behaviour in school or sports competitions at school, in the neighbourhood and in the family;

He/she demonstrates an interest and inquires with teachers in physics, chemistry and biology about the how to used specific elements to make explosive devices or lethal weapons;

As a teacher, you know your students best, and you are in the best position to know if they manifest changes and unusual behavior. Believe in yourself and in your professional judgment and seek advice if something is wrong and if you are not sure about your consideration.

He/she takes part in fundraising campaigns for the needs of the violent and extremist group to which he/she belongs;

He/she calls other students to join violent and extremist group and encourages them to act for the cause;

He/she contacts and acts for the needs of the well known violent and extremist group by getting instructions from recruiters and leaders.

He/she participates in travel and activities (ideological - religious camps, sports competitions as part of a fan group, international circles of a group of the same ideological basis) for the needs of the violent and extremist group outside the place of residence;

He/she makes a plan to travel to zones where violent extremist groups are active, in unstable regions or in conflict zones.

It is important to note that these indicators can be considered as possible signs of a radicalization process that leads to violent extremism when, and only when the individual manifests a combination of several indicators at the same time or in a continuous period of time. Also, they should not replace the full evaluation of the process of identification of a radicalized individual, and of course they should not be taken as the only source to draw conclusions.

Protocols for prevention of radicalization

Protocol for the Prevention of Radicalization in the First Stage “Problematic Behaviour”

“The role of the teacher as *dominus litis*”

The unusual and problematic behaviour of the student should be recognized by the teacher at an early stage. At this stage, the teacher should assume the role of *dominus litis* and initiate their own initiative to remove such phenomena.

In addition to the standard curriculum, teachers should create suitable conditions and a safe learning environment⁵ and for open discussions on issues

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⁵ Law on Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools CONSOLIDATED TEXT (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 10/2015, 145/2015, 30/2016, 127/2016 and 67/2017)

related to current government policies, various controversial issues, and topics such as radicalization that leads to violent extremism and terrorism. At first, perhaps such issues will be difficult for young people to understand and deal with, but they should not stay away from these topics, on the contrary, they need to question their emotions and deal with them, and learn to think and reason for themselves, which gives them the opportunity to contribute to social change as conscientious citizens.

The overall behaviour of students and the interaction with peers and teachers should be considered through a holistic (comprehensive) approach. There are situations where intervention is vital and necessary. Encouraging the development of critical thinking is essential for the development of students and should be taken into consideration when deciding on intervention.

By actively participating in such debates, young people learn how to argue, to judge, to respect the opinions of others, to think about different attitudes and to resolve conflicts. These skills will enable them to gain self-confidence and build resistance for management of conflicts, which they will encounter every day in their life either at home, outside or in their local community, as well as responding to global problems and threats from extremist and terrorist ideas.

Therefore, through concrete challenges and actions, we will help teachers make their classrooms safe places for free and open discussion of controversial issues and topics. (See Annex 1)

“Controversial issues are valuable opportunities to hold important classroom discussions because values and ideas are explored in a safe area.”

OXFAM (Controversial Issues Learning)

Proposed activities for the teacher in the detection of problematic behaviour:

- ✓ In the school curriculum, include education for human rights and peace;
- ✓ Oblige students to set rules and responsibilities in the classroom;
- ✓ Openly talk to students about violence, radicalization, extremism and terrorism, as well as the consequences of them;
- ✓ Openly discuss with students about topics that can encourage violence;
- ✓ Openly talk about diversity in religions and beliefs;
- ✓ What specific rights are not respected in the act of violence?;
- ✓ Suggest ways to raise awareness of human rights in the school and promote respect for differences, for example through debates, lessons in the nature, games, role play and storytelling;
- ✓ Suggest to students to establish a club against violence;

- ✓ Help them to organize activities to promote a peaceful campaign and a safe school environment for everyone;
- ✓ Take the time after school or during a break to talk about bad behaviour - why it happened and what should be undertaken to correct it;
- ✓ Start a discussion using the following phrases:
 - What is happening here?
 - What is interesting about what is happening there?
 - What were we arguing about?
 - Why and how did this problem arise?
 - Will somebody tell me a nice word about his/her friend?
 - What do you think about your friends?
 - Let's talk about human rights and freedoms today!
 - Why do you think we need to have a discussion about it?
- ✓ Be an observer and a listener;
- ✓ Make a simulation of violence and see the consequences;
- ✓ Do not reject or discontinue students in asking questions;
- ✓ Be prepared and demonstrate tolerance of comments different from yours;
- ✓ Promote mechanisms for reporting (professional service or on line) that will encourage students to speak against signs of radicalization and violence;
- ✓ Initiate the creation of an on-line platform for education and prevention of radicalization and violence intended for students.

