

IS THERE SPACE FOR DE- RADICALISATION AND DISENGAGEMENT IN PRISON?

Comparison between Belgium and Sweden

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This research studies if efficient and effective disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes can be conducted in prisons in Sweden and Belgium. Using a qualitative literature review, it points out the general and most important factors of both disengagement and de-radicalisation. Disillusionment and relationships are required when someone wants to disengage from an extremist group. While de-radicalisation not only needs a change of behaviour, but also a change of identity, this seems to be a more difficult aim to reach. Literature suggests that the cognitive opening, that occurs when someone becomes more vulnerable to radicalise, can be used the other way around. Relevant strategies, arising out of the found factors, are including the social network, building mentor – mentee relationships and offering spiritual support and economic incentives. These theoretical results, compared with how prison contexts and regimes in Belgium and Sweden occur, lead to the practical implementation of exit-programmes in both countries. Sweden, in comparison with Belgium, has a long history in exit programmes, although, practises in prison are rather rare. Belgium on its side has built up an extended framework, however, to implement the set goals, changes need to be made.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction	3
2. Exit: relevant factors and strategies	3
2.1. Disengagement.....	4
2.1.1. Factors related to disengagement.....	4
2.2. De-radicalisation	5
2.2.1. Factors related to de-radicalisation.....	6
2.3. Disengagement and de-radicalisation strategies	7
3. De-radicalisation and disengagement in prison	8
3.1. Sweden.....	8
3.1.1. General information	8
3.1.2. Prison and Probation Service	8
3.1.3. (De-)radicalisation policy in Sweden.....	9
3.2. Belgium	9
3.2.1. General information	9
3.2.2. General Direction of Penitentiary Institutions.....	9
3.2.3. (De-)radicalisation policy in Belgium	10
4. Methods	11
5. Discussion	12
5.1. Radicalisation in prison	12
5.2. De-radicalisation and disengagement programmes in prison	12
5.2.1. Sweden	12
5.2.2. Belgium	13
6. Conclusion and limitations.....	14
7. References.....	16

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1949, the following statement appeared in a monthly journal: “The prison system fails because it is based on the wrong idea that change in the personality of a delinquent can be brought about by locking him up in the seclusion of a prison. However, a revolutionary new thought is beginning to develop here. In particular, this means that the dynamics of change in the personality is given by the healthy personal relation to another person, and that it is the task of the prison to provide the appropriate environment” (Goossens, 2011). At this moment, 7 individuals are convicted of terrorist acts in Swedish prisons. Previous research already stated that prisons can be seen as a breeding ground for recruiting and training into extremist organisations (Cuthbertson, 2004; Noppe, 2010). The closed character makes it an attractive place for extremist groups to convince people stepping into their clandestine lifestyle. Detainees can become vulnerable for radicalisation, when they are experiencing a lack of hope or have the feeling of not getting a fair treatment, what can lead to additional frustrations (Noppe, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to counter this feelings and treatments as much as possible. A useful tool, implemented in multiple countries already, are disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes.

When we want to take a better look at how de-radicalisation and disengagement should be conducted in a prison context, it is necessary to put these terms in the light of the above. Keeping in mind that penal institutions are, even nowadays, considered questionable as an environment where it is possible to make a change in an individual’s behaviour, it makes it an interesting topic to investigate. This study aims to research how factors related to disengagement and de-radicalisation, found in literature, are applied in prison policies and contexts of Sweden and Belgium. The main research question is: ‘Is literature supportive with regards to how efficient and effective disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes in a closed institution can be conducted?’. This research question can only be answered, while pointing out other questions. Therefore, this thesis has three major topics with the aim of satisfying the overall objective. The first part of the thesis is giving an answer on the question ‘What are the main factors found in literature targeting disengagement and de-radicalisation?’, followed with the question ‘Which strategies can be used to disengage and/or de-radicalise an individual?’. The second part concerns questions about ‘How are prisons maintained in Sweden and Belgium?’ and ‘How is the policy regarding to terrorism and prison in both countries?’. Lastly, the third part is describing the current situation concerning disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes in prison in both Belgium and Sweden. The supportive research question here is ‘What are the programmes used in Sweden and Belgium and which disengagement and/or de-radicalisation factors are implemented in the programmes?’.

