YOUTH WORKER'S
Perceptions and Awareness of Radicalization in
TÜRKİYE, SPAIN, FRANCE, AND UKRAINE

Youth Worker's Perceptions and Awareness of Radicalization in Türkiye, Spain, France, and Ukraine

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I. Introduction

Radicalization is one of the leading concepts that lead to the emergence of many types of political violence, especially terrorism. Radicalization, which has become increasingly important especially after the 2000s, has become an analytical paradigm for interpreting and explaining the phenomena and events of political violence. Before addressing the nature of the concept and its conceptual framework, it would be an appropriate attempt to emphasize its etymological analysis and historical development. Like many central themes of political science, radicalization is a word of Latin origin. Etymologically derived from the word 'radix', radicalization implies the act of returning to one's roots, but it also corresponds to a meaning related to the roots of things, whether plants or numbers (Kaya, 2021). However, the concept has expanded in meaning over time to include meanings such as the fundamental nature of a thing; a person or institution that supports political and social reform and that is innovative or progressive in breaking with tradition.

Although radicalization is a concept that belongs to the Ancient Greek period, its use and content close to its current meaning was acquired in the 18th century. In this period, the word radical, which constitutes the origin of radicalization, developed in a theme related to the Age of Enlightenment,

the French Revolution and the American War of Independence. In England, it was associated with middle class radicalism and used to describe violent revolutionary leaders in this period. In England, the transformation of the anger generated by the increase in industry, urbanization, literacy and population into the Wilkes movement outside the parliament reached a turning point in terms of radicalization. Towards the end of the 18th century, in France, criticisms against the political power of the time regarding corruption and abuse of the executive power resulted in the middle class voicing various political demands (Dickinson, 1994, p. 222). The word 'radical', which is still used today in the French parliament to describe center-left and progressive revolutionary political parties, is associated with those times. In the light of these developments, the concept of radicalism became a doctrine for political movements organized around the search for reforms in socio-cultural and political structures in different countries in the 19th century (DuBois, 1975, p. 64). The transformations in Western political life have brought individualism to the forefront since the 19th century and the importance of social roles acquired through the family has started to decrease. The fact that women began to challenge male domination in the socio-cultural and political spheres, especially the right to vote, led to the emergence of the feminist school as a mass movement. This movement had radical qualities in time.

The most significant differences in the development of radicalization emerged in the 19th century. In this period, emancipation and republicanism were defended against the absolute monarchies that dominated Europe. At this point, one of the pioneering movements was the Irish revolutionaries (Demetriou, 2012, p. 440). As a result of radicalization, this movement saw violence and internal conflict as a way out against the decisive actors of British politics. It is possible to see similar tendencies in Palestine and Cyprus during this period. Arab nationalism against the Zionist nationalism of Jewish immigrants and the mandate administration, and Greek Cypriot nationalism, which desired unification with Greece, were radicalized. By the 20th century, with the rise of left-wing ideologies and reformist tendencies, civil rights movements enabled people to campaign for socialism, women's rights and against the Vietnam war, making radical activities in this context

attractive (Cottrell, 1986, p. 49). Another historical event that contributed to the historical development of radicalization is the 1968 generation. These resistance movements, which emerged as student resistance in Europe and spread to many parts of the world, gave birth to new social movements that emphasized lifestyle, ethics and identity. New social movements questioned the issues related to the political sphere and led to a shift of interest beyond the political sphere and brought issues such as feminism, peace, animal rights and ecological issues to the agenda (Calhoun, 2011, p. 204).

A significant part of the events that have been the source of the historical development of radicalization have occurred in the 21st century. In this period, the emergence of new cross-cultural technological developments and the decisive influence of the media on political behavior have increased the complexity of defining and determining the content of concepts such as radical, radicalism or radicalization. This complexity has also made it difficult to develop a common international perspective on what radicalism is. In the 21st century, radicalism has become much more visible and globalized, making it difficult to develop a strategy to combat it. Radicalism has become more popular and widespread in this period due to inequalities arising from the current world order, lack of socio-economic support and the spread of radical ideologies. In addition to these reasons, it can be said that certain groups benefiting from or having more access to social welfare opportunities and components independent of individuals' living standards also played an effective role in this process. After addressing the historical development of radicalization, it would be an appropriate attempt to explain what it is. However, it should be noted that this is not an easy task.

The conceptual framework of radicalization is related to a number of complex issues. First and perhaps most importantly, radicalization is used in conjunction with concepts such as extremism and terrorism. This use of radicalization prevents a clear delineation of the differences between the related concepts. Because radicalization corresponds to the approval and realization of radical behavior, the question and problem of how to define the behavior in question has emerged. In order to define or answer this

question or problem, many states, institutions, organizations and researchers have defined radicalization in functional terms. However, the unconscious use of the concept in different disciplines has caused it to remain ambiguous and a common consensus has not been reached.

Radicalization can be simply defined as the intellectual, organizational and personal transformation process that provides intellectual resources for extremism and fundamentalism. In this respect, radicalization is the mental process of individuals who plan, implement or legitimize actions that involve the element of violence or result in violence (Köse & Coşkun, 2019, p. 40). According to Borum (2011, p. 8), radicalization is the act of developing extreme ideas to legitimize violence, while according to Moghaddam (2005, pp. 161–162), it is a ladder metaphor that gradually evolves towards terrorism. Therefore, radicalization is the totality of beliefs, feelings and behaviors that advocate a group or a cause, demand sacrifices for its realization and justify violence in this direction (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 416).

The radicalization process may differ for both radicalized and self-radicalized individuals as it involves various factors. In this respect, explaining the radicalization process is a very difficult undertaking. Because each form of radicalization requires the consideration of many phenomena from the physical environment to psychological factors. With new technological developments and tools, this situation has increased its importance. Despite this, it should be stated that there are different theoretical approaches that try to explain the radicalization process. However, among these theories, it would be useful to focus on four models as they contain more explanatory information especially in terms of youth radicalization. The first of these models is the Four Stage Model developed by Randy Borum. According to this model, the perception of injustice, the need for identity and belonging, and psychological factors that increase vulnerability and sensitivity are three determining factors in the radicalization of individuals and eventually becoming a member of terrorist organizations (Borum, 2010, p. 3). As a result of his analyses, Borum decided that individual ideological developments (Borum, 2003, pp. 7–10) could

have an impact on radicalization, and thus completed the pillars of the Four Stages Model. With the model in question, Borum tries to explain how injustice and victimization and the sensitivities of individuals turn into hatred against other individuals/groups over time and how this hatred will play a role as a legitimizing factor in the use of violence.

Another researcher who has developed a theoretical perspective on radicalization is Fathali Moghaddam. The approach developed by Moghaddam is called the Ladder Model. Moghaddam considers it as the individual coding the conditions that are not necessarily bad socio-economically as fair and unequal through his/her own psychological filter and presenting or constructing this situation as a justification for struggle. This evaluation is considered as the radicalization process which means that the individual may be involved in terrorist acts at the end of the staircase where all the pavements are climbed (Moghaddam, 2005, pp. 160-166). Another model that tries to explain radicalization is the Theory of Joining Extremist Groups developed by Quintan Wiktorowicz. With this theory, group importance and dynamics in the radicalization process are revealed. Although Wiktorwicz avoids using the concept of radicalization, he mentions the existence of four processes that lead to joining an extremist group: cognitive expansion, religious search, acting in accordance with the general framework and socialization (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 1). Another theoretical approach to the processes of youth and radicalization is called the Three Level Model by McCauley and Moskalenko. This model focuses on the radicalization of individuals, groups and masses in the political context and classifies the types of radicalizations in question. It is emphasized that with the interaction between the three levels (individual, group and mass) and the twelve stages, individuals can be radicalized in general (McMauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 418). The desire to use violence, which starts from the individual and then continues in an organized manner and ultimately becomes a legitimized goal, is considered as a radicalization process. In line with the relevant theoretical foundations, radicalization starts with the deprivation, discontent, deficiency, belonging / detachment, desire for change and transformation felt by individuals, groups or societies against the socio-economic, political and sociological situations they are in. Violent

radicalization, on the other hand, and the desire to gain a place through change and transformation are among the prominent factors in radicalization models.

The importance of examining young people's perceptions and awareness of radicalization plays a critical role in understanding societal dynamics and security policies. Young people are a key demographic shaping the future of a society and their opinions can reflect the overall trends and risk areas of a society. Radicalization processes often take place among young people. Therefore, young people's perceptions and awareness of radicalization are of vital importance for the development of radicalization prevention and counter-radicalization strategies. Young people's views on this issue are an essential resource for understanding the factors leading to radicalization and developing effective intervention methods. Furthermore, young people's awareness of radicalization is important in maintaining the overall health and cohesion of society. Young people's thoughts and attitudes on this issue can play an important role in preventing social conflicts and discrimination. Increasing awareness of radicalization can help foster healthier social relations and mutual understanding among young people. Consequently, studying young people's perceptions and awareness of radicalization is a fundamental step towards social cohesion, security and well-being. Such studies can help in the development of effective policies and programs against radicalization and strengthen the positive role of young people in society. The threat of radicalization is a growing concern in many countries around the world. In recent years, there have been a number of high-profile terrorist attacks in Türkiye, Spain, France, and Ukraine, which have highlighted the vulnerability of young people to radicalization. For this reason, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

- · What is the understanding of radicalization among young people and youth workers in Türkiye, Spain, France, and Ukraine?

- · What are the factors that make young people in these countries vulnerable to radicalization?

- · What are the views of young people and youth workers in these countries on how to prevent radicalization?

II. Conceptual Framework

The term radicalization pertains to the progression wherein individuals or communities embrace political or social beliefs or religious views that may involve advocating violence or endorsing violent actions to instigate societal transformation. Grasping this phenomenon requires acknowledging its intricate nature and the multitude of elements influencing it. The reasons, behind radicalization are complex and interconnected with factors at play such as exclusion and economic struggles leading individuals, towards extreme beliefs and actions. Individuals who feel disconnected, from the majority of society or see themselves as affected by inequality are more inclined to gravitate towards beliefs that offer significant transformations. In the process of radicalization indoctrination plays a role as individuals tend to embrace ideologies that highlight flaws, in the current social or political system and perceive it as unfair or dysfunctional These ideologies rationalize resorting to actions such as violence as a means to instigate change Narratives that accentuate divisions, between "our group and others" depicting adversaries as foes or challenges to ones beliefs or lifestyle frequently trigger radicalization

Radicalization doesn't unfold in a manner. Varies widely among individuals and groups. It usually starts with a phase of pre radicalization when one is introduced to ideologies initially. Then comes a phase of identification where the person starts to associate with these beliefs. Eventually some may progress towards commitment by either engaging in or endorsing actions to realize their ideological objectives. Radicalization is commonly portrayed as a journey where each stage strengthens an individual's dedication. In today's digital age, the Internet and social media play a crucial role in the spread of radical ideologies. Online platforms offer spaces for individuals to find like-minded communities, which can reinforce radical beliefs. These platforms also serve as powerful recruitment and propaganda dissemination tools for extremist groups. The sense of belonging that online communities can foster is particularly attractive to individuals who feel marginalized in their offline lives. However, while the Internet can accelerate the radicalization process, offline dynamics such as

personal relationships, social networks, and community influences also contribute significantly.

Countering radicalization requires diverse and multi-pronged strategies. These include fostering community engagement, addressing the root causes of victimization, promoting social and political inclusion, and implementing targeted interventions for individuals at risk of radicalization. Successful counter-radicalization efforts often combine preventive measures, such as education and community development programs, with more direct interventions aimed at individuals who are already on the path to extremism. Rehabilitation and reintegration programs for former extremists are also critical components of effective counter-radicalization strategies. Radicalization is a global phenomenon with local manifestations. Each region or community has its own unique cultural, historical, and socio-political context that shapes the form radicalization takes. For example, in some parts of the world, religious extremism may be more prevalent, while in others, political or ethnic radicalization might be the dominant form. Understanding these local dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies to counter radicalization in specific regions.

The impact of radicalization on society and security is profound. It poses significant security challenges, including terrorism and inter-community violence. Radicalization also has broader societal consequences, such as increasing polarization, fear, and division within communities. This fragmentation can undermine social cohesion and destabilize societies, making it harder to address the underlying issues that fuel radicalization in the first place. Efforts to counter radicalization must carefully balance security concerns with respect for human rights and civil liberties. Overly aggressive tactics, such as mass surveillance or indiscriminate detention, can exacerbate the problem by alienating the very communities that need to be engaged in prevention efforts. Counter-radicalization strategies that prioritize dialogue, inclusivity, and respect for civil liberties are often more successful in the long term.

The psychological dimensions of radicalization are critical to understanding how and why individuals are drawn to extremist ideologies.

Factors such as identity, perceived injustice, and personal vulnerability play a significant role. Many individuals who become radicalized feel a sense of powerlessness or marginalization, which drives them to seek out alternative ideologies that promise empowerment or revenge. Understanding these psychological factors is key to developing more effective prevention and intervention strategies. Historical and contemporary examples of radicalization provide valuable insights into the methods used by different groups and the effectiveness of various counter-radicalization efforts. For instance, the radicalization processes of groups like Ku Klux Klan, far-right extremist organizations reveal common patterns, such as the exploitation of grievances and the use of propaganda to recruit members. Studying these examples helps policymakers and practitioners refine their approaches to preventing and countering radicalization. By learning from past experiences, societies can better address the evolving threats posed by radical ideologies.

II. I. Awareness/Understanding of Radicalization in Türkiye

There is no common approach to defining the concept of radicalization in the literature, but there is a consensus that it refers to a process (Schmid, 2013; Borum, 2011; Köse & Coşkun, 2019). As a matter of fact, according to Jensen (2006), the adoption of ideas and views over time that provide the basis for individuals to accept political violence as legitimate represents the process of radicalization. It is important to distinguish between extremism and radicalization precisely here. Because radicalization is a process of thought, stance, and organizational transformation, on the other hand, extremism is the transformation of this transformation into action through illegal means and the emergence of violence. In this context, terrorist acts are often the subject of extremism (Bartlett & Miller, 2011). Since radicalization tendencies mostly involve the process of personal and organizational transformation, they will not always lead to extremism or terrorist acts. However, these violent actions attempt to create a legitimate basis for themselves through the radicalization process. For this reason, it is seen that studies on radicalization in the literature have increased with the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Madrid in 2004, and London in 2005, especially

in the West (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010; Ranstorp, 2010; Neumann, 2008; Nesser, 2006)

While the Western experience found a wide place in the radicalization literature, studies in Türkiye started later. Although studies have increased in recent years as awareness of the risks related to the subject has increased, deficiencies continue (Anaz vd., 2016; Kurt, 2023; Orhan, 2010; Öztop, 2022; Sayari, 2010; Sozer & Sever, 2011). Additionally, Türkiye's radicalization experience differs from the West's experiences in many aspects (Köse & Coşkun, 2019: 124). The first of these differences stems from the historical roots of the radicalization experience. The political social developments and ideologies experienced in the last period of the Ottoman Empire were partially transferred to the Republican period. The rapid modernization and nationalization processes brought about by the Republic also caused rapid migration and urbanization. Thus, this rapid transformation deeply affected Turkish society and politics in the 1960s and 1970s. These effects facilitated the society's positioning in different radical points and political ideologies.

Secondly, it is a process of military coups that originate from Türkiye's own political and social characteristics, has important consequences in both society and politics and involves non-political interventions in the political system. The process of military coups, which aimed to create a legitimate ground with the claim of combating radicalization and extremism, both created an example of radicalization in itself and facilitated new radicalizations in the social sphere. Finally, the radicalizations that Türkiye is currently struggling against are more open to regional and transnational influences. Because Türkiye faces security risks posed by failed states in its region, especially in its border neighbors. Conflict and violence in failed states pose a risk of spread and contagion, especially to the countries in the region. This spread-contagion can occur through cross-border mobility of radical groups and the formation of new networks, societies in the region being influenced by the radical ideas or cross-border migration. The instability in Türkiye's geography poses a significant risk of radicalization. The ongoing civil wars and conflicts in the region will continue to be an important security issue for Türkiye in the future. In this context,

radicalization, extremism, and de-radicalization will be important in Türkiye's future security agenda, as it is today. For this reason, understanding radicalization trends in Türkiye, identifying the factors affecting these trends, and producing solutions for de-radicalization and reintegration of radicalized groups into society is of vital importance to overcome Türkiye's fragilities in this area.

II.I. I. Radicalization trends in Türkiye

II.I.I.I. Far Left Radicalization

Türkiye inherited left-wing radicalization from the pre-Republican period. Its ideological roots are based on the political and social transformations in the last periods of the Ottoman Empire (Akdere & Karadeniz, 1994: 15-20; Cerrahoğlu, 1975). However, radicalization and extremism occurred with the ideological effects of the Second World War and the bipolar world system of the Cold War. In the left political stance, which mostly became evident in universities, criticism towards the West was developed, anti-imperialism was defended, and Kemalism, nationalism, and independence ideas were dominant (Ünüvar, 2007: 821-829).

The transition to the multi-party period in Türkiye in the 1950s brought about the polarization between the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Democrat Party (DP). This polarization was carried out mostly through university students. During this period, the Direction Movement, the Workers' Party of Türkiye (TİP), and the Federation of Thought Clubs (FKF) enabled young people to organize around left-wing thought. During this period, FKF remained within the political arena and was supported by CHP, strengthening the DP opposition (Ünüvar, 2019: 407-411). However, at the end of the 1960s, the FKF structure shifted to the line that envisaged an active struggle to organize an anti-imperialist youth. Thus, Revolutionary Youth (Dev-Genç) was established as the first structure created for students to realize the revolution (Ünüvar, 2007: 824). Additionally, armed conflicts occurred in universities between 1969 and 1971 (Köse ve Coşkun, 2019: 134).

The People's Liberation Army of Türkiye (THKO), founded in 1971, was the first structure formed to use violence for left-wing politics in Türkiye (Şener, 2015: 225). Again, some members of the structures established during this period joined the party under the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) after September 12. This organization, which aimed to destroy the existing order by using violence within the framework of Marxist-Leninist claims, is accepted as a terrorist organization by the Republic of Türkiye. It has been determined that these organizations have been involved in various violence and assassinations since 1971 (Turkish MFA, 2024).

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It was seen that the leftist movement was also in contact with the "Kurdish issue" in the years 1960-1980. FKF and Dev-Genç had close relations with the Kurdist separatist movement, especially between 1961 and 1975 (Bozarslan, 2007: 1176). However, in 1970, Revolutionary Cultural Eastern Hearths (DDKO) were founded by university students. Thus, the Kurdist separatist movement began to become autonomous independently from the leftists. The Eastern Rallies organized as a reaction to Turkish nationalism, began to develop cultural and national feelings among the Kurds. DDKO was closed with the March 12 Memorandum. Subsequently, when its members were released with the 1974 amnesty, the radicalization process began. With the establishment of organizations that preferred armed actions and the involvement of young people, this ethnic radicalism began to turn into political extremism (Doğanoğlu, 2016: 941-959; Bozarslan, 2007: 1186).

Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), founded in 1978, accelerated the radicalization process and started terrorist activities in 1984 (Bozarslan, 2007: 1169-1179). Kurdish nationalism, mostly driven by Kurdist separatist movement, was a movement with predominant ethnic components in its early periods, and over time. It used violence as a tool to establish its state (Çolak, 2013). Thus, it became the leading example of ethnic radicalism and extremism in Türkiye. Power gaps arising from political instability in Türkiye's surrounding countries were very effective in the radicalization and

extremization processes of the Kurdist separatist movement. Because these geographies used for armament and militancy allowed the PKK to gain power in the process (Köse & Coşkun, 2019: 148–149).

Today, Türkiye continues to fight against the PKK and its extensions, which continue to take advantage of the political instability in Northern Iraq and Syria. Figure 1 shows the terrorist attacks that took place in Türkiye between 2000 and 2020. It is seen that the power vacuums arising from the uprisings in the Arab geography could be a trigger for the rise of terrorist acts between 2010 and 2012. The increase in terrorist acts between 2014 and 2018 is related to the instabilities caused by the Syrian civil war, mass migrations, and the gaining power of terrorist groups. Even though religious radicalism and extremism were seen to be effective in the region in this process, it was determined that most terrorist acts in Türkiye were carried out by the PKK and its extensions. In this context, Türkiye has long-term experience in combating radicalism and extremism due to the instability in its nearby geography. However, the ongoing instability in its geography makes it necessary to constantly improve its combat capabilities.

Figure 1. Terrorist Acts that Occurred in Türkiye between 2000–2020
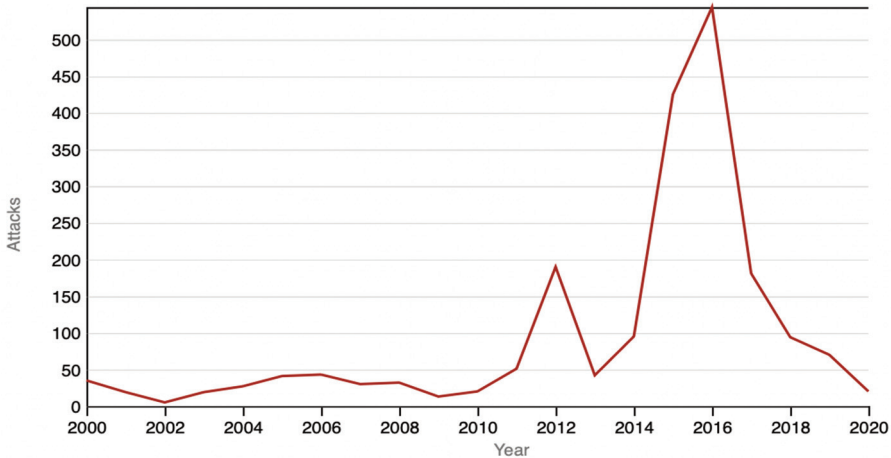
Source: (START, 2024)

II.I.I.III. Far Right Radicalism

There is an increasing participation in radical far right politics worldwide, fueled by the motivation of far right radical movements. Particularly, the rising global migration movements have led to an increase in extremism targeting minorities in many countries (Milli İstihbarat Akademisi, 2024: 9). In Türkiye, the radical right-wing movement driven by far right motivations has indeed shown an increasing trend for approximately the past 10 years. The mass migrations resulting from the Syrian civil war have made Türkiye the country hosting the highest number of refugees in the world today (UNHCR, 2024). Over time, there has been a growing dissatisfaction among the public regarding this situation. In this context, developments have emerged where incidents turning into violence against Syrians have occurred (Kaya, 2020). In the political arena, the Victory Party, established in 2021, has prominently featured anti-immigrant rhetoric in its founding manifesto, aligning with the discourse of radical right-wing movements (Victory Party, 2021).

Although anti-immigrant sentiments of radical right-wing in Türkiye have not reached the same level of extremism as in the West, Türkiye still hosts a significant population of 3,167,421 Syrian refugees (Presidency of Migration Management, 2024). Different foreign nationals from various origins also reside in Türkiye for various reasons. Considering this, the potential for radical right-wing extremism to escalate could be a future threat factor for Türkiye. Furthermore, extreme actions targeting foreign populations could also result in the marginalization of these groups within the country.

II.I.I.IV. Far Left Secularist Radicalization

Far left secularist radicalism cannot be considered separately from left-wing radicalization, ethnic radicalism, and far right radicalism in Türkiye. Indeed, understanding the impact of political and social transformations on individuals' radicalization can be comprehended through developments in Türkiye. In response to the new developments in these transformations, Far left secularist radicalism has also carved out its own space. Primarily, Far

left secularist radicalism aims at altering the existing political order through non-political means, particularly through military interventions, and returning to the essence of the political system. In this context, it has been considered legitimate for intellectuals of the era, the military, and senior judiciary members, especially under the discourse of protecting the republic against the 'threat of religious conservatism,' to pioneer the transition to a new political order. This movement, causing social polarization, has utilized divisions such as secularism-anti-secularism, republicanism-anti-republicanism, and modernism-conservatism. Within this context, it has been observed that 'headscarf' has also been transformed into political symbols associated with Far left secularist radicalism (Erdoğan, 2009: 584-591).

The restrictions imposed on these symbols have indeed been significant examples of extremism. Extremist movements often consider resorting to violence and unlawful methods legitimate to suppress opposing ideologies and promote their own. In this context, it can be observed that the Far left secularist radical movement has transformed into political extremism through the implementation of military coups. Examples of political radicalization, such as the state of emergency measures in the 1970s, have been seen as providing a legitimate ground for extremism within the Kurdist separatist movement (Ercan, 2010). Statist radicalism, which utilized its discomfort towards Kurdist separatist movements as a means to legitimize extremism, has pushed them towards transformation within the new political order.

Consequently, Kurdist separatist movements have been able to add a new impetus to their motivation for radicalization. In this regard, it can be understood that different radical tendencies in Türkiye feed into each other's radicalization stages. Additionally, political extremism initiated with the military coups in the 1960s lastly provided an opportunity for infiltration by terrorist organizations like Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) in 2016 (Köse & Coşkun, 2019: 138-146). Finally, evaluating far-left secularist radicalism alongside other radical tendencies can be considered a unique arena of struggle within Türkiye's political and social structure.

II.I.I.V. Religious Radicalization

Religious extremist movements, also known as fundamentalism, have been fueled by Türkiye's initial stance against religion during Turkish modernization. However, they have not evolved into a unified movement in Türkiye. Instead, there has been religiously motivated participation from Türkiye in wars occurring in neighboring countries, particularly between 1970 and 1990. Upon their return, these individuals have not formed any organizations within Türkiye (Başdemir, 2013). However, the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution and the establishment of Hezbollah in the same year played a significant role in religious radicalization and extremism in Türkiye. Especially, Hezbollah had a notable influence in Türkiye during the 1980s and 1990s (Avcı, 2011). These movements aim, like other religious extremist movements, to establish social, political, and economic order based on the principles of Islamic Sharia in the regions where Muslims reside.

In the 2000s, the number of organizations representing religious radicalization, particularly in Türkiye's vicinity, increased. Al-Qaeda, responsible for the 9/11 attacks, carried out terrorist actions in Türkiye. Exploiting the political instability initiated by the US invasion of Iraq, DAESH emerged. Subsequently, taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the civil war in Syria to spread its influence, DAESH became a significant threat to Türkiye (Köse v& Coşkun, 2019: 153-154; Güler & Özdemir, 2014). As seen, religious extremism in Türkiye stems more from transnational, particularly regional developments, rather than internal dynamics. Therefore, Türkiye's geographical location renders it fragile to religious radicalism. Another example of religious radicalization and extremism that Türkiye has recently experienced is FETÖ (Miş et al., 2016). Although the organization's inclination leans towards religious radicalization, it has been deeply involved within the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) for a considerable period, utilizing the tools of political radicalism in Türkiye and even attempting a coup. From this, it can be understood that the tendencies towards radicalization in Türkiye are closely interconnected.

II.I.I.VI. New/Neo Radical Movements

The new radical movements do not exhibit similarities with the ideological and symbolic motivations of classic radicalization types. These social movements also differ from classic radicalizations in their methods of action and organizational structures. Occasional intersections may occur within these new social movements, which fall outside the traditional left-right political spectrum. However, they generally oppose political collective solidarity stances. They often focus on the impacts of social issues experienced during the process of globalization. Economic inequalities, gender roles, environmental issues, human rights, animal rights, migration, identity movements, peace movements, and opposition movements are considered within the scope of new social movements. The most significant characteristic of these movements is their flexible and unstructured nature. Indeed, organization is mostly achieved through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in these movements. Communication technology plays a crucial role in these movements (Castells, 2008).

Within the scope of new social movements in Türkiye, actions related to feminist radicalism and ecological radicalism stand out. Since the 1990s, NGOs have been the driving force behind the development of the feminist movement in Türkiye. Similarly, ecological radicalism is also conducted through NGOs in Türkiye. Thus, the demands of social groups are voiced and mobilized. Participation in these movements is expanding, especially through the Internet. Additionally, there is permeability among participants of new social movements in Türkiye (Köse & Coşkun, 2019: 162-163). Indeed, although the Gezi Park protests started with ecological radicalism, over time, they evolved into demonstrations involving various social movements and even violent incidents. While new social movements may not always manifest organizationally in Türkiye with actions verging on extremism, the motivations within these movements could potentially lead individuals towards different extremist organizations.

For example, numerous studies have examined the demographic profiles of PKK members. Alaçam (2004) found that 15.6% of captured

organization members were female. In a more recent study by Teğin (2019), the proportion of women increased to 25%. These extremist tendencies could serve as examples of feminization within feminist motivations. Indeed, individuals who cannot find organizational structures within feminist radicalism to carry out extremist actions may be inclined to turn to different extremist organizations (Wood & Thomas, 2017: 31-46). This situation could serve as an example of permeability among radicalization trends in Türkiye. However, studies indicate that exposure to the media alone has a low probability of leading to radicalization. This is evidenced by very few cases of individuals becoming terrorists solely through media influence (Meleagrou-Hitchens et al., 2017). Even in processes where the media and the internet play significant roles, it has been observed that non-media factors can be more important (von Behr et al, 2013).

II.I.II. Factors Influencing Perceptions of Radicalization

Radicalization is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by a wide range of factors that influence how individuals or groups develop extreme beliefs. These factors can include media exposure, socio-economic conditions, and political climates, all of which play critical roles in determining the perceptions and susceptibility of individuals toward radical ideologies. As a process, radicalization does not occur in isolation but is deeply embedded in social structures, influenced by technological advancements, economic disparities, and political dynamics.

Communication technology, particularly the rise of social media, has transformed how ideas, including radical beliefs, are shared and reinforced. The widespread availability of online platforms has enabled extremist groups to disseminate their messages more efficiently, recruit followers globally, and even shape public discourse. While media exposure can facilitate radicalization, it often acts more as a tool for reinforcement rather than as a primary trigger, with its impact varying based on other underlying factors.

Socio-economic influences are among the most significant contributors to perceptions of radicalization. Conditions like poverty, unemployment,

and limited educational opportunities often create environments where radical ideologies seem to offer solutions to grievances. Feelings of marginalization and social exclusion further exacerbate this, fostering a sense of injustice and driving individuals to embrace more extreme beliefs. In such contexts, radicalization can be seen as an outlet for expressing dissatisfaction, challenging perceived inequalities, or gaining a sense of identity and purpose.

The political environment also plays a central role in shaping perceptions of radicalization. Political instability, discrimination, conflicts, and lack of representation can amplify grievances and foster radical tendencies. Political events, especially those involving violent conflict or repression, often have a direct impact on the radicalization process, influencing not only those directly affected but also broader communities that share similar identities or ideologies.

II.I.II.I. Conventional and Social Media

The advancements in communication technology and the increasing use of the internet are growing day by day. This increase raises the possibility of individuals being exposed to radical content more frequently (Hawdon et al. 2019). Even in processes where the media and the internet play significant roles, it has been observed that non-media factors can be more important. Therefore, the media can be considered only one of the risk factors in radicalization processes. Because studies have observed that cognitive radicalization (such as media) rarely leads to behavioral radicalization (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017). Pauwels and Hardyns (2018: 36) suggest that radical messages in both traditional and social media should not be ignored or exaggerated. Similarly, in their experimental studies measuring the effects of traditional and social media on radicalization, Wolfowicz et al. (2022) have arrived at a similar conclusion. They also highlight the relatively greater effectiveness of social media tools compared to other media elements in these processes. Because of the widespread use of mass media and social media, terrorist groups have found it easy to share propaganda messages with the global public (Haklı, 2018: 85). This situation has made the media not a direct trigger but an influencer

of radicalization. The opportunities provided by technology help terrorist organizations and radical groups disseminate their actions to the masses, find a new financial source, and create chances to recruit new members (Sevinç ve Babahanoğlu, 2019: 983).

The example of DAESH can be given to groups effectively utilizing this tool. The organization, using platforms like Twitter and Facebook, disseminates its propaganda and recruits new militants from various parts of the world. In fact, during the 2014 World Cup, DAESH reached a wide audience with the hashtags it used on Twitter (Haklı, 2018: 200). In Türkiye, visuals and narratives that can trigger the radicalization of migrants and fuel far right radicalism through anti-foreign sentiment can come to the forefront of social media agendas. Especially, disinformation is frequently employed to trigger these processes. For instance, on September 24, 2023, a video taken from TikTok was shared on Twitter, garnering a significant number of views. The video was captioned with "Protests calling for the deportation of Arabs from Türkiye and preventing them from traveling or working in Türkiye." However, it was later revealed that the footage depicted people gathered for a football match (Küçükaksu, 2023). As can be understood from this example, radicalization through the media is not only about bringing like-minded individuals together but also about using disinformation to influence the masses.

II.I.II.II. Socio-Economic Factors

In the literature, it is observed that various socio-economic factors such as social and economic deprivation, socialization, a sense of belonging to a community, income level, acquired or given social status, occupation, education, and age, among others, influence radicalization in individuals (Borum, 2003). Additionally, identities that individuals possess can sometimes generate feelings of exclusion from the rest of society, fostering a belief that the existing conditions will never change. This, in turn, triggers radicalization by giving rise to extremist feelings towards the system and the people who are part of it (Bozkurt, 2021: 161). Indeed, in Köse and Coşkun's study (2019: 213) investigating university students, it was observed that the sympathy towards the PKK among participants, especially

those from the southeastern Anatolia region of Türkiye, was primarily influenced by this factor.

The economic disruptions experienced globally today lead people to express their difficulties and deprivation with sharper demands. Especially in low-income groups or societies, these demands can lead to extremism based on political, religious, or other ideologies (Küçükcan, 2009: 32-54). The sense of deprivation and victimization triggered by these situations is often perceived as inequality and injustice. This perception can motivate individuals to become alienated from society, radicalize, and even join terrorist organizations (Uslu, 2021: 56). The distribution of unemployment rates by cities in Türkiye for the year 2022 is presented in Figure 2. It is observed that especially the cities in the Southeastern Anatolia region have the highest unemployment rates. These data correspond to both the cities where Köse and Coşkun (2019) found intensified moderate approaches towards terrorist groups among young people and the areas where Türkiye conducts its counterterrorism operations. However, it should be underlined that the Turkish Government have invested a huge amount of her budget in these cities for decades, but the PKK have never approved these investments and blocked the development of the region by terrorist attacks.

Figure 2. Distribution of Unemployment in Türkiye in 2022
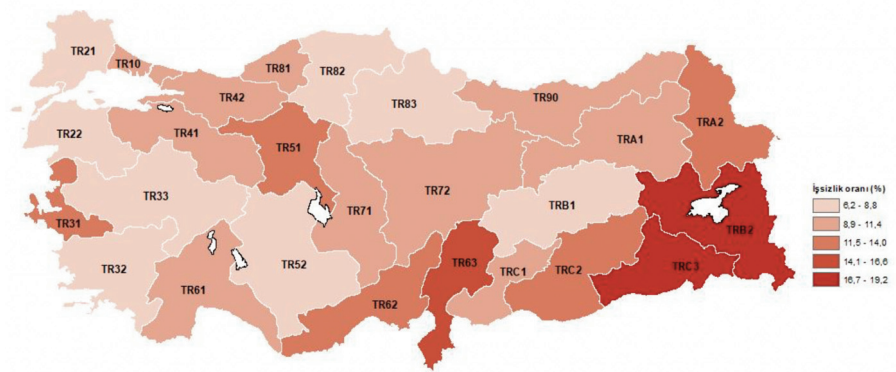
Source: (TUİK, 2023)

The economic factors creating a significant risk factor for radicalization also lead to the importance of welfare levels in countries. The pandemic process in 2020, followed by the ongoing Russia–Ukraine War, has severely shaken the global economy. A general contraction in the global economy is evident in the inflation trends in the data presented in Figure 3. Indeed, a similar inflation change is observed in Türkiye, as shown in Figure 4. This situation could indicate the potential increase in radical tendencies worldwide due to the decline in welfare levels. However, it would be incorrect to say that economic factors alone pose a risk for radicalization as seen in Türkiye. Because despite the stable inflation rates between 2015–2019 as seen in Figure 4, Figure 1 shows a significant increase in terrorist attacks in Türkiye. Norman and Mikhael (2018) also concluded in their study that unemployment does not directly lead to radicalization, but it can be one of the risk factors. As a result, based on the examples provided and the studies conducted, it is understood that economic factors related to unemployment and prosperity alone do not provide sufficient motivation for radicalization tendencies.

Figure 3. Headline inflation
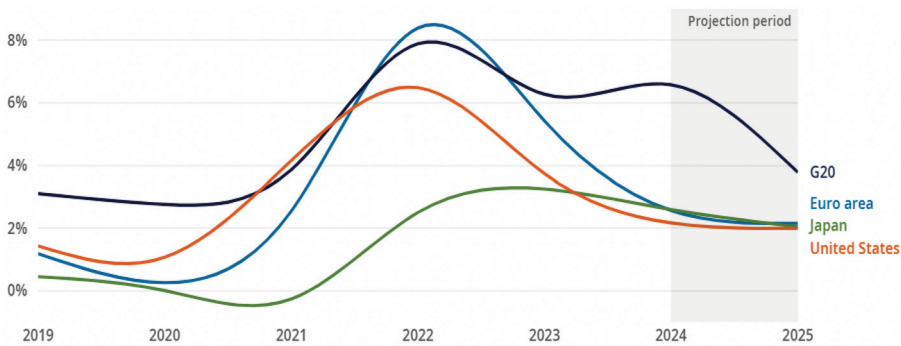
Kaynak: (OECD, 2024)

Figure 4. Rage of change in 12 months moving averages in inflation of Türkiye (%)
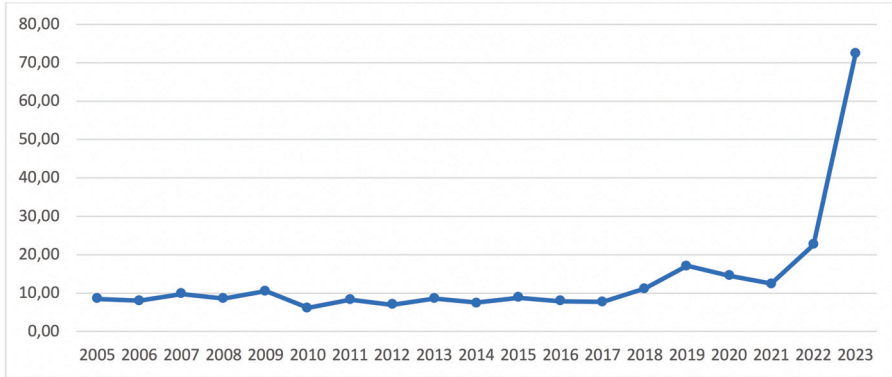
Source: (TUİK, 2024a).

Among the socio-economic factors, other important variables include age and education. As understood from the history of radicalization in Türkiye, universities are significant social spaces in the process of radicalization. In this context, young people are particularly susceptible to and involved in radicalization. Mukhitov et al. (2022) claim that socio-economic and cultural factors related to social conditions are influential in the tendency of young people towards radicalization. Therefore, education becomes crucial among youth. Education has a two-way relationship with radicalization. Firstly, it contributes to the socio-economic status of young individuals for their future. In this regard, increasing education becomes essential. Secondly, as in Türkiye, universities not only offer opportunities for integrating into radical channels but also provide governments with the means to control radical tendencies and promote de-radicalization.

Additionally, universities enable young people to establish relationships with various social groups. In Türkiye, as seen in Figure 5, the number of universities has almost tripled, especially in the last 15 years. While this increase in access to education may seem positive, in many cases, it can hinder young people's interaction with different social groups. Indeed, a study by Köse and Coşkun (2019) showed that university students in the Southeastern Region tend to prefer studying with similar groups because they are reluctant to engage with social groups in different cities. This tendency car-

ries the risk of potential clustering (hence, massification) of radicalization in these regions. Thus, it leads to the reproduction of the "other" positions by these young people themselves. Additionally, the increase in the number of universities may pose a risk of undermining resources allocated to preventing radicalization.

Figure 5. Number of Higher Education Institutions in Türkiye
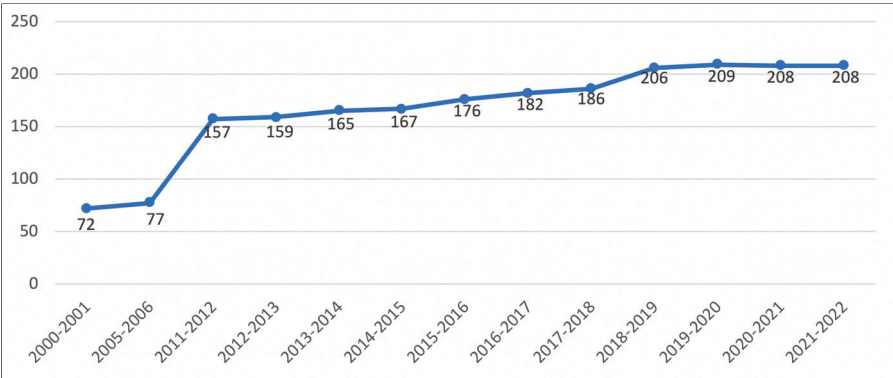
Source: (DrDataStats, 2024)

Another aspect to consider in education in Türkiye is the participation of students in schooling. The global population is increasingly aging, and Türkiye exhibits a similar trend. As seen in Figure 6, there is a slight decrease of 1.5% in the population of individuals aged 20–24 in 2022 compared to 2021. On the other hand, the population of individuals aged 15-19 has increased. However, data presented in Figure 7 indicates a 16% decrease in the number of individuals enrolling in universities for the 2022–2023 academic year compared to the previous year. This decline in enrollment may lead to a reduction in the intellectual socialization of young people within the university environment, as well as a decrease in overall education levels in society, posing a potential risk for radicalization.

Figure 6. Population of Individuals Aged 15–19 and 20–24 in Türkiye
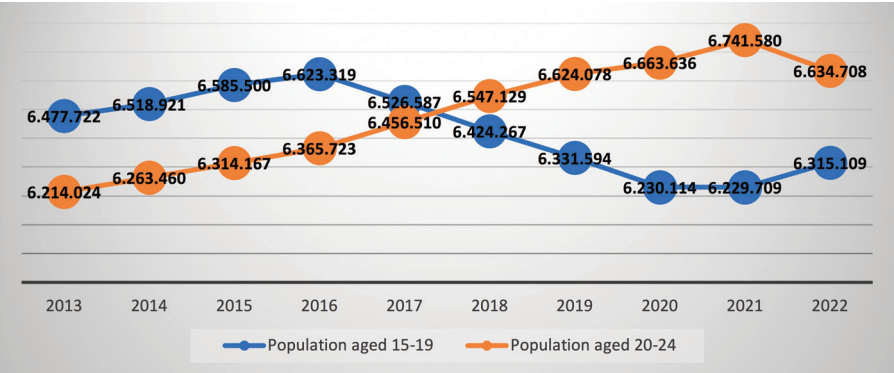
Source: (TUİK, 2024b)

Figure 7. Number of students enrolled for the academic year
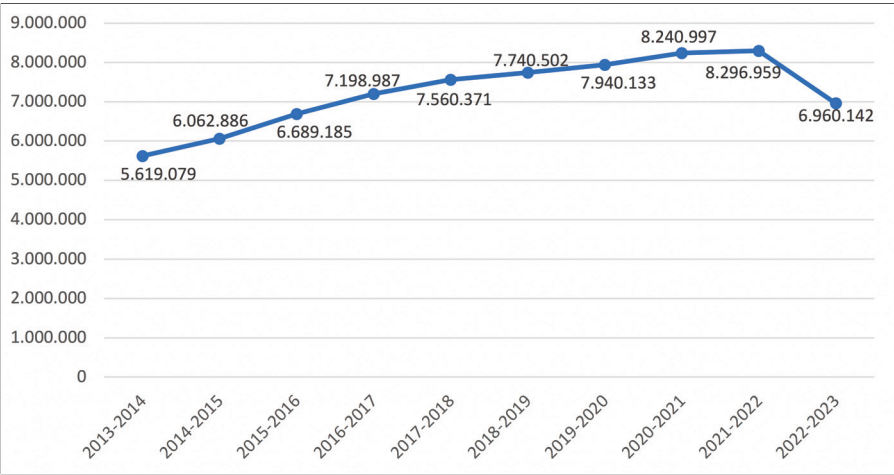
Source: (YÖK, 2024)

In a country, the education of the immigrant population is as important as the education of the general population. This is because young people who lack education, have low-income levels, feel marginalized, and experience identity crises are predicted to be involved in many crimes in the future. Referred to by the local population as the "lost generation," these young people (Orhan & Gündoğar, 2015: 20) are also likely to show tendencies toward radicalization. Education is the most important tool to prevent social problems. Indeed, through education, generations can be raised to overcome

integration problems and achieve social and economic integration (Orhan & Gündoğar, 2015: 35). In this context, Türkiye places importance on the inclusion of foreign populations, especially Syrians, in education. According to the latest report released by the Ministry of National Education for the 2021-2022 academic year, the enrollment rate of foreigners in Türkiye is 68.51%. Syrians, in particular, have an enrollment rate of 65% (MoNE, 2022).

II.I.II.III. Political Climate

Moghaddam's (2005) "staircase to terrorism" model, Wiktorowicz's (2005) social/cognitive model's external conditions, and Schmid's (2013) driving conditions all see political conditions as a significant factor in the process of radicalization. Indeed, developments at the global or country level can push individuals and groups towards radicalization and extremism. These situations generally arise from perceptions of injustice, inequality, and exposure to such conditions. When examining the trends and history of radicalization in Türkiye, it can be said that the most significant risk factor is the political climate. Indeed, transformations in the country's political climate over time have created a relationship that influences and triggers all tendencies. In today's context, especially during election periods, the conflict situations experienced lead to an increase in the actions of radical groups (Köse & Coşkun, 2019: 205-206).

The Solution Process can serve as an example of the importance of the political climate in radicalization. Initiated in 2013 to address the grievances caused by PKK terrorist attacks in Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia over the past 30 years, the process aimed at the disarmament of the organization and the establishment of a common political ground in the region. However, unexpectedly, the PKK gained more influence in the region and refused to lay down arms, leading to the end of the process in 2015 (Köse, 2017: 13-40). The process created intolerance towards the "other" by certain groups and fueled the motivation of right-wing tendencies.

Türkiye has significant experience with radicalization within its domestic politics. However, the instability in its geographical vicinity also makes Türkiye vulnerable regarding radical tendencies. The Syrian civil war,

which began in 2011, and the instability in the region have provided a conducive environment for terrorist organizations to gain influence. Elements such as the PYD/YPG, as extensions of the PKK and extremist terrorist organizations, have garnered sympathy from similar factions in Türkiye.

II.I.III. Strategies on how to prevent radicalization

As described in this study, Türkiye has been grappling with a multifaceted radicalization threat for a longer period compared to many other countries. In the current context, it continues to combat ideological, religious, and ethnic radicalization. This reality in Türkiye serves as an example that radicalization is not solely understood in religious terms as perceived in the West (Sönmez, 2017: 18). The long-standing struggle against radicalism and extremism has prompted Türkiye to adopt a multi-dimensional approach. In this context, combating radicalism is addressed through various means such as deterrence, de-radicalization, and national, international, and coercive measures.

In addition to military and legal efforts, active measures are also being taken in Türkiye to prevent radicalization or to implement de-radicalization processes. In this context, particularly in 2015, 921,000 individuals were reached and included in informational programs. Participation in social projects as in sports, artistic, and cultural activities, was organized to convey counter-narratives and encourage socialization. Furthermore, various institutions such as the Directorate of Religious Affairs, prisons, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports provided training to employees to raise awareness and engage the community in various activities (Sönmez, 2017: 21). Primarily, the Ministry of Interior, along with universities, local governments, and civil society organizations, continues to collaborate with both national and international institutions to generate joint projects and combat radicalization. Being involved in regional and international coordination efforts is one of the methods Türkiye prioritizes in its fight against radicalization. Furthermore, local municipalities organize events and activities for youth through youth centers and youth councils at the local level.

In addition to government initiatives, combating radicalization in Türkiye also involves civil society organizations, research centers, and academic studies. One of the most active civil society organizations in this field is the Terrorism and Radicalization Research Center, established in 2021. The association aims to prevent radicalization, extremism, and terrorism in Türkiye by organizing integrated programs in collaboration with national and international institutions. Furthermore, the Terrorism and Radicalization Studies Journal, managed by the association, contributes to the academic field by providing scientific insights into combating radicalization. Activities such as the "Counterterrorism and Radicalization Congress," organized by Başkent University in 2023, contribute to the development of academic studies in universities. The Defence Against Terrorism Review (E-DATR), produced by the Centre of Excellence–Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) under the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces, continues to serve as a platform for publishing scientific articles.

II.II. Awareness/Understanding of Radicalization in Spain

Perhaps because of the focus of security studies in relation to terrorism, the literature that addresses the relationship between public opinion and radicalization is scarce. However, in the case of Spain, the study conducted by Mata (2020) in which she analyzes the impact of ETA on the political behavior of Spanish citizens stands out. In this sense, this author has constructed an index taking into account 1) the number of people killed by ETA, 2) the type of person killed by ETA, that is, whether they were civilians, politicians or members of the State Security Forces, and the type of violence exercised by ETA, such as extortion, street violence, kidnappings and assassinations. The author finds a relationship, especially with the lethality of the periods in which terrorist attacks have been committed and adds that there are other factors that may have had an important influence on the perception of terrorism, such as media coverage, the strategies of political parties, the state response to the threat, among other issues.

