A Comparative Look at European and American Approaches to Countering Radicalization Toward Violence

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Introduction

The literature on radicalization toward violent extremism covers a wide range of nuances, and there are many ways of approaching the topic. As such, the personal story of each individual in the process of radicalizing toward violent extremism must be an essential consideration for front-line practitioners when deciding which approach to take. This chapter presents a high-level comparison of the European and American approaches to addressing radicalization toward violent extremism, including the similarities and differences in their approaches to countering such radicalization. It also discusses ongoing and possible future developments in the field of evaluating counter-radicalization and deradicalization interventions.

Similarities between the American and European approaches to countering radicalization toward violent extremism (CVE) include recognizing radicalization toward violent extremism as a process; acknowledging that extremist ideology is usually the result of, rather than the reason for, joining radical extremist groups; and emphasizing the importance of community engagement for counter-radicalization and deradicalization purposes. Differences between the approaches are evident when looking at cultural dissonances within each society with regard to the delicate nature of (CVE), the focus of the discourses surrounding CVE, and the perceived relevance of interventions aimed at violent gangs toward the practice and policy of CVE.

Definitions related to radicalization

In this context an intervention is a non-military way of leading radicalized groups or individuals, or those with the potential to be affected by the process of radicalization, away from the willingness to use violence in the name of their ideology and/or cause. Interventions are sometimes referred to as a "soft approach" to counter-terrorism, as opposed to a "hard" military approach, in that they are organized to work with people, as opposed to working against people.1

Due to the emergent nature of the study of CVE, definitions regarding violent radical activity, the rejection of such activity, and the processes that lead to such rejection are still evolving. There are numerous offered definitions for the term radicalization, making it difficult to settle on one definitive definition. For example, even the European Union, which explicitly states that the prevention of radicalization is a key objective of its counterterrorism strategy, does not provide a single clear definition of radicalization.2 An amalgamation of the many comparable definitions found in relevant research could characterize radicalization as a social and psychological process of increased support and/or participation in violence or other undemocratic

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methods stimulated by extremist ideology that rejects the status quo of democratic society.³

The exact meaning of diminishing one’s involvement in extremist activity also requires clarification, and the difference between disengagement and de-radicalization has been thoroughly discussed in relevant literature. Disengagement is generally used to describe the act of removing oneself from a radical group, while de-radicalization generally describes a cognitive change that involves denouncing the ideology of the radical group of which the individual was formerly a part. As such, a disengaged individual is not necessarily deradicalized.⁴ Neumann writes that disengagement facilitates behavioral change, such as the rejection of violence, while deradicalization signifies substantive changes in ideology and attitudes.⁵

Horgan and Braddock define disengagement as the process whereby an individual initiates a change in his or her group role or function that is usually associated with a reduction of violent participation. They explain that disengagement may not necessarily involve leaving the group or movement, but is most frequently associated with significant temporary or permanent role change. By comparison, they define deradicalization as the social and psychological process whereby an individual’s commitment to, and involvement in, violent radical ideologies and groups is reduced to the extent that he/she is no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity.⁶

Radicalization and de-radicalization as non-linear processes

It is important to note that radical thoughts do not always become radical actions, and in democratic societies, "radical" is not an actionable label. Some might even say that being radical is a good thing and that we are all radical in our own ways. Of course it is possible for radical thoughts to become radical actions culminating in extremist violence or terrorism, but that is the rare exception.⁷

To make progress in the field of countering violent extremism, it is imperative to comprehend that radicalization—whether or not it is toward violent extremism and/or terrorism—is a human process. Radicalization happens gradually, rather than as a one-time decision, and the process is unique for each individual or group.⁸

Radicalization involves several phases that, when put together, usually lead to

³ Joanna Pliner, Inventory of Interventions, European Union Seventh Framework Program project Scientific Approach to Finding Indicators of and Responses to Radicalization (SAFIRE). The Inventory of Interventions document is restricted, but key conclusions of the document are explored in the public deliverable summary and in the SAFIRE public focus documents by the author, which can be seen on the project results web site: http://goo.gl/1NsUy8 and http://www.safire-project-results.eu/focus.html respectively.
⁴ Ibid.
⁸ SAFIRE project results: http://www.safire-project-results.eu/.
changes in values and changes in behavior, though not necessarily in that order. The same is true for deradicalization, which is also a cumulative process resulting in a change in values and behavior.

Since radicalization is a process, and since each person’s process of radicalization is individual, there is no established order of events or checklist that can be universally applied when trying to identify those who are possibly radicalizing toward violent extremism, or when designing de-radicalization programs. The cognitive change of deradicalization and the behavioral change of disengagement do not always display a definitive correlation, nor do they always coincide with one another. Cognitive change can come before behavioral change and behavioral change can come before cognitive change, or the two may overlap.

European and American cultural dissonances in addressing violent radicalization

Identifying the shift between a person radicalizing and a person radicalizing toward violence is an imprecise task and is often dependent upon context. Horgan and Braddock define radicalization as the social and psychological process of incrementally increasing one's commitment to an extremist political or religious ideology. Their definition of violent radicalization expands upon this to include the social and psychological process of increased and focused radicalization through involvement with a violent non-state movement. They note that radicalization does not necessarily lead to violence, but it is a factor that could potentially lead to violence since violent radicalization is usually a progression of ideological radicalization. Violent radicalization encompasses the phases of becoming involved with a terrorist group and remaining involved and engaging in terrorist activity. It includes the pre-involvement process of seeking out the opportunity to engage in violence and the exploration of competing alternatives. In order to be considered a violent radical, the individual must have both the opportunity for engagement and personal agency in making a decision about that engagement.

For distinct but overlapping reasons, the European Union and the United States each face difficult public and political discourses regarding their policies to address violent radicalization. In the European Union, there is tension between CVE and citizens' rights to privacy and the protection of free thought. In the United States, CVE can be seen to clash with rights protected by the First Amendment, including freedom of speech, the free exercise of religion, freedom of the press, the right to peaceable assembly, and the right to petition the government. In the United States there is also a reticence to imply a negative connotation to the word radical. It is deeply engrained in the American identity, and supported by the educational system, that radical ideas should not only be permitted, but also that they should be encouraged and appreciated because they are often some of the most important ideas. As the Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group wrote in their report "Preventing Violent Radicalization in America,"

10 SAFIRE project results: http://www.safire-project-results.eu/.
12 Horgan and Braddock, “Rehabilitating the Terrorists.”
Not only is being a radical no crime in America, the very idea of “radicalism” has positive connotations in a nation whose founding principles were seen as radical, even revolutionary, at the time. American history books are full of reminders that many of the rights and freedoms now taken for granted were fought for by individuals who were condemned as “radicals” and “extremists” by their contemporaries. Abolitionists “faced violent mobs and hostile legislators who interfered with their mail and destroyed their presses;” women campaigning for their right to vote “were called ‘hysterical’ and…banned from public speaking;” Martin Luther King Jr. was “smeared and threatened” by the government. This collective experience has taught Americans of all political persuasions that “radicals” are essential parts of their national story, and on many occasions they have been drivers of positive change and renewal.¹³

Leaders and coordinators of interventions to counter violent extremism in both Europe and America must be careful not to infringe upon the rights of citizens, not only for legal and cultural reasons, but also because it can actually prove to be counterproductive to their goals. Many activists start out with no intention of engaging in violent acts in the name of their cause, but may be sparked by a perceived injustice—such as an infringement upon their rights—to make the transition from activism to extremism. Sometimes the suppression of activists with radical ideas who have yet to instigate violent and/or extremist activity can be the catalyst that pushes them toward violence, therefore precipitating the very opposite of the desired outcome. While it is true that many activists do not aspire to participate in violent extremism, it is also true that many of those who do end up engaging in violent extremism started out as activists; this further obscures the distinction between acceptable and dangerous radicalism.¹⁴

A common theoretical knowledge base

While cultural and political differences between the United States and Europe do affect their approaches to countering radicalization toward violent extremism, there are a few basic principles found in the literature regarding the process of radicalization on which both sides agree. It is from this common theoretical knowledge base that different actors, such as the United States and Europe, build upon while also taking their own populations and cultures into consideration, to develop local discourses, policies, and interventions. The broadly-supported principles within this knowledge base can be categorized into two main creeds, both of which will be discussed below: 1) radicalization is a "process of processes," and 2) extremist ideology is a result, not a cause, of the process of radicalization toward violent extremism.

