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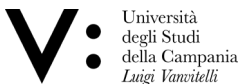


SERENY

Strengthening approaches for the prevention of youth
radicalisation in prison and probation settings

GA NO. 101007425

Handbook to increase human rights protection in prisons with regard to young adults



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List of acronyms

CoE
CRC
ECHR

Council of Europe

Convention on the Rights of the Child

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

ECtHR
EU

European Court of Human Rights

European Union

FRA

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

ICCPR

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

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1.



1. Background and general aims of the SERENY project

1.1. SERENY at glance

According to Recommendation Rec(2006)2 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE) on the European Prison Rules¹, all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with respect for their human rights. Art. 45 of the European Union (EU) Parliament Resolution (2015/2062(INI))² underlines 'that any specific programme targeted on a certain group of prisoners, such as those considered as 'radicalised', must respect the same human rights criteria and international obligations as apply to any other prisoners.' Moreover, Art. 46 of the same Resolution stresses that 'inhumane detention conditions, ill-treatment and overcrowding can constitute factors that increase the risk of radicalisation.'

Against this background, the project 'Strengthening approaches for the prevention of youth radicalisation in prison and probation settings' (**SERENY**), co-funded by the Justice Programme of the European Union (GA no. 101007425), aims to promote the adoption of **effective, evidence-based interventions related to the prevention of radicalisation processes among young inmates, respectful of their human rights** as recognised in international, EU, and CoE instruments. At the same time, SERENY aims to provide **primary knowledge and data on young adults being or becoming radicalised during prison and probation**, contributing to the definition of intervention practices and approaches more aware of the multifaceted and complex factors involved.

In order to design effective prevention programmes, young people's particular needs and realities must be adequately understood, avoiding focusing on mere criminogenic needs to reduce risk factors in prisons to instead focus on the strengths of vulnerable young people and, through this approach, help develop positive identities and overall resilience.

¹ Recommendation Rec(2006)2-rev of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Prison Rules (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 January 2006, at the 952nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies and revised and amended by the Committee of Ministers on 1 July 2020 at the 1380th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies), available at: <https://rm.coe.int/09000016809ee581>.

² European Parliament resolution of 5 October 2017 on prison systems and conditions (2015/2062(INI)), available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017IP0385>.

SERENY aims at gaining a deeper understanding of:



challenges that prison operators have to face when involved in young adult radicalisation prevention programmes;



drivers of radicalisation and risk factors related to the **specific age of inmates**;



promising approaches to radicalisation risk prevention and mitigation based on a human rights promotion perspective, allowing for a translation of rights granted by law to young adults into their daily lives in prison.

1.2. This Handbook: focus, methodology, and goals

SERENY strives to individuate and implement effective strategies to prevent the radicalisation of young adults in prison and probation settings. **While previous phases of the project focused on the macro-** (legislation, policy) **and meso-** (prison management, involved communities practices) **levels of radicalisation prevention, this Handbook primarily focuses on the individual dimension**, with data collected within **prison and probation settings in Italy, Austria, Spain, Slovenia and Albania**. These supporting data – both quantitative and qualitative – have been collected through different means, namely:

- a **pan-European online-based survey** addressing the concerned professionals, namely prison and probation staff (Annex I);
- **focus group meetings** with prison and probation staff (Annex II);
- **interviews with young people at risk**, carried out by trained social workers (Annex III).³

More specifically, **the goal of the Handbook is to offer practical guidance primarily to prison staff but also to a broader audience** – including policy- and law-makers and penitentiary administrations – **to increase the protection of human rights in prisons with regard to young adults**. In other words, the Handbook is **not directed only to individual operators but also prison administrations more broadly**. To that purpose, based on the analysis of the collected data, it provides recommendations and describes some of the best practices identified.

³ The data supporting this study are available on request from the SERENY partners. The data are not publicly available due to ethical and legal restrictions, as they contain information that could compromise research participants' safety, privacy, and/or anonymity. Importantly, the quantity and quality of the data collected through the online survey, the focus group meetings and the interviews greatly varied across the countries and their respective prison administrations. For example, most of the professionals participating in the online survey worked in Spanish and Albanian institutions. Further, the professionals participating in the focus groups varied greatly, with asymmetries across the countries under analysis. In Spain, only the Catalan prison administration consented to hold focus group meetings. Finally, the SERENY researchers were not always allowed to hold focus group meetings (e.g., with the Spanish nation-level prison administration) and/or administer interviews directly to the young adults in prison or probation settings, neither personally nor with the assistance of prison staff (e.g., with the Italian and Spanish prison administrations). In the latter case, when possible, interview questions were re-organized to be directed to staff and professionals working with young inmates.

Fig. 1. Pan-European online survey: sample participants by nationality (elaboration by Manfred Zentner, Donau Universität Krems, Department Migration and Globalization)

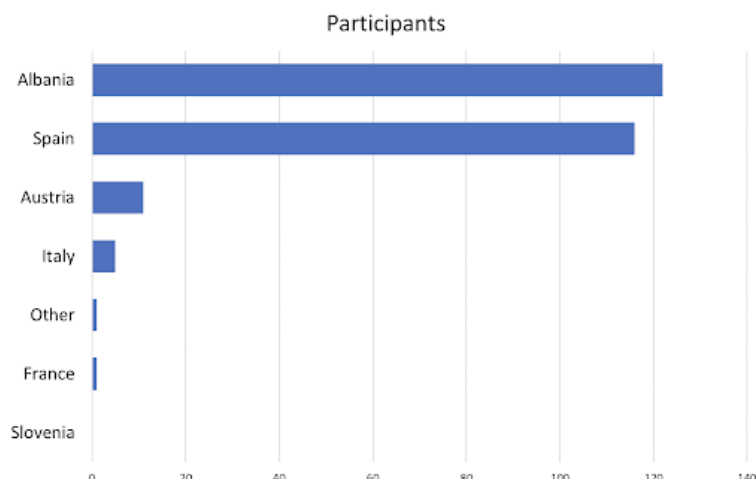
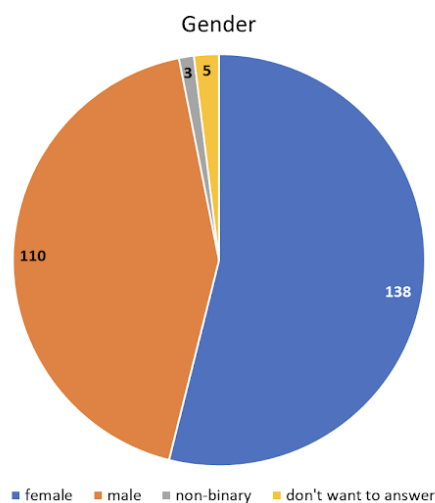


Fig. 2. Pan-European online survey: sample participants by professional background (elaboration by Manfred Zentner, Donau Universität Krems, Department Migration and Globalization).



Fig. 3. Pan-European online survey: sample participants by gender (elaboration by Manfred Zentner, Donau Universität Krems, Department Migration and Globalization).



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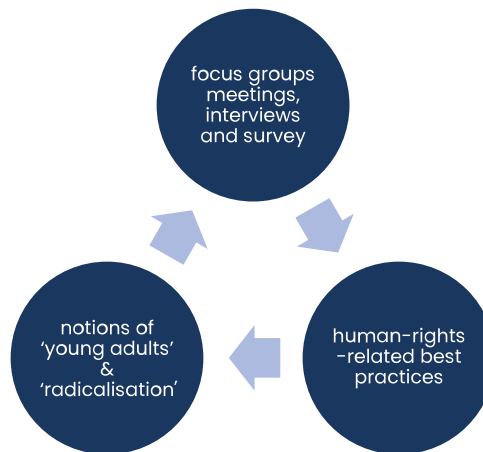


2. Terminology

To make the terminology used as clear as possible, **this Handbook resorts to the working definitions listed below**. Some of them, notably ‘young adults’ and ‘radicalisation’, at least partially bypass existing legislation and other regulations in force in different national systems. This choice comes from the fact that such notions are not meant to be authoritative for law- and policymakers but rather to provide a common terminological and methodological ground for the purposes of this Handbook, namely the collection of data at focus group meetings, interviews to young people at risk, and the online pan-European survey. Therefore, **the notions below indicate the framework common to scientific partners and prison operators to identify and share their experiences, best practices, and related limits**.

In particular, the definitions of ‘young adults’ and ‘radicalisation’ served as the basis for collecting and analysing the data and as the main target of the best practices in this Handbook. This means that **the analytical side of such notions feeds into the normative and vice versa**.

Fig. 4. Interaction between the notions of ‘young adults’ and ‘radicalisation’, data collection and the identification of human-rights-related recommendations and best practices.



