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PREVENTING RADICALIZATION IN PRISONS

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DANISH
AND SWEDISH PRISON AND PROBATION
SERVICES' COUNTER-RADICALIZATION
STRATEGIES WITHIN PRISONS

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It is important to direct resources to effective evidence- and value-based counter-radicalization strategies, especially within prisons. With the increasing threat of violence and terror from various violent extremist groups, such as Daesh, the focus on prisons should be intensified. While radicalization within prisons was not a significant problem a decade ago, the new recruitment strategies from e.g. Daesh now pose a new challenge for prisons. This thesis identifies contemporary literature on radicalization, deradicalization, and violent extremism within a prison context. From this seven recurrent themes were identified: overcrowding, religious chaplains, sectioning, risk assessment, monitoring and supervision, rehabilitation programs and education of staff. This was then used to develop an assessment model, which was based on the Canadian Risk-Need-Responsivity model's three core principles, for evaluating and conducting counter-radicalization strategies. The assessment model was then used as a framework for a comparative analysis of the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Services' counter-radicalization strategies within prisons. The results show that both countries adhered to a degree to the assessment model and current literature within the field. The results further reveal that there is a lack of empirical evidence and data on radicalization and counter-radicalization within prisons, and that the data available is somewhat outdated.

Keywords: Deradicalization, life-course and developmental criminology, militant Islamism, prisons, radicalization, rehabilitation, violent extremism.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of radicalization is recognized internationally, however, a new aspect of it requires immediate attention, namely radicalization within prisons. It has previously been noted that prison radicalization has become widespread (Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013; ICSR, 2010) but the ‘type’ of radicalization has primarily been gravitating towards the right-wing nationalistic neo-nazi environment (Hamm, 2007). This is contradictory of the common assumption, that most radicalized individuals are Muslim. However, there is a speck of truth to this presumption, namely that most conversions within prisons are to Islam (Hamm, 2007). These conversions have been shown to serve more as a protective factor, i.e. benefitted the inmate in a positive way and helping them towards leading a crime free life, than a risk factor, e.g. “a stable correlate that predicts crime involvement” (Wikström, 2008, p. 131). A report from the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR) explains that,

... prisons matter. They have played an enormous role in the narratives of every radical and militant movement in the modern period. They are ‘places of vulnerability’ in which radicalisation takes place. Yet they have also served as incubators for peaceful change and transformation (ICSR, 2010, p. 1)

However, a shift within radicalization, and especially within prison radicalization, has occurred. With the emergence of Daesh¹ in 2014 after the Arab Spring, a new challenge surfaced. Daesh distanced themselves from whence they came - Al-Qaida, who had high standards and demands for those wanting to join their cause - and Daesh did not (and does not) care who joins their cause (ICSR, 2016). With their violent extremist approach and propaganda, multiple Western countries assess the potential threat from Daesh and/or other militant Islamic groups to be far higher than those from right- or left-wing extremists at present (Danish government, 2016; Swedish Prison and Probation Service; ICSR, 2010). Therefore, the focus within this thesis will primarily be on radicalization towards militant Islamism.

While Al-Qaida has strict requirements for those who wish to join their organization, Daesh does not discriminate those wanting to join. Rather, they have offered a redemption narrative for those with a criminal history, in order to gain followers who have valuable criminal skills such as forgery, theft, violence, etc. The ICSR brought an example of Daesh’s propaganda slogan “‘sometimes people with the worst pasts create the best futures’, alongside text explaining that ‘jihad is a purification no matter who you are or what sins you have, no good deeds are needed to come before it’” (ICSR, 2016, p. 27). And where better than prisons to find people who have criminal histories and might want to redeem themselves? Prisoners are individuals who “are removed from their friends and family; they are confronted with their past; and they need to find their way in a new (and often hostile) universe” (ICSR, 2010, p. 26). Therefore, Daesh poses a new challenge for the counter-radicalization and counter-terrorism strategies throughout the world.

¹ Also known as the Islamic State (IS) or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Aims and Research Question

The overarching aim of this thesis is to contribute to the counter-radicalization strategies within prisons by implementing current literature and research from similar countries as well as relevant criminological literature. The more specific aim is to provide an assessment model which can be used for the evaluation of counter-radicalization strategies as well as the drafting of a potential strategy within prisons, and is based on contemporary research within the field of radicalization, deradicalization and violent extremism submerged within a prison context. Hence, the guiding research question is:

- How is radicalization assessed and prevented within the Danish and Swedish prison context?

Literature review

How dominant a problem is prison radicalization? The Prison and Probation Services in Denmark have had prison radicalization and recruitment on their agenda for nearly a decade. However, no empirical data has been produced - at least not accessible to the public. This thesis will attempt to uncover how and what the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Service's focus on when dealing with prison radicalization. Do they implement criminological theory and data? Which areas are included in the main effort against prisoner radicalization? What has been known to work and what does not work? How do the two countries compare to each other on the effort, keeping in mind that Denmark has been 'at it' for approximately ten years whereas Sweden has seemingly just begun. However, before this can be done, a literature review of the most current research available regarding radicalization, deradicalization and violent extremism within a prison context will be provided.

The literature review will begin with a conceptual clarification of the three main concepts within this thesis, which are *radicalization*, *deradicalization* and *violent extremism*. This is done to show the challenges that Prison and Probation Services face when attempting to clarify what they are working with and against. In addition, not much literature is available about radicalization and violent extremism within prisons, therefore, in order to understand the two concepts in this particular context, an exploration of the concepts are needed. The literature is based on research and publications from Western countries such as Canada, the U.K., the U. S., Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and, the Netherlands among others.

Radicalization

Schmid (2013) notes in the beginning of his research paper, there is no general definition of the concept of radicalization (Schmid, 2013, p. 5). He adds that "[a]bove all, it cannot be understood on its own" (Schmid, 2013, p. 5). It seems there is a presiding consensus among scholars and government officials that radicalization is a process. In Doosje et al. (2016), they articulate radicalization as a process "through which people become increasingly motivated to use violent means against members of an out-group or symbolic targets to achieve behavioral change and political goals" (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 79; Danish Security and Intelligence Service, 2017; Precht, 2007). They explain that an individual undergoes three stages when becoming radicalized, *sensitivity*, *group membership* and *action* (Doosje et al., 2016, pp. 81-82). However, whether or not a person is radicalized "depends on factors at three levels ... micro (individual), meso (group), and macro (societal) level" (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 81). They focus mostly on the micro and meso levels within radicalization process. Within the

micro level, radicalization can occur when an individual feels insignificant, insecure, uncertain, needing a sense of belonging and direction (Doosje et al., 2016; Borum, 2017; Kruglanski et al., 2014). At the meso level, “the radicalization process is likely to depend on the social environment (friends, family, and other groups)” (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 80). Schmid (2013) emphasizes these causes for radicalization as well. This could well be associated to the prison context, as many inmates claim that they find new friends or a new family, become part of a new group while serving their sentences. On the other hand, sometimes they meet up with their procriminal friends within these institutions and thereby continue the relationship. What differs from a ‘normal’ context to a prison context is the fact that when serving time in prison, the individual is bound to the institution. It can be hard to evade radical individuals especially if these individuals are very charismatic, warm, and inviting (Hamm, 2007; Borum, 2017). Doosje et al. also emphasize the importance of friendships and family,

People are social beings and this makes them vulnerable to social influence from people close to them and with whom they have frequent contact ... Extremist groups supply individuals with a strong sense of in-group belongingness, which is a basic human need, and a clear image of an evil out-group, creating a strong inter-group dynamic (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 80).

While Doosje et al. (2016) do not specify if their definition of the radicalization process is valid for each type of extremist group, but with the generalizability of the process it can be assumed that it could in fact be valid for both Islamist, right-wing and left-wing extremism.

Borum (2017) relies on the psychological factors when trying to explain the process and roots of radicalization. As Doosje et al., Borum has observed through his work there are some general tendencies regarding psychological vulnerabilities in violent extremists. These are “(1) a need for personal meaning and identity; (2) a need for belonging; and (3) perceived injustice/humiliation” (2017, p. 22). While this is not the sole root cause for radicalization, he mentions ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors as motivational factors. ‘Push’ factors are often “grievance-related” (Borum, 2017, p. 22) and ‘pull’ factors “are often material of expressive perceived incentives” (Borum, 2017, p. 22).

Kruglanski et al. (2014) presented a theoretical and empirically supported analysis of radicalization into violence (p. 70). Their main emphasis is on a motivational force, which they call the “*quest for significance*” (Kruglanski et al., 2014, p. 73), and is explained as “the fundamental desire to matter, to be someone, to have respect” (Kruglanski et al., 2014, p. 73). They also provide a process of radicalization over time, which first includes a beginning of the significance quest, thereafter an identification of what means can be used to achieve significance, and in the end, a commitment to the significance quest (Kruglanski et al., 2014, p. 74). Some sort of loss often triggers the beginning or awakening of the significance quest. This could be the loss of a loved one, loss of feeling significant, feeling humiliated, etc. (Kruglanski et al., 2014) which can be transferred to the feelings a prisoner might experience when being incarcerated. Furthermore, the means to significance could be identifying an opportunity in order to gain significance, e.g. ideology, becoming a martyr by self-sacrifice (Kruglanski et al., 2014). And lastly, the commitment to the goal or significance quest is characterized by “the social process of networking and group dynamics through which adoption of the goal and the means is carried out” (Kruglanski et al., 2014, p. 89). In addition, Kruglanski et al. emphasize the usefulness of

conceptualizing radicalization and that “personality, culture, or situational factors could impact any and all of these [abovementioned] categories” (2014, p. 89).

