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RADICALISATION AND DE-RADICALISATION IN FINLAND – SUPPORT NEEDS IN DE-RADICALISATION PROCESS

ABSTRACT

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This thesis was done in cooperation with Radinet organisation. In a discussion with Radinet personnel it came apparent that there is a need to explore the social support needs of individuals in de-radicalisation process in Finland. The aim of this thesis was to study the phenomena of radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland and to investigate the possible social support needs that the individuals on de-radicalisation process might have. Also, the role of Finnish social sector and how it could support the social needs for these individuals was reviewed. This research provides an overall picture of the current situation in Finland and provides suggestions on what measures could be taken in the future to better respond and acknowledge the issue.

In this study, a qualitative research approach was applied by conducting five interviews. Professionals working in the field were interviewed to obtain knowledge of the current situation in Finland. The data collection from the interviews was analyzed with thematic content analysis.

The main results were that radicalisation and de-radicalisation are individual processes, therefore the social support needs must be addressed according to individual demand. The root causes pushing towards radicalisation need to be explored to enable change. Also, it was important to separate radicalisation from violent radicalisation. The most significant finding was that the individuals in these processes need someone to listen to their story and someone to talk to. The main results of how Finnish social sector could respond to these needs was a multidisciplinary working approach in the processes and sharing knowledge of the phenomena. The third sector, NGOs, with expertise on this matter, should be included as cooperation partners and knowledge of their project and expertise should be widespread.

The results from the interviews presented in this thesis were in line with the literature and support the earlier research implemented on this topic. The conclusion was that there is a need to develop the multidisciplinary work with institutions and third sector organizations as well as to reorganize the existing resources. As a conclusion it could be said that education on the phenomena is needed to achieve common understanding of what they are. When reflecting the process, the need for further research related to radicalisation and de-radicalisation is clear. Further research is needed on social and health care field to better understand the need of the individuals as well as the needs of the professionals that are in contact with the individuals on de-radicalisation process.

Keywords: Radicalisation, De-radicalisation, Disengagement, Social support, Finland

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

There has been radicalisation in the world for a long time. Radicalisation in the form that it is defined nowadays is a relatively new topic around the world. In this research the phenomena are reflected through the definition and occurrences in the 21th century. This thesis concentrates on radicalisation in Finland, even if the phenomenon is a global one. In Finland the risk for violent radicalised attacks is considered to be low. Even if the risk is low, there have been quite a few radical attacks in Finland, therefore it does not rule out the fact, that violent radicalisation is a part of the issues that the Finnish society needs to tackle with. Radicalisation, extremism and terrorism are complex issues that do not have one correct answer to, even the definitions of some of these concepts has been difficult to define. There are international researches done of the phenomena and how to avoid the possible dangers it poses to the societies. Governments and organisations are working on many counter radicalisation processes and research seeks to understand the phenomena itself as well as the reasons behind it.

Governments around the world are increasing and emphasizing the preventative work in this issue in order to maintain a safe environment for all. Counter radicalisation processes are needed to maintain a safety environment for all. Nowadays, when searching for information on any specific agenda is possible via internet, it is also good to acknowledge that the issues and movements around the world might also have an impact on the individuals living in Europe, and in Finland.

When considering violent radical attacks or terrorism, Finland is seen to be a relatively safe country. Unfortunately, Finland has had one attack in Turku, where the violent extremist attack, judged as terrorism, was targeted towards civilians and killed and injured several people. The more visible or common forms of violent radicalisation in Finland are the right and left-wing radical thinkers, who might cause disturbances in social surroundings by violent actions.

This research explores the overall phenomena of radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland on a general level. Even if there are different movements and groups that could

be suspected, this study does not specify on any one of them. To be able to study these phenomena it is necessary first to clarify what is radicalisation, what is de-radicalisation and what is the situation in Finland at the moment. Once the phenomena are more familiar, the deeper exploration of the root causes can start. This is necessary in order to understand the underlying causes, that might impact the decision making of the individuals, who feel the necessity to use intimidating actions towards civilians. Of course, the phenomena can be suspected on many different levels on a society, this study however explores the process of radicalisation and de-radicalisation on an individual level to comprehend the underlying causes better.

Once knowledge is gained of the reasons that push towards a strong ideology, the measures that should be taken to prevent this from happening can start. This research looks for the answers to what should be done to be able to provide adequate social support for the individuals attached to these phenomena. Social support and social capital are presented in this study to mirror the results that this study comes up with. Therefore, social support and social capital are only briefly explored as their own fields. The main thought in this research is to reflect the social support needs with the individual needs.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Working life partner, Radinet

This thesis is done for Radinet-project. Radinet is a program to help people who have radicalised thoughts and wish to withdraw from them, or who are in danger to move towards radicalisation. The program is a part of the Radicalisation awareness network's EXIT-working group that is supported by the European Commission. (VUOLLE Setlementti, n.d.) It is funded by Finnish Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs. The project is implemented in cooperation with Ministry of Interior, different organisations that work with violent perpetrators as well as organisations that are funded by Funding centre for Social and Health organisations (STEA) (Radinet, n.d.) This thesis is also provided for master's degree Programme of Community Development, Human Rights and Conflict Resolution of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

Radinet is a non-governmental organisation (NGO), that provides impartial, confidential and voluntary services for individuals and their relatives who have radicalised thoughts, who have had radicalised thoughts or are in danger to become radicalised. Radinet works with people with different backgrounds. Civilians, people who are in jail, individuals who have come back from crisis areas, with adults and under age individuals. The aim is to help the individuals in need to have a positive change in life. The core values of Radinet are: confidentiality, impartiality, voluntarily, and customer-oriented approach. On top of that the guiding principles of European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network's (RAN) are implemented in Radinet work. (Radinet, n.d.)

Radinet also provides assistant, education and consultations for professionals working in different sectors; health care, education, social services, youth services and security sector. The personnel working in Radinet provide their expertise and tools for other sectors to better recognize and interfere with the phenomena of radicalisation. Radinet program was first launched when European Commission suggested that all member states should have a program to prevent violent radicalisation and support the individuals who want to detach themselves from radicalised thoughts. (Radinet, n.d.)

The need for a study of the social support needs of individuals on de-radicalisation process was first brought up in a meeting with Radinet personnel. In this meeting they described how these individuals might have several stressing points in their lives that require support. The idea for this study came up from this meeting, to do a research of the phenomena of radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland and how could Finnish social sector support the possible social needs of these individuals (Personal communication, 2018 April 17.)

2.2 Radicalisation in Finland

In Finland the threat for violent extremist attacks is considered to be low according to the authorities. Nevertheless, there are groups with extreme ideologies that are considered as a possible threat to the society and these individuals might act violently towards others in society or harm themselves. This emphasizes the need for preventive work to maintain safety and inclusiveness to all and the necessity of multidisciplinary work among authorities, associations and organisations towards this phenomenon (Radinet, n.d.)

Religious based violent extremism is a rather small phenomenon in Finland. However, the threat for terrorism has increased in Finland and the four-level-scale measurement has been raised to 2, which is considered to be elevated. In this scale 1 is low level risk and 4 is severe (YLE, 2017.) Instead of religious based radicalism, political radicalism is a more visible one in Finland. Political right-wing and left-wing radical ideologies are more active parties in Finnish society. Especially right-wing extremists, racists skinheads, are known to bring their ideology visible. They use spontaneous street violence as one of their ideological actions. The most commonly known group of right-wing extremists are the National Socialist Resistance Movement. The left-wing extremists, anarchists and anti-fascists, are mainly known to be active towards the right-wing radical thinkers. Their actions are mainly targeted to the National Socialist Resistance Movement and their aim is to stimulate and interrupt their actions. (Ministry of Interior, 2018, 8-9.)

According to the Ministry of Interior (2018), there has been an increase in religiously based extremism, radical Islamist terrorism, in Finland and the court has had more cases that have gone to preliminary inquiry. The individuals who are implementing violent

extremists' ideology are considered to be the biggest threat to commit severe harm to civilians. However, they seldomly act alone, but instead are a part of a social surrounding.

In Finland there has only been one attack towards civilians that was ruled out in court as terrorist attack. This violent attack happened 18.8.2017 in Turku market square where an individual stabbed ten by passers, out of which two died, and justified his attack by religious jihadist ideology. Ever since the attacker had received a rejection of seeking asylum from Finland he had shown change in his social behaviour and increased interest towards radicalised Islamist ideology. (Onnettomuustutkintakeskus, 2018; Ministry of Interior, 2018, 9.)

Even if there has only been one attack ruled out as terrorist attack, this does not mean that Finland has not had acts of violence towards civilians or properties in other forms. Malkki and Sallamaa (2018, 863) argue, that there are several violent attacks in Finland, that could be addressed as terrorism, however at the time this term was not used out of these attacks. Malkki and Sallamaa (2018, 863) describe that, according to Global Terrorism Database, Finland is one of the countries with smallest number of terrorist attacks documented. However, according to Malkki and Sallamaa (2018, 863), there are acts of violence that were justified with an ideology, thus the concept of terrorism could have been linked to some of these incidences. There have been two school shootings and a bombing in Myyrmanni shopping centre by individual actors. Far right extremism practiced during war time, skinheads and racist attacks towards individuals as well as bombs that have been placed in refugee centres. Far left violence and anarchism has been visible during Cold War and in the 21st century in the form of attacks towards police. Animal activism where fur animals have been released to the nature. Also attacks that have been linked to the political situation in Middle East occurred in Helsinki to Iranian and Turkish embassies. (Malkki & Sallamaa, 2018, 866-869.)

The latest appearance of radicalisation that has been visible in media in Finland is probably the police attempt to break down the Nordic resistance movement by court decision. Last November the Pirkanmaa district court banned the Nordic resistance movement as well as Nordic Tradition group. The request for this came from the police, therefore that the actions of these groups were thought to be beyond the common national legislation, rules and because these groups use violence as a method. The movements appealed to the

higher court of the decision and in September Turku higher court overruled the appeal. The decision to overrule the appeal, instead of warning, to ban the groups was based on their fascistic anti-Semitic ideology that violates the rights of sexual minorities and does not consider all human races as equals. (Yle, 2018.)

3 KEY CONCEPTS

3.1 Radicalisation

The concept radicalisation has been hard to define and differentiate from extremism. There are many reasons behind radicalisation. One way to define radicalisation is to explain it by a strong ideology that seeks to create change on political, social or on governmental level. It could be described as a shift from the ideology that the mainstream has. Radicalisation is usually seen as open minded and not directly linked to violence, instead it might use persuasion as a way. Violent radicalisation could be seen as using revolution or coercion as means to reach a certain goal. (Schmid, 2013, 6-8, 31.)

Feddes (2017, 48) explains, that radicalisation is the process of an individual/s who create increased motivation towards radicalisation and possible violence to achieve the goals that they aim for. Radicalisation as a concept can also be explained by a narrowing of mind towards main political concepts of an individual or a group. The individual or group, that has radical thoughts tends to have such strong ideology, that at the end it is challenging to have alternative thoughts outside of their own ideology. (European Institute of Peace, n.d.)

Radicalisation can occur in many different fields. The most commonly spoken ones are radicalisation based on strong religious or political ideology. Political radicalisation, right and left-wing radicalisation, builds its strong ideological values on political thinking that leans strongly on one side of politics. There are also other forms of radicalisation, such as activists who defend animal rights. (Ministry of Interior, 2018, 12-26.)

Colaert (2017, 15), explains that radicalisation can be a driving force to positive change. Some movements, such as The American Civil Rights movement, were considered to be radical thinkers, therefore that their thoughts diverted from the mainstream of thinking. Radicalisation is not illegal and not all who have radical thoughts encompass or approve violence in their actions. Miller & Chauhan (2017, 24) also describe, that some radical thinkers who wish to have radical change in things, totally abandon the use of violence in their way of thinking.

Neumann (2017, 17-18), explains radicalisation as a process where the individual with radical thoughts moves towards extremism over time. It is a process that requires time and has its roots on dissatisfaction on many areas that the individual wishes to have change in. There are several reasons that influence the radicalisation process, therefore there is no one profile on how to describe a terrorist. Some of the aspects that experts have found to have an impact on the process are; individual or broader conflicts, tension in society, falls expectations, need for individual support, exclusion, political opinions, history of being a victim of violence and lack of trust. It is an individual process over time.

3.2 Extremism and terrorism

Extremists have a very strong ideology and what separates it from radicalism is that extremism tends to ignore law and uses violence as a way to achieve their goals. Extremists use any means to push towards the goal they want to achieve. (Schmid, 2013, 8-9.) According to European Institute of Peace (EIP)(n.d.), the difference between extremism and radicalism is that extremism accepts the use of violence even though they do not necessarily use violence themselves to achieve a political goal. Feddes (2017, 48) describes extremism as a support system to a social progress that approves the use of violence to achieve change in society. According to Finnish Ministry of Interior (n.d.) violent radicalisation and extremism is the encouragement or usage of violence based on an ideology or world view. Violent radicals or extremists may join a group, movement or actions that are justified by their way of thinking and justification to use violence or intimidation as a way to achieve a goal. At its most, it can lead to terrorism. (Ministry of Interior, n.d.)

Terrorism as a concept has many definitions given by different organizations. The vast amount of different definitions however conclude that terrorism is a deliberate act of violence to civilian or non-militants. It seeks to cripple the normal action of a chosen area. (Schmid, 2013, 16-17.) Another way to explain terrorism or violent extremism is a deliberate trained and prepared violent attacks towards civilians by a small group of individuals that share same strong ideology. (European Institute of Peace, n.d.) Terrorism can also be described as a purposeful act of violence to scare or intimidate the social environment in order to gain political change (Feddes, 2017, 48).

Sinai (2007) describes in Mapping Terrorism Research how the concept of terrorism is hard to define therefore, that is has multiple dimensions to it. According to Sinai (2007) one of the most commonly used definitions of terrorism is that of United States (US) Department of State (Sinai, 2007, 33.) They define terrorism as:

> The term terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant[1] targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. The term international terrorism means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country. The term terrorist group means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism. (United States Department of State, 2004, xii.)
> [1] For purposes of this definition, the term noncombatant is interpreted to include, in addition to civilians, military personnel who at the time of the incident are unarmed and/or not on duty (United States Department of State, 2004, xii.)

Sinai (2007) argues, that the problem of the many definitions of terrorism is the separation of execution of violent attacks towards civilians and unarmed people and that of armed military personnel. If the terrorist attack is targeted to armed on duty military personnel, instead of terrorist attack it might have to be called warfare. (Sinai, 2007, 33-35.)

Terrorism is a difficult concept to define, but as a conclusion it is deliberate violent attack towards civilians, that aims to cripple the function of the society or environment where the attack is executed. The aim is to create mass destruction in a specific surrounding. (Schmid, 2013, 16-17; European Institute of Peace, n.d.; Feddes, 2017, 48.)

3.3 De-radicalisation and de-radicalisation process

De-radicalisation could be defined as an exit of the radical thoughts. It is a complex concept and has several descriptions of its meaning. One explanation to de-radicalization is, that it is the programmes that seek to integrate radicalised individuals back to society and leave radical thinking. Another explanation is that de-radicalisation is the change of beliefs and actions and the willingness to integrate back to society (Schmid, 2013, 6-8, 40-41.) According to Collins dictionary (2018), de-radicalisation is explained as stimulation of more moderate views of those who have extreme political or religious thoughts.

Koehler (2017, 64) describes de-radicalisation as a process where the ideology or principles do not necessarily change, however the commitment to an extremist group or acceptance of violence alters. It is disengagement of the role that use to be as well as change in attitudes. This definition of de-radicalisation is supported by Neumann's (2017) view of what radicalisation is. According to Neumann (2017, 20-21), de-radicalisation is the process of a radicalised individual who's commitment to the extremist group changes. They might question the motives or their level of commitment to the group and wish to draw out.

The process of de-radicalisation means the change in violent behaviour and/or mind set. It is aimed to individuals before they are involved in extremist group activity or when they are departing such activity. It has different aspects that need to be encompassed within. Education of the ideology, integration back to society, opportunities in work life and psychological assistance are a few to mention in the process. It is also important to acknowledge that radicalisation and de-radicalisation are processes that require time, these changes in a person's life do not happen suddenly. (Neumann 2017, 20-21.)

3.4 Social support and social services in Finland

Social support or social assistance is the help that people gain from fellow people and authorities. It can be split into three main categories of support; emotional, instrumental and informational. With emotional support the process empowers the individual's self-confidence by enabling expressions of problems, receiving feedback and the feeling that they matter. Instrumental support refers to the concrete things that can be received, such as economic assistance and support with childcare. Informational support can be explained as the information that is gained from other peoples' contribution. (Seeman, 2008.)

In Finland the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible of the policies regarding social and health services. It is the actor that prepares the legislation that is implemented on this sector. Social services in Finland promote social wellbeing, inclusion and safety of families, individuals and communities as well as general capacity to function.

Social welfare professionals working in the field are responsible of implementing this knowledge into action. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, n.d.)

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, municipalities need to organize social services to support on financial issues, management of everyday life issues, prevent social exclusion and promote social inclusion, housing related problems and support needed in acute crisis situations. Also, to provide support on any kind of violence, abuse or domestic violence needs, to ensure wellbeing of children and their development, and to support families and friends of those who are in a difficult life situation. Life problems caused by substance or alcohol misuse, ageing, mental health issues, illness or disability as well as support needs on functional capacity due to a hindering matter such as physical impairment must be organised by the municipalities for their residents. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, n.d.)

Social and welfare services are also provided by private sector companies, institutions and organisations. These social service providers complete the service provision of the municipalities by handling more than a quarter of the demand, and since 2000 the need for private sector providers has been increasing. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, n.d.)