2.1. Young adults

One of the limits of the different forms of legislation currently in place in the analysed countries lies in the absence of a common, legally binding definition of ‘young adult’ as a specific age group for penitentiary treatment and prevention of radicalisation.⁴ Different countries either resort to distinct notions of ‘young adult’ for penitentiary treatment or do not have any **specific** legal regimes applicable to age groups between juvenile and adult prison populations. For the purposes of this Handbook, **‘young adults’ refers to the age group, including people between the legal age determined within a given legal system and their mid-twenties**.

This definition is **purposefully under-determined** because it keeps different notions and legal regimes across different countries together while still being precise enough to be analytical-ly and normatively useful. In particular, this definition has guided the focus group meetings with prison staff and front-line operators, which constitute the main basis for the recommendations to increase human rights protection in prisons concerning vulnerable/at-risk young adults. Therefore, **recommendations and best practices should be considered applicable mainly – but not necessarily limited to – this age group**.

⁴ See Report on the coherence between EU/International legislation related to human rights and its implementation in 8 analyzed countries with a special focus on young adults, 2022, available at: <https://www.sereny.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Report-of-national-legislation-frameworks-on-youth-radicalization-programs.pdf>, p. 9.

2.2. Radicalisation

Similarly, 'radicalisation' is normally not defined in legally binding instruments.⁵ While definitions of radicalisation in social science and psychology literature abound and are relatively settled⁶, 'radicalisation' is most commonly defined in "soft law" instruments, policy documents, government handbooks, and internal guidelines⁷.

For the purposes of this Handbook, '**radicalisation**' refers to **a process by which individuals adopt extremist beliefs that increase the willingness to use violent means to achieve societal changes or, more generally, the expected outcome.** Also in this case, the working definition is relatively broad. It includes distinct notions – religious, political, criminal – of radicalisation while remaining analytically useful.⁸

Both definitions – 'young adults' and 'radicalisation' – served as the basis for collecting and analysing the data and as the main target of the best practices contained in this Handbook. This means that the analytical side of such notions feeds into the normative and vice versa.

'Radicalisation' refers to a process by which individuals adopt extremist beliefs that increase the willingness to use violent means to achieve societal changes or, more generally, the expected outcome.

⁵ See again Report on the coherence between EU/international legislation related to human rights and its implementation (nt. 4), p. 21.

⁶ See, e.g., Schmid, A. P., 'Radicalization, De-Radicalization, Counter-Radicalization: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review', *The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague* 4, No 2, 2013, pp. 5–6; Dandurand, Y., 'Social inclusion programmes for youth and the prevention of violent extremism', in M. Lombardi et al. (eds.), *Countering radicalisation and violent extremism among youth to prevent terrorism*, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. IOS Press, pp. 23–36; Maskaliūnaitė, A., 'Exploring the theories of radicalisation', in *International Studies – Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal*, 17, 2015, pp. 9–26; Christmann, K., 'Preventing religious radicalisation and violent extremism: A systematic review of the research evidence'. UK: Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 2012; Iannello, N.M. et al., 'Radicalization in Correctional Systems: A Scoping Review of the Literature Evaluating the Effectiveness of Preventing and Countering Interventions', *Journal for Deradicalization*, No 34, 2023, pp. 177–210.

⁷ See, e.g., Council of the European Union, The European Union Strategy for Combating Radicalization and Recruitment to Terrorism, 14781/1/05 REV 1, JAI 452 ENFOPOL 164 COTER 81, 24 November 2005; European Commission Expert Group on Violent Radicalization, 'Radicalization processes leading to acts of terrorism', report, 2008, p. 7: 'socialisation to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism'; European Commission, Communication concerning terrorist recruitment – Addressing the factors contributing to violent radicalization, COM/2005/0313 final, 2015, p. 2: 'phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism'; Committee of the Regions, Combatting Radicalization and Violent Extremism: Prevention mechanisms at local and regional level, opinion, 16 June 2016, p. 4: 'a phenomenon of people who regard the use of violence as legitimate and/or use violence themselves in order to achieve their political objectives which undermine the democratic legal order and the fundamental rights on which it is based'; Lenos, S. et al., RAN Centre of Excellence, RAN Polarisation Management Manual, ex-post paper, July 2017, p. 5: 'the process through which an individual comes to adopt extremist political, social, or religious ideas and aspirations which then serve to reject diversity, tolerance and freedom of choice, and legitimise breaking the rule of law and using violence towards property and people'.

⁸ An exception was the focus group meeting with staff members of Catalan penitentiary administration, where the so-called *Proderai* (Protocol for the Prevention, Detection and Intervention of Islamist radicalization processes) used by the *Mossos d'Esquadra* (Catalan police) defines radicalization as opposed to religious fundamentalism: 'Religious fundamentalism implies the acceptance of a dogma that governs all aspects of life, often making a rigorous interpretation and consequently showing a critical attitude towards any deviation from doctrines and practices considered essential. In contrast, Islamist radicalization is always accompanied by an attitude of intolerance towards ideas or beliefs that are different from one's own. When this intolerance justifies or is accompanied by acts of violence in its various forms, we speak of violent Islamist radicalization.'

2.3. Penitentiary administration

For the purposes of this Handbook, “penitentiary administration” refers to **the set of public authorities and procedures tasked with the implementation of sentences and the management of the life condition of offenders in correctional institutions, their rehabilitation, as well as their relationships and with the staff of the correctional institutions themselves.**

2.4. Correctional institution

For the purposes of this Handbook, “**correctional institution**” refers to **a State prison, prison facility, or other prison institution, correctional camp, community corrections centre, correctional farm, State reformatory, or probation recovery camp owned, operated, leased, supervised, or contracted for by the State.**

3.



3. Desk analyses: summary

The previous phases (macro- and meso-level analyses) of SERENY provided insights for the elaboration of this Handbook.⁹ Such insights derive from the desk analysis of national legislation and the organisational and institutional features of the analysed countries. The countries under analysis were Italy, Austria, Spain, Slovenia, Germany, France, and Belgium. Such insights are useful not only to policy- and lawmakers but also as a starting point in the activities involving the focus groups meetings and interviews as well as in the elaboration of the survey's answers and the elaboration of recommendations and best practices. Therefore, the insights and related recommendations from such previous phases are here briefly summarised.

3.1 EU/international law related to human rights and its implementation

This first output was a report focusing on the coherence of national legislation in place with European and international law standards when it comes to the treatment of young adults in prison to prevent radicalisation.

There, some **common problematic patterns** were individuated:

- The **'reactive' character of the related strategies**, notably the influence of events such as terrorist attacks on their adoption.
- The **focus on Jihadist radicalisation**, overlooking other forms of radicalisation and carrying the risk of over-stigmatising and over-compressing legitimate expressions of religious freedom.¹⁰
- The overall **absence of legally binding definitions of 'radicalisation'** potentially undermines prisoners' rights and creates problems for penitentiary staff and courts.
- The **legal opacity and uncertainty** deriving from the fact that the substantive legal frameworks are preponderantly based on administrative instructions, circulars and similar instruments of soft law or uncertain legal status.
- the overall **absence of specific measures tailored to young adults**.
- **de-centred strategies of social inclusion and training programs**, relying on ad hoc initiatives, often led by private and/or third-sector actors.

Against this background, the report highlighted **problems** with the measures' effectiveness in single countries, which, in turn, linked to the **actual budgetary investment** into stable programs to prevent radicalisation. The report also stressed that many of the limits of the regimes currently in place derive from the **crime-prevention, zero-risk approach** adopted in most countries, which mostly frames the prevention of radicalisation as a (national) security issue.

⁹ See again the 'Report on the coherence between EU/international legislation related to human rights and its implementation (nt. 4); and the 'Evidence-based recommendations to policymakers for designing and implementing young adults' radicalisation prevention interventions in prison and probation settings', available at: <https://www.sereny.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/D2.4-Evidence-based-recommendations-for-policymakers.pdf>.

¹⁰ For more recent EU counter-radicalization policy changes, see Bąkowski, P., 'EPRS - European Parliamentary Research Service, In-Depth Analysis. Preventing radicalisation in the European Union: How EU policy has evolved', PE 739.213 - November 2022, pp. 14-16.

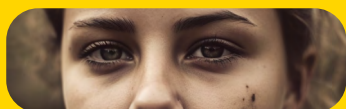
The report indicated some **preliminary strategies and best practices**:



Establishment of **legally binding definitions in dedicated primary legislation**.



The strengthening of **procedural, notably judicial guarantees for prisoners**.



The exploration and implementation of treatment strategies overcoming crime-prevention approaches, notably **vulnerability-based approaches**.



The establishment and/or strengthening of **restorative justice and democratic inclusion** strategies.



Stabilisation and increase of **funding for specialised correctional staff**.

3.2. Recommendations to Policymakers

The second output provided further recommendations to policymakers. Based also on insights from Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)¹¹ best practices and research results, it recommended the implementation of:

- Policies aimed at preventing and countering radicalisation in prison are required to be **evidence-based and conceived in terms of progressive adaptation to the evolutive character of the phenomenon**.
- Programmes clearly define how to **measure their accomplishment**.
- **Departure from a zero-risk policy**.
- **Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention** interventions aimed at improving the relationship between the prisoner and the prison authority and, therefore, with the State; the bond with families, the links with the outside world; and the good relations between prisoners and prison staff.

