



UCARE

Educational tool

breaking the cycle of radicalisation at its source

UNIVERSAL CURRICULUM AGAINST RADICALISATION IN EUROPE

UCARE is a curriculum that provides educational tools to foster citizenship and social skills in high school students, with the aim of preventing processes of radicalisation. It is a unique intervention, as it aims to tackle radicalisation at its source without singling out or stigmatizing individuals at risk. UCARE offers secondary schools the opportunity to teach citizenship skills, which often fall outside the regular curriculum. On a more structural level, the program counteracts the threat of social or religious radicalisation within European societies by giving young people alternatives to violence.

UCARE is developed by University College Roosevelt (UCR), an international honors college of Utrecht University, as part of the TERRA II project funded by the European Commission. TERRA II is a collaborative effort of several international institutions and experts on radicalisation prevention, led by Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group The Netherlands.

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Today, seventy years after the end of the Second World War, extremism and radicalisation of various sorts are rapidly becoming a serious problem in European countries. The extremist groups' rhetoric is particularly attractive to those who experience an identity crisis and/or have a sense of injustice and resentment towards certain social groups or the establishment of a country. Radical movements attract many because they offer fulfilment of psychological needs in individuals who can't find this otherwise.

Researchers at UCR have developed an innovative curriculum drawing on theories of radicalisation, civic education and empirical findings from the discipline of Social Psychology. Ucare consists of material, which school teachers can use to implement in their lessons. These materials are designed to foster empowerment, to stimulate empathy and an understanding of different perspectives and world views. From scientific evidence we know that civic and social skills will help in preventing intergroup violence and can contribute to a peaceful coexistence with others.



UCARE AIMS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF RADICALISATION AT IT'S SOURCE BY:

- Creating a community which allows minority members to have a positive identity within society.
- Breaking 'us' vs. 'them' divisions, which can lead to intergroup conflict.
- Empowering members of underprivileged groups by providing them with practical knowledge on democratic means of defending and exercising their rights. These means can form a feasible alternative to violence.
- Promoting democracy and providing alternatives to extremist ideology.
- Stimulating critical thinking, to make individuals resilient to populist rhetoric of extremists.

The curriculum should be suitable and beneficial for all young individuals, regardless of the type of violent ideology that may be attractive to them or whether or not they are at risk of radicalising. Thus the curriculum can be seen both as a primary prevention program as well as a civic competence program. Since young adults are the ones most vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism, we chose a youth oriented approach in order to reach them before they radicalise. Therefore a unique approach has been taken, namely school based intervention, which targets the general population of secondary school students.

PARTNERS IN THE PROJECT

Coordination

- Impact, partner in Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, the Netherlands is the National knowledge and advice centre for psychosocial care concerning critical incidents. Impact is coordinating partner for TERRA I and TERRA II. Impact has translated state of the art scientific knowledge on radicalisation into practical tools.

Partners

- University College Roosevelt (UCR) an international honors college of Utrecht University The Netherlands.
- Quilliam Foundation, the United Kingdom, is the world's first counter-extremism think tank set up to address the unique challenges of citizenship, identity and belonging in a globalized world.
- AAV-11M, Spain, the Association for Aid to the Victims of the 11th March, stimulates transnational cooperation between associations of victims of terrorism and enhances the representation of victims' interests at the European level.

For questions regarding the TERRA project, please contact Magda Rooze, project leader TERRA, m.rooze@arq.org or visit www.terratoolkit.eu.

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