2. EXIT: RELEVANT FACTORS AND STRATEGIES

An exit-movement tries to get in contact with people who are aiming to end their relationships with former extremist group which they belonged to. This movement brought us to two kinds of programmes, disengagement and de-radicalisation

programs, both targeting members of extremist organisations and help them to build up a life without hate and violence (Pauwels & Hardyns, 2016).

The distinction between de-radicalisation and disengagement is of great importance whereas they require a different approach. On the one hand it is so that a disengaged individual not necessarily becomes de-radicalised. On the other hand, not everyone who engages in terrorism is considered to be radical (Altier, Thoroughgood & Horgan, 2014).

2.1. Disengagement

The first programme is called a disengagement programme. These programmes focus on the criminal and violent behaviour of former extremists. The aim of disengagement is to prevent that those members will conduct any forcibly behaviour in the future. To reach their goal, they use two types of factors that can help an individual to get back on track. The first factors, push-factors, are experiences that push the person away from their former environment. They concern aspects related to the individuals' experiences. The second factors that are considered to be efficiently, relevant to disengagement, are pull-factors. In contradiction to the push-factors, these are components that seduce an individual towards a conventional social role (Altier, Thoroughgood & Horgan, 2014).

2.1.1. Factors related to disengagement

Disengagement programmes are a more widely studied subject than de-radicalisation programmes. Therefore, research revealed a couple of strategies and factors that can have a positive outcome regarding breaking bonds with extremist and violent environments. This chapter will summarize the relevant components found in literature.

A systematic review study, conducted by Windish et al. (2017), concluded that two main components are of great value when trying to understand why an individual wants to abandon an extremist organisation. The first factor consists of disillusionment. This can lead to disengagement in a various amount of ways, such as a lack of satisfaction with the individual's current life situation or frustration with the group (members). Multiple studies disclosed that group members were more deceived by the negative aspects of joining the group than they were satisfied with the more positive outcomes. They became aware that the group was too violent or too hypocritical. In addition, victimisation, including psychological abuse and physical violence, and financial disillusionment increases the urge to disengage. The second component that can have a major impact on disengagement is having relationships. We can distinguish four categories of relationships: immediate relatives (e.g. parents, siblings and grandparents), children, spouses or intimate partners and social relationships (e.g. colleagues, friends and neighbours). Relationships go hand in glove with motives such as caregiving of children, family obligations and creating positive social bonds. Disillusionment can be seen as an important push-factor, whereas tight relationships are interpreted to be a relevant pull-factor towards conventional standards (Windish et al., 2017).

Altier, Thoroughgood and Horgan (2014) stated that, besides some fundamental differences between involvement in radical groups, there are also certain similarities that can explain why an individual wants to leave the group they took part in. Although these results are included in the systematic review from Windish

et al. (2017), it is interesting to take a look at more precise components that can play a role in the disengagement process. In the study, they have distinguished push- and pull-factors. As mentioned previously, disillusionment is a good predictor to break away of violence. Two types of disillusionment are considered valuable in this study: disillusionment with strategy or actions of the group¹ or disillusionment with personnel (e.g. leaders and other members). Other factors, besides disillusionment, that push a person away are facing unmet expectations², experiencing difficulties regarding the adaption to a clandestine lifestyle, having inabilities to cope with psychological and/or physiological effects of violence such as fear and paranoia, encountering loss of faith in the ideology and having a burnout. Cited pull-factors are competing loyalties, employment and/or educational demands or opportunities, family demands and desires, positive interactions with moderates³, financial incentives and amnesty⁴ (Altier, Thoroughgood and Horgan, 2014).

