



ORPHEUS

A European Interreg project
In Social innovation



Introduction of the
ORPHEUS Innovative
Violent Extremism
Prevention Method

STRATEGIC REPORT WITH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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ORPHEUS

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Title: Introduction of the ORPHEUS Innovative Violent Extremism Prevention Method. Strategic Report with Policy Recommendations

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INTRODUCTION TO ORPHEUS

ORPHEUS - Offline and online Radicalization Prevention Holding back Extremism and Upholding Security

An international project on how to foster resilience in youth: new approaches within online and offline prevention

1 Introduction

In response to ongoing societal concerns about violent extremism in Europe, in 2019 ORPHEUS (Offline and Online Radicalization Prevention, Holding back Extremism and Upholding Security) was awarded funding by Interreg 2Seas for a 4-year project to develop a new integrated prevention model to tackle the risk factors for violent extremism in democratic societies, regardless of ideological background, by fostering resilience in young people and professionals supporting them.

Partner agencies in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK – including local governments, youth work and educational organisations and universities – worked together to develop and test the new model, a summary of which is presented below, with advice on how regions can adapt and incorporate it into local prevention policy and practice.

If you would like to find out more about the ORPHEUS consortium partners, please see the [‘Who We Are’](#) page on our website or read the Strategic Report.

2 The ORPHEUS Prevention Model

It is essential for young people to have a solid base within the community where they feel they belong and that they have a voice, the absence of which can be a risk factor for violent extremism. The ORPHEUS model promotes an innovative, grassroots *wellbeing*-oriented approach to prevention. It emphasises a co-creation approach between young people and youth workers / educators, promoting the agency of young people as equal citizens in democratic societies and supporting them to be part of the solution.

ORPHEUS targets the interplay of risk factors for violent extremism, always with a wellbeing perspective in mind, by seeking to:

- strengthen positive networks for young people;
- offer legitimate channels to young people for the public expression of their grievances;
- promote positive alternatives to violent extremist narratives.

You can read more about the theories and evidence behind the ORPHEUS model in the [ORPHEUS Position Paper](#).

3 In Co-Creation With Young People

❖ Safe Spaces

“Safe Spaces” are an integral component of the ORPHEUS prevention model. A safe space is both a location and a set of core principles, co-created between young people and professionals they trust, to support young people to:

- foster connections between young people and their family, friends and institutions, strengthening their social bonds;
- engage in open dialogue;
- be empowered to publicly express their grievances.

The co-creation of safe space is not easy or straightforward, and involves a lot of dialogue back and forth between frontline workers and young people, but the aim is to create space and support young people to feel confident within this space. It must be more than just listening to young people, but also enabling them to act. Safe space sessions were piloted in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK, with over 400 young people taking part. Learning from the safe spaces pilot sessions informed the development of training and guidance for professionals to increase their skills and confidence in facilitating safe spaces in the future.

96% of young people who completed a survey after taking part in a safe space session reported decreased levels of social alienation.

You can read more about Safe Spaces pilots, methodology and evaluation in the Strategic Report.

You can learn more about running Safe Spaces in your region by reading the guidance and training manuals available in the [ORPHEUS Toolkit](#).

❖ Online Safety Training

Empowering young people to be safe in online spaces, with the critical literacy skills to identify propaganda and build resilience to attempts at ideological grooming, is a key component of the ORPHEUS model. The project developed a training course on online safety and cyberawareness aimed at supporting young people to more effectively evaluate information they encounter online, understand the impact of cognitive bias and think more critically about free speech, privacy and the role of the media. This training was piloted in all the project regions, with over 500 young people taking part.

95% of young people who participated in online safety / cyberawareness training who completed a survey indicated they had increased their levels of cyberawareness.

You can learn more about the development and evaluation of our Online Safety training for young people in the [Strategic Report](#).

You can access the Online Safety training for young people in the [ORPHEUS Toolkit](#).

❖ Alter-narrative movies

ORPHEUS emphasises the promotion of positive alternatives to violent extremist narratives. A series of 12 short 'alter-narrative' movies have been developed, aimed at young people, with the intention of raising critical awareness and stimulating debate, exploring topics such as immigration, youth culture, critical literacy and race and ethnicity, which will be available to watch on the ORPHEUS website. Additionally, a guidance manual was developed to support content creators to develop their own alter-narrative films.

You can access the [alter-narrative movies](#) and the [guide to creating alter-narrative content](#) on the ORPHEUS website.

❖ The ORPHEUS Toolkit - Supporting Professionals (Frontline Youth Workers and Educators)

It is essential for the success of the ORPHEUS model that frontline professionals working with young people, such as youth workers and educators, have the necessary skills and confidence in relevant competency areas. We have developed a range of tools to support the ORPHEUS model, to help train professionals and build fertile ground for the politicisation and democratic citizenship of young people.

The toolkit includes five training modules to support professionals in developing the skills and confidence to create safe spaces. These are designed to be flexible and adaptable according to local needs and contexts. Each course consists of a comprehensive manual to support the individual delivering the training, additional supporting material such as handouts and slides, and a resource pack to be distributed to professionals who complete the training. The topics covered by the training modules are:

- Dealing with Controversial Issues
- Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces
- Moral Panic, Youth and Counter Culture
- Critical Literacy and Online Awareness
- Get Up Stand Up: Supporting Young People In Their Struggle Against Injustice

90% of professionals who took part in a training session and completed a survey reported increased confidence in relation to topic-specific competencies and 83% reported increased confidence in competencies relevant to the ORPHEUS model generally.

Also included in the ORPHEUS Toolkit are:

- A guidance manual to support professionals when engaging in online direct dialogue with young people in chatrooms and chat apps;
- Alter-narrative movies that can be shared with young people, using the films to stimulate debate and critical thinking and to promote positive alternatives to radical narratives;
- A guidance manual to support content creators in creating their own alter-narrative content;

- Webinars – a range of pre-recorded educational webinars covering relevant topics such as Safe Spaces, the extreme right on social media and utilising the positive effects of online gaming in creating safe spaces.

You can read more about the development and evaluation of the professionals' training in the Strategic Report.

You can access the training materials, guidance manuals, alter-narrative movies and webinars in the [toolkit](#) area of the ORPHEUS website.

4 Flexibility, Adaptability and a Cross-Border Approach

The ORPHEUS model has been developed and tested by an international, multi-partner consortium involving frontline professionals, researchers and policymakers, with different regions sharing good practices and innovation from their unique contexts. Moreover, ORPHEUS has been developed by different types of organisations and agencies. It is not just academia, not just local municipalities and not just schools or youth organisations, but a combination of all these organisations contributing their expertise and working together. This approach presented a number of challenges including navigating different languages, principles and local working cultures. However, the strength of this cooperative and co-creative approach is that it has ensured that the ORPHEUS model and its supporting tools have been tested in different areas so are flexible and can be adapted to work with and inform local policy and practice, with the prevention model functioning as a guiding set of principles.

5 Using the ORPHEUS Prevention Model in Your Region

The ORPHEUS model has been developed, tested and refined in four different countries and has been specially designed to be flexible and adaptable, to meet local and regional needs.

To help to start planning how to bring the ORPHEUS model to your region, we recommend visiting the [ORPHEUS website](#), which has all the information you need to support you.

6 For Policymakers

If you are in a policymaking or strategic role, we suggest that you take the following actions:

- Read the [ORPHEUS Position Paper](#), which describes in more detail the theoretical underpinnings and evidence behind the ORPHEUS prevention model;
- Read the [Strategic Report](#), which provides a more detailed overview and evaluation of the project and its achievements, to help you envisage how the ORPHEUS model might work in your context;
- Review the contents of the [ORPHEUS Toolkit](#) so that you are informed about the products available to support the frontline professionals in your region who will be using the ORPHEUS model;
- Review the ORPHEUS roadmap and the [ORPHEUS step by step](#) instructions;
- Read the ORPHEUS Policy Recommendations which include further advice to help you implement ORPHEUS successfully in your region.

For Frontline Professionals (Youth Workers, Educators etc)

If you are in a role working directly with young people, we advise that you access the [ORPHEUS Toolkit](#) where you will find relevant training courses, guidance manuals and other material to support you in delivering the ORPHEUS model.



<https://www.orpheusproject.eu/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ORPHEUS OFFLINE AND ONLINE RADICALISATION PREVENTION, HOLDING BACK EXTREMISM AND UPHOLDING SECURITY (2019-2023)

In European cities, the threat of radicalisation towards all types of violent extremism including but not limited to jihadi, extreme right/left and hate crimes remains a significant societal concern. While left extremism remains a worry, the number of extreme-right arrests is increasing.

In addition, the problem of foreign fighters and home-grown-terrorism inspired by violent ideologies poses serious security risks. According to Europol, between 2014-2019, 129 religiously inspired attacks took place in Europe. In these attacks 374 people lost their lives. In 2020, 57 attacks and 449 arrests were recorded while in 2021, 15 terrorism related attacks and 388 arrests were also documented. Most of the arrests (260) are due to investigations related to jihadist terrorism in some EU States. Moreover, those who joined DAESH/IS and engaged in violence in Syria are now returning to their actual residences in EU countries, and some could pose a threat if their relationship with DAESH/IS still continues.

Finally, extremist groups still enjoy the benefits of online recruitment and propaganda and operate internationally, hence the response should be transnational too.

However, existing repressive measures fail to eliminate or minimise such threats adequately, especially in regard to young people. This is due to several reasons. For example, the measures can see Muslim radicalisation as the central security threat and disregard others; or explain violent extremism with a linear process (stages) failing to acknowledge the complexity of paths leading to extremism. Police and security agencies are expected to play a central role in preventing violent extremism and young people are viewed as the subject of the problem, which should not be the case. The ORPHEUS integrated prevention method challenges these approaches and appears as an innovative alternative prevention method that has an international aspect.

ORPHEUS stands for: **O**ffline and **O**nline **R**adicalization **P**revention, **H**olding back **E**xtrémism and **U**pholding **S**ecurity. The project consists of partners from Belgium,

France, Netherlands and the UK: City of Mechelen, Ceapire, Artevelde University of Applied Sciences, Portsmouth City Council, University of Portsmouth, Greta Grand Littoral, University College Roosevelt, ContourdeTwern / R-Newt. The project also features 33 Observer Partners from various countries with similar interests.

ORPHEUS accepts the need for public expression of grievances and their causes as an important part of prevention efforts. ORPHEUS, in an evolutionary manner, tackles the causes of radicalisation, and violent extremism in democratic societies, regardless of ideological background. It emphasises young people as equal citizens in democratic societies and seeks opportunities to include their voices in the solution process and to increase their resilience through alternative prevention methods against online and offline radicalisation in a sustainable way.

Therefore, ORPHEUS aims to enhance the integral prevention model to address violent extremism; develop Safe Spaces for and with young people; build resilience through critical thinking skills and increasing the confidence of educators while trying to solve violent extremism problems of young people; integrate online work on different levels of prevention and provide guidance and policy recommendations for adoption of an integrated prevention method in the 2Seas area.

ORPHEUS bases its prevention method on the Safe Spaces concept, which is not so much characterised by a location, institution or organisation, but by the pedagogy and philosophy behind them. Safe space practices with young people are designed to stimulate and organise open dialogue, foster connections between young people and their family, friends and institutions, and to support the public expression of their grievances freely. The concept of Safe Spaces extends to online Safe Spaces, especially since the Covid-19 lockdowns globally made this a necessity rather than an option.

To achieve the goals set, the ORPHEUS project partners developed several tools to be used by professionals dealing with young people. They are uploaded to the ORPHEUS website (<https://www.orpheusproject.eu>). To start, a position paper has been drafted that facilitates discussion on basic concepts and ideas underpinning ORPHEUS. Furthermore, the partners designed five training courses to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of professionals working with young people and to support them in, *dealing with controversial issues, online media literacy/awareness, working with youth culture, strengthening personal safety in Safe Spaces, and politicisation with young people in socially vulnerable situations*. Each training has been supplemented with a manual. In addition, a series of short 'alter-narrative' films intended to raise critical awareness exploring topics such as immigration, youth culture, critical literacy and race and ethnicity and a guideline on how to create such content have been created. The

project also developed *online-awareness training* specifically *for young people* to support them directly in dealing with online threats. Moreover, a report on the perspectives of youth, a guideline on direct online dialogue, a manual to explain how Safe Spaces can be organised in collaboration with young people and a RoadMap that summarises the ORPHEUS prevention method and shows step by step how it can be applied, have been created.

Additionally, the ORPHEUS project consortium organised 4 field visits, 13 partner meetings, 9 webinars and several focus groups in Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France and finally, a conference in Mechelen (Belgium) at the end of November 2022 to share best practices and to learn from international experiences of UK, Belgium, France and the Netherlands during the ORPHEUS project (see <https://www.orpheusproject.eu> for further details).

After this multifaceted undertaking, several analyses have been conducted to measure the effectiveness of the ORPHEUS prevention method tools and to see whether the intended targets have been reached and the correct material created. The analyses took place in an interactive and constant manner. Surveys, field visits, partner meetings, interviews, webinars and focus groups have taken place for this purpose.

Findings show that young people who attended the Safe Space sessions found the practice useful because, according to their feedback, a high majority (96%) who completed a survey indicated a decrease in social alienation. Young people noted that Safe Space practices contributed positively to their wellbeing, their feeling of belonging and positive identity development. They also reflected positively about the effectiveness and usefulness of the online-awareness trainings as it increased their awareness about spotting false information online; the impact false information can have on themselves and the society and how to perform fact checking.

The trainings developed for professionals also yielded a high satisfaction rate. The majority of the professionals found the trainings and the content to be satisfactory and befitting the general ORPHEUS trajectories. Overall, results indicate positive reception of the trainings. Unfortunately, because the videos were yet not completely distributed, no analyses could be performed about the reception of them and their effectiveness during the time this report was being written.

The analysis of the policymakers' focus groups also provided the project team with great insights in terms of the future steps of the project, such as the need to work with parents and carers as well. Policymakers also highlighted different avenues for

distributing our findings, communicating our lessons and the need to work together with different stakeholders on different levels of government within the context of every partner country, but also internationally.

In general, the evaluations and analyses provided support to collaboration with young people to solve their problems, to the ORPHEUS project as being effective in reaching its intended goals and that the project has produced the correct tools and content as part of the innovative integrated ORPHEUS prevention method for tackling social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism. Upon such positive findings, the international ORPHEUS project consortium developed several important policy recommendations. The following are just some of them, in which it is suggested to,

1. Promote justice, equality, human rights, democracy and democratic citizenship as part of common community values;
2. Secure an all-inclusive social welfare for everybody, with nobody left out;
3. Policymakers to communicate and disseminate messages on inclusiveness into their broader communication for all their fellow community members;
4. Include resilience and online and offline awareness trainings in school curricula in cooperation with young people, teachers, experts and policymakers;
5. Train local officials, law enforcement personnel and all other staff working for the state and/or local authority to communicate in a respectful manner with residents;
6. Constantly measure the changing demands of the public and the needs of young people through active dialogue.

TO CONCLUDE

Findings suggest that Safe Space practices and the other ORPHEUS tools are effective in contributing to reducing the factors that exacerbate the risk of young people becoming involved in violent extremism.

The feedback from young people, professionals and policymakers in addition to the evaluations and analyses clearly show that ORPHEUS and its tools have the capacity to increase the resilience of young people against core elements that facilitate radicalisation, social alienation and violent extremism, if applied accordingly while taking into account socio-political intricacies in the areas where delivery is planned.

A complete list of the policy recommendations developed based on the findings and related analyses are provided in chapter IV.

The innovative and integrated ORPHEUS prevention methods have proven to be successful and now needs the support of policy makers and professionals to be implemented and disseminated to other regions.

Time has come to increase the resilience of young people against social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism with the innovative and integrated ORPHEUS prevention method and relevant policies.

ORPHEUS WORKS



Notice: The references of all information are provided in the actual body text of the report. It has not been included in the executive summary to enable a swift reading.

CHAPTER I

THE OBJECTIVES OF ORPHEUS

1 Introduction

The threat of radicalisation towards all types of violent extremism remains a significant societal concern in the EU (News European Parliament, 2021). Unfortunately, radical groups enjoy the benefits and the comfort of online radicalisation and recruitment opportunities. Such security risks in the EU are enough evidence that the level of threat should not be overlooked. Unfortunately, existing counter measures do not provide the desired outcome. The complexity of the subject itself and the international network it operates within at a time when digitalization has become vast, makes prevention more challenging.

Therefore, there is a need for international cooperation and developing new and alternative prevention policies that can be modified by each member according to their own context. However, new prevention methods face challenges because of the existing common understanding of the causes of the threat, subject of the threat, main role player in response activities and the preferred response to these threats. ORPHEUS challenges all these and introduces alternative practices and understanding in fighting social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism.

The abbreviation ORPHEUS stands for: **O**ffline and **O**nline **R**adicalization **P**revention, **H**olding back **E**xtrémism and **U**pholding **S**ecurity as a new prevention method. The project explores alternative forms of offline and online prevention of violent extremism in democratic societies, regardless of ideological background. Besides providing various trainings and material to support professionals and policy suggestions for policymakers, ORPHEUS also provides Safe Spaces and online safety training for vulnerable young people. They are all of utmost importance because they provide an alternative to young people to stay connected to their social environments, families, and communities and prevents them drifting away to violent extremists.

Therefore, the strategic report planning proceeds as follows; Chapter I provides information about the background, the need for ORPHEUS, the involved partners, the transferability aspect of ORPHEUS and the aim of the project. Chapter II describes some challenges encountered during the actualization of the project, the preferred prevention method, information about the activities taken during the project and about the developed products and tools. Chapter III shares the results of the measurements performed to see the effectiveness of the project and its prevention tools. Finally, Chapter IV lists the policy recommendations informed by field studies and input from the young people, policymakers, professionals through interviews, observations, webinars and field visits.