Regarding fundamentalist terrorism, there is very little literature addressing the perception of fundamentalist radicalization. However, there are numerous studies that address the potential risk posed by the rise of

Islamophobia on the European continent, linked to negative attitudes towards migration. In this regard, studies on the rise of the radical populist right stand out, which situate what Europe, and the world, is experiencing as a fourth wave of reactionary far-right movements (Mudde, 2021). These types of discourses present in public opinion pose a challenge properly referred to new processes of radicalization, such as those linked to Qanon, which are already present in Europe but with different characteristics than those previously present in the United States (Schulze et al., 2022).

II.II.I. Factors Contributing to Radicalization

The Spanish government refers to radicalization processes as "violent radicalization" (Ministry of the Interior, 2019), a concept that leaves the door open to new security threats that may occur over the years. This is explained because the country has faced, in the last decades, different challenges linked to Political Violence of domestic and international character. At the domestic level, through revolutionary movements born in the 1970s, such as the GRAPO (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2021) or other movements that combined revolutionary and far right ideology, as was the case of ETA. According to data from the Collective of Victims of Terrorism (COVITE, 2023), between 1960 and 2023, 1294 people were murdered in Spain, with the Basque Country and Catalonia being the regions with the highest number of victims. Of these, 821 were killed by the terrorist organization ETA. As for international terrorism, the same organization puts the number of people killed in the 2004 Atocha bombings at 192. These attacks were committed by individuals linked to Al-Qaeda in the context of Spain's possible participation in the invasion of Iraq and 3 days before the elections. In addition to these attacks, Spain has suffered other attacks linked to fundamentalist terrorism, with cells close to different organizations, such as DAESH and others.

Currently, as explained in the National Security Strategy (Government of Spain, 2021), the active terrorism threat is fundamentalism, and likewise, the government has placed the country in a terrorist alert level 4[1], that is,

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[1] This information can be checked on this website:
https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/prensa/nivel-alerta-terrorista/

high, during the period 2015-2023. In this sense, the Government of Spain has made available to citizens tools for the prevention of terrorism, such as the App AlertCops[2], designed to enable citizens who have knowledge or suspicions of radicalization processes, as well as the preparation of terrorist activities, to alert the police forces. This model can be useful while falling into models of citizen hypervigilance that negatively influence certain groups. Currently, as explained in the National Security Strategy (Government of Spain, 2021), the active terrorism threat is fundamentalist, and likewise, the government has placed the country in a terrorist alert level 4, that is, high, during the period 2015-2023. In this sense, the Government of Spain has made available to citizens tools for the prevention of terrorism, such as the App AlertCops[2] designed to enable citizens who have knowledge or suspicions of radicalization processes, as well as the preparation of terrorist activities, to alert the police forces. This model can be useful, while falling into models of citizen hypervigilance that negatively influence certain groups.

According to Reinares, García-Calvo and Vicente (2019), who have studied the fundamentalist (they named as jihadists) phenomenon in Spain in depth, there are 3 factors to take into account to understand their radicalization processes: 1) The irruption of second-generation fundamentalists, added to homegrown fundamentalism, 2) The two differential association factors, and 3) The predominant terrorist involvement options before 2012 and since 2012. The authors emphasize that fundamentalism has not been a homogeneous phenomenon throughout history in the country, but that at least two clearly differentiated stages must be distinguished, from 2004 (year of the Atocha bombings) to 2011 and from 2012 (start of the war in Syria) to the present. The first stage has been marked by the influence of Al-Qaeda in international terrorism, while the second has been marked by the irruption and international presence of DAESH.

Regarding the first of the radicalization factors, the irruption of second-generation fundamentalists, added to homegrown fundamen-

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[2]   The App can be downloaded from the following website:
      https://alertcops.ses.mir.es/publico/alertcops/en/

talism, the authors highlight similarities with European countries. Until 2011 the profile of fundamentalists arrested or killed in Spain corresponded to migrants, especially from Morocco. However, from 2012 onwards, the authors state that 6 out of 10 fundamentalists belonged to second generations, "that is, they were descendants of Muslim immigrants, but unlike the latter they were born or grew up in Spain" (Reinares et al., 2019). The authors emphasize that these are profiles of adolescents or young Muslims and of Muslim origin, who suffer identity tensions when they do not find balance between their culture of origin and that of the country in which they live. To this profile the authors add young people without migratory ancestry, who have been involved in other radicalization processes and whose profiles are related to dysfunctional families and traumatic adolescence. In short, this leads to the existence of an endogenous fundamentalism in Spain in which 7 out of every 10 fundamentalists arrested or killed are people, generally young people, who were born or grew up in Spain.

Regarding the two factors of differential association, the authors refer to the communication of these radicalized persons with figures who are activists or religious leaders. And, on the other hand, to the emotional connection with radicalized personnel, either through family, friendship, or neighborhood ties. These two differential factors have occurred in the two periods studied, before 2012 and after. However, the authors highlight that before 2012 the local fundamentalist networks were concentrated in 5 municipalities, while in the second period these municipalities grew and relate this to the expansion of online radicalization processes.

As for the third factor, and considering the 2 phases, before and after 2012, the fundamentalists arrested or killed studied by the authors began by belonging to cells that were organized and operated within the country. However, from the dissemination of DAESH propaganda, many fundamentalists moved to Syria or Iraq. In the case of men, they did so as Foreign Terrorist Fighters, while women moved for non-operational roles. The authors emphasize that the role of women in these DAESH operations was and is a novelty with respect to studies on terrorism and radicalization prevention. In this sense, Garcia (2020) conducted a study applying Bosi and

Della Porta's relational model to female fundamentalists in Spain. In this sense, the context is the creation of the caliphate in the Levant in 2014, since most of the women studied were mobilized in this period. As for the meso factors, she concluded that 90% of them had been radicalized through Internet social networks and that they came from peripheral neighborhoods, such as Príncipe Alfonso in Ceuta and La Cañada de Hidum in Melilla. The author then relates the situation of socio-economic vulnerability to which these women are exposed as one of the influential factors in the radicalization process. Regarding the micro level, the author highlights that most of them were women under 23 years of age who were going through some kind of personal crisis and who did not find support in their family and social networks. The lack of roots, added to other factors, such as submissiveness within couple relationships or the lack of social expectations to find a partner, influenced the success of the radicalization process.

II.II.II. Differentiating Religious and Non-religious Extremism

In the case of Spain, they can distinguish two major forms of extremism that have plagued the country. On the one hand, the existence of violent movements or terrorist groups with far right ideologies and secessionist objectives. This is part of the country's domestic terrorism, present since the 1960s. As for violent extremism of a religious nature, we are referring specifically to fundamentalist terrorism, present since 2004 and coinciding with the characteristics of this form of international terrorism in many other parts of the world.

The Government of Spain (2019) states that in the period between 2012 and 2019, 400 people have been arrested for terrorist links, of which 70% were fundamentalists. The rest of those arrested were linked to ETA; however, this organization announced the cessation of its activity in 2011 and communicated the end of its trajectory and total dismantling of its structures in 2018 (Aizpeolea, 2021). The government considers, therefore, that the active security threat is the fundamentalist one. In this regard, they highlight the influence of DAESH's campaign to recruit fighters and train them and highlight two potential risks for the country.

Firstly, the presence of Foreign Terrorist Fighters who went to Syria or Iraq and have returned to Spain. He stresses that this is an unprecedented situation and that it is common to other European countries. It constitutes one of the keys to being considered an agent of radicalization that can accelerate and expand the processes of radicalization among other people. And in turn, they pose a potential risk since they are already radicalized profiles that can end up committing attacks.

But the security strategy puts a special focus on prisons, which it considers to be one of the main foci of radicalization today. These prison institutions are urged to promote radicalization prevention strategies and to readapt existing ones. For the government, this is one of the main challenges in identifying risk factors and preventing political violence that may occur in the present and in the future.

II.II.II.I. Religious Extremism in Spain

Religious extremism in Spain, particularly fundamentalist terrorism, has been a major security concern, especially since the 2004 Madrid train bombings, which marked a turning point in the country's approach to terrorism. The attacks, executed by individuals affiliated with Al-Qaeda, targeted Spain as part of a broader agenda related to global fundamentalism, particularly in response to Spain's support of the Iraq War. This event exemplifies the transnational nature of fundamentalist extremism in Spain, highlighting how global conflicts can have local repercussions.

In Spain, religious extremism is primarily associated with funda-mentalist ideologies, which emphasize a distorted interpretation of Islam to justify violence. The phenomenon of fundamentalist radicalization has evolved significantly since 2004. Initially, the profile of fundamentalists in Spain largely consisted of first-generation immigrants from North Africa, particularly Morocco. However, as the years progressed, there has been a noticeable shift towards the involvement of second-generation immigrants and homegrown fundamentalists—individuals who were born or raised in Spain but struggled with cultural and identity tensions. These individuals often experience a sense of exclusion, caught between their parents' cultural

values and the social norms of Spanish society, making them more vulnerable to extremist narratives that offer a sense of belonging and purpose.

Digital platforms have played a crucial role in the rise of fundamentalist radicalization in Spain. The widespread use of social media and encrypted communication channels has facilitated the dissemination of extremist propaganda, making recruitment efforts more effective. Online spaces provide not only a means for spreading radical ideas but also a sense of community among individuals who feel alienated or marginalized in their offline lives. Fundamentalist groups utilize platforms like YouTube, Twitter (now X), WhatsApp, and Telegram to share videos, articles, and personal testimonials that glorify jihad and martyrdom, encouraging vulnerable individuals to join the cause.

Socio-economic conditions are also significant contributors to religious extremism in Spain. Marginalized areas, such as Ceuta and Melilla, have been particularly susceptible to radicalization due to high poverty rates, limited access to quality education, and pervasive unemployment. These socio-economic challenges create an environment where extremist ideologies find fertile ground, as they often present themselves as solutions to systemic grievances. In addition, the lack of effective integration policies has further isolated communities, hindering efforts to counter radicalization at its root.

The Spanish government's approach to combating religious extremism has been multifaceted, focusing on intelligence operations, border control, community-based programs, and digital monitoring. While initiatives like the mobile app AlertCops, which allows citizens to report suspicious activities, have been introduced to enhance public engagement, these measures have not been without controversy. Concerns have been raised about profiling and discrimination, especially among Muslim communities, which can exacerbate feelings of alienation and inadvertently contribute to further radicalization. The balance between ensuring security and protecting civil liberties remains a persistent challenge in addressing fundamentalistradicalization in Spain.

II.II.II.II. Non-religious Extremism in Spain

In contrast to religious extremism, non-religious extremism in Spain has predominantly been driven by far right and separatist movements that seek regional autonomy or independence. These movements have historical roots dating back to the Franco era and earlier, where repression of regional identities fueled resistance and gave rise to extremist ideologies. The most notable example of non-religious extremism in Spain is ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna), a Basque separatist organization that waged a violent campaign from the 1960s until its ceasefire in 2011 and eventual dissolution in 2018.

Non-religious extremism in Spain is characterized by its focus on territorial claims and ethnic identity, with movements like those in the Basque Country and Catalonia advocating for self-determination. These movements have mobilized support by invoking historical grievances, emphasizing cultural distinctiveness, and framing their struggles as resistance against state oppression. The narratives of these movements often revolve around the preservation of regional languages, traditions, and political autonomy, making them a powerful force in local politics.

The organizational structure of non-religious extremist groups in Spain has been more centralized and formalized compared to religious extremist networks. For instance, ETA maintained a clear hierarchical organization with designated political, military, and logistical wings. Its political arm, Herri Batasuna, sought to gain legitimacy through elections while supporting ETA's broader separatist agenda. Although ETA has ceased its violent activities, its legacy continues to influence far right movements in the Basque Country, which now pursue their goals through peaceful and democratic means. The presence of mainstream far right parties, such as the Basque Far right Party (PNV) and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), demonstrates a shift from violent extremism to political negotiation, though radical factions still exist.

The political climate has played a significant role in shaping non-religious extremism in Spain. Events like the 2017 Catalan independence

referendum, which was deemed illegal by the Spanish government, heightened tensions between regional movements and the central state. The heavy-handed response, including police intervention and the imprisonment of Catalan leaders, intensified resentment and radical sentiments among segments of the population. This demonstrates how political responses to regional demands can either mitigate or exacerbate radical tendencies. Effective dialogue and negotiations are essential to address such grievances and prevent the resurgence of violent extremism.

Socio-economic factors also contribute to non-religious extremism. Regions with higher unemployment rates, limited economic development, and perceptions of state neglect tend to show stronger support for far right movements. For many supporters, far right extremism represents a form of socio-economic protest, as they perceive their regions to be marginalized by the central government. This creates a fertile environment for radical ideologies to thrive, as regional identities become intertwined with socio-economic grievances, enhancing the appeal of extremist narratives.

While religious and non-religious extremism in Spain have different ideological foundations, they share certain characteristics that drive radicalization. Both forms exploit identity conflicts, whether cultural-religious or ethnic-territorial, to mobilize support and justify their actions. They also leverage socio-economic grievances, presenting themselves as alternative solutions to systemic issues such as inequality, discrimination, and political marginalization. Furthermore, both religious and far right extremists utilize digital platforms for propaganda, recruitment, and coordination, although their tactics and messaging vary based on their target audience.

Despite these similarities, the two forms of extremism diverge significantly in their goals, methods, and impacts. Religious extremism, particularly fundamentalism, aims for a global transformation aligned with an ideological vision of DAESH. It tends to target civilians indiscriminately to create fear and destabilize society. On the other hand, non-religious extremism, particularly far right movements, is more focused on achieving regional autonomy or independence. Historically, such movements in Spain

have targeted state officials, infrastructure, and representatives of the central government as part of their strategy to further their political objectives.

II.II.II.III. Challenges and Strategic Responses

Addressing both religious and non-religious extremism in Spain requires a differentiated approach that considers the unique characteristics of each form while also recognizing their commonalities. For religious extremism, promoting social integration, enhancing economic opportunities, and ensuring equal access to education are crucial measures to prevent radicalization. Engaging communities in dialogue, offering support services, and providing counter-narratives that emphasize peaceful coexistence and mutual respect are also essential strategies.

For non-religious extremism, addressing regional disparities, ensuring fair political representation, and fostering dialogue between regional and national actors are key steps in mitigating radical sentiments. Constitutional reforms that allow for greater regional autonomy, where appropriate, could help reduce tensions and prevent the recurrence of violent separatist movements.

Overall, combating both types of extremism requires a balance between security measures and the protection of civil liberties. While surveillance, intelligence, and law enforcement play crucial roles, they must be implemented in ways that do not alienate communities or exacerbate existing grievances. By understanding the distinct drivers and characteristics of religious and non-religious extremism, Spain can develop targeted and effective strategies to promote peace, security, and social cohesion.

II.II.III. Factors Influencing Perceptions of Radicalization

Regarding the factors influencing radicalization, the literature distinguishes three types: 1) cultural and immaterial (Norris & Inglehart, 2019), closely linked to the role of the media and social networks; 2) socio-economic (Rydgren, 2007); and 3) related to the political climate (Ignazi, 1992).

II.II.III.I. Cultural Factors, Conventional Media, and Social Media

Regarding cultural and immaterial factors, radical political options attract voters pursuing "cultural revenge," defending traditional values that they believe are being lost and yearning for a past that is often mythical or non-existent (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). The cultural component of radicalism goes hand in hand with the increasing role of emotions and identities in politics (Goodwin et al., 2001) and has found in online platforms and social networks an ideal means of dissemination. This factor contributes to explaining both far-right and religious radicalism, especially among young people.

In Europe, far-right radicalism identifies non-European immigrants as the main threat to indigenous culture, especially those from Muslim countries. Supporters of this type of radicalism do not perceive immigrants as an economic threat, but rather as an ethno-cultural threat (Lucassen & Lubbers, 2012). Media, particularly online platforms (Ellinas, 2018; Zeiger & Gyte, 2020), but also conventional media, play a central role in disseminating hate speech and Islamophobia (Yusha'u, 2015).

Conversely, religious radicalism identifies two cultural threats, in this case to religious tradition: the imposition of Western values globally and cultural assimilation to Muslim immigrant communities in Europe. Like far-right radicalism, online platforms and social networks play a fundamental role in the dissemination and recruitment of fundamentalists (Kadivar, 2017; Hollewell & Longpré, 2022). However, by openly advocating terrorist violence, fundamentalist radical organizations frequently resort to Deep Web websites, protected forums, and encrypted messaging applications (Winter et al., 2020).

The message of cultural dispute spread by the media has an impact especially on men, young people, and residents in rural areas, at least in European countries. The feminist revolution of recent decades has caused a "crisis of masculinity" that has led some men to take radical positions against gender equality advocated by right-wing radicalism (Nagle, 2017), but also by religious extremism. Although it cuts across all age groups, it particularly affects young people, traditionally more critical of the status

quo, who are attracted to radical formations proposing a new model of citizenship in which they would have greater influence (Hirschman, 1970; Bennett, 2012). In fact, some studies, like Hollewell & Longpré (2022), demonstrate how young men with university studies more frequently tend to endorse positive attitudes towards political violence and terrorism and, therefore, are at higher risk of being radicalized. Likewise, radicalization around the defense of traditional values and rejection of immigration and feminism is greater in rural environments since these spaces lack diversity and are dominated by a culturally familiar and "authentic" form of social relations (Förtner et al., 2021).

Academic interest in online radicalization originated in the post-9/11 context (Hollewell & Longpré, 2022) and constitutes one of the pathways to radicalization. Online platforms such as discussion forums, blogs, and, more specifically, YouTube, Twitter (currently, X), and Facebook, are used to disseminate extremist ideas, incite violence, recruit members, and create groups, organizations, or communities motivated by hatred (Correa & Sureka, 2013; Kadivar, 2017; Ganesh & Bright, 2020; Zeiger & Gyte, 2020). The use of these platforms, particularly social networks, has particularly changed the dynamics of online radicalization, especially among young people, driving self-radicalization (Hollewell & Longpré, 2022).

Empirical studies, such as Ledwich & Zaitsev (2019), conclude that, contrary to what conventional media claims, YouTube's recommendation algorithm does not promote extremist content but rather discourages users from visiting this type of content. However, other works, such as Hassan et al. (2018), argue that exposure to violent and radical content online is related to extremist attitudes and increases the risk of committing violent actions among far-right and fundamentalist radical groups.

Although the Internet does not determine the adoption of extremist beliefs, new technologies have facilitated the spread of radical ideas through gradual processes of socialization (Marwick et al., 2022). Extremist groups use online platforms for communication, propaganda, recruitment, logistics, financing, and hacking (Winter et al., 2020; Hollewell & Longpré, 2022).

Among the most common techniques of extremist propaganda are the use of images, photographs, and illustrations (Tarín et al., 2018; El Ghamari, 2023) and conspiracy theories (Jääskeläinen & Huhtinen, 2020). Extremist political groups resort to increasingly sophisticated propaganda (Awan, 2007) to defame their rivals, influence electoral processes, or stigmatize certain ethnic-cultural, religious, or political groups (Fenster, 1999; Bartlett & Miller, 2010; Tarín, 2017a, 2017b; Tarín et al., 2018).

II.II.III.II. Socio-Economic Factors

A second explanation for radical voting is socioeconomic. The social and economic causes of political radicalism have been the subject of theoretical discussion since the early twentieth century (Verba & Schlozman, 1977) and are one of the causes addressed by governments to prevent extremism (Richards, 2003). The literature on electoral behavior considers that perceptions of poor economic conditions, both personal and national, and their connection to the responsibility of the government and traditional parties stimulate the electoral success of radicalism (Rydgren, 2007). Thus, voting for extremist parties or political options would be explained by economic voting theory (Duch & Stevenson, 2008; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2008). On the other hand, social psychology argues that the propensity towards radicalism, especially among young people, is determined by personal traits linked to social conditions related to socioeconomic and cultural problems (Mukhitov et al., 2022).

Within the socioeconomic determinants of radicalism, there are two that particularly affect young people: economic disparities and unemployment and lack of opportunities. Some studies maintain that socioeconomic disparities are a breeding ground for extremist ideas (Makki & Akash, 2021). Specifically, sociopolitical inequality is positively associated with cognitive radicalization while economic inequality is related to behavioral radicalization (Franc & Pavlović, 2023). However, works such as Ouassini & Verma (2018) and Myagkov et al. (2019) question the impact of these factors and identify other sociodemographic conditions such as access to the state, the lack of presence of governmental security agencies, and residence in peripheral areas.

Other studies link radicalization to unemployment and lack of opportunities in the labor market, especially among young people (Stevkovski, 2014; Al-Badayneh et al., 2016; Beramendi et al., 2018; Iqbal et al., 2020). In fact, the lack of economic opportunities due to unemployment and low educational attainment attracts radicalized individuals to the recruitment of violent and terrorist groups, both fundamentalist (Abdel Jelil et al., 2018; Gouda & Marktanner, 2019) and far-right (Falk et al., 2011). However, studies like Norman et al (2018) question the direct causality between unemployment and radicalism, suggesting that unemployment is just one of several factors that may lead to radicalization.

II.II.III.III. Political Climate

Political determinants, like socioeconomic ones, are related to extremist and violent attitudes and behaviors (Makki & Akash, 2021). Political factors such as governance, lack of state presence, and grievances are sometimes more significant than cultural and social factors (Allan et al, 2015). Among the political factors, those related to political events and perceptions of governmental response stand out (Ignazi, 1992).

A climate of widespread distrust in democratic institutions contributes in some countries to creating a more critical political culture that tends towards extremism and radicalization, especially among younger generations (Muxel, 2020). Political science has studied radicalism from the perspective of electoral behavior and has focused on the causes and consequences of radicalism. Although this report focuses on the causes of radicalization, understanding its consequences is also fundamental in raising awareness for the prevention of radicalism among young people.

In this sense, the rise to power of radical political options can lead to the deterioration or even the breakdown of democracy (Haggard and Kaufman, 2021; Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018), but sometimes, it has positive effects because it stimulates participation and electorally integrates sectors disillusioned with the political system (Abramowitz and Saunders, 2008; Alfaro-Redondo, 2019). Thus, radicalism can become a way to renew and strengthen democracy and only constitutes a threat to coexistence if it is

accompanied by a rejection of democratic values (Bohigues, 2021) or the defense of violent actions to reach or maintain power, as is the case with the far right and fundamentalism; hence this report focuses on these two types of radicalism currently present in Spain.

Focusing on Spain, in this country there are no Islamist parties with institutional representation, but there are far-right formations, and one of them, Vox, has achieved significant levels of representation and is part of local and regional governments. Studies like Barragán & Rivas (2022) indicate that the determinants of voting for Vox are ideological and linked to the perception towards the government and institutions. Thus, ideology (right-wing), Spanish nationalism, negative opinions towards immigrants, high interest in politics, and distrust towards politicians explain the vote for this party. Euroscepticism and sociodemographic factors such as gender have no impact. However, among young people (under 35 years old), other determinants come into play such as dissatisfaction with the government or rejection of further integration into the European Union.

II.III. Awareness/Understanding of Radicalization in Ukraine

To better understand the situation on radicalization trends and its perception in Ukraine, it is important to have a look at the country's USSR historical background through a prism of the overall global history of recent decades. According to the European Network on Radicalization, 93% of all instances of extremism in the Western countries were carried out by left-radical groups; it should be noted that a significant portion of them had indirect connections with the Soviet Union (Farinelli & Marinone, 2021). Radicalization Awareness Network 2021 Furthermore, far right and anti-colonial movements (which in the 20th century also supported left-wing ideas simultaneously) had direct support from the USSR in the form of briefings, training, and arms supply. Extremism issues are to a greater extent the result of social crises and societal problems. In other words, the radicalization process is an "organic" course of events in the life of society (Tarasyuk, 2023).

In the context of Ukraine, extremism has not historically been perceived as a significant internal issue. Rather, instances of radicalization have often been externally driven, primarily fueled by foreign influences. Youth

workers in Ukraine continue to acknowledge that the root causes of radicalization, such as political instability, economic hardship, and social injustice, have not typically been directed towards Ukrainian authorities or societal groups within Ukraine. Instead, these factors have been linked to external oppression, particularly from Russian-led regimes throughout history, including the Tsarist, Soviet, and Kremlin eras. From a historical perspective, Ukrainian society has not exhibited widespread feelings of disenfranchisement or alienation among its various population segments. Instead, Ukrainians have consistently sought independence, emphasizing national identity and the right to use their language freely. Extremist movements like the Organization of Ukrainian Far rights and the Ukrainian Partisan Army (OUN-UPA) have been framed not as radicalized entities but as far right groups striving for Ukrainian sovereignty, opposing foreign powers like the Russian and Polish regimes (Zasenko et al., 2024).

The initiation of World War I and the ensuing conflict between Russia and Austria-Hungary starting on August 1, 1914, led to significant consequences for Ukrainians under the jurisdiction of these warring states. Within the Russian Empire, a crackdown was initiated against Ukrainian cultural expressions and organizations, leading to the arrest or exile of notable individuals. Following its occupation of Galicia, the Russian government endeavored to fully integrate the region, imposing a ban on the Ukrainian language, shutting down Ukrainian institutions, and making preparations to dismantle the Greek Catholic Church. However, these Russification efforts were halted when Austrian forces reclaimed the area in the spring of 1915. Meanwhile, Western Ukraine remained a battleground, enduring severe hardships and destruction due to the ongoing military engagements.

Following the end of World War I and subsequent revolutionary turmoil, the territories of Ukraine found themselves partitioned among four distinct states. Bukovina became part of Romania, while Transcarpathia was absorbed into the newly formed Czechoslovakia. Poland took control of Galicia and the western part of Volhynia, in addition to smaller neighboring regions in the northwest. Meanwhile, the territories lying to the east of the

Polish boundary became known as Soviet Ukraine. In 1928, the government began implementing targeted actions against the kulaks, who were labeled as "wealthy" peasants without a standard definition. This crackdown evolved from heightened taxes and increased quotas for grain deliveries to the complete confiscation of their assets.

By the mid-1930s, this campaign resulted in the forced relocation of approximately 100,000 families to remote regions in Siberia and Kazakhstan. Stalin's policies led to the Holodomor, a devastating famine in 1932-33, which stands as a peacetime demographic disaster without precedent. Within the Soviet Union, it is estimated that five million people perished, with nearly four million of those victims being Ukrainians. Amidst its push for industrialization and collectivization, the Soviet government also initiated a crackdown on what it labeled as "far right deviations," leading to an aggressive undermining of Ukrainian cultural identity. In Ukrainian Galicia, which was under Polish control and referred to as "Eastern Little Poland," there was a significant suppression of the Ukrainian language, along with educational institutions, during the 1930s. This period saw a deliberate promotion of Polonization within the education system. Under Polish jurisdiction, revolutionary nationalism gained momentum, and the Organization of Ukrainian Far rights (OUN), a widespread underground movement, began to expand its influence.

Similarly, in the Bukovina region, previously under Austrian rule, Ukrainian cultural expressions, language, and education faced oppression. The unexpected onslaught by Germany on the USSR commenced on June 22, 1941, with sections of the Ukrainian population initially welcoming the German forces as liberators. However, in the zones under their control, the Nazis attempted to enforce their ideological "racial" agendas, resulting in around 2.2 million individuals being forcibly sent to Germany for slave labor, known as Ostarbeiter or "eastern workers". Cultural expressions were stifled, and the scope of education was curtailed to primary levels only. The period also saw Soviet partisans and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) engaging in guerrilla warfare against the German forces, in addition to conflicts between themselves. Following the conclusion of World War II, the

Soviet regime swiftly reinstated its totalitarian grip through the Communist Party and secret police, targeting anyone associated with Ukrainian nationalism for persecution.

In the aftermath, roughly half a million people were expelled from western Ukraine due to their involvement in insurgent and far right movements, alongside victims of religious oppression and collectivization efforts. Despite occasional lapses, the Kremlin consistently pursued policies of Russification, a trend that has remained unbroken since 1959. By 1939, Soviet forces had occupied these territories, subsequently integrating them into the Ukrainian SSR. Given the constraints on expressing direct opposition to the prevailing political stance, advocacy for the Ukrainian language and culture often took on subtle forms. This included the celebration of the mother tongue through poetry, expressing concerns over the scarcity of textbooks in Ukrainian, and encouraging subscriptions to Ukrainian publications.

From 1965 onwards, the movement for national dissent saw a significant increase, manifesting through various means such as protest letters and petitions to government officials, the establishment of informal groups and discussion forums, as well as the organization of public gatherings and protests. During the 1970s, the regime responded with not only arrests and executions but also the controversial use of psychiatric hospitals for political detainees. Contrary to the swift emergence of mass movements in the Baltic and Transcaucasian republics during the 1980s, Ukraine's national awakening, spurred by policies of openness (glasnost), unfolded more slowly. In Ukraine, particularly within the Donbas region, industrial workers who traditionally remained unorganized began to consolidate, with early signs of unrest manifesting through letters from miners as early as 1985. However, it wasn't until July 1989 that a significant self-organized movement among the Donbas miners catalyzed a strike, signifying a pivotal shift towards the mass politicization of Ukrainian society that year.

On July 16, 1990, Ukraine declared its sovereignty, a move that came amidst Mikhail Gorbachev's attempts to quell rising far right sentiments by

suggesting a new union treaty aimed at granting extensive autonomy to Soviet republics while maintaining central control over key areas like foreign policy and the military. In response to the potential relinquishment of their newly proclaimed sovereign rights, Ukrainians, led by students, staged mass protests and a hunger strike in Kyiv in October 1990. This period of tension culminated in August 1991 when a coup attempts by hard-liners in Gorbachev's administration failed miserably within just a couple of days. Seizing the moment, the Ukrainian parliament convened an emergency session, during which it proclaimed Ukraine's full independence on August 24, 1991. Citizenship was extended to the people of Ukraine on an inclusive (rather than ethnic or linguistic) basis. As a conclusion from the materials presented above, we may state that the political repression had the prominent role in driving radicalization in a Ukrainian society at least in the past 100 years.

Nowadays, the trend of external imposing of the radicalised attitudes continues. For example the Anti-Maidan protests in 2013-14 may demonstrate the case that has been investigated internally in Ukraine and externally, discovering alarming practice of artificial and manipulative behaviour of pro-Russian parties to "prove" that there is a pro-Russian support in the Ukrainian society. On one hand, it cannot be claimed that there were no skeptics regarding European integration or supporters of the Party of Regions and Viktor Yanukovych within society. Likewise, it's not accurate to universally declare that all participants in protest actions within certain regions of Ukraine were "bought." However, Russia's influence is undeniable, as is the utilization of these movements in the hybrid war against Ukraine for the past 30 years. For instance, the terrorist (formerly "civic") organization "DNR" has been active since 2005. The organization employed various methods, participated in actions of Russian neo-fascists at the Seliger congress (2013), and, as a terrorist group, staged joint "parades" with another ally of Russia-the Communist Party of Ukraine.

The tools of radicalization are theoretically quite primitive bombarding with disinformation over years, using speculative or delegitimizing narratives against Ukraine. For example, Russia successfully utilized

constructs from 1917–21 based on regional history or the everyday life of social groups. By bringing these aspects together, providing context to contemporary issues through historical events and constructs, a new interpretive framework (frame) is created. Among the general audience, the deep and persistent intertwining of such constructs is often referred to as "mentality." While this concept is somewhat unscientific in the way it's used, if the goal is to create a radical group, instilling such a frame is one of the key tasks of the aggressor state. The formation of a radical group relies on the following sequential actions:

- Identifying marginal groups, studying their social issues, dissatisfaction levels with the government and/or societal structure.

- Sustaining a narrative of personal or social threat, attributing these threats to certain entities (for example, a ruling elite) and exaggerating and dramatizing the consequences.

- Utilizing narratives for the mobilization of part or all the group. This is achieved through the implementation of various social group behavior control technologies and depends on the amount of invested material resources.

The mentioned terrorists from "DNR" referred to the concept of the Donetsk–Krivoy Rog Republic as a proxy structure to legitimize the occupation of the eastern districts of the Ukrainian People's Republic by Soviet military forces. However, the transition from peaceful protests, which did not experience repression or forceful pressure from other participants, almost immediately turned into actions not just by paramilitary but by military armed formations. This sudden transition is quite unusual, even without considering the presence of Russian servicemen. Essentially, there was a leap from relatively peaceful actions in March to the seizure of administrative buildings by militants on April 11 (Tarasyuk, 2023).

II.III.I. Differentiating Between Religious and Non-Religious Extremism

Religious conflicts in Ukraine are largely due to the presence of many religious organizations and the diversity of religious communities. Historically inherited religious disputes between communities periodically emerge in Ukraine. For example, conflicts within Orthodoxy are caused by its division into three independent churches, each claiming a monopoly on representing all of Orthodoxy in Ukraine. The issue of Orthodox and Greek Catholic disputes is particularly acute. The sharp competition between church formations has led to the division of territories dominated by the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, with specific regions where one of the churches predominates. Meanwhile, some confessions settle for a secondary, or even nominal, representation in these regions. Socio-political changes also lead to new Orthodox schisms, Christian-Muslim disputes, and tensions between traditional and non-traditional religious organizations for Ukraine (Tchaikovsky, 2007).

The primary regulatory document in the field of religious activity is the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" dated April 23, 1991. It enshrines the right of citizens to fulfill their religious needs in their confession, outlines the requirements for religious organizations in Ukraine, and stipulates that officials and citizens guilty of violating the legislation on freedom of conscience and religious organizations are subject to liability established by law. Under Ukrainian law, the church is separate from the state. The Law of Ukraine "On the Fundamentals of National Security of Ukraine" includes among the main and potential threats to the national security of Ukraine and societal stability the "possibility… of extremism in the activities of some national minority associations and religious communities." (Tchaikovsky, 2007). All entities responsible for ensuring Ukraine's national security, within their powers, are obliged to counter extremism: the President, the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) and the Cabinet of Ministers, the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, law enforcement agencies, ministries, and other central executive bodies, political parties, citizen associations, and the

citizens of Ukraine themselves. Violations that may be committed by religious extremists are also subject to examination according to the Administrative and Criminal Codes of Ukraine.

According to Oleksandr Sagan, the head of the Department of Religious Studies at the H.S. Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and Doctor of Philosophy, the density of the religious network in Ukraine is quite high—one religious community per 1600 citizens. Therefore, religious organizations in Ukraine have a powerful network that significantly outweighs other civil society institutions and the network of state and local authorities. The Moscow Patriarchate is currently perceived as a Russian church in Ukraine, effectively a fifth column of the Kremlin. On this issue, there is now a consensus among residents of both the East and the West of the country, which have been artificially positioned as opposites by Russian propaganda using language or industrial wellbeing as manipulation justification. A study by the Razumkov Centre in May 2023 indicates an increase in the number of believers who do not identify with any of the Orthodox churches in Ukraine—these are Orthodox believers who no longer wish or can identify with the Moscow Patriarchate but, due to upbringing, certain convictions, and prejudices, are not yet ready to identify with the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (CBIT About Us., 2023).

Overall, after a big number of criminal investigations revealing how Moscow Patriarchate churches in Ukraine worked for Russian interests even during a full-scale invasion in 2022-2023, 66% of Ukrainians believe that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine should be banned, and 85% are convinced that the government should intervene in its activities. These are the results of a survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology from May 26 to June 5, 2023. These figures are increasing, as in December 2022, the results showed 54% in favor of a ban and 78% wanting the state to intervene in the activities of the UOC MP to some extent. However, as of today, Ukrainian legislation does not allow for the prohibition of the UOC MP as a structure, as a legal entity, because it is not one (Tatarenko, et.al., 2023).

At the same time, the establishment of a joint local Orthodox Church of Ukraine is essentially Ukraine's response to the transformation of Russian Orthodoxy into a version of political Orthodoxy and its conversion into a new ideology of the Russian Federation, which proclaims the revival of the Moscow Empire in the form of the USSR 2.0 or any other form. However, a common problem in separating the Ukrainian church from the Moscow Patriarchate is the attempt by both church structures and governmental institutions to apply administrative resources rather than an educational-informational component; therefore, this radicalization factor will remain (CBIT About Us., 2023).

II.III.II. Identification of Potential Risk Factors

Since 1991, the Institute of Sociology has been conducting annual sociological monitoring that measures how Ukrainians change year by year. Changes in the mood of Ukrainian society have a wave-like nature; since 2011, all sociological studies noted the consolidation of Ukrainian society in many directions. Before the 2014 war in Ukraine, both right and left forces have become radicalized as a consequence of systemic strategy implemented by the Kremlin using its proxies like the Communist Party of Ukraine, the Orthodox Church, pro-Russian media, etc. The occasional radicalization of interethnic relations (mostly against the Roma population) is a consequence of the general radicalization of society.

In 2019, at a human rights club meeting titled "Radicalization of Society," it was discussed that radicalization in the political sphere is linked to a general lack of political culture, disregard for the principles of law, reliance solely on political expediency, a tendency to use coercion against political opponents, and an unwillingness and inability to consider minority interests. As a result, even political forces closer to centrist ideologies have leaned towards radicalization in their activities, both in parliament and in the executive branch's actions. A general shift to the right in Ukrainian politics has been observed: centrist political forces are becoming right-centrist, and right-centrist forces are moving further to the right than radicals.

However, it should be noted that the majority of Ukrainians are relatively moderate and do not wish to support right-wing radical political forces in elections. In parliamentary elections, right radicals succeeded only once—"VO Svoboda" in 2012 gained 10% amidst the general disillusionment with the infighting of the Orange factions. However, within a year, their support dropped to 5%, and by 2014 they failed to enter parliament. While the armed conflict with Russia continues, there will be a demand for right-wing radical sentiments. Despite nearly 28 years of independence, the indigenous Ukrainian ethnicity in some regions still feels discriminated against (not to mention the occupied territories). If this situation persists, right-wing radical views will have a basis for development. Human rights compliance cannot be considered successful if the rights of communities—linguistic, religious, ethnic, and others—are not upheld.

In 2019, the number of people who consider the use of torture unacceptable decreased from pre-war 86% to 75.6%, meaning nearly one in four Ukrainians considers the use of torture acceptable, especially against separatists (Zakharov, 2019). The use of force, to which the defenders of Maidan in Kyiv were compelled, the death of a significant number of people at Maidan, and the armed conflict in the East led to a strong decrease in immunity against violence admitted by the media in 2019. At the same time, there was an observable increase in hatred towards separatists, triumph over the deaths of militants, and the spread of photos of enemy corpses on social networks. The latter is a stable trend in 2022-2023. The systemic factors for radicalization were named by R.Bortnik, a head of the Analytical center "Joint Goal", in 2012 – and they still remain the same – as:

- Political-party disillusionment. Over 20 years of independence, people have grown weary of oligarchic and clan-based parties, their empty promises, and the chasm between such parties' electoral programs and their actual actions. Parliamentary parties in Ukraine, claiming to be liberal or social-democratic, almost never fulfill their political agendas in practice. Their actions seldom align with their proclaimed ideologies, if struggle for property and power isn't considered their ideology. Instead, real positioning occurs not on

ideological grounds but on political markers – foreign policy orientation, historical views, language, church. Hence, a significant portion of disillusioned individuals vote not necessarily for power or opposition, but for "somebody else.". Another example is how pro-Russian political parties fuel radicalization trends in Ukraine: in March 2013, the leader of the Party of Regions parliamentary faction, Oleksandr Yefremov, labelled his colleagues from the opposition as "neofascists," which immediately provoked a physical fight among the deputies. The party widely manipulated with the terms of fascism and neo-Nazism associating them with the national traditional costume and Ukrainian language use in order to oppose themselves to active national political parties as "Svoboda" (Freedom) and "Batkivshchyna" (Motherland). Then, in May, in major Ukrainian cities, the government organized a campaign called "To Europe – Without Fascists!" Further the Party of Regions started to hire young physically fit men to get engaged in fights during such and similar protests. Both Ukrainian and German political scientists were stressing that radicalisation fuelled by that party is a designed scenario of political technologies (Bortnik, 2012).

· The economic crisis and poverty. With Ukraine's stagnant economy, lack of social sector reform, and effective social policy in general, pensions and salaries significantly lower to neighbouring countries, create fertile ground for social alienation and radicalism in Ukraine. People hate richer citizens and tend to blame them in anything negative happening. In 2011 because of the political disapproval about 55% of Ukrainians were ready to join the street protests in case of serious economic deterioration. However, of material wealth was the primary motive that could prompt people to take to the streets in 2011. Later historical events demonstrated that political direction of Ukrainian country development is also an important driver.

· The organization and conduct of elections which has not once been identified by citizens as a democratic and transparent one. This leads to distrust towards the representatives of a government with a rare bigger support to the existing opposition.

Currently, during the full-scale aggression of Russia in Ukraine, various social environments have emerged that could become the target of deliberate radicalization efforts (Tarasyuk, 2023). There are several million internally displaced persons within Ukraine and over a million military servicemen, a significant portion of whom will also spend their lives dealing with the direct consequences of war. Additionally, many refugees abroad continue to face integration challenges in Western societies, as well as adaptation difficulties should they return to Ukraine. Russia can also exploit narratives of polarization between different societal groups, such as between military personnel and civilians, for example, by spreading stories about men who successfully flee abroad illegally or actively disseminating misinformation about mobilization rules (the conditional narrative of "everyone to the trenches without preparation"). Stories of a more social nature, such as opposing women's and men's rights, tales of abuse in military units, etc., also pose a risk. The spread of classic populist narratives, easily utilized both in relatively peaceful times and in wartime, poses a certain risk, for example, the idea that "we need a battalion of deputies, and the war will end in a day." Macro-economic problems are also evident—an increase in poverty and a general decline in the quality of life.

The war undoubtedly significantly legitimizes violence, especially on such a scale and with such an existential threat to the country. Moreover, it's important to remember that all these events primarily represent the fates of individuals who could have extrapolated their personal problems onto the political and social reality in Ukraine even without a full-scale war. Individual radicalization through personal grievances in life (the so-called "lone wolf" theory) could also become a much more common phenomenon. Examples of such extremism have been observed in Ukraine in the form of well-known terrorist attacks, such as the "Lutsk terrorist" Maksym Kryvosh, who in 2020 took a bus full of hostages.

Currently, Ukraine faces challenges in establishing new infrastructure to prevent radicalization, as this requires relatively stable conditions. A pressing issue is Russia's support for separatist and terrorist groups. A particular danger continues to be the influence of Russian propaganda. Accord-

ing to a survey by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, as of the end of 2022, about 12% of Ukrainians still view the dissolution of the USSR negatively, and around 9% of the population disapprove of condemning the regime as totalitarian. In the matter of assessing the dissolution of the USSR, as well as in almost all future issues, there is a difference between groups of respondents with different languages of daily communication and different financial status. Among those who speak Russian in everyday life, a positive assessment of the USSR's dissolution also prevails, but among them, there are nearly 20% more who mourn the USSR than among Ukrainian-speaking respondents.

The same trend applies to people with lower financial status compared to more affluent respondents. About 73% of Ukrainians approve of the state decision to condemn the USSR as a communist totalitarian regime that carried out a policy of state terror. This opinion prevails in all regions, with no more than 14% disagreeing (about 14% in the South and 12% in the East of Ukraine). Just over half of Ukrainians report that Russia's attack on Ukraine has motivated them to reevaluate the Soviet past. Although this is a subjective assessment, previous questions have indicated a significant shift in public opinion regarding historical memory compared to the period before the full-scale invasion. As of August 2020, approximately 31% of people across Ukraine were convinced by Russian propaganda that the events of the Maidan were a "coup," with this view being predominant in the Southern and Eastern regions of Ukraine.

The Southern macro-region of Ukraine, especially the Odesa region as a case, which remains the only traditionally Russian-speaking region not subjected to occupation, deserves special attention. In a survey conducted in the Odesa region in the summer of 2023, about 35% of the population strongly disapproves of renaming streets and squares from Soviet to indigenous or new names. Moreover, over 9% strongly disagree with the statement that the UOC of the Moscow Patriarchate facilitated Russian aggression in Ukraine. These are good examples of possible spaces where Russian disinformation could influence and shape groups to intensify people's views.

Of course, such indicators do not necessarily mean a potential for mobilizing protests, let alone radicalization and extremism. However, there are more potentially alarming examples. In the same survey in the Odesa region, over 10% of respondents indicated that changes in school education since 2014 are nothing but rewriting history. It's noteworthy that 16% of respondents from southern Ukraine consider the Revolution of Dignity to be a coup d'état. This not only indicates public dissatisfaction but may also suggest a potential for further radicalization of this group, possibly through resistance to national policies of decommunization and derussification. However, it is important to note that this indicator has decreased by 20% compared to the results of a national survey conducted in the spring of 2023. These figures are not evidence of a clear threat but demonstrate differences in views among relative majority groups, which are already being used or can be used by Russia for "soft power" or influence. The relative majority of groups, while maintaining their marginal position, only indicates a higher likelihood of the emergence of anti-Ukrainian views and eventually actions. As noted, the soft influence of Russia has not ceased and continues, although it has become less effective.

Radicalization, as one of the goals of Russian influence, is used and will continue to be used throughout the confrontation with Ukraine. Regardless of the terms of de-occupation and possible victory, the Ukrainian state and society will face the challenge of communicating with citizens of Ukraine who have been under Russian rule for almost a decade. This will be compounded by problems with many Russian citizens and stateless persons. The administrations of these regions will require maximum attention from Kyiv, but conflicts, propaganda influence problems, collaborationism, and generations raised on Russian politics of identity will undoubtedly become another unprecedented challenge. Infiltration and forceful control cannot guarantee security on such a scale, and in the absence of a consistent reintegration policy, they may catalyze precisely extreme views among the most marginal groups.

Therefore, several key aspects deserve attention. Firstly, the survey in the Odesa region indicates a worrying trend of dissatisfaction with state policies in the areas of decommunization and derussification. This audience

could become a target for Russian disinformation and propaganda. Secondly, although Russia's soft influence in Ukraine has become less pronounced, it has not disappeared. This situation is especially characteristic of traditionally Russian-speaking regions, such as the Odesa region, but this does not mean that it is absent in any other part of Ukraine. There is an increased risk of radicalization of Ukrainian society, especially in the absence of effective communication strategies. Attempts to reintegrate territories and populations that have been under Russian rule pose a particular challenge that requires broad attention. Here we are dealing not only with legal issues but also with identity issues.

From this perspective, the administrations of Odesa and other regions require maximum attention from Kyiv. However, we must not forget that conflicts, the influence of propaganda, and generations raised on Russian politics of identity pose an unprecedented challenge. Forceful methods do not solve everything, and developing experience will be extremely important for de-occupied territories, especially those that need to be reintegrated since 2014.

Basically, as a follow-up to the Russian propaganda, nationalism as a movement in Ukraine is present, influential, and even enjoys unofficial support from many politicians, but officially, nationalism is not a public policy in Ukraine. Journalists, experts, and public intellectuals find themselves needing to explain certain manifestations of nationalism from politicians or public figures to the population. Over a historically short period, the Ukrainian ruling class has struggled to assimilate and integrate the large influx of Russian-speaking individuals brought in from the Russian Empire/USSR into Ukrainian culture. However, Ukrainians as a nation do not support either non-integral nationalism or imperialism.

II.III.III. Factors Influencing Perceptions of Radicalization in Ukraine

Perceptions of radicalization in Ukraine, as in any other context, are influenced by a complex interplay of various factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for policymakers, researchers, and the public. Within the scope of this project, we will look at the influence of conventional and social

media, socio-economic factors, and political climate on the perception of radicalization in Ukraine.

II.III.III.I. Conventional Media and Social Media

Both conventional media and social media play significant roles in shaping opinions and potentially contributing to radicalization. Conventional media, encompassing newspapers, television, and radio, wields significant influence in shaping public perception through framing, agenda setting, sensationalism, biased reporting, and the facilitation of echo chambers. This all typically can be done through the hands of the so-called "gatekeepers," who play a crucial role in controlling the flow of information and shaping the narrative that reaches the audience. These gatekeepers, often individuals or editorial teams within media organizations, decide which stories to cover, how to frame them, and the prominence they will receive. Researchers have long debated the role of gatekeepers in media and whether they do more good than bad (Durani et al., 2023). Regardless of the role they play, the power to frame issues and set agendas allows media outlets and their gatekeepers to mold public understanding, potentially framing specific groups as threats or victims.

Media ownership in Ukraine historically has been concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and entities, some with affiliations to specific political parties or business interests and used exclusively to further the narratives and interests of these said individuals or entities. In Ukraine, "most politicians, as well as oligarch owners of media, believe that media is a very powerful instrument they can use to shape public opinion" (Dresen, 2021). Before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, more than 75 percent of Ukrainians regularly watched TV channels owned by Ukrainian oligarchs Viktor Pinchuk, Ihor Kolomoisky, Dmytro Firtash, and Rinat Akhmetov (Rybak, 2018). This typically led to biased reporting and the amplification of certain narratives over others, impacting how viewers understand radicalization.