Push-factors	Pull-factors
Disillusionment	Relationships
Unmet expectations	Competing loyalties
Experiencing difficulties regarding the adaption of the clandestine lifestyle	Family demands and desires
Having inabilities to cope with psychological/physiological effects of violence	Employment/educational demands and opportunities
Encountering loss of faith	Positive interaction with moderates
Burnouts	Financial incentives
	Amnesty

Table 1: push and pull-factors regarding to disengagement

2.2. De-radicalisation

The second kind of programmes concern the disposition of someone's belief in a particular ideology. Besides of helping individuals cut ties with the extremist environment, de-radicalisation programmes try to stimulate a transformation from extremist to ex-extremist (Pauwels & Hardyns, 2016).

Taking into account that de-radicalisation requires more than only a change of behaviour, it necessitates other measurements than when an individual wants to disengage. De-radicalisation is considered to be a valuable tool in the fight against extremism. A study conducted by Deschesne (2011) states four general characteristics of this phenomenon. The first one includes that de-radicalisation is a strategic tool, enforced to break the cycle of violent action and response. An effective counterterrorism policy should help develop this. The second characteristic enounces that de-radicalisation is not a new phenomenon. The

¹ For example: becoming frustrated about the lack of success.

² Unmet expectations derive when there is a strong contrast between what someone was expecting of joining a certain group and the real experiences of joining in. This is considered as an overall component that encloses more specific push-factors described in this paragraph.

³ Positive interactions may induce reconsidering the reason of involvement to a violent organisation. In addition, this can provide alternative social bonds and relationships outside the group.

⁴ Amnesty refers to the fear of being sentenced or imprisoned.

increase of literature about this subject nowadays may suggest that it is a contemporary process. Notwithstanding this kind of programme was already conducted in the seventies. Thirdly, de-radicalisation can emerge spontaneously. Multiple reasons can cause an individual to de-radicalise without any help from the outside. Members can for example establish self-doubts or start questioning the purposes of the organisation. The fourth and last characteristic contains the importance to make a difference between physical and psychological forms of desistance. One can be blocked to be involved in a certain type of behaviour, but therefore there might not be a change in attitudes. As de-radicalisation requires the disappearance of radical thoughts, de-radicalisation strategies should be approached in a different way (Deschesne, 2011).

2.2.1. Factors related to de-radicalisation

To become de-radicalised someone must abandon their former violent environment, and consequently, this involves a change of behaviour. Previously mentioned disengagement factors can therefore be considered as a first step into the de-radicalisation process. De-radicalisation requires an identity change so additional steps are compulsory to complete this process. The amount of literature written concerning de-radicalisation factors are more rare in comparison with literature that targets factors related to disengagement. The following paragraphs focus on how someone can evolve out of their radical thoughts.

One theory states that to become vulnerable for radicalisation, a cognitive opening must occur. This opening can embrace new radical ideas continuing in picking up new beliefs. Using the supply and demand theory, this cognitive opening can be triggered when an individual is psychologically receptive (demand) and another person or organisation facilitates a certain solution to it (supply). The moment when someone starts to distrust the conventional system and become more susceptible to new ideas and perspectives, recruiters attack their prey and offer a way out. This theory can also operate the other way around. Some factors or events can progress into a cognitive opening in which an individual is motivated to leave their former extremist organisation. There are four kind of components that are related to (de-) radicalisation: contextual risk factors, push-factors at the individual level, pull-factors and catalysts (Pauwels, Schils, Brion and Verhage, 2014).

First, contextual risk factors are factors who refer to global contextual factors (e.g. structural demographic, socio-economic and/or political processes) and local societal circumstances (e.g. political inequality, poverty or unemployment). Secondly, push factors at the individual level embody personal characteristics and traits (e.g. individuals with a high level of thrill seeking), socio-psychological mechanisms (e.g. perceived injustice, group threat or insecurity), social situations of the individual's life and emotions such as frustration or hate towards other populations. The third component are pull-factors related to a certain group or ideology. Lastly, catalysts include trigger events, violence, biographical availability (e.g. the lack of engagement in society) and significant others (Pauwels, Schils, Brion and Verhage, 2014).

