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From the Rasmorad Report “Common Methodology on Risk Assessment Strategy”. Focus on

RISK ASSESSMENT AND STRUCTURED PERSONAL JUDGMENT

According to academic literature, the best approach to risk assessment is through a *Structural Personal Judgment (SPJ)* protocol. This is a scientifically based approach, which codifies information in a pre-established manner, using equations or formulas in order to obtain a probability value of risk of violence. Anyway, evidence-based risk factors serve to guide the assessor through an overall evaluation, based on a broader review and knowledge of the individual context and personality, in order to build up proper exit strategies from violence.

The most relevant SPJ protocols assessing violent individuals are HCR-20 and SAVRY. None of them is specifically targeted on violent extremists.

In fact, the collected data in Rasmorad show that many Project partners use this kind of non-specific tools in P&P contexts, and the question is if the outcome is satisfactory, in assessing radicalized inmates and probationers.

It was scholar Ellen Pressman, identifying limits in “representation of salient items related to violent extremism in the HCR-20 an SAVRY”, who underlined, in 2009, “the need for a specific tool to assess the risk of violence for extremists”.

As a result, she developed an assessment guide for a specific SPJ protocol, which is focused on assessing the risk of what has been referred to as “violent political extremism”. This is called **VERA**. (*Violent Extremist Risk Assessment*).

Its added value is the integration of relevant items associated with de-radicalization, disengagement and protective factors. It is designed to help practitioners in developing measures tailored on the individual, in view of his/her disengagement from violence.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON RISK ASSESSMENT

The second part of the Report proposes a series of **Guiding Principles** that the Rasmorad partners should follow in their P&P contexts, in order to choose a risk assessment tool, which responds both to a common methodology and to the different histories and problems of the single Countries, in dealing with violent terrorism.

These principles are:

- Using a risk assessment focusing on Structured Personal Judgment (SPJ)
- Using a risk assessment targeting specifically violent extremists
- Broadening the scope of the data collection (gathering as much information as possible) and fostering interagency co-operation
- Ensuring high quality training and providing peer support when necessary
- Designing and implementing an evaluation policy of the risk assessment strategy

THE RISK ASSESSMENT CHART

It resulted from discussions, that it could be relevant to design a “Chart”, in order to recapitulate all the Guiding Principles step by step, in order to help Country partners to improve their risk assessment strategy:

- By identifying the gaps they may have;
- By helping them design/develop solutions according with the guiding principles mentioned in the Common Strategy, and the examples provided by the data collection.

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