The Danish researcher Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen explored violent radicalization within Europe in an article from 2010. The studies included in her article particularly focus on the micro- and meso level. Dalgaard-Nielsen also found that the need to belong, the feeling of being accepted and significant as well as creating social bonds were emphasized as causes for radicalization. It was argued that “... radicalization occurs as individuals seek to reconstruct a lost identity in a perceived hostile and confusing world” (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 799). Dalgaard-Nielsen draws upon research from Neumann & Rogers (2007) as well as Marc Sagemann (2004) who all emphasize the importance of social bonds and networks in the process of radicalization (2010, pp. 803-804). Therefore, as Dalgaard-Nielsen concludes,

... radicalization is very much a question of who you know. The studies underline the importance of group processes and offer empirical support for the contention that socialization rather than inherent psychological characteristics or socioeconomic deprivation is key to understanding violent radicalization” (2010, p. 805).

Like Doosie et al., Schmid (2013) also attempts to provide a clarification of the concept radicalization. In his research paper, the focus is on radicalization in terms of Islamist extremism. He delves into the history of the concept as well as discussing the various definitions used by scholars and governments in order to uncover what the most universal definition of it could be. He includes a working definition of violent radicalization from an expert group established by the European Commission which is defined as “socialization to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism” (Expert Group cited in Schmid, 2013, p. 5). Schmid places his emphasis on being precise when it comes to phrasing one’s operational definitions. He points out that “[i]f we want to continue to use the concept of radicalisation in a meaningful way, there is a need for greater uniformity and precision” (Schmid, 2013, p. 18). In addition, Schmid provides his own conceptualization of radicalization which incorporates the essence of the definitions used by governments, national and international organizations, and think tanks². Schmid acknowledges that his definition is quite extensive. Schmid defends his elaborate definition by stating, that “... too much complexity reduction and too high a level of abstraction are not conducive to a better understanding of the phenomenon under consideration” (Schmid, 2013, p. 19).

What can be concluded from this review is that radicalization is a process. However, how and what it entails is context-bound, i.e. differing from country to culture to groups. As Schmid explains it, “radicalisation, like terrorism, too often means different things to different people” (Schmid, 2013, p. 19; Kundnani, 2012).

Deradicalization

Doosje et al. (2016) define deradicalization as a process,

... in which people reject the ideology they once embraced. This is one step further than disengagement, which is characterized by a change in

² see his extensive definition of radicalization in Schmid, 2013, p. 18

behavior (stop using violence and leaving the radical group) without giving up one's radical beliefs" (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 82).

Doosje et al. (2016) mention that prisons can lead to deradicalization as it can signify a new beginning for the individual. This is supported by several researchers, organizations and think tanks in addition to the abovementioned definition of deradicalization (Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013; ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016; Jones, 2014; Mulcahy et al., 2013; Olsen, 2008; Schmid, 2013 among others). However, as Schmid (2013) points out, deradicalization and disengagement do not follow a specific pattern, one can occur before the other and vice versa. Kruglanski et al. note, "... disengagement denotes the discontinuation of active participation in violence whereas *deradicalization* denotes a *belief system* that supports violence" (2014, p. 87).

Schmid emphasizes that it is hard to uncover "what works and what does not work in general or what is even counter-productive when it comes to de-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation. Local context matters very much" (Schmid, 2013, p. 55). The report from the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) (2010) supports this notion.

Kruglanski et al. (2014) also discuss the notion of deradicalization in their article. They state, "at an abstract level, radicalization and deradicalization are indeed mirror images of each other, and the processes that promote deradicalization reverse those that promote radicalization" (Kruglanski et al., 2014, p. 84). The process of deradicalization can be activated by a number of incidents. For example, a person might experience, after a while, a reduction in commitment to the cause, perhaps instigated by a disillusionment of their comrades'/leader's behavior; the radicalized person might experience a change in morality, thus feeling that violence is not a legitimate action towards attaining one's goals, etc. (Kruglanski et al., 2014; Kundnani, 2012; ICSR, 2010). In addition, Kruglanski et al. emphasize that social networks are likely to influence both the radicalization- and deradicalization process.

While the literature on radicalization is quite extensive, the opposite is apparent for deradicalization.

Violent Extremism

Doosje et al. (2016) provide a fairly brief explanation of radical groups including a table of the various types of radical groups with their main concerns and examples of them, e.g., Daesh, which can be categorized as both a "Nationalistic or Separatistic" or "Religiously motivated" group (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 80). In this account the authors rely on group psychology in order to explain the radical groups' goal, dissatisfactions, their self-image, the group's inclination towards using violence, etc.

Bertelsen (2016) emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between extremism and violent extremism. The abovementioned groups are extremist in nature, but not all the groups resort to violence. The only difference in Bertelsen's definitions of the two is that he includes the phrase "by violent means" (2016, p. 2) when defining violent extremism. Bertelsen's working definition is then, "An intense desire for and/or pursuit of a universal and comprehensive change in own and common life, socially, culturally, and/or societally, by violent means – where the consideration for human existence is set aside" (Bertelsen, 2016, p. 2). On the other hand, Schmid explains that,

Extremists strive to create a homogeneous society based on rigid, dogmatic ideological tenets; they seek to make society conformist by suppressing all opposition and subjugating minorities. That distinguishes them from mere radicals who accept diversity and believe in the power of reason rather than dogma (Schmid, 2013, p. 9)

What is difficult within this field of radicalization, de-radicalization and violent extremism, is that there is not a universal definition for the concepts. This makes the task of defining them as well as attempting to include every type of violent extremist direction exhaustive and nearly impossible, as the scope of any article doing this would be lengthy and dense. Rather, an entire book series might be able to encompass all the variations of definitions that are out there. Schmid (2013) describes this problem quite well,

Covering right-wing, left-wing, ethno-nationalist, anarchist and single issue radicalisation would no doubt have increased the scope and validity of the findings but was beyond the ambit of this particular review. This is not to deny or downplay the importance of other (non-religious) forms of radicalisation. Bringing all these forms of radicalisation under one theoretical model or theory is a challenge that has so far eluded us; it is difficult enough to reach a modicum of agreement on Islamist radicalisation (Schmid, 2013, p. vi)

This problem is evident later in the analysis of the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Services' focus and scope. While the Danish documents clearly limit themselves to their primary focus, i.e. militant Islamist extremism, the Swedish documents provide definitions of the various directions within extremism and thereafter narrow their focus towards the militant Islamist extremism.

Criminal backgrounds and prison context

Within the literature on radicalization the process almost always follows the same formula: radicalization plus an extremist environment equals a dangerous terrorist. What is important to keep in mind is that not all radicalized extremists become terrorists who commit terrorist attacks. Some of the individuals who are radicalized are recruited for different purposes such as assisting financially or spreading the ideology among their network etc. (Silke, 2014, p. 2).

Silke (2014) is concerned with risk assessments in prison; more specifically targeted "terrorist" prisoners (p. 1). He identifies four groups of individuals within the prison context who should be subject to risk assessments: *radicalized extremists*, *prison recruits*, *vulnerables*, and, *affiliates* (Silke, 2014, p. 3). The *radicalized extremists* are also known as the "True Believers" (Silke, 2014, p. 3). They range from, a) people who already have carried out acts of violence, b) to those who have assisted others in violence, but not been violent themselves, and, c) to those who pose no risk now although having been violent and perhaps have become charismatic preachers of the violent ideology (Silke, 2014). In addition to varying across types of individuals, the prisons also have to take the variance of age of the individuals into account (Silke, 2014). The group of the *affiliates* is the individuals who "have been convicted of involvement in extremism or terrorism" (Silke, 2014, p. 4). In other words, they could have been the accomplices of the "True Believers". The third group refers to the *prison recruits*, meaning those who have been radicalized within prison "possibly as a result of contact with extremist prisoners" (Silke, 2014, p. 4). The fourth group, the *vulnerables*, are characterized

by individuals “who while at the moment may not have radicalised, may nevertheless still be assessed as vulnerable to joining the “Spectacular Few” [i.e. True Believers] in the right circumstances” (Silke, 2014, p. 4). What is interesting about Silke’s (2014) paper, is that his findings contradict the common hypotheses such as “prison hardens the terrorist and makes them more dangerous”, in which this is actually the exception and not the rule. Silke (2014) found that while the inmates might not become deradicalized, they certainly did disengage from the group, meaning that they distanced themselves from the use of violence but still believed in the cause (p. 7).

In addition, Silke (2014) was inspired by Hamm’s (2007; 2013) exploratory study within two American prisons, in Florida and California. It revolved around the prisoners’ conversions to “non-traditional” religions (Hamm, 2007, p. 3), in which he interviewed 30 prisoners, 15 chaplains and nine gang intelligence officials (Hamm, 2007). The study determined that most of the conversions within the two prisons were positive experiences (Hamm, 2007), meaning that it served as a protective factor rather than a risk factor as well as most conversions were to Islam (Hamm, 2007). However, within overcrowded maximum-security prisons without enough religious chaplains to undertake the spiritual guidance, the possibility of a negative radicalization can occur (Hamm, 2007). In Hamm’s book (2013), the empirical data is based on the study he conducted in 2007. In this new version, Hamm speaks of the “Spectacular Few”, those who were in fact radicalized extremists and went on to commit terrorist attacks. However, as is also briefly pointed out in his exploratory study, he now explains radicalization within prisons as a

... double-edged sword, capable of producing both positive and negative results. Some prison radicals have achieved great heights of public service as presidents and prime ministers, Nobel Peace Prize winners, and leaders of national liberation movements. Others have committed unspeakable acts of terrorism and genocide. Time spent in prison cuts both ways (Hamm, 2013, p. 1).