The cognitive opening that can make an individual receptive for de-radicalisation is often triggered by a traumatic experience. This experience can call the coherence of an individual's worldview into question, what may increase post-traumatic disorders. This cognitive opening should be apprehended by social and law

enforcement services to convince the person of the flaws of their previous behaviour and involvement (Fink and Hearne, 2008).

4 components	Content
Contextual risk factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global contextual factors - Local societal circumstances
Push-factors at the individual level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal characteristics and traits - Socio-psychological mechanisms - Social situations of the individual's life - Emotions
Pull-factors related to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A certain group - A certain ideology
Catalysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trigger events - Violence - Biographical availability - Significant others

Table 2: Factors related to de-radicalisation

2.3. Disengagement and de-radicalisation strategies

According to a study, carried out by the International Peace Institute, programmes should include three elements. The first one concerns motivation. Reasons for disengagement, and further de-radicalisation, can include economic and social motivators such as support and help after traumatic experiences. Secondly, family involvement is one of the most successful proven factor used in these programmes. The risk and fear of long-term damage to the social propinquity is something that is most likely to be prevented. Lastly, financial incentives and support can be given through education assistance or help in finding a job. This facilitates the decrease of dependency of belonging to a violent group (Fink and Hearne, 2008).

The Working Group on Prison and Probation of the Radicalisation Awareness Network⁵ (RAN P&P) focuses on how to prevent radicalisation and engagement with extremist groups and how to decrease the levels of existing radicalisation among people in prison or in probation programmes. In their practitioners working paper, named 'Dealing with radicalisation in a prison and probation context' (RAN P&P, 2015) they discuss effective statements that can lead to a successful disengagement and/or de-radicalisation programme.

On the one hand, they state that deregulatory factors (e.g. overcrowding, lack of staff, tension and poor facilities) influence the flagging and dealing with radicalisation negatively. These factors should therefore be avoided. Other factors that can be kept in mind to ensure a healthy prison environment are safety (e.g. avoiding conflicts between inmates mutually and inmates and staff), trust, fairness (being radical is not considered as a crime itself, therefore it may not lead to more severe repressive measurements), humanity, legitimacy, staff – prisoner

⁵ The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) exists of a network of practitioners who work with people who are vulnerable for radicalisation or persons who have already been radicalised. These practitioners consist of police and prison authorities as well as teachers, youth workers, civil society representatives, healthcare professionals and local authorities' representatives.

relationships (e.g. mutual respect) and identification of a risk of presence of a charismatic extremist leader (RAN P&P, 2015).

On the other hand, the P&P suggests some rehabilitation interventions that are positively related to targeting radicalisation. First, as stated before, the intervention is more effective when the offender's social network is involved. Their cooperation can comprehend giving information about the intervention as well as charging them with responsibilities and training to deal with their relative or friend. Secondly, implicating spiritual support can improve the de-radicalisation process by offering spiritual care and guidance. It is required that those clergy own the respect of the prisoner and are not linked to the authorities. At last, mentoring programmes are widely considered an efficient tool. A mentor can be a trained volunteer who serves as a role model but also an individual with a past as violent extremist and who has experienced a desistance process can offer guidance. To improve the success of this mentoring process it is important that the mentorship not only occurs whilst a person is incarcerated but that it keeps evolving into contact and support after the individual's release (RAN P&P, 2015).

3. DE-RADICALISATION AND DISENGAGEMENT IN PRISON

3.1. Sweden

3.1.1. General information

There are 79 penal institutions in Sweden. At 1 October 2016, Sweden had 5630 individuals imprisoned. The incarceration rate amounts 57 inmates per 100 000 persons. The official capacity of the prison system exists of 6228 places, which means that 84% of the prisons are inhabited. Only 6% of the inmates are women and 31% have a foreign nationality (World Prison Brief, n.d.).

3.1.2. Prison Probation Service

The Prison Probation Service is responsible for the prison administration. Their main tasks are (1) implementing prison and probation sentences, (2) supervising conditionally released persons, (3) implementing instructions for community service and (4) carrying out pre-sentence investigations in criminal cases. The Service is responsible for preparing the inmate of a better life on release. They organise trainings, work and various treatment programmes to reach this aim (Kriminalvården, n.d.).