Radicalization is a process of processes

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The process of radicalization is a malleable one. The life of the radicalizing person is often changing in many of its dimensions, as the individual is affected by varying aspects of society. When these life changes of an individual overlap with the recruitment process of extremist groups, the individual is more likely to be susceptible to the group’s message. When Dr. Anat Berko, a world-renowned terrorism expert (and more recently, an elected political official), asked a Palestinian suicide bomber dispatcher about his recruitment process, he replied, "Find me the sad guys."\(^{15}\)

Certain personal and life circumstances fuel the dynamic correlation between one’s susceptibility toward radicalization and the recruiter's pursuit for new collaborators. Individuals drawn to extremist messages and groups often feel excluded from their societies, trapped, hopeless, or lack of a sense of belonging or identity.\(^{16}\)

When people or groups become discontented with the state of society, a demand for some sort of action arises. When that demand is met or "supplied" by an extremist organization, radicalization is propagated.\(^{17}\) Counter-radicalization interventions therefore attempt to intervene in this dynamic before supply meets demand. In other words, interventions aim to interrupt or prevent the process of radicalization before there is a chance for social frustrations to be expressed through the outlet of violence.

Kruglanski and Fishman write that the processes of radicalization and de-radicalization are essentially mirror images of one another. Both processes are guided by two central elements: an intellectual/cognitive element fueled by ideological content and arguments delivered by figures who are perceived by the individual to be credible and influential; and a motivational element prompting individuals to embrace an alternative opportunity for honorable existence and personal significance backed by material support, vocational training, and family assistance.\(^{18}\)

The initial stages of the radical recruitment process and the de-radicalization process resemble one another in that they both involve engaging in dialogue, befriending new people, and addressing social, financial, and psychological needs in an effort to gain another’s trust.

Extremist ideology as a result, not a cause, of joining radical extremist groups

Bartlett, Birdwell and King refer to the Social Movement Theory to show that people are often drawn to movements for reasons other than those that define the group itself, and that the groups often serve (for the purposes of the newly joined individual) merely to articulate a grievance.\(^{19}\) Horgan says that terrorists usually acquire their

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\(^{15}\) Dr. Anat Berko, Israel Homeland Security International Conference, November 2, 2010.


religious ideologies once they are already involved in an extremist group rather than joining the group because of its ideologies. They usually join for the allure of adventure, excitement, vision, purpose, and camaraderie provided by the terrorist organization.\textsuperscript{20}

Similarly, Bjorgo and Carlsson have written that youth usually do not join racist groups because they possess racist ideologies, but rather they adopt racist perspectives as a consequence of joining such groups. Many participants of racist youth groups, they argue, use racism as an expression of another motivation, and do not actually espouse the racist ideology that the group represents. Examples provided by the authors of other motivations that could lead youth to join racist groups include showing off to friends, living up to group expectations, proving loyalty or masculinity, or gaining media attention. Bjorgo and Carlsson thereby argue that identity, rather than ideology, is the most crucial element in drawing youth into radicalization, and into racist groups in particular.\textsuperscript{21}

Perceived grievances and rejections from society that can influence an individual’s process of radicalization and potentially lead to them join an extremist movement—such as the previously mentioned examples of feeling excluded from their societies, trapped, hopeless, or a lack of a sense of belonging or identity—can be born from what Bartlett, Birdwell, and King refer to as permissive factors. They define permissive factors as elements that do not directly cause radicalization, but that may increase the likelihood of becoming radicalized. They specify three categories of permissive causes: global, state, and socio-cultural. Permissive factors at the global level may include geopolitics, foreign policies, and/or military actions. State level permissive factors could include real or perceived discrimination as a result of economic or cultural exclusion from state and social structures. Socio-cultural permissive factors could include a combination of elements of discontent regarding one’s personal situation, ideology, culture, and/or identity.\textsuperscript{22} Intervention coordinators are better able to formulate their core goals and methods when they understand that the reasons individuals support or participate in extremist activity are usually deeply rooted and have origins other than those that define the causes of the radical group.

