

Workshop proposal nr.3

Title: Radicalization; a force for progressive change or a one-way ticket to violent extremism.

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Radicalization; a force for progressive change or a one-way ticket to violent extremism.

The study of radicalisation is a challenging field. Radicalisation of all kinds – left wing and right wing, environmental or Islamist – is a process that may lead to violent extremism, but doesn't have to. How are we to distinguish between radical thinking as an element for progressive change and the development of liberal democracies, and radicalisation as a process that may lead to violent extremism? This workshop is conceived in two parts.

1. How can we define and expound the two phenomena? Where are the fault-lines? How can we encourage progressive thinking and discourage violent extremism?
2. What works and what doesn't in the prevention of violent extremism?

The Norwegian Action plan against radicalisation and violent extremism (2014) set an agenda for mobilising civil society: local, regional and state authorities as well as NGOs. Bjørge (2015) suggests that the most realistic way of understanding and evaluating such processes would be to ask: "what works, and in what context" (Pawson & Tilley 1997). Furthermore which public motions could act as a catalyst for violent extremism? Can misguided public programs in themselves contribute to marginalisation and increased polarisation?

In order to approach this question from as many perspectives as possible, the workshop invites papers from theoreticians, practitioners, researchers and policy makers in mental health and the social sciences in the Nordic countries. Papers are welcomed on topics as diverse as individual mental health and family perspectives, work with populations at risk due to contextual factors in childhood, resilience-building, models for prevention, de-radicalisation and rehabilitation, as well as the organization of such work on local, regional and national levels.