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

Violent radicalization is a result of complex concepts of social marginalisation, frustration and inequality in Finland and western Europe. However, these concepts cannot be said to be the only driving reasons towards radicalization, but as the population in Europe grows the more diverse are the reasons to be considered.

A Finnish report explains the stressing points of why Muslims living in Finland might end up moving back to their country of origin, some as foreign fighters, some for other reasons. The driving reasons to leave Finland are felt to be life situation, societal ambiance, world politics and the actions of public authorities. The Muslims living in Finland have experienced racism, economic distress and some domestic violence. These reasons have had an impact on the decision to leave, not motivators towards radicalization. The individuals that have experienced difficult life situations are more likely to move than those who are doing better. However, the statistics show that individuals with good school reputation and life situations are also leaving. In Finland the main stress points are felt to be hostility towards Muslims, Islamophobia, discrimination, inequality, labelling as terrorist and not being recognised as Finnish citizens. (Creutz, Saarinen, & Jantunen, 2015, 3, 46-47.)

Nuolioja (2015), has similar findings of the driving aspects towards radicalization. Social exclusion, division in society, youth, media, and political iniquity (Nuolioja, 2015, 61). Colaert (2017, 157-162) state, that when talking about elements pushing towards radicalization ideology should not be seen as the only matter, instead the overall situation of the individual should be recognized. Economic and social components should also be researched to be able to form an overall picture of the situation that the individual is in. Inequality is seen as one pushing reason towards radicalization as in other researches too.

When discussing about de-radicalization process it is important to recognize the root causes that lead towards radical thinking. The underlying causes should be opened up and discussed instead of pushing towards leaving an ideology. Often ideology is only one pushing aspect among other elements, therefore it is necessary to give a correct framework for the reason why one is radicalised. (Colaert, 2017, 157-162.) Akbarzadeh, (2013),

describes, that in Australia the young Muslims are in danger to adapt the extremist ideas that Islam might pose when only parts of the religion are implemented and when they feel political alienation and marginalised from the social system (Akbarzadeh, 2013, 461-462).

According, to Feddes (2017, 49), the motivation for an individual to become radicalised can be divided into four different categories reflecting on the root causes that led to the situation of growing a strong radical ideology. The first group are the identity seekers whose motivation is driven by reasons that they feel is missing in their identity. They feel unsure and are longing to be a part of a social group. When feeling socially insecure of their identity they are easily drawn to e.g. extremist groups that can provide the needed social support for them. To be able to prevent this from happening different kind of social support should be provided for these individuals. The second group is justice seekers who lean towards radical way of thinking, therefore that they seek justice for themselves through this. The underlying reasons for their ideology are past experiences of social exclusion, negative encounter with authorities, discrimination and necessity. Also, the perception of being unequally treated, disappointment and embarrassment push towards justice seeking. These individuals should be guided and provided other methods on how to deal with negative emotions. The third group are significance seekers who look for a meaning to life after an intense experience has occurred in their life. These individuals would benefit of different methods of how to cope with stressful occurrences in life in order to prevent them from seeking easement from wrong paths. The last group are sensation seekers who look for excitement and change in life to prevent boredom. They might have criminal history and are easily drawn to extremist groups or other acts of violence in the fume of adventure. They should be provided ways on how to implement their' thrive of sensation seeking with different methods. (Feddes, 2017, 49.)

Schmid (2013, 4), explains that the underlying causes for radicalisation should not only be looked on individual level, but to have a bigger framework to work with, to be able to understand the process better. Micro, meso and macro levels should be included in the process to gain knowledge from individual level, social surrounding level and of the role of the government and society of country of residence and overseas. Micro level understanding aims to understand the individual causes that enhance vulnerability towards radicalisation, such as marginalisation, embarrassment, stigmatisation and alienation to

mention a few. Meso level explores the issue on wider scope, investigating the surrounding environment and the pushing elements that it might have and the organisations that provide the kind of inclusion and acceptance that the individuals might need. Macro level seeks to understand the connection between governments and societies to e.g. minorities, and their relationship to one another when considering the pushing and pulling elements towards radicalisation process. Feddes (2017, 53-54) has similar findings on risk components pushing towards increased motivation to radicalisation. Micro, meso and macro levels have been identified, meaning individual, group and social levels where the driving reasons can be identified. Also, Neumann (2017, 17-18), explains that there are many driving elements that can push towards radicalisation.

Schmid (2013), suggests, that in good domestic counter terrorism policies should be included, social cohesion, fairness and justice as well as flexibility in social and political change (Schmid, 2013, 57). These replicate the findings on the previous research, thus strengthening the outcome of the results.

A lot of research has been done to understand what radicalisation, terrorism and de-radicalisation is. Many institutions have published researches and recommendations for policies to prevent violent radicalisation. However, on national level in Finland, the phenomena are still relatively new. Therefore, research of this topic is needed. This thesis is needed to understand what radicalisation is in Finland, and what type of challenges it poses to the society.

5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

5.1 Research questions and aim of research

In this research I explore the social support needs that an individual on de-radicalisation process might have. The phenomena of radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland is researched to be able to gain knowledge of the prevailing situation on national level. The social support needs are also reflected to the current situation in Finland and how Finnish social sector supports the process, by conducting expert interviews on this matter. The phenomena are explored both on general level and individual level. The research questions in this study are:

1. What is radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland?
2. What are the individual social support needs that are needed in de-radicalisation process?
3. How could the de-radicalisation process be supported in Finland?

The aim of this study is to provide an answer to the social support needs and how could Finnish social system respond to these needs. Professional interviews are used as data collection method to gain knowledge of this topic.

5.2 Qualitative research in studying radicalisation and de-radicalisation

I chose qualitative methodology for this research as it implements the thought that the reality is versatile and seeks to understand the target subject. Instead of explaining already existing truths the aim of qualitative research is to reveal and find facts and knowledge. Therefore, I found this methodology suitable for this research to be able to emphasize the knowledge that there is available of radicalisation, de-radicalisation and social support. (Hirsjärvi, Remes, & Sajavaara, 2015, 160-161, 181-182.) Some key features of different qualitative study methods are their ability to describe a phenomenon in the perception of the participants allowing them to point out their connection and understanding of the subject. A contextual research is considered to be able to point out the existence of things in

social world and the way these occurrences embody. This study benefits from this approach therefore that it enables the demonstration of the features of radicalisation and de-radicalisation as well as the systematic classification of the social support needs of an individual. (Ritchie, 2007, 27.)

A research plan was provided for the thesis supervisors and working life connection Radinet. With their approval on the plan, a co-operation agreement was written, between me, Radinet and Diak. The research was then further continued, and the level of data collection was extended.

The research questions relevant for this thesis were constructed implementing the thoughts of understanding the needed social change, interaction and processes. Also, with the questions I want to describe the phenomena and reduce confusion around the topic. These questions are the guiding tools of this thesis and are utilised to help to look for the possible directions that I need to take to gain sufficient amount of data. (Agee, 2009.) Qualitative research method allows this research to look into the data collected in a comprehensive and versatile way. As the research proceeded qualitative method enabled flexibility to change the plans according to the circumstances which is necessary, therefore that I was conducting professional interviews. (Hirsjärvi et. al. 2015, 164.)

5.3 Expert interviews

To gain up to date information from the field, professionals working in institutions or non-governmental organisations (NGO) in Finland were interviewed. Altogether five interviews were conducted. The interviewees were chosen from different institutions and NGO's that are in contact with radicalisation and de-radicalisation. This was done to enable a wider perspective of the overall situation. The aim was to conduct interviews with Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Internal, Social sector professionals, and on NGO level. One of the interviews was conducted with Radinet to enable the use of their knowledge of the situation. The interviews were done in Finnish. The recordings were transcribed in Finnish, and the data implemented to this thesis from those were then translated in to English. I contacted the interviewees first via e-mail explaining the reason why I wish to interview them. All the participants who agreed to be interviewed were sent

an informed consent (Appendix 1). The informed consent explains the research, the use of the data collected from the interviews and the general information for the interviewee. The same information was explained face-to-face before the interviews started. All of the participants were asked to sign the informed consent to ensure, that they agree and have understood the information given in the sheet. (Silverman & Patterson, 2014, 63-64; Ruusuvuori & Tiittula, 2009, 24.)

The implemented interview questions (Appendix 1, Appendix 2) for the professionals are based on previous studies and also to the research questions of this thesis on what should be asked in order to gain knowledge of the subject. The professionals were asked to describe what is radicalisation and de-radicalisation. The occurrence of radicalisation in Finland and how these phenomena, radicalisation and de-radicalisation, are visible in their work were questions that I noticed that needed to be asked to clarify their meaning. The relations with these phenomena's and social support had to be figured out for this study. Also, the needs that the individuals might have, and the role of Finnish social sector had to be suspected to be able to build a picture of the current situation. According to the comments received a question of the challenges that social sector in Finland might have in the de-radicalisation process was also added to the entity.