2 Background

According to Europol, between 2014-2019, 129 religiously inspired attacks (including completed, foiled and failed attacks) took place in Europe. In these attacks 374 people lost their lives (News European Parliament, 2021). In 2020, 57 attacks and 449 arrests and in 2021, 15 terrorism related attacks and 388 arrests took place in EU member states. Most of the arrests (260) are due to investigations related to jihadist terrorism in some EU states.

Although there is a decrease in the number of attacks compared to previous years, the arrest rates and the threat remain similar in regard to jihadist terrorism (Europol TE.SAT, 2022). Moreover, those who joined DAESH/IS and engaged in violence in Syria are returning to their actual residences in EU countries, and many still pose a threat if they are not disconnected with DAESH/IS.

On the other hand, while left extremism remains a worry, the number of extreme-right arrests are increasing. Another concern is the threat level of the radicalisation of EU citizens which is increasing and poses a genuine security threat. As Renard (2017) emphasizes, foreign fighters and home-grown-terrorists who are inspired by violent ideologies are posing serious risks too. Attacks such as the 2004 Madrid/Spain, 2005 London and later the Manchester attack in the UK and 2016 Nice/France were committed by individuals that have grown up in these countries. It looks like that the latter is gaining more attention from counterterrorism professionals due to the unknown and unidentified character of many in the community that may appear as a risk because most act alone. Although some argue that homegrown terrorism poses a lesser threat compared to foreign fighters and the others because they lack the complex planning and resources, the 2016 Nice attack in which 86 people died and hundreds were wounded shows that there are exceptions to this claim. They do not expect to receive an order to kill but commit the violence whenever and however they like because most do not feel the need to be physically linked to a terrorist organization. Renard (2017) further asserts that 73% of the attacks in Europe and North America that took place from 2014 to 2017 were committed by home-grown-terrorists. Therefore, taking countermeasures against radicalisation and violent extremism of any sort remains a priority for every state in Europe¹.

However, known repressive measures fail to eliminate or minimise such a threat, especially in regard to young people, and therefore more emphasis on the adoption of new prevention methods is needed (De Jongh., et al. 2018)). In accordance with The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action Objective 2 'Prevent terrorism and address radicalisation and recruitment', Action 1 'Empower communities to prevent

¹ The ORPHEUS project started with eight European partners, including two partners from the United Kingdom. In the course of the project, Brexit was effectuated. The UK-partners remained engaged partners in the project, and shared their insights and conclusions. If we refer in the report to the EU, we include the perspectives of our partners from the United Kingdom.

radicalisation and recruitment' (European Commission, 2010), ORPHEUS facilitates sharing of local experiences, develops positive alter-narratives and (online) prevention. In accordance with the Interreg 2Seas programme, the project addresses one of the key societal challenges: Secure societies - protecting freedom and security of EU and its citizens.

Preparations for ORPHEUS started in 2017. After several meetings in 2018 the consortium reached a shared project definition. This resulted in a project application to the 6th call of the Interreg 2Seas programme. It received funding from Interreg 2Seas and is a 3.5-year project, which commenced in 2019. Its goal was the development of new integrated and aligned services for offline prevention and online awareness training for the prevention of violent extremism by extending the prevention service together with private and social institutions, with young people and their educators as central actors. Despite the obstacles caused by the Covid-19 pandemic during the execution of the project, with lockdowns significantly hindering partner meetings and related activities with young people and professionals, the challenges for creating and keeping functioning a large international consortium, problems related to absentees of partners due to their other professional commitments, ORPHEUS project partners still managed to meet a realistic percentage of set goals and produce the needed outcomes and products in a timely manner.

3 The Need for ORPHEUS

Although European countries and regions have developed their own tactics in reaction to the grave threats of violent extremism: early detection, online recruitment, counter-discourses and different collaboration structures across Europe, the expertise on these topics remains limited and fragmented, and is not easily transferred to other countries and regions. To fill such a knowledge gap on prevention, there was a need for local practices to be researched, tested and adapted on a cross-border level.

In the main narrative of prevention, radical ideology is seen as the starting point of a process towards terrorism. This generalised approach appeared to be troublesome because academic evidence *against* this narrative is growing. The majority of people with radical beliefs reject violence and not all engaging in terrorism hold a radical belief. In other words, holding radical or extreme beliefs that reject violence should not be considered as a threat but rather as a potential that can contribute to improvement in democratic and scientific societies through new ideas. Nor should one imply that all people from a specific belief or ethnic, background are all engaged in violent extremism or terrorism (Ekici, 2020). This is why ORPHEUS accepts the need for public expression of grievances and their causes as an important part of prevention efforts.

There is a large amount of evidence that relative disadvantage and deprivation is a driver towards violent extremism. A broad quantitative study of country-level data from 172 countries concluded clearly that countries with more economic discrimination of

minority communities are more vulnerable to domestic terrorism (Piazza, 2011). Abbas & Siddique (2012) also draw the attention to the perception of deprivation, discrimination and marginalisation which were identified as important causal factors of violent extremism. On the other hand, official policies on 'counter radicalisation' have been identified as a driver of perceived discrimination (De Bie, 2016) due to witnessed unfairness, discrimination and injustice against some groups during execution of counter policies and this approach also leads to social alienation. ORPHEUS tackles social alienation and frustration as risk factors for radicalisation and violent extremism. The reconnection with social institutions and the politicisation of grievances are important goals to reduce the risk of radicalisation.

According to the partners who conducted research for the ORPHEUS project, experts in the field of counterterrorism describe the young people at risk as antisocial adolescents estranged from family, friends and social institutions, with a lack of positive projection and in search of belonging. This social alienation makes them vulnerable to a groomer's attention. Thus, both policymakers and field workers acknowledge the need to engage with young people more effectively to reduce the risk of radicalization.

The problem is that the current policies do not have the capacity to tackle this problem because of 4 important challenges:

1. The lack of integral methods in the field of preventing radicalization across the EU. Activities are often reduced to the detection and detention of individuals. It does not focus on the root causes such as networks, grievances and context or on the lack of alter-narratives.
2. The lack of Safe Spaces for individuals to express their grievances in a peaceful way. Current fear of radical beliefs makes it difficult for young people to express their grievances and therefore may be drawn to radical viewpoints or towards extremist groups.
3. The need to build resilience within young people, to increase the confidence of educators to address controversial and sensitive issues such as extremism and to engage youth workers.
4. The need to integrate online work within prevention strategies. The prevention system is not fully adapted to online grooming tactics: recruiters find young people online and offer extreme solutions to their frustrations. Current approaches disregard the link between online & offline prevention strategies.

Eventually, ORPHEUS, in an evolutionary manner, tackles the causes of radicalisation and violent extremism in democratic societies, regardless of ideological background. ORPHEUS emphasises young people as equal citizens in democratic societies and vehemently seeks opportunities to include their voices in the solution process. In addition, ORPHEUS helps shape safe environments for young people where they can express their grievances freely and receive professional help. ORPHEUS makes it clear

that if we, the experts, policy makers and state officials don't listen to vulnerable youth, there might be others waiting to listen to them and recruit them in their violent extremist groups. Therefore, ORPHEUS reaches out to the youth for their involvement.

The main target group of ORPHEUS are vulnerable young people between the age of 13 and 25. These are people who are at risk of radicalisation, alienation from family, friends and social institutions, experience frustration towards society and are in search of belonging. Therefore, with the help of their friends, families, leisure organisations, frontline workers, educators from schools, youth workers, youth social organisations and administrators/facilitators of social platforms ORPHEUS reaches out to them in order to provide awareness trainings for online and offline risks and increase their resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism.

In addition, the project activities collected their thoughts about the problem and possible counter-narratives. Moreover, Facebook and other social media chat rooms are used to post content that appeals to young people feeling frustration and alienation from their social environments to talk to them about online and offline risks.

The Safe Spaces are developed in co-creation with young people who were directly consulted about what they need in order to feel safe and to express their grievances. Training modules are also developed in co-creation with key players upon consultation about what they need in order to build self-confidence in addressing grievances. Such a large scale and significant project necessitated the creation of a consortium consisting of several international partners and of many observer partners.

4 ORPHEUS Project Partners

The ORPHEUS partnership comprises cities and institutions operating in a diverse context which are representative of typical problems faced by existing prevention strategies within the 2Seas Area. ORPHEUS adopted a cross-border approach and consists of the following partners from Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK.

All have experience in EU funded projects and/or experience in alienation, social cohesion, extremism, radicalisation and counter-terrorism issues:

- **City of Mechelen** – Lead Partner and local pilot. City of Mechelen is a European leader in Prevention/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) through societal innovation projects that resulted in preventing the appearance of new potential Foreign/Home Terrorist Fighters in recent years.
- **Portsmouth City Council** (Hidden Harm and Exploitation, Children and Families Services) – Local pilot. Portsmouth has 9 years of experience in delivering programs to counter extremism, including Daesh/AQ inspired, extreme right and extreme left.

- **University of Portsmouth** (Cybercrime Awareness Clinic) – Knowledge partner. University of Portsmouth has an institutional focus on providing innovative solutions and plays a leading role in research and innovation on cross-discipline thematic areas that address key issues facing society.
- **Artevelde University of Applied Sciences**, Ghent (Department of Social Work) – Knowledge partner. Artevelde University of Applied Sciences is an educational research centre experienced in practice-oriented research and development on the subject of deradicalization as a challenge for prevention in youth work.
- **Greta Grand Littoral**, Calais (Training Centre for National Education and Skills Assessments) – Local pilot. Greta Grant Littoral is specialised in vocational education training (VET). They are skilled in training engineering, instructional engineering and multimedia engineering.
- **Ceapire**, Antwerp (Centre of Expertise and Advice for Prevention and Intervention of Radicalism and Extremism) – Knowledge partner and joint pilot with the City of Mechelen. Ceapire was founded and is driven by young Flemish individuals who have been involved in helping young people at risk of radicalisation prior to the recent events of Syria and Iraq.
- **University College Roosevelt** (UCR), Middleburg (Department of Psychology) – Knowledge partner. UCR has expertise in development and evaluation of educational interventions to foster civic and social competences of young vulnerable people.
- **ContourdeTwern / R-Newt**, Dordrecht (Youth Work and Professional Training for Youth Workers) – Local pilot. R-Newt, is experienced in youth work and aims to be present and have real contact with youth within their social environment to work on safety themes and prevent radicalization.

The project also has 33 Observer Partners from various countries with similar interests. Among them are city councils, local governments, schools, youth organisations, institutes or entities working on counter extremism, positive identity development and/or non-stigmatization. In addition, there are organisations working on outreach programs, polarisation or hate crimes, radicalisation prevention, those willing to share good practices and security practitioners. All these efforts are displayed to achieve several key aims and outputs.

5 Key Aims and Outputs

A priority objective of the project was the development of social innovations, which would render local services more efficient and effective in addressing the key societal challenges in the 2Seas area. ORPHEUS has developed alternatives to offline and online prevention of social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism. This is done by using an approach that is not *problem-oriented*, but *wellbeing-oriented* which can be translated as making the individual feel part of a social institution such as the family, community or anything where he/she feels valued. Additionally, ORPHEUS has developed new integrated and aligned services, extending the prevention service together with private and social institutions, with young people and their educators as central actors. The key aims and outputs of ORPHEUS are the following:

a. Enhancing the integral prevention model to address violent extremism

Creation of a new prevention framework: the ORPHEUS Prevention Pyramid, which combines efforts from general prevention to direct intervention and targets the interplay of different risk and protective factors. ORPHEUS targets the interplay of offline & online causal factors: positive networks for young people; legitimate channels for expression; inclusive alter-narratives.

b. Develop Safe Spaces for and with young people

Stimulate and organise open dialogue, connect young people in balanced bonding with family, friends and institutions and support the public expression of their grievances. This has been done with the help of frontline workers, educators from school and youth work & social organisations because they are better skilled to open a dialogue and are less reluctant. They engaged in prevention to decrease the risk of radicalisation.

c. Build resilience, critical thinking skills and increase the confidence of educators

Enhance key analytical skills within young people. Involve young people and educators as part of the solution. Empower educators to facilitate difficult conversations on sensitive topics. With transferable resources ORPHEUS involves young people and educators as part of the solution through co-creation of the prevention activities and peer-to-peer support, empowers educators to facilitate difficult conversations with young people on sensitive topics - both offline and online - based on their trust relation with young people.

d. Integrate online work on different levels of prevention

Develop online alter-narratives to raise critical awareness and resilience of young people against online grooming. Then young people are better protected against online recruitment to violent organizations which decreases the risk of radicalization.

e. Provide guidance and policy recommendations for adoption of an integrated prevention method in the 2Seas area

The project conducted focus groups with policymakers to inform the development of guidance and policy recommendations for the wider adoption of its integrated prevention methods. In addition, young people have been asked to respond to surveys to include their perspectives in possible future policy recommendations. Local and national policymakers, youth workers and professionals acknowledged the policy decisions that are fundamental to successfully embed integrated online and offline prevention methods in their social cohesion context.

f. Transferring the outputs

The ORPHEUS partnership comprises cities and institutions operating in a diversity of contexts which are representative of typical problems faced by existing prevention strategies within the 2Seas Area. This will ensure that lessons learned, and solutions developed will have a wide generic component which can be transferred and replicated widely. Project outputs are shared with all partners and other EU institutions and transnational networks for possible transfer of the ORPHEUS prevention method.

6 Durability, Replicability and Transferability of ORPHEUS

ORPHEUS has been developed with the intention to serve its goals even after the official deadline of the project. For this purpose, the introduced new integrated and aligned services for online and offline prevention include private and social institutions, young people and their educators as central actors.

ORPHEUS enhances the capacity and knowledge of project partners on how to make young people express themselves in Safe Spaces, how to engage in a dialogue during sensitive and controversial issues, how to create awareness and resilience to misinformation and how to adopt positive life examples (alter-narratives), both online and offline.

Project resources have been documented and disseminated, which enables (potential and current) prevention professionals to implement its rationales, methods and tools themselves in the future.

All these disseminated knowledge and tools will ensure the durability, replicability and the transferability of the ORPHEUS integrated prevention model.

However, these achievements did not take place through an uneventful process, as the new prevention method faced several challenges.

CHAPTER II

IMPLEMENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF ORPHEUS

1 Challenges Encountered by ORPHEUS in its Preventive Approach

Many mainstream prevention models conceptualise a process of sequential steps leading towards a person becoming involved in violent extremism (Muro, 2016; Moghaddam, 2005; Borum, 2011). This is just one of the problems. A view on the current mainstream approaches shows clearly how problematic and ineffective they are in regard to preventing social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism problems among young people.

ORPHEUS has had to face the following challenges whilst introducing its new integrated prevention method.

1. Muslim radicalisation is seen as the central safety threat, which causes stigmatisation of Muslim population/youth and also results in the neglecting of other violent extremism (e.g., extreme right).

ORPHEUS tackles all sort of violent extremism.

2. Violent extremism is explained with a linear process (stages) which does not allow handling of diverse paths and timing towards violent extremism (e.g., flash radicalisation, petty crime).

ORPHEUS considers the interplay of the puzzle model elements (ideology, grievances, networks, context) as causes of violent extremism.

3. Radical beliefs and ideology are seen as the starting point of radicalisation, but research does not support the notion that all people with radical beliefs engage in violent extremism. The currently predominant view neglects other risk factors.

ORPHEUS sees ideology as one of the factors (e.g., legitimisation, bonding, injustice, ...) and applies a broader focus that includes alter-narratives, channels for free expression of grievances and opportunities for social bonding.

4. Early detection of 'individuals at risk' is a preferred prevention approach but results in a lack of focus on social prevention in the community and in unfair discrimination of specific individuals.

Instead of that ORPHEUS refers to the broad integral prevention pyramid to avoid similar risks.

5. Police or the security forces are seen as the steering force in fighting violent extremism which results to a one-sided securitisation approach.

ORPHEUS prefers to tackle the problem with frontline workers and with young people.

6. The risk assessment is seen as the role of frontline workers which leads to undermining the pedagogical relation (trust bond) with young people.

However, ORPHEUS emphasises the importance of that trust bond and sees it as a very essential component of prevention practices.

7. Young people are seen as the object of prevention practices which often results in negative reactions, giving young people the feeling of being targeted and disempowered.

ORPHEUS views young people as subjects, actors and equal citizens whose input is desired during policy development against violent extremism matters.

Eventually, as an alternative approach, Hafez and Mullins (2015) suggest the puzzle metaphor based on the interdependence of four components: grievances, networks, ideologies, and enabling environment and support structures instead of sequential steps leading to engagement in violent extremism.

2 Prevention Method Used by ORPHEUS

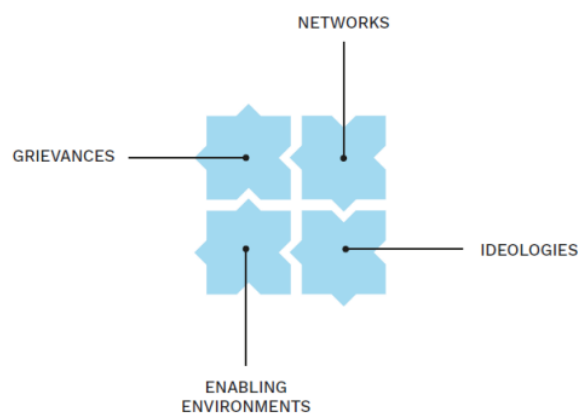
ORPHEUS bases its prevention philosophy upon the *puzzle model* in which four factors are presented as causes of violent extremism.

But in the ORPHEUS prevention model three of these factors are covered with the aim to tackle the interplay of these three (offline and online) causal factors by:

- strengthening positive networks for young people;
- offering legitimate channels for expressing grievances;
- promoting inclusive alter-narratives on society.

The interplay of these three factors also inspires our approach of Safe Spaces in the application. Approaching young people as part of the solution, NOT as part of the problem.