The saving grace is that a significant portion of the Ukrainian population is well-informed about the supporters behind major television

stations and how this ownership influenced the way news is presented. Every third respondent among those who participated in USAID interviews considers it necessary to know who owns the media (USAID, 2023). Relatively recent legislative alterations have further reinforced this awareness by mandating television and radio broadcasting companies to publicly disclose their ownership structures, significantly decreasing the power of influence conventional media have over the perceptions of Ukrainian citizens. The most recent survey regarding the level of trust Ukrainians had in the various media sources showed a continuation of the downward trend in the consumption of news through television, that is, TV channels are losing their popularity as a source of news. In 2015, 85% of Ukrainians watched the news on TV, then in 2023, this share decreased to 30% (USAID–Internews, 2023).

Social media's pervasive influence manifests through its rapid information spread, fostering the dissemination of both accurate and misleading content and contributing to the swift propagation of radical ideologies. Providing a virtual haven, social media enables like-minded individuals to form online communities, acting as echo chambers that reinforce extremist ideologies. Algorithmic polarization on these platforms, driven by algorithms prioritizing content aligned with users' preferences, can reinforce extreme views, contributing to the radicalization of individuals exposed to increasingly extreme content.

Serving as primary channels for information dissemination, platforms like social media and forums allow individuals to share and access a broad range of perspectives, actively influencing opinions based on encountered content. These platforms contribute to the formation of echo chambers and filter bubbles, where users predominantly encounter information aligning with existing beliefs, reinforcing opinions and solidifying perspectives. Employing algorithms for content personalization, online platforms create feedback loops, exposing users to content that aligns with their views and potentially influencing opinions over time. This is especially prominent in such unmoderated social media platforms as Telegram and TikTok that have an increased popularity in Ukraine (Patoka, 2023).

According to the USAID–Internews, the majority of Ukrainians (76%) obtain information through the means of social media, specifically – Telegram, which is the main source of information for 72% of survey participants (USAID, 2023). Although TikTok is not extensively utilized for news consumption – only 5% of USAID Interview participants employ it for this purpose – it remains a significant social media platform with a user base exceeding 10.55 million in Ukraine in 2022 (Shkil, 2022). User engagement, facilitated by interactive features like likes, comments, and shares, serves as a mechanism signaling the popularity or importance of content. This engagement can influence others to adopt or consider specific opinions while navigating digital spaces. Online communities, fostered by these platforms, connect individuals with similar interests or opinions, and social influence within these communities significantly shapes opinions as users seek validation and acceptance from their online peers (Patoka, 2023). Despite the risks of echo chambers, online platforms provide opportunities for accessing diverse perspectives. Users can engage with content from various sources, cultures, and ideologies, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of different viewpoints and fostering a more informed public discourse. In essence, online platforms dynamically shape opinions by facilitating information dissemination, influencing user engagement, fostering virtual communities, and balancing exposure to diverse perspectives.

Media portrayal profoundly influences public perceptions through several key mechanisms. Media outlets wield the authority to frame issues and set agendas, shaping how events are perceived by the public. The framing of stories, achieved by emphasizing specific aspects and downplaying others, plays a pivotal role in shaping opinions. Furthermore, media portrayal can contribute to the formation and perpetuation of stereotypes, whether through biased reporting or the incorporation of stereotypes in news coverage (KIIS, 2023).

Media outlets' selective reporting on certain events or issues further molds public perceptions by choosing which stories to highlight or downplay. This selectivity can sway the perceived importance or

significance of specific topics, influencing public opinion. Visual representation, including images and visuals used in media coverage, holds considerable power in shaping perceptions. The way individuals, events, or issues are visually represented can evoke emotional responses, thereby shaping opinions. The construction of narratives in media coverage is a crucial factor influencing how individuals comprehend complex issues. The narrative structure, encompassing the framing of cause and effect, plays a pivotal role in shaping opinions about the root causes and potential solutions to problems.

Moreover, media portrayal often mirrors and reinforces cultural and social norms. This influence shapes public opinions by framing certain behaviors or perspectives as either acceptable or unacceptable based on prevailing societal norms. In essence, media portrayal functions as a multifaceted force that shapes and molds public perceptions through framing, stereotyping, selective reporting, visual representation, narrative construction, and alignment with cultural and social norms.

For example, we can look at media called "Medium" positioning itself as "Medium's Partner Program for people who are interested in helping them fulfill their mission of deepening the collective wisdom of the world through personal expression, knowledge-sharing, and storytelling. This story explains and distinguishes the terms "radicalization," "extremism," and "terrorism," stating that "radicalism" is a less used term among the three terms mentioned. This media forms the following definition for the average Ukrainian citizen as follows: "Radicalization is the process of moving from a non-violent politics of dissent to the use of violence to achieve one's political goals (i.e., to a violent politics of dissent). Therefore, when we use the term radical (which is, of course, only one of the concepts), it is logical that we are talking about a person who is ready to use force to achieve his or her views. It doesn't necessarily have to be physical force; a cyberattack, for example, can also be an option. But of course, direct use of force dominates". The author also identifies that radicalism has several mechanisms and levels influenced by several factors, both external (such as economic status, social background, and political regime) and internal

(personal life events). The former are categorized as macro factors, while the latter are referred to as micro factors. Recently, a third type, known as meso-factors, has been identified, representing elements between external factors and biographical moments. In simpler terms, this pertains to how individuals within a group respond to certain factors and how these factors stimulate them to endorse violence, referred to hereafter as the legitimation of violence (Mervo, 2019).

When analyzing the influence of media on the perception of radicalization in Ukrainian context, it's crucial to remember that the interplay between media, social media, and radicalization in Ukraine is shaped by the complex and ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Pro-Russian propaganda and misinformation campaigns seek to portray the Ukrainian government and certain groups within Ukraine as radical or extremist, influencing public perception and potentially justifying Russian actions. This adds another layer of complexity to understanding how individuals in Ukraine form their perceptions of radicalization. Pro-Ukrainian groups are actively engaged in countering pro-Russian propaganda, employing various strategies to reach diverse audiences and combat misinformation.

Numerous independent Ukrainian media outlets and journalists are committed to fact-checking information, investigating war crimes, and providing objective reporting on the conflict. They utilize websites, social media platforms, and international collaborations to reach global audiences. Initiatives like **StopFake** and **VoxCheck** Ukraine dedicate extensive resources to debunking pro-Russian disinformation and providing reliable information to the public. They translate their work into multiple languages to reach international audiences. Groups like **Bellingcat** and **InformNapalm** employ open-source intelligence-gathering techniques to verify information about Russian military movements, war crimes, and propaganda tactics. Their findings shed light on Russian disinformation campaigns and counter false narratives.

While responsible pro-Ukrainian media outlets prioritize fact-checking and accurate information, some, unfortunately, employ tactics that can negatively impact perceptions of certain groups. This can include the use of strong negative language or generalizations, potentially influencing how Ukrainians view individuals associated with those groups and even condoning acts of aggression. This can foster negative perceptions of specific groups and potentially create fertile ground for extremism, potentially encouraging individuals to adopt extreme behaviors, opinions, or viewpoints, thus somewhat normalizing radicalization towards a certain group of people.

II.III.III.II. Socio-economic Factors

Understanding the link between economic factors and radicalization is complex and often nuanced. While there's no direct causal relationship, research suggests economic disparities and lack of opportunities can contribute to perceptions that make individuals more susceptible to radicalization narratives (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2016; Kunst and Obaidi, 2020). Economic disparities, in general, can contribute to feelings of injustice, frustration, and alienation, which may fuel radicalization perceptions. When individuals perceive significant economic inequalities, it can create a sense of injustice and marginalization. This feeling of exclusion may lead some individuals to seek alternative ideologies or groups that promise solutions to address perceived economic injustices. Understanding the link between economic disparities and radicalization is crucial for developing effective strategies to prevent and counter radicalization.

In Ukraine, socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping perceptions and contributing to conditions that may heighten the risk of radicalization. Historical and geopolitical influences are central to understanding this dynamic. The country has faced numerous challenges rooted in its complex history, including Soviet-era legacies and ongoing geopolitical tensions. Economic disparities are often viewed through this historical lens, contributing to a sense of grievance and perceived injustice.

Regional disparities further shape these perceptions. Economic development varies significantly between regions, leading to feelings of inequality and marginalization. For instance, there are considerable differences in per capita income across Ukraine, with limited spatial correlation between neighboring regions. Some areas with high Gross Regional Product (GRP) are adjacent to those with below-average GRP, while others maintain a similar GRP level to their neighbors (Getzner & Moroz, 2021). Western regions, such as Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil, generally exhibit higher levels of economic development, driven by a diversified economy that includes a strong agricultural sector and growing service industries. Central and eastern regions, including Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kharkiv, have larger industrial bases and higher GDP per capita, but they also face challenges related to dependency on heavy industries and disruptions from ongoing conflict. In contrast, southern regions like Odessa and Mykolaiv benefit from access to the Black Sea and ports, offering growth potential in trade and maritime sectors, alongside agriculture and industry.

The disparities in regional economic development can be attributed to several factors. Soviet policies favored heavy industry in specific areas while neglecting development in others, creating an uneven foundation for post-Soviet growth. Natural resource distribution, infrastructure quality, and connectivity to trade routes have also contributed to regional variations. Additionally, the decline of traditional heavy industries following the Soviet collapse led to economic stagnation and unemployment in resource-dependent areas. Corruption and weak governance have further hindered development, limiting equal access to resources and opportunities across regions.

The ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, particularly since the full-scale invasion, has had profound economic consequences, including widespread unemployment, displacement, and infrastructure damage. By 2023, unemployment is projected to reach 18.3%, with 65% of households reporting a decline in income since February 2022. The proportion of families relying on paid employment as their main income source has

dropped from 67% to 53% (UNDP, 2023). As a result, nearly 44% of households struggle to meet basic needs, with one-third experiencing insufficient food consumption and 43% resorting to measures such as limiting portions, borrowing food, or opting for cheaper alternatives (UNDP, 2023). According to the World Bank, the proportion of people living below the international poverty line (6.85 USD per person per day) rose from 5.5% in 2021 to 24.1% in 2022, pushing 7.1 million people below this threshold (World Bank, 2023). These economic challenges exacerbate existing inequalities, fostering frustration and resentment.

A lack of trust in institutions also influences perceptions of radicalization. Economic disparities often lead to distrust in institutions perceived as failing to address the needs of marginalized groups. This distrust creates an opening for radical groups to offer alternative narratives and solutions, undermining traditional authority figures. Ukraine's complex history of political and economic instability has shaped public perceptions of injustice, eroding trust in governing institutions. A 2023 survey by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) revealed rising levels of criticism toward the authorities compared to 2022. Trust in the Verkhovna Rada decreased from 35% to 15%, while distrust surged from 34% to 61%. Similarly, trust in the government fell from 52% to 26%, with distrust rising from 19% to 44% (KIIS, 2023).

Perceived injustice is another factor that contributes to the risk of radicalization. Individuals who feel economically disadvantaged compared to others may develop a sense of resentment toward the system or dominant groups, making them more receptive to narratives that attribute blame for their struggles to specific ideologies or groups. In Ukraine, this sense of perceived injustice often stems from economic disparities, where individuals compare themselves unfavorably to privileged groups, particularly political elites. Corruption, cronyism, and a lack of transparency in governance further exacerbate these perceptions, leading to frustration and resentment. The inability of political elites to address these concerns creates an environment conducive to radical narratives that critique the political establishment and propose alternative ideologies as solutions.

Following the full-scale invasion, a collective social understanding emerged in Ukraine, focusing all efforts—physical, financial, and mental—on combating Russian aggression as a common adversary. Internal conflicts were set aside, as domestic issues were deprioritized in favor of addressing external threats. However, instances of corruption, misappropriation of humanitarian aid, and political maneuvering have broken this unspoken unity, resulting in public outrage, anger, and demands for increased oversight. These breaches of solidarity have created fertile ground for radicalization (Mazurok, 2023).

The concept of relative deprivation is also relevant in understanding radicalization in Ukraine. Individuals do not merely assess their situation based on objective measures but also through comparison with others perceived to be better off. In Ukraine, the societal structure lacks explicit social class distinctions, with individuals often measuring their life success and financial standing against the country's wealthiest, particularly oligarchs. This comparison, combined with stark economic disparities, fosters a sense of inequality and exclusion. People who perceive themselves as economically disadvantaged relative to the oligarchic class may be more susceptible to radical ideologies that offer solutions to perceived grievances, propose empowerment, or present an alternative vision of society.

On the other hand, unemployment and a lack of opportunities are significant contributors to feelings of hopelessness and disenfranchisement, creating conditions that can lead to radicalization. When individuals experience long-term unemployment or face limited access to education and employment, they may become vulnerable to radical ideologies that offer a sense of purpose, belonging, or empowerment. Thus, addressing unemployment and creating pathways for personal and professional growth are essential steps in preventing radicalization.

The post-Soviet transition from a centrally planned to a market economy posed numerous challenges for Ukraine, including high levels of unemployment and limited economic opportunities. The shift in economic structures resulted in uneven development, leaving certain segments of the population, particularly those without the skills needed for the emerging

labor market, facing persistent unemployment. This economic hardship has contributed to a sense of exclusion and frustration, which, in some cases, has created a fertile ground for radicalization.

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine has further exacerbated the issue of unemployment, as displacement, economic disruptions, and job loss have become widespread. The conflict has directly impacted the lives of many citizens, with approximately 13% of households reporting damage to their residences. Interruptions in the supply of essential services during the winter of 2022/2023 significantly reduced the standard of living (UNDP, 2023). The lack of access to quality education has been a top concern, especially among the youth, with 11% identifying it as a critical issue (UNDP, 2023). Additionally, as of February 15, 2024, the global count of Ukrainian refugees reached 6,479,700, highlighting the scale of displacement and its impact on economic opportunities (Operational Data Portal, 2023).

The lack of opportunities also limits individuals' sense of agency and control over their lives, which can contribute to frustration and susceptibility to extremist narratives that offer a sense of direction, purpose, and belonging. For example, since the onset of the war, 23% of women have reported dedicating 50 or more hours per week to domestic tasks, compared to 13% of men, indicating a gender disparity in responsibilities and access to opportunities (UNDP, 2023). This gendered impact of economic disruption further underscores the complexities of vulnerability to radicalization.

Economic vulnerability among unemployed individuals or those facing limited opportunities can make them more susceptible to radical groups that offer financial support or the promise of a better future. Such groups often exploit this vulnerability to secure loyalty and commitment. This manipulation is facilitated by the individual's urgent need for economic security, making them more inclined to accept radical ideologies that provide a perceived solution to their immediate hardships. Social exclusion and disenfranchisement often result from a lack of economic opportunities. Individuals who feel disconnected from mainstream society may be more likely to turn to radical groups that offer a sense of community and

belonging. This sense of social exclusion reinforces narratives that justify radical actions as a means of addressing grievances and achieving empowerment.

However, it is crucial to recognize that correlation does not imply causation in the context of radicalization. While economic factors are influential, they are rarely the sole catalyst. Other elements, such as individual motivations, social networks, and psychological factors, also play significant roles. Importantly, not everyone facing economic hardship becomes radicalized; most individuals experiencing economic difficulties do not turn to extremism. Protective factors, such as strong social support, access to education, and resilience, are critical in preventing radicalization.

The nature of radicalization is complex and diverse, with economic factors potentially being more closely associated with specific forms, like right-wing extremism, than with others. A nuanced understanding of these associations is vital for developing effective prevention strategies. Approaching the topic of radicalization requires careful consideration, avoiding oversimplified generalizations. While economic disparities and limited opportunities create conditions that can be conducive to radical narratives, individual motivations and contextual factors remain integral components of the process.

II.III.III.III. Political Climate

The political climate plays a pivotal role in shaping perceptions of radicalization within both individuals and societies. The escalation of societal and political polarization fosters an "us vs. them" mentality, rendering individuals more susceptible to narratives that vilify opposing groups and rationalize extreme actions. This can result in the characterization of dissent or disagreement as indicative of radicalization. Economic downturns, coupled with high unemployment and growing inequality, generate frustration and resentment, rendering individuals more open to radical ideologies offering purported quick solutions or scapegoating specific groups. This heightened vulnerability contributes to an increased perception of radicalization, especially among those who feel marginalized or disenfranchised.

Inflammatory political rhetoric and biased media coverage further complicate public understanding of radicalization, often conflating it with any form of activism or dissent. This oversimplification of complex issues leads to the labeling of diverse groups as radical, irrespective of their actual beliefs or actions. Government policies, particularly in the realm of counterterrorism and security, can exacerbate feelings of alienation and injustice, potentially propelling individuals towards radicalization. Actions abroad, such as military interventions, may be perceived as contributing to radicalization in other countries, influencing how it is perceived domestically.

The historical context and cultural values of different societies play a crucial role in shaping their understanding of radicalization. Societies with a history of political repression may be more attuned to perceived threats to freedom, while others may prioritize stability and order, resulting in varied thresholds for labeling something as radical. Collectively, these factors underscore the intricate interplay between the political climate and the nuanced perception of radicalization within diverse social contexts.

The political landscape in Ukraine has been significantly shaped by key historical events, each influencing perceptions of radicalization in distinctive ways. The fall of the Soviet Union led to rapid economic and social change, creating feelings of uncertainty and disillusionment among some segments of the population. The resulting power vacuum allowed such radical entities to gain strength, contributing to an environment conducive to extremist ideologies. The dissolution of the USSR and the subsequent phase of forging Ukrainian identity marked a pivotal moment, sparking the rise of nationalism and separatism. This period witnessed the emergence of gangs like skinheads, fueled by economic instability and a palpable sense of loss. Skinhead movements often find traction among disaffected youth seeking belonging and a sense of identity. The post-Soviet uncertainties made them vulnerable to their messages. Some skinhead groups in Ukraine adopted extreme far right and xenophobic ideologies, targeting minorities and perceived "outsiders" as scapegoats for societal problems. Unfortuna-

tely, these ideologies translated into acts of violence and hate crimes against marginalized groups, further deepening societal divisions.

The Orange Revolution deepened societal divisions, amplifying radical sentiments on opposing sides. A prevailing distrust of authorities and political institutions heightened feelings of injustice and disrespect among different segments of the population, fostering an atmosphere conducive to radicalization. The societal division and distrust following the Orange Revolution provided fertile ground for groups like Oplot. Oplot's pro-Russian ideology appealed to those feeling marginalized or disrespected by the new government, furthering the "us vs. them" mentality. Oplot's activities, including street clashes and anti-government protests, contributed to the atmosphere of radicalization within the pro-Russian segment of the population.

The Revolution of Dignity brought about heightened patriotism and a willingness for radical action to defend Ukraine. However, it also saw the radicalization of some pro-Russian citizens, leading to armed conflict in Donbas. This period also witnessed a concerning increase in anti-Western and anti-Semitic sentiments, reflecting the complexities of ideological polarization, for example, the emergence of the Misanthropic Division movement. This neo-Nazi group embodies the radicalization of some Ukrainians, fueled by heightened patriotism and anti-Russian sentiment. Their ideology promotes extreme nationalism, white supremacy, and hatred towards minorities. Misanthropic Division played a role in the armed conflict in Donbas, participating in violent actions against Ukrainian forces and pro-Ukrainian civilians. This further escalated the conflict and exacerbated tensions. Their existence highlights the ideological divides within Ukrainian society, exposing the potential dangers of radicalization when fueled by nationalism and anger.

The Russian aggression further fueled radicalization dynamics in Ukraine. A surge in anti-Russian sentiment and a readiness for radical defense measures were notable responses. A portion of the Ukrainian population underwent radicalization, giving rise to far-right groups.

Simultaneously, this period witnessed the growth of xenophobia and intolerance towards various groups, illustrating the multifaceted nature of radicalization influenced by geopolitical events. Collectively, these political events have left an indelible mark on Ukraine's societal fabric, shaping the perceptions of radicalization and fostering complex dynamics that require nuanced approaches for effective intervention and prevention.

The perception of government response to extremism in Ukraine and its influence on radicalization is a complex and multifaceted issue. Different segments of Ukrainian society have differing views on the government's response to extremism. Some may perceive it as effective and necessary, while others may see it as heavy-handed, discriminatory, or even fueling further radicalization. Often, the primary focus is on security measures, including law enforcement operations, surveillance, and counter-terrorism legislation. These measures can be perceived as effective in curbing immediate threats but may also raise concerns about civil liberties and alienate segments of the population. Failure to address root causes and perceived injustices can undermine trust in the government and its legitimacy, making individuals more susceptible to radical narratives that offer alternative solutions.

Hence, the only public governmental document that mentions radicalism as a thread to our society is the Order of the President of Ukraine On the Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of 15 October 2021 "On the Information Security Strategy" where in radicalism is mentioned in section Global challenges and threats (Increase in the number of global disinformation campaigns): Global disinformation campaigns, inspired by authoritarian governments and radical activists to manipulate the minds of individuals and groups, have become a common practice that threatens the democratic development of states and international stability. Nevertheless, there is no other public governmental response which can be analyzed with its perception by Ukrainian society.

In Ukraine, there is an ongoing debate on whether the government adequately addresses the underlying social, economic, and political factors

that contribute to radicalization. These factors include poverty, marginalization, lack of opportunity, and historical grievances. The ongoing war in Ukraine has significantly complicated the issue of extremism and radicalization. The influence of foreign actors, particularly Russia, in promoting propaganda and supporting extremist groups cannot be ignored.

During the analysis of radicalism and its manifestations within the Ukrainian socio-political framework, several conclusions emerged. It was found that various types of radical communities are proliferating, yet the regulation of radical movements by state policies remains largely absent. Instead, certain politicians actively endorse such groups, utilizing them as instruments of influence. The societal peril posed by radical groups is assessed within the framework of their potential evolution into more extremist entities. While Ukraine has not yet witnessed the full maturation of such communities, the proliferation and endorsement of radical movements heighten the risk of their transformation into extremist organizations.

Addressing the issue of radicalization in Ukrainian society necessitates the formulation of comprehensive state policies aimed at safeguarding the populace from radical and extremist influences. This entails bolstering legal, informational, and cultural structures to regulate diverse community dynamics, thereby thwarting the emergence of extremist movements. Specifically, there's a pressing need for targeted media censorship to counter radical and extremist rhetoric. The author advocates for the establishment of censorship norms governing public speeches and statements made by public officials, politicians, and representatives of various political entities, parties, and organizations, with the aim of curbing the dissemination of radical ideologies within society.

II.III.IV. Views on How to Prevent Radicalization in Ukraine

II.III.IV.I. Trust in Institutions:

Efforts of Ukrainian law enforcement agencies to prevent negative radicalization are based on criminal law. Article 161 of the Criminal Code of

Ukraine establishes strict liability for violation of the equality of citizens depending on their racial, national, regional affiliation, religious beliefs, disability, and on other grounds (*Kriminalnij Kodeks Ukrayini*, 2024). The law establishes punishment for intentional actions aimed at inciting national, regional, racial, or religious enmity and hatred, at humiliating national honor and dignity, or insulting the feelings of citizens in connection with their religious beliefs, as well as direct or indirect restriction of rights or establishment of direct or indirect privileges of citizens based on race, skin color, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, disability, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, language or other characteristics.

The established point of view of Ukrainian law enforcement officers is the assertion that crimes committed for reasons of intolerance encroach on the most valuable thing – freedom of expression, freedom to be with one's views, one's identity. Therefore, such crimes deserve special attention. That is why in Ukraine, measures are being taken to improve the practice of using legislation on intolerance. In particular, since January 2020, the representative office of Freedom House has been opened in Ukraine, which, in cooperation with civil society institutions, is implementing the project "United in the fight against hate crimes in Ukraine". Today, there is a network of partners from nine organizations that deal with various issues, including monitoring hate crimes. They communicate with the victims, collect information about hate incidents on the territory of Ukraine.

In 2021, the results of the study "Practice of investigating crimes in Ukraine, committed for reasons of intolerance" were presented (*Praktika rozsliduvannya v Ukrayini zlochiniv, vchinenih z motiviv neterpimosti. Zvit za rezultatami doslidzhennya, 2021)*. The research was made possible thanks to the cooperation of the Ukrainian Legal Aid Foundation, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the National Police of Ukraine, Freedom House, the Congress of National Communities of Ukraine, the Roma Human Rights Center "Our World," Truth Hounds, ZMINA, the Human Rights Expert Center, and the Regional Center for Human Rights. The period from 01.01.2015 to 06.30.2020, inclusive, was investigated. Research has

established that over the past five years there has been a trend towards an increase in registered cases for violation of articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, which provide for punishment for crimes committed due to intolerance. At the same time, the obtained data indicate the existence of a selective approach of pre-trial investigation bodies, investigators, and the national police during the qualification of crimes under such articles.

In particular, not all crimes that were committed due to intolerance are classified under the relevant articles. Investigators and prosecutors classify them according to other sexes, which, in their opinion, have the prospect of being considered in court. Proof of this is the fact that in five years, 597 criminal proceedings were opened for violation of Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, but 372 cases were closed, 9 were stopped, 179 are ongoing, and 21 were sent to court, There is a result of the trial—15, sent to a foreign country—1. The authors of the study believe that the specialization of the prosecutor's office and investigators is an effective way to solve the problem of investigating crimes committed out of intolerance. They indicated that in 2008-2009 there was an interdepartmental group just to combat hate crimes. At that time, there were special units in the search and security service which dealt with far-right organizations, including. However, later the units were liquidated, the regulatory basis, and the plan of certain measures were also canceled.

In the speaker's opinion, one or two prosecutors at the level of the regional prosecutor's office and one investigator each in the territorial administration of the State Bureau of Investigation and the National Police, who will specialize in crimes committed due to intolerance, will be enough. Also, taking into account the lack of clear methods of investigation of such crimes, it is necessary to develop an appropriate algorithm and model cases that can be extended to other units.

The study identifies certain features of persons who commit crimes due to intolerance. It is indicated that from the practice of psychological and psychiatric examination of suspects of crimes motivated by intolerance, it follows that their characteristics differ significantly from the characteristics of persons who have committed other types of crimes. These people are

distinguished by poor social adjustment and dissatisfaction with their position in society. They are impulsive, have reduced self-control, are prone to unpredictable actions, emotionally immature and infantile. More often than not, such persons do not understand society's demands on them, or do not want to fulfill such demands. They have a firm belief that representatives of a different race or nationality or other social groups are "different" and are evil. When committing crimes out of intolerance, such persons do not feel guilty because they consider their actions justified (Praktika rozsliduvannya v Ukrayini zlochiniv, vchinenih z motiviv neterpimosti). Zvit za rezultatami doslidzhennya, 2021). With the beginning of the active phase of the war on the territory of Ukraine in February 2022, there is a reorientation of hatred and intolerance of Ukrainians from the "internal field" to the "external field." From now on, the main source of radicalization is the aggressor state and its citizens who support the war and represent the official government (Kriminalnij Kodeks Ukrayini, 2024).

The issue of trust in government institutions and the authorities is relevant for Ukraine throughout the period of independence. On the one hand, this is a logical consequence of the democratization of society in terms of freedom of speech, in the process of which citizens express their own opinions about the government. On the other hand, the traditionally high level of mistrust of Ukrainians towards government institutions is caused by the specificity of the mentality. It means the traditional dominance of family values and personal interests. In addition, the unsatisfactory quality of life, socio-economic problems, and lack of proper social guarantees form an additional basis for mistrust of the authorities.

Since the beginning of the active phase of the war in February 2022, the level of trust in the authorities has increased due to existential threats. In that situation, people hoped for local and regional authorities. From May 2022 to October 2023, another stage of a decrease in confidence in the institutions of the central government in Ukraine can be observed. This is evidenced by the survey data conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology on September 30 - October 13, 2023. (Dinamika sprijnyattya napryamku sprav v Ukrayini ta doviri do okremih institucij mizh travnem

2022 roku ta zhovtnem 2023 roku. Pres-reliz Kiyivskogo Mizhnarodnogo institutu sociologiyi, 2023). Those who trust the president decreased from 91% to 76%, the government from 74% to 39%, and the parliament from 58% to 21%. The Armed Forces of Ukraine and volunteers maintain stable trust among state institutions. Currently 94% of Ukrainians trust the Armed Forces (in May 2022 – 98%), and 87% trust volunteers (in May 2022 – 87%)", according to the press release of the Military Intelligence Service of Ukraine based on the results of the study. This is due to the courage and self-sacrifice of soldiers and volunteers in the war. Trust in local government has not changed: as in May 2022, 50% currently trust it, and 46% do not. The level of trust in institutions shows that, at present, citizens' criticism is primarily focused on the government and the Verkhovna Rada, and to a lesser extent on the President of Ukraine.

Distrust of local authorities is caused by inefficient spending of local budgets. Currently, there is a dangerous trend of forming the image of local authorities as not very responsible in the conditions of a full-scale war. As a result, public opinion may not protect local government from possible recentralization and the rollback of decentralization. The critically low level of trust among citizens in state executive power and local self-government bodies is directly related to the level of radicalization in society. However, it is worth distinguishing between positive and negative radicalization in connection with the mentioned problems of trust. Positive radicalization during the recent history of Ukraine led to social protest actions, which in turn caused positive transformations. The prevention of negative radicalization in connection with the problem of trust in the authorities is seen in the strengthening of the role of civil society in terms of influencing the decision-making process by state institutions. Such activities can be carried out using traditional methods of civic participation.

The second way to increase trust in the government is to develop a system of consultative and advisory bodies at central and local government institutions. In particular, it is intended to improve the work of public councils under regional military administrations and councils of territorial communities. There are also prospects for the involvement of civil society

institutions in the development and implementation of projects for the sustainable socio-economic development of territorial communities (Hrushetsky, 2023).

T. Tarasiuk, the analyst of the Fund of Democratic Initiative named after I. Kucheriv, considers that the threat from ideological groups remains in Ukraine relatively low to date (Tarasyuk, 2023). It's notable that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is one of the few parliamentary institutions in Europe without far right or right-populist factions represented. Overall, electoral support for such political forces rarely exceeds one percent of the population. In the context of the nine-year war with the Russian Federation, underestimating these movements would not just be an incorrect interpretation of potential threats but also a waste of an important social resource for countering enemy activity. Far right groups, as practice shows, are increasingly integrating into regular military units of Ukraine, indicating a high level of control over potential threats these groups may represent. However, it should be emphasized that the process of radicalization in Ukrainian society could be an expected side effect of the military conflict and is not limited to just one ideological direction. Millions of internally displaced persons, as well as Ukrainians who are migrants or refugees in European Union countries, form very vulnerable demographic categories. These groups have strong interconnections both among themselves and with those who remain in Ukrainian territory. Such factors create fertile ground for various political actors, including radical and extremist organizations.

Moreover, the presence of approximately one million combatants in Ukraine, who will become a particularly vulnerable subcategory of society— war veterans—after demobilization, cannot be ignored. After the cessation of hostilities and a large humanitarian crisis, there is a high risk of the emergence of extremist and radical socio-political movements. This could particularly affect internally displaced persons, veterans, and citizens who, for various reasons, are prone to pro-Russian positions. Mechanisms to address these issues become particularly relevant in the context of the possible de-occupation of Crimea and certain areas of the Donetsk and

Luhansk regions, which have been under RF control for 8 years. The magnitude of these problems could be unprecedented for Ukraine in recent decades.

These examples vividly illustrate a key issue: Ukraine cannot unconditionally adapt practices from the EU and the USA. The discourse of social and political challenges, as well as the ideological context, differs significantly from that of democratic states. Furthermore, the methods of the Russian Federation regarding so-called "hybrid" influence on Ukraine significantly differ from their activities in EU or NATO countries, for which different security structures of the RF are responsible. These issues concern not only groups or categories of the population but can also manifest in individual radicalization through mechanisms of the phenomenon known as "lone wolf," where radicalization occurs without recruitment or any involvement in movements or groups, based on individual perception of problem causes through random life events.

The main reason this is a significant problem for Ukraine is that the Russian Federation will almost certainly use vulnerable population groups for manipulation and radicalization of their sentiments. Especially after Russia's new invasion in 2022, we can expect that small groups loyal to Russian narratives will still exist in Ukrainian society. One clear example of an external threat is separatism sponsored by the Russian Federation. This method is familiar to many through situations in Abkhazia, Ossetia, Transnistria, and the so-called "DNR" and "LNR." Despite prolonged military confrontation, this threat remains relevant for Ukraine.

Ukraine's integration as an EU candidate requires special attention as it will facilitate deeper cooperation in the security sphere and the expansion of the EU's security strategy within Ukraine. The uniqueness of internal threats from Ukrainian extremism and terrorism highlights the need for indigenous research and development, as many of these practices cannot simply be copied. Operationalizing existing programs, analyzing societal trends, and leveraging the experience of democratic countries will help avoid mistakes, such as the ambiguity of deep control in the UK's preventive programs. There's also an opportunity to develop indigenous best practices,

including funding projects in collaboration with territorial communities where CVE (Countering Violent Extremism) practices can be applied and where civil society has gained experience in interaction. Practices linked to civil society are the most optimal way to improve the security situation and can evolve independently of state funding and central government attention, which is focused on the main threat—Russia.

Meanwhile, collaboration between law enforcement, local authorities, communities, and NGOs specializing in CVE practices will be beneficial for all parties. This will help reduce the burden on law enforcement, particularly internal security services, allowing them to focus more on direct anti-terrorist activities, as Russia's influence and actions remain the primary threat. NGOs will also gain capabilities and develop basic practices in deradicalization that the state can use, especially during the liberation of occupied territories. Initiatives by NGOs will gather additional data and practices, significantly improving knowledge and information about local regions and communities for Ukraine's security bodies. Preventive practices are an important element of Ukraine's security and a new component in combating terrorism and hybrid threats. They remain relevant even during a full-scale war, the reduction of the country's human resources, social crises, and increasing integration with the EU and NATO.

II.III.IV.II. Educational Approaches and Interventions

The problem of radicalization in the educational space of Ukraine is not isolated in separate educational activities and educational disciplines. The term "radicalization" is usually used within some humanitarian educational disciplines, in particular "History," "Political Science," and "sociology" in the sense of "activation of processes," "extreme views," "tendency to extreme actions". In particular, this term is used to describe the activities of political parties and public associations, certain political leaders, and social groups. In its immediate sense radicalization is represented in the conceptual field of the concepts "bullying", "domestic violence", "terrorism", "extremism". "Bullying" and "domestic violence" are studied in the formats of extracurricular activities in secondary schools. The activity is supported by UNICEF, the "Kiddo" Charitable Foundation, the "Studena"

public organization, the Women's Consortium of Ukraine, the "Children's Welfare" Ukrainian Foundation, the "La Strada-Ukraine" International Women's Protection Center, and the "Safe World" public organization.

The problem of radicalization in Ukrainian universities begins to arise in connection with the events of 2013 in Kyiv, the war in the East of Ukraine, the occupation of the territory of Ukraine, and political confrontation within society. Since then, efforts have been made to convert the national education system to the prevention of radicalization and the minimization of its negative consequences. In Ukrainian universities, academic disciplines related to radicalization are aimed at forming students' understanding of the essence of radicalization and familiarization with the mechanisms and techniques of combating radicalism in the countries of the world. In the educational process, the signs of radicalization, the reasons for their occurrence, and the peculiarities of the formation and functioning of the relevant organizations are revealed. Educators set themselves the task of teaching students to independently analyze the peculiarities and forms of manifestation of radicalization in the countries of the world; to develop skills for identifying trends that are characteristic of modern forms of radicalization; to determine the mechanisms and techniques of countering radicalization. Attention is also paid to the concepts of radicalization, the problems and specifics of the development of modern radicalization, knowledge about the mechanisms and techniques of countering radicalization.

In particular, in the 2022/2023 academic year, the academic discipline "Mechanisms and techniques of combating radicalism, extremism, and terrorism" was introduced at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The discipline was prepared by the Faculty of Philosophy for first-year students majoring in Political Science (Osadchuk, 2022). The content of the training consists of an analysis of the features of the mechanisms and techniques of avoiding radicalism, extremism, and terrorism in the USA, Latin American countries, Western Europe, the State of Israel, and Ukraine. The methodological aspect of the discipline consists of post-behaviorism and neo-institutionalism. In the scientific and educational context, the

course is a mechanism of diversification and deepening of the field of scientific political analysis.

The problem of radicalization in Ukrainian universities exists in connection with the education of foreign students. In scientific articles, educational disciplines, and public activities, radicalization is thought of in the international and inter-confessional dimensions of the conceptual field of "xenophobia" and "tolerance." In particular, the International Day of Tolerance is celebrated in higher educational institutions of Ukraine where foreign students study. The projects of public organizations are aimed at countering xenophobia in universities. However, the highest manifestation of such activity is the introduction of special educational disciplines. For example, in the 2019/2020 academic year, Sumy State University introduced the course "Inter-ethnic and Inter-Religious Tolerance" for students of "Management of Socio-Cultural Activities" (Opanasyuk V., 2019).

In the teaching process, identity, socio-cultural diversity, and the problem of tolerance are studied; ethnicity, nation, religion, and faith; stereotypes and prejudices: the problem of independence of judgments and self-criticism in the discussion; concepts of tolerance, discrimination, and intolerance. So, "radicalization" as a separate concept in Ukrainian education is presented in the context of historical, political, and sociological and some other humanitarian sciences and educational components. In the school educational space, it is present in connection with the concepts of "bullying" and "violence." In some university curricula, terrorism and extremism are associated with radicalization, on the one hand, and on the other hand, radicalization is meant in connection with the problems of xenophobia and ethnic and religious tolerance. However, radicalization is not presented as a separate problem with its own specific content in the Ukrainian educational space.

The critically low level of the presence of the term "radicalization" in the educational space of modern Ukraine is caused by the lack of a stable, logical definition of this concept. We will try to provide such a definition in view of the general context and current issues in order to ensure the prospects of its further use. Radicalization is a process. Therefore, the

concept of "process" is a generic concept that defines the meaning of the main term "radicalization." A process is a sequential change of objects and phenomena, a set of certain actions according to a regularity. Therefore, during the study of radicalization, cause-and-effect relationships are established in the social and political life of a certain country.

Also, essential features of the concept of "radicalization" are determined by ideological aspects. Namely, the views of groups of people and individuals, which are characterized by exceptional categoricalness, and which can potentially lead to a change in the existing order of things. This part has a connection with the criminal legislation of Ukraine regarding responsibility in connection with threats to the constitutional system. This understanding is finally formed by the term "violent radicalization". It is a phenomenon where people are carriers of ideas that can potentially lead to acts of terrorism, extremism, extreme manifestations of xenophobia, and bullying. These phenomena are united by signs of anti-legality, in some cases anti-constitutionality.

It should be borne in mind that in Ukraine, the concept of "radicality" is usually used in a positive context, namely to denote a certain excessive activity, passion, extreme forms of public activism. Such usage is observed in the content of historical, political and sociological knowledge. However, thinking of radicalization in a negative sense, it is worth pointing out the socially dangerous and destructive prospects of its development, which can lead to destabilization of the political system. Therefore, an important attribute of negative radicalization is protest in terms of attitudes and actions. Hence, the logical definition of the term "radicalization" has the following meaning: radicalization is the process of intensifying the social behavior of individuals and social groups in the direction of illegal and socially dangerous phenomena of violence, bullying, extremism, and terrorism.

Using such a definition, educators will have an effect in terms of a clear understanding of radicalization as a negative and socially dangerous phenomenon. From this understanding, there are opportunities to draw practical conclusions regarding the identification of social phenomena and

processes associated with negative radicalization in order to develop and implement measures for their prevention and minimization of consequences. Such activity can be part of the government's strategic programs and prospective activity plans of civil society institutes, in particular – specialized public organizations.

The goal of educational efforts in terms of understanding the implementation of the concept of "radicalization" is to avoid social danger and direct the social activity of individuals and social groups in a positive direction. The key to success in this is the interdisciplinary understanding of the phenomenon of radicalization. This approach will pave the way for the development of effective measures. It can be seen that there are philosophical, historical, political, social, legal, psychological, and physiological aspects in the process of radicalization. Philosophical aspects are related to the ideological content of state executive and local self–government bodies, political parties, influential social groups, civil society institutions, and political leaders. Historical aspects of radicalization include national experience in the dimensions of political struggle at the level of ideas and in the forms of destructive protest actions, social revolutions, and wars. Political manifestations of radicalization can be seen in the activities of modern political subjects; social manifestations can be traced in the behavior of influential groups; and legal aspects can be seen in the process of formation and development of legislation related to negative and positive radicalization.

At first glance, this may seem paradoxical, but the most significant aspects of radicalization are seen in psychological and physiological contexts. The focus of the psychology of radicalization can be on such states of the human psyche as frustration, anger as one of the stages of acceptance of loss, various types of depressive states. Physiological aspects of radicalization are related to the term "dominant," which refers to a situationally temporarily dominant reflex system that conditions the work of nerve centers that direct behavior. The relevance of the introduction of the concept of "radicalization" in the educational space of Ukraine is the war and the problems associated with it. Positive aspects of radicalization for Ukraine are the activation of local communities and their consolidation

around the issue of existential threats. This can potentially contribute to effective work on the development and implementation of sustainable socio-economic development projects.

However, in the case of an uncontrolled process of radicalization, there are threats of destructive actions, manifestations of resentment, and defragmentation of society. Such consequences can have a negative impact on the global security system. Radicalization in Ukraine may take the form of violent radicalization, extremism, and dominant protest sentiments. In this case, an area of instability and unpredictability will appear in the center of Europe. The specified circumstances in the educational space of modern Ukraine can be presented in the formats of extracurricular work since they are associated with too fast-moving processes.

Scientific research in Ukraine should aim to uncover the underlying factors that contribute to radicalization. A comprehensive understanding of these factors is essential, especially in the context of the ongoing war. Among the most significant factors are those related to the state of conflict, such as psychological stress caused by shelling, losses, and injuries. These war-related traumas have profound impacts on mental well-being, creating conditions conducive to radicalization.

Socio-economic and status-related factors also play a crucial role. The war has led to job losses, reduced wages, and an overall inability for many to maintain an acceptable standard of living. This economic instability has heightened feelings of frustration and vulnerability among affected individuals. Additionally, there is growing social tension between different groups, such as combatants and non-combatants, as well as between the relatives of Ukrainian Armed Forces soldiers (particularly wives) and the wider "peaceful" society. This division is further exacerbated by confrontations at both state and local levels along the "people-government" line, driven by issues such as corruption during the war and inadequate government attention to wartime expenses. Professional circles have also witnessed rising tensions, with confrontations emerging between administration and workers due to poor working conditions and autocratic management practices.

In addition to identifying the prerequisites for radicalization, it is crucial to explore its manifestations within Ukraine. One significant manifestation is the role of narratives propagated through the mass media. These narratives, which are central to the process of radicalization, are varied and often tailored to specific target groups. Six prominent narratives have emerged, each with different modifications and connotations. The first narrative centers on those "waiting" for Russian peace, reflecting sympathies toward Russian intervention. The second involves stories of "Kremlin agents" and their collaborators, which contribute to a climate of suspicion and division. The third narrative revolves around the establishment of an oligarchy in Ukraine and the demand for the return of looted goods. The fourth highlights corruption, focusing on the infiltration of power by corrupt individuals, their acts of corruption, and the inconsistency of punishment. The fifth narrative emphasizes the notion that "Ukraine is not Russia," reinforcing national identity and distinction from Russia. Lastly, there is the narrative of "the road to the front," which includes stories of individuals attempting to avoid military service.

The process of radicalization is also linked to specific images and symbols that resonate deeply within Ukrainian society, particularly in the context of violent radicalization. These images serve as focal points around which radicalization can occur. For instance, the image of a corrupt person stealing during wartime evokes anger and a desire for retribution. The concept of the "good Russian," who is perceived as inherently deceptive, also plays a role in reinforcing hostility. Other symbolic images include the "Zhdun" (an image representing waiting), the "collaborator," the missing or fallen soldier, the wounded warrior, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Individuals living under constant threat of shelling, those who have lost jobs due to the war, and the "boys from the front"—men who will return to "restore order"—embody a peculiar image of the "people's avenger," representing a sense of radical justice.

Radicalization practices in Ukraine have also become evident, particularly through social media and community activism. Some bloggers, for example, adopt the persona of "people's avengers," using their

platforms to amplify radical messages. Activists in local communities often act as carriers of radical images and narratives, further spreading radical ideologies. Social networks serve as conduits for content filled with resentment, ranging from powerless malice to outright hostility. Local protests, especially those triggered by the misallocation of funds by local authorities—such as directing resources to repairs and reconstruction rather than the war effort—also reflect radicalization trends. Informal youth groups have emerged as spaces where radical narratives and practices are shared and reinforced.

However, scientific studies of ways to prevent negative radicalization are of strategic importance. It is considered expedient to find optimal ways of establishing strategic work in communities. If local communities organize work on the development and implementation of a strategy for sustainable socio-economic development, they will feel united around the tasks of building a common future. Such a situation objectively makes negative manifestations of radicalization impossible. The idea of changing the "Second Ukrainian Republic" to the "Third Ukrainian Republic" is also worthy of attention: social transformation from a "society of corrupt consensus" to a "society of sustainable development".

A positive ideological and psychological background for the prevention of negative radicalization in the formats of the educational process can be the result of the formation of constructive content in the media sphere, which is aimed at the realization of the idea of harmony, unity and consolidation of efforts.

II.III.IV.III. The role of peers and the family

Youth serve as the driving force behind many processes across various spheres, often engaging in movements that include radical elements. When considering young people in the context of radicalization, it is important to examine how group membership influences peer perceptions and behaviors. Several key aspects characterize the dynamics of this influence. Social affiliation plays a significant role in shaping young people's behavior and choices. The desire for interaction and acceptance often drives youth to

integrate into groups that share a common vision, cultural context, or cause. These groups may unite against a perceived opponent or around a shared goal, which can foster a sense of belonging. However, when such groups are built around radical ideas, the social affiliation of youth can lead to deeper engagement with extremist ideologies.

Group dynamics also significantly impact youth radicalization. Young people often form groups where a shared identity emerges, reinforcing collective norms and behaviors. If this shared identity is based on radical beliefs, participation in such groups can amplify the desire to adopt more extreme ideas. This dynamic is intensified by peer influence, as young individuals are more likely to embrace radical perspectives when they feel a strong sense of unity and acceptance within the group. The need for "live" communication is another factor that has influenced youth behavior, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The pandemic created barriers to in-person interaction, forcing many young people to shift to online communication or seek support within small, like-minded peer groups. These groups often form based on similar life circumstances, such as economic status, educational opportunities, or displacement due to conflict. While these small peer networks can provide much-needed support, they can also become breeding grounds for radical ideologies, as isolation from broader societal interactions limits exposure to diverse perspectives.

Online communication has emerged as a dominant platform for youth interaction in recent years, particularly in the wake of the pandemic and ongoing war in Ukraine. Social networks and online forums facilitate communication and information exchange among young people but can also serve as hubs for radical groups. Online communities often form around influential opinion leaders and bloggers who promote protests, harassment, and radical actions. As online interactions become increasingly central to youth communication, the potential for exposure to radicalization grows, particularly in unregulated digital spaces.

In recent years, the communication patterns of Ukrainian youth have shifted significantly due to both pandemic restrictions and the war, with

most peer interactions now occurring online. This shift has led to more limited and, at times, negative interactions. One of the clearest manifestations of this is cyberbullying, a form of negative radicalization that has spread among teenagers. This type of radicalization often revolves around targeting individuals based on personal flaws, which can exacerbate feelings of isolation and hostility within the digital communication environment.

Efforts to counter negative radicalization among youth are underway, led by educational institutions, civil society organizations, and international organizations. These initiatives focus on creating safe communication environments, promoting tolerance, and offering psychological support to young people affected by both the pandemic and the ongoing conflict.

The ongoing war in Ukraine serves as a primary factor that could potentially drive radicalization among peers. The impact of the war on youth has been profound, with experiences such as the death of a relative at the front, injury, loss of housing, forced relocation, and psychological stress contributing to heightened vulnerability. However, widespread negative radicalization among peers within Ukraine has not been observed, as the shared experience of conflict tends to foster solidarity rather than division.

Extreme forms of negative radicalization, however, are evident in attitudes toward peers from the aggressor country. Hatred and a desire for revenge form the emotional basis for radical attitudes directed toward young people from the enemy state. These sentiments are often fueled by feelings of despair over a "lost childhood" or the loss of a home. In this sense, radicalization in Ukraine is not internally directed but rather has an external focus. Ukrainian youth generally view their peers within the country as "brothers in arms," while their hostility is primarily directed toward peers from the neighboring state with which they are at war.

Family dynamics play a critical role in shaping the views and values of young people, as the development of relationships within the family and the interactions between its members establish the social, cultural, and moral norms that guide youth into adulthood. The influence of family dynamics

on the formation of young people's perspectives is multifaceted, encompassing behavioral modeling, upbringing, family conflicts, and cultural or religious influences. The behavior of young people is often modeled on that of their parents, older siblings, or other influential family members. When mutual understanding and respect exist within the family, this environment can encourage young people to adopt positive views and values. Conversely, the presence of radical rhetoric, persistent criticism, or ongoing conflicts within the family may reinforce a young person's inclination toward radical positions. For example, when a parent serves in the Armed Forces, a teenager may be inspired to follow this example. Alternatively, when parents frequently criticize government actions, teenagers may align themselves more easily with radical-minded peers who oppose local authorities.