The interview questions were open-ended to enable the interviewee to express their perception of the subject in their own words and thoughts. With the open-ended questions the interviewees are allowed to answer without predisposition. This provides more data than questions that can be responded with yes or no. At first there were five interview questions, however according to the comments the interview questions were broken down into nine smaller ones. The questions were formulated so that they provide the interviewees the possibility to explain their point of view of the key issues researched in this thesis without presumptions. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were chosen to allow myself to gain deeper knowledge of how the interviewees understand radicalisation, de-radicalisation and the support needs that these individuals might have in Finland. (Silverman & Patterson, 2014, 61; Quinn Patton, M. 2015, 446-447.)

The interviews were a combination of semi-structured and focused interviews. In a semi-structured interview often, the questions presented are the same for the recipients, however the interviewer can change e.g. the order of the questions. The main thought is that

some of the aspects of the interview are settled and some can be adapted. The person responding to the questions can freely use their own words in a semi-structured interview. The interview questions in this research were the same for all the interviewees, following the principals of semi-structured interview. In the interviews some clarifying questions were presented to ensure that I have fully comprehend the answer. The clarifying questions were e.g. do you mean that…? The questions were also formed around the phenomena of radicalisation, de-radicalisation and support needs, thus indicating that they were built around a theme. Focused interviews follow the same theme in their questions and emphasize the perceptions of the interviewed individuals. This research benefits from using focused semi-structured interviews as it utilises the understanding of the professionals interviewed instead of that of the researcher. The interviews provided altogether 52 pages of transcripts. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2014, 47-48.)

The interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees. The interview language used in all of the interviews was Finnish. The recordings were transcribed, also in Finnish, the same day, or the following day of the interview sessions. The transcriptions were done word by word. However, the filler words and expressions of emotions were not transcript as the content of the expert opinions was the emphasis of the interviews. While doing the interviews some notes were also made, to ensure the data collection even if the recording would fail for some reason. The recording device and the sound quality were tested before the interviews. After the interviews the interviewees were asked if further questions could be asked via e-mail or telephone should they be needed. The interviews were held in private office or meeting rooms in a quiet environment without any disruptions. (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2007, 141, 146-7, 166-7.) The average duration of the interviews was 35 minutes and 18 seconds, the interviews took from 28 to ~42 minutes. The average length of the transcripts 10,4 pages, the longest transcript was 12 pages and shortest 8 pages. The specific duration and length of transcript of each interview conducted is presented in Appendix 3.

5.4 Data analysis

For data analysing methods thematic content analysis was implemented in this study. Thematic analysis focuses on context and themes and I chose this as my framework for

analysing the data collected from the interviews to be able to point out the main themes and subthemes from them. Once the main themes were found, subthemes emerging from them were gathered. Altogether nine main themes were found and from three to fifteen subthemes under the main themes. The main themes found were: occurrence of radicalisation, political violent radicalisation, religious based violent radicalisation, individual violent radicalisation, disengagement, individual process, knowledge of the phenomena, multidisciplinary work and development of social services. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 78-81.) A thematic framework (Appendix 4 tables 2a & 2b) was built according to Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor's (2007, 223) model. In this model the main themes were identified from all of the transcripts together, and subthemes listed under each main theme in the order and occurrence that they appeared in. For example, the theme disengagement brought seven subthemes under it as show in table below. The main themes are presented as headings and subthemes listed under each heading. The theme formation was done from all of the interview questions altogether.

Table 1. Theme formation table

5 DISENGAGEMENT
5.1 difficult definition
5.2 goal in violent radicalisation
5.3 change in behaviour
5.4 cessation of violence
5.5 leaving group/movement
5.6 change in way of thinking
5.7 disengagement + de-radicalisation

All of the themes found from the interviews were then further analysed and reported in this paper. Quite often the data collection and recognition of themes bring new aspects, therefore new themes can occur from them, for these reasons this method was chosen for the data analysis in this thesis. Thematic analysis can also help gaining understanding of a phenomena, if such is relevant in the research process. As radicalisation and de-radicalisation are relatively new phenomena's in Finland this specific method was implemented in the data collection to enable better understanding of the occurrences. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 78-81.)

Thematic content analysis was chosen as it identifies themes emerging from the data. In content analysis the data gathered for this research, both its content and context are analysed. The results of the analysis were then linked to the parameters of the question of social support needs of the individuals on de-radicalisation process and how could Finnish social sector support these needs. (Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor, 2007, 200.)

5.5 Validity, reliability and ethical consideration

The reliability of this thesis can be measured by the data collection done through the search engines for the literature implemented in this research. The processes of all data collection have been thoroughly explained, to be able to show the different phases of this research and the path that led to the conclusions that I make. Throughout the whole research process, I reflected that the data saturation that I use is sufficient enough, and the questions that I presented for the interviewees allow them to express their opinion and experiences freely. The conclusions and interpretations in this thesis are supported by the data collected from literature and interviews. (Lewis & Ritchie, 2007, 271-272.)

The research provides an answer to the research questions that I made in the beginnig and the results are adaptable in the Finnish society, therefore that the research focus was on national level. The data collection is valid for this research, therefore that the aim was to gain information from professionals. However, it does rule out the opinions and experiences of the individuals and their close circle who are experiencing this phenomenon themselves. The occurrence of radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland have been identified in this study. The experiences of the professionals working in the field have been included and presented in this study as thoroughly as it is possible in the limits of providing full anonymity for them. (Lewis & Ritchie, 2007, 273.)

To enhance the reliability and validity of the interviews, a thorough explanation of the interview processes is presented in this research. Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2014,185), argue that even though the mean is to show that the results can be duplicated this is difficult to presume with interviews, therefore that similar circumstances are not likely to happen the second time. The first interview was a test interview to see if the interview questions are answerable and provide data for this study. The test interview only ruled out one question,

thus leaving eight questions for the following interviews. The question that was considered too vast and repetitive with the other questions was; What is social support? The work life contact agreed with me, that this question is not needed as the other questions provide answers for this one too. The interview questions were thought through with the working life contact person, and it was agreed that with these questions, shown in appendix 1 and 2, this study can proceed.

The questions presented in the interviews were answerable, however some clarification had to be made before the interviews started. The first clarification had to be made on what I mean by radicalisation in Finland. Before the recording was started it was discussed that by radicalisation I mean to gain knowledge of violent radicalisation. The questions allowed the interviewee to describe their perception of the subject, however the formation of the questions allowed the interviewees to provide an answer partly to the following questions too. Therefore, some of the following questions were only asked in order to provide the interviewee possibility to add information to the latter if they felt that it was needed. I provided time for the interviewees to express their opinion and I asked further questions to ensure, that I have fully comprehend the opinion of the interviewees. (Hirsjärvi, et. al. 2015, 231-232.)

The interviews are professional opinions and perceptions of this issue/matter. Individuals that have radicalised thoughts, nor individuals that are on the process of de-radicalisation were not interviewed. The intend of this study was to gain knowledge of the phenomena itself as well as from the point of view of social sector. For that reason, only experts were interviewed. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the ethical point of view that these findings base on the data collection, theory and interviews, done for this research. To ensure full anonymity for the interviewees their name, age or gender is not published in this study. The interviewees were given a number in the order that the interviews took place to be able to separate them in this study.

In the interviews it came apparent, that as the NGO's and institutions participating in this study, have cooperation they might be able to acknowledge the interviewees or share the knowledge with each other. This hinders the possibility to provide full anonymity for them in this research, even if they're names or gender are not mentioned in this research. For this reason, the results in chapter 6 are presented without the given interview numbers

to ensure anonymity for the participants. There were five interviewees taking part in this study, therefore they could be identified from the answers if separated by numbers in results.

Before the interviews, the interviewees were sent an inform consent (Appendix 1), that included the interview questions. The consent stated that the any data collected through the interviews are implemented only in this study. The data, recordings and transcripts, are kept in a secure file as long as this study has been approved by the thesis supervisors. Whilst approved the data is then deleted. The participation is voluntary, and they can withdraw from the study at any point if they wish so, in this case the data collected from them is not used in this study. The participants identities are handled with full anonymity. The participants were given my contact details. (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2007, 141, 146-7, 166-7.) The interviewed professionals were all willing to hear about the results of this research once this is study was completed. This emphasizes the meaning of this kind of study.

6 PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS TO DE-/RADICALISATION

The findings from the interviews are presented in this chapter. The main themes occurring from the data are presented as subheadings. Under each subheading the main theme is broken down to describe the subthemes that emerged from the interviews. The results from the interviews were brought together and are presented as conclusions below. The main themes explain the occurrence of radicalisation, different forms of radicalisation in Finland as well as what is de-radicalisation and disengagement. The social support needs of the individual in de-radicalisation process that emerged from the interviews are presented in this chapter too. Individual process was one of the main results among the need of education of the phenomena, multidisciplinary work among authorities and NGO's, and development of social services. The quotations used in this chapter are my translations from Finnish to English from the transcriptions of the interviewees.