The Puzzle Model



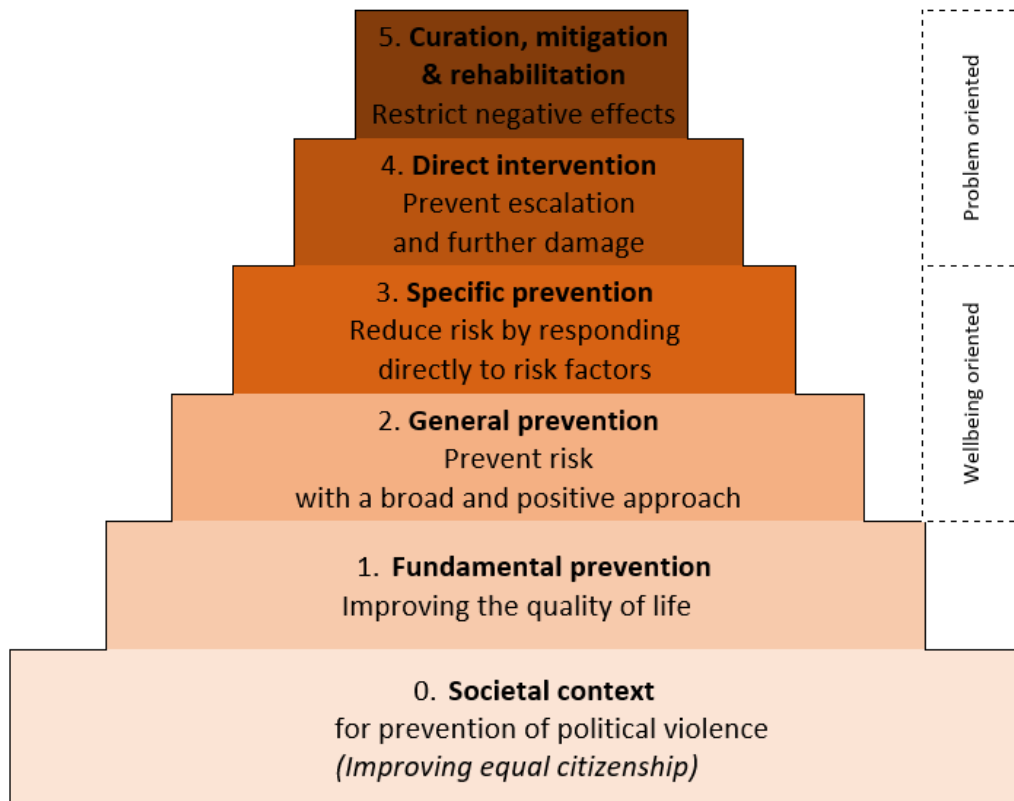
Hafez, M. & Mullins, C. (2015)

ORPHEUS develops this concept by utilising the *prevention pyramid framework* to counter the mentioned causal factors of violent extremism in the Puzzle Model.

The framework starts with analysing the problem and then proceeds with suggesting the appropriate level of action to be taken.

The prevention pyramid framework advocates that preventive measures should start with improving the quality of life for everyone in the community as a fundamental preventive measure. After that the framework suggests a broad and positive approach to prevent risk as general prevention.

Prevention Pyramid Framework



*Framework for the integral prevention of radicalisation towards violent extremism
 – Görgöz, Vanhove and Van Bouchaute, elaborating on the model of Deklerck, J. (2006)*

The next levels are the specific prevention during which one observes direct response to some risk factors and direct intervention levels that suggest taking measures to prevent the escalation of the problem and causing further damage.

The final (fifth) level is where curation, mitigation and rehabilitation are taking place, while negative effects are restricted. The most important notion in this framework is that it underlines how crucial it is to understand that prevention policies should not disrupt the quality of social life but rather to preserve it for all (all-inclusiveness) in a broader social context with the aim to:

- Strengthen positive networks for young people, focusing on empowerment and critical thinking;
- Offer legitimate channels for the public expression of grievances;
- Promote all-inclusive alter-narratives on society.

3 The structure of ORPHEUS

The extent of the threat and the challenges caused by existing mainstream prevention policies urged the consortium to develop an effective work division of tasks in order to achieve the ORPHEUS targets and also to overcome other unexpected problems that might occur during project actualisation.

The five work packages are both the backbone and building blocks of the ORPHEUS project. They carry out the objectives of the project. The five work packages with specific focus on actions and targets have been implemented. Every partner responsible for a work package coordinated its activities, organised the necessary meetings and produced tools and products in collaboration with other partners for the development and creation of ORPHEUS products and deliverables.

Work Package 1: Safe Spaces

The Safe Spaces work package concentrated on tackling the (interplay of) three causal factors of violent extremism by strengthening positive networks for young people, offering channels for expressing grievances and promoting inclusive alter-narratives on society. The promotion of the Safe Space practices for vulnerable young people was the main concentration of the package.

During the times when actual Safe Space sessions could not be organised, as during the Covid-19 restrictions period, responsible partners organised online Safe Space sessions to support young people in need of opportunities to express their grievances.

Professionals were supported in the implementation of Safe Spaces by means of a hands-on manual and five co-created training trajectories: Dealing with Controversial Issues; Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces; Moral Panic, Youth and Counter Culture; Critical Literacy and Online awareness and Resilience; and Get Up Stand Up.

Apart from these products, also an evaluation report on prevention work was realised.

Work Package 2: Online Safety

The second work package focused on online safety and on countering the online propaganda of violent extremists and their recruitment operations. Therefore, ORPHEUS set up pilots for online safety on two aspects:

- a- Cyberawareness and resilience training sessions for young people to improve their skills on how to become safer online, more aware of risks and of how they will be approached (or 'groomed') by radical groups.
- b- Direct online dialogue methods for youth workers. Together with young people this package made fact videos and developed narratives on inclusive societies targeting young people in search for information on radical topics. Furthermore, it developed a guideline for the production of alter-narrative videos. The package also developed a training for young people and an online safety platform for

professionals, consisting of all the tools, trainings, guidelines and theoretical visions of the ORPHEUS project.

Work Package 3: Upscaling the new integrated prevention model

The third package's main focus was working on necessary products that serve the upscaling of the project in order to have the ORPHEUS prevention model be translated into an official prevention policy and diffused to other locations within the Interreg 2Seas region. Therefore, the package focused on the Strategic Report with policy recommendations for adoption of the ORPHEUS integrated online and offline extended prevention model, the Hands-on Toolkit for current and potential key players in prevention and the report/analyses on the perspectives of young people and the position/concept paper of ORPHEUS which defines the important concepts, overview of ORPHEUS and the language to be used during the ORPHEUS project.

Work Package 4: Project Management

Within work package 4 the overall management and other administrative and financial control resources required for overseeing the ORPHEUS project as a whole were provided by the project manager. This package covered overall planning, monitoring, reporting to the funding authority Interreg 2Seas, and if necessary, revision of plan and tracking deliverables and outputs and ensuring that specific results are delivered on time and were obtained within the budgets and was responsible for cost statements and reports. Also, the organisation of partner meetings and the update of the risk management were part of this work package.

Work Package 5: Communication

Work package 5 developed and executed a communication strategy that disseminated the benefits of the ORPHEUS activities and supported the uptake of project outputs in prevention services. It focused on dissemination, communication and outreach. Therefore, it developed newsletters for observer partners and stakeholders, created short messages for social media channels (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) to communicate the activities and the results of the project. The WP also created posters, generated publicity for the project by giving presentations and organising workshops at local, national or transnational levels in different countries and cities. Finally, the WP also covered the work related to the finalisation of publications and trainings.

4 Cross-Border Collaboration: Opportunities, Challenges and Lessons Learned in Times of a Pandemic

The framework of Interreg 2Seas requirements, the concept of a multi-organisational project set-up, the geographic distribution of the project team, the different languages used in the local pilots, the temporary nature of the project and staff turnover, and last but not least an unexpected pandemic, all led to increased complexity of the implementation of ORPHEUS.

One of the main objectives of the Interreg 2Seas program is promoting social innovation applications to tackle the challenges related to youth unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. The change should benefit all the stakeholders of social and local services. Public stakeholders which are in charge of developing and delivering social innovation and welfare policies, research centres, and more generally the civil society are all beneficiaries. Next to these objectives, the program is underpinned by the aim to support cross-border cooperation and cohesion.

To achieve these objectives, Interreg 2Seas provides a detailed structure for project development and the monitoring of progress. For social innovation projects, situated in a disorganised and unpredictable context, a strict and predetermined plan does not always match the reality. However, Interreg 2Seas takes a flexible attitude and is open for justified amendments and modifications. Nonetheless, the focus on formal reporting of Interreg 2Seas, does, in our view, impede a cross-border knowledge creation, including continuously reflecting and lessons learned, and this especially in social innovation projects.

Geographic dispersion resulting in working in virtual teams, imposes additional challenges, since face-to-face interaction is rare, but important to build trust and the support engagement. The ORPHEUS consortium met during partner meetings, to get acquainted with each other, with the different organisations, and with the regional context where ORPHEUS is developed locally. Although frequent online meetings were organised, the geographical distance made it difficult to collaborate. Therefore, also more extended field visits were organised by a knowledge partner and the lead partner.

The multi-organisational structure of the ORPHEUS project required awareness of the project management for enacting non-formal authority and empowerment, resulting in the importance of building trust. Although trust between the project partners is essential in the implementation of the project, of similar importance is a clear division of tasks, open and continuous communication, and knowledge sharing.

The follow-up of the implementation of the Work Packages was done in Working Groups. Each Work Package Working Group met once a month to discuss issues, share information, follow-up on the deliverables and targets, divide tasks and plan next steps. This facilitated keeping a clear eye on the development of the project in the local pilots and taking mitigating measures if necessary.

The ORPHEUS project partners consisted of two local governments, an educational institution, two youth work organisations, and three knowledge partners from various disciplines. Uniting the different cultures of the project partners and stakeholders was a challenge. Different organisational, professional, and national cultures needed to be merged into one project culture.

Knowledge sharing and cross-border cooperation was essential for a successful implementation and realisation of the project objectives. Yet, different attitudes of sharing and cooperating, increased by a fear of loss of face and communication in a foreign language, were a challenge.

The ORPHEUS project piloted in Flanders-Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The products, trainings, questionnaires, etc. were all used in these pilot areas and needed to be translated in English, Dutch, and French. Apart from the text translation, we also needed to adapt the tools and products to the local contexts and regulations.

Communication and knowledge sharing with the different local organisations and professionals was a challenge and not always possible without translation. This could make the impact of the ORPHEUS project on the wider local organisation more difficult. Luckily, some partners did speak or at least understood English, French, and Dutch, and could reach out to the local organisations in their own language.

Furthermore, the ORPHEUS project was time limited. However, building trust, the concrete realisation of the project deliverables, and knowledge sharing takes time, especially towards the end of the project. Time constraint was a continuous issue. The temporary nature of the project also increased the possibility that project collaborators would choose more stable job opportunities. Staff turnover was for some partners an issue. This endangered the “memory” of the project in acquired skills and knowledge. Again, clear communication and securing knowledge is essential.

The ORPHEUS lifespan extended from early 2019 to early 2023. In the middle of this period, we were confronted with an unexpected pandemic. At the beginning of March 2020, the ORPHEUS consortium met for the fourth Partner Meeting in Mechelen (Belgium). It would be the last face-to-face meeting of the consortium until October 2021. The pandemic had a major influence on the development of the project. As ORPHEUS aspires to social innovation, in collaboration with social services, professionals, policymakers and young people, the impact was even greater. The successive lockdown periods and other health measures were drastic and did not always coincide in the different countries of the 2Seas area. Schools and youth organisations became inaccessible during lockdowns and after the lockdowns they understandably had more urgent issues to deal with. Cooperation with these stakeholders came temporarily to a standstill for some partners.

The consortium increased the online meetings and organised online partner meetings, however, the lack of face-to-face cooperation and the delay in collaborating with stakeholders was strongly felt. Also, the consortium included more online work with

each other, but also with our stakeholders, such as online safe spaces and a webinar series on the ORPHEUS topics.

All these challenges seem to be painting a picture of a difficult and negative journey. This is not the impression we want to give. The cross-border cooperation was intense and frustrated by the above challenges, but overall, it was very rewarding. Project partners learned to cooperate in a constructive way, developing tools and guidelines for professionals and policymakers that can be deployed in the different contexts. The challenges faced eventually forced us to become even more innovative and try different methods and tools that we then integrated into our final methods and products, and this was a necessary addition for a project that wants to be as futureproof as possible in a hybridised, post-Covid-19 world.

5 Additional Activities Organised by ORPHEUS

The actualisation of the ORPHEUS project required the consortium also to have some additional activities such as field visits, partner meetings and focus groups for a more productive and efficient progress.

The main objective of the field visits was to collect additional and more in-depth information on the practices of Safe Spaces through interviews with professionals in the pilot areas about their Safe Spaces, site visits at locations where Safe Space work is done with young people, individual interviews with managers and a co-creation workshop on 'methods of politicisation'. Eventually 4 field visits, out of which 1 had to be in the form of a virtual field visit due to Covid-19 restrictions, took place as part of the project.

In addition, the consortium organised partner meetings to strengthen collaboration among the ORPHEUS partners on a wider context of topics. As part of the partnership within ORPHEUS, 13 partner meetings took place, four of these meetings took place online due to Covid-19 pandemic limitations.

Additionally, focus groups have been organised with the policymakers and professionals to have their views about the ORPHEUS integrated prevention method and with young people to include their perspectives in the policy making process. The focus groups with policymakers and professionals were organised in Belgium, the Netherlands, United Kingdom and France.

6 Tools and Products Developed by ORPHEUS

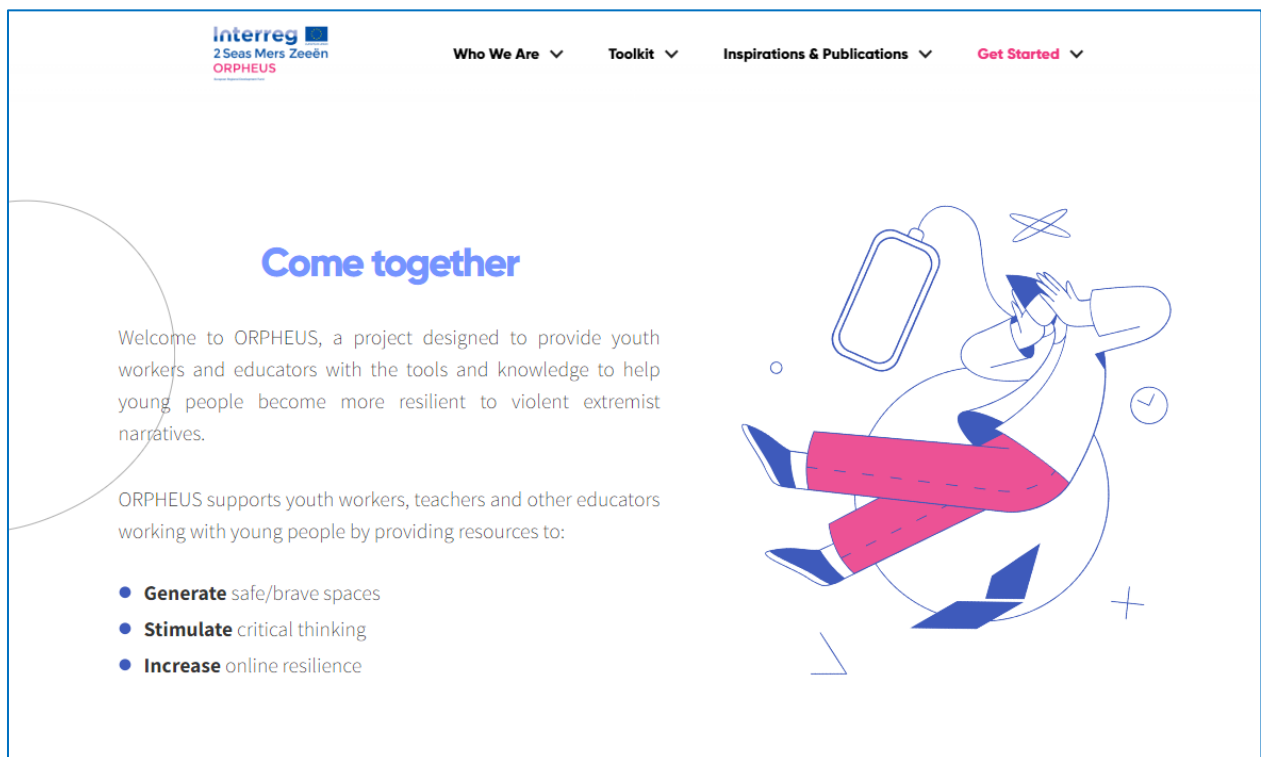
ORPHEUS produced several products and tools based on the Safe Spaces concept and its integrated prevention method. All of them are designed to provide professionals who work with young people the skills, knowledge and confidence to deal with a number of issues relevant to young people's sense of global democratic citizenship and increasing their resilience to online and offline violent extremist narratives. The following is the list of created tools and products of ORPHEUS:

- A Concept/Position Paper
- Training for Young People on Cyberawareness
- Five different training courses and related manuals for professionals:
 - Controversial Issues training and related manual,
 - Critical Literacy and Online Awareness training and related manual,
 - Youth Culture – Supporting the Skills of Professionals in Interacting with Young People training and related manual,
 - Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces training and related manual,
 - Politicisation with Young People in Socially Vulnerable Situations training and the Get Up Stand Up book as the related manual
- 8 Webinars (on YouTube)
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPEe6adbWbT2iggXTA2J81A>
- Direct Online Dialogue in Chat rooms and Chat Apps. Manual
- Safe Space Manual
- Alter-narratives (12 Sketches, infographics and group discussion videos), a Guide for creating visual alternative narratives preventing violent extremism.
- ORPHEUS Website - Online safety platform for professionals. The complete Toolkit of ORPHEUS that contains all material needed by professionals to support them and young people to (re-)connect. (<https://www.orpheusproject.eu>)
- Report on the Perspectives of Youth Study
- ORPHEUS RoadMap - One-page chart that displays in steps how to use the tools of the ORPHEUS prevention method.