Within this context, the recommendations to policymakers also highlighted the need for:

- **stronger social work and psychological care for inmates in preventing radicalisation** since rehabilitation and reintegration in these cases need to cover a broader array of aspects and often involve re-creating identities and narratives.
- **Mentoring programmes** could be considered to work with individuals at special risk, especially those relating to extremism.
- Programmes and strategies based on inmates' **special needs and cultural characteristics**, with the strengthening of intercultural mediation services in prison.
- **Stronger cooperation** at the national, regional and global levels **with public institutions, civil society organisations, the academic and scientific community, and different religious communities**. These forms of cooperation should take into consideration the insti-

¹¹ See the sources available at: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices_en.

tutional complexities of decentralised countries. More specifically, good local restorative justice practices conducted with high-security inmates who are members of terrorist associations have shown that interlocutions with the local communities are successful in welding social links with the contexts of reference.¹² Restorative programmes often have broader objectives than deradicalisation of individuals; they seek to inculcate a peaceful dialogue and positive peace within a particular context. First is the use of “trainers” in peace building and one-to-one deradicalisation work, second is reconciliation programmes (with a focus on victims), and third, community engagement approaches. This points to the need to situate exit processes within the societies and communities into which formers will be reintegrated.¹³

Segregation policies in prison have to be made exceptional. They cannot be configured as an automatic measure to address radicalisation, especially due to the negative impact on the human rights of the inmates.

This last set of recommendations to policymakers was specifically **directed to penitentiary administrations**. In particular, they included:

- **Improving transparency in access to information** regarding radicalisation prevention in prison.
- **Enhancing public scrutiny**, also for the purposes of democratic control.
- **Implement training programmes for prison staff** on comprehensive approaches to radicalisation, going beyond assessing the risk of radicalisation in prison.

¹² See esp. European Commission, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs Internal Security, Evaluation of impact and effectiveness of counter- and alternative campaigns stemming from the CSEP programme aiming at preventing radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism – Final Report, October 2022 (https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/CSEP%20final%20report_en.pdf).

¹³ Ran Collection of approaches and practices, Ran Collections, 2019, p. 133 (https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files_en?file=2021-05/ran_collection_approaches_and_practices_en.pdf); The potential of restorative justice in cases of violent extremism and terrorism, 2021, (https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/publications/potential-restorative-justice-cases-violent-extremism-and-terrorism-2021_eng); Biffi, E., ‘The role of restorative justice in preventing and responding to violent extremism’, Ex post paper, RAN Centre of Excellence, 2020, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ran_rvt-exit_role_of_restorative_justice_dublin_3-4_122019_en.pdf; Chapman, T., ‘“Nobody has ever asked me these questions”: Engaging restoratively with politically motivated prisoners in Northern Ireland’, in O. Lynch & Argomaniz, J. (eds.), *Victims and perpetrators of terrorism: Exploring identities, roles and narratives*, Routledge, pp. 181-196; Clubb, G., & Tapley, M., *Conceptualizing de-radicalisation and former combatant re-integration in Nigeria*, in *Third World Quarterly*, 39(11), 2018, pp. 2053-2068.

4.



4. Recommendations and best practices to increase human rights protection with regard to young adults

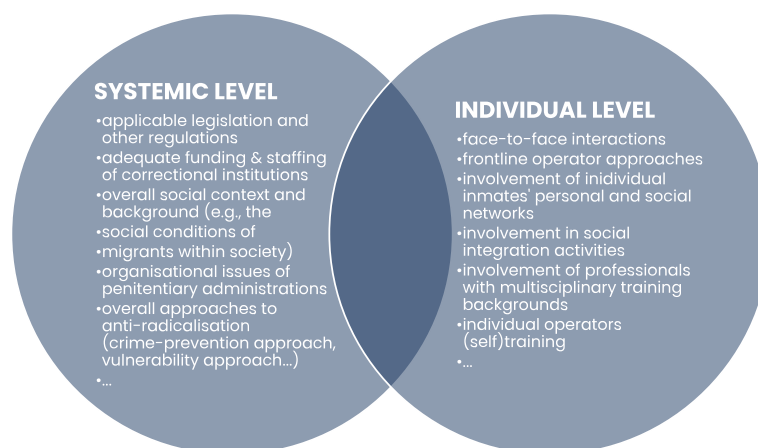
4.1. The impact of systemic conditions on individual-level strategies

This Handbook focuses on the individual dimension of human rights protection in prison and probation settings. However, the macro- and meso-levels – broadly speaking systemic – remain relevant even in this context. Considering that **the Handbook is not directed only to single front-line operators but also, more broadly, to penitentiary administrations**, a first point to stress is the **close link between individual and systemic levels**. Individual solutions and best practices can neither replace nor compensate for systemic shortcomings.

The data collected through the survey, interviews, and focus group meetings highlighted the need to consider structural problems of penitentiary systems in improving human rights protection at the individual level. **Effective strategies and best practices at the individual level can successfully be implemented only under certain systemic/structural conditions**, many of which do not necessarily concern the specific issue of prevention of radicalisation but affect the overall human rights protection in penitentiary systems. Participants in the focus group meetings emphasised that the lack of resources is one of the difficulties they encounter, as they have to deal with inadequate resources and lack continuous training that would enable them to tackle the challenges of radicalisation. For example, **effective anti-radicalisation strategies, focusing on the integration activities of inmates of different nationalities, religions, and ethnicities, turn around the adequate staffing and training of cultural mediators within correctional institutions**.

Effective anti-radicalisation strategies, focusing on the integration activities of inmates of different nationalities, religions, and ethnicities, turn around the adequate staffing and training of cultural mediators within correctional institutions.

Fig. 5. Interaction between the systemic/structural level and the individual level in strategies and best practices concerning the prevention of radicalisation.



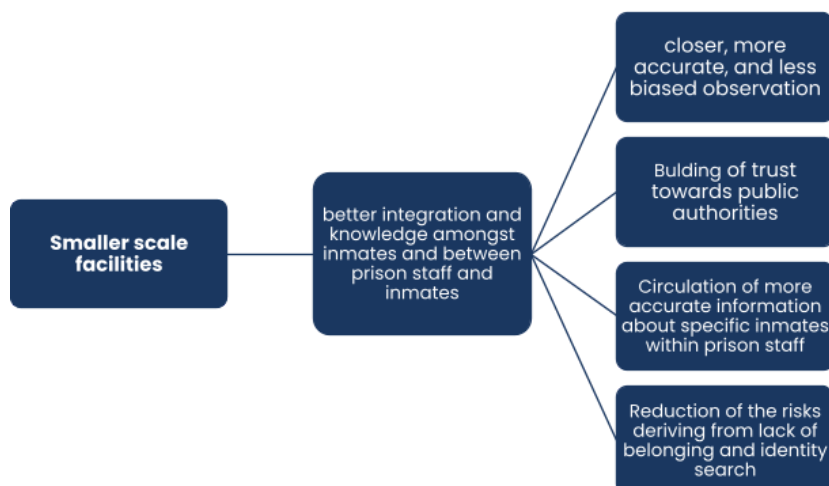
4.1.1. Recommendation 1: smaller scale prison and probation settings

Overcrowding and understaffing are well-known systemic problems in many penitentiary systems, potentially leading to violations of human rights law, notably **Art. 3 ECHR (Prohibition of torture)**. At the individual level, overcrowding and understaffing in prison and probation settings affect the concrete possibilities of individual front-line operators to perform their tasks effectively.

Besides the problems deriving from overcrowding/understaffing, **the scale of prison and probation settings** is relevant, as it **affects the possibility of successfully implementing rehabilitation and anti-radicalisation strategies**. As they allow for better integration and knowledge amongst inmates and between prison staff and inmates, **smaller facilities** have at least four potential benefits:

- **Closer, more accurate, and less biased observation by front-line operators.** On the one hand, this **reduces the risk of misinterpreting** inmates' behaviours, potentially deriving from operators' biases; on the other hand, it **improves the capacity to rightly detect significant indicators of an actual radicalisation process**, without considering them immovable and unchangeable during the time of imprisonment.
- **Building of trust towards public authorities.**
- **Circulation of more accurate information and first-hand knowledge about specific inmates** amongst prison operators with different training backgrounds and tasks, thus enabling the multi-disciplinary approaches that are, in turn, crucial to reducing biased evaluation.
- **Reduction of the risks deriving from lack of belonging and identity search.**

Fig. 6. Recommendation 1: Benefits of smaller scale prison & probation settings.