6.1 Occurrence of radicalisation

In all interviews the professionals concluded that radicalisation itself can be both negative and positive. When explaining radicalisation all interviewees brought up the aspect of change that radicalisation has, if used, within the limits of common norms and legislation. Radical thoughts can be a trigger for change in politics and an asset for societies. One interviewee described:

> "…*that when thinking of women's rights evolvement in Finland, when it happened it was considered to be radical thinking. However, it improved the rights of women and created societal development.*"

Another interviewee explained:

> "…*that radical thoughts are needed for politics and world to evolve.*"

It came apparent in the interviews that it is necessary to discuss of violent radicalisation when talking of the form it takes when it is not acceptable. Therefore, the word violent is

added to be able to separate these two forms of radicalisation. When describing violent radicalisation, all of the professionals brought up the fact that it is an individual process. In the process the individual begins to implement opinions, perceptions or ideologies that are often rationalized by religious or political views. These ideologies divert from the main stream way of thinking. The individual process also begins to accept the use of violence towards other people or encourages others to use violence as a way to achieve their aim.

Also, in violent radicalisation two of the interviewees described how the way of thinking alters into seeing things 'black and white'. Majority of the interviewees described, that the individuals do not always have strong knowledge of the ideology they are adapting. One interviewee explained how:

> "-*in the black and white way of thinking the initial setting of mind evolves from main stream into we/them…*"

Another of the interviews brought up the fact that phenomena's transfer to Finland from abroad. Even if they do not exist in Finland, common world and vast information flow brings shared problems to all. The polarization of society and world was also mentioned in some of the interviews, and that it causes juxtapositions in the society that pushes people apart from main stream opinions.

6.2 Political violent radicalisation

The participants on the whole demonstrated that in Finland violent radicalisation is considered to be relatively small phenomena. The forms and reasons of political violent radicalisation in Finland are considered to be right- and left-wing radicals, criticism towards immigration to Finland and political ambience. According to all interviewees, political violent radicalisation is the prevailing form of violent radicalisation in Finland. Right-wing radicals are considered to be the most active groups that cause disturbances in the society.

Protests, political manifestations and violence crimes are the most common forms mentioned in the interviews of how these movements aim to reach their purpose. Some of the interviewees explained that whenever right-wing radicals are active, this activates the left-wing radicals. It was also felt that political discussion activates counterforces in some groups. Left-wing radicals were described to be violent towards authorities. One of the participants mentioned:

> "...*global terrorism and global violent radicalisation have an effect in Finland too, even if it does not take the same forms in here...*"

Other forms of violent radicalisation were mentioned by some of the interviewees. They explained that individuals fighting for animal rights tend to damage properties, such as; paint fur. This is considered to be unacceptable therefore that it causes damage to others and deviates from the main stream ideology.

6.3 Religious based and individual violent radicalisation

In all cases the informants identified religious based violent radicalisation as one form that occurs in Finland. However, some interviewees explained that the overall picture of the visibility of religiously based violent radicalisation is not in correlation with the incidences in Finland. There has been only one terrorist attack in Finland, that was religiously based. Some of the interviewed professionals felt that the discussion focus is in imbalance. Often when talking of violent radicalisation, it is assumed to be religious based, when in fact the more common form of violent radicalisation is based on political ideologies. In some interviews the individuals going back to conflict zones, war areas were mentioned. There are individuals and families that return e.g. Syria. However, in the interviews it was mentioned that the returning individuals do not necessarily go back because of an ideology.

Individual violent radicalisation means that an individual actor creates reasons to act violently towards others. There is no specific one reason behind this. However, there have been violent radical attacks or incidences towards civilians committed by a single actor in Finland. This kind of violent radicalisation has taken form of school shootings, school

killings and threats, e.g. bombs, targeted to schools as described by some of the informants.

Almost all of the interviewees mentioned the individual violent radicalisation as a form that occurs in Finland. Unfortunately, quite often the attacker is also killed in the attack. One of the interviews mentioned:

> "*...one reason behind this kind of action can be to seek visibility and fame. For a brief moment this individual is feared and talked about.*"

6.4 Disengagement

When explaining de-radicalisation all of the interviewees described that the definitions given for this phenomenon are difficult therefore that they are not true to all individuals. Disengagement was mentioned in all interviews. It was felt as the main goal in violent radicalisation. Disengagement means the process where the individual has the will to change behaviour and stop the use of violence. As one of the interviewees explained de-radicalisation as a process where the human:

> "*…wants to disengage from extremist group, wants to live a violence free life.*"

> "*...wants to abandon extremist ideology.*"

In disengagement the individual is willing to leave the group or movement that justifies the use of violence by an ideology. It is an alteration in the way of life to move towards non-violent ways to implement thoughts. It is a change in actions that is likely to trigger the change in alteration of thoughts as well. One of the interviewees described that:

> "*...first there is sort of alterations in the way of life, that, for example stopping the use of violence.*"

> *"... as a consequence of changes in life style begins the alterations in way of thinking as well… one starts to question wheatear the use of violence is right."*

The process of de-radicalisation was described to start by the cessation of violent actions and disengagement from the movement or environment that allows or supports this kind of behaviour. Once the individual has the willingness to implement this way of thinking it is more than likely to start the change in the way how the ideology is implemented.

De-radicalisation was referred to the change in mind and the way the individual thinks. Disengagement and de-radicalisation are linked to each other, therefore that the alterations process of an individual often requires both of these to happen in order to change life course. Changes in the way of life starts the process of questioning the way of thinking and the use of violence, thus altering the mindset of an individual. The main goal is to stop the use of violence and committing of crimes.

6.5 Individual process

Radicalisation and de-radicalisation were both seen as individual processes. In both, it was suggested, that the individual causes, the root causes need to be explored in order to allow change. The underlying reasons and triggers that first pushed the individual towards radical thoughts need to be suspected for change to happen. The need for understanding the individual reasons for support was emphasized in all of the interviews. One of the respondents expressed that:

> *"... and as this radicalisation process, so is de-radicalisation process a very individual process too… "*

> *"...the individual decides to leave from these from individual reasons."*

The main topic in social support according to the interviewees was the need to be heard, that there is someone who listens and gives value. Someone, who is willing to hear the story behind the actions.

Labelling and stigmatization were definitions that were common to all interviews. These were reasons that were explained to be hindering aspects for individuals to be able to feel part of the society. Labelling and stigmatization are felt by individuals and communities that they live in. These are likely to also be pushing elements towards possible radicalisation when feeling isolated from the society. Also, the feelings that the society is not able to provide what is needed was mentioned. The aspects that were explained to be some of the social support needs of the individuals were; to be seen and heard, someone to listen to the story and not be alarmed by it, respect and visibility as well as lack of social networks. As argued by one the interviewees also, economic distress was mentioned as one area that can:

> "*...hinder the ability to control the daily living…*"

The main idea behind all of these reasons is to see the client as an individual. To adapt the social work methods on an individual level for every client. Together with the client to discuss and find out the reasons for isolation, marginalisation, feelings of frustration and other life challenges that they might be facing. Also, the influence they have on their inner circle needs to be explored as it might cause distress to those around them too.

In some of the interviews the needs for youth to be heard by adults were mentioned. Youth need to have an adult to talk to and provide a safe environment for them. Couple of the interviewees also mentioned children and how their childhood should be protected from radical propaganda. Some of the children who have grown in families where strong ideologies are implemented, or children who has had to face the violence in a conflict zone need an adult to normalize the situation. One of the interviewees explained that:

> "*There are youth who have relatively radical opinions, however this is not a bad thing if they have the possibility to talk about them. If an adult takes them seriously and listens to them…*"

The main topic that arouse from the interviews was the need to be heard and valued by someone. There can be multiple reasons why an individual diverts from the mainstream way of thinking towards increased radical thoughts. Only by understanding the individual root causes for this alteration in way of thinking and/or action can the social support needs

be explored. In all cases it was felt that inclusiveness, being respected and having social networks were aspects that everyone needs in order to feel part of something.

6.6 Knowledge of de-/radicalisation

The need to address the phenomena and provide knowledge of it was emphasized. In all of the interviews it was suggested that authorities and social and health care workers should have knowledge of what it means, how it might occur and what is violent radicalisation and de-radicalisation. This need of mutual understanding was brought up to enable the people dealing with this issue to understand what they are or might be facing. According to one participant knowledge of de-radicalisation should be spread:

> *"...knowledge should be spread even wider, starting from day-care centres, what this means as a phenomenon."*

As it was emphasized in the interviews, the amount of actual client cases dealing with violent radical ideologies in Finnish social services are rare. Therefore, it was felt that not all of the authorities and personnel working on social and health care field need to have a thorough understanding and expertise of how to address and work with these clients. However, it would be beneficial for social and health care personnel to be able to recognize individuals who might have a strong ideology that guides their actions. One participant explained that:

> *"...increasing knowledge and on the other hand understanding that, if we have persons who as individuals have gone through radicalisation process, an important part of preventative work is to understand the effects it has on their close circle too..."*

If the social and health care workers have the knowledge to recognise these individuals and understanding of the phenomena, they can implement social and health care methods and basic services for them, thus possibly prevent the ideological attachment from growing too strong. Authorities of all fields facing these phenomena would benefit it they would have the knowledge of where to contact and consult experts. The different

organisations that are experts in this field should be included in the processes by providing this knowledge to the workers in the social and health care services.