Common practice: emphasizing community engagement

The United States and Europe both emphasize the importance of community engagement when it comes to CVE. A stated goal of the Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States (SIP) is enhancing the federal government’s community engagement efforts related to countering violent extremism.\textsuperscript{23} The European Radicalization Awareness Network consists of eight working groups, one of which (RAN POL) focuses on the

\textsuperscript{21}Tore Bjorgo and Yngve Carlsson, \textit{Early Intervention with Violent and Racist Youth Groups}, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), 2005.
\textsuperscript{22}Bartlett, \textit{The Edge of Violence}.
potential role of local and community police in preventing radicalization leading to violent extremism and/or terrorism.\(^{24}\)

Much like the supply and demand dynamic between vulnerable individuals and extremist organizations discussed earlier, there are "push and pull" factors within society that serve to give radical individuals reasons not to partake in extremist activities, whether that means leaving the radical group they are part of or deciding not to join one in the first place. Push factors make participating in extremist organizations unappealing, and pull factors make alternatives offered by the larger society attractive.\(^{25}\) Push factors are the doubts that make leaving the radical group feasible, and pull factors are the incentives that make reintegrating into society a viable option. For example, push factors may include pressure from outside the group, such as negative social sanctions; feelings of dissatisfaction within the group, such as losing faith in the ideology of the movement; becoming disillusioned with the activities of the group; losing one's hierarchical position within the group; or excessive pressure and exhaustion of holding a leadership role in the group. Pull factors may include the desire for aspects of a "normal" life that are either unavailable or difficult to attain as part of an extremist group such as: longing for the tranquility of life outside the group like not always having to look over one's shoulder; outgrowing the need for a thrill, which originally drew them to extremism; wanting to have a viable chance in the job market and similar future prospects; and/or wanting to start a family.\(^{26}\)

In order for a CVE intervention to have the potential to make a positive impact, the community being targeted by the intervention must trust the intervening group.\(^{27}\) The participants are more likely to embrace the concept and objectives of an intervention if the leading figures are seen by the participants as credible sources of information.\(^{28}\) Having respected, credible figures involved in the intervention also contributes to addressing the intellectual component of radicalism. For example, in the case of addressing Islamic extremism, moderate religious authorities whose thoughts and intentions the participants respect are best suited to present theological arguments against terrorism—and especially against using Islam as a rationale for terrorism—such as Islam prohibiting the harming of innocent people\(^{29}\) and the Quran warning against pushing beliefs too far.\(^{30}\)

During his time in office, former US Department of State Counterterrorism Coordinator Daniel Benjamin said that a broad range of "non-coercive" instruments,

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\(^{25}\) Bjorgo, *Early Intervention*.


\(^{30}\) Personal interview with youth counselor and security / social issues / radicalization, alienation and social isolation front line worker; September 1, 2010.
such as messaging, capacity-building, outreach to civil society, and educational campaigns are necessary to make environments non-permissive for terrorists seeking to exploit them.\textsuperscript{31} These are in line with the core goals and activities of several European community policing programs such as Channel and CoPPRa (Community Policing Preventing Radicalization & Terrorism).\textsuperscript{32} Conducting both community policing and community engagement establishes a clear division between hard counter-terrorism and soft counter-radicalization, thus making sure that the two practices do not interfere with the goals of the other while also ensuring that the capacity for each type of measures is maintained and that relevant resources are available if the need arises to shift from soft to hard approaches, or vice versa.\textsuperscript{33}

Looking through different lenses

Even with some similarities in their knowledge bases and understandings of the process of radicalization toward violent extremism, there are differences in the approaches that the European Union and the United States have taken to address the problem. This is not surprising due to the differences between European and American histories, social and political cultures, and national societal challenges that existed even prior to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The two main differences between the European and American approaches revolve around how they focus their discourse on radicalization and de-radicalization, and their perspectives on the relevance of counter-gang programs toward counter-radicalization programs.