He continues on to explain that the radicalization of individuals, as seen above in the clarification of the concept, often occurs in social settings, i.e. by friends, or in this case their cellmate, family, or someone who “possess[es] qualities of charismatic leadership” (Hamm, 2013, p. 17; Borum, 2017). An interesting notion brought forth is that while Hamm claims that a person can become radicalized everywhere, he emphasizes that those who are radicalized within a prison context “tend to play for keeps” (Hamm, 2013, p. 16). He provides an elaboration of this,

By their very nature, prisons are intended to induce transformative experiences among inmates. Today’s prisons are hotbeds for personal transformation due to the increasingly chaotic nature of prison life caused by the movement toward mass incarceration. Mass incarceration has increased the social marginalization of inmates and their desire for bonding, group identity, and spiritual guidance. These changes make prisons a better place to foment terrorism than any other social setting (Hamm, 2013, pp. 16-17).

However, Hamm quickly points out that even though radicalization can occur within the prison context, the actual recruitment to a terrorist organization in order to conduct an attack is “an extremely rare event” (Hamm, 2013, p. 17). This

finding is supported both in his earlier report (2007) as well as from Silke (2014), Jones (2014) and ICSR (2010).

A recent report from the German Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), the Hesse Information and Competence Centre Against Extremism (HKE) in addition to another recent report from the ICSR (2016) have shown a change in the background of the newly recruited terrorists. Beforehand, terrorist organizations such as Al Qaida recruited people who were well educated, had religious knowledge of Islam and who *did not* have a criminal record (ICSR, 2016). The emergence of Daesh in 2014, signified a change in what was previously known about “usual” profiles of potential terrorists. Daesh were and are not picky about whom they are associated with and who joins them. The important thing for them is that people join their forces. This is seen in the joint report from the BKA, BfV and HKE, which analyzed the backgrounds of the individuals who travelled to Syria to join the Daesh as well as their radicalization processes (BKA, BfV & HKE, 2016). This report found that two thirds of the German foreign fighters were already known by the police prior to departure, most of them known for either violent crimes or property crimes (BKA, BfV & HKE, 2016, p. 17). It was noted that during the radicalization process the individuals known to the police committed more politically motivated crimes which then constituted the highest percentage of offenses while the other offenses declined (BfV, 2016, p. 17) An interesting point made in the report though, is that the data showed that

... friends represented a relevant factor at the start of their radicalization (54%). Other relevant factors were contacts at (relevant) mosques (48%), the Internet (44%), so-called Islam seminars (27%) ... family members (21%) ... contacts at school (3%) and contacts in penal institutions (2%) (BKA, BfV & HKE 2016, p. 19).

Contacts in penal institutions constituted only two percent, which is quite interesting given the fact that it is placed relatively high on the agenda in the Danish and Swedish context. This is further supported by Jones (2014) and ICSR (2010). However, in the ICSR’s most recent report from 2016, it is found that due to Daesh’s recruitment strategy, i.e. “anyone works” in a nutshell, the recruitment of potential terrorists has moved below the original standard from Al-Qaida and in to the prisons, ghettos, etc. (ICSR, 2016). The ICSR notes that,

...involvement in jihadism offered redemption from crime while satisfying the personal needs and desires that led them to become involved in it. Just like the criminal gangs of which they used to be members, jihadist groups offered power, violence, adventure and adrenaline, a strong identity, and – not least – a sense of rebellion and being anti-establishment. This made the ‘jump’ from criminality to terrorism smaller than is commonly perceived – especially when considering that, unlike al-Qaeda, Islamic State required practically no religious knowledge or learning, and cared little about the complexities of theological discourse. For criminals with a guilty conscience, the jihadism of the Islamic State could seem like a perfect fit (ICSR, 2016, p. 24).

This explains the “benefits” for joining Daesh for the individuals with criminal backgrounds, but what do they gain from recruiting criminals? A common assumption about individuals with criminal backgrounds is that they are not loyal

to anyone but themselves and solely focus on financial gains (Pressman, 2009). As aforementioned, prisons are hard places for individuals and some become extremely vulnerable during their stay. This means that prisons become “places of opportunity” (ICSR, 2016, p. 30). The ICSR explains this further,

... [that] inmates [are] vulnerable and experience cognitive openings, making them receptive to jihadist ideas, they also tend to be part of the demographic that jihadist groups are keen to attract: young men, from Muslim backgrounds, who are unfamiliar with their own religion yet impulsive, confident, willing to take risks, and have been in conflict with the state and established authorities. Far from being an obstacle, their criminal pasts have de-sensitised them to law-breaking and violence, and may in fact have provided them with skills that can be used in terrorism. In short, from the jihadists’ perspective, prisons are the perfect ‘breeding ground’ (ICSR, 2016, p. 30)

In addition to the quote above,

This is of greater benefit to the extremists than the criminals: not only do they get access to potentially fruitful opportunities and targets for radicalisation, they can also take advantage of the criminals’ skills and underground connections, facilitating access to forged documents, weapons, money, goods, or even safe houses (ICSR, 2016, p. 32)

With this information in mind and the recent announcement from Daesh, in which they call upon their members to commit attacks in their home countries (BKA, BfV & HKE, 2016), it is understandable that several countries are rearming and increasing their focus towards potential attackers within their own boundaries – and where else to begin the search than the obvious place of opportunity, the prisons.

METHODS

This section includes a description of the areas of study, what materials have been used for the analysis, what method has been used to analyze the materials, a section covering the limitations for the thesis, a self-developed assessment model which serves as an overall framework for both the analysis and the forthcoming discussion as well as ethical considerations for the project.

Areas of study

The areas of this study are Denmark and Sweden. These countries have been chosen for comparison as they are fairly similar when it comes to legislation, religion, welfare system, societal structure, population, historically in relation to both countries being longstanding monarchies among other things. A quick comparison of Denmark and Sweden can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Comparison of Denmark and Sweden on selected features.

	Denmark	Sweden
Population male/female*	M: 2,483,766 F: 2,517,343	M: 5,013,347 F: 4,981,806
National religion**	Christians (Protestants)	-
Primary ethnicity**	Danish	-
Crime rate*	2015: 209,902 convictions	2015: 107,000 convictions
Nbr. Of prisons***	12	46
Nbr. Of prisoners***	2015: 3,422	2015: 4,292

*Danish and Swedish statistics websites, **www.denmark.dk/www.sweden.se, ***Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Service

In the table above, areas which are interesting for the thesis, have been chosen for comparison. As is seen, religion, ethnicity, crime, number of prisoners, and prisons have been included. This is due to the overall relevance to prison radicalization. However, ethnicity and religion is not filled out for Sweden, which is due to the fact that Sweden does not register “religion, ethnicity, or race as categories in its census” (Westin, 2006, n.p.). On the other hand, the Swedish government states in an article on their website from February, 2017, that even though there is a claim about there being far more Muslims than other religions in Sweden, this is actually not the case. They disclose that Muslims only represent about 1,5 percent of the Swedish population (The Swedish government, 2017). In comparison, nearly 80 percent of the Danish population is Protestants and the second largest religious group is Muslims, however, numbers for this community are not released (“Religion in Denmark”, n.d.). In addition, Denmark and Sweden are very similar historically in relation to their monarchies, which both can be traced back for more than 1000 years (“The Danish Monarchy”, n.d.; “The Swedish Monarchy, n.d.). Both Denmark and Sweden have held large territories, parts of Norway, Iceland and Finland among others (van Hattem, 2013).

Another reason for choosing Denmark and Sweden as areas of study for this thesis is that despite many similarities, the countries are very different regarding radicalization and more specifically radicalization within prisons. While it has been on the agenda for nearly a decade in Denmark, Sweden has just (within the last two to three years) begun to include it in their counter-terrorism strategy. In addition, both countries’ prison systems are built on the notion of rehabilitation and treatment. Both countries have implemented the Canadian Risk-Need-Responsivity model in their prisons (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b; “RNR-principperne”, n.d.). Therefore, one of the aspects for this thesis is to explore how similar or different their strategies regarding counter-radicalization within their prisons are.

Materials

The material for analysis for this thesis consists of official documents such as evaluations and reports from Denmark and Sweden. From Denmark official documents were collected from the archives and websites of the Danish Government, the Danish Ministry of Justice as well as the Danish Prison and Probation Service. The information is distributed across several documents as well as authorities and consists of 10 documents. The same procedure is applied for Sweden. From Sweden the documents were also collected from the Swedish Government, the Swedish Ministry of Justice and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and consists of eight documents. The primary information is collected from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. In the following, a

background for the reports and definitions provided by the two Prison and Probation Services' will be elaborated.

Background for the reports

Denmark

As aforementioned, the analysis of the Danish Prison and Probations Service's efforts against radicalization in prison include several official documents as there is not one compilation of all the information. This is due to the Prison and Probation Service being responsible for following the government's strategy and guidelines.

In Denmark, it is assessed by the Center for Terror Analysis (CTA) which is a part of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) that the primary threat against Denmark and its democracy are the militant Islamist groups (The Danish government, 2016, p. 10). They acknowledge that there also is a potential threat from political extremists; however, they assess this to be limited (The Danish government, 2016, p. 10). Therefore, the main focus of the Danish perspective is on militant Islamism.

Sweden

The first report on violent extremism and radicalization within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service was drafted in primo 2015, in which the purpose of the report was to "identify methods and approaches to strengthen the fight against violent extremism in Probation" (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, own translation). The report was commissioned by the Swedish government as a part of the new counter-terrorism strategy for Sweden and its agencies. In addition, the Swedish government sent out a regulation letter in December 2016 (Ju2016/03379/KRIM) commissioning the Prison and Probation Service to write another report which more specifically should entail a knowledge overview.³ The second report is based on national and global literature and research.