The teacher should analyze the seriousness of the situation, monitor it for a certain period and, depending on the situation, if there is no improvement, the teacher should decide whether to send the student to the pedagogue, the psychologist or the school principal, or to invite the parent of the child to an informative conversation for the purpose of familiarization with and pointing out the situation that occurred.

Protocol for the Prevention of Radicalization in the Second Stage “Concerning behaviour”

As stated in the explanation, certain deviant phenomena in the behaviour of the student can be observed at this stage. Student activities at this stage are on the thin line between legal and illegal. However, each activity is unusual beyond the normal behaviour of students. Inertia or non-engagement of the teaching staff at this stage can lead to metastasis of the occurrence. Here the teacher must and should notice the first signs of radical behaviour of the student. Not always, but there may be a situation where the deviant activities of the student can be observed directly according to the indicators from the second stage. At this stage, not always the teacher can be *dominus litis* in the preventive role. At this stage, cooperation with other stakeholders in the school, parents, professional service or local councils in the community is needed, which should give their input in preventing and deterring students from these phenomena.

What should the teacher do within his / her competences?

STEP 1

Step 1 - Undertake the actions provided for in the Prevention Protocol from the first stage in order to try to deter or convince the student that the actions and activities he/she performs are not typical of him/her and set a bad example to the others.

STEP 2

Step 2 – Call the student’s parent and inform him/her about the deviant, unusual and strange behaviour of the student, pointing to certain symptoms of radicalization.

STEP 3

Step 3 – Inform the pedagogue, the psychologist, the principal, as well as the school and the teachers’ council about the phenomenon of radical behaviour among certain students in order to for them to undertake appropriate measures.

At this stage, there are sufficient elements for the school management to inform the local council in the community, as well as the local police unit about the occurrence that have a duty to monitor it and undertake appropriate measures to prevent these phenomena among students. For this purpose, we

recommend the establishment of a call centre in the local community that will have a telephone or on-line platform for reporting these phenomena.

Protocol for the Prevention of Radicalization in the Third Stage “Alarming Behaviour”

Students at this stage can often exceed the limits of the allowed and perform activities within the school that are illegal and punishable under the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia. Although the competences of the teaching staff and the management for preventive action in this stage of the activities of the students have been overcome, any observation of such activities within the school should be determined and properly reported to the parents of the students and the competent authorities, in this case the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry of Interior on its website has created a platform for on-line reporting of forms of violence.

What should the teacher do within his / her competences?

STEP 1

Step 1 – The teacher should immediately call and inform the parent of the student about the determined activity;

STEP 2

Step 2 – The teacher should immediately inform the principal and the other school management about the determined activity;

STEP 3

Step 3 – The teacher in collaboration and coordination with the school management should report the case to the Ministry of Interior through the on-line platform on the ministry’s website or directly to the nearest police station.

Annex 1

PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

1

Situation 1: *How should I talk to my students about sensitive issues, such as radicalization that leads to violence, extremism, terrorism, military conflicts, and the like?*

Challenge: Many teachers do not feel comfortable talking about these issues some even refuse to deal with these issues at all, thus avoiding such questions asked by their students, arguing that such issues should not be addressed at all, and that the situation can get out of control.

Action options: It is very important for schools to offer opportunities for young people to discuss such issues, if students do not have the opportunity to search for these answers to other and often wrong places; we have already mentioned that age makes them very vulnerable to negative extremist propaganda and attitudes. For these

reasons, such safe places for discussion, where they can freely say and share their thoughts and concerns, are indispensable. You, as a teacher, should be ready to answer such questions that do not have to be part of your curriculum. It is important in such situations, that in a calm manner you initiate a discussion in which, besides the person asking the question, you will include other students, especially those who are passive and show no interest. In this manner, students will have the opportunity to express their views together, to learn to listen and respect the attitudes of the others. If you as a teacher are previously prepared for such situations (controversial issues), it will greatly reduce your fear, and the success of developing a constructive discussion will be greater.

If the situation goes beyond the limits of an allowed discussion and cannot be continued, it is advisable for the teacher to find a way to calm the

situation, and after the class dismissal to inform the principal so that other necessary measures that are in accordance with school internal rule-books would be undertaken.