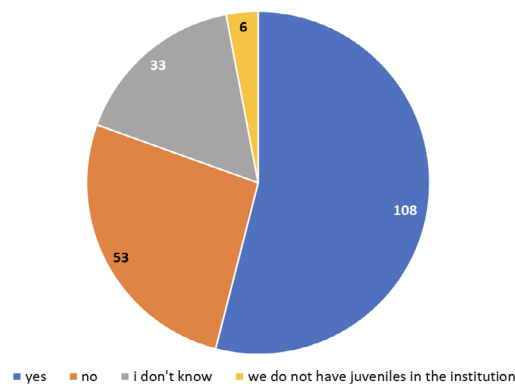


4.1.2. Recommendation 2: institutional embeddedness of training

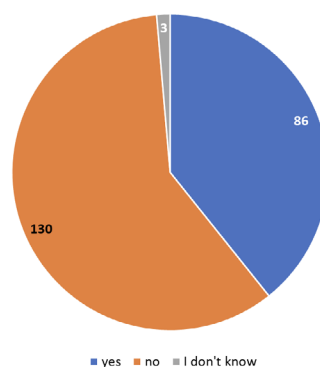
In the penitentiary systems of analysed countries, **there are currently several kinds of training programmes** concerning human rights and prevention of radicalisation directed to correctional staff, especially in facilities dealing with young adults. However, such programs are quite often run by entities and networks that are not institutionally part of the penitentiary administration. Further, they normally involve only a selected number of front-line operators, often participating in training programmes still designed or otherwise considered experimental, exceptional, or contingent. Effective implementation of skills acquired during such training and related evaluation is often not considered a relevant factor in work evaluation and career progression. In other words, **radicalisation prevention and human rights training programmes are most often institutionally disembedded.**

Fig. 7. Pan-European online survey: perceived existence of tools/programs to address the prevention of radicalisation among young adults in prison (elaboration by Manfred Zentner, Donau Universität Krems, Department Migration and Globalization).

Are there specific tools or programs to address the prevention of radicalization among young adults in prison?



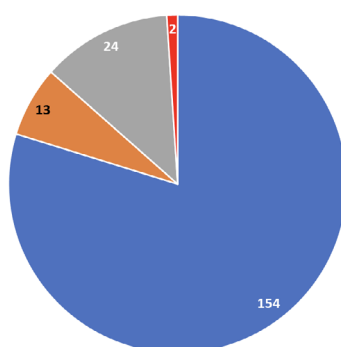
Have you received training on detecting signs of radicalization in prisons?



Indeed, data from surveys and focus group meetings show that the positive effects of such programmes are often **still limited in their effectiveness. Front-line operators sometimes struggle to grasp the immediate relevance of human rights training to the prevention of radicalisation.** Relatedly, they often perceive **participation in such programmes as a mere duty** to comply with, with no or only limited direct connection to their actual tasks or real usefulness. While they mostly recall the existence of such programs, **they sometimes cannot even confirm whether they took part into them or what was their actual content.** Most importantly, they often talk about human rights as if there was a sort of **trade-off between their respect and security and correctional purposes.**

Fig. 8. Pan-European online survey: perceived role of human rights in anti-radicalisation strategies in prison (elaboration by Manfred Zentner, Donau Universität Krems, Department Migration and Globalization).

Are human rights part of the measures to deal with radicalization in prisons?



■ yes ■ no ■ I don't know/ not sure ■ yes, BUT

In the opposite direction, some of the most positive experiences from the supporting data come from organisational settings where different kinds of training are provided in-house. In other words, it is not only a matter of establishment and adequate funding/design of training programmes but also **institutional embeddedness**. Some programmes have limited success in reaching their goals not only because they are underfunded or have a contingent, una tantum nature. At an even deeper level, prison and probation staff often do not perceive the knowledge and skills acquired through such programmes as part of the core training necessary to perform their tasks and their job. Just like in any organisational structure, the behaviour of individual individuals is closely embedded in networks of social relations within their institution.

Therefore, for the purposes of human rights protection, **it matters whether the mobilised resources and procedures and related evaluations/follow-up are internal or external to the organisation where individuals operate and, more specifically, prison and probation operators work. Authentic awareness of the value of human rights, strengthened by internal incentives, is crucial to creating an environment where inmates and penitentiary administration staff can reach the ultimate goals of rehabilitation and, more specifically, prevention of radicalisation**, especially of individuals at risk such as young adults.

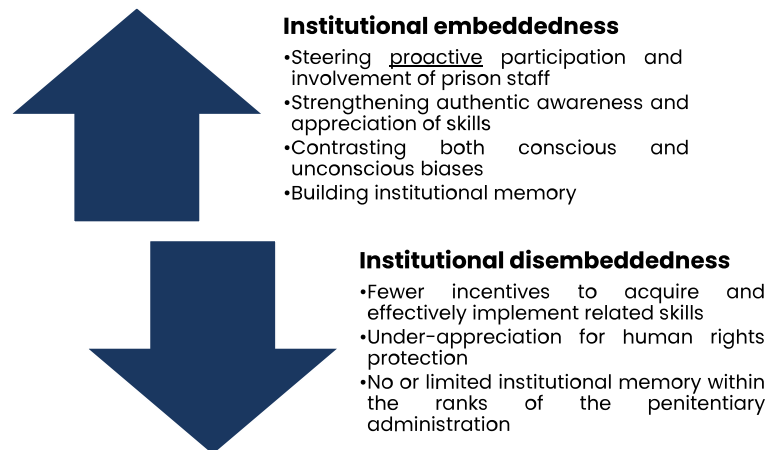
These insights highlight the need for more effective training programmes involving a higher number of professionals with different backgrounds and training. This need has also emerged in the survey and the focus group meetings with prison and probation staff. In that regard, this is a further instance where macro- or meso-level issues directly affect the micro/individual level. While sharing/circulating information and knowledge across transnational and trans-institutional networks remains crucial, **penitentiary administrations should embed training programmes and related follow-up into operators' ordinary, "everyday" selection, promotion, and career progression based on internal evaluation and audit procedures.**

Penitentiary administrations should embed training programmes and related follow-up into operators' ordinary, "everyday" selection, promotion, and career progression based on internal evaluation and audit procedures.

As it creates concrete incentives for prison and probation staff, institutional embeddedness has at least four potential benefits:

- Steering **proactive participation and involvement** of prison staff in training programs.
- Strengthening **authentic awareness and appreciation** of human rights, especially when it comes to strategies related to the prevention of radicalisation.
- **Contrasting both conscious and unconscious biases** against human rights protection, potentially perceived as “too high”.
- **Building institutional memory** of best practices within the ranks of penitentiary administration.

Fig. 9. Recommendation 2: Benefits of institutional embeddedness of training programmes.



4.2. Human rights and prevention of radicalisation in prison and probation settings: shifting from a zero-sum to a positive-sum approach

The previous section highlighted the impact of systemic conditions on the individual level. It recommended related strategies to be implemented by penitentiary administrations.

Coming closer to the individual level, the supporting data show that still today, even within the ranks of correctional staff, there is **a tendency** – often not explicitly verbalised or otherwise expressed– **to perceive a higher level of human rights protection as running contrary to the needs of prevention of radicalisation (zero-sum approach)**. Importantly, this perception is sometimes shared even by inmates themselves, who often consider greater attention to human rights by correctional staff as a sign of their “weakness”.

In contrast, it is crucial to highlight that **effective prevention of radicalisation and human rights protection reinforce each other. Extremist narratives can be refuted by upholding human rights and the rule of law during enforcement.** These often include one-sided friend-enemy representations. In other words, **it is essential to point at strategies based on a positive-sum approach.**

Fig. 10. Human rights protection and prevention of radicalisation: shifting from a zero-sum to a positive-sum approach.



Therefore, keeping the ECHR and the ICCPR as the main normative points of reference and without any pretence of exhaustivity, **this section points to best practices that emerged from the supporting data in relation to a selection of human rights, namely:**

1. **Prohibition of torture, inhumane and degrading treatment (Art. 3 ECHR and Art. 7 ICCPR)**
2. **No punishment without law (Art. 7 ECHR and Art. 15 ICCPR)**
3. **Right to family and private life (Art. 8 ECHR and Art. 24 ICCPR)**
4. **Right to religious freedom (art. 9 ECHR and arts. 4 and 18 ICCPR)**

4.2.1. Best practice 1: minimisation of isolation in relation to the prohibition of torture, inhumane and degrading treatment

In many penitentiary systems, **inmates – even young adults – considered or suspected as at risk of radicalisation are subjected to stricter penitentiary treatment**, often involving isolation and solitary confinement. Such measures are often implemented as disciplinary sanctions for breaching prison rules and often turn into “easy” ways to reduce inmates’ contact with potential sources of radicalisation.