Definitions

Denmark

Only two working definitions are provided in the Danish government's action plan and the evaluation from the Ministry of Justice which are for radicalization and extremism. While it makes sense that the operational definitions are included here, it would have been beneficial to incorporate these in the Prison and Probation Service's documents. On the other hand, the documents from the Prison and Probation Service are fairly short and condensed, whereas the Danish government's action plan and evaluation from the Ministry of Justice are three times longer and more comprehensive to which it makes sense to include the definitions therein. Furthermore, as aforementioned, the Danish focus is almost exclusively on militant Islamism, however, what this entails is nowhere to be found in any of the contemporary documents. It is briefly mentioned under the clarification of *extremism* in the Danish government's action plan (2016),

³ In addition to this, the Swedish government also wanted the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to conduct partial reports on the status of which measures have been taken by the Prison and probation Service as well as how the long-term prospects have been ensured for their efforts against violent extremism (The Swedish Government, 2016b, p.1). These reports will, unfortunately, be published in mid May, meaning that they will not be able to be included in this thesis. However, the reader is recommended to read the partial reports/evaluations for more information on how Sweden is faring in their efforts against violent extremism.

Extremism refers to individuals or groups who commit or attempt to legitimize violence or other unlawful acts with reference to society, which they are dissatisfied with ... The definition includes among others, left-wing extremism, right-wing extremism and militant extremism. (The Danish government, 2016, p. 7, own translation).

This is paradoxical due to the fact that the evaluation from the Ministry of Justice actually states that missing definitions are a part of the general challenge when researching radicalization and extremism (Justitsministeriet, 2015a, p. 6). Therefore, it can only be recommended that both the Danish government and Ministry of Justice take inspiration from the CTA in PET, who have publicized short and condensed reports about e.g. *Analysis of Militant Islamic Radicalization* (2016), *Danish Islamic environments which are significant for the terrorist threat in Denmark* (2014) among others, in which brief and concise definitions are offered.

Sweden

The first thing that strikes the reader is that while the first report (2015b) provides a conceptual clarification, it fails to provide a working definition of radicalization, violent extremism, and violent extremist environments. It seems odd to omit these when it includes definitions of deradicalization, disengagement, Daesh, etc. They themselves state, “[r]egarding the concepts of violent extremism, radicalization and violent extremist environments the Swedish Prison and Probation Service follows the definitions set forth in the task and used by the collaborating agencies” (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 1, own translation).

The second report (2016b), on the other hand, includes a very comprehensive conceptual clarification. Not only does it provide definitions of extremism, violence, violent extremism, terrorism, what the difference between violent extremism and terrorism is, radicalization, deradicalization vs. disengagement, it also includes a conceptual clarification of the various extremist environments which the report deals with, i.e. right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism, and Islamist extremism (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, pp. 7-14). In addition, as it is mentioned in the report, the importance of clarifying concepts is paramount, due to the many different definitions of these three very important groupings among various parties and groups. Therefore, putting in the extra effort to properly define the concepts makes it more universally useful.

The working definitions of radicalization and extremism are fairly similar to the definitions provided by the Danish government and the Danish Ministry of Justice. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service relies on the definition put forth by the Security Police (SÄPO) from 2010 which states radicalization as, “[t]he process that leads to a person or group supporting or practicing ideological motivated violence to promote a cause” (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, p. 8). Both countries refer to radicalization as a social process (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b; Danish Security and Intelligence Service, 2016). The conceptual clarifications are more explicit and elaborate in the Swedish documents whereas they are short and lack depth in the Danish documents.

Violent extremist environments

Denmark

None of the Danish reports offer an explanation of how they define violent extremist environments. As mentioned in the first section, the Danish reports mainly focus on militant Islamism as this is assessed to be where the biggest threat lies (The Danish government, 2016, p. 10).

Sweden

In the first report (2015b), the primary focus is on Islamist extremism, however, attention towards right- and left-wing extremism is also granted (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b). As aforementioned, a definition of the various violent extremist groupings is not included in this report.

In the report, they describe the target group who are either in proximity to or involved in a violent extremist environment, as

People who are deemed to be close to, or included in the violent Islamic environment, including assessment of vulnerable recipients have an average age of 36 years. Of them, about 75% have previous convictions. Inmates who are associated with political extremist environments have an average age just below 30 years of age. All of which are considered related to the extreme right-wing environment have previous convictions, compared with about half of the people related to the extreme left-wing environment (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 7, own translation).

This paragraph primarily concerns males. Regarding females, there are not many (known) female extremists in Sweden, however, those who are primarily gravitate towards the left-wing of violent extremism (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 7, own translation).

In the second report a thorough overview of the various extremist environments in Sweden is presented. This overview includes information about the different environments, what their primary goals are, who their ‘targets’ are, how they view society and the world, average ages of joining and leaving the environments, and much more. It also incorporates what type of crimes are usually committed by members of the various extremist environments and emphasize that the right-wing and left-wing extremist groups are generally non-violent, however, that the right-wing extremist groups are more specifically prone to hate speeches. While freedom of speech is condoned in both Denmark and Sweden, “[t]he European Court of Human Rights has stated that freedom of expression does not, inter alia, protect opinions that are characterized by hate speech and which can obscure particular individuals or groups” (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, p. 11, own translation). This is also seen in relation to religious gatherings which are often seen in the Islamist extremist environments.

The same partial conclusions can be made for this section as the previous about definitions. The Danish documents have a more narrow focus, i.e. militant Islamism, whereas the Swedish incorporate the three overall extremist directions.

Method

The comparative analysis method is chosen to analyze the material from Denmark and Sweden. This is chosen because the thesis will focus on two separate countries, and their approaches towards countering prison radicalization in order to see how different or similar they might be.

Comparisons of countries have been done for decades, whether it was focused on crime trends, penology, types of crimes, victimization studies, etc (Heidensohn, 2008). As Collier states, “[c]omparison is a fundamental tool of analysis. It sharpens our power of description, and plays a central role in concept-formation by bringing into focus suggestive similarities and contrasts among cases” (1993, p. 105). With the increasing globalization and global perspective it has become easier to compare and locate data about individual countries on popular subjects (Howard et al., 2000). The advantages of applying a comparative analysis approach is that it is appropriate for studies which have a limited time scope (Collier, 1993) as well as implementing a small number of cases, i.e. two countries/states/nations or more (Heidensohn, 2008). In addition, comparative analyses allow for the testing and expansion of theories to other contexts than the original ones (Howard et al., 2000). Furthermore, this allows for the

...elaboration and specification of theory. If a specific theoretical model does not account for variations in crime in other nation-states, perhaps some refinement can be identified on the basis of this investigation, thereby improving the explanatory power of the theory (Howard et al., 2000, p. 145)

Nivette (2015) emphasizes that the task of “[c]omparative criminological research is designed to investigate differences in crime and criminal justice organizations across borders” (p. 462). This notion is supported by Howard et al. (2000): They express that comparative analyses are beneficial for evaluating and assessing the performance of national and international criminal justice policies (Howard et al., 2000). Perhaps one of the most important goals for comparative analyses and criminology is to assist the coordinated effort against transnational crime such as terrorism (Howard et al., 2000, p. 147). By learning about and from other countries’ experiences, policies, approaches etc., and comparing these results, a greater understanding of what works in which context can be achieved.

However, while there are numerous advantages to utilizing the comparative analysis there are also disadvantages which emerge during the analysis. When comparing two countries (or more) there are several challenges such as varying definitions and legislations, differences in recording crimes e.g. rates, episodes, etc., and especially linguistic differences. In addition, the comparative method might seem superficial to some researchers who might favor the experimental or case study methods. Collier (1993) explains that the inherent problems associated with the comparative method is among others the problem of having “[too] many variables, [too] few cases” (p. 197) as well as not having enough capacity to sort out rival explanations (p. 197). Nonetheless, even though the comparative analysis is appropriate for this thesis as it will analyze documents from the macro-level, a model for analysis is needed. This is due to the fact that there is no yardstick for assessing what is important to include in a counter-radicalization strategy within prisons even though many international organizations have conducted comparisons of crime (the International Crime Victims Survey), prison radicalization (ICSR, 2010), etc. Therefore, an assessment model has been developed for this particular thesis based on the current literature regarding radicalization, extremism, and violent extremism within a prison context.

Assessment model for the counter-radicalization strategy within prisons

During the search for relevant literature and sifting through the various countries' strategies for counter-radicalization within prisons, it became apparent that many countries in the Western world apply the same type of prison model regarding offender assessment and rehabilitation, albeit with few exceptions and customizations. This is the Canadian Risk-Need-Responsivity model (RNR), which was primarily developed by James Bonta and D. A. Andrews in 1990 and builds on their Psychology of Criminal Conduct theory (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). However, what is lacking is an assessment model for counter-radicalization efforts in prisons. In this section an attempt will be made to develop such a model based on the current literature on prison radicalization and risk factors. This will, in turn, then be applied to the comparative analysis of the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Services' strategies, and, lastly it will serve as a guide for the discussion and conclusion.