7 Hands-on Toolkit

Some of the products are gathered in the ORPHEUS Toolkit: The toolkit mainly consists of training materials and guidance manuals created by experts on these topics, suitable to use for both online and offline prevention and politicisation practices.

ORPHEUS provides the following tools as part of the toolkit and offers practical guidelines for practitioners to act according to the new ORPHEUS integrated prevention model. All necessary publishable documents and products are made available in three languages (English, Dutch and French) on the ORPHEUS website.



❖ Safe Space Practices

Through partner interaction as well as discussions with young people and relevant professionals, ORPHEUS gradually developed its most important products based on the Safe Spaces concept for young people.

In the ORPHEUS framework paper, the concept of 'Safe Spaces' is explained as a pedagogical approach:

"The concept of Safe Space is not so much characterised by a location, institution, organisation... but by the pedagogy and philosophy behind it. The pedagogical view should be aimed at rebalancing protection and emancipation, and (re)install 'Safe

Spaces as laboratories’ where young people are in charge, working together in empowering ways and participating in the whole society.”

The conception of Safe Spaces extends to *online Safe Spaces*.

ORPHEUS is designed to equip key players (such as social and youth workers, educators, voluntary key players and peers) with the necessary skills to support young people in Safe Spaces through enabling them to express their grievances freely. The method for the development of Safe Spaces does not start from one fixed framework and lead downstream but is a bottom-up approach. Its prevention philosophy makes it clear that prevention should start with an all-inclusive approach from the bottom and lead up, whilst always targeting the welfare of the society as a whole.

Young people attending Safe Space sessions are empowered to engage in peer-to-peer dialogue, supported by skilled educators, to help them address their concerns and grievances in an interactive, constructive and informal environment, reducing the risk of social alienation. While the concept of *Safe Spaces* extends to both *online and offline Safe Spaces*, with a nuance, it may sound as if they are totally separated from the real world. But that is not the case. They function whilst being open to dialogue, trying to connect young people with family, friends and institutions for fulfilling their social bonding needs.

The *Safe Space* concept has two dimensions: First one is the ***internal dimension***. It is the organised integrated network of social services aimed at vulnerable young people. The network involves two target groups:

- a- key players* (such as social and youth workers, educators and peers) who receive coaching on how to engage in and facilitate implementation of Safe Space session for young people and
- b- young people who are offered Safe Spaces* for dialogue with peer-to-peers and skilled educators.

The second is the ***external dimension***, and it is the direction in which young people receive support to strengthen their positive network with family, friends and institutions and are stimulated to engage with social institutions. Ultimately, the intention is to support young people to express their grievances in the public sphere bravely.

A key element in the development of Safe Spaces is the presence and role of the professional. Taking for granted ideas and traditions in the role of creating conditions, the use of Safe Spaces and ideas of liberation or empowerment are to be discussed and shaped by professionals, in co-creation with young people, since they have to consider the places as safe. Various studies (Van Alstein, 2017; Van Bouchaute et.al., 2018; MENARG, 2019) have indicated that professionals need support in at least three key elements: (1) keeping a relation of trust and confidentiality in the context of ‘de-radicalisation’ policies; (2) the problem of action embarrassment and (3) finding out ‘what is negotiable and what isn’t’ in discussing controversial issues with young people.

However, it is essential to mention that there is no clear-cut approach to organising Safe Space sessions. It depends on the local needs to determine how this concept will be applied. In other words, at one location a Safe Space could be a moment and location at a school where students are entitled to express their grievances freely under a safeguarded environment, whilst elsewhere it could be an outreach program that provides similar opportunities to young people. Therefore, the vision and the concept may differ depending on the needs, opportunities, whether it is organised online in private chat rooms or offline at a specific secured location. It is a secure, free environment for young people to get rid of their grievances and receive professional support, if they desire, without any trouble.

❖ Trainings and Manuals for Professionals

The project developed five training courses designed to increase the confidence and knowledge of professionals working with young people in key competency areas. Each training course is explained by a comprehensive manual to support the individual delivering the training. They are also able to benefit from additional supporting material such as handouts and slides, and a resource pack once they complete the training. All these training packages are made publicly available on the official ORPHEUS website (<https://www.orpheusproject.eu>).

❖ Dealing with Controversial Issues Training

Dealing with controversial issues is, 'to provide professionals with the tools to deal with different kinds of situations with the intention of 'turning a difficult, seemingly destructive conversation and processes into a constructive one, constructive learning moments and a broadly open climate in dealing with young people' (Van Alstein, M., 2018).

For this purpose, a manual titled: *Dealing with Controversial Issues. Manual for the Training of Professionals* has been prepared. It is designed for those developing training packages for professionals working with young people. With this manual they can develop training for professionals in different functions such as youth workers or teachers, working with young people in formal or informal contexts. The manual suggests that the current local political climate and sensitivities should be considered when delivering the training. The manual also informs professionals about how to develop possibilities and methods on dealing with foreseeable and unforeseeable controversy in planned and unplanned moments of activities, conversations and discussions. The manual clarifies how to develop such a training whose general objectives are:

- Making professionals aware of the importance of installing Safe Spaces for young people and professionals,
- Make them feel more confident in dealing with controversial issues, can assess, what topics are difficult and sensitive to discuss with a group of young people,

- Are aware of their own perspective, own approach and own reactions in dealing with controversial issues,
- Can set up ground rules in a group before starting discussions,
- Can use supportive discussion and questioning techniques in dealing with controversial issues and can take the role as a facilitator of difficult discussions amongst young people.

❖ Critical Literacy and Online Awareness Training

This training provides professionals with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to be able to support young people to develop their critical literacy and build resilience to false information online, reducing their susceptibility to online grooming by means of exposure to disinformation. The relevant manual *Critical Literacy and Online Awareness. Manual for the Training of Professionals*, explains the aim and how the training programme should be carried out for professionals such as teachers and educators, youth workers and anyone else working with young people in formal or informal contexts.

On the other hand, especially after Covid-19, the online presence of young people has accelerated a wider social transition to a hybrid reality, where most traditional activities can now be realised in an online environment as well as offline.

Therefore, it has become more pertinent to empower young people through trainings by professionals to use the internet in a safer and responsible manner. They need to be prepared in such a way that they become able to evaluate effectively the information they encounter and to come to an informed opinion as to its accuracy and the actions required. It is just as important that they are able to identify factual information and be confident of this, as it is to be able to identify false information.

The focus on providing online awareness trainings such as *cyberawareness* is to increase awareness about online threats and increase resilience of young people to online violent extremism, and *media literacy* that basically sheds light upon how young people should deal with information found online and why they should not react with haste without investigating the facts.

In general, the objectives of this training are to:

- Strengthen young peoples' understanding of different types of false information they may encounter online,
- Strengthen young peoples' understanding of how and why false information online may put them at risk,
- Strengthen young people's skills to effectively evaluate information they encounter online,

- Strengthen young peoples' understanding of cognitive bias,
- Support young people to think critically about the limits of free speech, and
- Support young people to think critically about the role of media and privacy.

❖ Moral Panic, Youth and Counter Culture Training

This training supports frontline workers in coping with the countering elements of youth culture.

The professionals will gain insights into the functions youth culture and counter cultures have for young people. By highlighting the positive elements of youth culture and related behaviour of young people, frontline workers can make an important connection with young people. By having an open dialogue with young people, frontline workers can create a space where young people are able to express their thoughts, feelings and fears.

The manual titled: *Moral Panic, Youth and Counter Culture. Manual for the Training of Professionals*, is designed for trainers that develop trainings for professionals working with young people.

The manual also contains information that can be used for pedagogical reasons. With this manual, professionals can compile a programme for a few hours, half a day or several days of training. In any case, it is important that closure is provided at the end of the training. That is why they are provided with a closing section for the various topics. This addresses the need for voices being heard and topics being tackled. There should be an opportunity for follow-up or supervision if required.

The manual suggests that a one-time training on such a topic should be seen as a start for further trainings, programmes or try-outs with young people.

The key objectives of the manual are to:

- Assist professionals developing skills in coping with the countering elements of youth culture;
- Have a positive attitude towards youth culture;
- Focus on the positive elements of youth culture;
- Encourage critical thinking about youth culture and helping young people express aspects of youth culture in a constructive manner.

By highlighting the positive elements of youth culture and related behaviour of young people, frontline workers can make an important connection with young people. By having an open dialogue with young people, frontline workers can create a space where young people are able to express their thoughts, feelings and fears. Frontline workers

can help young people to express the countering elements of youth culture in a constructive manner.

❖ Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces Training

This training enables Safe Space facilitators to create an exceptionally Safe Space to discuss social frustrations.

The goal is to create a positive environment to discuss themes that participants feel they cannot discuss – let alone tackle – in legitimate, mainstream spaces. Aims to provide professionals with the knowledge and skills to develop and monitor enhanced group dynamics.

The related manual: *Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces. Manual for the Training of Professionals* is intended to train professionals (upskilling) and enable Safe Space facilitators to create an exceptionally Safe Space in which social frustrations can be discussed. The manual delivers professionals information about the training that provides knowledge and skills to develop and monitor enhanced group dynamics because such an approach is needed in every Safe Space, regardless of the theme. In addition, there is the necessity to meet the needs of young people who have had too many negative experiences with social institutions (i.e., family, school, work, association, care, police, justice, media) and who, as a result, may be tempted to recruit in illegitimate alternatives.

Eventually, the key objectives are to:

- Enable professionals to feel more confident in starting activities with a new group;
- Build and maintain a relation of trust and confidentiality with and within a group of young people; Facilitate in forming individuals into a group that likes to do activities together;
- Enhance trust between young participants;
- Become aware of their own role in a group and the behaviour of this/these role(s) and can adequately handle problems in a group whilst dealing with key topics such as social alienation, social bonding and group dynamics.

❖ Politicisation with Young People in Socially Vulnerable Situations Training

Young people should be visible through all means of communication channels to express their dissatisfaction and frustrations and thus be able to demand or make a social change.

Therefore, this training is developed to support professionals feel more confident in processes of politicisation with young people in socially vulnerable situations, to understand the meaning and importance of politicising activities with young people,

and to increase the space for young people to express their grievances and make them visible. To support professionals dealing with such matters the *Get Up Stand Up Book (Politicisation Manual)* provides insightful information.

Published by Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in collaboration with Uit De Marge and with the financial support of Interreg 2Seas as an ORPHEUS project, the politicisation manual supports professionals working with young people in socially vulnerable situations to reflect on and practice politicising work. In this book it is explained that politicisation can be more than street action and provides ways on how you can demand change. Furthermore, it provides suggestions on how and when youth organisations can work in a politicised way and mentions possible obstacles they may hit during their work.

Briefly, the politicisation manual explains how some issues can be brought to the attention of the necessary audience to make or demand a change and prevent further victimisation while it also describes the methods for both online and offline politicisation and possible feedback and obstacles that might be experienced during the process.

8 The Position Paper

One of the primary documents created to provide a brief but satisfying overview about the development of ORPHEUS. It facilitates discussion on basic concepts and ideas of ORPHEUS; how they are linked to the different prevention practices in our countries and the creation of a standardised ORPHEUS project language between partners and its network while it introduces the scientific evidence about the puzzle model on 'radicalisation' and how the prevention pyramid has been developed upon the suggestions made by the puzzle model on radicalisation.

9 ORPHEUS Webinar series

Project partners organised and hosted 8 live webinar meetings between June 2020 and February 2022 open to all relevant stakeholders. The applied agenda and the topics were the following:

❖ The ORPHEUS prevention pyramid

This webinar described the Pyramid model as a framework for developing innovative methods for tackling the risks of violent extremism. It explains the strengths, the pitfalls, the pros and the cons of the model.

❖ When do individuals radicalise? In search of an integrated model for the explanation of violent extremism

The majority of explanation models for violent extremism describe a process consisting of sequential steps. These linear process models are well-known and broadly used but fail to grasp the unpredictable and diverse paths and timings towards violent extremism. In a forthcoming publication, Prof. Dr. Rik Coolsaet develops an explanation scheme based on the long historic path of terrorism studies since the 1960s. Coolsaet explained his model and applies it to both jihadi and far-right terrorism.

❖ The Far Right and Conspiracy Theories, what conspiracy theories are and how they are used by the far right

Some theories are harmless, but others are very concerning. The risks are that young people may have been exposed to misleading and hateful content and engaged with extremist individuals. Therefore, increasing the vulnerability to risk, harm and exploitation. This webinar described what conspiracy theories are, and how they are used by the Far Right. Dr. Stocker also dived into the subject of common antisemitic and Islamophobic conspiracy theories, ending the presentation with what we can do to counter harmful conspiracy theories.

❖ The Extreme Right on social media: The Lure of Propaganda from Perfect Puppies to Sensationalised Stories

This webinar examined the results of two recent studies on the social media online activities of a popular UK extreme right group 'Britain First'. First, the way in which the groups constructed themselves on mainstream social media as 'imagined political communities' is discussed. Analysis of a circa 5-million-word dataset reveals that Britain First strategically mobilized a number of topical news events and systematically denigrated ('other') immigrants and Muslims. The second discussion is about the change in their visual strategy as they were removed from the world's largest social media platform Facebook and migrated to a less regulated-platform – Gab.

❖ **Online Safe Spaces: “What works?” Concepts and methodologies,**

This video session takes a closer look at the importance of safe spaces for vulnerable young people to express their grievances. Moreover, due to the Covid-19 lockdowns, the focus on online safety has become more important than ever to protect young people from online grooming.

❖ **Islamic reform movements: Islamism, Salafism and Jihadism**

The postcolonial Islamic world has been a turbulent place. Many revolutions and counter-revolutions have taken place. These have led to different movements that today are also present amongst the Muslim population in the West. Misunderstandings of the different theories and practices however are very common. This webinar provided a brief introduction to the development of the 3 main modern Islamic Reform Movements and an elaboration on the differences and similarities.

❖ **Online alter- and counter- narratives for combating violent extremism**

In the age where digital social media are often blamed for increasing polarisation and rise of extremism, there is undisputable need for support for social media creators willing to counteract these trends. This webinar presented scholarly perspectives on narrative approaches for the prevention of violent extremism. Criteria of effective alter- or counter-narratives to narratives promoting violent extremism were considered and supported by practical examples.

❖ **Utilising the positive effects of social gaming**

In this webinar Cristian took participants on a journey through online and offline experiences of social gaming, provided with examples. He explained what social gaming is, its powers and functions of social interactions during gaming.

10 Guidelines for Direct Online Dialogue in Chat rooms and Chat Apps

This manual is meant to help professionals working with young people to address the problem of online extremist statements and online threats.

It is a manual created to support professionals with a method when engaging in online, direct dialogue with young people in chat rooms and chat apps. In other words, it is a prevention manual developed for professionals dealing with prevention about when and how to engage with young people online whilst considering the essentials of concepts such as: politicisation, non-stigmatisation, impartiality, enabling the young people to express their grievances and seek the opportunity to further engage with them in Safe Spaces.

The topics discussed in the manual are direct dialogue in online chatrooms and discussions on social media; how to deal with fake news in online communication; conspiracy theories in online communication and prevention of online radicalization.

11 Alter-narratives and Guide for Creating Visual Alternative Narratives Preventing Violent Extremism

This guide supports content creators to develop effective ‘alter-narratives’ to radical narratives.

A series of short ‘alter-narrative’ films were created with the intention to raise critical awareness, exploring topics such as immigration, youth culture, critical literacy and race and ethnicity.

It provides information and alternative approaches created by experts as part of alter-narratives to increase grooming awareness and resilience among youth in special workshops on such topics.

The aim of these alter-narratives is to allow vulnerable youth to engage with positive stories and role models on various sensitive matters, protect them from engaging in violent extremism and increase their awareness about narratives used by violent groups to find sympathisers or recruit new members.

In addition, the alter-narrative manual provides more in-depth information about the created material and informs on how to use it. The titles of some alter-narrative content created for ORPHEUS are listed below:

Sketch 1: Ethnic Profiling

A humoristic video about the prejudices from some members of the police towards young people & the prejudices by some young people towards police.

Sketch 2: Youth culture

Group of young people hanging out on the corner of the street, talking about their daily lives. Use of wordplay to put the viewer on the wrong track. Highlighting stereotypes concerning youth culture.

Info-graphic 1: Migration crisis

Infographic video about the reality of migration and asylum seekers in the EU context.

Info-graphic 2: Muslims & democratic values

Infographic video about democratic values that Muslims have and the political presence of Muslims in the EU context.

Info-graphic 3: How do I view the world?

An infographic video (based on the book “Factfulness”) about processing information about the world (e.g., The gap instinct)

Info-graphic 4: Right-wing extremism vs Islamic extremism

An infographic video comparing 10 examples of similarities between right-wing and Islamic extremism

Info-graphic 5: Fact checking

Interview with fact checkers from the organisation “Factcheck. Vlaanderen” about the value of fact-checking.

Group discussion 1: Racial identity and tensions

A group discussion with young people about racial identity and racial tensions.

Group discussion 2: Inter-religious dialogue sessions

A group discussion about religion and religiosity in western societies.

Group discussion 3: Youth culture & stereotype

A group discussion with young people about how society (such as parents and teachers) views youth culture.

Group discussion 4: Ethnic profiling

A group discussion with young people about their view on ethnic profiling.

Group discussion 5: Gender roles in modern societies

A group discussion with young people about their view on gender roles in modern societies

12 Safe Space Manual

The manual has been drafted to aid professionals working with young people. It identifies the necessary steps to be taken on how to organize Safe Spaces for young people in co-creation with them and how to empower them during their participation. It further defines their role as an observer and if needed as a mentor so that together with young people they can create a Safe Space for expression of grievances or to find a solution to whatever problem young people experience and establish/reconnect them with a bond to the community.