Wide lens vs. narrow lens: the European Union’s broad societal approach vs. the United States' focus on Islamic radicalization

The counter-radicalization policies of the European Union and the United States both make a point of naming Islamic radicalization as the main terrorist threat to their respective societies. American policy and scientific literature on radicalization in the United States makes a deliberate focus on Islamic radicalization, while European literature and policy address a broader range of radicalization toward violent extremism, including extremist versions of other ideologies beyond just those that related to Islam, such as right wing, left wing, separatist, and new religious movements.\textsuperscript{34}

There has been an effort in recent years in the United States to bring awareness and attention to other types of radicalization toward violence, but the vast majority of the discussion and policy decisions are still directed toward Islamic extremism. When the Obama administration announced SIP in August 2011, it was the first initiative by the United States federal government to call for "combating violent extremism." The policy addresses all types of radicalization toward violent extremism but mainly focuses on radicalization inspired by Al Qaeda.\textsuperscript{35} Most articles to be found on the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Neuman, Preventing Violent Radicalization.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Channel: \url{http://www.acpo.police.uk/ACPOBusinessAreas/PREVENT/Channel.aspx}; CoPPRa: \url{http://www.coppra.eu/index.php}
\item \textsuperscript{33} Neuman, Preventing Violent Radicalization.
\item \textsuperscript{34} SAFIRE, \url{http://www.safire-project-results.eu/}.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Bjelopera, Countering Violent Extremism.
\end{itemize}
topic of radicalization in the United States focus on Islamic radicalization toward extremism.

In addition to cultural and political reasons for this distinction in policy, there is also a semantic and conceptual difference between the American and European understanding of what constitutes counter-radicalization and deradicalization efforts. The discourse surrounding counter-radicalization and deradicalization interventions within the European Union is much broader than that of the United States; the discourse in the European Union generally allows for the inclusion of anything that could possibly influence individuals in a way that would deter them from developing a willingness to use violence in the name of an ideology. This could include neighborhood community programs, counter-radicalization programs for prison inmates, and everything in between. These types of programs exist in the United States, but they are not recognized as contributing to CVE.

Examples of such social programs with a counter-radicalization influence include the Somali Mothers Health Realization initiative, which promotes positive and proactive strategies for immigrants raising children in the United States in order to curtail recruitment amongst Somali families; and Teens on Target, which motivates at-risk youth in California to adopt attitudes of anti-violence, with the aim of preventing youth living in violent neighborhoods in California from joining violent groups and/or participating in violence.

Violent gang interventions: Good starting point or irrelevant to de-radicalization?

As explained earlier, in the United States the word "radical" has long held a positive connotation. As such, the concept of deradicalization has been a difficult one for many in the United States to grasp. It is interesting, however, that similar efforts made for crime-fighting purposes, rather than for the purposes of changing someone's behavior and outlook, are not seen as taboo. In the United States, policy makers, researchers and CVE practitioners all look to criminology and the history of fighting crime in America to inform their understanding of the process of radicalization, as well as the design of counter-radicalization and deradicalization interventions. The European Union, however, stops short of drawing any connection between addressing criminal gangs and the individuals who join them, and addressing radical extremist groups and those who join them. It is generally thought that the similarities between the two processes are not well enough established and that the lack of political affiliation of gangs is a sound reason to keep the two in separate categories.

There is some literature in the United States that compares deradicalization with what Morris, et al. call "deganging"—leaving a gang and the violent lifestyle that goes along with it—that recognizes the similarities in motivations between entering and leaving gangs and entering and leaving violent radical groups. The literature on gangs and deganging also shows that so-called affiliative factors including personal

36 Neuman, Preventing Violent Radicalization.
38 Ibid.
relationships, social networks, and a sense of community or belonging\textsuperscript{39} likely play a central role in an individual's decision to enter into or exit a gang;\textsuperscript{40} that gangs are frequently said to serve as "surrogate families" for their members;\textsuperscript{41} and that weak bonds with family and low commitment to school are significant risk factors for gang participation.\textsuperscript{42} This is similar to the literature on radicalization discussed earlier showing that individuals who join radical groups usually do so in an effort to fill real or perceived social and/or societal voids, and that taking on a radical ideology then becomes a result of, rather than the reason for, joining that radical group.\textsuperscript{43}