Solitary confinement is not, in itself, in breach of Art. 3 ECHR, but whether such a measure falls within the ambit of the prohibition of torture and degrading treatment depends on the particular conditions, the stringency of the measure, its duration, the objective pursued and its effects on the person concerned.¹⁴ Therefore, **in their concrete application, such measures and similar disciplinary treatment often risk violating the prohibition of torture, inhumane and degrading treatment under Art. 3 ECHR and Art. 7 ICCPR**, especially when it comes to their mental health, socialisation capacities, and rehabilitation prospects. Moreover, **insofar as they isolate inmates from their social environment and exclude them from re-socialisation activities**, both within and without correctional institutions, **such measures risk triggering or strengthening processes of radicalisation, especially when it comes to particularly vulnerable people such as young adults.**¹⁵ In other words, **isolation and solitary confinement of inmates often trigger and/or strengthen rather than reduce (the risks of) radicalisation.**

Against this background, **one of the best practices that emerged from the supporting data concerns the ways isolation and solitary confinement should (not) be used. Correctional staff – especially prison guards – should be trained and put in the conditions to**

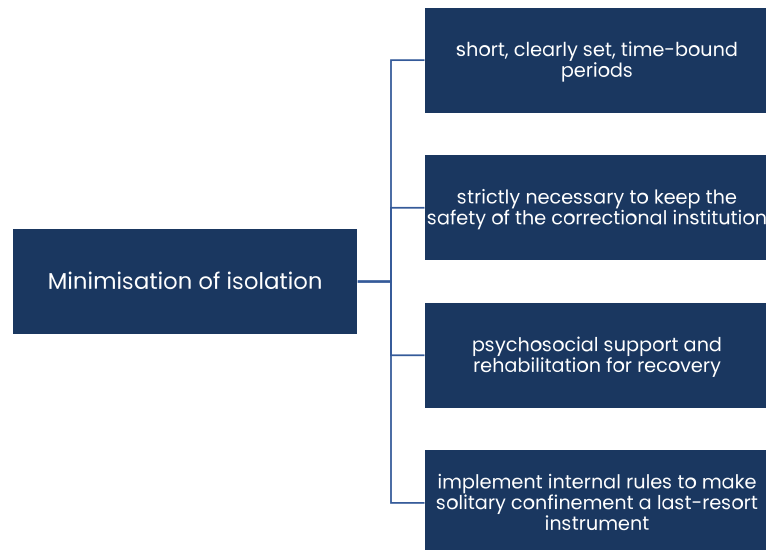
- minimise the recourse to isolation and confinement measures;

¹⁴ ECtHR judgements *Rohde v. Denmark*, 21 July 2005, § 93; *Rzakhanov v. Azerbaijan*, 4 July 2013, § 64.

¹⁵ See Khosrokhavar, F., ‘Nouveau paradigme de radicalisation en prison’, in *Cahiers de la sécurité et de la justice*, 30, 2014, pp. 12–21, at p. 17.

- impose isolation only based on clear standards and for short, clearly set, time-bound periods;
- interpret and implement internal rules and guidelines so that solitary confinement becomes an instrument of absolutely last resort;
- impose isolation only when strictly necessary to keep the safety of the correctional institution rather than sanction for breaches of disciplinary rules;
- provide follow-up psycho-social support and rehabilitation for recovery.

Fig. 11. Best practice 1: minimisation of isolation.

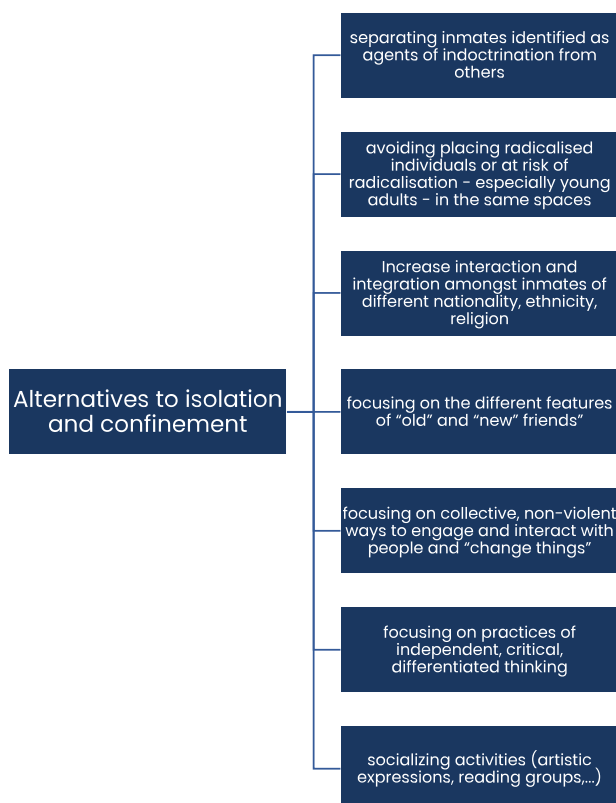


Crucially, individual operators should be trained to internalise the awareness that, especially in the mid- and long-term, **minimisation of isolation and solitary confinement is beneficial to the rehabilitation process and, at the same time, it actually increases the overall safety of correctional institutions.** As alternatives to isolation and solitary confinement, **more effective strategies for the prevention of radicalisation are those aimed at de-constructing social relationships with agents of indoctrination and at building new ones**, for example by:

- separating inmates identified as agents of indoctrination from others;
- avoiding placing radicalised individuals in the same spaces. This applies particularly to young adults, especially exposed to be (re-) radicalised by older inmates;
- increasing interaction and integration amongst inmates of different nationalities, ethnicities, and religions;
- developing exercises focusing on the different features/characteristics of “old” and “new” friends”;
- in sessions with psychologists and social workers, focusing on collective, non-violent ways to engage and interact with people and “change things” in a democratic, multicultural, secular society;
- focusing on practices of independent, critical, differentiated, nuanced thinking. It is particularly important to allow at-risk individuals to recognize as dynamic the personal and intrapsychic issues that they often consider as rigidly dogmatic and absolute;
- socializing activities (artistic expression, reading groups, etc.).

In other words, **young inmates should be subject to differentiated treatment, even in the absence of special regimes formally applicable to them**, in order to take into consideration the particular situation of immaturity and identity in formation and to **avoid measures that may contribute to their social isolation, low self-esteem and low self-efficacy.** At the same time, individual operators and prison guards should understand the **role of bravado**, which might hide an insecure and easily manipulable self.

Fig. 12. Best practice 1: Alternatives to isolation.



4.2.2. Best practice 2: use of indicators in relation to the ‘no punishment without law’ principle

The strategies developed to prevent and counter radicalisation in prison are generally based on behavioural risk indicators.¹⁶ The latter are often elaborated, tested, and validated within the framework of transnational networks operating in the field of judicial and anti-crime co-operation.¹⁷ Such indicators are, therefore, central elements for correctional staff training. The detection of such indicators by prison and probation staff might lead to different and potentially more afflictive detention conditions concerning among other things inmates’ observation, treatment, access to (re-) socialisation activities, and contacts with the external world. Indicators as such might already be problematic under human rights standards, considering that sometimes their scientific bases are put into question; they are not publicly available, also for security reasons; and their concrete application might be opaque and subject to (religious, ethnic, national, gender) bias. Moreover, using indicators may induce into the single prison operators a “fill-the-box”, “yes/no” mindset that risks jeopardising the individualisation of the treatment.

In other words, **while not against human rights law as such, the use of “simple” indicators, no matter how scientifically sound, opens to risks of penitentiary treatments devoid of clear legal bases, that is, one of the main tenets of the ‘no punishment without law’ principle.** Furthermore, their potentially biased application risks violating the general prohibition of discrimination under human rights law.¹⁸ Relatedly, different prison or probation treatments based on the use of indicators run **risks of labelling, which – as far as they contribute to crystallise the**

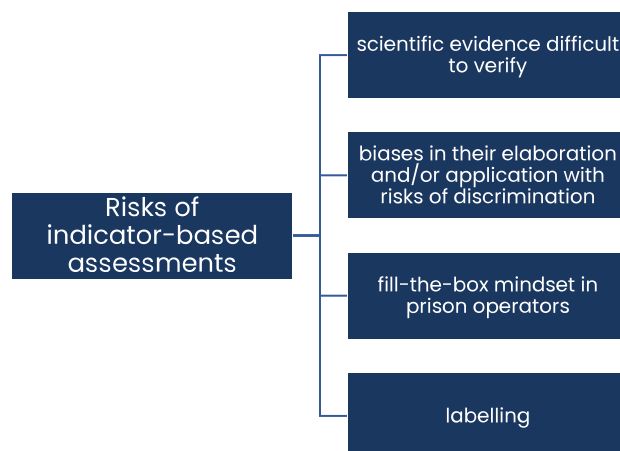
¹⁶ Supporting data include a non-exhaustive list of such risk-assessment tools: questionnaires; VERA2R; YALE-BROWN Scale; SVR (Risk Assessment System) such as DYRIAS, HCR-20, Riscanvi, SARA; Pre-release risk/needs assessment considering activities, emotions, external appearance, relationships, and communication.