2

Situation 2: *How should I deal with conflicts that occur among students with extremist-religious tendencies?*

Challenge: Conflicts between young people who have different considerations at this school age are normal. However, such conflicts can be intensified if it concerns the inclusion of religious views or certain attitudes about the way of life and the like. In such a situation, the teacher will have to be careful not to take sides and not to offend any of the students. If a student or group of students takes positions and a side, they start to insult one another and express hate speech, and then a discussion should be immediately initiated to involve all students, in order to gain mutual acceptance and mutual understanding. The discussion should be constructive and anyone who wants to talk should be given the opportunity and no one should be allowed to dominate the situation.

Option for action: Regarding the lifestyle issue, you as a teacher can start tactfully discussing with your

students the topic of discrimination in order to help them establish rules for mutual treatment for respect. In addition, you can point out the benefits of diversity in a society, and that one of those benefits stems from the fact that respect for diversity fosters coexistence and empathy.

Regarding the religious theme involved in conflicts that can occur among students, you as a teacher can emphasize that not all conflicts worldwide are always the result of differences in religion. Republic of Macedonia is an example of a country that is multi-confessional and multi-ethnic, and it is a great example of respecting and nurturing different religions and tolerance in this direction. It is very important, when discussing this topic, to indicate to students that conflicts are not a solution to such issues, but the only solution lies in dialogue and mutual respect for diversity, which, as we have said, should produce positive rather than negative repercussions.

If the conflict continues to occur during the other classes, as well, then it is necessary to inform the school principal, but without the knowledge of the students, so that other measures, that are in accordance with the school rulebook, would be undertaken.

3

Situation 3: *What if a student begins to insult his/her classmates verbally (based on their racial, ethnic, gender, etc. origin) during the gym class in a sports game, but also to act aggressively, to push, hit them, and the like?*

Challenge: There may be situations where due to various frustrations or injustices experienced by a child in and out of school they manifest such phenomena. There is a dilemma at this moment whether there is any concern that this could be an early sign of identification of the radicalization of an individual that could lead to violence. From the first point of view, these are the years when young people usually manifest such relations, but as described in the section on indicators, one indicator should not be taken independently, but one should perceive and monitor the situation of the student for a certain period of time, during that class, but also in conversation with colleagues teaching other classes.

Option for action: In this case, you should first stop the sport game briefly and ask the student what the problem is, the exclusion from the game or from the class, should not be taken as an option. If there is a possibility for that, it is advisable to start a discussion and include other students in

it, and in a constructive way, try to calm the situation and find a solution to the problem. You as a teacher in this situation should explain the purpose of sports activities and the positive side of the collective game, that sport does not divide people by race, religion, gender or ethnicity, and that much more can be achieved together. As an explanation of this, it is recommendable that you give examples of the numerous football, handball, basketball and similar clubs that have players from all over the world in their teams and that they are all connected by the one and only thing, the desire to win the match.

4

Situation 4: *What if a student asked me to leave the class to go to perform a religious right?*

Challenge: When faced with such a request by a student, it is very important in this situation that the teacher, if he/she has no prior knowledge about the manner and time of the performance of the religious right, is previously informed, in order to adequately respond to the request. The previous preparation of the teacher will enable him/her to provide a more reliable and simple explanation of the decision that he/she would make in terms of this request by the student.

Option for action: Talk to the student and indicate that you understand and respect the religious commitment and practice of religious rites, and explain that our state is secular and education is separated from religious teaching and practicing rituals while at school. Make the student aware that you know the ways and time periods of practicing religious rituals, and that these practices do not have to be carried out immediately, but also after a certain period during the same day, in order to understand that such a request is not based. Furthermore, explain that educational institutions in the curriculum study the basics of religions, but it does not practice religious rituals in school facilities, but also that teaching instruction should not be interrupted, something that religious leaders would have confirmed if asked. Tell the student that the decision to let them absent from classes will give rise to repercussions for the teacher. It is also very important to emphasize that this decision is not related to the freedom of religion, but to the rules, safety and security of students within the education system.

If the student does not obey the teacher and leaves without permission, and if such practice continues, then the pedagogical staff should be involved, who would inform, invite and involve in

a constructive discussion the parents in order to solve the problem jointly. If this does not prove to be successful, then it is necessary to include the school principal in order to undertake other measures that are in accordance with the school rulebook.

5

Situation 5: *What should I do if the student during the chemistry or physics class is interested in some specific chemical elements that are related to the preparation and composing of an explosive device, gives examples and values the attacks on humanity from certain past or ongoing conflicts?*

Challenge: Chemistry and physics classes can attract different interests and questions from students. The teacher should assess the sensitivity of the thematic unit that will be taught and predict the sensitive issues. In such a situation, it will be necessary that the teacher guides the conversation in a direction so as to emphasize the positive characteristics of the thematic unit that one has benefited from.