13 ORPHEUS Website

The project has developed a special website, as part of the ORPHEUS integrated prevention method, on which all of the training courses, manuals, guidance and short films are available. It is the Online Safety Platform for professionals. It serves for the dissemination and the transfer of the project information to others. The website itself can be considered as the ORPHEUS toolkit that contains all tools needed to respond to the expectations of the project (<https://www.orpheusproject.eu>).

14 ORPHEUS RoadMap

A one-page chart that summarizes ORPHEUS and displays the necessary steps to be taken in order to apply the ORPHEUS integrated prevention method.

15 ORPHEUS Final Conference



How to foster resilience in youth: new approaches within online and offline prevention
on Wednesday 30 November 2022 in Mechelen (Belgium)

CHAPTER III

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ORPHEUS PREVENTION METHOD

1 Measuring the Effectiveness of the ORPHEUS Prevention Method

The ORPHEUS project consortium constantly tested and performed evaluations on the effectiveness of its tools and prevention method in general in an interactive manner. Data collection and performance evaluations are based on surveys, interviews, webinars, focus group discussions, field visits and partner meetings.

There has been a continued effort to measure whether the goals are likely to be achieved or have been achieved, whether the created tools serve the expected outcomes and whether the created material does provide desired results.

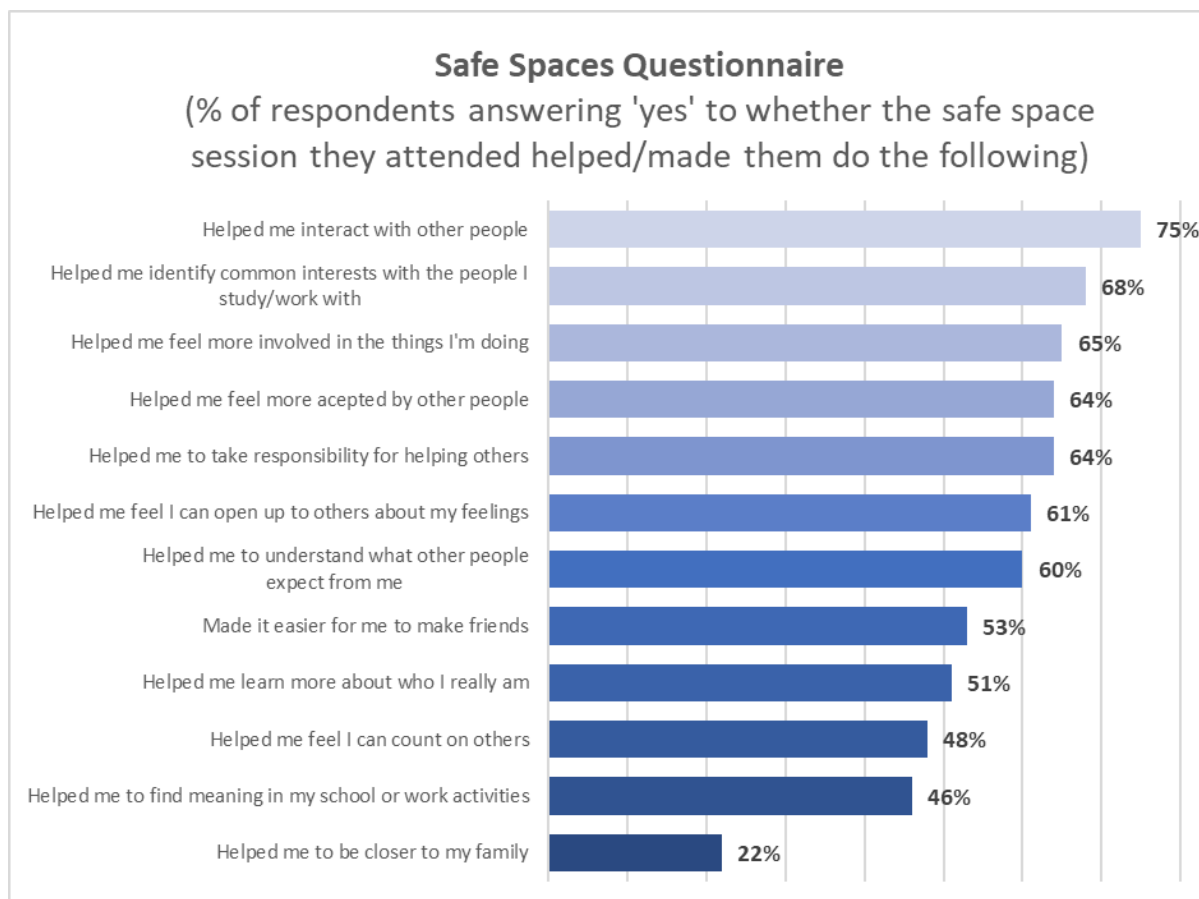
2 Measuring the effectiveness of Safe Spaces in reducing social alienation

Young people attending Safe Space sessions were invited to complete a short questionnaire to help measure whether the session had reduced their levels of social alienation. Based on 114 survey responses, 96% of young people who participated in a Safe Space session and completed a survey indicated a decrease in social alienation in at least one area as shown in Chart-1.

The questions in the survey were adapted from the Jessor and Jessor scale of social alienation designed for adolescents. This scale measures generalised alienation in terms of uncertainty about the meaningfulness of daily roles and activities and a belief that one is isolated from others (Jessor and Jessor, 1977).

The percentage of respondents responding positively to each question is shown in Chart-1 below:

Chart-1

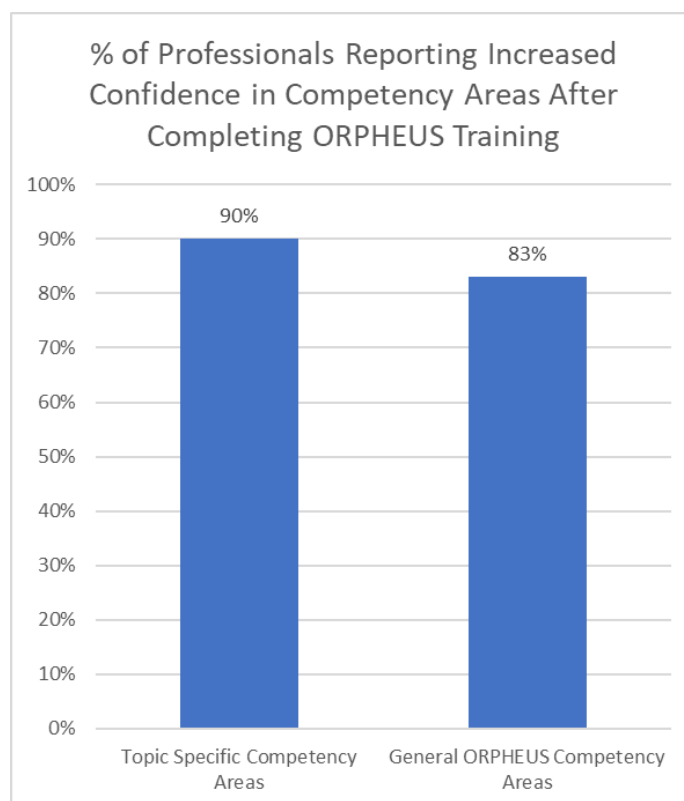


3 Measuring the Effectiveness of the Training for Professionals

During the same period of the project professionals undertaking the five trainings from each region were invited to complete a questionnaire, before and after the training, to rank their confidence in certain key competency areas relating to the 5 trainings the project team has developed. Their confidence levels before and after the training were compared to see if their overall confidence had increased after the training. Survey questions related specifically to the aims and objectives of each individual training, but also to the general aims and objectives of ORPHEUS.

90% of respondents felt more confident in topic-specific competency areas after completing the training and 83% felt more confident in the general ORPHEUS competency areas.

Chart-2



4 Evaluations of the “Perspectives of Youth Study

In total, the study (in the form of participant observation in Safe Spaces and anthropological analysis) was conducted with 120 participants in four pilot countries. Participants ages were between 14-25 and came from diverse backgrounds but all were in search of social connection. The study tried to answer the following questions:

1-Which social phenomena do young people label as problematic? How should we understand this in policy terms?

2-Which social institutions (e.g., family, school, leisure clubs, social work, police, media) / social interventions (e.g., Safe Spaces, resilience training) do young people find supportive or unsupportive?

The findings of the observations reveal that young people are aware of *top down* determined problems such as extremist ideologies or mental wellbeing challenges. However, they emphasise problems such as body shaming and sexual intimidation as *bottom-up* problems, for which sexual intimidation was mentioned as something they learned to deal with. Moreover, it appears that issues such as violent extremism have started to become a tiring topic for them, hence youth seem to make up their own agenda of concerns.

Those who participated in the study generally appreciate the support they are offered and prefer practical virtual solutions and move easily to another if an alternative support appears. An encouraging finding mentioned in the study by the observer is that the awareness about dangerous online content of the young people who attended Safe Space sessions is satisfying, however, it gets jeopardised at times when they experience a level of identity related frustrations and are left without institutional support.

Based on the experience with young people at Safe Space sessions and their reactions and input, the study asserts that the use of “humour” to establish a connection with young people often works. In addition, it is suggested that during the discussion of sensitive issues young people should be given the chance to determine how such a session should develop or end, which is often in relevance with their personal life problems which adults/teachers/professionals may be unaware of. Those who attended the sessions value discussing top down-introduced problems as part of increasing their resilience against similar issues. But the observer came to the conclusion that they feel the need to be guided on how to compartmentalise, to leave their troubles at the door and focus on learning skills and acquiring expertise that is useful in surviving present threats.

5 Work Package-1 “Safe Spaces” Evaluations

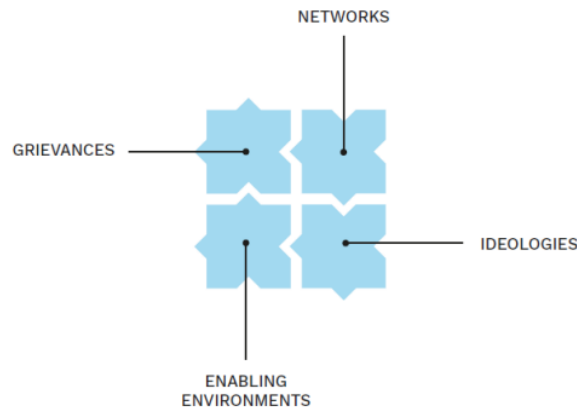
The evaluation report on Safe Spaces analyses the monitoring spreadsheet and the findings of the focus groups, the interviews with frontline practitioners, young people and the surveys conducted before and after the pilot applications in order to determine whether the applications have been a success or a failure.

The report argues that at the initial phase of the project the intention was to start with a framework that allows experimenting with the concept of 'Safe Spaces' in prevention work in the pilots. However, the work in this regard took an unpredictable direction due to the pandemic and the organisational and contextual difficulties at the pilot locations. The pandemic inspired ORPHEUS to develop the online Safe Space concept, but with some concerns whether this development would change the character and guidance of Safe Spaces and what kind of implications it may have for the professional supervisors.

According to the researchers who evaluated Safe Spaces, the concept of 'Safe Spaces' does not connect seamlessly with the concept of prevention, which is not unexpected because no one has been able to develop a perfect prevention method of any crime so far. Therefore, the fact that ORPHEUS considers young people as team players (actors) involved in Safe Spaces in the first place is important. They are viewed as young equal citizens in our democratic societies and should be considered as part of the solution, not of the problem. This perspective distinguishes ORPHEUS from similar initiatives.

In addition, the analysis revealed that there are few explicit references to young people's agency in the documents and discussions in the pilots which is seen as a pending challenge. The first concern is whether the Safe Space method is a relevant method for specific prevention issues, or does it fit better in a more general view on prevention? The other concern is that when Safe Spaces are applied to the specific prevention (3rd layer of the pyramid), there is a danger that the specific safety and agency of young people will be eroded. Having stated the concerns, the same researchers revealed an encouraging analysis that states that Safe Spaces can make a positive contribution to tackling risk factors in the ORPHEUS puzzle model indirectly.

The Puzzle Model



Hafez, M. & Mullins, C. (2015)

Accordingly, the researchers argue that:

- Controversial topics can be addressed comfortably > narratives or 'ideologies'
- Positive social bonding is supported > 'networks'
- Raising awareness of injustices and supporting the public expression of grievances > 'grievances'
- The specific (in)formal contexts of Safe Spaces have effects on the safe climate, activities, agency of young people and on the role of professionals.

The authors of the report further note that, with some preconditions Safe Spaces could be made safer and that the next phase of Safe Space, the "Brave Space" concept received significant support from professionals in the pilot regions. Brave Spaces can be viewed as the spaces where young people feel ready to take action towards a change or to solve a problem they experience. Some of them may already be brave due to previous experience while some may grow into it after their Safe Space or other similar experiences. In other words, it is a sort of progress in which safe spaces open up, and young people look for ways to speak out, to express and take action. Such spaces can also function as a springboard where young people learn to and evolve to standing up for themselves and their peers, build more self-confidence and draw the courage to prevail.

Initially, the professionals seemed to be reluctant in supporting the public expression of grievances due to their professional roles (perception) and the organisational culture boundaries. This reluctance undoubtedly is related to lack of knowledge about the concept of politicisation and probably due to how it is often (negatively) associated with politics. That is why the new slogan 'Get up, Stand up' and for the baseline: 'supporting young people in their struggle against injustices', is being received more positively because it makes clear that the focus is on collective awareness and a social action against injustices in the forms of economic, cultural and political.

The report also draws attention to the presence and role of the professional as another vital aspect of Safe Spaces. The analysis reveals that youth workers clearly need tools for guiding young people in the context of prevention of radicalisation.

Finally, the analysis concludes that ORPHEUS should engage to develop Safe Spaces and/or to install new Safe Spaces wherever and whenever needed in co-creation with young people.

6 Work Package 2 “Online Safety” Evaluations

The overall goal of the work package was to provide online safety for young people to protect them from online grooming so that young people would be better protected against online recruitment by individuals or organisations aspiring to violent extremism. This was to be achieved by two deliverables: co-created training trajectories for online awareness and resilience against grooming and alter-narrative content. Hence, project partners created online alter-narratives and training for cyberawareness and resilience of young people against online grooming via online safety pilots to provide young people with the skills to become safer online, more aware of risks and of how they may be approached (or ‘groomed’) for violent extremist purposes and to strengthen media literacy in terms of identifying and critically assessing news and propaganda. The work package focused on online safety, behaviour and awareness among young people in the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France.

During the surveys, young people from these pilot locations noted that they experience various problems. For example, young people from Belgium and the Netherlands stated that they experience problems such as identity struggle, perceived discrimination, distrust for mainstream authorities and inclination towards conspiracy theories. Furthermore, issues such as injustice, poverty, feeling unheard, unequal opportunities, insensitivity and close-mindedness, are among the most mentioned topics. Dutch youth also mentioned ethnic profiling as a problem, and hate crimes and diversity were mentioned by Belgian youth. Besides this, harassment on social media platforms was also mentioned, but many respondents explained that they often did not engage in discussions on social media as they felt this would be pointless or attract more negativity and cause tension. French youth largely mentioned similar topics, as they discussed discrimination, racism, hate crimes, harassment, not being heard, feeling different, injustice, and poverty. Youth from the UK who responded to the question of problems responded that they witnessed misinformation, disinformation, social perception of personal image and online aggression.

The online awareness and resilience against grooming training was evaluated based on the trainers’ reflections and participants’ post-training questionnaires. Nevertheless, results show that there are some strong indications that the training deliverable is indeed effective as intended.

Moreover, the thematic content analysis of the reflection forms indicated that most trainers (64.7%) noted that they felt the goals had been achieved. Nobody felt that a session had completely failed to meet any of its goals. The evaluations do not include trainings data from France because their training process was still ongoing during the period this report was being written.

Table 1: Sample

Country	Participants
UK	103
BE	72
NL	12
Total	187

In particular, young people agree that they were a lot more aware of the impact false information online can have on themselves and society. See Table 2 for details.

Table 2: Overall Evaluation

	I am more aware of how to spot false information online		I am more aware of the impact false information online can have on myself and society		I am more aware of how to check facts and identify reliable sources of information		Total across all items	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No answer	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%	2	0%
No, not at all	7	4%	5	3%	10	5%	22	4%
Yes, a little	92	49%	69	37%	93	50%	254	45%
Yes, a lot	88	47%	113	60%	82	44%	283	50%

The trainings were perceived by participants as sufficiently effective in all three regions. In particular, in Belgium participants agreed that their awareness improved a lot most often.

Both trainers and participating young people were mostly convinced that the trainings achieved their goals and that these trainings were effective. Among young people, 95% of those who completed a post-training online evaluation agreed that the trainings had improved their online awareness. However, it has to be noted that only 187 out of the total >500 participants completed the evaluations, thus the results might be biased or skewed in favour of a particular opinion.

Overall, results clearly indicate positive reception of the trainings and point out the potential effectiveness of the trainings. Trainers' reflections clearly indicated that contents of such trainings must be carefully adjusted to take into account local context, in particular considering age, interests and intellectual capacity of participating youths.

Young people who participated in the trainings and completed the post training questionnaire were very positive in terms of their perceived effectiveness of the training in rising their awareness similarly to the trainers who conducted it using the developed material.

The second deliverable of WP 2 was the alter-narrative fact videos on inclusive societies for young people. At this point the project developed 12 out of 15 intended fact videos including examples of inclusive societies and testimonials of young people or their families. Produced videos covered various social issues ranging from ethnic profiling, through racial identity and tensions, ending on gender roles. Videos had forms of infographics, discussions or sketches. The creators decided to cover social issues relevant for young people rather than “examples of inclusive societies and testimonials”. The relevance of the issues covered in most videos for young people was confirmed by our analysis which demonstrated a match between topics of most videos and topics brought up by young people in the studies done in preparation. Besides the topics covered in the videos, young people also mentioned: online polarisation, aggression and social pressure, as well as their negative opinion about the utility of political discussions online and poverty as one of the most pressing issues. At this point in time, it is not possible to evaluate neither the actual reception nor the effectiveness of the videos as they were not yet made available to the target audience.