The need for social work was felt to be very important in these processes, therefore that that social and health care workers meet with clients. The need to spread the knowledge was felt to be great. It is not only social services but health care and educational field as well. It was also brought up, that it might be challenging or even intimidating to have a conversation of an area where the worker has no knowledge or little knowledge of the subject.

6.7 Multidisciplinary work, development of social services

The need for knowledge and cooperation was brought up and emphasized in all expert interviews. The phenomena of radicalisation, violent radicalisation and de-radicalisation were expressed to be issues that cannot be solved only by one sector. Multidisciplinary work among institutions and NGO's was highlighted to better respond to the needs that these phenomena poses to the society. The aim is not to educate all authorities, social and health care workers to be professionals on handling with this issue. However, the suggestions were to bring NGO's and institutions closer to the services provided by municipalities to share expertise and cooperate. According to one interviewee:

> "...strongly believe that with social work methods these individuals can be identified and supported... however, it is important to have someone that can be consulted..."

> "to spread the knowledge... on where to turn to..."

Authorities and the service system in general was described to have all the qualities that the clients in de-radicalisation process might need. However, the client might struggle to build confidence to these agents due to past negative experiences that they might have. The clients might be intimidated to describe their story for the police and social worker because they might fear the consequences that it might have. Therefore, the third sector, NGO's, are an asset for the process because they might be able to build a trusting

relationship more easily with the individuals. Also, the possibility of Finnish service systems to respond to these issues was felt to be inadequate, even if the methods and qualities are correct.

The participants on the whole demonstrated that the resources in Finland are vast to tackle with this issue. However, cooperation with all service systems, authorities and NGO's with expertise on this was highly emphasized in order to utilise all the resources available at the moment.

The developmental need of the social service systems regarding these phenomena was transparent in all interviews. Some of the informants suggested reflection and development of the services to enable better respond to the matter. Cooperation was one that was suggested by all interviewees. Also, the management of new concepts occurring and development according to the needs they oppose was mentioned. Those government services that are considered to serve basic human needs were felt to be adequate at the moment, however better management and organisation might be needed. One of the participants was reflecting that:

> "*...to conduct analysis within social work that how does this occur in social work? Are there areas that have not been notified yet?*

Some of the experts described that the resources do not allow enough time to support the clients. As argued by one of the interviewees:

> "*The rapid circle of the service does not give the continuum for the clients...*"

Majority of the informants expressed their concern that even if Finland has good functioning social and health care systems they are hard to reach when dealing with life crisis. Also, the interviewees expressed their concerns that the close circle of the individual in radicalisation or de-radicalisation should be included and heard.

All of the interviewees emphasized the necessity and importance of preventative work to be able to reach the individuals before the ideology or attachment to an organisation is

too strong. With good preventative work the aim is to decrease violent radicalisation in society, which is the form that is considered to be harmful and unacceptable. In one of the interviews updating training for professionals working in the field was suggested. This is also supported by the all of the other interviews where need for education of the phenomena was felt needed.

7 DISCUSSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

In the discussion part the main results are presented and reflected to the previous literature and the key concepts. The reflection is done following the order that they are presented in this thesis. First the concept radicalisation is discussed, this will be followed by deradicalisation. Then the discussion is moved closer to the results, explaining individual process and the social support needs that emerged from that. These social support needs are then reflected to social capital and social support on the level that they are explored in this study. The main results: disengagement, individual process, multidisciplinary work and sharing knowledge to enable even better preventative work are discussed in this order below.

7.1 Reflection of the results

According to all interviewed professionals, radicalisation is a way of thinking, or implementing an ideology that differs from the mainstream of opinions or standards and norms in the society, without violent action. The experts described, that radicalisation is not only a negative thing. It appears in our everyday lives and in the society. When the ideology is strong towards something but does not approve the use of violence on any level, or any other form of harming anyone or anything, it can be acceptable. It is necessary for everyone, professionals and laymen, to be able to separate radicalisation from violent radicalisation or extremism that allows the use of violence. In the interviews it was explained that radicalisation has been an asset behind some societal changes. All of the interviewed professionals agree that radicalisation is not acceptable on any level when it implements any means of violence. This reflects with the research literature well. Colaert (2017, 15) agrees with this way of thinking by explaining that radicalisation can be a driving aspect to positive change.

The form of radicalisation that is unacceptable is violent radicalisation where the use of violence is seen as a method to achieve goals as stated in the interviews. Feddes (2017, 48), provides similar kind of explanation of radicalisation, stating that it is an individual process where the individual develops increased motivation towards radicalisation and

possible violence to achieve the goals that they aim for. Schmid (2013, 6-8, 31) explains the two sides off radicalisation where radicalisation is usually seen as open minded and not directly linked to violence, but violent radicalisation could be defined as using more provocative measures to achieve a certain goal. In the interviews it came apparent too that radicalisation and de-radicalisation are individual processes. Neumann (2017, 17-18), explains radicalisation as a process where the individual with radical thoughts moves towards extremism over time. When exploring how the interviewed experts and previous research sees the process they all speak of individual who moves towards an ideology, this clearly indicates that the pulling and pushing reasons towards violent radicalisation are individual too.

According to the interviews de-radicalisation process is an individual process and does not have only one specific definition. It is disengagement of the extreme way of thinking as well as detachment of the movement or organisation itself. This does not mean going back to the state that the individual was before, instead it means a process that starts when the individual has the willingness to implement a more open-minded view of their thoughts. Disengagement and to be detached on individual level were also emphasized as part of de-radicalisation by the professionals in all of the interviews as well. The process takes time as the development progresses from alteration in actions is likely to change the social surrounding and mindset too by time. The definition of de-radicalisation given by Schmid (2013, 6-8, 40-41), Koehler (2017, 64) and Neumann (2017, 20-21) supports this way of describing the concept. According to them as well, de-radicalisation is a process of change in behaviour, mindset and willingness to leave the group that supports a strong ideology accepting violence. It is a process where the individual starts to question violent behaviour before being part of a group or when willing to depart a group.

It was emphasized that the individual causes driving towards radical thinking need to be figured out. However, even if the individual reasons are seen as one of the major components on this process, the close circle of the individual and social level implementation cannot be left out. It is also important to support the families that are going through the process on the side of the individual. Also, the social level needs to be addressed to be able to provide adequate and efficient support by the governments and support systems. The social level development of methods and multidisciplinary work among all participant sectors was discussed in the interviews, suggesting that macro level development on

this matter is needed in Finland. Schmid (2013, 4) and Feddes (2017, 53-54) both describe the necessity to explore the needs on micro, meso and macro level, meaning the individual, group and social level. The conclusions that I made from the interviews support these concepts.

Individuality and individual needs were present in both, literature and interviews. In both it was emphasized that to understand the process of radicalisation and therefore de-radicalisation as well, it is necessary to identify the underlying causes that push towards certain way of thinking and acting. Colaert, (2017, 157-162) discusses of the importance of recognising the overall situation of the individual and exploration of social and economic aspects that could be reasons pushing towards radicalisation. Creutz et. al. (2015, 3, 46-47) explain in their research that the Muslims leaving Finland have several reasons that affect their decision to leave the country. Not only uneducated but also educated individuals with good life situation have made the decision to leave. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the reasons why they felt the need to leave. This brings this research to the point of the felt individual needs.

Labelling and stigmatization of an individual or a community were felt to be very distressing and causing isolation from the society. This is common in literature and in the interviews. Isolation and marginalisation from the society hinder the possibility to have adequate social networks which is seen as one important aspect of social inclusiveness. Creutz et. al. (2015, 3, 46-47) and Nuolioja (2015, 61) describe similar findings in their studies conducted in Finland. Social exclusion, political and social atmosphere, division in society, inequality, labelling and racism are some reasons that they mention. The political and social atmosphere as an issue is shared by some of the interviewees as well. The polarization of societies is a concern that the experts share. Instead of confrontation the atmosphere should be openminded and non-judgemental to prevent ideologies from drifting further apart from having a dialogue with each other.

When reflecting how social networks are linked to the needs of an individual it is possible to understand how it connects to the process of preventing violent radicalisation and enhancing de-radicalisation. Economic distress that some might experience and exclusion from society bring out support needs on many levels of life. The need to build social networks and connect with family and next of kin is necessary to have connections to

people that can support. Bourdieu (1986, 21-26) has presented three forms of capital; cultural, economic and social. Bourdieu (1986) describes social capital as number of networks that an individual can have as a result from own efforts and that of the society's institutions that the individual lives in. Field (2009,1, 14) agrees on this definition of social capital of being the connectedness to networks, other people and resources that strengthen the individual. This is in relation with the findings that lack of social networks are a result of isolation and marginalisation that exclude people from society.