Upbringing within the family serves as the primary influence on a young person's ideology and values. The family environment shapes perspectives on various life aspects, such as religion, morality, ethics, and social norms. These foundational beliefs often determine how individuals relate to broader social issues, shaping their outlook on life and society. Negative aspects of family dynamics, such as conflicts, divorce, or limited communication, can also impact the views of young people. For instance, children who experience parental divorce may develop distinct attitudes toward interpersonal relationships, potentially affecting their broader social interactions. The impact of such experiences can shape young people's perceptions of authority, trust, and conflict resolution. Families are typically the main channels for the transmission of cultural and religious values, which play a pivotal role in shaping young people's worldviews and identities. Cultural traditions, religious beliefs, and ethical norms are often instilled within the family, influencing how youth understand and interpret the world around them.

In recent years, family dynamics in Ukraine have been significantly affected by both the pandemic and the ongoing war. Under critical emotional stress, Ukrainian families have endured the loss or disappearance of members due to conflict. Such circumstances lead families through the

stages of grief recognized by psychological science, including denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and eventual acceptance. The war has also caused displacement, physical injuries, loss of housing and employment, and a severe drop in family income, forcing many families to relocate to different regions or even other countries. In response, radicalization within Ukrainian families is largely directed toward the aggressor state, with feelings of hatred, resentment, and a desire for revenge creating a sense of unity among family members, minimizing internal conflicts.

However, the separation of family members, particularly between spouses, can result in psychological distress for children, who may experience a persistent sense of uncertainty and a lack of adequate parental care. Ukrainian youth who have gone abroad to study or work due to the war face additional challenges, living under constant stress and pressure. This strain negatively impacts the strength of family bonds, often resulting in radicalized sentiments directed toward the aggressor state. The current demands of work and education for family members also have a critical impact on family ties. Physical exhaustion, continuous psychological stress, and anxiety about the future contribute to the development of radical attitudes within Ukrainian households, primarily directed against the state held responsible for disrupting their lives. Many Ukrainian families today are on the brink of survival, struggling with extremely low income and the inability to meet basic needs. This economic hardship further strengthens radical sentiments toward the state that initiated the conflict, as people attribute their loss of happiness and stability to the actions of the aggressor.

Family support and peer networks are crucial protective factors that foster healthy psychosocial development and overall well-being among youth. These social environments provide emotional security, positive relationship models, and support in times of stress, contributing to the resilience of young people. Emotional support within the family plays a fundamental role in a teenager's development. A positive family atmosphere, characterized by love, understanding, and support, promotes emotional growth and stability. Such an environment not only enhances the mental health of young people but also fosters an optimistic outlook on life,

contributing to a stable psychological state. This emotional security forms a critical foundation for youth as they navigate challenges. The family is also a primary setting for modeling positive relationships. It is within this social unit that children first learn effective methods of interaction and conflict resolution. These early experiences shape their ability to manage relationships in adulthood, equipping them with vital interpersonal skills that contribute to social and emotional well-being. The capacity to handle conflicts constructively and to engage in healthy social interactions has lasting implications for how youth manage relationships throughout their lives.

In difficult circumstances, the family often serves as a key source of support. During times of stress or crisis, both emotional and practical support from family members can help adolescents develop independence and confidence in their abilities to overcome obstacles. The presence of a supportive family network is especially crucial during the ongoing war in Ukraine, where the psychological impact of conflict can be severe. Within this context, the family becomes an essential protective factor, providing stability, rational thinking, and a sense of emotional security, which collectively minimize the risk of negative radicalization. Peer networks also play a significant role in youth development, offering support, understanding, and opportunities for sharing experiences. Connections with peers are an integral part of socialization, helping young people broaden their perspectives and envision a positive future. Interaction with peers allows for the development of social skills, such as communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, and assertiveness. These skills are vital for navigating social environments and contributing to personal growth.

The current war conditions in Ukraine have further highlighted the importance of family support as a buffer against psychological distress. In the face of existential threats, family members often develop a deeper appreciation for the family unit as a primary social community. For Ukrainian servicemen, the family represents the entity that requires protection from external threats, motivating their resistance efforts and directly influencing their commitment to defend Ukrainian territories. In

the Ukrainian media landscape, content that features family stories has become increasingly popular. Narratives such as farewell ceremonies for fallen soldiers, farewells at the front lines, reunions with newscasters returning from the battlefield, and communication with relatives abroad via social networks resonate deeply with the public. Such media stories garner a high level of engagement, including views, shares, comments, and emotional reactions. This media presence underscores the vital role of the family as a source of support during the dramatic circumstances of war.

The family also provides practical support in the form of financial transfers to relatives who are facing hardship due to poverty, illness, or psychological issues resulting from the war. These financial contributions often play a decisive role in alleviating difficult situations. Emotional support from family members is of particular significance for those enduring hardships. Direct contacts are maintained through phone calls, social media correspondence, and the exchange of files. Family discussions frequently revolve around current events, particularly the front line and security conditions in their local area. Given the existential significance of such communication, it is evident that family support holds crucial importance in Ukrainian society at present.

Peer networks in Ukraine currently operate primarily through online platforms, as direct face-to-face interactions have become limited due to safety concerns related to the war. Despite these constraints, peer networks continue to offer a sense of solidarity, with each group defined by its age, professional sphere, and life priorities. However, the ongoing war has become the dominant theme in all such peer interactions, shaping the content and nature of communication. Before the active phase of the war, the communicative content of different peer groups varied based on their specific interests and contexts. However, over the past two years, discussions in all peer groups have become centered around war-related topics. This shift reflects the pervasive impact of the conflict on Ukrainian society and underscores the critical role of both family and peer networks in providing support and maintaining resilience among youth during these challenging times.

II.III.V. Recommendations for Countering Radicalization Among Youth Workers in Ukraine

II.III.V.I. Education and awareness campaigns

The exploration of radicalization within Ukraine demands a domestic viewpoint to effectively identify and mitigate the primary risks faced by susceptible groups. This approach is vital not only for preventing extremism but also for countering Russia's efforts to intensify social and political strife within the country. Given the overwhelming potential threats, there's a clear need for a broader framework for intervention beyond what law enforcement agencies can provide, especially in light of the general scarcity of government resources for such initiatives. Civil society's involvement presents a viable pathway, offering the ability to implement and adapt European radicalization prevention strategies (CVE) and integrate them into both the course of European integration and humanitarian efforts. This strategy includes the creation of databases to validate preventive and de-radicalization methods for at-risk groups, minimizing the need for coercive measures.

Furthermore, the scholarly examination of radicalization processes specific to Ukraine is essential. Although there are already noteworthy studies, such as those by the National Institute for Strategic Studies (NISD), broadening research into the risks and evolution of social groups will foster the development of novel deterrence methodologies. This task gains urgency given the challenge and potential pitfalls of directly transplanting strategies from democracies that face distinctly different issues. Preventive CVE measures can be instrumental in addressing the vulnerabilities of marginalized and disadvantaged individuals, serving as an early warning system to highlight escalating issues and facilitate swift national-level responses. Crafting such programs requires substantial collaboration among researchers, civil society, and governmental bodies, spanning fields from political sociology to criminology, law enforcement, education, and psychotherapy. Despite the daunting prospect of a post-conflict society, these efforts represent critical components in the broader strategy to counterbalance Russian asymmetrical tactics of warfare against Ukraine.

To sum up, the deliberate educational programs dedicated to radicalization in Ukraine are not known to the authors of the material. In the open source community, one may find occasional publications by researchers, journalists, or investigators. For example, the presentation for the scientific-practical conference "Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms as Avital Basis for Comprehensive Security in Europe," held at the Dnipro State University of Internal Affairs, focused on: "Countering radicalism among youth as a means of ensuring the rights and freedoms of national minorities in Ukraine." This material is offered for the school teachers as useful for educational class hours or extracurricular activities for grades 9-11 by the national educational platform "Na Urok" Another example of occasional access to such topic may be taking part in international events by representatives of academia or active youth, e.g. Yevhen Pysmenskyi, the Head of the Department of Police Activities at the E.O. Didorenko Luhansk National Internal Affairs University of Donetsk Law University, participated in the training "Prevention and Countering of Radicalization Leading to Violent Extremism 42/2023/ONS". The training was organized by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL, Budapest, Hungary) and the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic in collaboration with the Police Academy of the Czech Republic (Prague). An expert of the Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation T.Tarasiuk points out that unfortunately, Ukraine currently lacks a comprehensive counter-terrorism infrastructure. There are no preventive mechanisms, and the focus is predominantly on resolving threats through forceful means. Significant progress was made in relation to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, particularly with the need to recognize the quasi-regimes "L/DNR" as terrorist organizations, which was enacted by the Verkhovna Rada on January 27, 2015. However, subsequent progress in counter-terrorism mechanisms has been limited.

Ukraine possesses a distinct Anti-Terrorist Center under the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), established back in 1998, but it only became a fully-fledged institutional unit of systemic counter-terrorism on February 18, 2018. Currently, the SBU's Anti-Terrorist Center serves merely as a direct action force structure without access to preventive extremism mechanisms.

Detailed information or data on the mechanisms used for prevention or analytics of potential threats are not publicly available. Integrating into the existing infrastructure of the European Union would enable Ukraine to become one of the founders of a new European security architecture. This involves three main EU Security Strategy institutes: the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), the European Cities Against Violent Extremism Alliance, and the High-Level Expert Group on Radicalisation at the European Commission. Ukrainian participation in these structures in any capacity could integrate it into the pan-European system of countering extremism. This would reduce the need for developing separate preventive systems and simplify cross-border cooperation, which is particularly important in combating recruitment (Tarasyuk, 2021). Employment and adaptation of the international experience will help Ukraine to design its own education and awareness raising campaigns.

II.III.V.II. Strengthening online resilience

Ongoing war has created fertile ground for radicalization by intensifying feelings of injustice, frustration, and alienation among the population. Economic hardships and lack of opportunities have made individuals more susceptible to extremist narratives that promise solutions to perceived grievances. The conflict has also fueled far right sentiments and xenophobic attitudes, particularly towards perceived "outsiders" or ethnic minorities. Radical groups may exploit these sentiments to recruit and mobilize supporters, further polarizing society. Under these conditions, online resilience plays a crucial role. It is worthy to highlight that factors mentioned above contribute to the deterioration of the Informational Security of Ukraine in accordance with the Strategy of Informational Security of Ukraine adopted be the DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE On the decision of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine dated October 15, 2021 "On Information Security Strategy". Dirty information campaigns are an essential part of "hybrid war" as noted by the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (Turchinov, 2015).

Given the increasingly digital nature of modern life, online platforms play a significant role in shaping the beliefs and behaviors of young people. To effectively counter radicalization, it is crucial to enhance the resilience of youth workers who engage directly with young individuals. This comprehensive set of recommendations aims to equip youth workers in Ukraine with the tools and strategies needed to counter radicalization, with a particular emphasis on strengthening resilience within the digital realm. An essential component of this effort is education and awareness about radicalization. A comprehensive understanding of radicalization should be developed, recognizing it as a process that can lead to illegal and socially harmful phenomena, including violence, extremism, and terrorism. It is important to distinguish between positive radical activism, which can drive social change, and negative radicalization, which poses potential societal dangers. Promoting an interdisciplinary approach to understanding radicalization is also critical, as it encompasses various philosophical, historical, political, social, legal, psychological, and physiological dimensions. Educators should integrate diverse perspectives into their teaching methodologies, providing students with a holistic understanding of the root causes and manifestations of radicalization.

Fostering critical thinking skills among youth is another fundamental strategy in countering radicalization. Encouraging young people to analyze and question the narratives and images they encounter online can reduce their susceptibility to radical ideologies. Providing tools for discerning credible information from misinformation is key to reducing the impact of extremist content disseminated through digital channels. In addition, preventive measures within educational institutions should be developed and implemented to identify early signs of radicalization among students. Establishing mechanisms for intervention, such as counseling services and peer support networks, can help address underlying grievances and vulnerabilities that may contribute to radicalization.

Family dynamics also play a critical role in preventing radicalization. Engaging parents and caregivers is essential in promoting positive attitudes and behaviors among youth. Parenting workshops and support programs

can enhance family communication, conflict resolution, and mutual respect, empowering parents to serve as constructive role models in civic life and democratic processes. Strengthening family support networks is equally important, as they can provide emotional, financial, and practical assistance to individuals affected by the war. Facilitating communication among relatives through online platforms and community-based initiatives can help families cope with adversity and trauma in a resilient manner, thereby mitigating the risk of negative radicalization. The influence of cultural and religious factors on family dynamics and youth development must also be recognized. Promoting intergenerational dialogue can bridge potential generational and ideological divides within families, fostering an environment of tolerance, empathy, and social cohesion. This approach should respect diverse belief systems while emphasizing common values that encourage positive youth development.

Peer influence and online resilience are critical factors in countering radicalization among youth. Integrating digital literacy programs into school curricula can equip students with the skills to navigate online spaces safely and responsibly. Training on identifying and addressing online threats, including cyberbullying, hate speech, and extremist propaganda, is essential to foster a culture of digital citizenship that promotes ethical behavior and critical engagement. Strengthening peer support networks can provide young people with a sense of belonging, connection, and resilience. Encouraging positive peer interactions and collective problem-solving through online platforms, youth-led initiatives, and community-based projects can empower young leaders to act as ambassadors for peace, tolerance, and social inclusion within their peer groups. Developing and disseminating counter-narratives to challenge extremist ideologies and promote alternative perspectives online is another key strategy. Collaborating with influencers, content creators, and digital media platforms to amplify positive messages of peace, diversity, and solidarity can effectively engage youth in creating and sharing content that celebrates cultural diversity, civic engagement, and democratic values.

II.III.V.III. Community-based initiatives and interfaith dialogue

The issue of radicalization in connection with multi-group identity has recently gained special relevance, especially in the university environment of informal leaders and groups (Miconi, 2024). However, in Ukraine, similar processes are characterized by a special specificity caused by military circumstances. Throughout the history of New Ukraine, civil society institutions have become a powerful mechanism for training youth workers capable of systematic work in the direction of prevention of negative radicalism. Numerous social conflicts that occurred during the last thirty years of Ukrainian history did not cause civil conflict due to the ability of public organizations to work with manifestations of radicalism.

Currently, the role of the public sector, which is critical for Ukraine, is increasing, which is expressed in the volunteer movement, participation in defense processes, civil resistance, and assistance to victims of war. These directions can be further developed. However, very recently, a new form of participation of youth workers from the civil sector in processes directly related to the prevention of negative manifestations of radicalism appeared. These processes are related to the development and implementation of strategies for the sustainable socio-economic development of de-occupied territorial communities based on the determination of growth points of the local economy in terms of the establishment of business entities with high added value.

In February 2024, the public organization "Center of Public Initiatives "Intellect of Sumy Region" with the support of ISAR Ednannia started the project "Strengthening the stability and social cohesion of de-occupied Ukrainian communities in the dimensions of consultative and advisory and media practices." Project activities are carried out in five territorial communities of the Sumy Region freed from occupation oblast. The participants of the project are young scientific and pedagogical workers of Sumy State University, who are youth workers. Students and active youth living in the project communities are also involved in the project.

The implementation of this project will lead to the approval of the most effective form of prevention of negative radicalization. The essence of this form is the activity of youth workers from among university teachers in the direction of building a sustainable economy for the future of modern territorial communities of Ukraine. Territorial development strategies will be developed by local initiative groups under the leadership of a group of experts from the youth workers of Sumy State University. And this can potentially acquire signs of transitivity, i.e. the spread into practice of the strategic activities of other Ukrainian territorial communities.

After all, the source of radicalism is separation, opposition, and misunderstanding between social strata and individuals. Such separation objectively occurs around different points of view regarding the events of the past and the processes of the present. The only thing that can really unite people is their future, as it concerns both the current generation and future generations. Therefore, the activity of youth workers in the formation of optimal economic models of the future is the most effective way to avoid negative radicalization.

The possibilities of interfaith dialogue in the process of preventing radicalization are objectively quite promising in the modern world (Widiyanto, 2023). In Ukraine, such opportunities are especially powerful since there are long traditions of inter-religious tolerance in this state. Religious communities in Ukraine are diverse and numerous. Members of religious denominations have an effective experience of dialogue among themselves, which was formed over the centuries. In every religious doctrine implemented by religious denominations, there is a condemnation of violence and enmity. This forms the basis for the fight against negative radicalism.

However, the situation surrounding the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchy is a certain source of tension. Its top hierarchs are accused of facilitating military aggression on the territory of Ukraine. However, even in this extremely stressful situation, Ukrainians manage to avoid extreme manifestations of negative radicalism in the dimensions of

extremism. Regarding new innovative forms of interfaith dialogue in Ukraine, it is possible to propose the formation of interfaith councils to promote the defense, security, and sustainable socio-economic development of Ukraine. It is also considered promising to involve representatives of various religious denominations to participate in consultative and advisory institutions at national and regional bodies of state executive power and local self-government. The practice of military chaplains deserves special attention and comprehensive development. These are clergymen who organize church services directly in the cities of hostilities. Representatives of faiths are active organizers of symbolic family events. During the last two years of escalation of the war in Ukraine, all denominations have common problems, which additionally creates a field for strategic communication to avoid manifestations of negative radicalism.

II.III.V.IV. Interagency cooperation and coordination

With ongoing conflicts, socio-economic hardships, and external pressures, young people are susceptible to radical ideologies that promote violence, extremism, and terrorism. Addressing this complex issue requires a comprehensive approach involving interagency cooperation and coordination among various governmental and non-governmental entities. In Ukraine, countering radicalization is primarily the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), with its Anti-Terrorist Center playing a central role in this endeavor. Historically, the SBU has focused on direct action and law enforcement in response to radicalization threats, employing measures aimed at disrupting extremist activities and apprehending individuals involved in extremist acts. While these efforts are crucial for maintaining security and public safety, there has been a recognized need for a shift towards more preventive measures and enhanced collaboration among various agencies and stakeholders.

Despite being the primary agency responsible for countering radicalization, the SBU's approach has often been characterized by a need for more emphasis on preventive strategies. Instead, its efforts have been centered around reactive measures, such as surveillance, intelligence

gathering, and counter-terrorism operations. While these tactics are necessary components of any comprehensive counter-radicalization strategy, they alone are insufficient for addressing the root causes of radicalization and preventing individuals from becoming radicalized in the first place.

In addition to the SBU, other relevant agencies include the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and various civil society organizations. Each of these entities uniquely addresses different aspects of radicalization, ranging from educational initiatives and youth engagement programs to community policing and social welfare services. For instance, the Ministry of Education and Science can play a crucial role in implementing preventive measures within educational institutions, such as promoting critical thinking skills, fostering inclusive classrooms, and providing resources for educators to address sensitive topics related to extremism and radicalization. On the other hand, the Ministry of Youth and Sports can focus on engaging young people in positive activities, promoting social cohesion, and providing alternative pathways for youth empowerment and participation.

Similarly, the Ministry of Internal Affairs plays a critical role in maintaining public order and safety, essential for preventing the spread of extremist ideologies and addressing radicalization at the community level. By working closely with local law enforcement agencies, the Ministry of Internal Affairs can implement community policing initiatives, build trust and cooperation with marginalized communities, and address grievances that may contribute to radicalization. In addition to government agencies, civil society organizations also play a crucial role in countering radicalization by providing support services, promoting tolerance and diversity, and advocating for human rights and social justice. These organizations often have closer ties to affected communities and can offer tailored interventions and support networks to individuals at risk of radicalization.

Moving forward, Ukraine must adopt a more holistic and collaborative approach to countering radicalization, integrating both preventive and

reactive measures and leveraging the expertise and resources of various agencies and stakeholders. By fostering greater interagency collaboration and coordination, Ukraine can enhance its capacity to address radicalization's complex and multifaceted challenges and promote peace, stability, and social cohesion. While efforts have been made to combat this issue, the country still needs to improve interagency collaboration and coordination. These challenges stem from various factors, including lacking a comprehensive counter-terrorism infrastructure, focusing on reactive measures rather than proactive prevention strategies, and limited international cooperation.

As a consequence, the fragmented nature of interagency collaboration in Ukraine impedes the effectiveness of counter-radicalization efforts. While multiple government agencies and civil society organizations are involved in addressing radicalization, coordination and communication between these entities are often needed. This fragmentation hampers information sharing, resource allocation, and the development of cohesive strategies to prevent and counter radicalization. The absence of a comprehensive counter-terrorism infrastructure further exacerbates these challenges. Unlike some Western countries with well-established counter-terrorism frameworks, Ukraine lacks a centralized system for coordinating and implementing counter-radicalization initiatives. This decentralized approach makes it difficult to effectively pool resources, share intelligence, and coordinate responses to emerging threats. As a result, gaps and overlaps in responsibilities may occur, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for intervention.

International cooperation, particularly with European Union structures, offers valuable opportunities for enhancing Ukraine's capacity to counter radicalization. The European Union has developed comprehensive frameworks and mechanisms for addressing radicalization and violent extremism, including the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) and the European Cities Against Violent Extremism (ECAVE) Alliance. By engaging with these initiatives, Ukraine can benefit from best practices, expertise, and resources to strengthen its own counter-radicalization efforts.

Furthermore, collaboration with European partners can facilitate information sharing, capacity building, and joint initiatives to address common challenges related to radicalization. This includes sharing intelligence on foreign fighters, developing strategies to counter online radicalization, and promoting community resilience against extremist ideologies. By aligning its efforts with European standards and practices, Ukraine can enhance its credibility and effectiveness in countering national and international radicalization.

II.III.V.V. Early intervention programs

In Ukraine, the landscape of early intervention programs targeting youth radicalization is characterized by a fragmented and decentralized approach. While various government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international partners are involved in implementing such programs, there often needs to be more coordination and collaboration between stakeholders. One notable initiative is the involvement of civil society organizations in delivering prevention and intervention activities. These organizations often directly access at-risk youth and can provide tailored support and mentorship. However, their efforts are hindered by limited resources, inconsistent funding, and a lack of standardized methodologies.

Government agencies, such as the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, also play a role in implementing early intervention programs through educational institutions and youth centers. However, these efforts are often ad hoc and lack a comprehensive strategy for addressing radicalization among youth workers. International cooperation, particularly with European Union structures, presents opportunities for enhancing early intervention programs in Ukraine. Organizations such as the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) and the European Cities Against Violent Extremism (ECAVE) Alliance offer valuable resources and expertise that can be leveraged to strengthen existing initiatives.

Early intervention programs in Ukraine primarily focus on building resilience, promoting critical thinking, and fostering positive identity

formation among youth workers. These programs often employ a multi-disciplinary approach, incorporating elements of education, mental health support, social inclusion, and community engagement. One common approach involves the provision of psycho-social support and counseling services to individuals who may be at risk of radicalization. These services help to address underlying grievances, trauma, and social isolation, which extremist groups often exploit to recruit vulnerable individuals. Despite these efforts, several challenges persist in the implementation of early intervention programs:

Many organizations involved in early intervention programs face constraints in terms of funding, staff capacity, and expertise. Increased investment in training, capacity building, and infrastructure is needed to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of these programs. The socio-political context in Ukraine, including ongoing conflict and external influences, presents unique challenges for early intervention efforts. Programs must be adapted to address youth workers' specific needs and vulnerabilities in conflict-affected areas and mitigate the impact of external propaganda and recruitment efforts. There is a lack of robust evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact and effectiveness of early intervention programs in Ukraine. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be developed to measure outcomes, identify best practices, and inform evidence-based decision-making. To address these challenges and enhance early intervention programs in Ukraine, the following recommendations are proposed:

Increased investment is needed to build the capacity of organizations involved in early intervention programs, including training for staff, development of standardized protocols, and establishment of quality assurance mechanisms. Community engagement is essential for the success of early intervention programs. Efforts should be made to involve local communities, religious leaders, educators, and other stakeholders in program design, implementation, and evaluation. More research is needed to understand the root causes of radicalization among youth workers in Ukraine and inform the development of targeted interventions. Data collection systems should be strengthened to monitor trends, identify

emerging threats, and measure program impact over time. Early intervention programs play a critical role in preventing and addressing radicalization among youth workers in Ukraine. By adopting a multi-disciplinary approach, promoting collaboration between stakeholders, and addressing key challenges, these programs can effectively mitigate the risk of radicalization and encourage social cohesion, resilience, and tolerance in Ukrainian society. Through concerted efforts and sustained investment, Ukraine can build a robust framework for early intervention that protects vulnerable individuals and strengthens the country's resilience against extremist ideologies.

II.IV. Awareness and Understanding of Youth Radicalization in France

Radicalization in France is a complex and multifactorial issue. A number of factors have contributed to the rise of radicalization in France: the social and economic marginalization of certain communities, particularly in disadvantaged suburbs; intercultural tensions, fueled by discriminatory policies and xenophobic discourse; international conflicts, which have fueled the victimization of part of the Muslim population; extremist propaganda on the Internet; and the feeling of exclusion felt by certain individuals, mainly Muslim families from former French colonies. However, radicalization is not limited to Muslims, and concerns only a minority of individuals, while the climate of mistrust encourages the withdrawal of identity and radicalization.

International conflicts, such as the wars in Syria, Iraq, and now Palestine, have also played a role in the radicalization of certain individuals. The war situation and the brutality of the conflicts have attracted foreign fighters, but they have also fueled frustration and anger among certain individuals in France, pushing them towards extremist ideologies. Added to this is extremist propaganda on the internet, which is a major factor in radicalization. Terrorist groups use social networks and online platforms to find new members, spread their ideology, and incite violence. Users are thus exposed to extremist content and hate speech, which have a radicalizing effect. As regards the distinction between religious extremism and non-

religious extremism, it is important to remember that, while the motivations may differ, the processes leading to extremism often have points in common. Extremism may be a radical political ideology based on anger at the system in place, or it may be an extreme version of religious principles.

On the economic front, unemployment and certain effects of the economic crisis can contribute to this feeling of marginalization in certain urban and suburban areas of France. Discrimination in recruitment and difficulties in accessing the labor market, particularly for young people from working-class neighborhoods, can provoke a feeling of exclusion and, in some cases, despair, leading to a questioning of society and the values on which it is based and a search for other forms of commitment and recognition. On a cultural level, the radical discourse circulating in certain ethnic or religious cultures can reinforce an inward-looking community identity and lead to adherence to extremist ideologies. In social terms, the economic and social marginalization of certain groups fosters feelings of exclusion and fosters resentment towards society. Secularism in France has given rise to identity crises resulting from the loss of cultural or religious reference points, which plays an equally important role in the radicalization process. Finally, when it comes to identifying the risk factors for radicalization in France, we need to look very closely at the role of the major French national media and social media, their ability to rapidly disseminate hate speech and their share of responsibility. Radicalization in France is the result of a combination of social, political, economic and international factors that create a breeding ground for adherence to extremist ideologies. It is important to note that each case has its own complex dynamics and that any approach to tackling the phenomenon of radicalization must take this diversity into account.

II.IV.I. Factors Contributing to Radicalization

Radicalization is a complex, multi-dimensional process influenced by various factors that operate on individual, social, economic, political, religious, psychological, cultural, environmental, and generational levels. These factors interact dynamically, shaping individuals' perceptions,

behaviors, and potential susceptibility to radical ideologies. Understanding these factors in depth is essential for developing comprehensive prevention strategies that address both personal vulnerabilities and broader systemic issues.

II.IV.I.I. Individual Factors

Individual factors are central to the radicalization process among youth in France, often acting as initial triggers for their journey toward extremist ideologies. These factors include personal identity struggles, the need for social belonging, emotional vulnerabilities, and psychological needs, which can significantly influence a young person's path toward radicalization. Youth work plays a vital role in addressing these factors by providing support systems, positive role models, and opportunities for social integration.

Marginalization, both perceived and actual, is a key driver of radicalization among young people in France. Experiences of social exclusion, racism, and cultural alienation are particularly prevalent among youth from immigrant backgrounds, such as those from North African and Sub-Saharan communities. These young individuals often face discrimination in education, employment, and housing, which fosters a deep sense of "otherness" and detachment from mainstream French society (Khosrokhavar, 2017). This sense of exclusion is often compounded by "double marginalization," where youth feel rejected both as immigrants and as citizens. For example, young Muslims in France have reported facing Islamophobic incidents, such as verbal abuse, restrictions on religious dress, and discriminatory policies that are perceived as targeting their religious identity (Roy, 2004). This discrimination can deepen feelings of vulnerability, pushing some youth toward extremist groups that present themselves as defenders of the marginalized.

An identity crisis is a critical factor in the radicalization of youth, particularly among those struggling to reconcile conflicting aspects of their identity. For many young Muslims in France, balancing their religious identity with the country's strict secular values (laïcité) can be challenging.

This internal conflict can create psychological tension, leading some youth to seek clarity in radical ideologies that offer a strong sense of belonging and identity (Silke, 2008). Youth workers play a pivotal role in addressing these identity struggles by creating spaces for dialogue and understanding. Programs in schools, youth centers, and community organizations often focus on intercultural education and discussions about citizenship, helping young people integrate their religious and cultural identities with their French identity. By fostering a sense of acceptance and validation, these initiatives reduce the appeal of radical narratives that frame French society as hostile to religious expression (Neumann, 2013).

Psychological vulnerabilities, such as unmet emotional needs or trauma, contribute significantly to radicalization among youth. For example, young people experiencing a lack of love, support, or security—due to unstable family dynamics or weak peer networks—are more likely to be drawn to extremist ideologies that offer a sense of family, community, and love. Extremist recruiters often exploit these emotional voids, presenting themselves as providers of stability, purpose, and a sense of belonging (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). Youth work interventions, such as counseling services and mentorship programs, can address these psychological needs by offering emotional support, resilience-building, and positive role models. Youth centers in France often provide one-on-one mentorship, where trained youth workers help young people navigate personal challenges, build self-esteem, and develop coping strategies to deal with feelings of exclusion or vulnerability. These programs are essential in countering the emotional appeal of radical groups that frame themselves as "families" or "brotherhoods" for isolated youth (Kepel, 2015).

While socio-economic factors like poverty and unemployment are broader structural issues, they also play a significant role at the individual level. Economic deprivation often exacerbates feelings of injustice and exclusion among youth in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, such as the **banlieues** (Laurent, 2016). These neighborhoods, marked by high rates of unemployment, underfunded educational facilities, and limited social mobility, create conditions where radical ideologies can thrive.

Radical groups often present themselves as providers of economic empowerment, promising financial incentives, food, or protection to youth facing economic insecurity. For instance, some fundamentalist recruiters in France have offered financial support to impoverished families, framing their ideology as not just spiritually fulfilling but also materially beneficial (Vidino, 2017). Youth workers addressing these socio-economic grievances focus on promoting vocational training, job placement, and entrepreneurial initiatives, which provide young people with pathways to economic stability and reduce the lure of extremist recruitment.

Several psychological theories help explain why individual youth in France become susceptible to radicalization:

- **Significance Quest Theory** (Kruglanski et al., 2014) suggests that youth often turn to radicalization as a means to restore personal significance after experiences of humiliation or failure. Extremist ideologies offer a clear and purposeful mission, providing young people with a way to regain a sense of self-worth and purpose.

- **Social Identity Theory** (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) illustrates how young people adopt group identities that boost their self-esteem. When radical groups offer dignity, recognition, and belonging, young individuals may embrace these identities, even if they involve extremist beliefs. The psychological benefits of group membership—like increased self-worth and emotional support—often outweigh the perceived risks of radicalization.

- **Cognitive Dissonance Theory** (Festinger, 1957) suggests that young people may adopt radical beliefs to reconcile conflicts between personal values and lived realities. For example, Muslim youth in France who face systemic discrimination might resolve the dissonance between their faith and secular norms by embracing a radical interpretation of Islam, framing their struggle as a moral duty (Silke, 2008).

Charismatic leaders and recruiters play a significant role in the radicalization of youth in France. These figures present themselves as

empathetic and authoritative guides, appealing to young people seeking direction and purpose. They use personalized approaches, adapting their messaging to address socio-economic grievances, identity crises, or emotional needs. For example, fundamentalist recruiters have targeted disenfranchised French youth by framing their personal grievances as part of a broader religious mission (Sageman, 2004). Youth work programs that focus on leadership development and critical thinking can counter the influence of charismatic recruiters. By empowering young people with leadership skills, media literacy, and civic engagement opportunities, these programs offer positive pathways for youth to channel their energy and aspirations.

Addressing individual factors in the radicalization process requires a multi-faceted approach. Effective prevention strategies should include social inclusion programs, psychological support, and opportunities for personal growth. Initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue, emotional well-being, and socio-economic empowerment can help youth build resilience against extremist ideologies. Youth workers play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging within mainstream society, reducing the personal appeal of radicalization. By engaging youth in constructive activities, mentorship, and educational programs, youth workers help young people develop positive identities and meaningful social connections. This approach not only prevents radicalization but also promotes a more inclusive and cohesive French society.

II.IV.I.II. Social Factors

Social factors play a fundamental role in shaping the environment where radicalization unfolds, deeply influencing perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors, particularly among French youth. Social networks—whether physical or virtual—are key channels through which young individuals adopt norms, values, and behaviors that may align with radical ideologies. The influence of peers, community dynamics, and broader societal interactions is often decisive in the radicalization process, as social groups can reinforce shared beliefs and motivate collective actions. For youth in

France, these dynamics are often compounded by cultural, socio-economic, and systemic factors that influence how they navigate their social environment.

The impact of peer influence and group dynamics is one of the most significant social factors contributing to radicalization among youth. Adolescents and young adults are particularly vulnerable to the opinions and behaviors of their immediate social environment, including schools, community centers, and online spaces. The need to belong to a group is a powerful motivator for young people, who are in critical stages of identity formation. When young individuals find validation and acceptance within groups that espouse radical beliefs, their likelihood of adopting these beliefs increases significantly (Khosrokhavar, 2017). In France, youth work programs in schools and community centers aim to address the influence of peer groups by promoting social inclusion and fostering a sense of belonging. Initiatives such as sports clubs, art programs, and interfaith dialogues help young people build positive peer relationships that counter the appeal of radical groups. For many young people in marginalized neighborhoods, such programs offer alternative communities where they can express themselves, gain support, and form meaningful social connections. Research has shown that radicalization among French youth often occurs within tight-knit groups that consistently reinforce shared grievances and ideological narratives, creating a sense of unity and purpose that is difficult to achieve in mainstream society (Kepel, 2015).

In the digital age, social media and online platforms have become crucial in shaping social factors that contribute to radicalization among youth. The internet offers extremist groups unparalleled access to potential recruits, enabling them to spread propaganda, facilitate recruitment, and reinforce radical narratives. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and encrypted messaging apps such as Telegram have become essential tools for extremist groups, creating and managing extensive online networks that target vulnerable youth.

Social media algorithms, which prioritize content based on user engagement, often create "echo chambers," where individuals are

repeatedly exposed to similar content that amplifies radical messages while diminishing alternative perspectives. This phenomenon has been particularly evident among French youth, many of whom have been radicalized through sustained online interactions. These interactions provide not only ideological content but also emotional support, which is critical for young people experiencing social isolation (Vidino, 2017).

Anonymity in online interactions facilitates radicalization, removing the barriers of physical presence and social accountability. This allows radical groups to connect with susceptible individuals who might not openly engage with extremist ideas in public but are willing to explore them privately in digital spaces. Educational programs that focus on digital literacy and critical thinking are vital for preventing online radicalization among French youth. These initiatives teach young people to identify misinformation, evaluate sources, and critically engage with online content, equipping them with the tools to resist digital recruitment (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011).

Identity crises are particularly impactful social factors in the radicalization of youth in France. Young individuals often struggle with conflicting aspects of their identity, especially when navigating a multicultural society that presents both opportunities and challenges. In France, this struggle is exacerbated by the country's strict secular policies (laïcité), which are sometimes perceived as being in opposition to religious expression, particularly among Muslim youth. This internal conflict can lead to existential uncertainty, making radical ideologies that offer clear answers about identity, belonging, and purpose more appealing (Silke, 2008). Radical movements provide simple and compelling narratives that address identity struggles by offering a strong sense of self in opposition to an identifiable "enemy." For example, radical fundamentalist ideologies have gained traction among young Muslims in France, not solely for religious reasons but also as a form of resistance against cultural exclusion and perceived discrimination. These ideologies offer a sense of pride, empowerment, and a moral framework that appeals to those experiencing social marginalization (Kepel, 2015). Youth workers in France often focus on intercultural education, helping young people navigate their complex

identities and build a sense of belonging within mainstream society. By providing spaces for dialogue and understanding, these programs help reduce the appeal of radical ideologies that exploit identity struggles.

Socio-economic factors intersect significantly with social dynamics, reinforcing vulnerability to radicalization among youth. In France, marginalized communities—particularly those in the **banlieues**—experience high levels of unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion. This socio-economic marginalization often results in feelings of alienation from mainstream society, compounded by experiences of racism and discrimination (Roy, 2004). Youth from North African and Sub-Saharan backgrounds in French cities often face barriers to education, employment, and social mobility, making them more receptive to radical ideologies that offer explanations for their socio-economic struggles. For many young individuals in these communities, radical ideologies represent not only a means of asserting their identity but also a response to systemic injustices. By framing their struggles as part of a broader fight against an oppressive system, radical groups offer young people a sense of purpose, dignity, and empowerment (Laurent, 2016). Youth work programs that focus on vocational training, job placement, and community development aim to address these socio-economic grievances. By providing opportunities for personal growth and economic stability, these initiatives reduce the vulnerabilities that extremist groups exploit. Community centers, local NGOs, and grassroots organizations play a crucial role in fostering social ties and promoting inclusivity, which are essential for preventing radicalization.

Cultural isolation can also influence radicalization among youth in France. When individuals feel culturally different or disconnected from mainstream society, they may experience deep feelings of alienation. For minority communities, a lack of cultural representation or recognition can lead to a sense of "otherness." This cultural marginalization, when combined with social isolation, makes individuals more receptive to radical ideologies that emphasize cultural identity and offer an alternative community that celebrates these differences (Silke, 2008). Far-right groups in France have capitalized on this cultural isolation by promoting narratives

of cultural and ethnic preservation. These groups have used social media and public demonstrations to recruit and mobilize individuals around causes related to nationalism, xenophobia, and ethnocentrism. For young people experiencing cultural alienation, these radical ideologies offer a sense of pride, belonging, and resistance against perceived cultural threats (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

Local communities can either contribute to or help prevent radicalization, depending on the level of social integration they provide. Communities that actively promote social cohesion, inclusivity, and dialogue act as buffers against radicalization. Schools, community centers, mosques, churches, and other local institutions play key roles in fostering positive engagement and social ties among youth. Conversely, communities marked by fragmentation, lack of cohesion, and mistrust create environments where radical ideologies can thrive (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). Youth work initiatives that enhance social integration—through education, outreach, and engagement programs—are vital in addressing the social factors that contribute to radicalization. Efforts to build trust between communities and law enforcement, promote interfaith dialogue, and support grassroots activism are essential for reducing the social isolation and marginalization that drive youth toward radicalization.

II.IV.I.III. Economic Factors

Economic factors are significant drivers of radicalization, as they contribute to an environment of social and personal vulnerability that extremist ideologies can exploit. Poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, and a lack of economic opportunities create conditions where individuals, particularly young people, feel marginalized, disenfranchised, and hopeless about their future. This sense of economic deprivation often intersects with other forms of exclusion, deepening feelings of alienation and making radical ideologies more appealing as potential solutions.

In France, poverty is especially prevalent in urban **banlieues** and other economically disadvantaged areas, where substandard living conditions, limited access to education, and inadequate infrastructure are the norm.

Youth living in these neighborhoods often experience social isolation, a factor that contributes to feelings of abandonment by the state and broader society. In such environments, radical ideologies may serve as a means of asserting identity, achieving social status, or finding a sense of purpose that seems unattainable within the mainstream system (Laurent, 2016). The socio-economic divide between affluent urban centers and economically deprived suburbs exacerbates feelings of inequality among youth. In the **banlieues**, where a significant portion of the population is of North African or Sub-Saharan descent, young people face systemic barriers to social mobility. These barriers often translate into limited educational and job opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and exclusion (Roy, 2004). In such contexts, radical ideologies can offer narratives that frame radicalization not just as an ideological mission but as a form of social justice. Extremist groups exploit these economic grievances, positioning themselves as defenders of the oppressed and presenting radicalization as a form of resistance against perceived systemic failures (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

Youth unemployment is a critical factor in the radicalization process, especially in economically disadvantaged regions. In France, youth unemployment rates have consistently been higher in the **banlieues**, where economic opportunities are scarce. The lack of stable employment often leads to a sense of purposelessness and social disconnection among young people. In this context, radical ideologies become compelling alternatives, as they offer a sense of identity, empowerment, and belonging that is often lacking in mainstream society (Vidino, 2017). Young people from immigrant backgrounds face additional barriers in the labor market, even when they have the necessary qualifications. Systemic discrimination further limits their economic opportunities, reinforcing a broader sense of marginalization. This form of economic exclusion not only hinders personal development but also exacerbates feelings of frustration and injustice. Extremist recruiters actively exploit these circumstances by offering financial incentives, such as stipends, housing, or cash rewards, to youth who participate in radical activities. In this way, radicalization becomes not

only an ideological pathway but also an economic strategy for survival (Neumann, 2013).

Economic inequality serves as a catalyst for radicalization, particularly when it intersects with racial, ethnic, or religious divides. In France, economic disparities often align with social and ethnic boundaries, contributing to a sense of collective victimization among minority communities. For example, many residents of North African descent living in the **banlieues** face a disproportionate share of economic hardship, including lower income levels, higher unemployment rates, and limited upward mobility (Kepel, 2015). This economic marginalization reinforces perceptions of systemic injustice, where youth feel not only economically disadvantaged but also socially excluded based on their racial or ethnic identity. In such contexts, radical ideologies become attractive because they provide clear explanations for inequality and advocate for radical change as a form of resistance against systemic oppression. The message of "fighting against injustice" resonates strongly in communities where economic disparities are viewed as manifestations of broader social and political failures (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011).

Education plays a critical role in shaping economic opportunities, and limited access to quality education is a significant factor in youth radicalization. In economically deprived areas, schools often lack resources, qualified teachers, and adequate infrastructure, resulting in lower academic achievement and reduced employability. This educational disadvantage perpetuates socio-economic inequality, leading to feelings of hopelessness among young people, who may perceive mainstream paths to success as blocked (Roy, 2004). Radical groups often position themselves as alternative "educators," providing ideological training that includes promises of social mobility and empowerment. By addressing educational disparities in marginalized areas through targeted programs, vocational training, and support for higher education, policymakers can reduce the appeal of radical ideologies that exploit educational deprivation (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

Efforts to prevent radicalization must address the underlying econo-mic disparities that contribute to youth feelings of exclusion and

disenfranchisement. Targeted socio-economic policies, such as job training programs, community development initiatives, and support for small businesses, can help create economic empowerment opportunities. Community centers and local organizations that focus on vocational training, entrepreneurship, and social integration play a crucial role in mitigating economic deprivation among youth (Vidino, 2017). Youth work programs that emphasize employability skills, critical thinking, and civic engagement can help equip young people with the tools needed to navigate economic challenges and resist radical ideologies that exploit their vulnerabilities (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). By promoting economic justice, equal opportunities, and access to education, it is possible to reduce the socio-economic drivers of radicalization and build resilience among vulnerable youth populations in France.

II.IV.I.IV. Political Factors

Political factors play a crucial role in shaping the process of radicalization, forming the backdrop against which feelings of alienation, mistrust, and resistance emerge. These factors relate to how young people perceive state institutions, political discourse, and the broader political system. When political institutions are seen as corrupt, discriminatory, or unjust, individuals—particularly marginalized youth—are more likely to adopt radical ideologies as a form of protest or resistance. Both real and perceived political grievances can create a sense of systemic oppression, which extremist ideologies exploit by presenting themselves as the only viable solution.

A profound mistrust of political and social institutions is one of the primary political factors driving radicalization among youth in France. For many young people, particularly those from North African and Sub-Saharan communities, the state is often perceived as unresponsive, biased, or even hostile. This perception stems from experiences of systemic discrimination in law enforcement, the judicial system, education, and employment (Laurent, 2016). The lack of confidence in state institutions can push individuals to seek alternative forms of justice and governance, often provided by radical groups that frame themselves as champions of the

oppressed. Incidents of police brutality, racial profiling, and biased surveillance practices exacerbate mistrust, disproportionately affecting minority communities. High-profile cases of police violence, such as the deaths of Adama Traoré in 2016 and Nahel Merzouk in 2023, have sparked protests and heightened anti-government sentiment among young people from marginalized backgrounds. Such incidents reinforce narratives of state repression, making radical groups that claim to protect community rights and identities more appealing (Khosrokhavar, 2017). The extensive use of counterterrorism measures, such as the state of emergency declared after the 2015 Paris attacks, has also been criticized for disproportionately targeting Muslim communities, thereby fostering resentment and reinforcing perceptions of state-led discrimination (Roy, 2004).

Corruption and perceived injustice within the political system significantly contribute to youth radicalization in France. When political leaders and institutions are seen as corrupt or self-serving, faith in democratic processes declines. In economically disadvantaged areas, this perception is intensified, as residents experience the direct consequences of corrupt practices such as embezzlement of public funds, nepotism, and lack of accountability among public officials (Sageman, 2004). These experiences contribute to a broader sense of political disenfranchisement, making extremist ideologies that reject the democratic system more appealing. Feelings of injustice are often linked to the French state's secular policies, which some Muslim communities view as discriminatory against religious expression. Measures such as the ban on religious symbols in public schools and the prohibition of wearing the burqa in public spaces are framed by some as attacks on religious freedom, creating a sense of exclusion and injustice among affected youth (Vidino, 2017). Extremist groups exploit these grievances by presenting themselves as defenders of religious rights, deepening community divisions, and undermining trust in political institutions.

The nature of political discourse in France also contributes to youth radicalization, particularly when it contains elements of intolerance, xenophobia, or religious bias. In recent years, far-right parties like the

National Rally (Rassemblement National) have gained popularity through rhetoric that portrays immigration, particularly from Muslim-majority countries, as a threat to French identity and security (Kepel, 2015). This type of divisive rhetoric exacerbates social divisions and legitimizes radical responses among those who feel targeted by such discourse. Extremist groups capitalize on this polarized environment, framing their narratives as a defense of marginalized communities against systemic hostility. For example, fundamentalist groups position themselves as protectors of Muslim rights, using anti-Islamic political rhetoric as evidence of state hostility toward Islam (Roy, 2004). This creates a vicious cycle where political intolerance fuels radical ideologies, which in turn provoke more extreme political responses, further polarizing society.

Political alienation, often intertwined with socio-economic and cultural marginalization, reinforces a narrative of systemic exclusion among French youth, particularly second- and third-generation immigrants. Young people from these backgrounds often feel that their voices are not adequately represented in mainstream politics, leading to voter apathy, distrust in democratic institutions, and even rejection of democratic norms (Khosrokhavar, 2017). When traditional avenues for political participation seem closed or ineffective, some youth may turn to radical groups that promise direct, immediate forms of action. Extremist organizations often present themselves as genuine representatives of the people's interests, offering a more participatory and empowering form of political engagement than mainstream parties or institutions (Neumann, 2013). This appeal is particularly strong among youth who feel excluded from the political process, making radical ideologies a form of protest the perceived failures of representative democracy.

Foreign policy decisions and international conflicts also contribute to the radicalization process among French youth, particularly among Muslim communities. France's involvement in Middle Eastern conflicts, such as military interventions in Libya, Syria, and Mali, is often perceived as part of a broader "war against Islam." Many individuals interpret these actions as attacks on Muslim-majority countries, reinforcing narratives of Western

hostility toward Islam (Sageman, 2004). These international conflicts amplify existing grievances at the domestic level, making it easier for extremist groups to recruit individuals. The interplay between domestic and international politics is crucial in understanding the radicalization process, as grievances related to foreign policy often amplify feelings of marginalization and injustice within France (Vidino, 2017).

Mitigating the appeal of radical ideologies among youth requires addressing political grievances through transparent governance, equitable policy measures, and inclusive political discourse. Improving police–community relations, enhancing accountability, and ensuring equitable access to public services can help rebuild trust in the state (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). Efforts to increase the political representation of marginalized communities are also critical in reducing feelings of exclusion. Initiatives that promote youth civic participation, such as voter registration drives, youth councils, and community–based advocacy programs, can empower young people to engage positively in political processes, reducing the likelihood of radicalization (Roy, 2004).

Promoting political literacy, particularly among marginalized youth, is another effective strategy. Education programs that focus on democratic processes, civil rights, and political engagement can equip youth with the tools to pursue change through legitimate channels. By fostering a sense of ownership and agency in political processes, these initiatives can counter the allure of radical ideologies that promise empowerment through violence or subversion (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

II.IV.I.V. Religious Factors

Religious factors play a significant role in youth radicalization in France, particularly in shaping personal identity and social beliefs. The process of religious radicalization among French youth is complex and involves not only personal spiritual convictions but also broader cultural, social, and political dynamics. Extremist interpretations of religion often serve as catalysts for radicalization, where religious doctrines are manipulated to justify violence, intolerance, and exclusion. These

manipulations create a sense of moral or spiritual obligation, making radical ideologies appear both legitimate and necessary to achieve specific goals.