The Risk-Need-Responsivity model

In short, the RNR model is based on three fundamental principles as its name implies, *risk*, *need*, and, *responsivity* (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). It "is a theoretical framework that outlines both the central causes of persistent criminal behavior, and some broad principles for reducing engagement in crime" (Polaschek, 2012, p. 2). The first principle is the risk principle which has two parts, 1) that criminal behavior can be predicted, and, 2) the core of this principle is to match treatment to the risk level of the offender (Bonta & Andrews, 2017, p. 178). This means that in order to deliver efficient treatment, and thus reduce potential recidivism, these two levels, i.e. risk and treatment, must be matched. For example, a high-risk offender should, in theory, receive a higher and more intensive level of treatment, while a low risk offender should receive a low level of treatment. Bonta & Andrews (2017) note that if the situation is reversed, meaning that low risk offenders receive high levels of treatment and high-risk offenders receive low levels of intervention, the chances of recidivism actually increase rather than decrease. Therefore, it is important to match treatment to the risk level. The second principle is the need principle which "tells us *what* to treat" (Bonta & Andrews, 2017, p. 191), e.g., what dynamic risk factors have to be changed in order for the offender's criminogenic needs to become noncriminogenic (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). This could for example be values, procriminal attitudes, social network, substance abuse, in some cases personality factors relating to mental illnesses etc. (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2005). The third principle is the responsivity principle which also has two sides to it, a *general responsivity* and a *specific responsivity*. This principle "tells us *how* to treat" (Bonta & Andrews, 2017, p. 192). Bonta & Andrews explain the differences between the two types in the following way,

The *general responsivity principle* is quite straightforward: offenders are human beings, and the most powerful influence strategies available are cognitive-behavioral and cognitive social learning strategies ... It is under the specific responsivity principle that many of the psychological approaches to offender assessment may have their value. By identifying personality and cognitive styles, treatment can be better matched to the client (Bonta & Andrews, 2017, pp. 181-182).

In other words, general responsivity applies well-known general treatments and learning such as the cognitive-behavioral and cognitive social learning methods,

whereas specific responsivity is tailored to the individual offender's learning styles and needs.

There is more to the RNR model than the three core principles. It initially included 12 principles for effective rehabilitation (Bonta & Andrews, 2017); however, it has now been expanded to include 18 principles (see Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2011, p. 738). In addition to these, which range from the risk-need-responsivity principles; psychological theory; what human service means; to structured assessments and professional discretion; it incorporates the General Personality and Cognitive Social Learning Theory (GPCSL theory). It emphasizes the "Central Eight" risk and need factors such as criminal history, procriminal attitudes, procriminal associates, antisocial personality pattern, family/marriage, school/work, substance abuse, and leisure/recreation (Bonta & Andrews, 2017; Polaschek, 2012). GPCSL is based on the foundation of social learning theory, meaning that all behavior is controlled by costs and rewards "within the personal, interpersonal, and immediate situations of action" (Bonta & Andrews, 2017, p. 209). However, how well does it relate to the issue of radicalization within prisons?

The RNR model provides a beneficial framework as point of departure for an assessment model for counter-radicalization within a prison context as it is already configured for a rehabilitative/risk-reducing scene. However, due to the scope of this thesis, only the three core principles of the RNR model will be included. While the assessment model is based on the principles, seven recurring themes from contemporary literature and research have been added to customize the model towards a counter-radicalization effort in the penitentiary context.

The Assessment Model

The assessment model is, as aforementioned, based on the core principles of the RNR model, namely risk, need, and responsivity. These principles are at the foundation of the assessment model and the included themes from research will be elaborated upon and linked to the RNR principles in the following section. The themes identified in the literature are,

- Minimizing *overcrowding* and understaffing in prisons,
- Having 'enough' *religious chaplains* employed,
- Using *sectioning* of inmates in particular instances,
- Conducting *continuous risk assessments*,
- *Monitoring and supervising* the inmate's contact to procriminal associates,
- Having appropriate *rehabilitation programs* and treatment, and,
- Continuous *education off/for the staff* in correctional facilities.

One of the main concerns regarding radicalization within prisons is *overcrowding*. Overcrowding can be either the ratio of prisoners per officer or number of beds in a facility. In the U.S. there is a skewed ratio of prisoners per officer⁴, which

⁴ For example, in 2015 in Denmark, there were approximately 3,000 prison officers distributed across the country's correctional institutions (including max. and min. security prisons, youth prisons and jails) but approximately 3,422 incarcerated individuals in max. and min. security prisons (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015). However, these numbers are more fairly distributed compared to the situation in U.S.A, in which the inmate to staff ratio is approximately 9:1 (National Institute of Corrections, 2015; National Institute of Corrections, 2013).

disables the possibility of monitoring the inmates' behavior and whereabouts, thus leaving opportunities open for radicalizers to operate under the radar (Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013; Jones, 2014; ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016; Mulcahy et al., 2013). Upholding a steady flow of incoming and released prisoners, and staying below maximum capacity will also assist in ensuring that prison officers and inmates can establish somewhat of a relationship (Bonta & Andrews, 2017) which is effective from a rehabilitative perspective. Hamm (2007) notes that “[m]ass incarceration has increased the social marginalization of inmates and their desire for bonding, group identity, and spiritual guidance” (pp. 16-17). However, in Denmark and Sweden, the ratio of prisoners per officer is almost 1:1, therefore overcrowding in this thesis, will denote the number of beds/spaces within the prisons.

In addition to minimizing overcrowding, the importance of *employing religious chaplains* such as imams and priests is emphasized in the literature as well (Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013; Jones, 2014; ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016; Mulcahy et al., 2013; Olsen, 2008). While there has been some debate on whether or not they, the religious chaplains, can be considered more as a risk factor than a protective factor, most of the empirical data suggests that this is the exception to the rule. One of the major risk factors within prisons or radicalization in general is that those who become radicalized usually have a skewed perception of the ideology or religion (NIJ, 2015; ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016; Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013). This is where the religious chaplains enter the equation. By having a number of moderate and well-educated chaplains on the payroll fulltime, the inmates can receive proper religious guidance and education, moderate sermons and potentially a confidante to talk to (ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016; Hamm, 2007; Olsen, 2008; Kruglanski et al., 2014). In addition to proper religious education, the chaplains serve as yet another preventative measure, meaning that even though they are bound by their confidentiality, they still have a duty to report potential threats.

Adding to the abovementioned themes, the possibility of *sectioning* inmates is also highlighted in the literature. Sectioning means that a prisoner who is assessed to be dangerous and/or a radicalizer could be placed in another department with increased supervision or transferred to another facility in order to protect the other inmates (Jones, 2014; Mulcahy et al., 2014; ICSR, 2010; Silke, 2014). Sectioning can also serve as protection for the prisoner who is a violent extremist, as they are often considered to be at the bottom of the social hierarchy of offenders if they have committed an attack on civilians (Jones, 2014, p. 94). Sectioning can be done before or during imprisonment. There are different ways to practice this. There are three overall ways to do it, namely having all radicalized (and convicted terrorists) in one place, which is called “concentration” (ICSR, 2010, p. 17); if they should be separated entirely from the general prison population but still together with associates, which is known as “separation” (ICSR, 2010, p. 17); or if they should be totally isolated (from the general population and each other), which is called “isolation” (ICSR, 2010, p. 17). Many Western countries utilize an approach called “security first” (ICSR, 2010, p. 13) which includes the extremist inmates to dispersed and distributed across a number of maximum-security prisons (ICSR, 2010). This is called “(partial) concentration” (ICSR, 2010, p. 13).

In addition, a fourth theme is *continuous risk assessments* of the inmates. Risk assessments are instruments or scales based on risk factors to “estimate the likelihood (i.e., probability) of an outcome occurring in a population (Monahan,

2016, p. 521)⁵. Depending on one's allegiance with a particular perspective within a branch of life-course criminology, people can either change or not (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; Sampson & Laub, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 2005; Carlsson, 2012). However, in this model and the RNR model, the point of departure is that people can change if they are provided with the opportunity. Furthermore, it is often expressed within the correctional and penology literature that prisons can cause a person to change, i.e. either disengaging or even desisting from crime/violent extremism. Therefore, continuous assessments would be beneficial in obtaining an updated picture of the situations. Previously there have been no risk assessment instruments for assessing violent extremism and radicalization. Often the HCR-20 has been applied, as this instrument is one of the most common for predicting violence, however, in 2009 the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment (VERA) and its most recent version from 2012, the VERA-2, were developed by D. Elaine Pressman ("VERA 2R: measuring the likelihood of violent extremist action in prison, n.d."). The VERA includes items on attitude/mental perspectives, context, history (background) and protective items.⁶ It is structured after the HCR-20 but based on research and experiences with criminal violent extremists (Pressman, 2009). In addition, there is also the Extreme Risk Guidance (ERG 22+), which was developed by the NOMS Operational Intervention Services Group in 2011 (Silke, 2014). They are quite similar, although the VERA-2 has nine extra factors included in the assessment, including six protective factors (Silke, 2014; Beardsley & Beech, 2013). Furthermore, by applying risk assessments, ordinary offenders and radicalized offenders can be differentiated.

These four themes all tie in with the RNR framework. They address the risk and need principles. *Overcrowding* matches the levels of risk with a humane treatment of the individuals. Examples of overcrowding in prison are provided by Jones (2014) in which inmates in a Philippine prison had to "take turns to sleep" (p. 84) and in several Indonesian prison, where "it is not uncommon for there to be up to 30 inmates per cell" (p. 87). By employing a number of *religious chaplains*, both the risk and need principles are adhered to. It is due to the fact that the chaplains can reduce the potential risks that are posed by those who wish to radicalize "naïve" and vulnerable inmates with a distorted version of a religion (NIJ, 2015) and tend to the needs of the prisoners who feel lonely. *Sectioning* and continuous *risk assessment* are well placed within the risk principle, in the sense that the prisoner undergoes risk assessment to correctly establish how high a risk he or she is as well as placing him or her in the accurate institution and/or unit within that facility either for their own protection or their fellow inmates' safety.