¹⁷ The most notable example is the Transfer Radicalization Approaches in Training (“Train Training”) European Project (2017-2020).

¹⁸ Among many other provisions, see art. 14 ECHR; art. 26 ICCPR; art. 2 ICESCR; art. 2 CRC).

social identity and the self-perception of inmates, especially if particularly vulnerable like young adults – is further detrimental to the prevention of radicalisation and rehabilitation.

Fig. 13. Best practice 2: risks of indicator-based assessments.



However, the supporting data show an **overall consensus amongst prison operators that indicators are still fundamental or at least helpful in detecting signals of radicalisation**. At the same time, there is an equally strong consensus that **indicators must be used unbiasedly and with caution**, as some behaviours are not meant to be markers of radicalisation. For example, aesthetic signals such as long beards or specific behaviours (e.g., time spent praying) might not reveal a radicalisation process per se. Rather, they might be regarded as a means by which individuals seek positive changes in their lives. Prison staff, operators, and professionals must be trained to properly use indicators and overcome stereotypes and prejudices that might influence how they observe detainees over time and evaluate behaviours. **The central issue then is handling indicators in a non-biased way so that their use does not run contrary to human rights and the goals of prevention of radicalisation.** In this respect, prison operators should be trained to conduct **self-assessment, self-awareness, and bias self-identification exercises**, especially in cases where they are called to make decisions about the actual risk posed by certain behaviours and their instrumental falsification.¹⁹

The central issue then is handling indicators in a non-biased way so that their use does not run contrary to human rights and the goals of prevention of radicalisation.

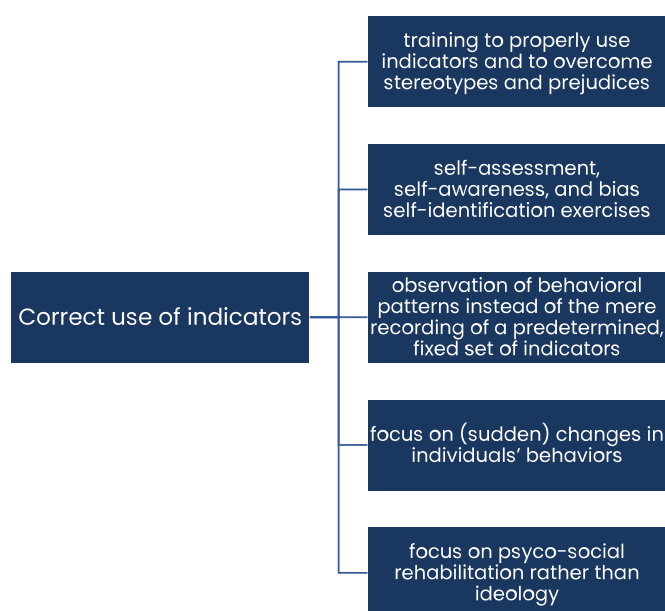
In this same regard, supporting data also show that some penitentiary administrations are conducting treatment experiments to overcome, or at least de-centre strategies based on

¹⁹ In this same regard, it seems appropriate to adopt the Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ) approach, an analytical method used to understand and mitigate the risk of interpersonal violence posed by individuals that is discretionary in expect but relies on evidence-based guidelines to systematize the exercise of discretion: see Hart, S. D., Douglas, K. S., & Guy, L. S., 'The structured professional judgement approach to violence risk assessment: Origins, nature, and advances', in D. P. Boer et al. (eds.), *The Wiley handbook on the theories, assessment, and treatment of sexual offending*, Wiley Blackwell, 2017, pp. 643–666.

“simple” one-on-one indicators. Such strategies focus on the **observation of behavioural patterns instead of the mere one-on-one recording of a predetermined, fixed set of indicators, particularly on the related changes**. In other words, under such strategies, what matters is not the indicator per se but rather the modification of the inmate’s behaviour over time. **More revealing as risk factors of radicalisation are sudden changes in individuals’ behaviours** (e.g., stopping talking with family members). In case studies emerging from the supporting data, a recurring marker of a radicalisation process is the abrupt tendency of inmates to isolate themselves and not to involve loved ones in their prison affairs, with consequent interruption of the relationships with their families.

“Simple” indicator-based strategies might, therefore, be abandoned in favour of observation of global behaviours. In all cases, especially violent individuals, **measures focused on psychological and social rehabilitation should be prioritised over measures focused on ideology, as the former are the main building blocks to initiate disengagement and de-radicalisation**. Importantly, dealing with behavioural patterns instead of “simple” indicators requires effective multi-disciplinary observation and, more generally, more work and adequate professional/staffing conditions, extremely hard to find even in the best-organised and -funded penitentiary systems.

Fig. 14. Best practice 2: Correct use of indicators.



To describe a more concrete, standard scenario, one could think of a young individual taking on paroxysmal religious attitudes, refusing to eat the common food and spending many hours in prayer in their cell. He/she avoids contact with other inmates and/or conspicuously grow a beard and obsessively listen to religious channels on the radio. There is no minister of religious worship available in the small prison. In such a situation, there are indicators of radicalisation. The correctional staff, thanks to a cultural mediator and a careful psychological analysis carried out on the young individual, reads the discomfort in terms of rejection of the prison dimension, perceived as distant and alienating, which does not respect their peculiar cultural and human needs either on a dietary or religious level. He/she particularly feels the geographical detachment from the family nucleus. A minister is thus identified, the diet corrected by excluding foods not allowed by their religion, and a theatrical activity with a self-narrative text is proposed. The young individual shows an attitude of greater acceptance of the prison dimension. There are also signs of exaggerated religiosity, mediated by the relationship with the Imam. The theatre brings him/her closer to the other inmates. In such a situation, it is likely that a reassessment of the indicators after a certain period (e.g., one year)

excludes the hypothesised process of radicalisation.

4.2.3. Best practice 3: strengthening family and social connections in relation to the right to family and private life

While detention entails inherent limitations on private and family life, it is a well-established principle of international and European human rights law that **inmates have the right to respect for private and family life** (Art. 8 ECHR and Art. 24 ICCPR)²⁰. At the same time, authorities have the obligation to enable and/or assist them in maintaining contact with their close family, and any interference with such right must be justified.²¹

However, **anti-radicalisation strategies are often characterised by too strict separation between inmates and their families and other social ties, especially outside prison**. Especially when risk indicators are observed and/or recorded, many penitentiary administrations tend to isolate inmates from their broader social environment. Even when they do not amount to full-fledged isolation, this approach, in turn rooted in zero-risk and crime-prevention strategies, is often counterproductive. Indeed, by pushing them towards the monothematic, extreme, tunnel-like, and potentially violent visions typical of radical thinking, be it religious or not, they negatively affect the capacity of inmates to build meaningful and diversified social connections and identity-building experiences. This applies even more to psychologically more vulnerable people like young adults, whose social and psychological identity goes through processes of reframing and re-understanding, also because of the traumatic experience of detention.²²

In contrast, supporting data from the online survey and focus group meetings show that social and especially family ties are a precious tool to prevent even reverse radicalisation processes. Family ties give meaning to people's lives and show potential "ways out" from radical and extremist groups.

In order to operationalise such insight, penitentiary administrations should implement **coherent strategies**. In particular:

- **Adapting prison transfer policies** to the specific needs of at-risk inmates, especially young adults. In particular, it is imperative to reduce at the minimum the number of transfers and the distance from the inmates' families.

- **Strengthening or re-establishing inmates' family relationships**, preventing them from experiencing boredom, isolation, alienation, and loss of meaning. Above all, prevention strategies must **value inmates' role in their respective family's contexts**. Indeed, such ties reinforce inmates' perception of self-value and self-esteem, in turn connected to their family role, and their re-socialisation and rehabilitation possibilities. **This has proved particularly productive in cases where inmates were allowed to work and contribute to the economic needs of their families.**

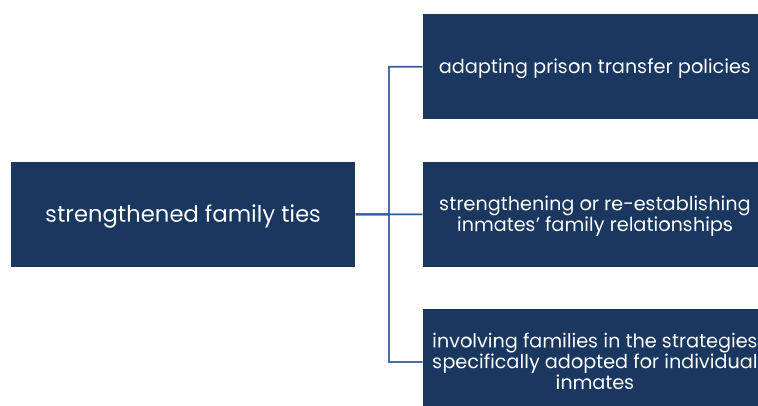
- **Involving families in the rehabilitation and re-socialisation strategies specifically adopted for individual inmates**, trying to establish productive alliances and further strengthening the individualisation of the penitentiary treatment, and, most importantly, adequately preparing the after-release phase.