Extremist interpretations of religion are central to the radicalization process. In France, such interpretations often focus on rigid understandings of Islamic teachings, emphasizing exclusivist doctrines hostile to other religions, cultures, and social values. For instance, fundamentalist groups like Al-Qaeda or DAESH, which have ties with various foreign intelligence services, have propagated interpretations of Islam that frame jihad as an obligation to wage war against non-believers (Kepel, 2015). These narratives use a simple, binary logic, portraying the world as a battle between believers and non-believers, which can be particularly appealing to young individuals experiencing identity crises or social alienation. For youth struggling with personal identity, these narratives offer clear moral certainties in an otherwise complex and confusing social environment. As a result, radicalization is framed not just as a personal choice but as a moral duty, where violent acts are seen as necessary for religious salvation (Roy, 2004).

Radical religious leaders play a critical role in shaping youth radicalization in France. These charismatic figures act as gatekeepers of extremist interpretations, using their authority to manipulate religious teachings to fit ideological agendas. Often operating in unofficial mosques, community centers, or online platforms, these leaders target vulnerable youth in marginalized neighborhoods. In France, several cases have emerged where radical figures have used socio-economic grievances and identity struggles as recruitment tools, exploiting the sense of exclusion felt by many youngsters (Khosrokhavar, 2017). The presence of such leaders is particularly evident in the banlieues, where a lack of official religious oversight and socio-economic challenges create fertile ground for extremist recruitment. Radical religious leaders are effective because they provide a sense of belonging, purpose, and spiritual guidance—critical needs for young people experiencing social exclusion or personal crises. For example, in some cases, young individuals who were previously disengaged from religious practices have been drawn into radical circles, not primarily due to their religiosity but because of the emotional and psychological support provided by radical preachers (Sageman, 2004).

The rejection of secular values is a significant factor in religious radicalization among youth in France. The country's strict secularism (laïcité), which includes bans on religious symbols in public schools and restrictions on religious dress, has contributed to perceptions among some young Muslims that the state is hostile to their religious identity. This perceived antagonism can lead to a defensive stance, where radical interpretations of certain religion are embraced as a form of resistance against perceived state oppression (Laurent, 2016). The rigid implementation of secular policies, such as the 2004 ban on hijabs in public schools, has been cited as a driver of alienation among Muslim youth. For some, these measures represent an attack not only on individual religious freedom but also on their cultural identity, making radical ideologies that emphasize resistance and defiance more appealing.

Religion often serves as a key component of identity, especially among youth from socially and economically marginalized communities. In France, young second- and third-generation immigrants often experience a sense of cultural dislocation, feeling caught between their ancestral heritage and the dominant secular French identity. In this context, radical religious narratives offer a clear and unambiguous identity that rejects cultural assimilation while celebrating religious distinctiveness (Roy, 2004). Extremist groups emphasize solidarity with a global religious community, which can be particularly appealing for youth seeking a sense of purpose and collective belonging. This collective identity can be particularly powerful for young people who feel marginalized within French society, as it provides a sense of pride and empowerment in opposition to perceived cultural exclusion (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011).

Efforts to counter religious radicalization among youth in France must involve a multi-faceted approach that includes collaboration with moderate religious leaders, interfaith dialogue, and education promoting critical thinking, tolerance, and empathy. Engaging moderate religious figures is crucial, as they can provide credible counter-narratives that emphasize peace, coexistence, and respect for diversity (Laurent, 2016). These leaders can also play a mediating role between communities and the state, helping to build trust and foster social cohesion.

Interfaith dialogue initiatives that bring together different religious communities can help reduce tensions and build mutual understanding. Such programs create spaces where young people can share experiences, address misconceptions, and develop a sense of solidarity that transcends religious differences (Roy, 2004). Moreover, educational programs that focus on critical thinking, media literacy, and empathy can empower youth to question extremist narratives and develop a more nuanced understanding of religion. By promoting religious literacy, it is possible to counter simplistic and violent interpretations of religious texts, helping young people to recognize the diverse and peaceful interpretations within their faith (Sageman, 2004).

II.IV.I.VI. Psychological Factors

Psychological factors are critical to understanding the radicalization of youth in France, addressing the mental and emotional drivers that can lead young individuals toward extremist beliefs and behaviors. The process of radicalization is multifaceted, often intersecting with social, economic, and political dimensions, but it is also deeply rooted in personal experiences and vulnerabilities. Key psychological motivators for youth include the need for belonging, the quest for recognition, and the desire for a sense of purpose and self-worth. Charismatic and manipulative leaders often exploit these psychological needs by presenting radical ideologies as pathways to personal transformation, empowerment, and heroism.

The need for belonging is one of the strongest psychological drivers of radicalization among youth. Young people often seek communities that offer solidarity, shared identity, and a sense of acceptance. Radical groups, whether religious, political, or ideological, provide clear boundaries between "us" and "them," reinforcing a strong sense of in-group identity. This appeal is especially potent among youth who have experienced social exclusion, cultural marginalization, or identity crises. By joining a radical group, young individuals can find the acceptance, camaraderie, and validation often lacking in mainstream society (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). In France, the banlieues—often characterized by high levels of socio-economic deprivation—are home to many young people from immigrant

backgrounds who face both systemic discrimination and cultural alienation. In this context, radical groups provide a sense of community and identity that contrasts sharply with the rejection experienced in broader French society. For example, some youth from North African or Sub-Saharan backgrounds, who feel stigmatized by both French society and their local communities, may turn to fundamentalist ideologies that offer an alternative form of belonging and pride in their religious or ethnic identity (Roy, 2004).

The process of identity formation is central to the radicalization of youth, as individuals often seek to construct coherent identities amidst social or personal dislocation. For second- or third-generation immigrants in France, this process can be particularly complex, as they navigate hybrid identities, feeling torn between their cultural heritage and the dominant French culture. Radical ideologies offer clear and unambiguous identities, often rooted in religious or ethnic grounds, providing young people with a strong sense of purpose and direction (Kepel, 2015). For many youths in France, the search for a stable identity is complicated by experiences of racism, cultural discrimination, and a perceived lack of acceptance from mainstream society. Extremist groups exploit these experiences by framing radicalization as an act of resistance and empowerment. For example, young Muslims in France who encounter Islamophobia may adopt radical interpretations of Islam to assert their identity and resist perceived pressures to assimilate (Laurent, 2016).

The quest for recognition and self-worth is a powerful psychological factor that drives youth toward radical ideologies. Many young individuals who become radicalized feel undervalued, invisible, or discriminated against in mainstream society. These feelings are often compounded by socio-economic struggles, such as high unemployment or lack of opportunities, leading to feelings of inadequacy or insignificance. Extremist groups capitalize on these feelings by offering roles that provide status, respect, and a sense of importance (Khosrokhavar, 2017). For example, fundamentalist recruiters in France often frame participation in their cause as a heroic struggle against oppression, positioning recruits as "warriors"

fighting for a greater cause. This narrative of heroism is particularly attractive to young men searching for a sense of masculinity, strength, and validation. Radical groups use symbolic language emphasizing bravery, sacrifice, and martyrdom, resonating with young individuals seeking to prove their worth or gain social recognition (Roy, 2004). Similarly, radical groups target young women by offering empowerment through participation in a revolutionary cause or by promising roles in creating a "pure" society.

Psychological vulnerabilities, such as trauma, mental health issues, or personal crises, make youth more susceptible to radicalization. Experiences of trauma—whether through direct violence, abuse, or witnessing conflict—can lead to anger, a desire for revenge, or a search for justice. Extremist narratives often channel these emotions toward a perceived enemy, framing violence as a legitimate means of redressing personal or collective grievances (Sageman, 2004). Mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety, can also make young people more vulnerable to extremist narratives that offer clear solutions, belonging, or a sense of higher purpose. For example, young individuals struggling with low self-esteem or feelings of hopelessness may find solace in radical ideologies that promise spiritual fulfillment or moral clarity. Research in France indicates that many radicalized youths exhibit signs of psychological distress, including feelings of alienation, anger, or existential confusion, which extremist recruiters are quick to exploit (Vidino, 2017).

Charismatic leaders play a significant role in exploiting psychological factors to recruit and radicalize youth. These leaders often present themselves as saviors, mentors, or protectors, offering guidance, acceptance, and a sense of purpose. In France, ideological leaders have used their influence to attract young followers, framing radicalization as a moral or spiritual journey toward personal transformation. These leaders emphasize discipline, commitment, and loyalty to the cause, presenting the radical group as a surrogate family for individuals who feel disconnected from their biological families or mainstream society (Kepel, 2015). The process of psychological manipulation by extremist leaders is often gradual,

beginning with ideological indoctrination and evolving into active engagement, such as participation in protests, recruitment activities, or even acts of violence. Manipulative techniques frequently involve creating a sense of urgency or crisis, which compels young people to adopt radical beliefs as a coping mechanism for perceived existential threats (Roy, 2004).

Cognitive dissonance, the internal conflict between personal beliefs and lived experiences, is another psychological factor contributing to youth radicalization. Radical ideologies offer a way to resolve this dissonance by providing coherent narratives that align personal grievances with broader ideological struggles. For example, young Muslims in France who experience systemic discrimination may adopt radical interpretations to reconcile their faith with the secular pressures of French society. By framing their struggles as part of a divine mission, they achieve psychological consistency and a sense of moral righteousness (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011).

To address psychological factors effectively, prevention strategies must include mental health support, counseling services, and community-based interventions. Providing psychological support can help address underlying mental health issues, build resilience, and promote emotional well-being. For instance, trauma counseling, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and social support networks can mitigate the impact of psychological vulnerabilities that contribute to radicalization (Sageman, 2004). Community-based interventions that focus on dialogue, trust-building, and social cohesion can reduce feelings of isolation and alienation among youth. Educational programs emphasizing critical thinking, media literacy, and empathy are also effective in equipping young people with the skills needed to resist manipulative narratives and develop a more nuanced understanding of identity and belonging (Neumann, 2013).

II.IV.I.VII. Cultural Factors

Cultural factors play a pivotal role in shaping the radicalization of youth in France, influencing how they perceive identity, belonging, and social dynamics. For young individuals, cultural identity is often at the core of their

self-perception, making them particularly sensitive to cultural tensions, marginalization, and exclusion. When cultural identity is perceived as under threat, youth may turn to radical ideologies as a form of cultural defense, resistance, or empowerment. These factors interact with socio-economic and political grievances, creating a complex landscape where cultural issues become central to the radicalization process.

Perceived threats to cultural identity are among the primary cultural factors driving youth radicalization in France. Debates surrounding national identity, immigration, and secularism often create an environment of cultural tension, particularly for minority youth from North African, Sub-Saharan, and Middle Eastern backgrounds. Many of these young people feel that their cultural identities are not fully accepted or respected within mainstream French society. For example, France's strict adherence to *laïcité* (secularism), including bans on religious symbols in schools and public spaces, has been a source of contention, especially among young Muslims. These policies can be perceived as attempts to suppress cultural and religious expression, prompting some youth to view radical ideologies to protect and assert their cultural heritage (Kepel, 2015). The framing of radical ideologies as defenders of cultural identity resonates strongly with youth who feel culturally marginalized. The rhetoric of a "clash of civilizations" is often invoked to explain their struggles, positioning radicalization as part of a broader defense of cultural identity against perceived threats (Roy, 2004).

Cultural marginalization, often intertwined with socio-economic deprivation, contributes significantly to youth radicalization in France. Young people from immigrant backgrounds living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, such as the *banlieues*, often experience both cultural and socio-economic exclusion. This exclusion reinforces a sense of "otherness," where youth perceive their cultural backgrounds not only as different but also as undervalued or stigmatized by mainstream French society (Khosrokhavar, 2017). The experience of cultural marginalization can drive youth to seek alternative sources of empowerment, recognition, and pride, which radical groups often provide. For instance, fundamentalist

narratives promoting a "return to religious values" appeal to young Muslims who feel that their cultural identity has been diluted or compromised by Western influences. Radicalization in this context is framed as a way to reclaim dignity, status, and cultural authenticity (Laurent, 2016).

The far-right in France also exploits cultural grievances by promoting far right and ethnocentric discourse that appeals to young people who feel threatened by multiculturalism and immigration. For instance, far-right groups like the National Rally (*Rassemblement National*) emphasize the preservation of traditional French culture, framing immigration as a threat to national cohesion. This far right discourse resonates with some French youth who feel disconnected from or threatened by cultural diversity, leading them to embrace far-right ideologies as a form of cultural resistance (Vidino, 2017).

Far right and ethnocentric discourse plays a significant role in shaping cultural radicalization among youth in France. For young people experiencing cultural dislocation or identity crises, radical ideologies that emphasize ethnocentrism and cultural pride offer a clear sense of belonging. Far-right groups, for example, use anti-immigrant rhetoric to emphasize the preservation of French identity, portraying immigrants—particularly those from Muslim-majority countries—as cultural threats (Kepel, 2015). This discourse not only promotes cultural polarization but also creates a fertile ground for radicalization among youth who perceive themselves as protectors of traditional French values. Conversely, within marginalized communities, ethnocentric narratives are often employed by radical groups to emphasize historical grievances, such as the legacy of French colonialism in North Africa. These narratives foster a sense of victimhood and resistance among French Muslim youth, framing radicalization as a defense of cultural identity against Western dominance (Sageman, 2004).

Media narratives in France play a crucial role in shaping cultural perceptions, often contributing to cultural polarization. The coverage of issues such as immigration, secularism, and the integration of Muslim communities tends to emphasize cultural differences rather than shared

values. This type of media portrayal reinforces stereotypes and the perception of cultural conflict, making radical ideologies that emphasize cultural defense more appealing to youth (Laurent, 2016). Social media, in particular, has become a powerful tool for spreading radical narratives among youth. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, along with encrypted messaging apps such as Telegram, create "echo chambers" where young people are repeatedly exposed to similar content. This amplification of cultural grievances reduces exposure to alternative perspectives and fosters a sense of cultural siege. For example, far-right groups use social media to spread anti-immigrant propaganda, while fundamentalist groups promote cultural resistance against perceived Western imperialism (Vidino, 2017).

The sense of cultural endangerment is deeply linked to the broader need for belonging and identity among youth. Radical ideologies offer young people a strong in-group identity, emphasizing cultural solidarity and pride. This sense of belonging is particularly appealing to young individuals who struggle with questions of identity and cultural acceptance. By providing a clear, unambiguous sense of cultural identity, radical groups offer youth a way to assert their cultural heritage and resist perceived threats (Roy, 2004). For example, some French youth who feel culturally disconnected from mainstream society are drawn to far-right groups that emphasize the preservation of traditional French values. These groups often frame radicalization as a form of "cultural patriotism," positioning it as a defense against multiculturalism, immigration, or globalization (Neumann, 2013).

Efforts to counter cultural radicalization among French youth must focus on promoting cultural inclusion, dialogue, and mutual respect. Initiatives that celebrate cultural diversity and foster intercultural understanding can help reduce the appeal of radical ideologies. For instance, community-based programs that bring together youth from different cultural backgrounds for dialogue, collaborative projects, and cultural exchange can foster a sense of belonging and reduce cultural tensions (Khosrokhavar, 2017). Promoting cultural literacy is another effective strategy for countering cultural radicalization. Educational programs that

emphasize the history, values, and contributions of different cultures can foster greater empathy, understanding, and appreciation for diversity. Media literacy initiatives that teach young people how to critically evaluate content can help them resist divisive narratives and develop a more nuanced understanding of cultural issues (Sageman, 2004).

Policies that ensure equal access to education, employment, and social services are also crucial for addressing cultural marginalization. Ensuring that all cultural groups have opportunities to participate fully in social, economic, and political life can reduce feelings of cultural exclusion and promote social cohesion. By fostering a more culturally inclusive society, it is possible to create an environment where radical ideologies lose their appeal, and youth can find meaningful ways to assert their cultural identities (Roy, 2004).

II.IV.I.VIII. Environmental Factors

Environmental factors play a crucial role in shaping the radicalization of youth in France. These factors influence how young people respond to conflict, crisis, and social instability, often intersecting with socio-economic, political, and cultural grievances. For French youth, exposure to environments marked by violence, instability, or humanitarian crises can create conditions where radical ideologies appear as viable responses to personal and collective grievances. Understanding the impact of these factors is essential for developing effective youth-focused strategies to prevent radicalization.

For youth in France, the experience of conflict and violence is not limited to distant war zones but can also manifest in the form of gang conflicts, police confrontations, or social unrest in marginalized neighborhoods, such as the *banlieues*. These areas often suffer from high levels of social tension, drug-related violence, and clashes between law enforcement and residents. This environment can contribute to a sense of insecurity, anger, and a desire for retribution among young people. For some, radical groups offer a way to channel these emotions into a larger cause, providing a sense of purpose and identity (Roy, 2004). Additionally,

the impact of international conflicts, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, plays a significant role in shaping the radicalization process among French youth. France's involvement in military interventions, such as operations in Libya and Syria, has been cited by extremist groups as evidence of a "Western crusade" against their religion. This narrative resonates strongly with some young French Muslims, who view these conflicts as attacks on their cultural or religious communities. This perception can foster solidarity with global fundamentalist movements and motivate youth to engage in radical actions domestically or abroad (Kepel, 2015).

The refugee crisis has had a notable impact on youth radicalization in France, especially among young people from immigrant backgrounds or those living in areas with high concentrations of refugees. The arrival of refugees from conflict zones like Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan has created additional challenges, including integration issues, competition for limited resources, and cultural adjustments. Young people who witness or experience the hardships faced by refugees may develop a sense of solidarity, but they may also become susceptible to radical narratives that portray the West as responsible for these crises (Khosrokhavar, 2017). Humanitarian crises can exacerbate feelings of hopelessness and frustration among marginalized youth, particularly when there is a lack of adequate social services, education, or employment opportunities. In such contexts, radical groups may exploit these crises by providing basic services, such as food, medical aid, or shelter, while also promoting their ideologies. This approach not only fulfills immediate needs but also builds trust and loyalty among vulnerable young people, making them more open to radical recruitment (Sageman, 2004).

In France, social and ethnic tensions are prevalent in urban areas where marginalized communities, particularly those of North African or Sub-Saharan descent, reside. These communities often experience socio-economic challenges, such as high unemployment, overcrowded housing, and limited access to quality education. For young people in these neighborhoods, these experiences can foster resentment and mistrust

toward mainstream society, creating fertile ground for radical ideologies that promise empowerment and resistance against perceived injustice (Laurent, 2016). The rise of populist and anti-immigrant rhetoric in France has further exacerbated these tensions. Young people who feel targeted by xenophobic discourse or discriminatory practices may adopt radical ideologies as a form of cultural or political resistance. For example, extremist recruiters in French *banlieues* often use narratives of systemic racism and discrimination to appeal to young Muslims, framing radicalization as a form of legitimate resistance against a hostile state (Kepel, 2015).

To effectively address the environmental factors contributing to youth radicalization in France, a multi-faceted approach is necessary. Key strategies should include conflict resolution, targeted humanitarian aid, initiatives for social cohesion, and educational programs tailored to youth needs.

- **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** Initiatives aimed at reducing violence and resolving conflicts in marginalized neighborhoods are essential. Youth-focused programs that promote dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation can help address grievances and foster cooperation among different groups. Engaging young people in community-led peacebuilding efforts can create a sense of ownership and inclusion, reducing the likelihood of turning to radicalization (Roy, 2004).

- **Humanitarian Aid and Social Services:** Providing essential services such as food, healthcare, and education is critical for reducing vulnerabilities that radical groups exploit. Youth-targeted interventions should also include trauma counseling and psychological support to address the mental and emotional impacts of crises, thereby reducing the appeal of extremist narratives that promise revenge or retribution (Sageman, 2004).

- **Social Cohesion and Integration Programs:** Efforts to promote social cohesion and intercultural understanding are vital for

countering the impact of social and ethnic tensions on youth radicalization. Initiatives that bring together young people from different backgrounds for collaborative projects, intercultural dialogue, and shared civic engagement can foster trust and reduce divisions (Khosrokhavar, 2017). Programs that support youth integration into the education system, labor market, and community life can reduce feelings of exclusion and promote a sense of belonging.

- **Educational Programs and Public Awareness:** Education plays a central role in preventing radicalization among youth. Programs that emphasize critical thinking, media literacy, and conflict resolution skills can empower young people to resist extremist narratives. Public awareness campaigns that promote tolerance, diversity, and peaceful coexistence can counter the polarizing effects of social and ethnic tensions, creating a more inclusive environment for youth (Vidino, 2017).

II.IV.II. The Distinction Between Religious and Non-Religious Extremism

Extremism, whether religious or non-religious, involves the adoption of radical beliefs that often justify the use of violence or other extreme measures to achieve ideological goals. The distinction between religious and non-religious extremism lies in the nature of the underlying ideologies and the sources of authority that drive these movements. Religious extremism, in particular, is characterized by beliefs and practices rooted in religious ideologies, often involving radical interpretations of sacred texts, religious doctrines, and fundamentalist views. Understanding the characteristics of religious extremism helps to differentiate it from other forms of extremism, enabling more targeted intervention and prevention strategies.

II.IV.II.I. Characteristics of Religious Extremism Among Youth

Religious extremism among youth in France involves using religious beliefs to justify extreme actions, often aimed at achieving religious, political, or social objectives. It is characterized by traits such as religious

fundamentalism, radical interpretations of sacred texts, and the belief that divine law supersedes human law. These traits are evident among young people in marginalized communities, where socio-economic, cultural, and identity challenges intersect, making some youth more susceptible to extremist narratives.

Religious fundamentalism among youth in France is marked by a strict, literal interpretation of religious teachings that rejects modern reinterpretation or adaptation. This form of extremism is often tied to feelings of alienation among young Muslims who face socio-economic hardships and perceive secular values as antagonistic to their religious identity. France's strict secularism (*laïcité*) policies, such as bans on religious symbols in public schools, contribute to this sense of exclusion and are often interpreted as attacks on personal faith (Kepel, 2015). Fundamentalism often becomes a form of resistance to perceived marginalization. For example, some French youth are drawn to Salafism, an ultraconservative interpretation of Islam that advocates a return to the "pure" form of the faith. The appeal extends beyond religious doctrines to social and cultural grievances, such as discrimination and exclusion from mainstream French society. Fundamentalist beliefs offer a sense of moral superiority and a clear identity, distinguishing youth from a secular society that they perceive as hostile. The allure of fundamentalism is particularly strong among youth from economically deprived areas, who see it as a means of empowerment and identity assertion (Roy, 2004).

Radical interpretations of religious texts are a core element of religious extremism among French youth, especially in neighborhoods marked by high unemployment and social exclusion. Extremist recruiters in these areas exploit socio-economic vulnerabilities by distorting sacred texts, such as the Quran, to frame their ideologies as divine mandates against perceived injustices. These radical interpretations often emphasize a binary worldview, presenting the struggle as one between believers and non-believers, with violent resistance portrayed as a legitimate form of religious duty (Khosrokhavar, 2017). Young people often encounter these radical interpretations through charismatic religious leaders operating in informal

settings, such as local prayer halls or online platforms. These leaders manipulate religious teachings to promote violence as an act of martyrdom or self-sacrifice for a divine cause. The use of social media further amplifies radical messages, with platforms like Telegram, YouTube, and TikTok being used to target young audiences. Extremist groups often use emotionally charged content that glorifies jihad and martyrdom, making it particularly appealing to youth seeking a strong sense of identity and purpose (Vidino, 2017).

A defining characteristic of religious extremism among youth in France is the belief that divine law is superior to secular, democratic laws. This belief manifests in the rejection of French legal principles perceived as contradicting religious principles, such as laws on secularism, gender equality, and freedom of expression. For some youth, this rejection is not only ideological but also practical, often expressed through defiance of school rules, opposition to gender-mixed spaces, or participation in protests against perceived anti-Muslim policies (Roy, 2004). In extreme cases, this belief has led to violent actions, as seen in terrorist attacks carried out by radicalized French youth. The narrative of divine law supremacy provides a framework that justifies both passive resistance and active rebellion against secular governance (Kepel, 2015).

Efforts to address religious extremism among youth in France must consider the socio-economic, psychological, and ideological factors that drive radicalization. Youth workers, educators, and moderate religious leaders play critical roles in these efforts, providing alternative narratives and support systems that can help young people resist extremist influences.

- **Engagement Through Youth Work:** Youth centers and community organizations in France have initiated programs to engage at-risk youth through dialogue, sports, arts, and education. These programs aim to foster a sense of belonging and identity that is distinct from extremist influences. Youth workers often act as mentors, helping young people develop positive identities and social skills that empower them to navigate challenges constructively (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

- **Promoting Alternative Religious Interpretations:** Collaborating with moderate religious leaders is essential for providing counter-narratives that emphasize peaceful teachings of Islam and other faiths. Programs in schools, mosques, and community centers often include religious literacy courses that teach youth about the historical and contextual interpretations of sacred texts. This approach helps counter the selective, radical interpretations propagated by extremist recruiters, offering a broader and more inclusive understanding of faith (Roy, 2004).

- **Education and Critical Thinking:** Schools are key to preventing religious radicalization by promoting critical thinking, media literacy, and intercultural understanding. Educators are trained to recognize early signs of radicalization and provide guidance that encourages students to question extremist narratives. By discussing topics like secularism, citizenship, and shared French values, schools can help young people reconcile their religious identities with their roles in a secular society (Neumann, 2013).

- **Interfaith Dialogue and Community Programs:** Interfaith dialogue initiatives in France have successfully fostered mutual understanding and reduced tensions among religious communities. These programs bring together youth from different faith backgrounds to engage in dialogue, collaboration, and joint community service projects. Emphasizing shared values like compassion, tolerance, and social justice, these initiatives aim to reduce the appeal of exclusive and divisive ideologies (Vidino, 2017).

Religious extremism among youth in France is marked by fundamentalism, radical interpretations of sacred texts, and the belief that divine law supersedes human law. Recruitment and radicalization are driven by socio-economic grievances, feelings of exclusion, and the search for identity and purpose. Addressing religious extremism requires a comprehensive approach involving youth workers, educators, moderate religious leaders, and community-based programs. By promoting critical thinking, alternative religious interpretations, and interfaith dialogue, it is

possible to reduce the appeal of religious extremism and support youth in developing a more inclusive and peaceful sense of identity within French society.

II.IV.II.II. Characteristics of Non-Religious Extremism Among Youth

Non-religious extremism among youth in France encompasses a diverse range of ideologies rooted in political, social, or economic objectives rather than religious beliefs. These forms of extremism share traits with religious extremism, such as a strong commitment to radical beliefs, rejection of established systems, and willingness to use violence. However, they are primarily driven by secular ideologies, including radical political beliefs, nationalism, and anarchism, which appeal to young people facing socio-economic challenges, identity struggles, and disenchantment with mainstream politics.

At the core of non-religious extremism among French youth are radical political ideologies aiming to transform society based on specific beliefs. These ideologies, whether far-left, far-right, or anarchist, reject pluralism and embrace an "us versus them" mentality. They identify certain groups— such as political elites, ethnic minorities, or economic classes—as adversaries to be defeated to achieve their goals (Neumann, 2013). Far-right extremism in France has increasingly targeted young people by promoting far right narratives that frame immigrants, especially Muslims, as threats to French culture and identity. This agenda is driven by xenophobia and economic protectionism, often blaming immigration for socio-economic issues such as unemployment, housing shortages, and social benefits strain. The National Rally (formerly the National Front), under leaders like Marine Le Pen, has popularized this rhetoric among youth, emphasizing the protection of French culture against perceived globalist and multicultural threats (Roy, 2004). Far-right groups have actively recruited young individuals through social media, street protests, and local networks, often glorifying French nationalism as a form of cultural defense (Kepel, 2015).

On the other hand, far-left extremism among youth in France is driven by anti-capitalist and anti-globalization ideologies. Radical elements within

movements like the *Gilets Jaunes* (Yellow Vests), which emerged from socio-economic grievances, have resonated with young people frustrated by economic inequality, high youth unemployment, and rising living costs. These groups advocate for systemic change, using protests, property damage, and confrontations with law enforcement to voice their demands. Youth drawn to far-left extremism often sees these actions as a legitimate means of fighting against economic injustice (Vidino, 2017).

Both far-right and far-left extremism in France involve a deep mistrust of state institutions and established authorities, which is particularly evident among disillusioned youth. Far-right youth extremists often resist government policies they perceive as favoring multiculturalism or immigration, framing these policies as betrayals of French identity. This anti-establishment sentiment is also reflected in conspiracy theories about the state serving globalist interests rather than national ones (Neumann, 2013). This rhetoric often finds traction in online forums and youth networks, where mistrust of state institutions is linked to fears of cultural erosion and socio-economic marginalization. Far-left extremists among youth reject centralized authority, viewing state institutions as protectors of capitalist structures and enforcers of inequality. For instance, young anarchists and far-left activists have historically used direct action, including clashes with police during protests, as seen in labor reform protests or May Day demonstrations. These acts of defiance are seen not merely as forms of protest but as revolutionary struggles against perceived oppression (Roy, 2004).

Violence is a common tactic among non-religious extremist youth groups in France, viewed as necessary to achieve political ends. Far-right youth extremists have engaged in violent acts targeting ethnic minorities, immigrants, and political opponents, often framing these attacks as defending national identity. Notable incidents include attacks on migrants in refugee camps, vandalism of mosques, and hate crimes against Jewish and Roma communities (Kepel, 2015). Far-left youth extremists, on the other hand, have targeted symbols of capitalism, such as banks, corporate offices, and government buildings. During demonstrations, young activists

have employed tactics like arson, vandalism, and street violence, justified as resistance against economic inequality and systemic corruption. For instance, far-left elements involved in the *Gilets Jaunes* protests resorted to property damage and violent confrontations as expressions of broader socio-economic frustrations (Neumann, 2013).

Social media plays a significant role in promoting non-religious extremism among French youth. Far-right and far-left groups use online platforms to spread propaganda, mobilize supporters, and coordinate direct actions. Far-right extremists, for example, have used social media to disseminate anti-immigrant rhetoric and organize flash protests, while far-left hackers have targeted government websites to expose corruption and disrupt public services (Laurent, 2016).

Addressing non-religious extremism among French youth requires a comprehensive approach that includes ideological deconstruction, promotion of political participation, and socio-economic development.

- **Deconstructing Radical Ideologies:** Educational programs, media campaigns, and youth dialogues should focus on challenging the core beliefs driving extremism. Schools and youth centers should emphasize democratic values, pluralism, and peaceful political engagement, equipping young people with critical thinking skills to recognize and resist extremist narratives (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

- **Promoting Political Engagement:** Providing platforms for youth to engage in democratic processes can reduce the appeal of extremism. Programs promoting active citizenship, civic education, and youth participation in decision-making can offer non-violent ways to address grievances. Initiatives like youth councils, debate forums, and community-based projects encourage political engagement and constructive dialogue (Neumann, 2013).

- **Addressing Socio-Economic Grievances:** Socio-economic marginalization is a significant factor driving non-religious extremism among youth. Targeted policies that promote education, vocational training, and job opportunities in economically

disadvantaged areas can reduce the vulnerabilities that extremist groups exploit. Community development initiatives that offer youth pathways to socio-economic mobility can provide meaningful alternatives to radicalization (Vidino, 2017).

Non-religious extremism among youth in France is driven by radical political ideologies, rejection of authority, and the use of violence to achieve political goals. While sharing traits with religious extremism, it is rooted in secular motivations, such as nationalism, anti-capitalism, and anarchism. Combating non-religious extremism requires a multi-faceted approach that promotes democratic engagement, socio-economic inclusion, and ideological resilience. By fostering democratic values, inclusive governance, and equal opportunities, it is possible to reduce the appeal of non-religious extremism and support youth in building a more peaceful and cohesive society.

II.IV.III. Identifying Potential Risk Factors for Youth Radicalization in France

Understanding the factors contributing to radicalization is critical for effective prevention strategies. Radicalization among youth is a complex process driven by a combination of individual, social, economic, political, and psychological factors. Among these, social factors are particularly influential, as they shape youth perceptions, behaviors, and interactions. Recognizing these dynamics is crucial for identifying risk factors that may lead young individuals toward extremist ideologies. This analysis focuses on three core aspects: peer influence and social groups, online propaganda and recruitment, and identity crises.

Peers and social groups play a decisive role in shaping youth behavior and identity. During adolescence and young adulthood, individuals seek social acceptance and form their identities, making them highly susceptible to peer influence. This influence can be constructive or destructive; it can foster social cohesion and shared values or promote radical beliefs, especially when extremist ideologies are prevalent within peer circles (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

In the context of radicalization, youth social networks often serve as incubators for extremist beliefs. Youth may join radical groups not only due to ideological alignment but also for the emotional benefits of belonging, recognition, and validation. In France, marginalized youth from immigrant backgrounds often feel excluded from mainstream society, which can make radical groups—whether far-right, far-left, or religious—appealing as they provide a sense of community and identity (Kepel, 2015). In these settings, peer pressure can intensify radical views, as members strive to gain approval, status, or recognition within the group.

Within radical groups, a process of socialization occurs, often involving groupthink, where the desire for conformity suppresses critical thinking and dissenting opinions. This dynamic accelerates radicalization as youth become more entrenched in their beliefs, sometimes participating in violent acts to prove their commitment and gain group validation (Sageman, 2004).

The rise of digital platforms has transformed the landscape of youth radicalization, making online propaganda and recruitment significant risk factors. The internet provides a constant stream of information, which extremist groups exploit to spread their ideologies, recruit members, and build virtual communities. Online spaces often function as echo chambers, where youth are exposed to repetitive, similar content that amplifies radical beliefs while reducing exposure to alternative perspectives (Neumann, 2013). Online propaganda is effective due to its appeal to specific grievances and emotions. Extremist content often emphasizes themes like victimhood, injustice, and existential threats, resonating with youth who feel marginalized or disillusioned. For example, far-right groups in France have used social media to spread anti-immigrant rhetoric, portraying immigrants as threats to French identity and culture. Similarly, fundamentalist groups use digital platforms to depict Muslims as targets of persecution, positioning themselves as defenders of the faith (Vidino, 2017).

Online radicalization among youth tends to be rapid and intense, facilitated by anonymity and accessibility. Youth who may be reluctant to engage with radical content in person are more likely to explore it online,

free from social constraints. To counter this, it is crucial to promote digital literacy and critical thinking among youth, equipping them to identify and resist extremist content. Initiatives fostering online resilience, responsible digital behavior, and credible counter-narratives are essential to prevent digital radicalization (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

Identity crises and the erosion of stable reference points are significant risk factors for youth radicalization. In a rapidly changing world where traditional norms and values are often contested, youth may struggle with confusion about their identity, purpose, and place in society. This disorientation can lead them to seek clear, definitive answers, which extremist ideologies often claim to provide. Radical movements exploit these identity crises by offering a sense of belonging, a clearly defined group identity, and a distinct enemy, whether real or perceived (Roy, 2004). In France, youth identity crises are frequently linked to integration challenges, cultural marginalization, and socio-economic exclusion, especially among second- and third-generation immigrants. These young individuals often experience difficulty reconciling their cultural heritage with the secular values of French society, leading to feelings of alienation and rejection. This struggle makes them vulnerable to radical ideologies that offer empowerment, pride, and a sense of community (Kepel, 2015). Similar dynamics are observed among disenfranchised youth drawn to far-left or far-right ideologies, which provide a clear purpose and belonging (Neumann, 2013).

The loss of stable reference points is not limited to cultural factors but can also be driven by economic instability, political uncertainty, or social disintegration. For example, youth facing unemployment or poverty may experience a loss of social status and self-worth, making them susceptible to radical ideologies that offer explanations for their struggles and a call to action (Sageman, 2004). To address these risk factors, targeted strategies are needed to prevent youth radicalization. Effective prevention requires multi-faceted approaches that consider social, psychological, and economic dimensions while fostering inclusion, resilience, and critical thinking.

- **Psychosocial Support Programs:** Providing mental health and social support is crucial for addressing emotional needs among at-risk youth. Counseling services, community-based interventions, and youth centers can help individuals cope with identity crises, trauma, and social isolation, reducing their inclination to turn to radical ideologies as coping mechanisms (Vidino, 2017).

- **Awareness Campaigns Against Hate and Discrimination:** Public campaigns promoting tolerance, diversity, and social cohesion can counter the narratives of hate that fuel radicalization. These campaigns should focus on educating youth about the dangers of extremism while addressing the structural injustices that contribute to feelings of marginalization (Khosrokhavar, 2017).

- **Improving Economic Opportunities and Social Inclusion:** Economic deprivation and social exclusion are significant drivers of youth radicalization. Initiatives that promote job creation, vocational training, education, and equal access to resources can help mitigate these risk factors. By enhancing socio-economic prospects, it is possible to reduce the appeal of radical ideologies that exploit youth grievances (Roy, 2004).

- **Enhancing Governance and Social Justice:** Addressing political grievances, improving governance, and promoting social justice are vital for reducing the appeal of radical ideologies. Efforts to increase transparency, accountability, and citizen participation can help restore trust in institutions and reduce the allure of extremist alternatives (Neumann, 2013).

Identifying potential risk factors for youth radicalization, such as peer influence, online propaganda, and identity crises, is essential for developing effective prevention strategies. By addressing these factors through psychosocial support, awareness campaigns, economic development, and improved governance, it is possible to reduce the likelihood of youth being drawn to extremist ideologies. Effective prevention requires a comprehensive approach that fosters resilience, inclusion, and opportunities for constructive engagement.

III. Empirical Work of Youth Workers' Perception on Youth Radicalization

Youth radicalization is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon influenced by various factors, including socio-economic, political, cultural, and psychological elements. It presents both challenges and opportunities for youth workers who engage directly with at-risk individuals across diverse communities. This empirical study aims to explore youth workers' perceptions of radicalization among young people in France, Türkiye, and Ukraine. By focusing on the perspectives of youth workers, this research seeks to uncover the factors contributing to radicalization, as well as the strategies perceived to be effective in preventing it.

The study is based on a multi-dimensional conceptual framework that recognizes radicalization as a dynamic process shaped by interacting factors at multiple levels. It integrates theories from psychology, sociology, political science, and conflict studies to provide a holistic understanding of how individual, social, economic, political, and cultural factors influence radicalization among youth.

The framework takes into account linked elements to understand radicalization better. It first looks at the factors contributing to radicalization from three perspectives. Aspects, social influences and structural factors. On a level factors like experiences, pyschological needs, identity crises and grievances contribute to making individuals vulnerable to radicalization. These individuals often interpret these factors as responses to injustices or feeling socially excluded, making radical narratives appealing as a means of empowerment or self discovery. At the level the influence of peers, dynamics, within communities and online interactions all play roles. Social connections play a role, in promoting ideas in both real life and virtual settings by influencing group dynamics and shared identities strongly affect behavior and beliefs. On a scale economic inequality, political marginalization and cultural isolation contribute to the breeding grounds, for radicalization. These underlying problems frequently heighten perceptions of unfairness and disconnection thus making extreme ideologies appealing to individuals.

The role of youth workers is central to this conceptual framework. Youth workers serve as frontline actors in identifying, preventing, and countering radicalization. They engage directly with young people in schools, community centers, refugee camps, and digital spaces, making them crucial stakeholders in early intervention. Beyond observation, youth workers actively participate in counseling, educational activities, and community programs that aim to promote social cohesion, critical thinking, and resilience. Their perceptions provide valuable insights into how radicalization is experienced, perceived, and addressed within communities.

The empirical study focuses on youth workers in France, Türkiye, and Ukraine, three countries with unique yet interconnected contexts for radicalization. In France, radicalization challenges are particularly evident among marginalized youth from North African, Sub-Saharan, and Middle Eastern backgrounds. Youth workers in France face the dual challenge of addressing socio-economic exclusion while navigating a secular framework that sometimes conflicts with expressions of religious and cultural identity. Many youth workers identify socio-political grievances, identity struggles, and community marginalization as key drivers of radicalization.

In Türkiye, political and socio-economic factors are more pronounced. Youth workers often emphasize how socio-economic hardships, and political instability intersect with ideological motivations. Türkiye's geopolitical position and complex political landscape further contribute to radicalization dynamics, with youth workers pointing to economic deprivation, ethnic tensions, and polarized political rhetoric as significant influences.

In Ukraine, the ongoing conflict and political instability have created fertile ground for radicalization, particularly among young people affected by war. Youth workers identify media propaganda, identity quests, and war-related trauma as critical elements shaping the radicalization process. Far right ideologies, coupled with socio-economic challenges and disrupted education, heighten Ukrainian youth's susceptibility to radical narratives.

The objectives of this empirical study are threefold. The first objective is to understand youth workers' perceptions of the factors contributing to

radicalization among youth in France, Türkiye, and Ukraine. By engaging with youth workers directly, this study aims to identify the main drivers of radicalization from their perspective, considering the specific contexts of each country. The second objective is to evaluate the strategies employed by youth workers in preventing and countering radicalization. This involves examining both formal and informal approaches, including educational programs, counseling, community engagement, and digital interventions, to assess their effectiveness in curbing radical tendencies among young people. The third objective is to identify the challenges and limitations youth workers face in their efforts to prevent radicalization and promote resilience among at-risk youth. This includes examining the socio-political constraints, resource limitations, and operational barriers that may hinder effective intervention.

This study employs qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and case studies, to capture the nuanced perceptions and experiences of youth workers. These methods aim to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of radicalization from the perspective of frontline actors. The data collection process considers contextual differences, ensuring that the findings reflect the diverse socio-political realities of each country. The following sections will detail the research methodology, data analysis, and empirical findings, providing a comprehensive view of how youth workers perceive and respond to the complex phenomenon of youth radicalization. This analysis will inform future policy recommendations and intervention strategies aimed at strengthening youth resilience against radical ideologies.

III.I. Data and Methodology

With the advent of the 21st century, terrorism and extremist actions have become one of the shared concerns of nations, turning radicalization tendencies into a matter of national and societal security. Especially in recent times, Spain, France, Ukraine, and Türkiye, which have faced the threat of terrorism, share common concerns about radical tendencies. The youth populations, considered relatively more vulnerable to radicalization, are of particular importance for these countries. In this context, this study

aims to deeply understand the radicalization processes in these four countries and to present suggestions on how to prevent radicalization to contribute to both societal and national security. Therefore, the study investigates how radicalization is perceived, addressed, and potentially prevented at the national level.

This research was conducted within the framework of the interpretive paradigm, aiming to understand the processes of radicalization among youth and the factors influencing these processes. The interpretive paradigm posits that social reality does not have a single objective truth and that individuals construct their own meanings through their experiences (Schwandt, 1994). This paradigm focuses on how individuals perceive and interpret the social world they inhabit. The interpretive paradigm approaches social reality as dynamic, relational, and contextual, acknowledging that each individual's experiences are unique and focusing on the understanding of these experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The qualitative methodology used in the research provides a flexible approach designed to deeply explore people's experiences, perceptions, and the underlying meanings of these experiences (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative methodology offers researchers a broader scope for understanding the complexity of human behaviors and social phenomena, allowing for the discovery of multiple perspectives. This approach contributes to a deeper understanding of complex and multi-faceted social processes, such as radicalization.

A phenomenological research method was preferred in the design of the research. Phenomenology aims to explore a phenomenon through individuals' experiences and perceptions, seeking to understand the essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In this method, researchers attempt to understand how participants experience a particular phenomenon and how these experiences reflect on their worldview. Phenomenological research centers on individuals' lived experiences and examines how these experiences are understood in their minds and social worlds. In this context, the study aims to reveal participants' subjective perceptions and experiences of radicalization.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants during the data collection process. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to follow a specific set of questions while also giving participants the flexibility to explain their thoughts and experiences (Kvale, 2007). This method enabled participants to express their thoughts and experiences about radicalization in their own words, leading to in-depth and rich data. In total, 15 participants were interviewed. The reason for choosing this number is based on common consensus in qualitative research regarding reaching data saturation (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Indeed, Bertaux (1981) suggested that an acceptable sample size in qualitative research should be at least 15 participants. Morse (1994: 255) recommended at least six participants for phenomenological studies, while Creswell (2013) suggested that a phenomenological sample could be formed with 5 to 25 interviews. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006: 78), conducting an experiment on data saturation, concluded that 12 interviews are sufficient to ensure reliable results in research. In conclusion, in qualitative research, the adequacy of sample size is assessed based on the depth of the data rather than frequency. Therefore, participants should be selected to best represent the research topic (Reilly & Parker, 2013). In this context, for participant selection, a purposeful sampling method was used. Purposeful sampling is a strategy designed to select participants who are best suited to provide in-depth data on the research question. This strategy involves consciously selecting individuals who have experienced or can contribute to understanding a particular phenomenon. In this study, criterion sampling was employed for participant selection (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Criterion sampling ensures that individuals who meet specific criteria are included in the research. Participants included secondary school teachers, public sector employees working in youth-related institutions, NGO workers, and academics, all with at least two years of experience working with youth. This selection was made to ensure participants were valuable sources of insight into their interactions with youth and their observations regarding the phenomenon of radicalization.

The interview questions were divided into eight themes, and 21 questions were prepared (Appendix 1). At least one structured question was

created for each theme, while other questions were organized as open-ended and sub-open-ended. These questions were structured around core topics, such as how participants view radicalization, what factors influence this process, and its effects on youth. Through these questions, the study aimed to deeply examine participants' perceptions of radicalization. In 2024, the interviews were conducted by local fieldworkers in the respective countries in the participants' native languages to ensure that they could express themselves in the best possible way. The interviews were conducted either online or face-to-face, depending on the participants' preferences. Only the interviews of participants who gave permission were recorded, and a standard transcription protocol (McLellan, MacQueen, & Niedig, 2003) was used by the fieldworkers to transcribe these interviews verbatim in Microsoft Word. Then, Due to the study being conducted in English, the documents were translated into English by the professional team of the School of Foreign Languages at Ankara Hacı Bayram University.

Qualitative content analysis is defined as a research method that systematically classifies and identifies themes and patterns in text data through subjective interpretation. This method emphasizes a holistic approach to examining conversations or texts and their specific contexts. Qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective information from texts; it seeks to uncover explicit or implicit meanings, themes, and patterns within the data. This approach enables researchers to understand social reality in a subjective yet scientific manner (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1279; Krippendorff, 2018). In this study, data were analyzed by creating themes and sub-themes. The coding process was carried out using the MAXQDA 2024 software (VERBI, 2021). MAXQDA is a software program used to organize, code, and analyze qualitative data, enabling a more systematic examination of the data. Throughout the research, main and sub-codes were created under the headings "Understanding Radicalization," "Factors Influencing Radicalization," "Combating Radicalization," and "Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization," with a total of 59 codes identified (in Appendix 2).

During the coding process, the coding paradigm developed by Corbin and Strauss (1990) was applied. This coding paradigm provides a three-step process to organize data meaningfully: open, axial, and selective coding. In the open coding phase, key concepts within the data were identified, while relationships between these concepts were identified during the axial coding phase. Finally, themes were integrated and analyzed as a whole during the selective coding phase. This coding process allowed for the systematic interpretation of the data, placing the research findings on a solid foundation. Furthermore, an inductive approach was adopted, allowing general themes to emerge from the data (Mihas, 2022: 141–142). Coding tables were prepared following Creswell's (2015) technique, which includes main code, sub-code, description, and example headings.

For research to have an impact on the theory or practice of a field, it must be conducted meticulously, and its findings should be presented in a way that ensures credibility for readers, practitioners, and other researchers. Therefore, the applied nature of most social research imposes a responsibility on researchers to ensure that the results of any study are perceived as trustworthy (Merriam, 2009: 210). The trustworthiness of the research was ensured based on the four main criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was enhanced through the use of researcher triangulation; three authors worked together to analyze the data, ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the findings. Additionally, the analysis, supported by direct quotes, contributed to the reliable reflection of participants' experiences. Dependability was also achieved through researcher triangulation, with systematic and transparent analysis processes, including coding through the MAXQDA software, ensuring consistency. Transferability was ensured by purposeful sampling and providing detailed information about the research context and participants' demographics, enhancing the applicability of the findings to other contexts. Finally, confirmability was secured through detailed documentation of the data analysis process and comparative analysis among the researchers. Each of these criteria played a critical role in ensuring the trustworthiness of the research.

III.II. Empirical Findings and Discussions

The study's practical discoveries provide insight into how youth workers view the multi-faceted issue of youth radicalization in France, Türkiye, and Ukraine. These results are grounded in observations gathered from interviews, focus groups, and case studies, with the goal of understanding the experiences, challenges, and approaches utilized by youth workers to combat radicalization. This part delves into studying the real-world data to explore the underlying factors causing radicalization and its effects while also discussing the measures taken to combat and manage it effectively. The conversation is structured to mirror the ideas that surfaced from the real-life information gathered and fits well with the study's framework of ideas. It combines discoveries from experiences and societal and organizational levels of examination to provide a perspective of the elements that lead to radicalization according to those involved at the forefront. The outcomes are explained in connection with the circumstances in France, Türkiye, and Ukraine taking into account the political atmosphere as well as economic and cultural distinctions that influence youth radicalization in each nation.