The report "Preventing Violent Radicalization in America" by the US-based Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group recommends encouraging the study of the knowledge and successes in related fields such as gang prevention in order to address ideologically motivated violence.\textsuperscript{44} A lack of certainty regarding personal identity and social acceptance drives both gang members and members of extremist organizations toward these two deviant paths. From there, the identity they build is shaped by the thrill that being part of a violent, illegal and/or immoral group provides.\textsuperscript{45} Once involved in these respective groups, both gang members and members of extremist groups can begin to feel an obsessive need to commit whatever acts are encouraged by the group.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to looking at the similarities between gangs and violent radical groups regarding their recruitment and retention strategies, it is also useful to compare the most effective ways to bring an end to such groups. Bjorgo and Carlsson provide the following factors that can weaken or precipitate the dismantling of gangs.\textsuperscript{47} Most of these factors relate to group dynamics and are similar to the factors that can precipitate the dismantling of violent radical groups. They include:

- Defeat of the group by external use of force
- Loss of external enemies or threat
- Loss of identity, status, or image
- Decay of group cohesiveness, solidarity, or attraction value
- Fragmentation of the group into smaller units that may be too weak to survive

The Gang Reduction Strategy in Los Angeles, adopted in 2007, is an example of a counter-gang intervention that achieved positive outcomes by using approaches that are now also seen as helpful to the process of de-radicalization.\textsuperscript{48} The program's strategy of prevention, intervention, re-entry, and suppression consisted of, among other things, gang awareness education, after school and recreational activities for

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid, citing Sageman, 2004, 2008; Horgan, 2005; Bjorgo, 2009; Benard, 2005; Nesser, 2005; Bakker, 2006; Hegghammer, 2006a, 2006b; Cragin et al., 2006; Noricks, 2009a.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, citing Decker & Van Winkel, 1996; Tobin, 2008; Cottam, Huseby & Lutze, 2008; Curry & Decker, 1998.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid, citing La Fontaine, Gerguson, & Wormith, 2003; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizottee, Smith, & Tobin, 2003.
\textsuperscript{43} Pliner, \textit{Intellectual and Motivational Intervention Approaches}.
\textsuperscript{44} Neuman, \textit{Preventing Violent Radicalization}.
\textsuperscript{46} Dr. Anat Berko, Israel Homeland Security International Conference, November 2, 2010.
\textsuperscript{47} Bjorgo, \textit{Early Intervention}.
\textsuperscript{48} Neuman, \textit{Preventing Violent Radicalization}. 
youth, and discussions and activities organized and run by former gang members. A case study on this program concluded:

There are, of course, some differences between terrorist groups like al Qaeda and criminal gangs, in particular the absence of a political ideology. But the individual experiences and social dynamics that lead young Latinos and African Americans in Los Angeles to join gangs may be quite similar to those that get young Muslims involved in terrorist groups. Moreover, all the elements of Los Angeles' Gang Reduction Strategy have been subject to rigorous assessment, which means that the underlying processes and dynamics are well-understood. In that sense, the gang prevention program in Los Angeles can offer useful lessons and may, in certain respects, serve as a framework that can be adapted for the purpose of counter-radicalization.

A look to the future: Evaluating interventions

It is important to emphasize that, just as there is no singular definitive process of radicalization, there is no one-size-fits-all intervention to address radicalization. Accordingly, interventions must be customized to the people and communities they are designed to help. In short, context matters.

Intervention coordinators should have a deep understanding of the people they are trying to keep from radicalizing toward violent extremism, their cultures, and their points of view. Understanding the cultural and social differences within communities will lead to more targeted interventions that are able to pinpoint and address the right people and bring the appropriate perspectives while avoiding offending members of the same community who are not involved in extremist activities or ideologies.

Wagenaar and van Deonselaar note that embracing a new environment is as much a part of the de-radicalization process as is disengaging from the old. Similarly, Kruglanski and Fishman outline two key components of the de-radicalization process: motivational and intellectual. The intellectual component refers to dealing with the ideological content through arguments and counter-arguments, while the motivational component refers to fostering the capability to pursue and continue that new outlook and by providing material support, vocational training, and family assistance.