20 But see also the European Prison Rules (nt. 1).

21 See ECtHR judgments *Khoroshenko v. Russia*, 30 June 2015; *Nusret Kaya and Others v. Turkey*, 22 April 2014.

22 See again Khosrokhavar (nt. 15); as well as Crettiez, X., 'Penser la radicalisation', in *Revue française de science politique*, 66, 2016, pp. 709–727, at p. 724.

Fig. 15. Best practice 3: benefits of strengthened family ties.



4.2.4. Best practice 4: religious and confessional activities and “spiritual help desks” in relation to the right to religious freedom

As mentioned above, **strategies for the prevention of radicalisation** – especially those based on too unreflective, one-on-one applications of risk indicators – **are often characterised by negative bias against (signs of) religious allegiance**, especially when it comes to Islam. Such negative bias also derives from **the way many anti-radicalisation strategies and related legislative and regulatory measures have emerged in many countries for the last two decades, that is, as responses to Jihadist terrorist attacks**, in turn connected to crime-prevention and zero-risk approaches.

As a consequence, **certain religion-based indicators and/or signals risk being disproportionately applied and/or read as markers of radicalisation processes**. Prisons and probation staff often read new practices (such as greater attention to the Koran and Islamic literature), aesthetic changes (new ways of dressing) or behaviours (e.g., towards women) as signals of radicalisation and, therefore, often try to stop the inmate’s engagement with (Islamic) religion. Such practices are detrimental for at least two sets of reasons.

First, they negatively affect anti-radicalisation strategies, as **different penitentiary treatments based on biased observation often lead to labelling/exclusion and jeopardise re-socialisation and rehabilitation goals connected to the identity-building of inmates**, especially the most vulnerable ones like young adults.

Second, they run **risks of violating international and European human rights law, notably the right to religious freedom of inmates**, protected among other things under Art. 9 ECHR²³ and arts. 4 and 18 ICCPR; **and, to the extent such practices result in actual religion-based discrimination and Islamophobia, the prohibition of abuse of rights** under Art. 17 ECHR, as well as the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.²⁴

Against this background, the supporting data showed other best practices whereby **the prevention of radicalisation of young adults and protection of the right to religious freedom are not mutually exclusive but reinforce each other**.

Indeed, in the specific field of the right to religious freedom, **“spiritual help desks” have proved extremely effective instruments of de-radicalisation and radicalisation prevention**. More specifically, encouraging engagement with non-extremist readings of religious and especially Islamic texts by providing **vetted religious literature** and interactions with **vetted imams and other ministers of religious worship, well integrated in local communities, helping inmates interpret the Koran correctly and establish social relationships with local Islamic communities**. The latter aspect is particularly important for young adults, who, in their identity-building, have specific (re) socialisation needs. At the same time, building and strengthening personal, social and cultural ties prepares inmates for the extremely delicate transition phases that follow probation and release.

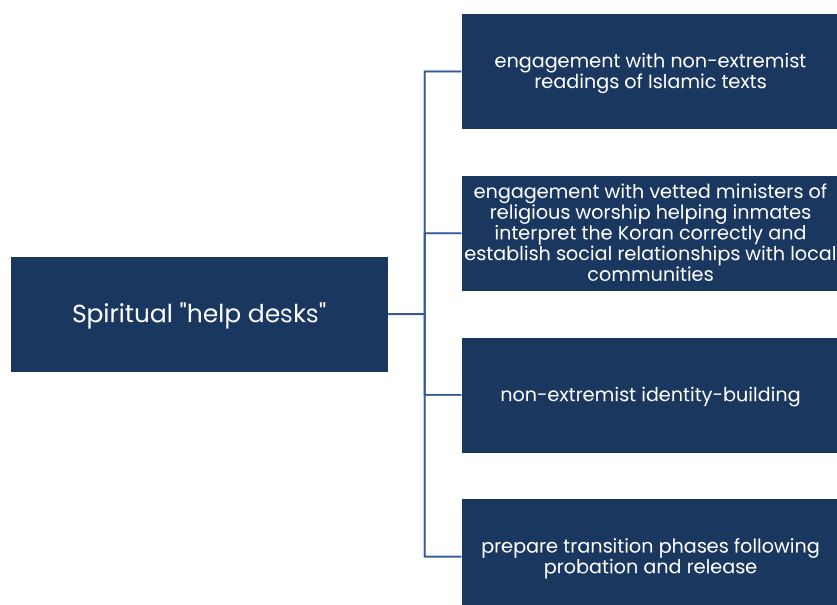
23 See esp. the ECHR judgments *Korostelev v. Russia*, 12 May 2020; *Neagu v. Romania*, 10 November 2020; and *Abdullah Yalçın (No.2) v. Türkiye*, 14 June 2022.

24 UN General Assembly resolution 36/55, 25 November 1981.

“spiritual help desks” have proved extremely effective instruments of de-radicalisation and radicalisation prevention.

The positive potential of such practices is widely confirmed by supporting data coming from the different sources. In particular, there are reported cases of young adults who, after initial periods of closure and resistance, showed increasing openness. Particularly significant is the way inmates begin making comparisons between some radical beliefs and those provided by the ministers.

Fig. 16. Best practice 4: Benefits of spiritual “help desks”.



5.



5. Conclusions

This Handbook aimed to provide a tool to enhance human rights protection for young adults in the context of the prevention of radicalisation within penitentiary systems. **While it primarily focuses on the individual level, the Handbook highlights the interconnectedness of individual and systemic factors in the protection of human rights.** Indeed, the supporting data further underscored the significance of addressing structural issues within penitentiary systems to improve human rights protection at the individual level. It is evident that effective strategies and best practices can only thrive within certain systemic and structural conditions, which extend beyond the specific concern of preventing radicalisation but encompass the broader realm of human rights protection.

Overcrowding and understaffing remain persistent systemic challenges, potentially leading to violations of human rights law. The scale of prison and probation settings also plays a crucial role in facilitating successful rehabilitation and anti-radicalisation efforts. **Smaller facilities** exhibit advantages in terms of more accurate observation, building trust, sharing information, and reducing risks arising from lack of belonging. The need for smaller scale prison and probation settings to address these concerns effectively has been particularly emphasized.

Institutional embeddedness of training emerges as a pivotal factor in bolstering human rights protection. Training programs often operate externally to penitentiary administrations, leading to limited effectiveness. **Institutional embedding of training** is recommended to create an environment where human rights awareness becomes an integral part of inmates' rehabilitation and staff's professional development. This approach not only encourages participation but also strengthens genuine appreciation for human rights principles.

Shifting from a zero-sum to a positive-sum approach in the relationship between human rights protection and prevention of radicalisation in prison is a critical shift that needs to be embraced. Effective prevention of radicalisation and human rights protection are not contradictory goals but rather mutually reinforcing. By upholding human rights and the rule of law, extremist narratives can be countered, leading to a more comprehensive strategy for preventing radicalisation. This calls for a shift in perspective, where **the collaboration between radicalisation prevention and human rights protection is viewed as synergistic, rather than competing.**

Several best practices were identified in the Handbook, each contributing to the overarching goal of enhancing human rights protection for young adults in prison and probation settings. These practices reflect a holistic approach that considers the complex interplay between human rights, rehabilitation, and radicalisation prevention.

Recommendation 2 advocates for a nuanced approach to the use of indicators in assessing risk. While indicators play a role in identifying potential threats, they must be applied with caution, avoiding biases and acknowledging the nuances of inmate behaviour. Instead of relying solely on indicators, the focus should shift toward observing behavioural patterns over time, promoting a deeper understanding of individual circumstances.

Best practice 1 highlights the importance of minimizing isolation as a strategy to prevent torture, inhumane, and degrading treatment. The use of solitary confinement should be a last resort and adhere to clear standards. Alternatives that encourage interaction, integration, and rehabilitation are more effective in preventing radicalisation.

The positive impact of strengthening family and social connections is emphasised in best practice 3. Maintaining inmates' ties with their families and broader social networks is crucial for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Strategies that adapt prison transfer policies, involve families in rehabilitation efforts, and prioritise family ties contribute to a more effective approach to radicalisation prevention.

Best practice 4 underscores the significance of religious and confessional activities in relation to the right to religious freedom. Rather than viewing religious engagement as a risk factor, the approach should be to provide inmates with access to vetted literature and ministers of religious worship, fostering a balanced interpretation of religious texts and facilitating positive community engagement.