In order to understand the reasons that cause radicalisation it is also necessary to enclose the close circle of the individual in the preventative work. This was emphasized in the interviews as well, therefore that the preventative work can reach out to others too possibly influenced by the radicalised individual. According to Feddes (2017, 53-54), there are several risk aspects that might push towards radicalisation. There are also protective matters that enhance the connectedness to society and prevent from radicalisation. In some Islamic extremist groups, the women support their men in the ideology and teach the ideology to their children. In the expert interviews it was also mentioned that some families, regardless of the ideology, bring their children up to the mindset. This means that the children learn to implement a possibly strong, even violent ideology already at home. This highlights the need for professionals working with children to have knowledge of the phenomena, to be able to recognise changing behaviour in children.

Emotional, instrumental and informational support can be all suspected from the interview results. The need to be heard, valued and have someone to share the story with was is emphasized in the findings. According to Schmid (2013,3), listening the terrorist stories is one component that is missing from governments. Schmid (2013, 3) explains that these terrorist actions would hardly happen if they would not have a reason to act violently. This clearly indicates that by listening can we begin to understand better the reasons that they have, thus giving us tools to cope with the root causes. This implicates that the emotional support needs of the individuals are one of the major aspects that needs to be considered. The need for instrumental support could be considered as the second thing once the emotional locks have been opened up. By assisting with concrete support requirements such as easement of economic distress and providing knowledge of where to seek support for such matters is necessary. This can also be linked to informational support needs, therefore that it is information that is received from other people who are

contributing in the process. These findings are in line with Seeman's (2008) explanation of social support. According to Seeman (2008), emotional support is the process where the individual's self-confidence is empowered by enabling expressions of problems, and the individual is valued. Instrumental support is the concrete things that can be received, e.g. economic assistance. Informational support can be explained as the information that is gained from other people who contribute.

The importance of preventative work was brought up in the interviews. It was emphasized, it would be vital to reach the individuals before they feel the need to get attached to a group or movement. The aim of the preventative work, de-radicalisation is to decrease and stop the use of violence. When reflecting how Schmid (2013, 57) describes, the different aspects that should be included in counter terrorism policies, they are in line with the interview results. Schmid (2013, 57) explains, that social inclusion, fairness, justice, and flexibility in social and political change are important aspects to include. In the interviews, labelling, stigmatization, social exclusion, marginalisation, lack of networks and polarization of societies were aspects that were recognised as negative matters felt to push away from the society. When comparing the results, the main aspects that should be considered in de-radicalisation processes are pointed out.

The results implicate that social cohesion in society is needed to enable integration back to society and creating a sense of belongingness. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) (OECD), preventing marginalisation, exclusion and enabling members to be included are part of social cohesion. Also, promoting well-being for all, building trust and creating an environment where the individual has the possibility to build social networks is necessary. These are assets that were brought up in the interviews as well. The need to build trust with the client and authorities or NGO's was mentioned as well as the need to increase the social networks of the individuals in de-radicalisation process. Feeling part of the society is vital in the process. This clearly indicates that social cohesion is necessary when discussing the processes of radicalisation and de-radicalisation.

7.2 Limitations of the research

My background is from health care field, a sector that works side by side with social services. However, these two disciplines differ from each other and cannot be compared to one another. Therefore, this might be seen as a hindering aspect for this research. Even if, I believe, that I have encompassed the key concepts and thoroughly familiarised myself with the topics that I present in this thesis I am not a professional of social care. On the other hand, I might have been able to approach the subject as a total outsider with no presumptions, since the area is not familiar to me.

Another aspect that might affect the results of this thesis is the time frame in which this study has been conducted. It would have been interesting to get an expert opinion from social and welfare ministry of this topic. However due to the schedule of the thesis it was not possible to arrange time where this topic could have been discussed vis-à-vis or via e-mail. If there would have been more time, the results might vary, as the topics has increased interest towards it nowadays. It would have been interesting to widen the interviewed individuals to general level too, to see if the results would still reflect to one another. Also, the fact that this phenomenon is relatively small in Finland so there are not that many previous studies of this topic on national level. Therefore, it is likely that in the future there are more studies and research done of this specific phenomenon that will provide more knowledge of the topic.

The scale of this research is not vast enough to include a thorough explanation of the social service system and the different approaches that it uses, therefore they had to be left out to be able narrow down the research. Also, the definitions of terrorism, extremism, radicalisation and de-radicalisation are only briefly explained in this study, to gain understanding of the concepts, even if they would require a more specific exploration.

7.3 Ethical consideration

While writing this thesis it came apparent to me that a study like this is needed and further research is required on these phenomena. The interviewees also support the importance of this study as they were interested to hear about the results that this study come up with.

This study is conducted on a rather general level, not focusing on any particular form of violent radicalisation. However, the findings suggest that as the processes are individual, the results can be implemented on any form of radicalisation. Considering the fact that the root causes are the one that needs to be explored in order to prevent violent radicalisation and to be able to provide adequate support for the individuals.

The interview results are my understanding of what were the main themes and subthemes occurring from the research. However, the findings correlate with the literature. Even if there are similarities in the interviews and literature, a second scope might find different aspects that I did not encompass in this thesis. Also, as mentioned earlier already, these results are expert opinions reflected to literature. Therefore, the experiences of the individuals and their families are not visible in this research. Even if there were only five interviewees, the results that I gained from them correlate with literature. The data in the interviews gave plenty of similarities, thus indicating adequate data saturation. The interview process is described as thoroughly as it is possible considering the replicants anonymity.

Qualitative research allowed this study to be modified throughout the process and made it possible to explain radicalisation and de-radicalisation from the perspective of experts and literature. However, another research method might be able to point out different aspects of the topic. As already mentioned, the individual experiences are not implemented in this study. Community participatory research method might have been able to examine this issue on a larger scope, however the main focus on this thesis was on expert opinions, therefore qualitative research and thematic data analysis were chosen.

In the future researches it should be noted that this topic encloses a strong emotional aspect too. The stigmatization and labelling issues that the individuals and their close circle feel should be noted, if for example, interviewing the individuals on de-radicalisation process. However, this kind of research is needed to better understand the individual reasons pushing towards radicalisation. In the literature too, it was mentioned that understanding the underlying reasons that push towards radicalisation is a key thing in building sustainable and effective processes to prevent the violence form of it from occurring.

7.4 Suggestions for social services and further studies

In the future the social services would benefit from education of this matter to enable the workers on the field to be able to encompass and recognize this issue better. Also, bringing the service systems closer together with NGO's to share expertise would likely increase the effectiveness of the preventative work on violent radicalisation. Development and reorganisation to enable effective use of existing resources in the future is one aspect that could be considered in social services. As a suggestion for all professionals working in social services and health care fields would be to gain knowledge of organisations that have expertise on violent radicalisation that could be consulted. Once having the knowledge of different organisations with expertise on the phenomena, it would lower the threshold to contact these professionals.

This research explores the needs in social level, therefore the focus is on social sector. However, in the future it would be interesting and beneficial to also implement similar kind of study on health care sector. It would be interesting to gain knowledge of how well health care field in Finland is aware of this phenomenon, what are the perceptions of the health care workers and what kind of measures have been taken to address the issues that it might rise. Especially a research implemented in health care centres of this topic would be interesting.

In my opinion, the health care workers do not have enough information of violent radicalisation and its' different forms. As s suggestion for further research it would be interesting to see how psychiatry and psychology could be implemented in the prevention of violent radicalisation.

For further research, an interesting point of view would be to conduct a research of how the individuals and their next of kin experience violent radicalisation and de-radicalisation. The research could explore their perceptions of the matter and what kind of social and/or health care needs do they feel that they have. Also, to conduct a research on civilians' general perceptions of the phenomena, to gain understanding how the concepts of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism are understood by non-professionals. One interesting topic would be to explore the relation between prison environment, radicalisation and de-radicalisation. To take it outside the context of social and health care field, it would

be interesting to investigate the perceptions of media on these phenomena and correlate their perception with the definitions that have been made of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. Also, the effects of social media and the level on how people in Finland are influenced by propaganda visible on social media would be an interesting research topic.

8 CONCLUSION

Radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland are relatively rare phenomena at the moment. History however shows, that there have been violent attacks in Finland even if they were not treated as terrorism at that time. Nowadays the vast number of different media channels and social networks allow fast information flow everywhere. The myriad of ways to receive up to date information around the world allows people to receive knowledge of the latest movements occurring in the world. Even if the movements are not implemented in Finland, they might have an impact on peoples' perceptions.

It is important to acknowledge the difference with radicalisation and violent radicalisation. Radicalisation in its acceptable form can be seen as an asset for the society. Radical thoughts have the ability to reform political decisions and bring positive change to the society. However, when discussing of violent radicalisation, it is the negative form of this matter that poses threat to society. Violent radicalisation allows and/or encourages individuals to use unacceptable measures to achieve goals. The use of violence towards civilians and authorities' or damaging of properties is never acceptable and this is the form of radicalisation that governments are tackling with different preventative processes.