In prison, it is mandatory to take part in occupational activities, for 6 hours a day, from Monday to Friday. These activities can consist of working with assembling subcontracted products, indoor maintenance of doing the laundry. Inmates can choose to study in prison. The Service has their own school, which makes it possible for the prisoners to continue their education, even when they are transported to another institution (Kriminalvården, n.d.).

In Sweden, prisons are subdivided into institutions with a different degree of security. There are 3 classes: class 1-prisons have the highest security, followed by class 2 and 3. Kriminalvården, the commission responsible for the assignment of a prisoner to a certain penal institution, considers risks of escaping, recidivism or continued crime, addiction and other misconduct to choose a proper institution. In

addition, they avoid the risk of placing prisoners together who could have a bad influence on one and the other (Kriminalvården, n.d.).

3.1.3. (De-)radicalisation policy in Sweden

Before 1971, the term 'terrorism' never appeared once in parliamentary publications. In that year, the occupation of the Yugoslav consulate and the assassination of a Yugoslavian ambassador followed by the Bulltofta skyjacking event in 1972, started to raise awareness concerning radical violence. These events led to the first Terrorist Act in Sweden, that came into force in 1973. Further, notable events on Swedish territory in the 20th century where the killing of Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986 and the murder of Anna Lindh, who was the Foreign Minister, in 2003. In the years following, the Swedish counterterrorism policy started focussing more and more on transnational challenges and opened up for increasing its cross-border cooperation (Eklund and Strandh, 2015).

In a communication report of 2011, the government pointed out Sweden's national counter-terrorism strategy. They summarize the strategy under three headings: preventing (reduce the will of individuals to commit or support a terrorist act), stopping (the discovering and reducing of threats) and preparing (by putting adequate protection) (Ask and Björklund, 2012).

In 2015, Kriminalvården, the institution responsible for the management of prisons in Sweden, brought out a report called 'Violent extremism in the prison: Reporting the Government's mission putting methods and working methods on a map to strengthen the work against violence-inducing extremism in the Criminal Care'. This report contains methods used by the Prison and Probation Service to prevent and reduce radicalisation in prison. With this document, they want to contribute efforts to maintain the democracy and protect it against violent extremism (Kriminalvården, 2017).

3.2. Belgium

3.2.1. General information

In 2016, the Belgian prison population existed of 10 619 inmates. Belgium has a prison population rate of 94 prisoners out of 100 000 people of the national population. Almost 5% of the population are female prisoners and 44% aren't Belgian. The maximum capacity consists of 9687 prisoners. The prison system is overcrowded with a rate of 109,6% (World Prison Brief, n.d.). There are 34 penal institutions in Belgium (Federale Overheidsdienst Justitie, 2018).

3.2.2. General Direction of Penitentiary Institutions

The General Direction of Penitentiary Institutions (DG EPI) is charged with the implementation of sentences and custodial measurements. DG EPI consists of a central board and external services that include prisons. The central board is responsible for controlling and securing individual files of detainees and personnel management, whilst prisons are in charge with the enforcement of measurements and sanctions concerning a deprivation of freedom. There are three types of prisons in Belgium: closed prisons, half-open prisons and open prisons (Federale Overheidsdienst Justitie, 2018).

Within DG EPI, there is a service called Cellmade which is responsible for providing an adequate labour and educational training programme for detainees

while promoting the optimal return to society. Unlike the Swedish system, work is not a compulsory activity in Belgian prisons. Nevertheless, it is strongly promoted since it has proven its positive effect (Cellmade, n.d.).

The Basis Law⁶, the legal framework that aims to provide clarity and legal certainty for a Belgian detainee, was published on January 12, 2005. Anno 2018, not all provisions stated in this framework are putted into force. This evolves in the fact that certain necessities, such as making individual detention plans and normalised regimes, can't be ensured (Liga voor Mensenrechten, n.d.).