In conclusion, this Handbook provides comprehensive recommendations and best practices that address both individual and systemic factors in enhancing human rights protection for young adults in prison and probation settings. By adopting these strategies, penitentiary administrations can create environments that not only prevent radicalisation but also promote the holistic well-being and rehabilitation of inmates, ensuring their successful reintegration into society. The interplay between human rights protection, rehabilitation, and radicalisation prevention is a dynamic one, requiring a multifaceted and collaborative approach to achieve positive outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

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Annex I – Pan-European online survey: questions

Question 1. In which country do you work?

- a. Albania
- b. Austria
- c. Italy
- d. Slovenia
- e. Spain
- f. Belgium
- g. France
- h. Other

Question 2. What is your age?

Question 3. What is your gender?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Diverse/non-binary
- D. Prefer not to answer

Question 4. In which type of institution do you work?

- a. prison
- b. probation program
- c. EXIT program
- d. other

Question 5. How long are you working in this position? In years & months.

Question 6. What is your educational background?

- a. BA
- b. MA
- c. MSc
- d. PhD
- e. Professional (Vocational) Training program
- f. Other

Question 7. What is your professional background?

- a. Social work
- b. Psychology
- c. Philosophy
- d. Security
- e. Medicine
- f. Educational science
- g. Law/legal
- h. Other

Question 8. What is your current role with regard to radicalisation in prisons?

- a. Work with inmates in general

- b. Work with inmates at risk of radicalisation
- c. Work with radicalised inmates
- d. Management / not in direct contact with inmates

Question 9. With which forms of radicalisation are you confronted in prison/workplace?

- a. Religious
- b. Politically Left
- c. Politically Right
- d. Other

Question 10. What is your overall approach to dealing with radicalisation in prisons? Please describe in your own words.

Question 11. Do you have concrete methods to address radicalisation in prisons? If yes, please specify.

Question 12. Are there specific components conceptualised especially for female inmates? If yes, please describe them.

Question 13. Are there specific tools or programmes to address the prevention of radicalisation among young adults in prison? If yes, please describe.

Question 14. Do you use risk assessment tools regarding radicalisation? If so, which one(s)?

Question 15. Are human rights aspects part of the measures to deal with radicalisation in prisons? If yes, please elaborate in a few sentences.

Question 16. Have you received training on recognising signs of radicalisation in prisons? If yes, what were the aims and the brief content of the training?

Annex II – Focus group meetings: template questionnaire

1. Are there any specific national legislative definitions of radicalisation that guide your work? Are they in line with the phenomenon of radicalisation that you face in your daily work?
2. Are there specific prevention and/or counter-radicalisation treatment programmes? If not, would it be important to have them?
3. What positive experiences would you highlight about interventions that your administration has carried out regarding radicalised inmates or those at risk of radicalisation? On the contrary, what are the main difficulties that front-line operators encounter in their day-to-day work in this regard?
4. Do you think that the group of young adults at risk of radicalisation has specific characteristics compared to the general prison population? What specific needs of young adults at risk of radicalisation have you identified? In this sense, do you think that there should be some specific programmes aimed at young adults? If they exist, do these programmes intercept these needs?
5. Are there any official behavioural indicators concerning inmates' radicalisation? If so, how are they designed/constructed, and what do they include? On what criteria are they based? How do you use them in your daily work?
6. What kind of evidence and psychological or criminological theories underpin the programmes that exist (or those that should exist)?
7. Who are the professionals involved in these programs? What are the main difficulties that front-line operators encounter in their day-to-day work with radicalised inmates or those at risk of radicalisation? What role should social workers, educators, psychologists, cultural mediators and other professionals play in this issue? And third-sector entities?
8. What strategies are currently being used to promote positive identities and the resilience of radicalised individuals and those at risk of radicalisation?
9. Some experts are drawing attention to the need for intervention programmes not to be based solely on a zero-risk policy (possible labelling effects of an actuarial perspective and a possible conflict with human rights...) What is your opinion on this? Based on your experience, how does this zero-risk policy translate into practice?
10. The project is interested in the level of respect for human rights and the policies that are being implemented in this regard. What is your assessment of this? If necessary, how could compliance with them be improved? In this sense, what is your opinion on isolation measures for radicalised/at risk of radicalisation people?
11. More in general, regarding human rights in the penitentiary environment, do you think that prisons respect inmates' needs and demands related to their cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds?

Annex III – Interviews with young people in prison or probation settings: questionnaire

Dear interviewee,

Thank you for accepting our invitation. We are a group of researchers from different European countries, and we would like to talk with you about some aspects of life that are relevant to every one of us, such as friends, family, well-being, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours.

This interview is divided into two parts. In the first one, you will be asked some open-ended questions, whereas in the second part, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire by crossing the answer that fits you the best. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. You are free to withdraw at any time. If you want to stop, just tell the interviewer.

We will never know who you are because we will use only numeric codes to identify the questionnaire. We care about your privacy, and thus, we will adopt all the necessary measures to protect it.

THANK YOU!

QUALITATIVE SECTION²⁵

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gender Male Female Non-binary

How old are you? _____

Where were you born? _____

How long have you been in Italy (each partner, insert the name of the country)? _____

Where were your parents born? _____

Where did you grow up? _____

Family status (being married, divorced, children, brothers and sisters, living alone) _____

²⁵ The five domains and related questions of the qualitative interviews with young inmates have been inspired by the following readings: Barrelle, K., 'Pro-integration: Disengagement from and life after extremism', in *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 7, 2015, pp. 129–142, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2014.988165>; Cherney, A., & Belton, E., 'Assessing intervention outcomes targeting radicalized offenders: Testing the pro integration model of extremist disengagement as an evaluation tool', in *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 13, 2020, pp. 193–211; available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2019.1680854>.

Which is your religion?

- No religion Catholic Christian (e.g. Protestant, Orthodox) Muslim Jewish
 Buddhist Other (specify): _____

Did you have a job before incarceration? If yes, what was your job? _____

What is your educational level?

- Primary School Middle School High School Bachelor Degree
 Master Degree PhD

CRIMINOLOGICAL INFORMATION

How long have you been in prison?

How old were you when you were arrested?

For which offences have you been convicted? (OPTIONAL)

GROUP IDENTIFICATION

We all are part of social groups and communities. Which of these groups do you feel close to? You have more than one option!

- My Country
- My Political group
- My Family
- My Religious group
- My Ethnic group
- My friends
- Other (specify): _____

Now, we would like to ask you some questions about your life outside and inside prison. Feel free to skip the questions you do not want to answer. If you do not feel comfortable, tell the interviewer that you want to stop or that you do not want to answer some specific questions.

DOMAIN N. 1: SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

If you think about your social contacts and relationships, how many close and trusted friends do you think you have? A few? Some? Many?

Friends and family play a relevant role in our lives. How would you describe your relationships with them?

We all are part of a larger society, and sometimes, we might go through both positive and negative experiences. Have you ever perceived that others discriminated against you or isolated you?

You are now living in a community with other people. How would you describe your relationships with other inmates? Are they important in your life? Why?

With regard to your relationships with prison staff, guards, and social workers (e.g. educators, psychologists), how would you describe them?

As in larger society, in prison, individuals might feel that they are not treated the way they wish. As to this, do you think that other prisoners and staff treat you right? Also, do you think that your needs and demands related to your cultural and religious traditions are considered?

DOMAIN N.2: PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Everybody looks for purpose, meaning, and direction in life and try to get them from a variety of experiences and circumstances. What or who gave you purpose, meaning and direction outside prison? And now?

Sometimes, we might feel good and full of energy; sometimes, we might feel sad or down. Do you think you have a web of support around you both outside and inside prison? For instance, think of your friends, family, prison staff, other inmates or those people who are special to you. How do they support you?

We get some comfort not only from people but also from other sources. Is there any thought or activity that makes you feel good during your time in prison?

DOMAIN N. 3: IDENTITY

In addition to looking for purpose, meaning, and direction in life, we all try to understand who we are. How would you describe who you were before incarceration?

Some experiences might change us and help us discover something new about us. How did incarceration change you? Are you discovering new images of yourself, new beliefs, new interests or roles? Is someone helping you reflect on yourself and on your story?

People feel connected to other individuals and groups, and they enjoy spending time with them. At the beginning of the interview, you mentioned some groups. Why are they important to you?

DOMAIN N. 4: IDEOLOGY

People have beliefs and ideals that are relevant parts of their lives. Do you have any? How important are they in your life? Did they change after incarceration?

People might have different beliefs and worldviews. Do you think it is good to share thoughts and opinions with someone who has different beliefs and views of the world? What did you think about this before incarceration?

Do you have someone to whom you can talk about things that are important to you?

DOMAIN N.5: ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

People use violence sometimes to get what they want or to affirm their ideas. Do you think it is justifiable to use violence?

People like contributing to their communities in many ways. Have you ever been involved in any civic or religious community and in any prosocial activity before prison? And now?

Are you currently involved in any educational and vocational programs? If you are not, would you like to be involved in some program?

In conclusion, do you think that incarceration benefitted you? If yes, how and why?

How do you imagine your life after prison?



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