The next theme identified within the literature, is *monitoring and supervising the inmate's contact to his or her social network both within the prison as well as outside*. Monitoring includes controlling who is allowed to visit, limiting access to phones and the Internet. It is already acknowledged that prisons "play a significant social and psychological role in providing the setting and context for significant personal change" (Jones, 2014, p. 93), and that "... time in prison may mark the beginning of physical disengagement" (Jones, 2014, p. 93). This potential disengagement or desistance from crime and/or extremism can then

⁵ For a detailed discussion of risk assessment instruments, see Doyle & Dohan (2002).

⁶ See Pressman (2009) for an elaboration of the VERA instrument. She provides the background and a "how-to" guide for the instrument as well as a scheme of the items and scores used in the tool.

be further assisted by the supervision of the inmate's social settings and privileges. The restriction of visitation from known procriminal extremist associates as well as communication with these can disable the connection between them and the inmate. This might then enable the prisoner to reflect upon his or her situation and possibly become more open towards rehabilitative programs and disengagement from the criminal/extremist environment (Sampson & Laub, 2005).

Thereafter, *rehabilitation programs and treatment* (Schmid, 2013; Silke, 2014; Bonta & Andrews, 2017; Jones, 2014; ICSR, 2010) are emphasized. Evidence-based and value-based rehabilitation programs tailored to the specific context, i.e. country and inmate would be preferable, however these are difficult to find and often expensive. Denmark in particular has been working with mentorship programs (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2016) and in collaboration with the European Union has extended the program to target violent extremists and called it "Back on Track". This project was funded by the EU for a couple of years, and aimed at helping inmates cope with everyday problems, emotional or practical, and motivate them to leave the criminal/extremist environments ("Back on track, preventing radicalization among prison inmates", n.d.). The literature so far has not been able to figure out "what works" within rehabilitative programs in correctional facilities and especially not regarding radicalization. Consequently, mentorship is the only specified rehabilitative program mentioned in this model until other evidence-based programs targeting radicalization can be identified.

Lastly, an important and redundant theme in the literature is the *continuous education of the prison staff* and in particular those who have daily contact with the inmates. It is crucial in order to prevent radicalization to know what to look for and the telltale signs change according to each individual, each extremist direction, and each type of violent extremist organization. In addition, a cultural understanding is also paramount in recognizing what is legitimate cultural practice and what is not (ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016, Schmid, 2013). Therefore, education for the staff should be prioritized.

These themes also tie into the RNR principles. *Monitoring* falls under the risk principle, as it is a part of the results of the risk assessments made of the inmate in question. *Rehabilitative programs* are more in line with the responsivity principle, both the general and specific responsivity, as they can be tailored to the individual. More general programs which have been evidence-based can be used if these match the prisoners learning style and risk level. *Education of staff* presents itself aside from the core principles of the RNR model, as it forms the basis of the correctional institution of human service that the staff is properly educated and able to handle offenders.

These seven themes based on the RNR models principles now represent a preliminary assessment model for counter-radicalization strategies within prisons in Western countries.

Table 2. Visualization of the seven themes embedded within the three core RNR principles

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Risk principle</i>	<i>Need principle</i>	<i>Responsivity principle</i>
No overcrowding	+		
Religious chaplains		+	
Sectioning	+		
Risk assessment	+	+	+
Supervision/Monitoring	+		
Rehabilitation progr.		+	+
Education of staff	+	+	+

Limitations

As for any research there will be limitations. There are several limitations in this particular thesis. Firstly, only literature from Western countries is included. This is due to the potential relevance of prison radicalization literature available and comparable for the context in this particular study which is located in Northern Europe. In addition, prison management is somewhat similar in most of the Western countries, i.e. U.K., the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Canada among others (ICSR, 2010; NIJ, 2015). Secondly, the secured institutions, i.e. youth prisons, are not included in the analysis as information about counter-radicalization strategies was not available from Denmark. Thirdly, only two countries, Denmark and Sweden, were chosen. It could have been interesting to include Norway and Finland in order to compare and visualize the Scandinavian counter-radicalization effort. In addition, a comparative analysis has not been done for any of the Nordic countries; rather previous comparisons regarding prison-radicalization have included several different countries (ICSR, 2010) which have not had the same societal structure as the Nordic countries indeed share. However, only Denmark and Sweden were chosen as this will allow a more in-depth analysis and discussion as the assumption is that they are not equally advanced in their counter-radicalization strategies within the prisons in addition to aforementioned reasons under Areas of study. Fourth, including semi-structured or structured interviews with personnel from the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Service, such as prison officers, would have been beneficial for this research in order to include a third dimension to the analysis. Rather than only having two levels for the analysis i.e., the government and the Prison and Probation Services which will elaborate on how the strategies are on these levels, the third dimension could provide a personal and practical perspective to the analysis. Furthermore, a fourth dimension could have been interviews with the inmates regarding their views on prison radicalization. By including them, first-hand and in-depth knowledge from the corners of the prisons could have been explored. It could have been researched if prison radicalization was a problem seen through the eyes of the inmates or the prison personnel, or if it is merely on the agenda in order to make the current government(s) more popular. Also, by including interviews with both inmates and prison personnel additional information could have been gathered, for example in relation to risk assessment in Denmark; what types of risk assessment do they use if they use any, etc.

Ethical Considerations

As there was no interaction with people and the project solely relied on public documents, there was no need to seek ethical approval. In addition, as no interviews were conducted and no sensitive data was included, there were no ethical considerations to be made.

RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

While the state of Denmark has been occupied with the prevention and issue of radicalization and extremism for nearly a decade now, it seems that the state of Sweden has begun fairly recently.

The difference between the two countries is that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's action plan against violent extremism and radicalization is made separately from the Swedish government but as a supplement to their counter-terrorism strategy. In Denmark, the Prison and Probation service does not compile an in-depth action plan, but rather states that it will follow the Danish government's guidelines from their action plan against radicalization and extremism. Furthermore, the Danish government's action plan (2016) is based on an evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Justice in 2015. Therefore, the Danish analysis is based on several official documents in contrast to the Swedish analysis which is based mainly on two documents from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

Applying the assessment model

Overcrowding

Denmark

As it was found in the literature review and included in the assessment model, overcrowding has been identified as one of the major risk factors regarding radicalization. In Denmark, the Danish government addressed the problem in the multi-year agreement from 2013-2016 with the Danish Prison and Probation Service. In 2013 it was a problem in the Danish prisons that were almost at their maximum capacity with an average capacity of 97,1% (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2013, p. 12). This number includes all of the beds/spaces within the Danish Prison and Probation Service's facilities, i.e. prisons and jailhouses. Therefore, the Danish government, in the multi-year agreement, stated that 200 new spaces would be established distributed across the already existing facilities (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2013). In addition, 48 spaces designated for negatively strong inmates⁸ would be established at one particular facility (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2013, p. 2).

Recent statistics from the Prison and Probation Service show that the average capacity has decreased to 90,6% (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015). The number of spaces within the prisons have decreased as well from approximately 4,126 in 2013 to 3,777 in 2015 (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2013; 2015). The reasons for this can be assumed to be either due to the reduction in crime, more prisoners serving time at home with electronic tagging, fewer recidivists, or all of the above. The latest numbers on recidivism are from 2013 which makes it difficult to conclude on the potential percentage of recidivism in 2015 and 2016. However, in 2013 the recidivism percentage was 30% for ex-convicts (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015).

Sweden

The notion of overcrowding is also addressed in the first report from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (2015b). They state that Sweden "has a larger

⁸ Negatively strong inmates refers to gang members in the multi-year agreement, as the focus and emphasis then was on gangs and gang members rather than radicalization and potential terrorists. The recent change in focus is due to the terrorist attack at Krudttønden in Copenhagen on February 14th, 2015.

number of smaller institutions without overcrowding and thus the possibility of a centrally controlled investment process with regard to each client's risks and needs" (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 4). The statistics from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service are divided into the four parts of the Service's areas of responsibility, i.e. jailhouses (häkte), prisons (anstalt), probation (frivård), and recidivism (återfall). Only statistics from the prisons and jailhouses will be included here. Regarding prisons, the statistics from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service show that their average capacity has been decreasing from 2007-2013 (from 94% to 85%), but began to increase afterwards and is at 87% capacity in 2015 (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015a, p. 32). In relation to jailhouses, there has been a significant decrease from 2007-2013 (95% to 79%) which shortly increased and then fell again in 2015 to 78%. Reasons for the decreases in capacity are not addressed in any of the documents from Sweden.

Both Denmark and Sweden acknowledge the problem of overcrowding and statistics show that there has been a general decrease in both countries' capacities. However, how this has been accomplished is not addressed in either country. In the Danish multi-year agreement, it was disclosed that 200 new spaces for inmates would be established, however, the numbers from the Prison and Probation Service actually show a reduction in the number of places in the facilities. Again, this is not addressed. Therefore, as mentioned before, it can be assumed that the reasons for this are either decrease in crime, more prisoners serving time at home with electronic tagging, or a reduction in recidivists.