3.2.3. *(De-)radicalisation policy in Belgium*

After the attacks on the WTC-towers in New York City on September 11, Belgium indicated the increasing danger of Islamic inspired terrorism. In 2002, the Minister of Justice requested to found two working groups. These groups were signed with the task to work out a framework regarding radicalism, later called Plan Radicalism or Plan R. In this plan, they discussed how all different agency levels are supposed to proceed towards affairs related to radicalism, with a chain-orientated approach kept in mind (Federale Overheidsdienst Binnenlandse Zaken, 2016). Following to this framework, the Belgian government set up different reports, resulting in 'Action plan to prevent processes of radicalisation that can lead to extremism and terrorism' (Vlaamse Regering, 2016).

The attacks in Paris in December 2014, the attack in the Jewish Museum in Brussels in 2014, the foiled attack in Verviers in 2015 and the terrorist attacks in Copenhagen triggered the Belgian government to make a priority to tackle radicalisation in prison. A framework, called 'Approach of radicalisation in prison', was set up on March 11, 2015 (Beyens, 2016). Their used approach consists of a two-track policy. On the one hand, they want to prevent that other detainees become radicalised during their stay in prison while on the other hand, the policy states that it is necessary to develop a specialised framework for already radicalised individuals whilst incarcerated (Federale Overheidsdienst Justitie, 2015).

This two-track policy was conceived after the discussion whether it is better to concentrate radical inmates (so that the spread of radical ideas to other prisoners can be avoided) or to distribute those inmates among others (to counter the intensification of radical ideas). With this idea in mind, Belgium made up a deliberate placement policy based on a judicious selection. Prisoners will initially be integrated as much as possible within the normal prison context. If an individual is at serious risk for radicalisation or if the radicalisation process cannot be controlled anymore, the person will be transferred to a satellite prison. There, they will be followed-up more intensively and will be involved within programs that aim disengagement and/or de-radicalisation. If the threat becomes too real or the individual starts recruiting other inmates, he will be send to a specialized. In this stage, the detainee is completely locked off from other detainees (De Pelecijn, 2017).

⁶ Full name: Basis Law on the prison system and the legal status of detainees.

4. METHODS

To gather the relevant material for this qualitative literature review, specific terms were searched in different online library catalogues and research databases. The starting point was a systematic review (Windish et al, 2015), which included 114 articles concerning disengagement, synthesised by the outline of thematic analysis as described by Thomas and Harden (2008). The sample included qualitative approaches, quantitative techniques and mixed methods. They included three criteria to come to their final sample: (1) the study had to examine factors concerning the disengagement process, (2) the study was published in a peer-reviewed journal of book and (3) the study reported the original empirical research (Windish et al, 2015).

To define de-radicalisation and disengagement, references were searched in Malmö University library database, Ghent University library database, Google Books, Google Scholar and Web of Science. Research was conducted using the following terms and combinations of terms: ‘radicalisation’, ‘de-radicalisation’, ‘deradicalisation’, ‘deradicalization’, ‘disengagement’ and ‘desistance’. In addition, journals, such as ‘Studies in Conflict & Terrorism’, ‘Journal for Deradicalization’, ‘Journal for Peace Studies’ and ‘Panopticon’ were consulted to find relevant references.

Regarding information about Sweden and Belgium’s prison context, the official websites of the relevant institutions were looked up, together with information found in policy reports. To have a good insight in both countries policy, it was necessary to take a look at the assumptions about what they are planning to implement and thereafter, look into the practical feasibility, as done in a study by Schuurman and Bakker (2015). In their study, they made a difference between a programme or policy’s cognitive logic (mechanisms that make a programme or policy effective for achieving the aim) and its operational logic (the capacity of the organisation to implement the measurements successfully) (Schuurman and Bakker, 2015).