The analysis of real-world findings starts with exploring how youth workers view the factors influencing radicalization in individuals, issues like social and economic exclusion, identity struggles, political grievances, and cultural alienation. Youth workers consistently emphasize how these elements come together to form vulnerabilities that extremist organizations capitalize on, resulting in routes to radicalization. The discussion then shifts to the strategies youth workers employ to mitigate these factors. It explores various prevention and intervention measures, ranging from formal programs in schools and community centers to informal engagement in digital spaces. Special emphasis is placed on the effectiveness of these approaches, as well as the challenges faced by youth workers, such as resource limitations, socio-political constraints, and resistance from local communities. The findings also reveal how youth workers adapt their strategies to the specific contexts of each country. In France, for example, strategies often focus on promoting social inclusion and intercultural

dialogue to counter cultural marginalization, while in Türkiye, socio-economic empowerment and community resilience are prioritized. In Ukraine, trauma-informed approaches and conflict resolution strategies play a central role due to the ongoing conflict.

The conversation seeks to offer a look into the experiences of youth workers while also critically examining the effectiveness and constraints of existing prevention and intervention strategies in place. By pinpointing areas needing enhancement and identifying gaps for improvement, this examination adds to a comprehension of ways to bolster youth resilience and decrease vulnerability to extreme ideologies. In the sections of this report, we will explore topics drawn from real-world data analyzing the intricate views, approaches, and obstacles encountered by youth workers when dealing with youth radicalization in the countries under review. This conversation aims to offer perspectives for policymakers, teachers, and local leaders looking to enhance initiatives combatting radicalization at a community level.

III.II.I. Perceptions of Youth Workers on Youth Radicalization in Türkiye

In the open-ended 21 questions posed to youth workers, their experiences and observations related to the phenomenon of radicalization were explored in depth. According to the analysis, the results were examined under four themes: "Understanding Radicalization", "Factors Influencing Radicalization", "Combating Radicalization" and "Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization" and main codes and sub-codes (N=59) were established.

Table 1: Example Coding Table

Main Code	Sub code	Description	Example
Indicators	Sympathy for radical tendencies	Interest in and involvement with radical actions, ideas, and groups	Students showing interest in political or religious ideas that may be radical, participation in open or closed online communities, the use of radical rhetoric or the escalation of language on specific issues, and interest in radical literature or materials. (P. 32)
Indicators	Isolation	Individual and social isolation, withdrawal	According to my observations, this usually starts with withdrawal and isolation, followed by a shift toward radicalization fueled by resentment. (P. 51)
Indicators	Changes	Changes in individuals' beliefs, religious views, ideologies, social environment, and appearance	In my work with young people, I define "radicalization" as an extreme and rapid change in an individual's beliefs, attitudes and behavior influenced by a political, religious, or ideological framework. (P. 24)
Indicators	Discriminatory tendencies	Exclusionary and marginalizing approaches on any issue (such as religion, race, sect, gender, appearance, etc.)	Strict adherence to one's personal lifestyle, and the clear othering and rejection of alternative lifestyles and clothing styles. For example, forming an attack against different nationalities and symbols of different religions. If, during a dialogue, they display an exclusionary attitude, it becomes apparent. We can observe this in students. (P. 68)
Indicators	Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication	Indicators to watch for include tendencies towards various forms of violence (verbal, physical, psychological, etc.) and instances of peer bullying. (P. 1)

III.II.I.I. Empirical Findings

III.II.I.I.I. Understanding Radicalization

Under this theme, efforts are made to understand how radicalization is perceived by youth workers and how their awareness is interpreted. Additionally, the study investigates how youth workers assess the approach of national societies and governments toward radicalism. In this context, the perception of radicalism among youth workers is examined in depth. Eight main codes were created under this theme. The distribution percentages of the main codes related to this theme are shown in Figure 8. Accordingly, it is observed that participants have more insights into the effects, indicators, and understanding of radicalization. While these codes focus on how radicalization is perceived, other codes reveal the stance of the country and the approach of youth workers.

Figure 8: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme

Understanding Radicalization

Effects	22% (39)
Indicators	21% (37)
Understanding	17% (31)
Youth workers' perspective	13% (23)
Increasing prevalence	10% (17)
Government's attitude	8% (15)
Motivation of Youth Workers	7% (13)
Community's attitude	2% (3)
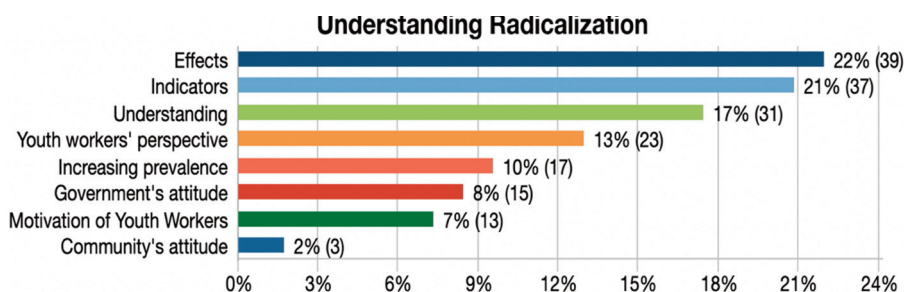
In Table 2, the frequencies of all sub-codes are provided, expanding the analysis. According to these results, the "increasing prevalence" code (f=17) indicates the presence of radicalization tendencies in Türkiye. Indeed, the government is aware of this and thus does not remain indifferent, implementing "combative" (f=10) measures. However, whether these measures are sufficient could be debated with the "inadequate" (f=5) code. While youth workers agree that society does not have a positive approach toward radicalization, they lack sufficient observations regarding society's approach. Youth workers have experienced perceptual "changes" (f=10) and increased awareness (f=13) during their work processes and generally approach their work on radicalization from a youth-focused perspective (f=7).

Table 2: Frequencies of Sub–Codes

Understanding Radicalization	
Increasing prevalence	17
Youth workers' perspective	
Increased awareness	13
Perceptual change	10
Community's attitude	
Positive approach	
Negative approach	3
Government's attitude	
Combative approach	10
Inadequate approach	5
Uninterested	
Effects	
Emotional negativity	5
Shallow thinking	3
Structural problems	6
Insecurity	6
Separation	10
Social conflict	9
Indicators	
Sympathy for radical tendencies	6
Isolation	6
Changes	9
Discriminatory tendencies	5
Aggressive tendencies	11
Understanding	
Non-normative	3
Demand for change	4
Rigid beliefs	7
Aggression	6
Threat	3
Limited positivity	2
Process	6
Motivation of Youth Workers	
Youth-focused	7
Community-focused	2
Values-driven	4

Youth workers have primarily defined radicalization as "rigid beliefs", "aggression", and as a "process." Table 3 shows the frequency of the top two terms in the sub-coded texts of "Understanding". The association of the "rigid beliefs" code with terms like "political" and "ideology" indicates that radicalization develops on a political and ideological basis. Similarly, the prominence of terms such as "students" and "violent" with the "aggression" code suggests that radical tendencies, especially among students, may be closely linked with violence. These findings highlight the extent to which political, ideological, and violent tendencies are influential in the radicalization process. The "process" sub-code draws attention to radicalization being defined as an extreme, political, and social process.

The "non-normative" code points to the connections that youths establish with legal processes and illegal structures in their involvement in radical processes. This suggests that youths become more inclined toward non-normative behaviors when they experience discord with existing social and political structures. Similarly, the demand for political changes under the "demand for change" code emerges as a factor reinforcing youths' relationship with radical thoughts. These findings are critical for understanding how the motivational factors behind radicalization are shaped by the desire for changes in social and political structures.

Table 3: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Understanding

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Non-normative	-Associations, Illegal, Legal, Process (f=2)
Demand for change	-Often, Political, Structures (f=3)
Rigid beliefs	-Political (f=5) -Ideology (f=4)
Aggression	-Students (f=5) -Violent (f=4)
Threat	-Individuals (f=3) -Coup, Ideology, Poses, Tools, Witnessed (f=2)
Limited positivity	-Form (f=4) -Norms (f=3)
Process	-Extreme, Political, Social (f=4) -Defined (f=3)

In the "indicators" sub-codes, the signs of radicalization are associated with various social and ideological transformations, as shown in Table 4. The high frequency of the "Sympathy for radical tendencies" code with terms such as "social", "groups", and "media" underscores the importance

of social media and group dynamics in the dissemination and manifestation of radical thoughts. Additionally, the "isolation" and "discriminatory tendencies" codes indicate that individuals become more susceptible to the radicalization process through social disconnection and the adoption of discriminatory thoughts. These findings provide significant insights into how radicalization is shaped through social isolation, discrimination, and media influence.

Table 4: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Indicators

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Sympathy for radical tendencies	–Social (f=5) –Groups, Media (f=4)
İsolation	–Family, Friend, Groups, Withdrawal (f=2)
Changes	–İdeological (f=5) –Radicalized (f=4)
Discriminatory tendencies	–Rights, Day (f=6) –Labor, students, theme (f=4)
Aggressive tendencies	–Day, Language, Use (f=5) –Labor, Violence (f=4)

According to youth workers' observations, the effects of radicalization (Table 5) predominantly manifest as "separation" and "social conflict". In areas coded as "separation", the prominent terms "social" and "polarization" indicate that radicalization leads to social fragmentation. Similarly, in areas coded with "social conflict", there is an emphasis on society. In areas coded as "emotional negativity", the high frequency of

terms such as "different", "groups", "ideologies", "social", and "anger" highlights the emotional impacts of radicalization on youth and underscores the importance of managing these effects. Additionally, an examination of other coded areas suggests that radicalization could pose a threat to democratic and social norms.

Table 5: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Effects

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Emotional negativity	-Different, Groups, Ideologies, Social (f=3) -Anger (f=2)
Shallow thinking	-Ability, develop, individual (f=2), -Multi-dimensionally, Achieve (f=1)
Structural problems	-Democracy, Social (f=5), -Society (f=4)
Insecurity	-Social (f=8) -Democratic (f=4)
Separation	-Social (f=9) -Polarization (f=8)
Social conflict	-Social (f=12) -Society (f=7)

III.II.II.I.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

The data from this theme reveal how various factors influencing the radicalization process are perceived by youth workers. The findings indicate that economic factors play a critical role in the radicalization process. Economic difficulties create significant pressure on social relationships and family dynamics, which can pave the way for youth to gravitate toward radical ideologies. Additionally, it has been observed that negative political experiences and societal polarization also contribute significantly to radicalization. In this context, it has been determined that the challenging political climate faced by youth has adverse effects on family ties and social structures.

Figure 9: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
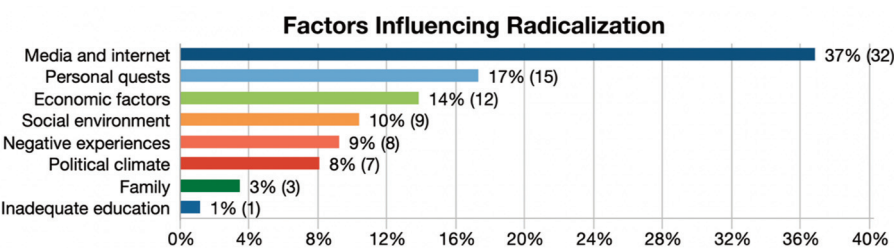
The impact of media and the internet on the radicalization process is one of the most prominent findings. It is understood that media and the internet play a central role in the dissemination of radical ideologies and that youth can interact more easily with radical groups through social media. Furthermore, personal searches and identity-seeking efforts have been identified as other significant factors that increase youth participation in radical groups. These factors collectively enhance our understanding of how youth become involved in the radicalization process. However, inadequate education has not emerged as a highlighted factor by youth workers in Türkiye. This area requires further in-depth investigation.

Table 6: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Economic factors	–Social (f=11) –Family (f=5)
İnadequate education	–
Negative experiences	–Political, Society (f=5) –Polarization (f=4)
Political climate	–Family (f=5) –Society (f=4)
Family	–Crises, Economic, İdentity (f=2)
Personal quests	–Groups (f=9) –Identity (f=8)
Media and internet	–Social (f=57) –Ideas (f=19)
Social environment	–Social (f=10) –Economic (f=4)

III.II.I.I.III. Combating Radicalization

The data related to this theme elaborate on the challenges faced in combating radicalization and the effectiveness of the methods employed. As seen in Figure 10, youth workers encounter more challenges than activities when dealing with radicalization. The frequency of sub–codes in

Figure 10 reveals that youth workers often lack full preparedness and resources when it comes to countermeasures. The most commonly experienced activity involves inter-institutional programs and collaborations, while the most significant challenge identified is the lack of adequate training.

Figure 10: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme

Table 7: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

Table 8 evaluates the challenges encountered in combating radicalization. The "nature of radicalism" code highlights the complexity of the radicalization process and the difficulties in understanding its signs. The frequent use of terms like "difficult" and "signs" underscores how challenging it is to grasp the nature of radicalism and identify its early indicators. This is one of the key factors that complicate early intervention efforts by those working with youth.

The "communication issues" code reveals the barriers to effective communication with young individuals. The high frequency of terms like "student/s" and "difficulty" indicates that communication becomes more challenging when youth are susceptible to radicalization, which in turn hinders intervention efforts. This finding suggests the need to develop more effective communication strategies in the fight against radicalization. Additionally, the "lack of education" code shows that deficiencies in education are a significant obstacle in combating radicalization. The frequent mention of "training" emphasizes how a lack of education makes youth more vulnerable to radical ideologies. This finding underscores the critical role of educational programs in preventing radicalization and the need for these programs to be more widely implemented. Finally, the "insufficient financial resources" and "legal and structural deficiencies" codes point to other major obstacles in the fight against radicalization. These shortcomings hinder youth workers' ability to effectively combat radicalization due to limited resources and gaps in legal frameworks.

Table 8: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Challenges

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
The nature radicalism	-Difficult (f=6) -Signs (f=5)
Communication issues	-Student/s (f=7) -Difficulty, Significant (f=3)
Lack of education	-Training (f=17) -Received (f=10)
Insufficient financial resources	-Groups (f=6) -Difficult (f=4),
Legal and structural deficiencies	-Student, Training (f=4) -Groups, İmportant (f=3)
Approach	-Societal (f=4) -Social (f=3)

Table 9 details the sub-codes of existing initiatives in the fight against radicalization. The prominent "inter-institutional programs and collaboration" code indicates that the initiatives are being implemented through projects involving universities and various organizations. In the training of youth workers, it is observed that awareness programs are being conducted. In efforts to increase the awareness of youth, legal and political elements are particularly emphasized.

Table 9: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Experienced Activities

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Inter-institutional programs and collaboration	-Projects, Universities (f=9) -Organization (f=7)
Training for youth workers	-Awareness (f=6) -Programs (f=5)
Surveys and feedback	-Impact, Project (f=5) -Participations (f=4)
Raising awareness among young people	-Legal (f=5) -Educational, Political (f=3)

III.II.I.I.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

Under this theme, the needs and recommendations of youth workers regarding the prevention and combatting of radicalization were examined. According to the distribution in Figure 11, the most critical need identified is the education of youth. Following this, counseling services for youth also emerged as a significant requirement. These findings suggest a recommendation to develop a youth-centered approach to combating radicalization. Furthermore, the importance of supporting these efforts with policies and collaboration was emphasized.

Figure 11: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
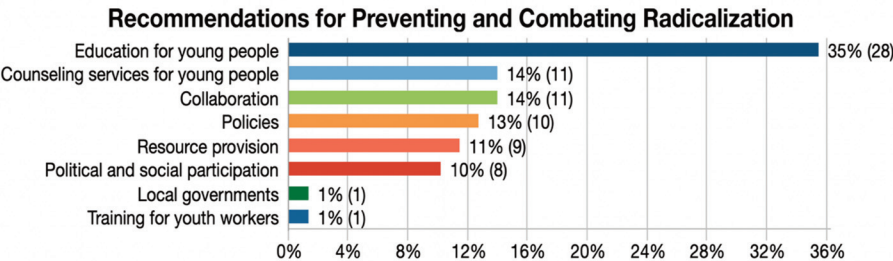
According to Table 10, the "Training for Youth Workers" code highlights the importance of training youth workers to recognize and effectively address radical tendencies. The prominence of the terms "Education" and "important" under this code underscores the critical role that training provided to youth workers plays in the fight against radicalization. Enhancing the competencies of youth workers directly influences the effectiveness of preventive measures in this process.

Similarly, the "resource provision" and "collaboration" codes emphasize the necessity of inter-institutional collaboration and the provision of adequate resources in combating radicalization. The frequent repetition of the terms "resources" and "support" highlights the need for effective utilization of resources to conduct a successful fight against radical ideologies. In this context, collaboration and resource sharing emerge as fundamental factors determining the success of programs to counter radicalization.

Table 10: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Training for youth workers	-Education (f=4) -Important (f=3)
Resource provision	-Resources (f=10) -Support (f=9)
Counseling services for young people	-Programs (f=8) -Support (f=7)
Local governments	-Councils (f=4) -Government, Represented (f=3)
Political and social participation	-Social (f=7) -Communication, Effective (f=5)
Collaboration	-Support (f=9) -Organizations, Resources (f=5)
Policies	-Resource (f=4) -Education, Important, Necessary (f=3)
Education for young people	-Awareness (f=14) -Media (f=12)

The most prominent code, "education for young people", highlights the importance of raising awareness and media literacy in youth education. The emphasis on the terms "awareness" and "media" suggests that there is a significant focus on developing awareness and educating youth about media–related issues as part of their education. In the "Policies" code, the prominent terms such as "resources", "education", "important", and "necessary" indicate that youth workers expect policymakers to institutionalize the allocation of resources and the implementation of education in this area. These suggestions are considered crucial and necessary in combating radicalism.

III.II.I.II. Discussions and Policy Advice

III.II.I.II.I. Understanding Radicalization

In Türkiye, youth workers have associated radicalization with "rigid beliefs," "aggression," and "process" based on their experiences with young people. Under the code of rigid beliefs, the terms "political" and "ideology" frequently appear. This finding reveals that radicalization is built on ideological foundations and intertwined with political processes. Groups like the PKK in Türkiye manipulate the political and ideological quests of young people, leading them toward radicalization (Köse & Coşkun, 2019). Defining radicalization as an ideological process explains the gradual shift of individuals toward more radical views.

Under the code of aggression, the terms "students" and "violence" are prominent. This finding indicates that aggression and violence are closely linked to the radicalization process, particularly within school and university environments. The literature points out that student movements in Türkiye are often open to radical ideologies and sometimes associated with violent groups (Ünüvar, 2007). Especially during their university years, young people exposed to radical ideologies are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors.

Youth workers generally express negative views on the government's measures against radicalization. The frequent use of the terms "insufficient" and "limited" in the coded data indicates that the

government's policies are perceived as inadequate in combating radicalization. In Türkiye, security-based measures have taken precedence over educational and social projects, a point criticized by youth workers.

Society's attitude towards radicalization is characterized by passivity and a lack of awareness. Terms like "lack of awareness" and "insufficient societal support" are frequently mentioned in different contexts. In Türkiye, radicalization is often associated solely with terrorism, without sufficient attention to its social and ideological dimensions, leading youth workers to call for greater societal awareness. The impact of society on the radicalization process requires deeper examination, and efforts to raise awareness must be intensified.

Regarding the impact of radicalization on society, the findings show how radicalization weakens social bonds and increases societal polarization. The frequent use of the terms "division" and "social conflict" highlights that radicalization in Türkiye fuels social polarization and threatens societal peace (Bozarslan, 2007). This finding suggests that radicalization in Türkiye is not just an individual issue but a broader societal problem.

III.II.I.II.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

One of the most prominent codes under this theme is economic factors. The frequent occurrence of the words "family" and "social" in the coded data indicates that economic hardships weaken family structures and lead young people toward radical groups. In Türkiye, economic difficulties, particularly among the youth, increase the tendency toward radical ideologies (Köse & Coşkun, 2019). Unemployment, low-income levels, and a lack of opportunities make young people more vulnerable to radical ideologies. The weakening of familial ties leaves young people deprived of social support and exposes them to the influence of radical groups.

The political environment is another significant factor affecting radicalization. The frequent use of the terms "political" and "polarization" in the coded data suggests that political polarization in Türkiye has negative effects on young people. Groups like the PKK and similar organizations exploit this polarization to recruit young people into their ranks. Türkiye's

internal political issues and regional conflicts further intensify radicalization processes (Bozarslan, 2007).

Additionally, under the code of personal quests, the frequent occurrence of the words "identity" and "groups" highlights that identity-seeking is a key factor driving young people to join radical groups. In Türkiye, particularly in the Kurdist separatist movement and groups like the PKK, the manipulation of young people's identity struggles leads to their radicalization. This process accelerates when young people feel unable to assert themselves in the social and political spheres, prompting them to seek a sense of belonging within radical groups.

The role of media also plays an important part in this theme. The frequent appearance of the terms "social media" and "propaganda" emphasizes the critical role that social media plays in spreading radical ideologies. The literature also points out that social media facilitates young people's interaction with radical groups (Pauwels & Hardyns, 2018). Terrorist organizations, in particular, use social media platforms as tools of propaganda to attract young people to radical ideologies (Sevinç & Babahanoğlu, 2019).

III.II.I.II.III. Combating Radicalization

In combating radicalization, the greatest challenges faced by youth workers include a lack of education, insufficient resources, and communication difficulties. Under the lack of education code, the frequent use of the terms "education" and "insufficiency" indicates that youth workers do not possess sufficient knowledge and skills to effectively combat radicalization. The literature also emphasizes that the educational programs implemented to combat radicalization in Türkiye are often limited and inadequate in protecting young people from radical ideologies (Köse & Coşkun, 2019). In order for youth workers to play a more effective role in this process, comprehensive educational and awareness-raising programs are needed.

The frequent occurrence of insufficient resources in the coded data highlights that financial and structural resources are limited in the fight

against radicalization. Terms such as "support" and "resources" express that youth workers do not have access to adequate financial support and resources. This situation indicates that civil society organizations and local governments need to take a more active role in combating radicalization. Without allocating more resources to social projects and civil society initiatives in Türkiye, it is understood that youth workers will be unable to carry out an effective struggle against radicalization.

Additionally, under the communication difficulties code, terms such as "student" and "communication challenges" frequently appear. The difficulty of establishing effective communication with young people is seen as another major barrier to preventing radicalization. Specifically, the challenge of establishing correct and effective communication with young individuals who have already been drawn to radical ideologies limits access to these youth and makes early intervention more difficult. In Türkiye, in order to overcome these communication challenges, there needs to be greater investment in training programs that equip professionals working with youth with effective communication skills.

The findings also show that under the government policies code, the terms "insufficient" and "indicators" are frequently used. This suggests that youth workers believe the government needs to develop broader and longer-term policies to combat radicalization. In Türkiye, security-based strategies are prioritized in the fight against radicalization, but it appears that insufficient attention is given to social projects and educational programs. This results in security-based measures being insufficient in addressing the root causes of radical ideologies in the long term. Youth workers emphasize that the government should invest more in educational and preventive measures in this process.

III.II.I.II.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

The most prominent solution proposed to prevent radicalization, according to the findings, is the expansion of educational programs and the dissemination of awareness-raising projects. The terms "education" and

"awareness" are frequently mentioned in the coded data. Youth workers believe that the most effective way to prevent radicalization is to increase educational programs targeting young people and raise their awareness against radical ideologies. The literature on Türkiye also highlights education as one of the most critical factors in combating radicalization (Köse & Coşkun, 2019). Educational programs help young people develop resilience against radical ideologies and support their integration into society.

Additionally, youth workers emphasize the importance of media literacy and social media awareness in preventing radicalization. The frequent mention of the terms "social media" and "media" in the coded data underscores the significant role that social media platforms play in the spread of radical ideologies (Pauwels & Hardyns, 2018). Terrorist organizations and radical groups use social media platforms to attract young people to radical ideologies. Preventing young people from being exposed to radical content on social media and enhancing their media literacy are seen as crucial strategies in preventing radicalization (Sevinç & Babahanoğlu, 2019).

The codes related to resource provision and the role of civil society organizations highlight the need for increased financial and structural support in combating radicalization. The frequent use of terms such as "support" and "resources" reveals that youth workers need more resources to fight radicalization effectively. Local governments and civil society organizations in Türkiye should increase projects targeting young people to create awareness against radical ideologies.

Under the code for collaboration between local governments and civil society organizations, the terms "projects" and "awareness" stand out. These findings indicate the need for more support at the local level for projects targeting young people. Collaboration between civil society organizations and local governments to run awareness projects for youth could be an effective method in combating radicalization. Moreover, such projects are highlighted in the literature as playing a key role in enhancing social cohesion among young people and keeping them away from radical

ideologies (Köse & Coşkun, 2019). In conclusion, based on their experiences and observations, youth workers in Türkiye propose a broad and long-term vision for preventing radicalization, which includes the expansion of educational programs, the support of social cohesion projects, the enhancement of media literacy, the strengthening of cooperation between local governments and civil society, and the development of effective communication strategies with young people.

III.II.II. Perceptions of Youth Workers on Youth Radicalization in Ukraine

In the open-ended 21 questions posed to youth workers, their experiences and observations related to the phenomenon of radicalization were explored in depth. According to the analysis, the results were examined under four themes: "Understanding Radicalization", "Factors Influencing Radicalization", "Combating Radicalization" and "Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization" and main codes and sub-codes (N=52) were established.

Table 11: Example Coding Table

Main Code	Sub code	Description	Example
Indicators	Sympathy for radical tendencies	Interest in and involvement with radical actions, ideas, and groups	Students showing interest in political or religious ideas that may be radical, participation in open or closed online communities, the use of radical rhetoric or the escalation of language on specific issues, and interest in radical literature or materials. (P. 32)
Indicators	Isolation	Individual and social isolation, withdrawal	Refusal to interact with family and friends, especially when accompanied by seclusion and self-isolation. (P. 17)
Indicators	Changes	Changes in individuals' beliefs, religious views, ideologies, social environment, and appearance	In my work with young people, radicalization can be defined as a process or phenomenon that involves a change in young people's ideological, political, religious, or socio-cultural beliefs and attitudes towards radical, extremist, or violent ideas or actions. (P. 36)
Indicators	Discriminatory tendencies	Exclusionary and marginalizing approaches on any issue (such as religion, race, sect, gender, appearance, etc.)	When a youth worker talks about manifestations of radicalism, these are indicators of discrimination, especially gender, age, religious, and political discrimination. (P. 50)
Indicators	Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication	A more aggressive reaction to words, and nervousness when discussing a certain topic. (P. 28)

III.II.II.I. Empirical Findings

III.II.II.I.I. Understanding Radicalization

Under this theme, efforts are made to understand how radicalization is perceived by youth workers and how their awareness is interpreted. Additionally, the study investigates how youth workers assess the approach of national societies and governments toward radicalism. In this context, the perception of radicalism among youth workers is examined in depth. Eight main codes were created under this theme. The distribution percentages of the main codes related to this theme are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 12: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
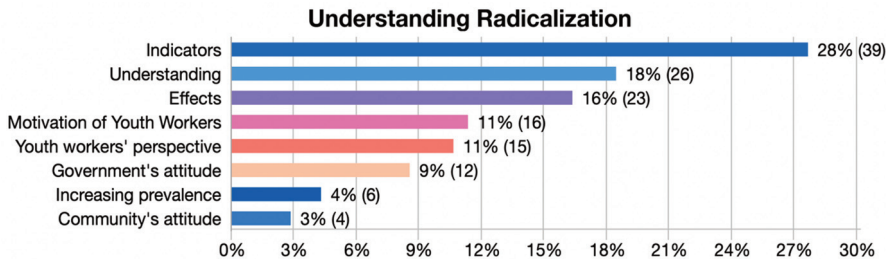
Figure 12 illustrates how youth workers in Ukraine understand radicalization and which elements stand out. The indicators code, with the highest percentage (28%), emerges as the most significant factor. This indicates that identifying specific indicators is crucial in understanding radicalization. Youth workers believe that recognizing clear signs of radicalization is critical for monitoring the process and intervening effectively. Understanding and Effects are also coded at 18% and 16%, respectively. This suggests that youth workers focus on better understanding the processes of radicalization and its impacts on individuals and society. Comprehending the causes and effects of radicalization is seen as an important step in grasping the depth of the process. Motivation of Youth Workers and Youth Workers' Perspective stand out at 11%, indicating that youth workers incorporate their own motivations and perspectives into the process, highlighting the importance of how they perceive their role in protecting young people from radicalization. Lower percentages are observed for Government's Attitude, Increasing Prevalence, and

Community's Attitude, suggesting that the roles of the government and society in combating radicalization are viewed as limited, and that youth workers see a need to raise more awareness in these areas. In summary, youth workers prioritize identifying indicators and understanding processes in their approach to radicalization; while also emphasizing the need to raise awareness of the roles the government and society should play in this effort.

Table 12: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

Understanding Radicalization	
Increasing prevalence	6
Youth workers' perspective	
Increased awareness	10
Perceptual change	5
Community's attitude	
Positive approach	2
Negative approach	2
Government's attitude	
Combative approach	7
Inadequate approach	
Uninterested	5
Effects	
Emotional negativity	3
Shallow thinking	
Structural problems	
Insecurity	7
Separation	6
Social conflict	7
Indicators	
Sympathy for radical tendencies	6
Isolation	3
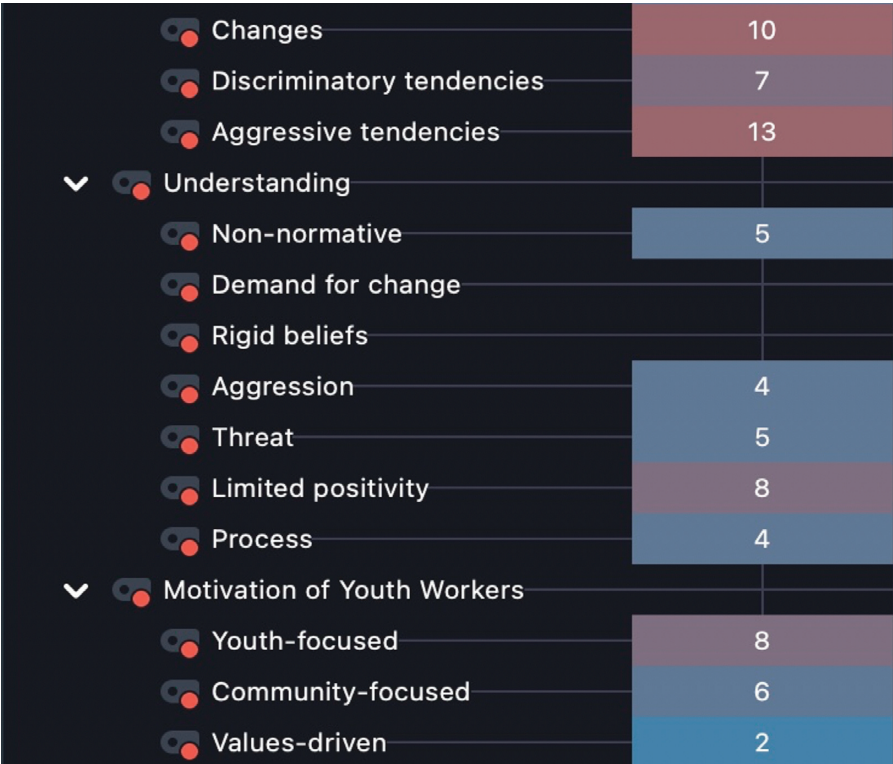
In Table 12, In the process of understanding radicalization, youth workers have highlighted various elements. Within the Youth Workers' Perspective category, Increased Awareness and Perceptual Change were the most frequently coded elements. Youth workers reported that their awareness of radicalization processes has increased, and their perceptions have evolved throughout these processes. The Government's Attitude was evaluated by youth workers as both inadequate and combative. The most frequently coded elements were Combative Approach and Inadequate Approach, reflecting the prevailing view that the government has not developed effective policies to combat radicalization. This indicates that the government needs more comprehensive strategies to address radicalization. Under the Effects category, elements such as Emotional Negativity, Structural Problems, and Social Conflict stand out. Youth workers noted that radicalization causes severe emotional issues for individuals and deep social conflicts within the community. In the Indicators category, Aggressive

Tendencies and Discriminatory Tendencies were the most prominent. These tendencies, as key indicators of radicalization, demonstrate that individuals in the process of radicalization exhibit increasingly aggressive and discriminatory attitudes. Additionally, factors such as Changes and Isolation play a significant role in the radicalization process. Finally, Motivation of Youth Workers was coded with a focus on both youth-oriented and community-oriented approaches. This finding indicates that youth workers focus not only on the needs of young people in preventing radicalization but also emphasize the role of the broader societal structure in this process.

Table 13: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Understanding

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Non-normative	-Action (f=4) -Extreme (f=3)
Aggression	-Aggressive (f=4) -Actions, change, defined, extremist (f=2)
Threat	-Puts, social, society, threat (f=2) -Action (f=1)
Limited positivity	-Positive (f=9) -Negative (f=5)
Process	-Extremist, views (f=3) -Aggressive, beliefs (f=2)

In Table 13, under the non-normative code, the most frequently used terms are "action" and "extreme." This shows that youth workers perceive radicalization as a process that deviates from norms, characterized by extreme actions. According to them, radicalization is associated with behaviors that go beyond ordinary patterns, involving actions that are extreme and non-normative. In the Aggression sub-code, the prominence of the terms "aggressive" and "actions" indicates that youth workers define radicalization through aggressive acts. Radicalization is seen not only as an ideological process but also as one expressed through physically aggressive actions. Youth workers emphasize that radicalization is closely linked to aggression-driven behaviors. Under the Threat sub-code, terms such as "social," "society," and "threat" suggest that youth workers view radicalization as a threat to society. In their perspective, radicalization poses a danger not only to individuals but also to the social fabric and broader community. In the Limited Positivity code, terms like "positive" and "negative" reflect youth workers' mixed views on radicalization. While "positive" is coded more frequently, the near-equal frequency of "negative" indicates a lack of consensus. This suggests that society does not have a homogeneous perspective on radicalization, and youth workers themselves remain divided between its potential positive and negative effects. Although many view radicalization as a potential catalyst for positive change, this perspective is constrained by the strong presence of negative impacts. Finally, in the Process code, the terms "extremist views" and "aggressive beliefs" highlight that youth workers perceive radicalization as an ongoing process. This process is defined by the gradual development of extreme views and aggressive beliefs, where individuals become progressively drawn towards radical ideas. For youth workers, radicalization is not a single event but a continuous journey of transformation.

Table 14: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Indicators

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Sympathy for radical tendencies	–Ideas, interest, participation (f=3) –Language, rhetoric (f=2)
İsolation	–Friends, social (f=2) –Self-isolation, absence (f=1)
Changes	–Attitudes, beliefs (f=5) –Sudden (f=4)
Discriminatory tendencies	–Based, discrimination, hate, only, speech (f=2)
Aggressive tendencies	–Actions, force, language (f=3) –Anger (f=2)

In Table 14, in youth workers' responses regarding the indicators of radicalization, several main sub-codes have emerged. Under the Sympathy for radical tendencies code, the most frequently used terms were "ideas, interest, participation," and "language, rhetoric." These findings suggest that one of the key indicators of radicalization is young people's interest in radical ideas, their participation in these ideas, and their use of language and rhetoric. According to youth workers, young people who sympathize with radical tendencies express themselves through language and discourse that supports these ideas. Under the Isolation code, terms such as "friends, social," and "self-isolation, absence" were prominent. This indicates that another indicator of radicalization is the tendency of young people to withdraw from social relationships and isolate themselves. Youth workers have observed that social withdrawal and loneliness are early signs of radicalization among young people. In the Changes code, terms like "attitudes, beliefs," and "sudden" were frequently used. This shows that sudden changes in young people's attitudes and beliefs are significant indicators of the radicalization process. Youth workers believe that such sudden shifts in attitudes increase the likelihood of young people joining radical groups. Under the Discriminatory tendencies code, the most commonly used terms were "based, discrimination, hate, speech." These findings suggest that discriminatory rhetoric and hate speech are also

among the indicators of radicalization. Youth workers noted that young people developing radical tendencies often use language filled with discrimination and hatred. Finally, under the Aggressive tendencies code, terms such as "actions, force, language," and "anger" stood out. According to youth workers, another important indicator of radicalization is the display of aggressive behavior, use of force, and expression of anger. These findings indicate that young people with radical tendencies tend to express their aggression through language and behavior.

Table 15: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Effects

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Emotional negativity	-Psychological, stress (f=2) -Anxiety, cause, conflicts (f=1)
Insecurity	-Communities (f=4) -Social, society, stability (f=3)
Separation	-Religious, social (f=3) Becomes, communities, discrimination (f=2)
Social conflict	-Communities (f=4) Conflicts, impact, lead, negative (f=3)

In Table 15, Youth workers' responses regarding the effects of radicalization are categorized into several main sub-codes. Under the Emotional negativity sub-code, frequently used terms include "psychological, stress" and "anxiety, cause, conflicts." These findings suggest that radicalization generates psychological stress and anxiety within society, which in turn becomes one of the primary causes of conflict. According to youth workers, radicalization creates significant emotional disturbances in individuals and increases their anxiety levels. In the Insecurity sub-code, the most commonly used terms were "communities" and "social, society, stability." These findings show that radicalization undermines security within communities and social structures. It creates a sense of instability and insecurity among social groups. Under the

Separation sub-code, the most prominent terms were "religious, social" and "becomes, communities, discrimination." This indicates that radicalization leads to religious and social separation, as well as discrimination. Individuals undergoing radicalization may become detached from their communities and engage in processes of separation and marginalization. In the Social conflict sub-code, terms like "communities, conflicts, impact, lead, negative" were frequently mentioned. These terms suggest that radicalization leads to social conflict and has a negative impact on society. According to youth workers, radicalization deepens conflicts between communities, exacerbating divisions and creating lasting negative effects on social cohesion.

III.II.II.I.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

The data from this theme reveal how various factors influencing the radicalization process are perceived by youth workers.

Figure 13: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
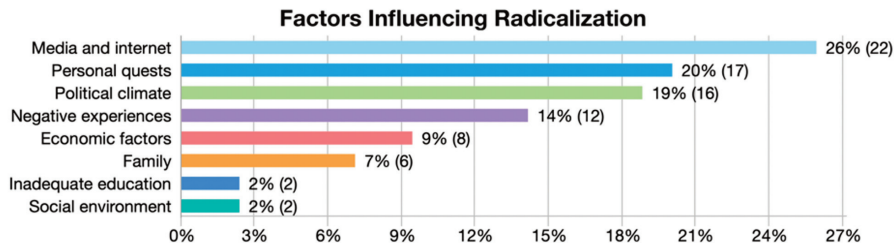
According to Figure 13, the media and internet factor stands out with the highest percentage (26%). According to youth workers, media and the internet are among the most significant factors that expose young people to radical ideologies and draw them into these ideologies. Social media platforms serve as powerful tools for radical groups to spread propaganda and attract young people to their cause. In second place (20%) is the personal quests factor. Young people are drawn to radical groups due to their search for identity, personal meaning, or a sense of belonging. These personal quests lead young individuals to become interested in radical ideologies and define themselves within these groups. In third place (19%) is the political climate factor. The political environment has a profound

influence on the radicalization processes of young people. Especially in periods of political conflict, young individuals are more likely to be drawn into radical groups. They turn to radical ideas as they seek to establish their identity amid political polarization and conflicts. The fourth factor (14%) is negative experiences. Traumatic or negative experiences in young people's lives make them more susceptible to the influence of radical groups. These experiences erode their trust in society, leading them to gravitate toward the "alternative" world that radical groups offer. Other factors, such as economic factors (9%), family (7%), inadequate education (2%), and social environment (2%), also impact radicalization. Economic difficulties increase young people's anxiety about the future, and these anxieties strengthen their belief that the solutions offered by radical groups may alleviate their struggles. A lack of family support facilitates young people's involvement in radical groups, while inadequate education and a negative social environment accelerate the radicalization process.

Table 16: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Economic factors	–Financial, social (f=5) –Status (f=4)
İnadequate education	–Educational, literacy (f=3) –Communities, lack, system (f=2)
Negative experiences	–Society (f=4) –Intolerance, rejection, actions, consciously (f=2)
Political climate	–War (f=8) –Social (f=4)
Family	–Absorb, aggression, attitude, driving (f=2)
Personal quests	–Desire, identity, sense (f=7) –Search, society (f=4)
Media and internet	–Social (f=28) –Influence (f=13)
Social environment	–System (f=2) –Alternative, athlete, bad, blogger (f=1)

According to Table 16, youth workers identified several factors that influence the process of radicalization. Under the economic factors code, the most frequently used terms were "financial" and "social." Young people are drawn to radical groups due to economic hardships, and they see the financial solutions offered by these groups as a way out. Moreover, economic difficulties affect young people's social status, making them feel excluded from society. Under the inadequate education code, the most frequently used terms were "educational, literacy" and "communities, lack, system." The lack of education is seen as a major factor contributing to radicalization. A deficient educational system leaves young people vulnerable to radical ideologies, making it easier for them to be recruited by radical groups. In the Negative experiences code, the most commonly used terms were "society" and "intolerance, rejection, actions." Youth who experience social exclusion and rejection are more likely to enter the process of radicalization. These negative experiences weaken their connection to society, making them more susceptible to the influence of radical groups. Under the political climate code, the most frequently used terms were "war" and "social." The political environment, particularly in conflict zones, is one of the most significant factors driving radicalization among youth. War and social instability increase young people's tendency to join radical groups.

In regions marked by political conflict, young people turn to radical groups as they seek to find their identity and a sense of belonging. In the family code, the prominent terms were "absorb, aggression, attitude." Family plays a crucial role in the radicalization process. Aggressive attitudes and weak family bonds increase young people's likelihood of joining radical groups. Disconnections within the family and a lack of support can push young people toward radical ideologies. Under the personal quests code, the most frequently used terms were "desire, identity, sense" and "search, society." Young people join radical groups in their quest for identity and meaning. These personal quests lead young individuals to define themselves through radical ideologies and find a sense of belonging within these groups. The media and internet code emerged as one of the most influential factors in the radicalization process. The most commonly used terms were "social" and "influence." Media and the internet play a key role in exposing young

people to radical ideologies and fostering their interest in these ideas. Social media, in particular, has become a tool that facilitates radical groups' access to young people. Lastly, under the social environment code, terms such as "system, alternative, athlete, bad," and "alternative, athlete, bad, blogger" were highlighted. The influence of the social environment can accelerate the radicalization process. Social surroundings, especially those offering alternative perspectives, can draw young people toward the allure of radical groups.

III.II.II.I.III. Combating Radicalization

The data related to this theme elaborate on the challenges faced in combating radicalization and the effectiveness of the methods employed.

Figure 14: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
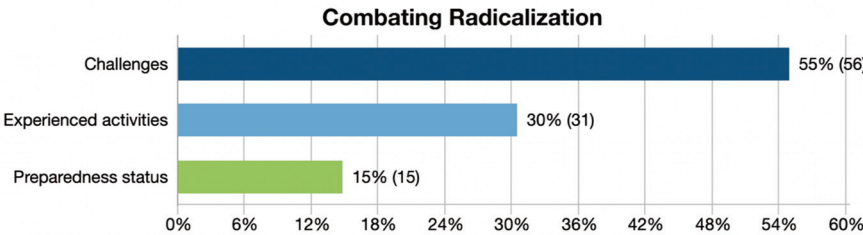
According to the data in Figure 14, the most prominent area of experience for youth workers in combating radicalization has been the challenges they face. With 67%, this area reflects that youth workers encounter significant obstacles in their efforts to address radicalization. The Preparation status was reported at 17%. When assessing how prepared they are to combat radicalization, youth workers indicated that their level of readiness is generally limited. The low level of preparation suggests that youth workers lack sufficient support and resources, making it difficult for them to be effective in their efforts. The Activities experienced were reported at 16%, showing that youth workers have engaged in some activities to combat radicalization, but these activities have been limited in scope.

Table 17: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

Combating Radicalization	
Preparedness status	
Prepared	4
Developing	3
Changeable	1
Unprepared	7
Experienced activities	
Inter-institutional programs and collaborations	14
Training for youth workers	8
Surveys and feedback	4
Raising awareness among young people	5
Challenges	
The nature radicalism	7
Communication issues	11
Lack of education	20
Insufficient financial resources	5
Legal and structural deficiencies	9
Approach	4

According to the data from Table 17, when examining the preparedness of youth workers in combating radicalization, some reported feeling prepared, while a larger portion indicated that they are still developing, and the majority stated that they are unprepared. This finding reveals that youth workers do not feel fully equipped to tackle radicalization, and their overall level of preparedness is generally low. Among the activities they have engaged in, inter-institutional programs and collaborations and raising awareness among young people were the most prominent. Youth workers have participated in various projects aimed at raising awareness among young people and preventing them from adopting radical ideologies through collaboration efforts. The training provided to youth workers has helped them enhance their knowledge and skills in combating radicalization. When it comes to challenges, the most frequently cited issue was lack of education. Youth workers believe that a lack of education is a significant barrier in their

fight against radicalization. Inadequate educational programs leave young people vulnerable to radical ideologies. Additionally, communication issues and legal and structural deficiencies are also major challenges. Communication problems present one of the biggest obstacles to establishing effective dialogue with young people. Legal and structural deficiencies, on the other hand, highlight the bureaucratic hurdles youth workers face when managing this process. Moreover, Insufficient financial resources and the nature of radicalism are other key challenges encountered in the fight against radicalization.

Table 18: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Challenges

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
The nature radicalism	–Behavior, perhaps, real, reasons, rights (f=2)
Communication issues	–Teachers (f=4) –Difficult, find, teenagers (f=3)
Lack of education	–Training (f=9) –Lack (f=5)
Insufficient financial resources	–Topic (f=3) –Results (f=2)
Legal and structural deficiencies	–Clear, engaged, including, information, tools (f=2)
Approach	–Influence (f=4) –Political (f=3)

In Table 18, the challenges faced by youth workers in combating radicalization are categorized into several main themes. Under the Nature of radicalism code, the most frequently used terms were "behavior" and "reasons." This indicates that youth workers struggle with the complex nature of radicalization and find it difficult to understand how young people behave during this process. The nature of radicalism is seen as a factor that complicates the management of the process. Under the Communication issues code, the most frequently used terms were "teachers" and "difficult, find, teenagers." This suggests that one of the biggest challenges is establishing effective communication with young people. Youth workers

have noted that engaging in dialogue with young people prone to radicalization is difficult, and they face particular challenges in communicating effectively with teenagers. In the Lack of education code, the most prominent terms were "training" and "lack." Youth workers see the inadequacy of educational programs as a major obstacle in combating radicalization. The lack of education leaves young people vulnerable to radical ideologies and hinders the effectiveness of youth workers in addressing the issue.

Under the Insufficient financial resources code, the most frequently used terms were "topic" and "results." Youth workers express concern over the lack of financial resources available to combat radicalization. Insufficient funding reduces the effectiveness of projects and makes it harder to develop long-term solutions to radicalization. In the Legal and structural deficiencies code, the most frequently used terms were "clear, engaged, information, tools." This shows that legal and structural barriers pose significant challenges in combating radicalization. Youth workers believe that the current legal frameworks and structural systems do not provide adequate support for addressing the issue. Finally, under the Approach code, the most frequently used terms were "influence" and "political." Youth workers have stated that a more effective strategy is needed to combat radicalization, and that current approaches are insufficient. Political approaches have not had the desired impact on young people, highlighting the need for new strategies in this area.

Table 19: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Experienced Activities

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Inter-institutional programs and collaboration	-Local (f=3) -Countries, different, international, legal (f=2)
Surveys and feedback	-Changes, feedback, programs (f=2) -Long-term, allows (f=1)
Raising awareness among young people	-Camp/s (f=4) -Local, summer (f=3)

In Table 19, under the Inter-institutional programs and collaboration code, the most prominent terms were "local" and "countries, different, international, legal." Youth workers reported participating in both local and international inter-institutional collaborations, and through these partnerships, they have developed more effective strategies for combating radicalization. Under the Surveys and Feedback code, the most frequently used terms were "changes" and "feedback, programs." Youth workers mentioned that they have gathered valuable data on radicalization through surveys and feedback collected from young people. This information has helped inform their approaches and strategies. In the Raising Awareness Among Young People code, the prominent terms were "camps" and "local, summer." Youth workers have experienced efforts to raise awareness among young people through summer camps and local activities, aiming to educate and engage young people in preventing radicalization.

III.II.II.I.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

Under this theme, the needs and recommendations of youth workers regarding the prevention and combatting of radicalization were examined.

Figure 15: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme

Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization
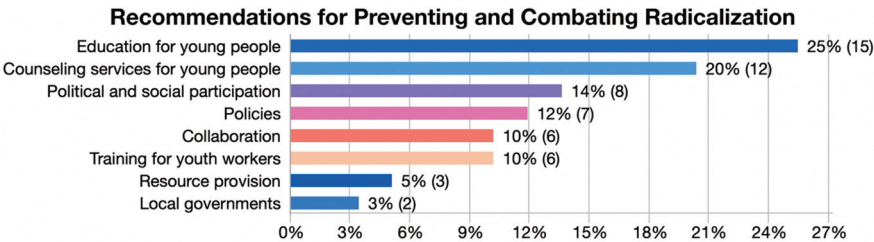
According to Figure 15, the most emphasized recommendation is Education for young people. Youth workers believe that education aimed at young people is one of the most effective ways to build resistance against radical ideologies. Education plays a crucial role in raising awareness among young people and protecting them from the influence of radical groups. The second most emphasized recommendation is Counseling services for young

people. Youth workers highlight that young people need emotional and psychological support, and counseling services are an important factor in preventing radicalization. These services provide the necessary support to young people before they fall under the influence of radical groups. The third recommendation is Political and social participation. Youth workers argue that active participation in social and political processes is a protective factor against radicalization. When young people are able to express themselves and contribute to society, the likelihood of them turning to radical ideologies decreases. Policies and Collaboration are also prominent recommendations. Youth workers suggest the development of effective policies to combat radicalization and emphasize the importance of increasing collaboration between different institutions. According to youth workers, these collaborations will help implement broader and more effective strategies against radicalization.