Exploration of the root causes that could be seen as pushing reasons towards radicalisation need to be understood when deciding which kind of social support needs to be addressed. It is hard to define the social support of people, therefore that it is an aspect that needs to be considered on individual level. This research and the data analysis implicate the needs of a group of people and with the knowledge gained from the data collection the main support needs can be pointed out. However, on an individual level these findings should be adjusted according to the needs of the individual. It is vital to acknowledge that radicalisation and de-radicalisation are individual processes, thus the client's individual needs should be recognised. When the processes are brought to meet with the root causes can the preventative work be at its most.

Labelling and stigmatization are aspects that surround the concepts of radicalisation and de-radicalisation. The individuals who might have a history of violence and crimes or belong to a certain religious group are easily labelled and society carries these actions in

records for rather long. Past negative experiences with authorities also hinder the possibility to build a trustworthy relationship with clients. Therefore, cooperation with different organisations that have expertise on these matters would be beneficial.

Education of radicalisation, violent radicalisation and de-radicalisation are needed. Authorities and social and health care workers who have little experience of this matter need to have knowledge of what is meant by these phenomena. Knowledge empowers workers to recognise the individuals and also gives them tools on how to address the issue. Also, when knowledge of the different networks available are provided for the social workers they are more likely to consult experts on how to proceed with the client. Common knowledge of the phenomena would probably also reduce the juxtaposition that has been identified to exist in societies at the moment. The polarization of societies increases the gap between different ideologies allowing confrontation of matters.

Social cohesion in society is necessary to enhance de-radicalisation and prevent radicalisation and the negative forms it takes. When people feel included, valued and share a sense of belongingness they are more likely to allow themselves to be part of the society as well. Social cohesion is also likely to increase individual's social capital therefore, that they have better social networks when they are integrated to society. Multidisciplinary work with authorities, institutions and non-governmental organisations are needed in the future. Cooperation with different sectors also increases social cohesion. With multidisciplinary work it is possible to bring together different experts that can support the de-radicalisation processes. Finland has a vast amount of different service systems and providers; however, they cannot tackle this issue on their own. When different experts are brought together to educate and share knowledge with each other the results are likely to improve. Development and education are needed to be able to provide effective de-radicalisation processes.

The findings in this research replicate with the conclusions and results found in the literature. This implicates the necessity of preventative work that is already implemented and emphasizes the need to further develop these processes and utilisation of all available resources. Therefore, that the processes and root causes of the individual differ there is no one correct method solution for all. For that reason, multidisciplinary work is necessary in order to support the different aspects that require assistance.

In the future it is important to continue research on the phenomena to keep up to date, gain knowledge and be able to respond to the challenges that it poses on national and international level. Also, it is vital to understand that these phenomena reach out to other sectors too, not merely social sector. Further studies are needed in health care field too. Based on the results it can be suggested that, only by understanding the root causes that push towards radicalisation and violent radicalisation can we begin to understand the phenomenon itself better. This knowledge brings us valuable tools to prevent it and enhance de-radicalisation as well. Also, it gives the preventive measures aspects to bring it up to the level where it can be most effective.

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APPENDIX 1. Agreement to interview, informed consent

SUOSTUMUS HAASTATTELUUN

Suostun siihen, että Salla Löf käyttää haastattelusta saatua tietoa opinnäyteyössään Radicalisation and de-radicalisation in Finland: How could Finnish social sector support the de-radicalisation process? Työn otsikko voi muuttua vastaamaan paremmin tutkimustuloksia. Työ on osa Diak YAMK-tutkintoa Community Development, Human Rights and Conflict Resolution.

Haastattelukysymykset, joiden pohjalta tieto kerätään ovat:
1. Mitä radikalisoituminen teidän mielestänne on?
2. Miten radikalisoituminen mielestänne ilmenee Suomessa?
3. Mitä deradikalisaatio mielestänne on?
4. Millä tavalla radikalisaatio ja/tai deradikalisaatio on nähtävissä työssänne?
5. Millaisen sosiaalisentuen tarve radikalisoituneilla/deradikalisoituneilla yksilöillä mielestänne on?
6. Millä tavalla sosiaalisektori Suomessa tukee näitä tarpeita radikalisoituneille/deradikalisoituneille yksilöille tällä hetkellä?
7. Kuinka sosiaalisektori Suomessa voisi mielestänne tukea deradikalisoitumisprosessia?
8. Mitkä ovat mahdolliset haasteet, jotka sosiaalisektorin puolella uhkaavat deradikalisoitumisen toteumista?

Haastatteluista saatuja tietoja ei käytetä mihinkään muuhun tarkoitukseen kuin edellä mainittuun tutkimukseen. Ääninauhat tuhotaan heti kun työ on hyväksytty. Tutkimustyön valmistuttua tekstitiedostoja säilytetään suojatussa kansiossa työn hyväksymiseen asti.

Ymmärrän, että haastatteluihin osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista. Ymmärrän, että voin koska tahansa vetäytyä tutkimuksesta, jolloin antamiani tietoja ei julkaista.

Henkilöllisyyttäni ei tuoda esille tutkimuksessa. Tiedot, joita haastatteluista saadaan, tuodaan työssä julki anonyymisti. Minulle on annettu haastattelijan yhteystiedot.

Olen lukenut ja ymmärtänyt tämän haastattelusuostumuksen ja siinä esitetyt asiat:

Aika   Paikka   Allekirjoitus ja nimen
                                                  selvennys

APPENDIX 2. Interview questions for the professionals in English

1. In your opinion, what is radicalisation?
2. How does radicalisation occur in Finland?
3. In your opinion, what is de-radicalisation?
4. How is radicalisation and/or de-radicalisation visible in your work?
5. What kind of social support needs does the radicalised/de-radicalised individuals have?
6. How is Finnish social sector supporting these needs for a radicalised/de-radicalising individual now?
7. How could Finnish Social sector support the de-radicalisation process?
8. What are the possible challenges on social sector that might hinder the de-radicalisation process?

APPENDIX 3. Duration of interviews and length of transcripts

Interview number	Duration of interview	Length of transcripts
Interview 1	00:42:01	12 pages
Interview 2	00:28:45	8 pages
Interview 3	00:31:16	11 pages
Interview 4	00:32.11	9 pages
Interview 5	00:38:56	12 pages
Average duration	00:35:18	
Average length		10,4 pages

APPENDIX 4. Thematic framework for analysis

Table 2a

1 OCCURENCE OF RADICALISATION
1.1 negative/positive radicalisation
1.2 enables change
1.3 radicalisation/violent radicalisation
1.4 way of thinking alters from main stream
1.5 accepting the use of violence
1.6 narrowing of mind
1.7 polarization
1.8 international problems to Finland via media
2 POLITICAL VIOLENT RADICALISATION
2.1 violent radicalisation rare
2.2 right wing radicals-> most active
2.3 left wing radicals
2.4 political ambience, immigration
2.5 political violent radicalisation most common in Finland
2.6 protests, manifestations, violence crimes
2.7 animal rights
3 RELIGIOUS BASED VIOLENT RADICALISATION
3.1 occurrences not in correlation with incidences
3.2 one terrorist attack
3.3 assumptions that incidences religiously based
3.4 returning to conflict zones, e.g. Syria
4 INDIVIDUAL VIOLENT RADICALISATION
4.1 no specific reason behind
4.2 individual actor
4.3 school shootings/killings/threats e.g. bombs
5 DISENGAGEMENT
5.1 difficult definition
5.2 goal in violent radicalisation
5.3 change in behaviour
5.4 cessation of violence
5.5 leaving group/movement
5.6 change in way of thinking
5.7 disengagement + de-radicalisation

APPENDIX 4. Thematic framework for analysis

Table 2b

6 INVIDIVUAL PROCESS
6.1 finding root causes
6.2 triggers that push towards radicalisation
6.3 understanding individual reasons
6.4 need to be heard, someone who listens
6.5 labelling
6.6 stigmatization
6.7 being part of society
6.8 isolation/inclusiveness
6.9 respect, visibility
6.10 lack of social networks
6.11 economic situation
6.12 clients are individuals
6.13 marginalization
6.14 effect in inner circle
6.15 youth, children
7 KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHENOMENA
7.1 more knowledge for social and health care workers
7.2 what is radicalisation/de-radicalisation
7.3 mutual understanding
7.4 rare phenomena
7.5 ability to recognize
7.6 social and health care methods as prevention
7.7 consultation of experts
7.8 social work important in prevention
7.9 intimidation towards the topic
8 MULTIDISCIPLINARY WORK
8.1 phenomena not solvable by one sector
8.2 cooperation with institutions and NGO's
8.3 share expertise and cooperate
8.4 service systems have right qualities
8.5 confidence building to authorities vs. NGO's
8.6 service systems not able to respond alone
8.7 resources vast with cooperation
9 DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
9.1 reflection/development of services
9.2 cooperation
9.3 management of new concepts
9.4 organisation
9.5 management
9.6 services good but difficult to reach
9.7 including close circle
9.8 preventive work important
9.9 education/updating training for professionals