7 Policymakers' Focus Group Analysis

Each pilot city held one online focus group, in the closing stages of the project, to which professionals, the majority of whom were in policymaking or other influential roles relevant to ORPHEUS's aims, were invited to comment on ORPHEUS's activities and outputs, as well as sharing their expertise to help guide the project in upscaling into different regions and countries. A total of 16 policymakers across the four pilots took part.

Participants were provided with a pre-read document, which briefly summarised the activities and outputs of ORPHEUS, and were invited to share their views on:

- ORPHEUS's activities and products developed, including safe spaces and trainings;
- The role of young people in the prevention of violent extremism;
- How ORPHEUS's products might be upscaled and / or incorporated into their local or and national policy and practice and linkages to other relevant initiatives and workstreams;
- Whether there were any resources or training topics they would like to have that were not provided by ORPHEUS?

The focus groups were transcribed and analysed, with most comments being grouped into one of the following four key topic areas:

- Young people's role in the prevention of violent extremism (including safe spaces and resilience / critical thinking);
- Adaptation / flexibility of the integrated prevention model;
- ORPHEUS's impact and position in relation to similar initiatives;
- Sustainability and scalability of the integrated prevention model.

The key points raised for each of these topics are summarised below, including any relevant recommendations:

There was broad agreement across all the focus groups that the centrality of the voice of young people is a crucial component in the prevention of violent extremism, not only in shaping safe spaces, but also in the development and implementation of the integrated prevention method.

A key point, made across different focus groups, was that the definition of what is a safe space must always be led by young people who are the key factor in deciding what is safe. This point notwithstanding, participants shared their thoughts on how safe spaces should be structured, including:

- A welcoming space with trusted professionals to talk to, but ensuring young people have a sense of 'ownership' of the space;
- A diversity of safe spaces, including opportunities for creative activities, music and green spaces;
- Clear training and guidance needed for professionals on how to:
 - manage difficult conversations within safe spaces, to avoid them becoming a source for conflict and discontent;
 - navigate rules and boundaries in different jurisdictions, (for example, maintaining political impartiality or having a proper understanding of the legal definition of hate speech).
- The need for continuous effort with safe spaces - they are not one-off activities but an ongoing, evolving process;
- The need for organisations running safe spaces to be inclusive in their outreach activities, so that the most isolated, vulnerable and at-risk young people are able to participate.

This feedback from policymakers accords closely with how safe spaces were operated during the project, and how the various training packages supported professionals to create and navigate the challenges of safe spaces, including the training for professionals on Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces and Dealing with Controversial Issues.

A guiding principle of ORPHEUS is ensuring the agency of young people in the integrated prevention method. Support for this principle was articulated in all the focus groups and was explicitly addressed during the project in a variety of ways, including the Get Up Stand Up manual to guide professionals in supporting young people's politicisation.

A variety of suggestions were made in the focus groups as to how young people can best be empowered as ORPHEUS is scaled up and embedded as a prevention method:

- Implement peer to peer / ambassador schemes to centre the voices of young people, allowing them to support one another and build their confidence in challenging hateful narratives;
- Include young people on steering committees, councils or other similar structures in schools and youth organisations to encourage shared ownership of safeguarding policies and safe spaces;
- Respecting and learning from young people's expertise - for example their knowledge of the latest social media platforms or technological developments;
- A commitment from those in power to act on what young people say as engagement followed by a lack of change can increase frustration.

Focus group participants expressed concerns that young people are encountering problematic material online at increasingly young ages and suggested that the prevention model needs to find a balance between:

- Intervening at an early enough stage but in an age-appropriate manner, and
- Teaching critical thinking skills while avoiding exposing young people to extremist narratives.

These points are in line with the ORPHEUS approach to cyberawareness training for young people, and in training professionals to support young people's cyberawareness, as the focus for both these training packages is very much on developing critical thinking skills relevant to all situations, without a specific focus on extremist narratives. The skills learnt in these training sessions will equip young people to take a more critical approach should they encounter extremist narratives in the future, without introducing them directly to such material. Moreover, the training was designed to be flexible so that it could be delivered to different age groups, from 11 or 12 up to the age of 25, depending on the school or organisation.

The importance of the role of parents/carers was raised in all the focus groups, with participants generally agreeing that parents/carers have an important role to play in prevention models like ORPHEUS, with some regions having informally involved families in a limited way. This highlighted a potential next step leading on from ORPHEUS, exploring how parents could be integrated into the process without compromising activities such as safe spaces that involve young people's autonomy and openness.

Focus group participants raised questions about how ORPHEUS defines certain terms such as "socially vulnerable" and "Safe Space". A key finding of ORPHEUS has been that due to the number of different regions and organisational / municipal / national policies, procedures and cultures in play, it is not possible to context-proof trainings, activities or definitions, as they will all need to be flexible in order to accommodate the different practices and conditions, especially after the pandemic significantly hybridised pre-existing practices. What the ORPHEUS prevention method actually does is to provide support, training and resources to professionals to enhance their confidence in key competency areas so that they are better able to define these terms and operationalise them themselves in a way that works effectively for their local context.

Participants across the different focus groups were also interested in the flexibility of the trainings and safe spaces in relation to a range of issues, such as the age of the young persons involved, the evolution of extremist narratives and the time and resources available for conducting training. Although it was not possible to include all the detail in the pre-read made available to focus group participants, all ORPHEUS trainings and manuals have been designed with flexibility in mind, building it into the prevention model. The trainings and outputs are not a 'static' offering, but a starting point for professionals to develop further in ways appropriate to their own contexts.

There was general agreement across the focus groups that ORPHEUS is addressing current and relevant challenges. To facilitate upscaling and achieve buy-in from stakeholders, participants suggested:

- Ensuring ORPHEUS' impact to date is clearly demonstrated, articulating its uniqueness, explaining the gap in prevention provision that it fills and what it does differently to what other similar initiatives have done or are doing;
- Having demonstrated its uniqueness, articulate how it fits into the existing prevention of violent extremism landscape;
- Identify and engage in information and resource sharing with other similar initiatives.

ORPHEUS's impact is demonstrated in this strategic report via the results of its evaluation and monitoring activities. However, it is crucial that this impact be communicated in a variety of ways to reach as many stakeholders as possible.

Focus group participants provided a range of suggestions for supporting the upscaling of the integrated prevention model into other areas, including:

- Obtaining buy-in from relevant national and local government and other relevant organisations to embed the model into policy and practice, including top-down support from managers for professionals in frontline roles is crucial;
- This buy-in can best be achieved by demonstrating the impact, resources and flexibility of the model, its position in relation to the overall prevention network and how it can meet the specific needs of organisations providing frontline services;
- Encourage collaboration and training partnerships between different agencies, including between schools and youth organisations to share expertise and good practice and inspire one another;
- Peer to peer training, where a limited number of nominated professionals receive training which they then cascade to their peers;
- Link training modules to existing school curricula and promote the teaching of critical thinking as a way to promote the wellbeing of young people.

Focus group participants were extremely forthcoming in identifying stakeholders and organisations within their regions that could be of assistance in promoting and upscaling the ORPHEUS prevention model. This included national and local government organisations and NGOs, and these suggestions will be taken forward as part of the project's upscaling and dissemination activities.

There were some differing opinions among focus groups participants in various regions about whether upscaling should be undertaken very broadly or in a more focused manner, and the answer to this question may well be a regional one, dependent on local / national networks and practices. It was noted in some groups that while some organisations had found it a challenge to adapt to a more digital environment, online engagement is useful and a popular way of expanding reach. This mirrors the findings from the ORPHEUS activities to date, where online delivery of cyberawareness training for young people, and some trainings for professionals, has been successful, although the online environment remains a challenging context in which to deliver safe spaces.

Furthermore, one group stressed the importance of supporting the wellbeing of professionals operating in online spaces by providing the necessary tools and training, and maintaining a good work-life balance, a need that is addressed by two of ORPHEUS's manuals - the Critical Literacy and Online Awareness training for professionals and the Direct Online Dialogue in Chat Rooms and Chat Apps guidance - and several of the webinars now available on the ORPHEUS website.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND THE EVALUATION OF FINDINGS

It is a fact that prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism remains a serious threat within the EU because of returning foreign fighters, home-grown-terrorism, far right/left-extremism, the international aspect of the culprits' operations and because of radical groups enjoying the comfort of online radicalising and recruitment opportunities. And since known traditional repressive measures fail to eliminate or minimise such threats, especially in regard to young people, the adoption of new prevention methods is a necessity.

Therefore, as an innovative prevention method, ORPHEUS bases its prevention philosophy upon the aforementioned puzzle model to tackle the interplay of three (both for offline and online) risk and protective factors by strengthening positive networks for young people, offering legitimate channels (e.g., Safe Spaces) for expressing grievances and promoting inclusive alter-narratives in society to increase their resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism can serve the need.

The effectiveness of the ORPHEUS practices has been measured constantly by the ORPHEUS partners. The qualitative and quantitative analyses are carried out by project partners with an academic affiliation from the University of Portsmouth (UK), Artevelde University of Applied Sciences (BE) and University College Roosevelt (NL). However, it is noteworthy that the results of the analyses and measurements are somewhat limited because of the challenges faced by the project, particularly due to the pandemic, made it hard to manage to apply a systematic sampling in the pilot regions and not all of the expected participants attended or provided the needed feedback. Especially in France, due to several unexpected problems, not all planned activities or meetings with policymakers could be organised. Moreover, in some pilot areas the planned number of trainings could not be provided because of various reasons. These are just some of the problems experienced, reducing the results' absolute generalisability. However, the wealth of activities and findings is still indicative of the value of the created prevention tools and the effectiveness of Safe Space practices.

In general, the interactively applied testing and evaluations provided support to the ORPHEUS project as being effective in reaching its intended goals as an innovative prevention method of social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism.

Young people who attended the Safe Space sessions replied in the surveys that these sessions had reduced their levels of social alienation. The findings are very encouraging with 96% of the young people who completed the relevant survey indicating a decrease in social alienation in at least one area and high rates of satisfaction from the Safe Space

sessions they attended because it contributed positively to their wellbeing, their feeling of belonging and positive identity development.

The trainings for professionals yielded a high satisfaction rate as well. Around 90% of respondents felt more confident in topic-specific competency areas after completing the training and 83% felt more confident in the general ORPHEUS competency areas such as:

- Developing a safe space for discussions among young people
- Setting up a constructive dialogue among young people on sensitive topics
- Supporting young people to express their grievances in a peaceful way
- Addressing sensitive issues in open dialogue with young people
- Helping young people to become more resilient to attempts to manipulate them emotionally

Young people who took part in the online awareness training evaluated the effectiveness of it too. The results shows that those who attended the trainings became 'a little' or 'a lot' more aware of how to spot false information online, about the impact of false information online can have on themselves and society and how to check facts and identify reliable sources of information at a rate between 95%-97%. That is a very high positive result supporting the notion that these trainings are effective.

The study on the perspectives of young people (in the form of participant observation in Safe Spaces and anthropological analyses) found out that young people who attended the Safe Space sessions do like receiving support and guidance in regard to solving their problems. However, they seem to be in need of direction whilst prioritising their problems and their method of defining some issues as problems is apparently different than of adults. They prefer practical virtual solutions and move easily to another if an alternative support appears. Based on the reflection of those who provided feedback, the researcher asserted that the awareness about dangerous online content of young people who participated in the study is satisfying, but gets jeopardised at times, as they experience a level of identity related frustrations and are left without institutional support. Overall, the impression from observations was that Safe Space practices left positive effects on the young people that have attend it.

Although *The Work Package-1 evaluations report* argues that the concept of 'Safe Spaces' does not connect seamlessly with the concept of prevention and the analysis raised some concerns, we should bear in mind that prevention is not a single initiative process and it takes multi-faceted efforts from a variety of stakeholders working on a diverse set of initiatives to achieve positive results that can never be absolutely successful, always considering the endless variables affecting emerging problems. The positive element here is that that ORPHEUS challenges the current approach which views young people as victims or as fanatic criminals, but instead integrates them as

team players involved in Safe Spaces in the first place, which is seen as essential, engaging with young people as equal citizens and as part of the solution.

The encouraging finding is that Safe Spaces have been assessed as having the capacity to make positive contributions to tackling all risk factors in the ORPHEUS puzzle model indirectly as they enable the controversial topics to be addressed comfortably; they support positive social bonding; they raise awareness of injustices and support the public expression of grievances. From our experience and work on the ground, we can safely say that Safe Spaces positively affect and shape a safer climate and activities for interacting with young people, allowing them to develop agency in the prevention process and also enhance the role of professionals in the prevention process.

In addition, the analysis shows that Safe Spaces could be made safer and transformed into the Brave Spaces which received significant support from professionals in the pilot regions.

Although some professionals were not in favour of supporting the public expression of grievances due to their professional roles and the organisational culture boundaries, they changed their perception once they understood that the intention is to support young people in their struggle against economic, socio-cultural and political injustices with the aim to increase awareness on such issues, indicating that youth workers need tools for guiding young people in the context of prevention of radicalisation, hence the ORPHEUS Toolkit.

Finally, the analysis suggests ORPHEUS should develop Safe Spaces and/or try to install new Safe Spaces wherever and whenever needed in co-creation with young people. It appears that Safe Space practices are useful for young people for preventing radicalisation as they reduce a core factor which is social alienation, providing them with open and safe environments for expressing their grievances and receiving professional support when needed.

The researcher of *the work package-2 that focused on online safety*, behaviour, and awareness training for young people in the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France based his evaluation on the trainers' reflections and participants' post-training questionnaires which provided *some strong indications that the training deliverable is indeed effective as intended*. Thematic content analysis of the reflection forms indicated that most trainers (64.7%) noted that they felt the goals had been achieved. Nobody felt that a session had completely failed to meet any of its goals. Among youth, 95% of those who completed a post-training online evaluation agreed that the trainings had improved their online awareness. However, it has to be noted that only 187 out of the total >500 participants completed the evaluations, thus the results might be biased or skewed in favour of a particular opinion.

Overall, results clearly indicate positive reception of the trainings and point out the potential effectiveness of the trainings, but trainers' reflections clearly indicated that contents of such trainings must be carefully adjusted to take into account local context. Young people who participated in the trainings and completed the post training

questionnaire were very positive in terms of their perceived effectiveness of the training in raising their awareness similarly to the trainers who conducted it using the developed material. The alter-narratives (videos, sketches) could not be evaluated neither in relation to the actual reception of them nor concerning their effectiveness as they were not yet made available to the target audience. Although both products were created and involved some modifications from the original intent, based on the data the training in particular shows a lot of promise.

The focus groups with policymakers also indicated that ORPHEUS initiatives, tools and methods were a very positive step and that there is a need to develop further on the work done by engaging with more actors, such as parents/carers and local and regional/national policymakers and youth/social worker organisations in the process of developing a more holistic, synergistic approach to the prevention of violent extremism.

The impact of the current project needs to be explicitly highlighted with decision-makers and further collaborative opportunities need to be sought so that processes and tools shaped in this project can be further explored and expanded beyond the 2Seas area.

TO CONCLUDE

Findings suggest that Safe Space practices and the other ORPHEUS tools are effective in contributing to reducing the factors that exacerbate that exacerbate the risk of young people becoming involved in violent extremism..

The feedback from young people, professionals and policymakers in addition to the evaluations and analyses clearly show that the ORPHEUS project and its tools have the capacity to increase the resilience of young people against core elements that facilitate radicalisation, social alienation and violent extremism, if applied accordingly while taking into account socio-political intricacies in the areas where delivery is planned.

The innovative and integrated ORPHEUS prevention method has proven to be successful and now needs the support of policy makers and professionals to be implemented and disseminated to other regions.

Time has come to increase the resilience of young people against social alienation, radicalisation and violent extremism with the innovative and integrated ORPHEUS prevention method and relevant policies.

ORPHEUS WORKS

CHAPTER V

ORPHEUS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

ORPHEUS (Offline and Online Radicalization Prevention, Holding back Extremism and Upholding Security) was a 4-year project to develop a new integrated prevention model to tackle the risk factors for violent extremism in democratic societies, regardless of ideological background, by fostering resilience in young people and professionals supporting them.

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the development, piloting and evaluation of the ORPHEUS integrated prevention model by an international, multi-partner consortium including local governments, youth work, education and training organisations and universities, drawing on the expertise of frontline professionals working with young people, such as teachers and youth workers, researchers and policymakers.

After meticulous field work, pilot applications and the analysis of project findings and results, we can say that the ORPHEUS prevention model is efficacious in contributing to the prevention of social alienation, radicalisation, violent extremism and promoting social bonding of individuals and building resilience in young people against the aforementioned threats in a sustainable way. Therefore, the following policy suggestions are made with the aim to achieve the project's defined goals in a larger context and with the hope that the ORPHEUS integrated violent extremism prevention model cross-pollinates and influences prevention methods and programs across many other regions.