Options for action: Put yourself in the position that the issue of chemical elements is interesting and explain the chemical properties; here it is best to activate a discussion and guide the conver-

sation in the direction of getting answers, such as what led the student to ask the question and have an interest, gradually explaining that for more knowledge the student can attend additional classes - sections in physics and chemistry where special experiments are performed. In such a situation, the teacher will be able to recognize whether the student has asked such a question solely for reasons of curiosity and to be interesting to his/her classmates in the class on the one hand, or the student is persistent and insists on recognizing a special intention on the other. In addition, if the interest is accompanied by magnification and comments on events related to bomb attacks on humanity, then it is an additional element that gives the teacher a signal that the student has intent for violent extreme thinking. If the student shows interest to be part of the section, then the teacher will switch to a stage when he/she will have “control” over the student’s interest and behaviour.

If the student does not accept the teacher’s proposal for participation in the extra hours, then the teacher will continue to monitor and follow this student for a certain period of time to see if he/she will ask such or similar questions.

6

Situation 6: *What if the student fasts during the month of Ramadan and for these reasons loses the concentration during class and does not participate in the discussion?*

Challenge: There are students in Macedonia who fast in the month of Ramadan, and as one of the obligations for their religion, culture or tradition, expect to receive support and understanding from the school. During the month of Ramadan, students abstain from taking meals and drinks from sunrise to sunset, so that this situation makes them feel physically very weak, but also mentally unwilling to follow the lessons. Such cases also occur in many young students even in primary schools.

Option for action: In such cases, it is best for you as a teacher to talk to the parents of these students and explain to them that they are still children and that they are still young to refrain from food and water and that this can affect first of all their health, and then their concentration and success at school. Furthermore, through sincere and open discussion, you need to explain to students that you understand their desire to practice religious obligations, but that apart from education, you are also responsible for their health and safety at

school, and therefore you need to carefully clarify the negative effects that could occur.

If the student does not obey the teacher and continues to be distracted and does not follow the lectures, as well as fails to perform other school activities, then it is necessary to re-involve parents in a joint discussion.

7

Situation 7: *What if the student refuses to participate in the joint celebrations of the school (prom night, New Year's celebrations, traditional events, excursions outside the city or the country, etc.)?*

Challenge: The organization and maintenance of such events sometimes by a student or group of students is received by disapproval and non-acceptance to participate. Rarely, but there are cases where some students do not want to be part of such school activities for various reasons. Usually, students do not give some sustained explanations, and they can be associated with religious, traditional or cultural attitudes, but also lacking a desire to associate with other students. Sometimes the decision can be imposed by parents, who in these situations are usually concerned about the safety of their child, or the reasons may be from a financial point of view.

Furthermore, some parents are concerned about such trips or parties because in these situations children are very relaxed and can come into contact with alcohol and drugs.

Option for action: In such cases, it would be best for you as a teacher to first talk to these students in order to find the reasons for their disagreement. Once you have become aware of the right cause, and if it is due to their parents, then it is best to talk to them and try to convince them that children will be taken care of by the teachers as if they were their own children and that this will negatively affect their child, that is, it separates them from their friends. Also, in the case of excursions and traditional events, it is necessary to inform parents in time, as well as the students that these activities are part of the curriculum. Regarding the prom celebrations, make sure to explain to children and parents that this event is perhaps the last joint association with their classmates and peers, since after finishing high school they will be separated and everyone will go their own way and who knows if and when they will meet again. If the cause is of financial nature, then, together with other students, you can organize a collection of funds to help the student in order to enable him/her to be part of the common school activities.

If the teacher fails to convince them, and if some activities do not affect the success of the student, then there are no ways for students to be forced and parents to do something they simply feel is not necessary and do not want to do.

8

Situation 8: *If in the classroom some of the students mention something about conspiracy theory, how should I react?*

Challenge: Some students may start to talk about topics about current political developments and stubbornly stick to their views. It can be about military conflicts, religious and ethnic tensions, and the like. Students in these situations can express their positions and claim some theories that all wars in the world are caused by a particular nation that has a negative inclination towards other nations, different from them. Such arguments and conspiracy theories are usually found on the Internet by young people, as one of the main instruments of propaganda dissemination nowadays.