Religious Chaplains

Denmark

The role of religious chaplains is emphasized greatly in both the Danish government's action plan (2016) and the Ministry of Justice's evaluation. Religious chaplains are highlighted as important for prevention work within radicalization and their position as positive role models within prisons is stressed. It is also emphasized that inmates have a right to practice their religion in the Prison and Probation Service's facilities (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 21). The Ministry of Justice explains the role of the religious chaplains as the following,

Conversations between inmates and religious chaplains take place in confidentiality, which may give the inmates an opportunity to express more extreme views towards a person whom they respect. In this context, the religious preachers may help to bring inmates, who are on their way into an extremist or radicalized direction, back on track (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 20, own translation)

However, initiatives that date back to 2013 (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2013) are still valid in the Danish government's action plan (2016). These initiatives are increased supervision of the religious preachers in prison, which entails requirements of sermons being conducted in Danish (The Danish government, 2016, p. 31); a more comprehensive and rigorous procedure for recruiting religious chaplains involving thorough background checks, interviews as well as conversations/examinations by an panel consisting of spiritual experts (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 21); and, admonishing the religious chaplains' reporting duty. This means that in spite of their confidentiality agreement with clients, they still have an obligation to "... avert terrorism and

other serious crimes, if necessary through a report” (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 22, own translation). Admonishing the religious chaplains is also enforced to ensure that they, the chaplains, do not contribute to the radicalization of inmates (The Directory of the Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015, p. 4).

Sweden

Religious chaplains can guide prison personnel regarding the religious aspect as well as provide the inmates with spiritual guidance (ICSR, 2010). The Christian Council of Sweden (Sveriges Kristna Råd, SKR), who are also known as NAV-employees, and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service have an agreement in which the SKR is “commissioned to provide, coordinate and administer spiritual care for priests, pastors, and deacons of Lutheran, Catholic, Orthodox and Free Church communities, and to communicate with representatives of other religious communities” (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 26, own translation). In addition, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service also has an agreement with the Muslim Council of Sweden (Sveriges Muslimska Råd, SMK), who provide, coordinate, and administer imams and other religious muslim representatives (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 26). NAV-employees are

... a part of the supportive and preventive work, e.g. when it comes to promoting an ethical and democratic attitude, they are can take part in the religious discussions, be good role models and guide the clients. NAV employees can also be helpful in increasing the [prison] staffs understanding of different religions, and differentiating what is religious practice and what is promoting violent behavior (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 26, own translation)

The second report from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service emphasizes the centrality of chaplains in the prevention of radicalization within prisons. Almost all of the research collected highlights the importance of chaplains (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, pp. 31-56). The authors conclude,

Religion and interreligious dialogues have a positive impact and normalizing effect on radicalized clients ... It is therefore important to promote religious tolerance and respect. The possibility of exercising ones religion is emphasized as important in order to prevent radicalization ... (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, p. 56, own translation).

As mentioned above, religious figures are important for preventing radicalization by providing a moderate religious education as well as assisting the personnel in identifying legitimate religious practices (ICSR, 2010).

Both the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Services employ religious chaplains, however, what none of the reports disclose is whether they have a sufficient amount of priests, imams, pastors, etc., on the payroll. As aforementioned, having enough staff and in particular moderate religious role models in the prisons is paramount to the prevention of radicalization. On one hand, the screening process which the Danish Prison and Probation Service has implemented might seem extreme. On the other hand, it can also be argued to be necessary. Religious chaplains are important for “correct” spiritual guidance and if a radical priest/imam/pastor is employed, the chances of radicalization of the

vulnerable inmates are much higher. Therefore, the increasing supervision and heightened standards for spiritual employees can be deemed a necessary evil. The hiring process for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's religious chaplains is not disclosed; therefore, it is difficult to compare these aspects. However, the important issue at hand here is that both Prison and Probation Services' acknowledge the significance of religious chaplains in their efforts against radicalization and extremism.

Sectioning

Denmark

One of the actions that a Prison and Probation Service can take regarding radicalized inmates is sectioning. It has previously been used to separate gang members from each other (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a). Therefore, The Corrections Act has also been changed to include sectioning of radicalized and extremist inmates in order to limit the inmates' access to other prisoners' and thus reduce the possibility of radicalization of them (The Danish government, 2016, p. 20). It was also one of the initiatives brought forth by the Ministry of Justice (2015a, p. 26). It is explained that,

In order to ensure the correct placement relative to fellow inmates, small units each with four to six places, must be arranged where the inmates in the individual units are completely secluded from the other ... At the same time, the small units may have a higher staffing capability than usual to closely monitor and supervise the inmates and ensure that the perpetrators' perilous behavior is observed and communicated to the appropriate authorities (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 26, own translation).

However, how they assess the placement or when to section the prisoners or prisoners-to-be is not disclosed.

Sweden

The first report emphasizes results from the Canadian Prison and Probation Services research regarding placement and sectioning of individuals who are violent extremists. The Canadians found that it was most effective to transfer violent extremists to other institutions, meaning that they found it efficient to separate violent extremists from vulnerable individuals (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 13). In relation to general placement of inmates, the report discloses that,

The point of departure for the placement of clients in the Prison and Probation Service is that a client may not be placed so that he or she is subject to more intensive supervision and control than is necessary for order and safety to be maintained. A decision on placement in the institutions shall be preceded by a risk and needs assessment in each case (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 24).

The second report also includes literature and research about segregation, placement, and isolation of radicalized prisoners from the general prison population (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, pp. 31-32, 50, 52). Though the general opinion leans towards success, the authors include that "[i]t is important to taken into account the strong criticisms against isolation" (Council of Europe cited in Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, p. 58, own translation).

While it can be assumed that the re-placement of radicalized inmates to another facility or department in a given facility is beneficial, Sweden and Denmark have different approaches to this. As mentioned above, Denmark has broadened the legislation to include radicalized and extremist individuals in The Corrections Act (The Danish government, 2016, p. 20), as it has been applied before with the separation of gang members. It can be deduced that they apply the “separation” practice, in which extremist inmates are separated from the general prison population if this is deemed necessary. How they arrive at the assessments of how the inmates should be segregated is not disclosed which is also apparent in the next section regarding risk assessments.

At first glance it does not seem that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service use sectioning as an option within the prisons or that it is a part of their legislation as it is in Denmark. However, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service utilizes risk assessment tools to assist the staff in considering where to place a prospective inmate. It can be argued that by assessing placement before actual imprisonment could in fact lead to a decrease in potentially dangerous situations and create a more organized and structured placement strategy. Therefore, the risk assessment of the individual inmate dictates the type of sectioning practice which will be applied. However, the structure and organization of the various Prison and Probation Services’ facilities and institutions is a project in and of itself, and due to the scope of this, a more in-depth analysis will not be undertaken in this thesis.

Risk Assessment

Denmark

At no point in any of the documents do they mention risk assessment or risk assessment instruments. Therefore, it can be assumed that it is not commonly used in the Prison and Probation Service’s work or more likely, that it is not disclosed to the public.

Sweden

In Sweden risk assessment tools and scales such as The Historical Clinical Risk Management-20 scale (the HCR-20 violence risk assessment scale), as well as the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment (VERA and VERA-2), are often utilized when assessing criminal individuals. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service state in their reports that there are no exact tools for risk assessment when it comes to violent extremism (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015a). According to Beardsley & Beech (2013), who tested the VERA instrument on five different, single-acting, well-known terrorists, they found that the VERA-2 comes fairly closely to being the most accurate and beneficial tool for risk assessments and can provide a more well-rounded assessment of potentially dangerous individuals. In addition, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service also mention the instrument called *Extremism Risk Guidance 22+* (ERG 22+) (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b) as a potentially useful tool in their work against radicalization in prison. These instruments will be debated in the discussion section of the thesis.

While Denmark does not provide any information on their possible use of risk assessment instruments, it can be assumed that they use some type of risk assessment for assessing the inmates as the Swedish Prison and Probation Service does.

Monitoring and Supervision

Denmark

One of the more emphasized points in the evaluation from the Ministry of Justice (2015a) is limiting the radicalized and extreme inmate's contact to the outside world as well as their contact to the potentially vulnerable inmates within the prison. In the appendix to the evaluation it is further explained,

The Prison and Probation Service has the opportunity to initiate a series of enforced measures against prisoners to ensure order and safety. This involves sectioning ... exclusion from community ... and limitation of contact with the outside world ... In addition, the Prison and Probation Service focuses on certain inmates' access to the Internet ... reading material ... and smuggling of mobile phones (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015b, p. 14, own translation).

As it has been emphasized in the evaluation from the Ministry of Justice, it has now gained its own spot on the Prison and Probation Service's goal- and result plan for 2017. Here they focus on increasing the control of access to and the smuggling of cellular phones to inmates via visitors as well as checking the employees of the Prison and Probation Service and visitors to prevent this. In order to do so more efficiently, different types of scanners will be installed in their facilities as well as conducting more cell searches (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2017, p. 9).

Sweden

The first report draws upon some of the focal areas in the Danish effort against radicalization is to control access to cellular phones, contact with outside affiliates, etc. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service state it in the following way,

In order to prevent and combat radicalization and/or other security-threatening activities, the control of visits and access to phones is crucial. [The] reduced incidence of illegal ways to communicate with the outside world (unauthorized mobile phones, the Internet) is important. Dynamic security combined with intelligence contributes greatly to this work (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 11, own translation).

While the quote explains the reason for controlling inmates' access to phones, it is important to note that in the effort to prevent radicalization or continued criminal activity, it is necessary to break the connection between the radicalized individual/the inmate and his/her social network. This is due to the importance of the imprisoned individual's social network that might enable the aforementioned person in a criminal/radical environment. By breaking the connection, the inmate has an opportunity to either disengage or desist from crime as well as "knife off" relations to procriminal associates (Carlsson, 2012). This will be elaborated on further in the discussion.