Training for youth workers is another key recommendation, aiming to equip individuals who work directly with young people with the necessary tools to combat radicalization. Youth workers indicate that the training provided to them needs to be more comprehensive. Lastly, Resource provision and Local governments are emphasized as areas where financial and structural support needs to be increased. Youth workers recommend that local governments take a more active role in providing resources and support for projects aimed at protecting against radicalization.

Table 20: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Training for youth workers	–Specialized, topics (f=3) –Course, present (f=2)
Resource provision	–Interesting, life (f=2) –Attract, behavior, business (f=1)
Counseling services for young people	–Psychological (f=6) –Support (f=4)
Local governments	–Authorities, local (f=2) –Awareness, highlighted, policy (f=1)
Political and social participation	–Communication, community, cooperation, dialogue, group (f=2)
Collaboration	–Benefit, cooperation, develop, experience, intercultural (f=2)
Policies	–Groups, strong (f=3) –Development, economic, educational (f=2)
Education for young people	–Information, training (f=5) –Critical, literacy (f=4)

Under the Training for youth workers recommendation, the most frequently used terms were "specialized" and "topics." Youth workers suggest that those involved in combating radicalization need more specialized training. These trainings are considered essential for youth workers to better understand radicalization and to intervene more effectively in this area. In the Resource provision recommendation, terms such as "interesting, life" and "attract, behavior" were highlighted. This indicates that youth workers believe there is a need for more financial and structural resources to effectively combat radicalization. In the Counseling services for young people code, the prominent terms were "psychological" and "support." Youth workers emphasize the need for psychological support for young people, stating that counseling services are a critical tool for preventing radicalization. They recommend expanding psychological

counseling and support services to provide young people with the necessary help before they are drawn into radical ideologies. In the Local governments code, the terms "authorities" and "local" were used. Youth workers suggest that local governments should play a more active role in combating radicalization. Increasing awareness at the local level and implementing policies are seen as critical in protecting young people from radical ideologies. Under the Political and social participation recommendation, terms like "communication" and "community, cooperation" were highlighted. Youth workers believe that increasing young people's participation in society is a key strategy in preventing radicalization. When young people are engaged in political and social processes, their likelihood of turning to radical ideologies decreases. The Collaboration recommendation emphasizes the importance of developing inter-institutional cooperation. Terms like "benefit" and "cooperation" suggest that different institutions working together can be more effective in combating radicalization. Finally, under the Policies and Education for young people codes, the importance of education and policy development was highlighted. Youth workers recommend the development of strong policies, and the expansion of educational programs aimed at young people. These programs would help raise awareness about radical ideologies and foster critical thinking skills among young people.

III.II.II.II. Discussions and Policy Advice

III.II.II.II.I. Understanding Radicalization

The process of radicalization in Ukraine, when examined within its historical and socio-political context, reveals a complex structure. The findings clearly illustrate the awareness and perceptions of youth workers regarding radicalization. Youth workers evaluate radicalization through various indicators and effects, particularly emphasizing how this process leads to profound social conflicts within society. Youth workers define radicalization through certain indicators, with aggressive and discriminatory tendencies being the most prominent. The high frequency of codes related to "aggressive tendencies" and "exclusion" indicates that this process significantly impacts individuals' behavioral and social

environments. These findings align with the historical context of Ukraine, where external influences have historically triggered radical movements. The study by Zasenko et al. (2024) emphasizes that Ukraine has long been under external influences, which have played a role in the emergence of radical movements. The identification of aggressive behaviors and social exclusion by youth workers further highlights the importance of understanding the societal impact of radicalization.

Youth workers perceive the government's approach to combating radicalization as inadequate and confrontational. According to the findings, there is a need for more comprehensive strategies to address radicalization. Tarasyuk's (2023) research also indicates that government policies in Ukraine have been limited in their efforts to combat radicalization, with external influences continuing to play a significant role. The youth workers' expectations of more effective policies from the government are consistent with the analyses found in the literature.

The emotional and social effects of radicalization are also evident in the findings. Youth workers highlight that radicalization causes significant psychological stress and anxiety. These findings support the idea that radicalization leads to deep social divisions and conflicts within society. Economic crises and social injustices are shown to make young people more susceptible to radicalization (Bortnik, 2012). The observations of youth workers reveal that this process not only affects individuals but also creates insecurity and conflict at the societal level.

Regarding their motivations, youth workers adopt an approach that targets both youth and society in the prevention of radicalization. The findings emphasize the importance of raising awareness and making society more responsive to these issues. In this regard, as the literature also suggests, cooperation between society and the government is essential in developing more inclusive and education-based policies (Tarasyuk, 2023; Farinelli & Marinone, 2021).

The perceptions of youth workers regarding radicalization are closely tied to Ukraine's historical and social context. The findings indicate that the

process of radicalization has profound effects on both youth and society, and that the government must develop more effective policies to address this issue. The observations made by youth workers reveal the destructive impact of radicalization on the social fabric and highlight the need for increased awareness and inclusive strategies to prevent this process.

III.II.II.II.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

The findings from youth workers in Ukraine regarding the factors influencing radicalization reveal both alignments and divergences when compared to the existing literature. According to the data, youth workers identified media and the internet as the most significant factor, with a 26% emphasis on its role in exposing young people to radical ideologies and drawing them into these movements. This aligns closely with the broader literature, which similarly highlights the role of media, particularly social media, in the spread of radical ideologies. For example, Farinelli and Marinone (2021) note that radical groups leverage media platforms to spread their narratives and recruit young people, a point also emphasized in the European Network on Radicalization's findings. Thus, both the findings and the literature consistently underscore the centrality of media in modern radicalization processes.

However, an area of divergence emerges in how youth workers perceive the impact of personal quests. The findings indicate that young people are drawn to radical ideologies as part of a search for identity, meaning, or belonging, accounting for 20% of the responses. While the literature acknowledges personal factors in the radicalization process, it often emphasizes external factors like political instability or economic hardship as more dominant triggers (Tarasyuk, 2023). The emphasis on personal quests in the findings suggests that Ukrainian youth workers may perceive a more individualized motivation behind radicalization, particularly in the context of identity formation, which may not be as heavily weighted in broader analyses of radicalization.

The political climate is another major factor highlighted by youth workers, who point out that political conflict and instability make young

people more susceptible to radical ideas. This is consistent with much of the existing literature, which stresses the influence of political environments, especially in conflict zones like Ukraine, where external pressures such as Russian aggression have historically fueled radicalization (Zasenko et al., 2024). Both the findings and the literature agree on the pivotal role of political instability in fostering radicalization, although youth workers seem to place slightly more emphasis on how political polarization directly shapes youth identity and pushes them toward extremism.

Interestingly, negative experiences were highlighted as a factor by youth workers, with 14% of responses indicating that trauma or social exclusion increases vulnerability to radicalization. This observation aligns with Bortnik's (2012) research, which shows that individuals who feel marginalized or excluded are more likely to be drawn to radical ideologies. However, the findings bring a more localized perspective to the issue, as youth workers in Ukraine specifically mention social rejection and intolerance as driving factors. This may reflect the unique socio-political context of Ukraine, where external occupation and internal social divisions heighten the sense of exclusion.

Furthermore, economic factors, while acknowledged by youth workers, only accounted for 9% of the identified influences on radicalization. This is somewhat in contrast to broader literature, which frequently underscores economic hardship as a significant driver of radicalization, especially in regions facing long-term economic instability. For example, Tarasyuk (2023) argues that economic deprivation often compounds other social grievances, making individuals more susceptible to radicalization. The comparatively lower emphasis on economic factors in the youth workers' responses could indicate a difference in how local actors perceive the root causes of radicalization, suggesting that in Ukraine, economic issues may be seen as less immediately impactful than social or personal triggers.

However, it should not be overlooked that Ukraine is currently going through an extraordinary period marked by war. In such circumstances, the factors influencing radicalization may go beyond the general literature and be shaped by the challenges of war or conflict situations. Indeed as the

literature on conflict zones suggests, addressing these issues requires a more nuanced approach, where prevention strategies not only focus on education but also on addressing the emotional and social disruptions caused by war (Bartlett, Birdwell & King, 2010)

III.II.II.II.III. Combating Radicalization

The greatest challenges faced by youth workers in Ukraine in combating radicalization include a lack of education, insufficient financial resources, and structural barriers. The findings indicate that youth workers encounter significant difficulties in addressing the complex nature of radicalization. One of the key issues highlighted is the challenge of establishing effective communication with young people who are prone to radicalization, with difficulties in engaging in dialogue being a recurring theme. As noted in the literature, radicalization is a multilayered process, often shaped by feelings of social exclusion, trauma, and insecurity (Farinelli & Marinone, 2021). In this context, the emphasis placed by youth workers on communication and educational challenges underscores the importance of these factors in managing the process of radicalization.

Moreover, the ongoing war in Ukraine has exacerbated these challenges. The trauma and instability brought about by conflict create an environment where young people are more susceptible to radical ideologies, complicating the efforts of youth workers even further. The findings reveal that the level of preparedness among youth workers to address radicalization remains insufficient, making it difficult for them to develop effective interventions. Additionally, the limited scope of inter-institutional collaborations and awareness-raising activities further hinders efforts to combat radicalization.

One of the most striking elements in the experiences of youth workers is the difficulty in understanding the nature of radicalization and the inadequacy of existing strategies to address it. Youth workers emphasize the need for a deeper understanding of the causes of radicalization and how young people become involved in this process. The literature similarly highlights that combating radicalization requires more than just

educational and awareness-raising approaches; it calls for comprehensive, community-based strategies (Tarasyuk, 2023).

In the current context of war and conflict, the methods and strategies used to combat radicalization tend to deviate from the general literature. The socio-psychological impacts of war make young people more vulnerable to radical ideologies, causing the process of radicalization to accelerate. As a result, the challenges faced by youth workers must be understood in light of the unique circumstances of war and conflict. There is a need for greater resources, support, and the development of more comprehensive training programs to effectively combat radicalization in this context.

III.II.II.II.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

The recommendations provided by youth workers for combating radicalization align with many findings in the literature. In particular, education and psychological counseling services are highlighted as crucial tools in helping young people build resilience against radical ideologies. The literature similarly emphasizes the role of educational programs in raising awareness among youth and fostering critical thinking skills (Gielen, 2017). This finding underscores the importance of both education-based programs and individual psychological support in the prevention of radicalization.

Another key recommendation from the findings is the need to enhance young people's social and political participation. Youth workers argue that when young people are actively involved in society, the likelihood of them turning to radical ideologies decreases. This is a point strongly echoed in the literature, which highlights the importance of creating social spaces where young people can express themselves as a protective factor against radicalization (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010). Providing avenues for young people to contribute to society strengthens their sense of belonging and reduces the appeal of radical groups.

Recommendations around institutional collaboration and the development of policies were also frequently emphasized by youth workers. They advocate for greater collaboration between different institutions and for these processes to be coordinated in a way that maximizes their impact

on combating radicalization. The literature also stresses the importance of such collaborations, noting that multi-stakeholder approaches can offer a more comprehensive strategy for addressing radicalization (Schmid, 2013). Regarding policy development, both the findings and the literature agree that prevention strategies should not only focus on security measures but also incorporate social and economic programs.

The recommendations from youth workers on education, counseling, social participation, and institutional collaboration reflect a broad and multi-dimensional approach to combating radicalization. In this sense, the emphasis on educational and awareness-raising programs in the literature is validated by the practical experiences of youth workers in the field.

In the context of prevention recommendations, it is important to consider how the ongoing conflict in Ukraine shapes the effectiveness of these strategies. While youth workers emphasize the importance of education, psychological counseling, and social participation, the unique challenges of a war-torn society cannot be overlooked. Conflict situations, such as the one in Ukraine, exacerbate social and psychological vulnerabilities, making young people more susceptible to radicalization. Indeed, as the literature suggests, the impact of trauma, displacement, and insecurity caused by conflict demands a more comprehensive approach to prevention. Educational programs and psychological support must be adapted to address the specific needs of young people affected by war, ensuring that these strategies are effective in both preventing and mitigating the effects of radicalization (Bartlett, Birdwell & King, 2010). Therefore, youth workers need additional resources and specialized training to navigate the complexities introduced by conflict when implementing these preventive measures.

III.II.III. Perceptions of Youth Workers on Youth Radicalization in France

In the open-ended 21 questions posed to youth workers, their experiences and observations related to the phenomenon of radicalization were explored in depth. According to the analysis, the results were examined under four themes: "Understanding Radicalization", "Factors Influencing

Radicalization", "Combating Radicalization" and "Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization" and main codes and sub-codes (N=56) were established.

Table 21: Example Coding Table

Main Code	Sub code	Description	Example
Indicators	Sympathy for radical tendencies	Interest in and involvement with radical actions, ideas, and groups	Over time, they began engaging with extremist content online and connected with radical groups on social media. (P. 48)
Indicators	Isolation	Individual and social isolation, withdrawal	Isolation. That's really the biggest problem. (P. 29)
Indicators	Changes	Changes in individuals' beliefs, religious views, ideologies, social environment, and appearance	The early signs were subtle, but paying close attention to changes in their behavior and attitudes helped us intervene before the situation escalated. (P. 48)
Indicators	Discriminatory tendencies	Exclusionary and marginalizing approaches on any issue (such as religion, race, sect, gender, appearance, etc.)	The exact definition would be racism (P. 10)
Indicators	Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication	Being always nervous, being unsocial, having hate speech, Inexplicable absents (P. 40)

III.II.III.I. Empirical Findings

III.II.III.I.I. Understanding Radicalization

Under this theme, efforts are made to understand how radicalization is perceived by youth workers and how their awareness is interpreted. Additionally, the study investigates how youth workers assess the approach of national societies and governments toward radicalism. In this context, the perception of radicalism among youth workers is examined in depth. Eight main codes were created under this theme. The distribution percentages of the main codes related to this theme are shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
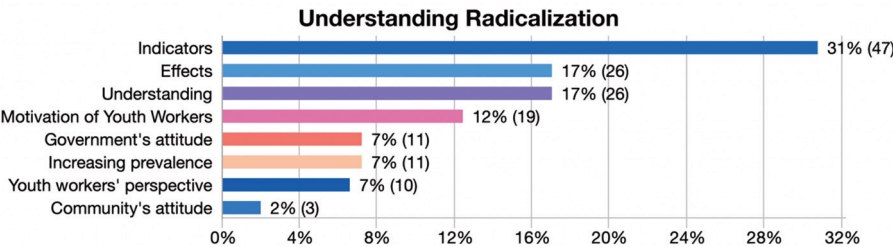
In the analysis aimed at understanding radicalization, youth workers focused primarily on the indicators of radicalization. This finding suggests that youth workers in France are highly aware of the indicators of radicalization. Furthermore, the effects and understanding of radicalization were coded at 17%, making this the second most emphasized area. Another significant finding is the motivation of youth workers to combat radicalization. In 12% of the coded areas, youth workers highlighted their personal sense of responsibility and motivation to address this issue. The increasing prevalence of radicalization and the government's attitude were coded at 7%, indicating that these topics are also of concern to youth workers. However, community's attitudes were the least emphasized, coded at only 2%, suggesting that youth workers place less focus on the societal perception and approach to radicalization.

Table 22: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

🔴 Changes	7
🔴 Discriminatory tendencies	8
🔴 Aggressive tendencies	8
⌄ 🔴 Understanding	
🔴 Non-normative	4
🔴 Demand for change	
🔴 Rigid beliefs	9
🔴 Aggression	7
🔴 Threat	2
🔴 Limited positivity	
🔴 Process	4
⌄ 🔴 Motivation of Youth Workers	
🔴 Youth-focused	10
🔴 Community-focused	7
🔴 Values-driven	2
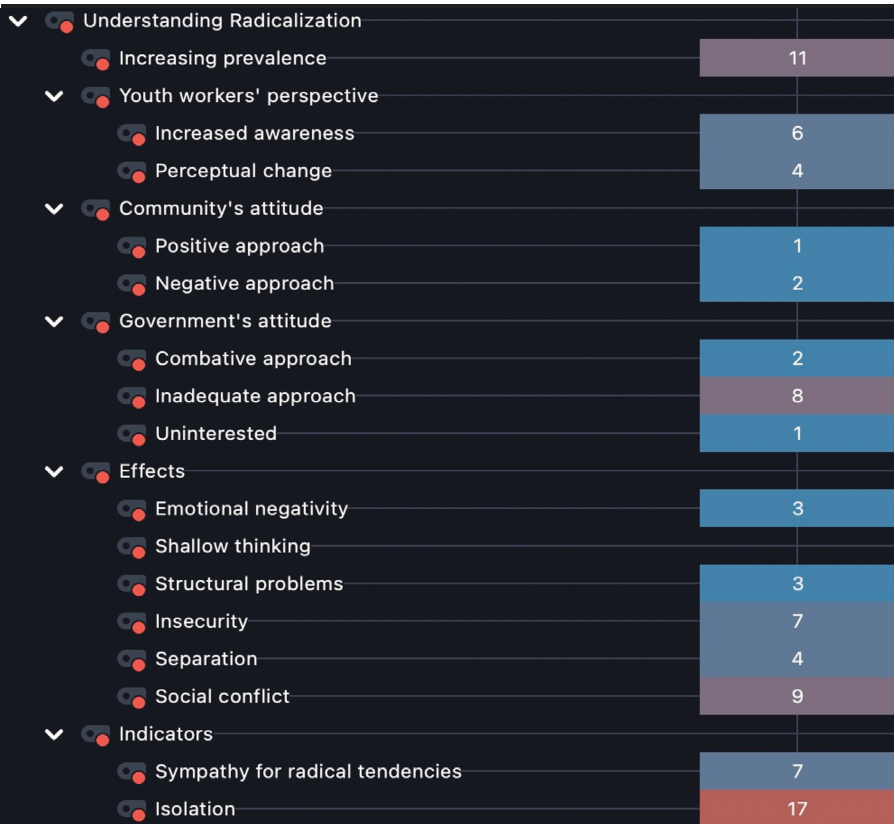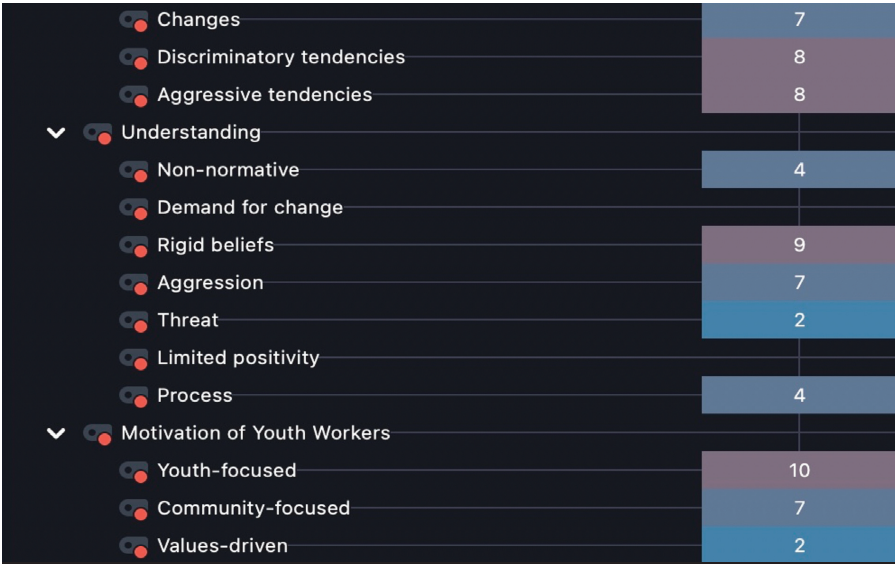
Youth workers reported that their awareness had increased and that they had experienced a deeper perceptual shift regarding radicalization processes. It was observed that society tends to adopt a negative attitude towards radicalization. While positive approaches remain limited, it is understood that society reacts more strongly against radicalization. The government's stance has been coded as both confrontational and insufficient. Among the effects of radicalization, the most prominent are social conflict, division, and insecurity. In this context, it is clear that youth workers assess radicalization in terms of its impact on social security. Under the indicators theme, the most striking finding is "isolation." Isolation has emerged as the most significant indicator of radicalization. The withdrawal of individuals from society and the loss of their social connections plays a critical role in the radicalization process. In addition to this, sympathy for radical tendencies, discriminatory behavior, and aggressive attitudes has also been coded as important indicators. However, isolation stands out among all the indicators and is one of the most frequently observed signs of radicalization by youth workers.

Table 23: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Understanding

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Non-normative	–Values (f=3) –Beliefs, definition, democratic, extreme (f=2)
Rigid beliefs	–Extreme (f=6) –Process (f=4)
Aggression	– Extreme (f=4) –Ideas, process, sometimes, violence (f=3)
Threat	–Society (f=3)
Process	–Extreme (f=4) –Adopt, ideas, ideologies (f=2)

Under the non-normative sub-code, the most prominent term was "values." Youth workers indicated that radicalization is based on values that exist outside of social norms. Additionally, concepts such as beliefs and undemocratic, extremist attitudes were also seen as important in defining non-normative tendencies of radicalization. In the Rigid Beliefs sub-code, the term "extreme" was the most frequently used. It was often emphasized that radicalization is rooted in extreme and inflexible beliefs that are resistant to change. The term "process" was used to describe how these rigid beliefs develop over time. In the Aggression sub-code, terms like "ideas," "process," and "violence" were highlighted. Youth workers explained that radicalization is a phenomenon where ideas and processes combine with violence. The Threat sub-code shows that radicalization is perceived as a threat to society. Under the process sub-code, terms such as "extremism," "ideas," and "ideologies" were prominent. Youth workers described radicalization as a process tied to ideologies, developing as individuals adopt more radical ideas.

Table 24: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Indicators

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Sympathy for radical tendencies	–Changes (f=6) –Behavior, extremist, groups, online (f=4)
İsolation	–Changes, social (f=6) –Behavior (f=5)
Changes	–Behavior, signs (f=5) –Extreme, groups (f=4)
Discriminatory tendencies	–Extreme, racism (f=2)
Aggressive tendencies	–Violence, violent (f=2)

Table 24 analyzes youth workers' responses regarding the indicators of radicalization. Under the sympathy for radical tendencies sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "change" and "behavior." These findings indicate that young people who sympathize with radical ideologies experience notable changes in their thoughts and behaviors. Youth workers highlighted that participation in extremist groups and engagement with radical content on online platforms are significant indicators of this process. Under the isolation sub-code, the prominent terms were "changes" and "social." This suggests that during the radicalization process, young people start to withdraw from social relationships and isolate themselves from society. Under the changes sub-code, the terms "behavior" and "signs" were most frequently mentioned. Youth workers observed sudden changes in the attitudes and behaviors of young people, noting that these shifts often indicate the onset of radicalization. Under the discriminatory tendencies sub-code, the most notable terms were "extremism" and "racism." These findings suggest that as young people become more radicalized, they tend to adopt increasingly discriminatory and racist rhetoric. Finally, under the aggressive tendencies sub-code, the terms "violence" and "violent" stood out. Youth workers noted that young people with radical tendencies often exhibit aggression and a propensity for using violence in their language and behavior.

Table 25: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Effects

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Emotional negativity	–Individual (f=3)
Structural problems	–Social, community, economic (f=3),
Insecurity	–Social (f=6) – Community (f=5)
Separation	–Communities (f=3) –Division, fear (f=2)
Social conflict	–Community, society (f=3) –Bad, cohesion (f=2)

Table 25 presents various significant sub-codes based on youth workers' responses regarding the effects of radicalization. Under the emotional negativity sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "individual" and "institutions." This indicates that youth workers believe radicalization has a negative emotional impact on individuals. Under the structural problems sub-code, the prominent terms were "social," "community," and "economic." These findings suggest that radicalization creates significant structural issues within society, negatively affecting social cohesion, community relationships, and economic stability. Under the insecurity sub-code, the most frequently mentioned terms were "social" and "society." Youth workers expressed that radicalization generates social insecurity and weakens the sense of trust within society. In the division sub-code, the most notable terms were "communities," "division," and "fear." Youth workers observed that radicalization leads to division and fear among communities. Under the social conflict sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "society," "community," and "maladjustment." These findings reveal that radicalization contributes to social conflict and issues with social integration within communities.

III.II.III.I.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

Figure 17: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
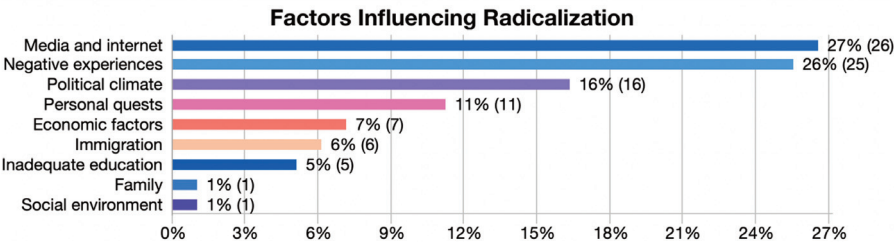
As shown in Figure 16, youth workers have identified media and the internet as the most prominent factor influencing radicalization (27%). Young people encounter radical ideologies through media and the internet, and these platforms have become powerful tools for radical groups to spread their propaganda. According to youth workers, the second most significant factor is personal quests (16%), representing young people's search for identity, meaning, and belonging. In their pursuit of personal fulfillment, young people tend to gravitate toward radical groups where they can define themselves. These personal quests increase their interest in radical ideologies and lead them to become part of these groups. The third factor is the political climate (16%). In periods of intense political conflict and questioning of policies, the likelihood of joining radical groups is higher. This suggests that young people may turn to radical ideologies in their efforts to find their identity within a polarized and conflict-ridden political environment. The fourth factor is negative experiences (11%). Traumatic, personal, or societal negative experiences in young people's lives make them more vulnerable to the influence of radical groups. These experiences erode their trust in society, leading them to seek the "alternative worlds" offered by radical groups. Other factors include economic factors (7%), immigration (6%), inadequate education (5%), family (1%), and social environment (1%). Economic hardships increase young people's anxiety about the future, making the solutions proposed by radical groups more appealing. Immigration experiences or society's attitudes towards immigrants, as well as inadequate education, render young people more susceptible to radicalization. Family and social environment, on the other

hand, are considered to have a lower impact on radicalization according to youth workers in France.

Table 26: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Economic factors	–Social (f=4) –Belonging, identity (f=2)
İnadequate education	–lack (f=3) –Driving, force, ignorance (f=2)
Negative experiences	–Exclusion, social (f=8) –Society (f=4)
Political climate	–Media (f=5) –Government, politicians (f=4)
Family	–
Personal quests	–Identity (f=9) –Belonging (f=5)
Media and internet	–Social (f=14) –Online (f=8)
Social environment	–
Immigration	–Driving, force, migration, problem (f=2)

The findings reveal that the difficulties young people experience due to economic factors negatively impact their "social" lives and create challenges in their sense of "belonging" and "identity." This suggests that economic hardships may contribute to the radicalization process. Inadequate access to education exacerbates these issues, as young people face a "lack" of educational opportunities, which acts as a "driving force" for radicalization, along with "ignorance." The frequent mention of terms such as "exclusion" and "social" in the context of negative experiences highlights how isolation from "society" fosters conditions for radicalization. In terms of the political climate, the terms "media" and "government" point to the influence of both media and political actors in shaping young people's vulnerability to radical ideologies. In the context of personal quests, the emphasis on "identity" indicates that young people's

search for self-definition can drive them toward radical groups. The role of "media" and the "internet" is emphasized by the frequent mention of "social" and "online" interactions, which serve as key avenues for the spread of radical ideologies. Finally, in the context of immigration, terms such as "driving force" and "problem" reflect the challenges faced by migrants, which may increase their susceptibility to radicalization. In additionally, the perception that migration is seen as a "problem" can be inferred.

III.II.III.I.III. Combating Radicalization

In this theme, which reflects the experiences of youth workers in combating radicalization, challenges appear to be the most prominent. While youth workers indicated that they had engaged in various activities during the process, the relatively low number of coded areas related to preparedness suggests that youth workers face shortcomings in their efforts to combat radicalization effectively.

Figure 18: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
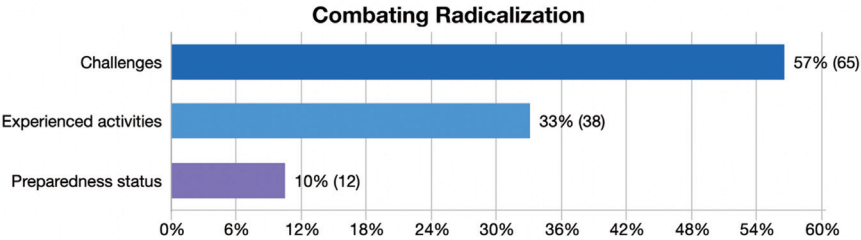
In this theme, which reflects the experiences of youth workers in combating radicalization, challenges appear to be the most prominent. While youth workers indicated that they had engaged in various activities during the process, the relatively low number of coded areas related to preparedness suggests that youth workers face shortcomings in their efforts to combat radicalization effectively.

Table 27: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

According to the data from Table 27, the unprepared category was the most frequently coded in terms of youth workers' preparedness for combating radicalization. This finding indicates that youth workers do not feel sufficiently equipped to tackle radicalization, and their overall level of preparedness is generally low. Among the activities they have participated in, the most prominent were inter-institutional programs and collaborations. Youth workers have collaborated with various institutions to prevent radicalization and have taken part in these programs. Training for youth workers is another key activity. These training sessions aim to enhance youth workers' knowledge and skills in combating radicalization. Additionally, surveys and feedback and awareness-raising initiatives among young people were other notable activities. In terms of challenges, the most frequently cited issue was the lack of education. Youth workers stated that inadequate educational programs leave young people vulnerable to radical ideologies. Furthermore, communication issues and legal and structural

deficiencies were identified as major challenges. Youth workers reported difficulties in establishing effective dialogue with young people and facing legal obstacles. Additionally, insufficient financial resources and the nature of radicalization were also mentioned as significant challenges in combating radicalization.

Table 28: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Challenges

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
The nature radicalism	-Person, signs (f=4) -Concerns (f=3)
Communication issues	-Lack, trust (f=5)
Lack of education	-Training (f=16) -Specific (f=7)
Insufficient financial resources	-Training (f=6) -Lack (f=5),
Legal and structural deficiencies	-Efforts, lack, training (f=3) -Face (f=2)
Approach	-Obstacles (f=4) -Government, measures (f=3)

Table 28 highlights the prominent sub-codes regarding the challenges faced by youth workers in combating radicalization. Under the nature of radicalization sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "person" and "signs." Youth workers expressed that they find it difficult to track the signs of radicalization in individuals, and the complexity of this process makes it challenging to combat. Additionally, the term "concerns" indicates that the nature of radicalization is a source of anxiety for youth workers. Under the communication issues sub-code, the most prominent terms were "lack" and "trust." Youth workers reported difficulties in establishing effective dialogue with young people, and a lack of trust has disrupted communication processes. Under the lack of education sub-code, "training" was the most frequently mentioned term. Youth workers emphasized that the absence of adequate education is a major challenge in combating radicalization. The term "specific" suggests that these educational efforts

need to be more tailored to addressing radicalization specifically. In the insufficient financial resources sub-code, the terms "training" and "lack" were highlighted. Youth workers stated that there are insufficient financial resources to support educational programs. Under the legal and structural deficiencies sub-code, the terms "efforts" and "lack" were frequently mentioned. Youth workers pointed out that there is insufficient legal and structural support in combating radicalization. Lastly, under the approach sub-code, the terms "obstacles" and "government" were prominent. Youth workers indicated that the government's approach to combating radicalization is inadequate, and they face various structural barriers in this process.

Table 29: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Experienced Activities

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Inter-institutional programs and collaboration	–Community (f=5) –Local, organization, religious (f=4)
Training for youth workers	–Particularly, received, resources, specialized (f=2)
Surveys and feedback	–Impact (f=7) –Behavior, changes (f=4)
Raising awareness among young people	–Community (f=4) –Extremist, promoting, workshops (f=3)

Under the inter-institutional programs and collaborations sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "community" and "local." Youth workers have actively collaborated with local communities and religious organizations to combat radicalization. These collaborations have emerged as a significant area of experience in anti-radicalization efforts. In the training for youth workers sub-code, the terms "particularly" and "resources" were notable. Youth workers emphasized how the training they received has helped enhance their roles in combating radicalization. Under the surveys and feedback sub-code, the most frequently used term was "impact." Youth workers observed changes in young people's behavior through the surveys and feedback they conducted. The terms "behavior" and "changes" were identified as key findings in this process. Under the

raising awareness among young people sub-code, the terms "community" and "extremist" were prominent. Youth workers organized workshops aimed at preventing extremist ideologies and raising awareness among young people. These initiatives were seen as important preventive measures against radicalization.

III.II.III.I.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

Figure 19: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme

Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

Category	Percentage
Education for young people	26% (53)
Counseling services for young people	16% (32)
Political and social participation	13% (27)
Resource provision	12% (25)
Policies	12% (25)
Collaboration	11% (22)
Training for youth workers	8% (16)
Local governments	1% (3)
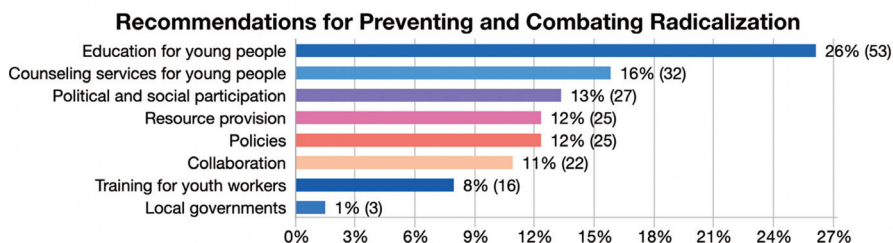
According to Figure 19, the most recommended area for preventing and combating radicalization is education for young people, which was coded at 26%. Youth workers emphasize that through education, young people can become more resilient against radical ideologies. Counseling services for young people ranked second at 16%. This recommendation suggests that providing professional support to young people before they show tendencies toward radicalization can help prevent the process. Political and social participation was another prominent recommendation, coded at 13%. It was noted that active involvement in political and social processes can keep young people from joining radical groups. Resource provision and policies was coded at 12%, with youth workers stressing the need for increased financial and logistical support in combating radicalization. Collaboration was coded at 11%, and youth workers advocate for strengthening cooperation between different institutions and stakeholders in the fight against radicalization. Lastly, training for youth workers was recommended at 8%, highlighting the need for further education to enhance youth workers' skills in combating radicalization.

Table 30: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Training for youth workers	–Efforts, support (f=3) –Action, awareness (f=3)
Resource provision	–Support (f=7) –Training (f=5)
Counseling services for young people	–Community (f=5) –Support (f=4)
Political and social participation	–Dialogue (f=7) –Education, mutual, open, prevent (f=2)
Collaboration	–Associations, community, educational, efforts (f=2)
Policies	–Government (f=3) –Support, understanding (f=2)
Education for young people	–Community, media, efforts (f=3)

In the training for youth workers sub-code, the most frequently used terms were "efforts" and "support." These findings suggest that youth workers need to make more efforts in combating radicalization and that these efforts should be supported. Additionally, the term "awareness" indicates that this training serves as an important tool in raising youth workers' awareness. Under the resource provision sub-code, the terms "support" and "training" were prominent. Youth workers emphasized that providing adequate resources and expanding education plays a critical role in combating radicalization. In the counseling services for young people sub-code, the terms "community" and "support" were frequently mentioned. This finding suggests that counseling services for young people should be strengthened with community-based support, and this support plays a significant role in protecting young people from radicalization. In the political and social participation sub-code, the terms "dialogue" and "education" were highlighted. Youth workers expressed that encouraging open and reciprocal dialogue is necessary for young people to play a more active role in political and social processes. Under the collaboration sub-

code, the terms "associations" and "communities" were the most frequently used. These findings highlight the importance of increasing collaboration between different communities and associations in combating radicalization. Under the policies sub-code, the terms "government" and "support" were prominent. Youth workers noted that the government should provide more support for policies aimed at combating radicalization. In the education for young people sub-code, the terms "community," "media," and "efforts" were the most frequently used. This suggests that young people need to be educated and made aware of radicalization, and this education should be reinforced with community support.

III.II.III.II. Discussions and Policy Advice

III.II.III.II.I. Understanding Radicalization

The understanding of radicalization, its effects, and its impacts on young people are complex phenomena at both the individual and societal levels. This study analyzes the awareness and perceptions of youth workers regarding the process of radicalization. The findings demonstrate that youth workers exhibit a high level of awareness of the signs of radicalization. This observation aligns with the existing literature, which frequently emphasizes that the processes of radicalization manifest through signs such as social isolation, behavioral changes, and the adoption of extreme ideologies (Khosrokhavar, 2017; McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). Social isolation, in particular, stands out as the most commonly observed indicator by youth workers. This finding is consistent with the notion in the literature that the weakening of individuals' social ties and their withdrawal from social life accelerate the radicalization process (Roy, 2004). As individuals become detached from their social environments, they become more vulnerable to radical ideologies.

Under the theme of understanding radicalization, the "meaning" code plays an important role. Youth workers define the process of radicalization in terms of values that deviate from social norms and rigid beliefs. According to the findings, the term "values" was the most frequently used under the "meaning" code, indicating that radicalization is perceived as a process

rooted in values that stray from societal norms (Khosrokhavar, 2017). The literature also highlights that as individuals' values diverge from the norms of mainstream society, they become more open to radical ideologies (Silke, 2008). The awareness displayed by youth workers regarding this process provides important insights into how individuals gradually adopt radical beliefs over time.

The effects of radicalization create wide-ranging problems on both individual and societal levels. The findings reveal various observations made by youth workers regarding the impact of radicalization on society. The most significant effects identified include "emotional negativity," "structural problems," "insecurity," and "social division." Emotional negativity refers to the psychological tensions and emotional difficulties individuals experience throughout the radicalization process. Structural problems, on the other hand, highlight the negative social, communal, and economic consequences of radicalization. Thus, radicalization has far-reaching implications not only for individuals but also for the overall structure of society (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011). Social insecurity and division are additional prominent effects, indicating that radicalization undermines social cohesion and leads to fragmentation within communities (Vidino, 2017). These effects, frequently emphasized in the literature, confirm that radicalization is a process that threatens the integrity of society (Sageman, 2004).

The rise of radicalization in France is associated with both social and political factors. The literature indicates that radicalization has increased in recent years, driven by social inequalities, economic problems, and the inadequacies of government integration policies (Khosrokhavar, 2017; Kepel, 2015). Young people, particularly those living in the suburbs, are more susceptible to radical ideologies due to marginalization and experiences of discrimination. Furthermore, France's military interventions in the Middle East have been used by radical groups to fuel "anti-Western" sentiments, contributing to the radicalization process (Roy, 2004). Therefore, the rise in radicalization in France can be understood as a consequence of both domestic dynamics and international developments.

III.II.III.II.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

Among the factors contributing to radicalization, the most striking is the role of the media and the internet. Young people frequently encounter radical ideologies through these platforms, which have become powerful tools for radical groups to disseminate their propaganda. According to youth workers, the contribution of the media and the internet to radicalization is the most significant, accounting for 27%. Following this, personal quests represent 16%, ranking second. Factors such as the search for identity, meaning, and belonging play a critical role in drawing young people toward radical groups. Young individuals tend to gravitate towards these groups, where they can define themselves and achieve personal fulfillment. Additionally, the political climate is identified as an important factor influencing young people's inclination toward radical groups, accounting for 16%. During periods of intense political conflict and questioning of policies, the likelihood of joining radical groups increases. In such polarized and conflict-ridden environments, young people seek to fulfill their search for identity within a politically charged atmosphere (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011; Roy, 2004).

Negative life experiences, on the other hand, account for 11% of the factors contributing to radicalization. When young people experience traumatic, personal, or societal negative events, these experiences cause them to withdraw from society and gravitate towards the "alternative worlds" offered by radical groups. These experiences undermine their trust in society, making them more vulnerable to the influence of radical groups. Other factors such as economic hardships, migration, inadequate education, and family also contribute to the process of radicalization. Economic difficulties, in particular, exacerbate young people's anxieties about the future, making the solutions offered by radical groups more appealing (Vidino, 2017).

In conclusion, the radicalization process is influenced by various factors. Social, political, economic, and personal quests all play significant roles in shaping young people's inclination towards radical ideologies. Youth workers' findings reveal that radicalization affects not only

individuals but also society at large, creating serious long–term consequences. The weakening of social trust, division, and insecurity are among the adverse effects of radicalization on society (Kepel, 2015; Neumann, 2013).

III.II.III.II.III. Combating Radicalization

Combating radicalization is a complex process fraught with numerous challenges and obstacles. According to the findings, youth workers face significant difficulties in their efforts to prevent radicalization, with 67% of them highlighting the challenges they encounter. These challenges include a lack of education, communication issues, and legal and structural deficiencies. The lack of adequate education leaves young people vulnerable to radical ideologies, while communication breakdowns and diminished trust among the youth further complicate efforts to prevent radicalization. Additionally, youth workers point to insufficient financial resources as a major barrier in their attempts to combat radicalization. These findings align with the literature, which emphasizes that radicalization must be addressed not only at an individual level but also through structural and institutional efforts (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011; Neumann, 2013).

In terms of practical experience, youth workers have found that certain programs and collaborations have yielded positive outcomes in the fight against radicalization. Collaborations with local communities and religious organizations have emerged as particularly effective, playing a significant role in preventing the spread of radical ideologies at the community level. Furthermore, training programs for youth workers have helped to enhance their roles in combating radicalization by increasing their knowledge and skills. However, the lack of specialized training programs specifically designed to address radicalization remains one of the major challenges identified by youth workers.

In conclusion, youth workers face numerous challenges and obstacles in their efforts to combat radicalization, but they have made significant strides through local collaborations and training programs. While a lack of education, structural deficiencies, and insufficient financial resources

complicate this process, youth workers have developed important resistance against radicalization through community–based partnerships. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of radicalization, the role of youth workers in this process is increasingly critical (Kepel, 2015; Vidino, 2017).

III.II.III.II.IV. Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization

The findings emphasize the importance of education, counseling services, and political participation in combating radicalization. 26% of youth workers stated that education is one of the most critical tools in building resilience against radical ideologies. This finding aligns with the literature, which extensively discusses the importance of educational programs in fostering critical thinking skills and protecting young people from radical ideologies (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011; Roy, 2004). Education not only helps raise awareness to prevent radicalization but also plays a key role in enhancing youth participation in society.

Counseling services ranked second at 16%, highlighting the critical role of providing professional support to young people before they exhibit signs of radicalization. This finding is consistent with the literature, which suggests that offering personal support can prevent young people from becoming socially isolated and turning to radical groups (Neumann, 2013).

Political and social participation was identified as another significant factor in preventing youth from joining radical groups (13%). The findings indicate that active participation in political processes helps reduce the likelihood of young people gravitating toward radical ideologies. The literature similarly supports the idea that when young people have opportunities to express themselves and contribute to society, their susceptibility to radicalization decreases (Vidino, 2017).

While these findings largely align with the literature, youth workers also stressed the need for more widespread and targeted educational programs specifically focused on combating radicalization. Although education is recognized as a key preventive tool, the findings reveal that current educational programs are not sufficiently widespread or specifically

tailored to addressing radicalization. This observation aligns with the broader consensus in the literature on the necessity for more comprehensive educational efforts to counter radicalization (Kepel, 2015).

In conclusion, while the importance of education, counseling services, and political participation is emphasized in combating radicalization, the structural and financial deficiencies faced by youth workers remain major obstacles. Expanding educational programs, increasing government support, and providing more counseling services to young people are seen as critical solutions to effectively prevent radicalization (Khosrokhavar, 2017; Roy, 2004).

III.II.IV. Perceptions of Youth Workers on Youth Radicalization in Spain

In the open-ended 21 questions posed to youth workers, their experiences and observations related to the phenomenon of radicalization were explored in depth. According to the analysis, the results were examined under four themes: "Understanding Radicalization", "Factors Influencing Radicalization", "Combating Radicalization" and "Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization" and main codes and sub-codes (N=54) were established.

Table 31: Example Coding Table

Main Code	Sub code	Description	Example
Indicators	Sympathy for radical tendencies	Interest in and involvement with radical actions, ideas, and groups	They have us. Well. They have done training for the entire faculty. And yes, they have introduced us. We have done some practical cases. For example, Pass This. How would I act? Then I. With these Practical Cases I have already seen that we have Well... Things Like Very armored. Because at the institute there is no flag. It doesn't matter if it's the Chinese one, the one from Japan, right? From Morocco. No. No. In high school. We don't have flags. So. Already Here, if someone Manifests This With a flag Now... It is already a... A warning sign. Well, yes, They Have Put Us... Some Practical Cases. And let's see where we go. About... Well. Above all. No? Interviews with families to see where they are going. And in the event that we see that it is a family that does not accept this, that we do not get it to understand any regulations of the center... It could be... Yes... An indication. (P. 88)
Indicators	Isolation	Individual and social isolation, withdrawal	I believe that the risk is more towards social isolation that leads to radicalism of any kind. Well, I mean, I believe that the risk is more towards social isolation that leads to radicalism of any kind. (P. 2)
Indicators	Changes	Changes in individuals' beliefs, religious views, ideologies, social environment, and appearance	Oh well, a change in discourse that is quite sudden, perhaps in aesthetics, in the way of dressing or this type of hair, if perhaps it is radicalization, then extreme right or politics, shaving one's hair, they start wearing symbols of certain things, they stop getting along with certain people they have gotten along with before, they perhaps isolate themselves from their usual group. (P. 110)
Indicators	Discriminatory tendencies	Exclusionary and marginalizing approaches on any issue (such as religion, race, sect, gender, appearance, etc.)	Well, young people go back a little to my parents' time, so to speak, right? From 50 years ago, many, by having... wanting... what happens is that the control mechanisms are what are changing, okay? Wanting to control the opposite sex, wanting to... say, well, I don't like this sweater you're wearing because you show your legs a lot, you show your body a lot. The mobile control issue is also occurring; Sometimes: "Give me your password, I want to know who you are communicating with, what you are saying." Those types of things are happening, they are happening now. And: "Who do you go with, who... I don't like that person because he has a bad influence on you." Those kinds of things are working. And submissive behavior on the part of girls is also occurring. (P. 59)
Indicators	Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication	Aggressive way of doing, not wanting to hear about anything else, readiness to change things people don't like but in a proper way. (P. 119)

III.II.IV.I. Empirical Findings

II.II.IV.I.I. Understanding Radicalization

Under this theme, efforts are made to understand how radicalization is perceived by youth workers and how their awareness is interpreted. Additionally, the study investigates how youth workers assess the approach of national societies and governments toward radicalism. In this context, the perception of radicalism among youth workers is examined in depth. Eight main codes were created under this theme. The distribution percentages of the main codes related to this theme are shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
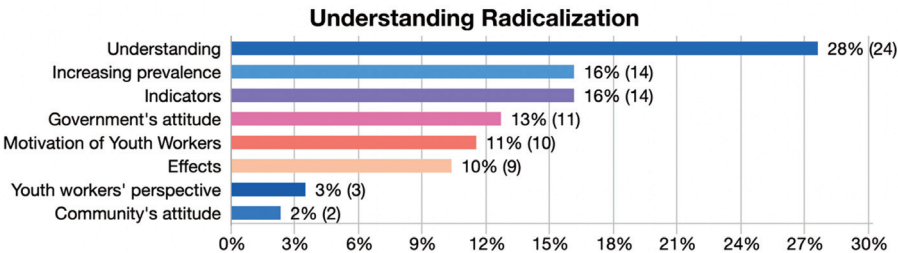
In the analysis of the theme "Understanding Radicalization," youth workers primarily emphasized the importance of understanding this phenomenon. This area constituted 28% of the coded data and emerged as the most highlighted topic. Following this, the increasing prevalence of radicalization and its indicators were also identified as significant areas of concern, with each being coded at 16%. These findings suggest that youth workers are particularly attuned to the growing spread of radicalization and its visible signs. Furthermore, the government's attitude towards radicalization was coded at 13%, and the motivation of youth workers to address this issue was marked at 11%. The effects of radicalization were also noted at 10%. In comparison, the youth workers' perspective and the community's attitude toward radicalization were emphasized less, with coding at 3% and 2%, respectively.