Options for action: It is a fact that our schools and teaching staff are not really ready to be able to answer these questions, but in cooperation with certain institutions or with the civil sector, they can organize and implement educational

projects for current events in the country and abroad. Such analyzes, theories and considerations could be part of the educational process in the subjects of history, philosophy, geography, and so on.

In such situations you, as a teacher, need to establish control over the communication and you should not immediately criticize the student for his/her views. Create an atmosphere for open discussion and involve other students in the conversation, by asking them to discuss and explain their opinion on the specific topic. If there are different views among students, enable constructive discussion in which you can ask each of them to present arguments and facts that would confirm their alternative theory, in this manner students will be taught to actively listen to each other, but also to accept and understand the different views. It is also good to open a discussion about receiving information, whereby you will point out that today there are many occurrences of “fake news” and “conspiracy theories”, the main goal of which is to twist the truth.

As a teacher, you should inform the students that local, national and global problems and issues should not be ignored, on the contrary, they should be discussed in order to be resolved. In this

regard, topics of discussion of hate speech, discrimination and xenophobia can be initiated with the mentioning of various examples in the world that affected various groups of ethnic, religious and other communities, in order to indicate that such events have always existed and that they are not targeted at just one community.

9

Situation 9: *How to act if the student during the biology class or other subjects dealing with biological processes and the emergence of the world and life on the planet denies the views of science and says that the books on humanity (the Quran or the Bible), depending on the confession of the student, is the only one that he/she trusts and refuses to attend and follow such instruction?*

Challenge: It is possible for a student to disagree with some theories that science has established, that are not in accordance with the holy books. If one takes for example the appearance of the human, science is in direct contradiction to what the holy books state, that the world and mankind is created by the “Lord/Allah”, but this should not constitute an incitement to conflict, but on the contrary, it should be taken as an opportunity for excellent discussion among students, where they could debate and exchange sustained arguments

that would create an atmosphere of common tolerance between different intellectual, cultural and religious views.

Option for action: In this situation, listen to the student to the end what he/she has to say. In the meantime, you can ask him/her additional questions, in order to draw more arguments and claims from the student. Invite other students to engage in the discussion, leading them into critical and analytical thinking. Students should understand that our state is secular, it guarantees religious freedoms and rights, and that no one can be forced to adapt their religious attitudes and considerations with certain scientific positions.

It is recommendable that parents be involved in such dialogues if necessary. If the dialogue is unsuccessful, and the student behaves in an ignoring manner and refuses to attend classes during the thematic content, then disciplinary measures in accordance with the school’s rule-book need to be applied.

10

Situation 10: *What should I do as a teacher if a student distributes extremist or religious propaganda material at the school?*

Challenge: The teacher notes that a student or group of students distributes propaganda material to other classmates at the school and loudly calls for certain actions.

Options for action: If the propaganda material and calls of the students are extremely violent and call for violent actions for the purpose of conducting actions for the needs of a particular cause, it is a crime and it is more than clear that for such actions the school administration should immediately be involved and the police needs to be called. The distribution of propaganda material can be a method of recruiting students if those who distribute the material are already radicalized persons. Students in this way can very easily be misled, because they are at an age in which they are interested in various things, especially if they are manifested in a “sensational” manner.

The fact that in our country, most of the combatants who were involved in the military conflicts in Syria and Iraq originated in the same neighbourhoods and were related or friends, points to the suspicion that this method of recruiting young people is dangerous and can have major consequences for the students in schools.

In order to prevent such occurrences and activities, the teacher could open a class discussion with the students about the impact of propaganda and propaganda material both in a positive and negative context. In this manner, the teacher will encourage and motivate students to discuss, to critically think, but also to discover which of the students are well acquainted with the propaganda and the manner of its functioning.

11

Situation 11: *What should I do if I see a situation that outside the school yard there are suspicious persons who stop and contact the students?*

Challenge: The teacher observes, in a certain period of time, suspicious persons who are moving and staying around the school, and in doing so, they are in direct contact with the students.

Options for action: First you need to ask the students whether someone knows the people outside or if they are their relatives and friends, then consult the school administration, contact the parents of the students, and finally report to the police. However, before making a decision to report to the police, follow this situation and these students for a short period of time to see if this contact continues to be maintained and whether these

suspicious persons come and stay in front of the school yard. Young people at this particular age are very vulnerable and, for these reasons, can easily fall under the influence of criminal and radical groups that young people perceive

as great potential for achieving their goals. The responsibility of teachers is to take care of the safety of their students and to protect them from such attempts to become involved into radical or criminal structures.

