European Platform of Deradicalising Narratives (EDNA)

How to counter extremist story-telling in the internet? Which kinds of narratives are, at all, able to de-radicalize vulnerable young people – and instil sustainable personal development and pro-social attitudes? How may we garner such deradicalising narratives, and in what form should we present them? Most pivotal these questions are, since today's youth ever more intensely uses the Internet to negotiate social belonging, form personal identity narratives, exchange lived-through experiences and build values. This is why we need to go beyond just detecting and closing down radical websites – and why ISEC rightly strives "to provide media skills and platforms to mainstream voices, moderate opinion-leaders, victims/ survivors, … and challenge single extremist/terrorist narratives". All these voices share a common notion that "we are the narrative" and that "We don't have to nor necessarily want to counter anything" but simply want to give testimony and tell our personally lived-through experiences to others".

However, taking a bunch of interview statements around the issue of violent radicalization and putting it onto a website, will only be of little help– and might even have detrimental effects. Not every narrative de-radicalizes – not even the most well intended ones. And not everybody's interview statements are helpful with any target group of beneficiaries. Plus, there is wide consensus among experienced first-line practitioners from various member states that "one cannot deradicalize on-line" and any media based intervention needs to be carefully facilitated in the offline domain.

Therefore, EDNA was designed as two-year national starter measure (conducted in Germany but already liaising with that gives answers as to which kind of story-telling is needed and how deradicalised narratives may be employed in prevention or intervention work. EDNA (a) harnesses empirical knowledge from EU best practice research (xx) draws from fields of interdisciplinary narratology, violence and trauma studies, biography and psycho-therapy research, qualitative-empirical media/ culture studies, and pedagogy, (b) identifies and approaches the most suitable clients for interviewing [from different extremist milieus and contexts], (xx) acquires exemplary narratives, enhances them by supplementary context information and background commentary, (h) determines how to edit, produce and arrange the material on an internet platform, (f) prepares material for staff/ practitioner training,
(c) develops evidence-based guidelines and methodological principles how, under which prerequisites, and by way of which methods and settings to use 'de-radicalising narratives' in targeted interventions of deradicalisation and prevention, (d) produces an

analysis of narratological impact factors, (e) tests the materials in deradicalisation interventions, (l) translate some material into English,

Stakeholders are: practitioners, teachers/schools, policy makers and the media; they will benefit – as will the primary target group: young people in vulnerable sectors of European societies. While – after the starter measure – furthering the transfer of the method into the different member states, the project will take advantage of apparent synergies with VPN's current ENoD-project (ISEC) – the build-up of a European Network of first-line Deradicalisation practitioners – and the recently inaugurated Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN).