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PREPARE PROJECT

Preventing radicalisation through probation and release
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Netherlands: a strong local emphasis in de-radicalisation, disengagement and rehabilitation programmes

In the Netherlands, both prison and probation contribute to de-radicalisation, disengagement and re-integration and do so in cooperation with local municipalities.

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Probation allows for individualised follow-up for prisoners leaving prison and mobilises many services (prison administration, justice services, etc.). As a result, it is a key moment to act against the violent radicalisation of these individuals, whether it took place in prison or on release. Local authorities have a key role to play in coordinating these different institutions. They can also use their knowledge and know-how in the field of prevention of reoffending and disengagement.

PREPARE contributes to the prevention of radicalisation through disengagement and rehabilitation programmes during release and probation, notably through multi-agency partnerships that include local authorities.

Efus coordinates this project from 2017 to 2019 with a broad partnership of local authorities and civil society organisation: City of Malaga and Generalitat of Catalonia (Spain), Rotterdam and The Hague (Netherlands), Bagnolet (France) and Vilvoorde (Belgium), Violence Prevention Network and Denkzeit (Germany), Fryshuset (Sweden), European Forum for Restorative Justice (Belgium) and Fondation Agir Contre l'Exclusion (France).

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1. Summary

The Dutch approach can be summarised as multi-agency, integrated and comprehensive with a local implementation. Both prison and probation contribute to de-radicalisation, disengagement and re-integration and do so in cooperation with local municipalities. The local approach has national support.

2. The Dutch National Strategy on countering violent extremism

The Dutch government is implementing the 2016-2020 National Counterterrorism Strategy, which is risk-based, i.e. focussing on the Jihadist threat, although it also includes all other forms of extremism.

Two principles of the strategy are particularly important:

- The approach is comprehensive and includes preventive, repressive and curative measures to be implemented collaboratively with relevant organisations and agencies.
- This comprehensive approach is replicated locally, in particular through **multidisciplinary case management** and active community engagement.²

The government published in November 2017 a policy paper titled “Comprehensive terrorism approach” (Integrale aanpak terrorisme). The extra money that was involved was intended to intensify the approach along five priorities, of which one is ‘investing in de-radicalisation, re-integration and the judicial approach’. The approach for returnees requires on the one hand further development of methods for de-radicalisation in and outside prisons and on the other further development of methods of re-integration³.

>>>> Local authorities: key in prevention, exit and re-socialisation

Local authorities are responsible for individual case management and tailor-made personalised approaches. The public prosecutor prosecutes foreign fighters and others that join the so-called Caliphate from the moment it becomes clear these individuals have indeed travelled abroad to do so.

The local authority is responsible for a ‘person-specific approach’⁴ and for setting up ‘case conferences’. An essential element of the ‘person-specific approach’ is the need for the parties involved to share relevant information about a given individual as soon as possible. This is vital if they are to make a comprehensive and effective assessment of the risks posed by the individual in question. A national model agreement for a person-specific approach has been drawn up with a view to further clarifying the

² National Counterterrorism Strategy 2016-2020, page 3

³ Integrale aanpak terrorisme, November 2017, page 6

⁴ https://english.nctv.nl/binaries/Policy%20memorandum%20Comprehensive%20Counterterrorism%20Strategy_tcm32-346732.pdf

legal framework within which the parties involved in the case conferences can share information about individuals who are or may be radicalising.

The case management is normally done in the multi-agency Safety Houses⁵. There, local or regional partners for security and care cooperate under the supervision of the local authority.

Furthermore, case conferences discuss the risks posed by returnees or prisoners being released into society and measures are taken to minimise risks and optimise re-socialisation. Tailor-made is the code word. Potential interventions are prosecution, area banning orders, care programme or a de-radicalisation programme.

>>>> Prisons

For each prisoner, including those that fall under the terrorist regime, a so called Detention and Re-integration Plan⁶ is drawn up. It describes how the cooperation between the prison, the ex-detainee and network partners such as local authorities can function. Probation is advising on this D&R plan, and for terrorism-related prisoners this will be done by the specialised TER team Dutch Probation (see section below). There are three dimensions: safety and security; care and re-socialisation; re-integration. The plan covers areas such as work and income, housing, identity papers, debts and care. Prisoners and their case manager work together on their re-integration in Re-integration Centres, which are located within the prison and can receive visits by outside partners such as volunteers or municipal civil servants. They can also be helped by outside partners.

Part of the D & R plan can be a personal de-radicalisation programme, to which the prisoner must voluntarily apply. The personal programme is not one-size fits all but tailor made. Local authorities can offer extra support in housing, debt management and welfare applications but under the condition that the ex-detainee duly cooperates in his de-radicalisation process. Prisons have the obligation to inform the municipality where the detainee's last resided of the date of release so that the local authority can prepare re-integration.

>>>> Probation: TER team

The Dutch Probation board supports the Dutch comprehensive approach. They developed their own approach in 2012, titled the TER⁷ approach⁸ for Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalisation. There is a specialised TER team that gathers around 15 experienced staff members, who receive training in conversation techniques for people with extremist ideas.

⁵ There is a short English language YouTube introduction <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo1ffn4qVQ>

⁶ DJI brede visie op radicaliseren en extremisme, 3 October 2016, page 20;

⁷ More information in English on the TER approach can be found in the RAN Collection: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/11695_en

⁸ <https://www.reclassering.nl/over-de-reclassering/wat-wij-doen/aanpak-radicaliseren>

The target audience of the TER team are not only prisoners convicted for terrorism, but also other prisoners that have raised concern about their possible radicalisation. The TER team can even be hired by municipalities to advise and support in prevention cases where there is no conviction.

TER's activities consist in home visits, contact with family, critical conversations and cognitive behavioural interventions during which the TER team guides the individual and checks whether they respect the measures applied to them, such as banning orders, use of social media, or contact restrictions. The TER team cooperates with all the relevant professional partners, i.e. local authorities, youth care, the National Coordinator for Counter terrorism and Safety (NCTV), police and public prosecution.

To date, the TER team has handled about 60 individuals and given advice in some 150 instances.

>>>> National support for the local approach by the NCTV and the National Expertise Centre on Extremism

The local approach is supported by the National Coordinator for Counter terrorism and Safety (NCTV)⁹, which develops tools and facilitates the exchange of knowledge between local actors in different municipalities. The NCTV is also connected or sometimes even attends the local case conferences.

Furthermore, the NCTV has set up a National Expertise Centre on Extremism (LSE¹⁰), which provide family support, individual counselling and group contact with people who are or have been dealing with radicalisation issues. The multidisciplinary team consists of 30 competent professionals with a lot of experience in the field of radicalisation, honour-related and domestic violence, youth care, crisis care and intercultural social work. The support centre is located in the region of Utrecht and offers help throughout the country.

⁹ <https://english.nctv.nl/>

¹⁰ <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/english>