Table 32: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

Code	Frequency
Understanding Radicalization	
Increasing prevalence	14
Youth workers' perspective	
Increased awareness	2
Perceptual change	1
Community's attitude	
Positive approach	1
Negative approach	1
Government's attitude	
Combative approach	
Inadequate approach	8
Uninterested	3
Effects	
Emotional negativity	1
Shallow thinking	2
Structural problems	1
Insecurity	2
Separation	2
Social conflict	1
Indicators	
Sympathy for radical tendencies	1
Isolation	4
Changes	5
Discriminatory tendencies	2
Aggressive tendencies	2
Understanding	
Non-normative	5
Demand for change	1
Aggression	5
Rigid beliefs	9
Threat	2
Limited positivity	
Process	2
Motivation of Youth Workers	
Youth-focused	3
Community-focused	
Values-driven	7

According to Table 32, in the analysis aimed at understanding radicalization, youth workers highlighted several key factors. Within the Understanding Radicalization category, increasing prevalence was the most frequently coded theme, appearing 14 times. This suggests that youth workers are particularly aware of the growing issue of radicalization. Youth workers' perspective also played a significant role, with elements such as Increased awareness (coded 2 times) and Perceptual change (coded once) being emphasized. These findings indicate that youth workers' understanding of radicalization has evolved over time, showing an increase in awareness and a shift in perceptions. In terms of Government's attitude, the most frequently coded element was Inadequate approach, which appeared 8 times, followed by Uninterested (coded 3 times). These results suggest that youth workers perceive the government's response to radicalization as insufficient and lacking in engagement, highlighting the need for more effective and proactive policies. Under the Effects category, the key elements included Emotional negativity (coded once), Shallow thinking (coded twice), and Insecurity (coded twice). These findings reflect the significant emotional burden radicalization places on individuals and its role in fostering social instability. Additionally, Social conflict and Separation were noted, further illustrating the broader societal consequences of radicalization. In the Indicators category, Isolation (coded 4 times) and Changes (coded 5 times) were the most prominent signs of radicalization, followed by Discriminatory tendencies and Aggressive tendencies (both coded 2 times). These indicators suggest that radicalization is often marked by an individual's increasing isolation, shifts in behavior, and the emergence of more aggressive or discriminatory attitudes. Finally, under the Motivation of Youth Workers, both Youth-focused (coded 3 times) and Values-driven (coded 7 times) approaches were emphasized. This indicates that youth workers are not only driven by the needs of young people in combating radicalization but also emphasize the importance of broader societal values in the prevention and intervention process. Overall, the data highlights the increasing prevalence of radicalization, its emotional and social effects, the lack of effective governmental policies, and the need for more comprehensive approaches to address these issues. Youth workers play an essential role in identifying

and understanding radicalization, driven by a strong sense of responsibility and guided by both personal values and a commitment to supporting youth.

Table 33: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Understanding

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Non-normative	-public (f=8) -right (f=6)
Rigid beliefs	-ideas, say (f=4) -become, ideologies, let (f=3)
Aggression	-community, school (f=4) -center, concentration, Muslim, ombudsman, whether (f=3)
Threat	-see (f=5) -area, say (f=4)
Process	-see (f=5) -area, say (f=4)
Demand for change	-way (=2)

According to Table 33, The analysis of youth workers' understanding of radicalization in Spain examined the most frequently highlighted codes and the prominent terms within those codes. The non-normative code, with the most frequently used terms being public and right, suggests that participants associate radicalization with ideologies that typically contradict societal norms. This finding indicates that radicalization is often perceived as related to behaviors and ideologies that challenge established social conventions. Under the Rigid beliefs code, the terms ideas and say were most

frequently noted. This indicates an understanding of radicalization as largely involving the development of rigid, often extreme, beliefs, which individuals then express or advocate for. In addition, the Aggression code highlighted community and school as key terms, suggesting that radicalization may lead to the emergence of aggressive behaviors within both community and educational settings. In the Threat code, the terms see and area were prevalent, implying that radicalization increases perceptions of social threats and can manifest across a wider range of contexts. Similarly, in the Process code, the terms see and area appear frequently, suggesting that the process of radicalization is observed across various domains and can be evaluated from multiple perspectives. Finally, the Demand for change code highlighted the term way, indicating that youth workers perceive radicalization as being primarily driven by individuals seeking change or transformation. This underscores the idea that radicalization is often fueled by a desire for radical shifts in personal or societal structures.

Table 34: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Indicators

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Sympathy for radical tendencies	-already, cases, practical, see (f=3) -flag (f=2)
İsolation	-believe, perhaps (f=3) -group, hair, kind, leads, risk, social (f=2)
Changes	-example (f=4) -know, perhaps, sometimes, things, trip, way (f=3)
Discriminatory tendencies	-control, wanting (f=3) -girls, go, happening, lot, occurring, show, things (f=2)
Aggressive tendencies	-way (f=3) -activities, example, flags, things, wanting (f=2)

According to the data in Table 34, under the "Sympathy for Radical Tendencies" code, terms such as "already," "cases," "practical," and "see" frequently appeared. This suggests that youth workers associate radical tendencies with observable cases and real-world applications. Additionally, the term "flag" also appeared, which may indicate a connection to allegiance to radical ideologies or symbolism. Under the "Isolation" code, terms such as "believe," "perhaps," "group," "hair," and "kind" were noted. This reflects a perception that radicalization is associated with social or psychological isolation. These terms indicate that youth workers see isolation as both a cause and a consequence of radicalization, particularly when individuals become part of socially or ideologically isolated groups. In the "Changes" code, terms such as "example," "know," and "perhaps" were prominent. This highlights that youth workers view changes in behavior or attitude as significant indicators of radicalization. The presence of terms like "trip," "way," and "things" suggests that these changes may occur in specific contexts, such as through travel or shifts in personal values and actions. Under the "Discriminatory Tendencies" code, terms such as "control," "wanting," "girls," "go," and "happening" were noted. These terms suggest that radicalization is linked to a desire for control and the development of discriminatory attitudes. Youth workers observed that radicalized individuals may exhibit discriminatory behavior, particularly toward specific groups, such as women or other minority groups. Finally, in the "Aggressive Tendencies" code, terms like "way," "activities," "example," and "flags" appeared. This indicates that radicalization is expressed in various forms, such as through the display of symbols or participation in violent activities. It suggests that youth workers associate aggression and overt displays of ideological allegiance as significant indicators of radicalization.

**Table 35:** Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Effects

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Emotional negativity	-organization (f=2)
Shallow thinking	-effect (f=2)
Structural problems	-closed (f=3) -bad, flexible, going, group, happens, telling (f=2)
Insecurity	-know (f=3)
Separation	-Muslim (f=2)
Social conflict	-closed (f=3) -bad, flexible, going, group, happens, telling (f=2)

According to the data in Table 35, under the Emotional Negativity code, the terms "organization" and "effect" frequently appear. This finding suggests that radicalization has emotional negative effects, which are associated with specific organizations and societal-level impacts. In the Shallow Thinking code, the term "closed" stands out. This indicates that radicalization may cause individuals to lose cognitive flexibility and adopt a closed-minded approach. Under the Structural Problems code, the terms "bad" and "flexible" are prominent. This reflects the view that radicalization can negatively impact societal structures and weaken the capacity for flexible thinking. In the Insecurity code, the term "know" appears, suggesting that individuals in the process of radicalization may be inclined to understand their identity and societal security, which could lead to deepening insecurity. Under the Separation code, the term "Muslim" appears, indicating that radicalization may deepen the division between social groups and bring particular religious identities to the forefront. Finally, in the Social Conflict code, the term "closed" reappears. This suggests that radicalization may fuel social conflicts and lead to further divisions between communities.

III.II.IV.I.II. Factors Influencing Radicalization

The data from this theme reveal how various factors influencing the radicalization process are perceived by youth workers.

Figure 21: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
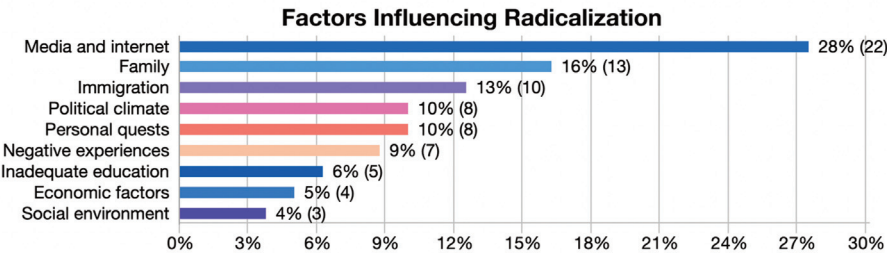
According to Figure 21, in the analysis of factors influencing radicalization conducted by youth workers in Spain, media and the internet emerged as the most frequently coded factor, with a frequency of 28% (22 mentions). This finding suggests that media and the internet play a significant role in the radicalization process, with young people particularly turning to online content and social media as channels for radical ideologies. The family factor ranked second, with a frequency of 16% (13 mentions). Youth workers highlighted the significant impact of familial relationships on radicalization. The dynamics within families and the values individuals receive from their families are key influences in the development of radical ideas. Immigration followed in third place with a frequency of 13% (10 mentions).

The influence of immigration, particularly immigrant identities and societal acceptance, on radicalization was emphasized. Immigrants, facing challenges in social integration processes, may be more susceptible to radicalization. Additionally, attitudes towards immigrants and the presence of immigrants in society can influence radicalization in Spain. Political climate ranked fourth with a frequency of 10% (8 mentions). Youth workers noted that political polarization and radical political discourse are key factors that push individuals towards radicalization. The political climate also reflects the impact of political leaders' policies on radicalization.

Personal quests and the search for identity were also significant factors, with a frequency of 10% (8 mentions). Youth workers observed that in their quest for identity, young people may gravitate toward radical ideologies. Negative experiences were identified as another important factor, with a frequency of 9% (7 mentions).

Personal or social negative experiences were noted as factors that increase individuals' susceptibility to radicalization. Inadequate education and economic factors were mentioned with frequencies of 6% (5 mentions) and 5% (4 mentions), respectively. These factors suggest that a lack of access to education and economic opportunities can increase the risk of radicalization among individuals. Finally, social environment emerged as the least influential factor, with a frequency of 4% (3 mentions). This indicates that, although social environments may play a role in the radicalization process, their impact is considered more limited compared to other factors.

Table 36: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Economic factors	–healthy (f=12) –diazepam, mind, world (f=9)
İnadequate education	–lot (f=5) –elements, go, information (f=3)
Negative experiences	–children (f=7) –become, course, feel (f=6)
Political climate	–children, school (f=17) –years (f=16)
Family	–say (f=23) –see, tell (f=15)
Personal quests	–group (f=11) –right (f=9)
Media and internet	–networks (f=28) –social (f=26)
Social environment	–dress, parents (f=6) –let (f=5)
Immigration	–right (f=27) –children (f=14)

According to the data in Table 36, the most frequently occurring terms within the coded areas influencing radicalization have been examined. Under the "Economic factors" code, the terms healthy and diazepam, mind, world were prominent. This suggests that economic conditions, along with the resulting effects on individuals' mental health and general well-being, play a significant role in the radicalization process. Economic hardships are also considered a potential factor contributing to an increased risk of radicalization. Under the "Inadequate education" code, the terms lot and elements, go, information were frequently mentioned. This indicates that radicalization can stem from deficiencies in education, highlighting that individuals deprived of adequate educational opportunities may be at a higher risk for radicalization. In the "Negative experiences" code, the terms children and become, course, feel were noted. This finding underscores the influence of negative social or personal experiences on radicalization, particularly among children, who may be more vulnerable to these experiences and, consequently, more likely to be affected by radicalizing influences. The "Political climate" code is marked by the frequent appearance of children and school. This points to the connection between radicalization and the political environment, particularly in terms of how political polarization and radical political discourses can influence educational systems and young people, who are seen as the most susceptible group in this context. Under the "Family" code, the terms say and see, tell were most frequent. This highlights the importance of family communication in the radicalization process and suggests that family dynamics and the values conveyed within the household play a crucial role in shaping the radicalization potential of individuals. For the "Personal quests" code, the terms group and right were emphasized. This suggests that radicalization can be driven by individuals' search for identity, with radical ideologies often being adopted in the context of group affiliations and personal quests for meaning. In the "Media and internet" code, the terms networks and social were notably frequent. This indicates that media, particularly social media platforms, have a substantial influence on radicalization, with individuals, particularly youth, being drawn toward radical ideas through online networks. The "Social environment" code highlighted dress and parents as the most frequent terms. This finding

indicates that social environments, particularly family and community, shape the radicalization process, with external influences contributing to individuals' susceptibility to radical ideologies. Finally, the "Immigration" code emphasized right and children. This finding underscores the impact of immigration–related factors on radicalization, suggesting that immigrant identities and their societal acceptance play a significant role in radicalization processes, particularly for immigrant children.

III.II.IV.I.III. Combatting Radicalization

Figure 22: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
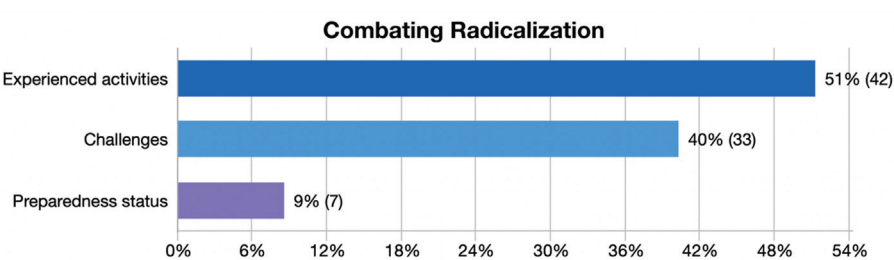
According to the data presented in Figure 22, in the analysis of youth workers' efforts to combat radicalization, "Experienced activities" emerged as the most frequently coded factor, accounting for 51% (42 codes). This finding suggests that youth workers have engaged in a wide variety of activities aimed at countering radicalization, underscoring the importance of practical experience in addressing this issue. "Challenges" was the second most emphasized factor, with 40% (33 codes). Youth workers highlighted the difficulties and obstacles they face while working to counter radicalization. This indicates that the process of combating radicalization is complex and fraught with challenges that require persistent effort and adaptive strategies. "Preparedness status" was coded at 9% (7 codes), suggesting that youth workers' preparation for combating radicalization is relatively limited. This finding points to a need for further training and resources to better equip youth workers in their efforts to address radicalization effectively.

Table 37: Frequencies of Sub-Codes

Combating Radicalization	
∨ Preparedness status	
Prepared	2
Developing	
Changeable	1
Unprepared	4
∨ Experienced activities	
Inter-institutional programs and collaborations	17
Training for youth workers	12
Surveys and feedback	3
Raising awareness among young people	10
∨ Challenges	
The nature radicalism	3
Communication issues	5
Lack of education	4
Insufficient financial resources	3
Legal and structural deficiencies	12
Approach	6

According to Table 37, in the analysis conducted by youth workers in Spain regarding combating radicalization, the most frequently coded category was "Experienced activities." Under this category, the most coded term was "Inter-institutional programs and collaborations" with 17 codes, highlighting the significant role that institutional cooperation and multi-stakeholder programs play in addressing radicalization. Additionally, "Training for youth workers" was coded 12 times, emphasizing the importance of training processes for youth workers in combating radicalization. "Raising awareness among young people" was coded 10 times, reflecting the considerable importance that youth workers place on activities aimed at raising awareness among young people. In the "Preparedness status" category, "Unprepared" was coded 4 times, indicating that youth workers feel they are not adequately prepared to combat radicalization. "Changeable" was coded once, and "Prepared" was coded only twice, signaling that the readiness to combat radicalization is still in a developmental phase. In the "Challenges" category, the most

frequently coded term was "Legal and structural deficiencies," with 12 codes, indicating that legal barriers and structural shortcomings are significant obstacles in the fight against radicalization. Other notable challenges included "Communication issues," which were coded 5 times. This indicates that youth workers face difficulties in establishing effective communication and ensuring the proper flow of information in the fight against radicalization. Communication issues may relate to difficulties in dialoguing effectively with young people, families, or communities, leading to information gaps or misunderstandings. "Lack of education" was coded 4 times, suggesting that deficiencies in education present a significant barrier to combating radicalization. Education is critical both for raising awareness among young people and for capacity-building training for youth workers. Youth workers highlighted the importance of early-age education as a key strategy in preventing radicalization. "Insufficient financial resources" was coded 3 times, indicating that one of the major obstacles youth workers face in combating radicalization is the lack of financial resources. Insufficient budgets can hinder the sustainability of activities and projects, complicate the acquisition of necessary materials, and generally prevent the execution of pre-planned activities. This situation limits the implementation of comprehensive and effective strategies needed to combat radicalization.

Table 38: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Challenges

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
The nature radicalism	-challenge (f=8) -thing (f=6)
Communication issues	-going, then, thing (f=7) -families (f=6)
Lack of education	-right (f=10) -system (f=5)
Insufficient financial resources	-right (f=8) -origin, protection (f=5),
Legal and structural deficiencies	-children (f=24) -going, then (f=18)
Approach	-children, school (f=27) -years (f=18)

According to the data in Table 38, under the sub-code "The nature of radicalism," the most frequently mentioned terms were "challenge" and "thing." This finding suggests that the nature of radicalization presents a significant challenge for youth workers and indicates that radicalization is a phenomenon that must be addressed in diverse and dynamic ways. Under the sub-code "Communication issues," the terms "going," "then," and "thing" were frequently mentioned. This highlights the difficulties youth workers face in establishing effective communication in efforts to combat radicalization, as well as the importance of timing in this process. Additionally, the term "families" was also present, indicating that communication problems with families play a significant role in addressing radicalization. The sub-code "Lack of education" saw "right" and "system" as prominent terms. This suggests that deficiencies in education, access to accurate information, and the functioning of the education system are significant factors contributing to radicalization. Inadequate education emerges as a crucial challenge in the fight against radicalization by youth workers. Under the sub-code "Insufficient financial resources," the terms "right" and "origin, protection" appeared frequently. This highlights that limited financial resources are one of the root challenges faced in combating radicalization and can create barriers to protection against radical ideologies. The sub-code "Legal and structural deficiencies" featured the terms "children" and "going, then." This indicates that legal obstacles and structural shortcomings in society can negatively impact the effectiveness of efforts to combat radicalization, particularly for children and young people. Finally, under the sub-code "Approach," the most frequent terms were "children" and "school." This emphasizes the role of educational institutions and society in shaping their approach to addressing radicalization, particularly in relation to children and schools. The term "years" also appeared, highlighting the importance of time as a factor in understanding the process of radicalization. This analysis reveals the complex nature of challenges faced by youth workers in combating radicalization, with factors such as communication issues, educational deficiencies, financial limitations, legal obstacles, and the need for a structured approach playing significant roles.

Table 39: Prominent Terms in the Sub-Codes of Experienced Activities

Sub-Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Inter-institutional programs and collaboration	-lot (f=17) -see (f=16)
Training for youth workers	-then (f=16) -know, right (f=7)
Surveys and feedback	-students (f=7) -different, end, see (f=5)
Raising awareness among young people	-different (f=13) -lot (f=8)

According to the data in Table 39, the most frequently occurring words in the sub-codes of "Experienced activities" are analyzed. Under the "Inter-institutional programs and collaboration" code, the words "lot" and "see" are the most frequently used. This indicates that inter-institutional collaborations and multi-stakeholder programs play a significant role in combating radicalization, and experiences related to these activities are frequently observed. Under the "Training for youth workers" code, the words "then" and "know" stand out. This emphasizes the importance of timing and the acquisition of knowledge in the training processes for youth workers. In the "Surveys and feedback" code, the words "students" and "different" are the most commonly used. This suggests that youth workers receive feedback based on the differences and changes observed in students. Finally, under the "Raising awareness among young people" code, the terms "different" and "lot" are the most frequently used. This implies that efforts to raise awareness among young people are diverse and extensive, involving a wide range of themes and being carried out intensively.

III.II.IV.I.IV. Recommendations for Preventing Radicalization

Figure 23: Distribution of Main Codes Within the Theme
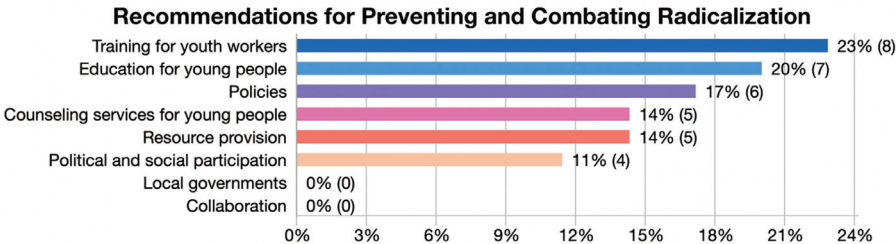
According to the data in Figure 23, the recommendations provided by youth workers in Spain for combating radicalization have been analyzed. "Training for youth workers" has the highest percentage, accounting for 23% (8 occurrences), which emphasizes the critical role of training programs for youth workers in combating radicalization. Additionally, "Education for young people" ranks second with 20% (7 occurrences), highlighting the importance of education in protecting young people from radicalization. "Policies" was coded at 17% (6 occurrences), indicating that policies are viewed as an essential tool in the fight against radicalization. Youth workers have emphasized the need for governments and relevant institutions to develop specific policies for the prevention of radicalization. "Counseling services for young people" and "Resource provision" were each coded at 14% (5 occurrences), reflecting the belief that providing counseling and resources for young people is crucial in preventing radicalization. Finally, "Political and social participation" was coded at 11% (4 occurrences), indicating that youth workers consider young people's involvement in societal processes as an effective way to prevent radicalization.

Table 40: Prominent Terms in Coded Areas

Main Code	Frequencies of the Top Two Words in Coded Segments
Training for youth workers	–know (f=7) –issue (f=5)
Resource provision	–protocol (f=5) –education (f=4)
Counseling services for young people	–healthy (f=12) –diazepam, mind, world (f=9)
Political and social participation	–why (f=3) –activities, always, club, dialogue, equally, experience, generate, included, gyspsy (f=2)
Policies	–right (f=14) –know (f=13)
Education for young people	–issue, know, level (f=4) –lot, right (f=3)

According to the data in Table 40, the most frequently mentioned terms in the recommendations made by youth workers in Spain to combat radicalization are analyzed. Under the "Training for youth workers" code, the terms "know" and "issue" stand out. This highlights the significant role that educational processes play in combating radicalization, particularly in terms of acquiring knowledge and addressing issues. Under the "Resource provision" code, the terms "protocol" and "education" are frequently mentioned. This finding reflects the importance of education and standardized protocols in providing resources effectively. In the "Counseling services for young people" code, the terms "healthy" and "diazepam, mind, world" are prominent. This suggests the critical importance of psychological support and a healthy mental structure in combating radicalization. Under the "Political and social participation" code, the term "why" is one of the most frequently used. Additionally, terms such as "activities, always, club, dialogue, equally, experience, generate, included, gypsy" emphasize the importance of diversity, equality, and dialogue in the social participation processes of young people. In the "Policies" code, the terms "right" and "know" are the most frequent. This underscores the importance of developing and implementing effective

policies to combat radicalization. Finally, under the "Education for young people" code, the terms "issue," "know," "level," and "lot" are frequently mentioned. This highlights the need to enrich the content and scope of education aimed at young people and suggests that an appropriate educational level can be effective in preventing radicalization.

III.II.IV.II. Discussions and Policy Advice

The literature review on radicalization processes in Spain reveals significant similarities and differences with the perceptions and evaluations of youth workers regarding radicalization. In the literature, socio-economic challenges, the role of digital platforms in spreading radical propaganda, and the government's security-focused policies are highlighted as key contributors to the radicalization process in Spain. The impact of digital media on radicalization processes, especially among youth, is also frequently emphasized in the findings of youth workers (Hollewell & Longpré, 2022). Youth workers define radicalization as ideologies and thought patterns that deviate from societal norms; this definition aligns with the literature, which often describes radicalization as a process that develops in opposition to mainstream social values (Reinares, García-Calvo & Vicente, 2019).

One of the concepts most frequently highlighted by youth workers when defining radicalization is the "increasing prevalence" of this phenomenon. Coding indicates that this is viewed as the growing visibility of radical tendencies in Spain and the strengthening of ideologies that challenge established social norms. Indicators such as isolation and behavioral changes are seen as early warning signs of radicalization, with concerns that youth who increasingly withdraw from society may develop stronger affiliations with radical groups. The literature also observes that these indicators are reinforced by the influence of digital platforms (Kadivar, 2017).

Youth workers further identify discriminatory tendencies and aggressive behaviors as important indicators of radicalization; this aligns with literature that discusses how radical groups manipulate young individuals as part of their recruitment strategies (Ouassini & Verma, 2018).

Youth workers' observations on the effects of radicalization—such as emotional negativity and a tendency toward shallow thinking—are also linked to broader social reflections, including insecurity and social conflict. These findings emphasize the potential for radicalization to foster unrest and social division, which is consistent with the impacts discussed in the literature (Government of Spain, 2021).

However, certain elements not fully addressed in the literature are highlighted in the findings of youth workers. Particularly, youth workers' sense of personal values and their responsibility toward young people are seen as important motivational drivers in combating radicalization. This values-based approach reflects an emphasis on supporting youth in the fight against radicalization, beyond a purely security-focused perspective. Additionally, youth workers stress that radicalization should be addressed not just as an individual issue but as a social problem—a viewpoint that is underrepresented in the literature. They advocate for government policies that are more comprehensive and youth-centered, expressing that security measures alone are insufficient for addressing this complex issue.

The analysis of factors influencing the radicalization process in Spain highlights the significant role of media and the internet. Youth workers specifically note that social media and online content serve as major channels for young people to engage with radical ideologies. The literature similarly emphasizes the influence of digital media and social platforms in the radicalization process (Ellinas, 2018; Zeiger & Gyte, 2020). This factor reflects the tendency of young people to adopt radical ideas and form communities around these beliefs through social media.

Family relationships are also frequently cited by youth workers as an influential factor in radicalization, with family dynamics and the values imparted within the household seen as crucial in shaping radical beliefs. The literature similarly underscores the role of familial values and communication patterns in the radicalization process (Reinares et al., 2019). Issues or communication gaps within the family may increase individuals' vulnerability to radical tendencies.

Immigration has emerged as another critical factor contributing to the

radicalization process in Spain. Youth workers note that the challenges faced by immigrants in adapting to societal norms and the sense of exclusion related to immigrant identities can heighten the likelihood of radicalization. The literature also explains that the feelings of exclusion and identity-seeking experienced by immigrants make them more susceptible to radical ideas (Reinares et al., 2019).

The political climate is also highlighted as an influential factor in radicalization. Youth workers observe that political polarization and radical discourse are key drivers that push individuals toward radicalization. The literature similarly stresses that political leaders' policies and societal polarization can accelerate the radicalization process (Ignazi, 1992).

Finally, personal quests for identity and negative experiences are also seen as significant factors in the radicalization process. Youth workers suggest that, in their search for self-expression and identity, young people may turn to radical ideologies. Negative social or personal experiences further increase individuals' susceptibility to radicalization.

The efforts of youth workers in Spain to combat radicalization reveal both the diversity of implemented activities and the challenges encountered in this process. Findings indicate that youth workers have extensive experience in addressing radicalization, and these experiences play a crucial role in prevention efforts. Particularly, "inter-institutional programs and collaborations" emerge as one of the most frequently utilized methods, highlighting the essential role of cooperation between institutions in tackling radicalization. The literature also supports the effectiveness of inter-institutional collaborations as a more comprehensive approach to combating radicalization (Awan, 2007).

The findings further underscore the significance of training processes in combating radicalization. Youth workers emphasize that education programs focused on raising awareness among young people are critical for countering radical tendencies. However, these efforts must be supported by adequate preparation and resources. According to the findings, many youth workers feel unprepared for this task, underscoring the need for more extensive training a necessity also highlighted in the literature (Reinares et al., 2019).

Among the challenges identified, legal and structural deficiencies are particularly prominent. Youth workers report that legal limitations and structural inadequacies pose significant barriers to combating radicalization. Insufficient financial resources and communication issues are also noted as key obstacles. Communication difficulties, especially in establishing effective dialogue with young people, families, and communities, hinder the flow of information and complicate the process. The literature similarly emphasizes that structural and financial support are critical to developing sustainable strategies in the fight against radicalization (Ignazi, 1992).

Youth workers also highlight that deficiencies in the education system and limited economic resources significantly impede efforts to prevent radicalization. The education system often fails to equip young people with the knowledge and skills needed to resist radical tendencies, leaving individuals more vulnerable to radicalization.

The recommendations provided by youth workers in Spain for preventing and combating radicalization emphasize the importance of training, policies, and counseling services in this process. The most frequently cited recommendation is "training for youth workers," identified as a critical element in the fight against radicalization. Youth workers emphasize the need for comprehensive training programs that enable them to communicate effectively with young people and develop effective strategies for preventing radicalization. The literature also underscores the protective role of training for youth workers against radicalization (Awan, 2007).

Education is also viewed as a crucial tool for building resilience among young people against radical tendencies. Youth workers recommend enhancing the content of education for young people and developing programs aimed at increasing awareness. This aligns with the literature, which highlights the importance of educational processes in fostering knowledge–based resistance among young people to radical ideas (Reinares et al., 2019).

The development of policies is another key recommendation for combating radicalization. Youth workers stress the need for governments and relevant institutions to establish specific policies aimed at preventing radicalization. The presence of comprehensive and actionable policies can support young people in distancing themselves from radical tendencies.

Counseling services and resource provision also play an essential role in protecting young people from radicalization. Youth workers advocate for increased psychological support services for young people as an effective method for preventing radicalization. Maintaining psychological well-being and offering support to young people are considered crucial factors in reducing susceptibility to radical ideologies.

IV. Conclusion and Final Policy Implications

The challenge of youth radicalization continues to be a concern, in countries such as France, Türkiye, Spain and Ukraine taking on different forms influenced by a mix of socio economic, political, cultural and psychological factors. This study has investigated the mechanisms behind the radicalization of people drawing on theories, research data and insights from youth workers. The key takeaway from this examination underscores the importance of grasping radicalization as a nuanced and faceted phenomenon rather than a straightforward process stemming from a single cause. The results indicate that people's radicalization is greatly influenced by feelings of being marginalized and alienated and by the need, for connection to a community well as a sense of identity and purpose. The root causes of radicalization differ depending on the circumstances. Typically involve issues such as disadvantage, discrimination in society lack of political representation, cultural isolation and exposure to extremist beliefs online. Radicalization tends to worsen due to factors like discrimination, police brutality and oppressive government actions that inadvertently support viewpoints and steer vulnerable individuals, towards radical ideologies.

The empirical work revealed that youth workers recognize both individual and systemic drivers of radicalization, with socio-economic factors—such as unemployment, poverty, and inadequate access to

education—playing a particularly prominent role. Youth workers emphasize the importance of addressing these root causes through targeted socio-economic interventions that offer young people viable alternatives to radical engagement. These interventions must focus not only on immediate economic relief but also on longer-term development opportunities that foster social mobility and empowerment. Cultural factors also emerged as significant contributors to youth radicalization, particularly in countries like France, where secular policies and national identity debates create a context of cultural friction for marginalized groups. The empirical results confirm that radical ideologies often exploit feelings of cultural exclusion, offering individuals a sense of pride and belonging that seems unattainable in mainstream society. This highlights the need for policies that promote cultural inclusion, intercultural dialogue, and mutual respect to counter the narratives of cultural victimization that fuel radicalization.

The role of digital platforms in facilitating radicalization is evident across all contexts examined in this report. The rapid spread of extremist content online, combined with the anonymity of digital spaces, makes it easier for youth to access radical material and interact with extremist networks. This underlines the need for comprehensive digital literacy programs that equip youth with critical thinking skills, enabling them to identify and resist manipulative online content. Digital literacy efforts must be paired with robust monitoring and counter-messaging strategies to effectively disrupt the influence of online extremist networks. Psychological factors, such as trauma, identity crises, and the search for recognition, further underscore the personal dimensions of radicalization. Young people often find solace in radical ideologies that provide clear identities, moral purpose, and a sense of heroism. This calls for the integration of mental health support, counseling services, and positive mentorship in counter-radicalization efforts. Addressing psychological vulnerabilities can help redirect youth toward more constructive forms of personal growth and identity formation. The empirical results demonstrate that youth workers play a critical role in identifying, preventing, and addressing radicalization among young people. Their insights point to the effectiveness of community-based interventions that foster social cohesion, provide safe

spaces for engagement, and offer positive role models. Successful prevention strategies rely on building trust and establishing strong relationships between youth, youth workers, community leaders, and policymakers.

Overall, the findings emphasize that counter-radicalization efforts must be comprehensive, multi-level, and adaptable to specific national and local contexts. Strategies should be designed to address the root causes of radicalization while promoting social inclusion, resilience, and opportunities for positive engagement. Effective interventions require collaboration among governments, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and digital platforms to create an environment where youth can thrive without resorting to radical means. Moving forward, it is imperative that counter-radicalization policies remain flexible and responsive to evolving trends, particularly those shaped by digital advancements, shifting socio-political landscapes, and global events. The ongoing adaptation of strategies, informed by empirical research and field experiences, is crucial for ensuring that prevention efforts are both effective and sustainable. This report serves as a foundation for future policy discussions, urging a holistic approach that integrates socio-economic development, cultural inclusion, political engagement, digital literacy, and psychological support to address the complex issue of youth radicalization.

To effectively counter youth radicalization, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive, multi-faceted policy approach. The empirical findings from Türkiye, Spain, France, and Ukraine highlight the necessity for both general and context-specific measures that address the socio-economic, political, cultural, and digital drivers of radicalization among youth. The following sections discuss in detail the strategies for addressing the root causes and processes of radicalization, focusing on targeted interventions.

Strengthening Socio-Economic Support

Addressing socio-economic inequalities is vital, as they significantly contribute to radicalization, particularly in marginalized regions where poverty, unemployment, and inadequate education are prevalent. One of the primary policy measures is to promote job creation and skills development

among youth. This can be achieved through youth employment programs that offer vocational education, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships. These initiatives should focus on economically disadvantaged areas, such as urban slums and rural regions, where opportunities are often scarce. Additionally, public-private partnerships can be fostered to engage local businesses in providing apprenticeships and mentorship for at-risk youth.

Empowering youth through entrepreneurship programs is another important policy measure. Governments can encourage entrepreneurship by providing micro-financing, business training, and startup support to youth. By fostering economic independence, these initiatives can reduce the appeal of extremist groups that exploit economic grievances by offering financial incentives.

Improving the quality of education in marginalized areas is crucial to breaking the cycle of socio-economic deprivation. Investments should be made in upgrading school infrastructure, training teachers, and providing scholarships for disadvantaged youth. Beyond traditional education, schools can serve as centers for extracurricular programs that promote social integration and cultural exchange, fostering a sense of community among diverse students.

Comprehensive welfare programs should also be developed to include not only financial assistance but also mental health support, social services, and counseling for families in marginalized areas. Such programs can alleviate socio-economic pressures that make radical narratives more appealing to youth. Welfare interventions that focus on the holistic development of communities can contribute to long-term resilience against radicalization.

Enhancing Political Engagement

Political alienation and disenfranchisement are significant factors driving youth toward radicalization. To foster meaningful political participation, civic education initiatives should be introduced at schools, universities, and community centers. These initiatives should focus on democratic values, human rights, and peaceful political engagement. By using interactive methods, such as debates, role-playing, and simulations,

these programs can engage youth and enhance their understanding of political processes.

Establishing youth councils at local, regional, and national levels is crucial for providing platforms where young people can express their concerns and participate in decision-making. Ensuring youth representation in policymaking not only builds trust in political institutions but also reduces the appeal of anti-establishment ideologies. Moreover, specific outreach programs should target disaffected youth in vulnerable regions, offering workshops, training sessions, and mentorship that encourage political participation and engagement.

Creating spaces for dialogue and mediation is another important strategy for bridging the gap between marginalized youth and political institutions. Facilitating exchanges between youth, political leaders, civil society organizations, and law enforcement can foster collaboration and reduce mistrust. By addressing grievances through structured dialogue, young people can be encouraged to pursue constructive forms of political engagement rather than turning to extremist alternatives.

Promoting Digital Literacy and Online Resilience

Digital platforms and social media play a significant role in the rapid spread of radicalization, making it critical to enhance digital literacy among youth. Introducing digital literacy as part of school curricula can teach students to critically evaluate online content, recognize misinformation, and use social media responsibly. Emphasizing media literacy skills, such as source verification and bias detection, is essential to help young people understand the tactics used in online extremist propaganda.

Governments, in collaboration with tech companies, need to improve efforts to monitor and regulate extremist content online. Effective measures should include clear reporting mechanisms, collaborations for fact-checking, and content moderation. However, these efforts must be balanced with respect for freedom of speech.

Counter-messaging campaigns are vital for challenging extremist narratives online. These campaigns should be engaging and relatable, using

videos, graphics, and interactive content to reach youth across social media platforms. Involving social media influencers, community leaders, and former extremists who have deradicalized can enhance the credibility and impact of such campaigns.

Cybersecurity education is also necessary to teach youth about digital safety and privacy, helping them avoid exploitation by radical networks. Workshops on digital safety should be accompanied by education about psychological manipulation tactics used by extremist recruiters, enabling youth to resist online coercion and radicalization.

Fostering Community-Based Interventions

Community-based interventions are essential for promoting trust, social cohesion, and resilience against radicalization at the grassroots level. Establishing community centers and youth clubs in vulnerable areas can provide safe spaces where young people can engage in recreational, cultural, and educational activities. Programs in these centers should be designed to promote sports, arts, music, and cultural activities that foster positive social bonds.

Collaboration with moderate religious leaders is critical in addressing religious radicalization. Moderate leaders can provide credible counter-narratives that emphasize coexistence and respect for diversity. Regular workshops, debates, and interfaith dialogue events should be organized in schools, mosques, and community centers to engage young people in discussions that encourage critical thinking and tolerance.

Violence prevention and conflict resolution training for youth workers, educators, and community leaders can enable them to identify early signs of radicalization and intervene effectively. Building local capacity to address conflicts constructively can prevent young people from seeking solutions through violence.

Cultural exchange programs are another important tool for promoting mutual understanding between different communities. These initiatives can include joint community service projects, collaborative art exhibitions, and intercultural festivals that emphasize shared values. By fostering empathy

and understanding, cultural exchange programs can counter the divisive narratives that contribute to radicalization.

Developing Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs

Rehabilitation and reintegration efforts are necessary for individuals who have already been exposed to radical ideologies or engaged in extremist activities. Comprehensive deradicalization programs should offer psychological counseling, religious education, and vocational training tailored to the individual's background, experiences, and motivations.

Families should be engaged in the rehabilitation process through counseling, training, and resources that enable them to support deradicalized youth. Strengthening family support systems can reduce the likelihood of relapses into radical behavior.

Mentorship programs connecting deradicalized individuals with positive role models, including former extremists who have successfully reintegrated, can provide the guidance and support needed for building new identities and finding meaningful roles in society.

Providing access to alternative education and employment opportunities is crucial for facilitating the reintegration of deradicalized individuals. Vocational training, internships, and job placement services can help individuals build new skills, regain self-confidence, and improve their socio-economic standing.

Enhancing Governance and Promoting Social Justice

Improving governance and promoting social justice are fundamental to reducing the political grievances that often fuel radicalization. Governments need to enhance transparency and accountability by implementing anti-corruption measures, judicial reforms, and citizen oversight mechanisms. These measures can restore public confidence in political institutions and reduce the appeal of radical ideologies.

Inclusive policymaking processes that ensure marginalized communities have a voice in decision-making are essential. Regular consultations, focus groups, and public forums can provide underrepre-

sented communities with opportunities to propose solutions to the issues affecting them.

Addressing structural discrimination in law enforcement, the judiciary, education, and the labor market is necessary for fostering a sense of equality and belonging among marginalized groups. Ensuring fair treatment across these institutions can reduce feelings of exclusion and contribute to social cohesion.

Human rights protection should be at the core of anti-terrorism and counter-radicalization measures. Repressive actions often backfire by fueling resentment and validating extremist narratives. It is crucial to balance security measures with the protection of civil liberties, ensuring that efforts to combat radicalization do not infringe upon individual rights.

Addressing youth radicalization effectively requires a holistic, multi-level approach that encompasses socio-economic development, political engagement, digital literacy, community integration, rehabilitation, and improved governance. By implementing these comprehensive policies, it is possible to create an environment that fosters resilience, inclusivity, and opportunities for positive engagement among youth. The strategies outlined above offer a pathway to reducing the appeal of radical ideologies and building a more cohesive, secure, and peaceful society.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Awareness and Understanding:

1. How long have you been working on young people and how long have you been working on radicalization?

2. How would you define "radicalization" in the context of your work with young people?

3. What signs or indicators of radicalization do you believe are important for youth workers to be aware of?

4. Can you describe any specific cases or instances of radicalization that you have encountered or are aware of in your work?

Perceptions and Attitudes:

5. What is your perception of the prevalence of radicalization among the youth in your community or the groups you work with?

6. How do you think radicalization affects young people and their communities?

7. What do you believe are the root causes of radicalization among youth? What do you think are the driving or attractive forces behind these reasons?

8. What are the attitudes of the government and society towards radicalization in the country where you work?

9. How would you take stock of the impact of social or traditional media on the young people you work in the context of "radicalization"?

Challenges and Barriers:

10. What challenges do youth workers face in identifying and addressing radicalization among young people?

11. Are there any specific obstacles or barriers that you have encountered in your efforts to prevent radicalization?

Preventive Strategies and Interventions:

12. What strategies or approaches do you believe are effective in preventing or countering radicalization among youth?

13. Can you share examples of initiatives or programs you have been involved in that aim to prevent radicalization among young people?

Training and Support:

14. How well-prepared do you feel, in terms of training and resources, to address issues related to radicalization in your role as a youth worker?

15. Have you received any specialized training or support related to radicalization and extremism?

Collaboration and Resources:

16. To what extent do you collaborate with other organizations or agencies in your efforts to prevent radicalization?

17. What additional resources or support would be helpful in your work to address radicalization among youth?

Evaluating Impact:

18. How do you measure the impact of your work in preventing or countering radicalization among young people?

19. Can you share any success stories or outcomes from your efforts in this area?

Personal Reflection:

20. How has your perception or awareness of radicalization changed over the course of your career as a youth worker?

21. What motivates you to work with young people in addressing the issue of radicalization?

Appendix 2: Code Book

Code List	Description
Recommendations for Preventing and Combating Radicalization	Under this theme, the study explores the recommendations from youth workers on how to combat and prevent radicalism
Training for youth workers	Development of training programs aimed at raising awareness among youth workers
Resource provision	Provision of information and financial resources
Counseling services for young people	Providing social and psychological support, counseling, and mentorship services for young people
Local governments	Local governments taking responsibility
Political and social participation	Providing communication and expression opportunities for young people in the political and social arenas
Collaboration	Facilitating inter-institutional, international, intercultural, interfaith, and youth worker collaboration and interaction
Policies	Support policies for disadvantaged groups, transparency, structural solutions, central solutions, monitoring mechanisms, and the structuring of relevant applications and laws

Education for young people	Internet security, media literacy, patriotism, critical thinking, tolerance, promoting cultural understanding, information literacy, raising awareness, and educating
Combating Radicalization	Under this theme, the current situation of youth workers' efforts to combat radicalization is investigated.
Preparedness status	This main code investigates how competent youth workers feel in addressing radicalization.
Prepared	The youth worker views themselves as having sufficient knowledge and skills to combat radicalism.
Developing	The youth worker is aware of the issues related to combating radicalism but continues to develop their skills.
Changeable	The youth worker has limited knowledge/experience in combating radicalism.
Unprepared	The youth worker feels inadequate and unprepared for combating radicalism.
Experienced activities	This main code explores the activities that youth workers have experienced or observed in combating radicalization.
Inter-institutional programs and collaborations	It includes collaborations and programs conducted among various institutions.
Training for youth workers	It encompasses trainings attended by youth workers aimed at enhancing awareness and knowledge about radicalization.
Surveys and feedback	It includes evaluations conducted to test the outcomes of the implemented activities.
Raising awareness among young people	It covers organizations, trainings, and other activities aimed at increasing awareness among youth.
Challenges	This main code identifies the challenges that youth workers encounter and perceive in combating radicalization.
The nature radicalism	Balancing a rights-based approach, the inherent secrecy of radicalization, the margin of error related to human factors.
Communication issues	Communication issues due to generational differences, tendencies of young people to conceal and hide themselves, distrust of teachers, difficulty in addressing issues due to the unique characteristics of each young person, young people's closure to different viewpoints, and communication narrowness
Lack of education	Deficiencies in raising awareness and providing education to young people and youth workers in legal, technical, psychological, and conceptual areas related to radicalism and lack of awareness
Insufficient financial resources	Economic inadequacies and challenges, and failure to allocate or restrictions on resources

Legal and structural deficiencies	Legal barriers, absence or dysfunction of legal and institutional mechanisms, lack of effective institutionalization and legalization, and bureaucratic issues
Approach	Politicians' indifference or lack of commitment, the lack of interest and value placed on youth workers in this field, and hesitation due to potential negative reactions from society or politicians
Factors Influencing Radicalization	Under this theme, the study investigates how youth workers assess the factors influencing radicalization
Economic factors	Economic disadvantages
Inadequate education	The lack of education in areas such as media literacy, the questioning of education quality, and deficiencies in raising awareness among young people
Negative experiences	The reactions young people receive from society, the intolerance of society or politicians, exclusion, discrimination, rejection, facing obstacles, exposure to bullying and/or violence, lack of space for expression, and exposure to hate crimes
Political climate	Political conditions, laws, and war situations
Family	The social and economic conditions of the family, childhood traumas experienced within the family, learned tendencies toward violence within the family, and experiences of radicalism from the family
Personal quests	Desire for protection, seeking self-discovery, recognition, and being heard, involvement in different religious and ethnic groups, solidarity, striving to feel like a member of society, identity search, and admiration for individuals and ideas
Media and internet	Information pollution, scarcity of verifiable information, dissemination power, and the impact of social and traditional media
Social environment	Social factors and the impact of the social environment on young people
Understanding Radicalization	Under this theme, efforts are made to understand how radicalization is perceived by youth workers and how their awareness is interpreted. Additionally, the study investigates how youth workers assess the approach of national societies and governments toward radicalism. In this context, the perception of radicalism among youth workers is examined in depth.
Increasing prevalence	The youth worker believes that radicalization is increasing within society
Youth workers' perspective	During the process, the perceptions of youth workers regarding radicalization are evaluated.
Increased awareness	The youth worker's awareness of radicalism has increased within the process
Perceptual change	The youth worker's understanding of radicalism has changed over the course of the process
Community's attitude	
Positive approach	The community is adopting a positive approach to radicalization and/or supporting it

Negative approach	The community is opposing radicalization
Government's attitude	The government's attitude towards radicalization is being investigated.
Combative approach	Radicalism is perceived as a security issue, and deterrent or preventive measures are taken to address it
Inadequate approach	The measures taken and policies implemented are insufficient and/or ineffective
Uninterested	Does not take an interest in the issue and does not address it in their agenda
Effects	The study explores how youth workers observe the potential consequences and impacts of radicalization and what their opinions are on the subject.
Emotional negativity	Experiencing emotional problems, unhappiness, hopelessness, and depression, identity crisis, self-conflict
Shallow thinking	Being trapped in narrow thinking patterns and losing a broad perspective
Structural problems	Causing social, political, and economic problems
Insecurity	Erosion of individual, societal, and political security
Separation	Experiencing social divisions, splits, and fragmentation, and the erosion of social cohesion
Social conflict	The emergence of conflictual relationships and ideas among individuals in society
Indicators	The main-code investigates what signs of radicalization might be observed in youth according to the observations, experiences, and thoughts of youth workers.
Sympathy for radical tendencies	Interest in and involvement with radical actions, ideas, and groups
Isolation	Individual and social isolation, withdrawal
Changes	Changes in individuals' beliefs, religious views, ideologies, social environment, and appearance
Discriminatory tendencies	Exclusionary and marginalizing approaches on any issue (such as religion, race, sect, gender, appearance, etc.)

Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication
Understanding	The main-code investigates how youth workers define radicalization and what they understand by it.
Aggressive tendencies	Aggression, anger, tendency toward violence, intolerance, manifestation of aggression in discourse and actions, peer bullying, general state of dissent, and becoming closed off to communication
Understanding	The main-code investigates how youth workers define radicalization and what they understand by it.
Non-normative	To understand radicalism as a phenomenon that goes beyond the law, legal norms, and democratic values
Demand for change	To understand radicalization as a tendency to alter existing structures, or as a stance or response against current cultural, social, political, and economic frameworks
Rigid beliefs	To understand radicalization as blind adherence to certain beliefs, especially those outside the mainstream
Aggression	To understand radicalization as supporting violence, engaging in aggressive rhetoric, fostering hostility, advocating extremism, and challenging the mainstream
Threat	To understand radicalization as a threat to the state, society, and individuals for various reasons
Limited positivity	To understand radicalization as an effective tool for the development of democracy, as long as it does not exceed legal boundaries and does not lead to extremist actions
Process	An approach that understands radicalization as a process rather than a state, involving psychological and sociological parameters
Motivation of Youth Workers	The main-code explores the motivations youth workers have when addressing radicalization among young people.
Youth-focused	An approach that cares about the current lives and futures of young people
Community-focused	An approach that cares about the stability and future of the community
Values-driven	An approach based on individuals' perspectives on human values or personal motivations

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