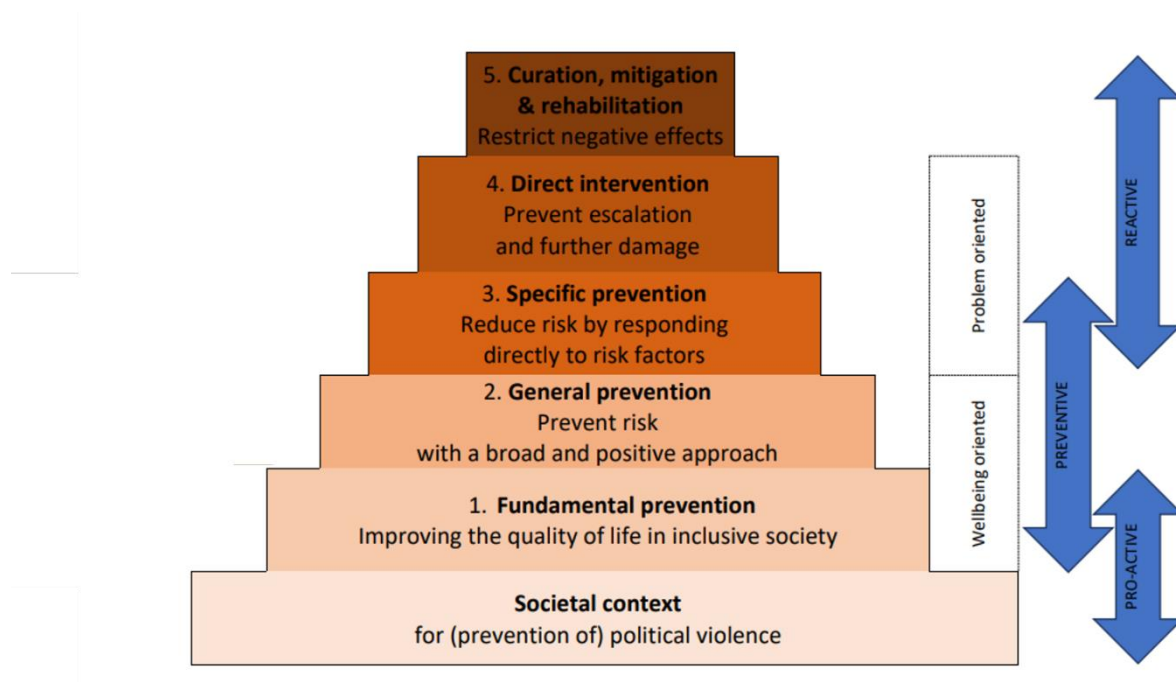
The recommendations offer guidelines for policymakers and prevention managers to implement the ORPHEUS prevention model in their regions. A key component of the development of the model has been cross-border collaboration, with experts and specialists sharing good practices and innovation.

As a consequence of this approach, some of the recommendations made below may already be common practice in some areas and innovative in others, and vice versa for other recommendations. It is expected that readers will use the recommendations within their own context, adapting them to the context of each organisation in order to face local challenges such as social alienation, polarisation, radicalisation and violent extremism in a relevant and sustainable way.

An Integrated Approach: The Prevention Pyramid

The ORPHEUS prevention pyramid is an integrated model for developing prevention policies and practices aimed at a combination of general and specific measures.

The pyramid metaphor suggests that all prevention work starts from the ground or basic level of the broader societal context: specific prevention practices are considered as part of improving the quality of social life of citizens in democratic inclusive societies. Or to put it the other way around: prevention policies and practices should not disrupt or deteriorate the quality of social life. Prevention work thus should have specific and critical attention for the general living conditions in society.



Framework for the integral prevention of radicalisation towards political violence – Görgöz, Vanhove & Van Bouchaute, elaborated on the model of Deklerck, J. (2006)

Further characteristics of this model are:

- It is not a phased or tiered approach of prevention and it does not involve the idea of a cascading sequence of prevention efforts in time. On the contrary, the model starts from the analysis of a perceived problem and leads to appropriate actions on different levels with special attention to avoid counterproductive effects of some (more problem oriented) measures on other prevention levels.
- The model makes a clear distinction between problem oriented (negative) versus wellbeing oriented (positive) prevention approach.
- The model differentiates five levels of prevention, from general to specific prevention; making the difference with direct intervention and curation as the reactive part of integral prevention.

In general, we advocate more attention for the lower levels of the prevention pyramid as opposed to a prevention approach 'higher' in the pyramid. Direct intervention and curation/mitigation are in fact more reactive interventions with more explicit tasks for security services, whilst social and educational actors are more appropriate to deliver preventive efforts in fundamental, general and specific prevention. Effective specific prevention needs a basis in the 'lower' broader, wellbeing-oriented levels.

The ORPHEUS recommendations have been organised accordingly, with a particular focus on Level 2 (General Prevention) and Level 3 (Specific Prevention) of the pyramid.

ORPHEUS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

General Prevention: Prevent Risk with a Broad and Positive Approach

- 1: Develop the Safe Spaces Concept
- 2: Measure the Needs of Young People Through Active Dialogue
- 3: Establish and Preserve Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations
- 4: Establish a Prevention Network or Join an Existing One

Specific Prevention: Reduce Risk by Directly Responding to Risk Factors

- 5: Develop Safe Spaces to Tackle the Interplay of Risk Factors
- 6: Train Professionals to Raise Their Confidence and Skills in Addressing Risk Factors
- 7: Support Young People and Professionals in Discussing Controversial Issues
- 8: Support Young People in Their Struggle Against Injustice
- 9: Emphasise the Agency of Young People in Prevention Work
- 10: Support Young People to Develop Their Critical Literacy and Online Awareness
- 11: Promote Positive Alternatives to Violent Extremist Narratives

GENERAL PREVENTION:

PREVENT RISK WITH A BROAD AND POSITIVE APPROACH

A broad and positive approach to prevention is in line with the core values of an open democratic society. Additionally, it is more efficient and effective because prevention costs are lower than reactive intervention or counter policies that require the involvement of multiple criminal justice system institutions (law enforcement, courts, rehabilitation institutions).

Recommendation 1:

Develop the Safe Spaces Concept

The ORPHEUS pilot experimented with the concept of 'safe spaces', *"where young people can meet each other, supported by professionals they trust. In these safe spaces delicate topics are addressed comfortably, young people are stimulated to engage in social institutions, and are supported in the public expression of grievances. These safe spaces are organised in such a way that they enable us to offer a pedagogical support as opposed to a disproportional repressive reaction."* (ORPHEUS application)

It is tempting to use safe spaces for tackling specific risk factors in prevention work. However, in a broader and more general perspective, we connect safe spaces to the second layer of the pyramid: "prevent risk with a broad and positive approach". In that perspective, safe space work relates to ideas on civic education for all young people. This view implies two challenges:

- we warn against a view on "the model citizen within a harmonic society": a democratic society inevitably implies differences in views and lifestyles, so a "one size fits all" approach is not appropriate or productive;
- we also warn against reducing 'safe spaces' to an instrument in prevention work: a safe climate and a trust relation are in the heart of good educational practices

Recommendation 2:

Measure the Needs of Young People Through Active Dialogue

The ORPHEUS pilot activities and analysis have shown that it is important for grassroots institutions to understand and engage with the current and developing needs of diverse and dynamic communities.

It is especially important to establish and maintain active dialogue with young people to ensure their voices are heard and acted upon, helping to prevent polarisation and social

alienation, two risk factors for violent extremism. It is essential for organisations to be inclusive in their outreach activities to ensure the most isolated, vulnerable and at-risk young people are able to participate.

Advice on engaging young people in active dialogue is available in the ORPHEUS toolkit, which includes guidance on supporting young people to have difficult conversations, express their grievances and fight against the injustices they experience. The ORPHEUS prevention model provides an effective framework to support institutions in achieving this.

Recommendation 3:

Establish and Preserve Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations

Civil society organisations are an important feature of democratic societies, representing the interests of a wide range of different groups, including young people and / or those from marginalised groups. ORPHEUS's pilot activities and research indicate that public officials should make organised and consistent attempts to support and collaborate with such organisations, to ensure that there is ongoing open dialogue and, in particular, to support the establishment and maintenance of active dialogue with young people discussed in Recommendation 2.

Recommendation 4:

Establish a Prevention Network or Join an Existing One

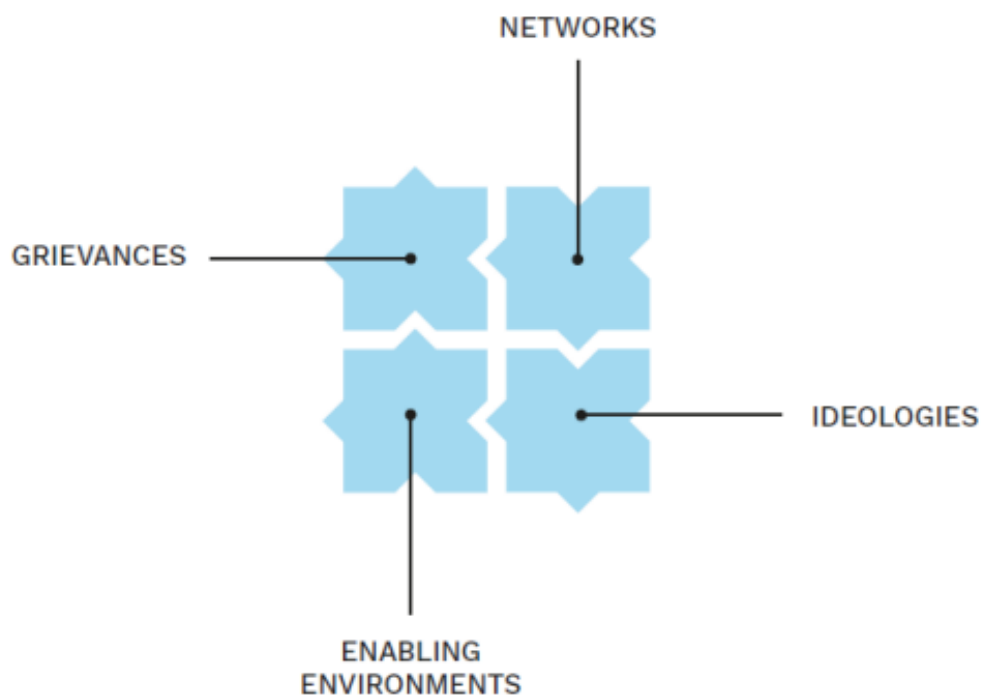
Violent extremist networks are grooming and recruiting young people, operating globally beyond national boundaries. Local prevention efforts are crucial but may, on their own, be insufficient to face these challenges.

Therefore, we recommend engaging in cross-regional / cross-border collaborative networks with other professionals to boost combined action against online and offline recruitment of young people. Such initiatives can be challenging in terms of finding a common ground and language, but if facilitated effectively, and with the full participation of young people, they may be more efficacious than isolated efforts. Members of the network will share good practices, innovation, the preconditions for success of various initiatives and challenges faced, as well as educating, informing and supporting each other about current and emerging threats and potential solutions, as demonstrated by ORPHEUS itself, as a cross-border, collaborative process between a network of professionals from a variety of specialisms.

SPECIFIC PREVENTION:

REDUCE RISK BY DIRECTLY RESPONDING TO RISK FACTORS

Linear models of pathways towards violent extremism are commonly used but fail to grasp the diverse paths and timing towards violent extremism. Hafez & Mullins (2015) did not find evidence for this linearity and suggested a puzzle metaphor based/focusing on the interdependence of four components: grievances, networks, ideologies, and enabling environment and support structures.



Recommendation 5:

Develop Safe Spaces to Tackle the Interplay of Risk Factors

Building on the puzzle model safe spaces can be developed to tackle the interplay of three risk factors by:

- addressing controversial topics and promoting inclusive alter-narratives (**narratives, ideologies**)
- stimulating young people to strengthen their positive networks and engage positively with social institutions (**networks**)
- supporting young people in the public expression of grievances (**grievances**)

The concept of safe space is not so much characterised by a location, institution, organisation, but by the philosophy behind it. This starts with an understanding of what a safe space can mean for young people. A safe space can be described as, on the one hand, a confined space where a lab is set up for learning experiences with a freedom of expression that is not always possible in the outside world. This may evolve into a space where discussions about societal issues are given a central place. In addition to being a 'closed' space, the safe space is also a 'public space' connected to the outside world, and in that sense the lab is never completely closed. All conflicts in society can just pop up in the safe space. It is a small step from that interpretation of safe space as a lab for the public debate to the idea of 'making the debate public'.

In our publication "From Safe to Brave Spaces", we elaborate on how we can support young people from being mere participants in a Safe Space. We elaborate on how young people can transcend the borders of a Safe Space, and how to take initiative to communicate and connect with the wider society.

Recommendation 6:

Train Professionals to Raise Their Confidence and Skills in Addressing Risk Factors

ORPHEUS aims to increase the skills and confidence of professionals working with young people in relevant competency areas by strengthening them through training.

Policymakers should encourage, support or provide the opportunity for professionals to take part in this training which will empower them in their work with young people and upskill them in handling problematic and sensitive matters in relation to young people and establishing social bonding between vulnerable young people and the community.

The training on **Dealing with Controversial Issues** is the overarching training, acting as an umbrella beneath which all the other training modules sit.

- This training focuses on offering young people opportunities to express their **grievances** in an interactive, constructive and informal environment;
- Attention for a safe and respectful climate during intense discussions and for recognising opposites without lapsing into enmity contributes to **positive networks**;
- For the puzzle element of '**ideologies**': this training helps key persons to support young people in critical thinking on ideas, narratives.

The four other trainings also address specific factors:

- **Strengthening Personal Safety in Safe Spaces** supports skills, knowledge, ability and confidence to build safe spaces amongst and with young people and in their relationship with professionals (positive **networks**);
- The training on **Moral Panic, Youth and Counter Culture** supports frontline workers in coping with the countering elements of youth culture. By highlighting the positive elements of youth culture, frontline workers can make an important connection with young people (positive **networks**);
- The training on **Critical Literacy and Online Awareness** aims to support professionals in acquiring the skills, knowledge, ability and confidence to support young people to develop critical thinking skills to be able to evaluate effectively the information they encounter online (**ideologies**);
- The training on **Politicisation (Get Up Stand Up: Supporting Young People In Their Struggle Against Injustice)** focuses on supporting professionals in creating channels with young people to address their **grievances**.

Recommendation 7:

Support Young People and Professionals in Discussing Controversial Issues

Because controversy and allowing controversy are part and parcel of a democratic society, controversies should not be avoided but given a well-considered place. Dealing actively with controversy also has advantages for young people growing up in a vital democracy: (1) it is formative for their role as citizens; (2) it sharpens their critical awareness and (3) it is good for developing their skills.

Dealing with controversy is a very concrete and practical pedagogical challenge. Professionals need support in at least four key elements:

- maintaining a relation of trust and confidentiality with the young people;
- coping with their own lack of confidence;
- dealing with the question 'what is negotiable and what isn't?'
- being seen to be taking the issue seriously, without the perception of condoning certain attitudes.

That is why in the ORPHEUS training 'Dealing with Controversial Issues' these challenges are addressed for both formal (e.g. during class) and informal (e.g. during leisure time activities, youth work, sports) contexts.

Recommendation 8: Support Young People in Their Struggle Against Injustice

ORPHEUS's safe space pilots have shown that young people actually needed and wanted to talk about their grievances when they were given the opportunity. Young people should be supported in their struggle against economic, cultural and political injustices if we desire to build a democratic, diverse and promising future. During pilot applications young people addressed that they felt their voice was not heard. Hence, it is important that local authorities facilitate, recognise, listen and respond to these voices.

Such an approach will make young people understand that their views are valued, included in the policy making process and it will feed their sense of belonging to the community. Professionals working with these young people must be given time and opportunities to support them when they want to express their grievances about experienced injustices. ORPHEUS has created a training module and guidance manual, **Get Up Stand Up: Supporting Young People In Their Struggle Against Injustice**, to equip professionals with the skills and confidence they need to support young people in this area.

Recommendation 8:

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Professionals working with these young people must be given time and opportunities to support them when they want to express their grievances about experienced injustices. ORPHEUS has created a training module and guidance manual, *Get Up Stand Up: Supporting Young People In Their Struggle Against Injustice*, to equip professionals with the skills and confidence they need to support young people in this area.

Recommendation 9:

Emphasise the Agency of Young People in Prevention Work

The ORPHEUS model strongly emphasises the involvement of young people, not as the 'objects' of prevention activity, but as subjects, actors and equal citizens. In other words, the ORPHEUS model centres young people as co-creators of prevention efforts, with appropriate pedagogical support from professionals. This approach opens a new pedagogical framework beyond the dichotomy of 'safeguarding' the potential victim or 'signalling' the potential criminal, instead harnessing young people's natural idealism and empowering them to feel part of the solution.

The ORPHEUS pilot activities have confirmed the effectiveness of this approach and the training modules and guidance manuals available in the ORPHEUS toolkit are specifically designed to support professionals in adopting it.

Recommendation 10:

Support Young People to Develop Their Critical Literacy and Online Awareness

Young people, when visiting online spaces such as social media platforms and chat rooms, may be exposed to propaganda and ideological grooming from those who wish to recruit them into committing violent extremist acts. Therefore, it is essential that young people are able to effectively evaluate information that they encounter online.

ORPHEUS's approach, in line with its emphasis on the agency of young people, is to move from a purely safeguarding perspective, that may cultivate a passive approach to risk from children, to a more empowering and resilient stance, helping young people to develop their media and information literacy skills and enhance their critical thinking and sense of global democratic citizenship, increasing their resilience to online grooming.

ORPHEUS provides two training modules to support the development of young people's media literacy skills, one for professionals and one aimed directly at young people.

Furthermore, the incorporation of media literacy training into school curriculums alongside the development of peer-led schemes, where a small number of young people are specially trained in online safety and can pass on their learning to their peers, is encouraged.

Recommendation 11:

Promote Positive Alternatives to Violent Extremist Narratives

An important part of ORPHEUS's integrated approach to tackling the risk-factors for violent extremism is the promotion of positive alternatives to violent extremist narratives. 'Alter-narratives' do not target specific violent extremist narratives directly, but are positively framed, empowering perspectives on topics of relevance to young people that are often presented in stereotypical or polarising ways, such as immigration, youth culture and race and ethnicity. Alter-narratives can provide opportunities for young people to address one another and discuss hot topics, speak for themselves, promote a pluralistic approach and support politicisation, while also helping to raise critical awareness and increase resilience to ideological grooming. ORPHEUS has developed 12 short alter-narrative movies and a guidance manual to support content creators to develop their own alter-narrative content.

Conclusion

The recommendations offered above focus on Level 2 (General Prevention) and Level 3 (Specific Prevention) of the ORPHEUS Prevention Pyramid, emphasising the prevention mechanisms that can be achieved with the tools provided by ORPHEUS.