While Kruglanski and Fishman refer specifically to deradicalization, these intellectual and motivational influences/components are also part of the processes of radicalization. Whether moving toward or away from radicalization, the intellectual component makes sense of and gives credit to a cause and/or ideology, while the motivational component provides the practical means by which to participate in and

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
51 Hearne, A New Approach?
52 Briggs, Bringing it Home.
53 Wagenaar, Willem and van Donselaar, Jaap (2009)
54 Kruglanski, “Psychological Factors in Terrorism and Counterterrorism.”
gain from the community.\textsuperscript{55} Intellectual and motivational approaches to de-
radicalization are each valuable, but both are required as neither is independently
comprehensive. If a person becomes disenchanted with the ideology of a radical
group but does not have opportunities or incentives to facilitate the transition out of
the radical group, they are unlikely to do so. Conversely, if family assistance and
vocational training are made available to individuals who believe that violent
extremism is the best way to achieve their goals, they are not likely to change their
situations.\textsuperscript{56}

For an intervention to make true progress, it must make meaningful contact with those
involved and should not be abrasive or accusatory in nature. Interventions have more
potential to yield positive results if the people participating in the intervention feel
that they are trusted. If the people coordinating the intervention display a
condescending demeanor toward the participants, they may feel disrespected and
suspect the organizers of having ulterior motives. Such perceived disrespect and lack
of confidence in the intervention can be detrimental to the process of
deradicalization.\textsuperscript{57,58}

The development of reputable and reliable methods of evaluating the effectiveness of
counter-radicalization and deradicalization interventions is an ongoing field still in its
early stages.\textsuperscript{59} This is complicated by the fact that the desired outcome of many
programs is a positive long-term effect. However, measurements of recidivism rates
are only a measure of what is known to date, what is observed, and/or what has been
revealed leading, in some cases, to provide false confidence if current positive results
are assumed to continue in the future without knowing future contexts or data. (An
example of this is Saudi Arabia's deradicalization program, which was lauded as a
success until 2009, when it was discovered that 11 of the program's graduates were
engaged in terrorist activities.) Program evaluation is further hindered by the lack of
long-term data, as most de-radicalization programs have not been around long enough
to comprehensively evaluate which methods and strategies have the most lasting
impact.\textsuperscript{60}

Even when the data is available, the definition of success varies according to the
intended outcome of the intervention. There are distinctions between the various goals
that pertain to addressing radicalization toward violent extremism, such as the
differences between disengagement and deradicalization, and between
deradicalization and counter-radicalization. Defining what makes a successful vs. an

\textsuperscript{55} Horgan and Braddock, “Rehabilitating the Terrorists.”
\textsuperscript{56} Pliner, \textit{Intellectual and Motivational Intervention Approache}.
\textsuperscript{57} Briggs, \textit{Bringing it Home}.
\textsuperscript{58} The importance of trust and credibility in interventions to counter radicalization toward violent
extremism was explored at length in SAFIRE. The relevant deliverable is restricted, but key
conclusions of the document are explored in the public deliverable summary and in SAFIRE public
focus documents, which can be seen on the project results web site: \url{http://goo.gl/9th4Tm} and
\url{http://www.safire-project-results.eu/focus.html}, respectively.
\textsuperscript{59} For example: SAFIRE in part explored the theoretical and practical aspects of evaluating
interventions related to countering radicalization toward violent extremism. Innovative Method and
Procedure to Assess Counter-violent-radicalization Techniques in Europe (IMPACT Europe) is an FP7
project that commenced in September 2014 and aims to fill the gap in knowledge and understanding of "what works" in tackling violent radicalization.
\textsuperscript{60} Stern, \textit{Mind Over Martyr}. 
unsuccessful intervention therefore depends largely on the stated goals of the program.

As time goes on, the methods of evaluating interventions aimed at countering radicalization toward violent extremism and/or terrorism, and similar objectives, will become further developed and able to serve as more useful tools for improving the application and design of interventions. In parallel to these ongoing developments, the sharing between practitioners of knowledge, protocol, and experience allows for the development of more robust policy and increases the nuance with which we are able to approach the challenge of radicalization toward violent extremism.