The study exists out of a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). This method was chosen because of the possibility to systematically summarise detailed information of qualitative data, which allows the discovery of patterns and differences in between the elements that corresponds to the aim of the study. Another advantage of QCA is the ability to gather and recapitulate a large amount of information (Verweij & Gerrits, 2012). The major difficulty that occurred whilst using this method was finding material applied by comparable sources, considering that this study wants to compare two different countries, with other policies, resources, prison origins and systems...what can lead to a bias of the study.

All this data was kept in mind to get to the aim of this study: how can effective programmes be conducted in prison. To reach its goal, the used literature had to give a significant importance to be able to compare Sweden and Belgium’s de-radicalisation and disengagement strategies. An iterative process was used whilst subjecting the information to a critical eye. An important requirement of using an article was that it was published in a peer reviewed journal. Policy documents were only valid when found on official websites of the concerned authority or published by a credible research agency.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Radicalisation in prison

The problem of radicalisation processes is also encountered in prison. Extremist groups try to expand their network via detainees. The closed nature of the prison makes it an attractive breeding ground for various extremist organizations (Noppe, 2010). Recruitment experts belonging to such organisation have already set up highly sophisticated operational methods to teach their beliefs to potential extremists. An essential characteristic is that they have a high level of group cohesion, which is an important characteristic in order to enforce their existence in prison (Cuthbertson, 2004). Risk factors such as isolation, frustration and other negative consequences that are related to incarceration could be strengthened, especially when joining a group can offer safety and guarantees. Detainees can become more susceptible to radicalization processes in prison, as they are exposed to a lack of hope or the inability to receive justice and recognition, which in turn can lead to additional frustrations (Noppe, 2010).

5.2. De-radicalisation and disengagement programs in prison

Considering the difference in between this two countries regarding the opinions and experiences of a specific prison regime, it makes it more difficult to make a comparison. Every system has its own specific advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it seems to be positive that in a dispersed system prisoners are less likely to marginalise themselves and are treated as ordinary inmates. On the other hand, is it more efficient to monitor extremist prisoners when they are putted in a concentrated regime (RAN P&P, 2015). In this chapter, the application of the previously discussed techniques will be implicated on the programmes going on in Sweden and Belgium.

5.2.1. Sweden

The basis of targeting radicalisation in Swedish prison consists of three stages. At first, expressions of violence induced extremism are noted, by behaviour or information gathered. Secondly, it is important to figure out if these expressions are made because of a persuasion or consist purely out of a reaction. In addition, possible risk factors the individual cares with are to be studied. At length, this should conclude whether a person is a vulnerable receptor or a transmitter of radical thoughts and behaviour. This has consequences regarding the placing of the individual: is a more intrusive control necessary to limit the danger to order and safety? When placing an individual in a certain institution, a risk and needs assessment is determined. Interventions are adapted to the individual possibilities as far as possible (Kriminalvården, 2015).

An example of a Swedish exit programme can be found in Fryhuset. Former right-wing extremists mentor young people who want to cut ties with their extremist environment. The used model is based on meaningful activities, such as sport, what triggers engagement and helps the adolescent becoming a part of the community. They try to encourage the adolescents while giving them confidence and promoting to take responsibility for their acts. An important requirement for success is that the individual is willing to change their identity (Christensen, 2015).

Fryhuset tries to offer equal opportunities for all individuals involved. They developed a five-stage process; the phase of motivation, disengagement,

establishment, reflection and stabilisation. The process includes contacting Fryhuset, breaking bonds with former friends, entering 'normal' life through joint activities, combatting problems and start a new future. The organisation helps the individual finding a new job or house, gives psychological support and keeps in touch after reaching the final stage (Christensen, 2015).

5.2.2. *Belgium*

Inside DG EPI, a cell 'Extremism' is established. This cell is responsible for the realisation of the framework 'Approach of radicalisation in prison'. The tasks of this group, consisting out of 3 persons, are developing a regime, controlling detainees contacts and determining the required components of personnel. Another assignment they fulfil is advising local and regional prison directions in the field of security measures and regimes. (Federale Overheidsdienst Justitie, 2015).