However, the project activities also highlighted the significance of many wider societal issues which contribute to the root causes of violent extremism. These issues, most of which sit within Level 1 of the Prevention Pyramid, Fundamental Prevention: Improving the Quality of Life in an Inclusive Society, are beyond the scope of the project to address, or offer solutions for. They may, however, fall within the purview of policymakers to influence or enact, and we therefore offer some additional observations of policies which, if consistently implemented and supported, may weaken the underlying risk factors leading to violent extremism, such as social alienation, grievances and polarisation, and promote social bonding and a sense of belonging. This, in turn, allows for wellbeing-oriented prevention models such as ORPHEUS to have a wider and more in-depth preventative effect.

- Making active and consistent efforts to secure all-inclusive welfare policies in support of social justice and equity
- Increasing the provision of financially supported social participative structures for young people to attend at low or no cost, such as leisure, social and sports clubs
- Political and community leaders should consistently deliver clear messages and actions supporting inclusivity of every individual regardless of their origin, skin colour, religion, sexual orientation, gender or any other distinguishing feature that makes their identity
- Schools, youth organisations, adult training facilities and integration entities should promote values that can be accepted by everybody regardless of their background such as social justice, human rights, equality, equity, democracy and democratic citizenship
- Zero tolerance of discriminatory treatment by public officials

Acknowledgements

The ORPHEUS consortium would like to extend its thanks to everyone who participated in the pilot activities, especially young people and the professionals supporting them, whose time and feedback have enabled the ORPHEUS prevention model to be developed, thoroughly tested and evaluated.

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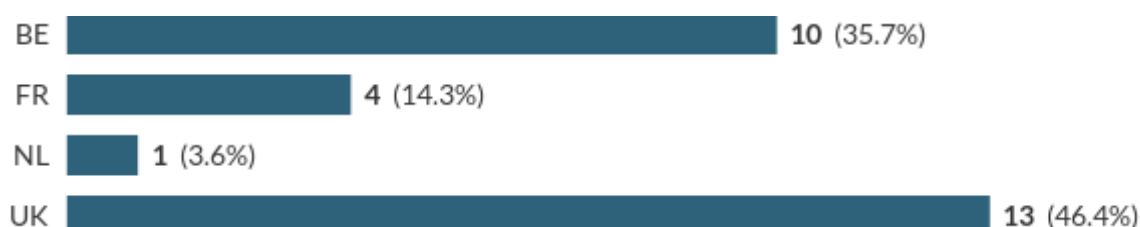
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ANNEX:

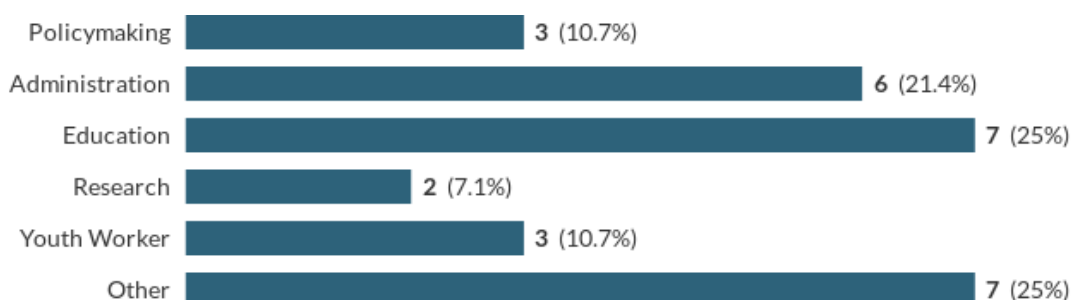
FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS ON THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1 In which country do you work?



28 responses were received in total.

2 What is your field of work?



"Other" responses:

National Security

Policing

Delivering workshops and training on polarisation and community conflict

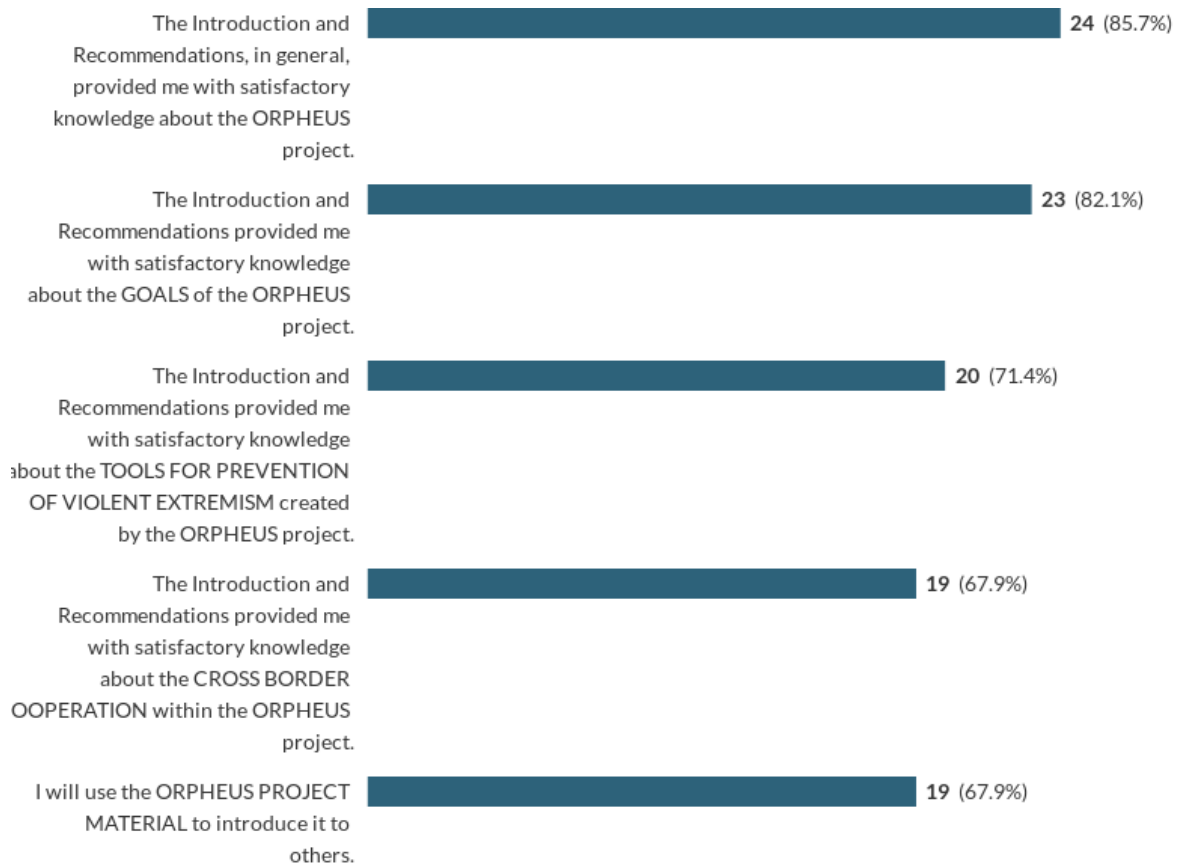
Law enforcement

Médiation sociale (accès aux droits, aux biens et aux services)

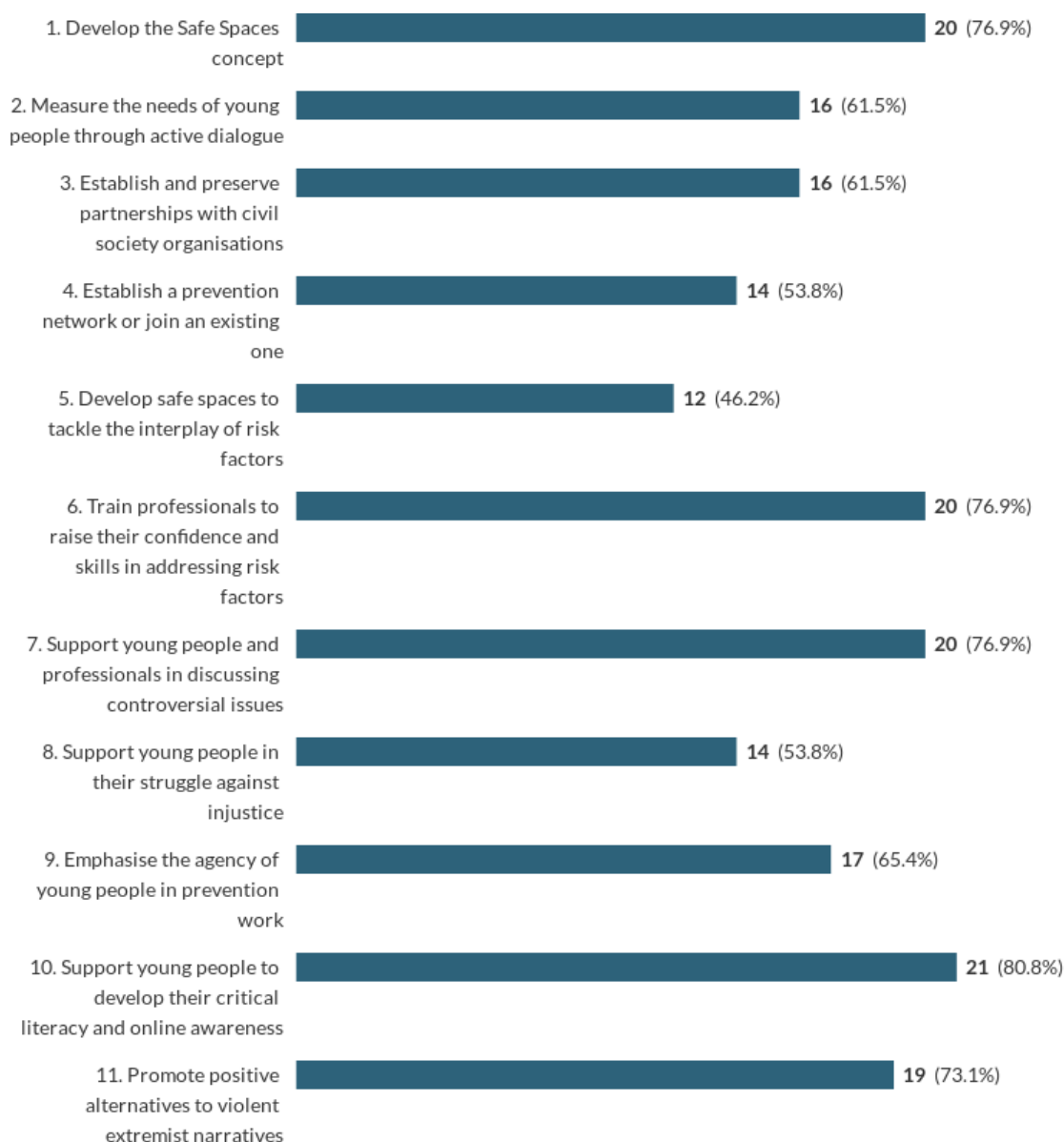
NHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Student

3 Thank you for reading the ORPHEUS Introduction and Recommendations. Please select all of the below options that apply.

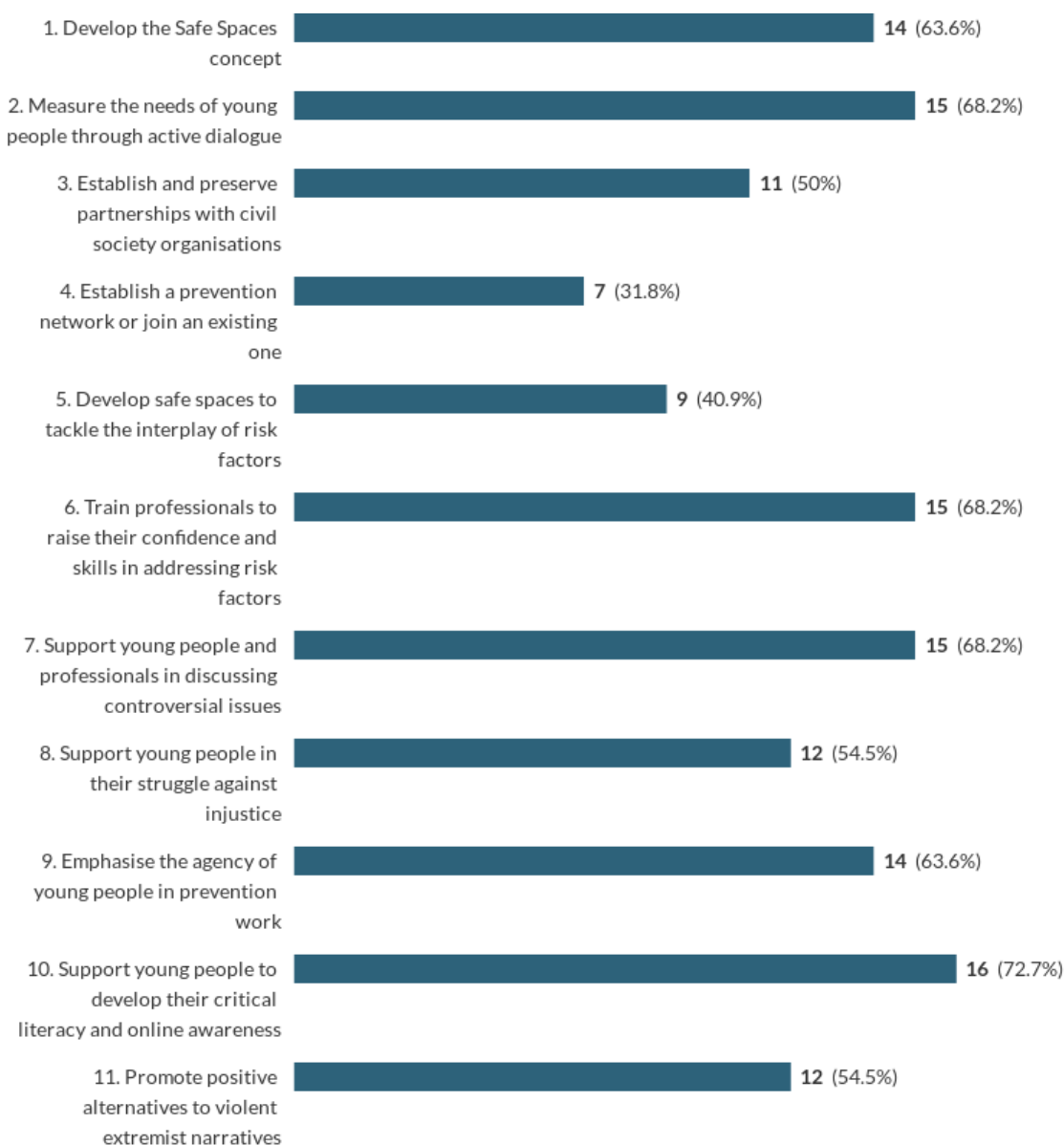


4 Please clarify, if possible, which ORPHEUS recommendations you would recommend in your region. Please select all options that apply.



3 respondents indicated that this question was not applicable to them.

5 Please clarify, if possible, which ORPHEUS recommendations you would implement in your region. Please select all options that apply.



6 respondents indicated that this question was not applicable to them.

6 Please share with us briefly any additional comments or suggestions you have about the ORPHEUS Introduction and Recommendations that are not already covered by this survey.

Free text responses:

1. Combine both documents in to one to make it easier to read.
2. First of all, only appreciation for the work done. Just some thoughts on the recommendations:

Recommendation 2: is there a sort of professional instrument to put the needs of young people in perspective because a possible risk might be that as local government you might become a service for complainants. While possibly many people who have a right to complain are not visible or do not have a voice at all.

recommendation 4: for me, this is worded too freely as "establish" or "join", at least you need to have an active participation in these networks. Additionally, it's not only necessary to share "good practices", but certainly also to share what hasn't worked and what the preconditions are for something to succeed (e.g. political approval, gatekeepers, capacity, means, etc;)

recommendation 5: Also discuss what potential risks of safe spaces might be? For example a group might evolve to a group of somewhat like minded people where one can begin to regard one's own group as intellectually superior.
3. The fact it has been developed by being youth centric ensures that it resonates with the intended audience. Empathy with grievances is more powerful and more likely to encourage open doors to alternative narratives.
4. The notions exploring the need for flexibility and advocating for multi agency approaches. The clarity of the position paper, very useful, eg the problems/ solutions chart. The spread of sections and options to explore sub sections makes navigation according to the readers needs easy.

re the policy rec doc, this phrase "the model starts from the analysis of a perceived problem and leads to appropriate actions on different levels with special attention to avoid counterproductive effects of some (more problem oriented) measures on other prevention levels" essential and needs to form the backbone.

Also the warning against specifics and homogenised outcomes (re model citizen) very useful, as they guard against abandoning of individual group context appreciation.

I feel the language used is constructive as it is process orientated and bucks many less useful trends i.e: the 'active dialogue' ideas and thoughts on creating and maintaining partnerships. As are the articulations on alter narratives.

I also appreciate the language on 'enmity avoidance'.

There is I feel a strong notion of continuity in the policy document, which has meaning on multiple levels; it can add fresh insight to policy makers, but also act as important affirmation to professionals and organisations who are or wish to develop more nuanced and more permanently resonant work. .

The recommendations about encouraging conversation and dialogue on controversial issues is vital; essentially 'the avoidance of avoidance', proven to be more useful, but for many counter-intuitive. The more these themes are explored and encouraged the closer we get to more sustainable work.

In short, it seems to offer a clear set of evidenced and low resource possibilities. Equally, although 'radical' the tone is not accusatory or competitive, this is helpful.

5. Mise en lumière d'outils existants et soutien aux initiatives et structures existantes pour la mise en oeuvre de ces recommandations : Éducation populaire (émancipation personnelle et transformation sociale), intelligence collective, droits culturels.

6. In the description of the Orpheus Toolkit. The last sentence is '... utilising the positive effects of online gaming in online gaming.' This sounds a bit confusing. Maybe 'utilising the positive effects of online gaming in creating safe spaces' would sound more logic.