In association with DG EPI, the Support and Service to Detainees is responsible for the more practical approach of targeting radicalisation in prison. The main agenda item is the preparation of individualised trajectories. In addition, they offer resistance trainings and discussion groups focused on the needs of the target audience. As far as Islamic extremism is concerned, Muslim consultants are designated to give moral and religious support to prisoners (Hulp- en Dienstverlening aan gedetineerden, 2016).

Nevertheless, as the implementation of the Basic Law is not completely fulfilled, it remains difficult to accomplish all predefined goals. Especially the overcrowding and the lack of serious investments to make a more modern prison system are fundamental changes that should occur. The League for Human Rights suggests that we abandon the nineteenth century concept of detention and opts for a differentiated approach based on small detention houses with individualised trajectories that prepare the detainee on his reintegration in society. In contradiction to the regime nowadays, marked by routine and uniformisation, specialised departments are proven to be more effective and more risk limiting (Liga voor Mensenrechten, n.d.).

	Sweden	Belgium
Positive techniques		
Economical and financial support	X	?
Involvement of the social network	X	X
Financial incentives	X	?
Spiritual support	≈ ⁷	X
Mentorship	X	-
Deregulatory factors		
Overcrowding	-	X
Lack of staff	?	?
Poor facilities	?	≈ ⁸

Table 3: components present in disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes
(X = present; - = absent; ? = not addressed; ≈ = present in a certain amount)

6. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

Looking back at the given theoretical framework regarding to disengagement and de-radicalisation in literature, both countries show a major difference in approaching radicalisation in prison. On the one hand, Sweden has set up some well-structured exit programmes. Including mentorship in their programme, they can achieve a high number of successful desistance programmes. Nevertheless, Exit Fryhuset is a programme that is mainly executed out of prison and therefore, it requires voluntary participation. The small detention houses in Sweden can be a suitable environment to conduct these kinds of programmes inside prison. Future practises should reveal how an environment characterised by coercion can contribute to effective desistance. On the other hand, Belgium has a wide range of action plans and legal frameworks on how to target radicalisation and extremism, both inside and outside prison. Their biggest stumbling block is postponing the implementation of the Basic Law. De-radicalisation requires an individual approach, customised to a specific detainee. The overcrowded prisons and lack of normalisation make it impossible for prison policies to carry out the pre-defined goals set in the action plans.

Besides from practical opportunities and limitations, there are also some ethical aspects that need to be considered whilst implementing de-radicalisation and disengagement in prison. The main question is: is de-radicalisation of an individual a desirable solution in a democratic society? A crucial requirement is that a right group is targeted, without stigmatising the group. In addition, it is questionable how de-radicalisation in a forced environment, such as a prison, can occur. As mentioned before, de-radicalisation aims a change of personality. In the programmes, agencies try to make this change using different tools. Using those strategies can also

⁷ Exit programmes in Sweden are generally focussed on leaving the extremist right. Therefore, a spiritual leader does not apply here. Nevertheless, the programmes are characterised by former extremist members who occur as coaches or mentors.

⁸ The Belgian prisons are sentences more than once by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture. Although it strongly depends from prison to prison, strong investments in prison accommodation are vital.

provoke the opposite effect of the predetermined goal. Individuals can find the programmes intrusive what can lead to stigmatisation and isolation. Another doubtful effect of de-radicalisation and disengagement programmes, marked by a forced character, is how far individuals will follow the imposed conditions. Sometimes, advantages are linked to following conditions (e.g. taking part in group discussions). An individual can follow a certain procedure, not with the aim to 'improve' himself but to gain benefits such as being subjected to a less severe regime. When this occurs, the long-term effects of the program can be distorted.

Main limitation that can bias this study are the inclusion of different kinds of documents regarding to the prison policy and to the exit strategies in Belgium and Sweden. Whereas Belgium has multiple frameworks published by the Department of Justice, League for Human Rights, Support and Service to Detainees..., Sweden's prison policy regarding radicalisation in prison exists of a more theoretical methodology. Concerning the exit strategies, Sweden has a concrete programme what helps linking the theoretical framework to practise, while Belgium is missing this expertise.

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