Rehabilitation Programs

Denmark

There are several rehabilitation programs ranging from substance abuse treatment, educational programs targeting either academia or craftsmanship, and mentorship programs, also known as exit-programs ("Vejen ud af kriminalitet", n.d.; Cullen,

2012). Especially mentorship programs have been offered to inmates who are already a part of an extremist milieu and probably radicalized (The Danish government, 2016, p. 15). One of the new initiatives in the Danish government's action plan (2016) is that one of the requirements for parole is to participate in an exit-program,

Requirements are imposed, that radicalized inmates who have been convicted on terrorism charges, shall participate in an exit-program in order to get parole. It is supposed to strengthen the motivation that radicalized prisoners are included in these exit-programs, and thus, affect them to change their behavior and motivate them to leave the extremist environment (The Danish government, 2016, p. 31, own translation).

This initiative is based on the exit-program project called "Back on Track" which was funded by the European Union and situated within the Danish Prison and Probation Service's facilities from 2011 till 2014. It has since then continued with funds from the Prison and Probation Service's regular mentor program (Directory for the Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015, pp. 1-2). The mentorship program within the Prison and Probation Service is an offer for youths between the ages of 15-25 who need support and guidance on how to lead a life outside of criminality. The mentors can help with practical, everyday things as well as how to deal with emotions ("Mentorer", n.d.). The youths can receive a mentor while incarcerated, while on parole, and afterwards for as long as they need ("Mentorer", n.d.).

Sweden

While the first report discloses that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service has several treatment/rehabilitation programs for individuals or groups (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 28), the second report includes research that addresses rehabilitation programs as well, however, the general results and conclusions from these are that "some programs and education may prove less suitable for radicalized individuals" (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, pp. 36-37, own translation). It mentions that mentorship has been proven to be successful most of the time (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b, pp. 37-38), but it does not disclose whether or not they have implemented such a program. Therefore, it can be assumed that they have not employed a mentorship program within the Prison and Probation Service's institutions.

The Prison and Probation Service's in Denmark and Sweden are, as aforementioned in the method section, built on the perception that prison is not solely a place of punishment, but rather a place for rehabilitation and treatment. This is clearly seen in the Danish legislation for The Corrections Act (The Corrections Act §3, §21-§22) in which it states that,

§3 Enforcement of a punishment must take place with due consideration both for the execution of the punishment and for the need to help or affect the sentenced person to live a crime-free existence (The Corrections Act).

Both countries incorporate rehabilitation programs targeting substance abuse problems, violence and anger issues, educational programs, etc. However, rehabilitation programs targeting violent extremists or radicalized individuals is not emphasized or disclosed within the Swedish reports while it is in fact implemented in the Danish context.

Education for Staff

Denmark

As Denmark has been occupied with the issue of radicalization and prevention for nearly a decade, it has resulted in an increased effort towards knowledge sharing between authorities and agencies as well as sharing knowledge with the public. Info-houses have been established in the country's 12 police districts in which collaboration between schools, social services, and the police are situated (The Danish government, 2016, p. 12).

Furthermore, the Prison and Probation Service has a close collaboration with the Center for Prevention within PET regarding radicalization and extremism. The two agencies have developed educational courses targeting the prevention of radicalization and extremism in which the participants "... were taught to identify signs of radicalization and extremism. Subsequent courses have been held for all newly employed personnel" (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 23, own translation). Education has been (and still is) an important point on the agenda for the Prison and Probation Service's work and staff. It is stated that,

... efforts should be focused on an educational strengthening of the Prison and Probation Service's staff in order for prison guards as well as other relevant staff groups to be even better equipped to handle prisoners with another background than Danish. A thorough cultural insight into the environments is thus considered to be crucial for the Prison and Probation Service's preventative effort as well as the investigative work and surveillance of the environments (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, p. 24, own translation).

With the assessment that radicalization could be a potential problem within prisons, it has been suggested that the Prison and Probation Service's staff should receive additional training. In addition to this, it has also been suggested that they hire staff with different educational backgrounds targeting various cultures and sociological issues which characterize the extremist environments (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a). This will enable a competency boost for the staff and make them better equipped for handling radicalized persons who are within the extremist environments.

Furthermore, several initiatives have been brought forth by the Ministry of Justice's evaluation. These include a) disclosing information about potential signs of radicalization of individuals who are about to be imprisoned, b) establish an electronic reporting system which will ease the reporting to PET and which can handle the immense load of information as well as enabling easy tracking of cases allowing staff to follow-up on specific cases; and, c) extending collaborations between the Prison and Probation Service, Social Services and the police (KSP) (The Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a, pp. 10-12). If and when these have been incorporated, the Ministry of Justice will probably note them in the future evaluation⁹.

Sweden

As seen in the paragraph above from Denmark, it is crucial for the personnel to be updated about new tendencies within the extremist and radical environments in order to identify these individuals. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service states the following in relation to education,

⁹ It is scheduled to be completed in mid 2018.

There is relatively little information about how specifically the implementation, the extent of the courses or the training opportunities have been addressed. Generally there is no complete documentation about the effect of the various educational initiatives (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 24, own translation)

The quote suggests that there is no real research on how to educate staff best in relation to radicalization and which program courses are considered to be more efficient than others. More research is needed as well as developing well-rounded courses based on current knowledge in order to keep the staff updated. In addition, it is emphasized in the first report (but also mentioned in the second report), even though there are various instruments which can be used, such as the VERA-2 and ERG 22+, there is no “radicalization checklist” (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 25) and that it requires expertise and experience to know what to look for when attempting to identify the signs of radicalization. While the current literature does not provide a checklist per se, as the Swedish Prison and Probation Service writes, general signs of radicalization have been identified. When it comes to signs regarding radicalization and violent extremism, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service implement knowledge from other countries’ experiences.

Furthermore, it is disclosed that prison and probation personnel who work closely with inmates or individuals on probation receive additional education every four years (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b, p. 26).

It is obvious that Denmark has a wider national network regarding research and educational offers regarding radicalization and extremism. This is mainly due to their longstanding work with this subject. As aforementioned, there are various offers for the municipalities, social services, the police, etc., to access information. PET’s prevention center is the primary force within education and training of personnel, especially within the Prison and Probation Service. However, as it apparent in the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, both agencies utilize knowledge from international partners. This can contribute to a more informed work modus as well as including the “what works” literature in their particular contexts.

DISCUSSION

In the discussion, the structure of the assessment model will be followed. This means that the discussion will be divided into the same sub-categories as the assessment model. These sub-categories are 1) overcrowding, 2) religious chaplains, 3) sectioning, 4) risk assessment, 5) monitoring/supervision, 6) rehabilitation programs, and, 7) education of staff. The discussion will emphasize the results from the comparative analysis alongside the assessment model and draw upon relevant literature within criminological theory. However, before the discussion on the results of the analysis within the seven themes can begin, a few comparative observations must be addressed.

To begin with, an elaboration in the method section on why Sweden and Denmark were chosen as areas of study was provided. It was disclosed that when looking at the Nordic countries, these two were most alike in many various

aspects, which would allow for a cohesive starting point for the comparative analysis. However, while both countries' prison systems are based on the perception of treatment rather than punishment, there is a significant difference between the two. Sweden has significantly lower prison sentences and more treatment sentences, whereas it is the diametric opposite in Denmark (Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015; Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015a). This signifies that Sweden, in theory, adheres to the rehabilitation principle, whereas Denmark is moving more towards a punitive perspective. Furthermore, how it is in reality for the prisoners in both the Swedish and Danish prisons is another question. Do the Swedish and Danish Prison and Probation Services' staffs adhere to the RNR-principles, especially in relation to the treatment of offenders? This is a difficult question to answer, and an interesting subject for future research.

Another interesting observation was the difference in the senders of the material used for this thesis. As mentioned in the methods section, the Danish perspective came primarily from the Danish Government, whereas the Swedish Prison and Probation Service provided the material for the Swedish perspective. This signifies two things; there is a difference in the two countries' level of trust and transparency. While Denmark has a multitude of publications to draw upon, there are not many cohesive and elaborate documents at the ground level, i.e. the Prison and Probation Service. Rather, all communication comes from the top level, i.e. the Government and the Ministry of Justice. This implies a level of distrust towards the ground level as well as a lack of transparency in relation to work methods in the prisons. On the other side is Sweden, in which all the material and work methods are transparent and are communicated from the Prison and Probation Service. It conveys a significant level of trust at the local level from the Government's perspective compared to the situation in Denmark.

These two observations show that while Denmark and Sweden are seemingly similar, there are some important areas in which they differ greatly. This will also be seen in the next sections in the discussion.

Overcrowding

When reviewing the current literature on radicalization within prisons, it was uncovered that one of the major risk factors for radicalization is overcrowding within prisons. Especially Hamm (2007; 2013), Jones (2014), and the reports from the ICSR (2010; 2016) emphasized this issue. Not only does it pose a problem for the inmates, it does so for the prison staff as well. As was noted, the ratio of prisoners per officer becomes skewed which in turn makes it difficult for the staff to supervise the prisoners, hence, leaving the dangerous extremist radicalizers to operate under the radar (Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013, Jones, 2014; ICSR, 2010; ICSR, 2016). While the problem of skewed ratios is valid in the U.S., it is in fact non-existing in Denmark and Sweden. Rather, the issue of the number of beds/spaces available is on the agenda. Both Denmark and Sweden acknowledged the problem and especially Denmark has taken it into account as the prisons nearly reached maximum capacity a few years ago. While there has been a decrease in capacity, it is not disclosed how this has been accomplished. It would have been interesting to see what actually caused this reduction in prisoners. Is it because Denmark has succeeded in establishing more spaces for inmates – even though the number of spaces also have declined? Is it due to the general crime rate decreasing over the years? Or is it possibly because the Danish government in

collaboration with the Prison and Probation Service has increased the use of electronic tagging for shorter sentences rather than ordinary imprisonment, thus decreasing the number of beds needed within the facilities?

Religious Chaplains

Several researches and reports within prison radicalization have identified the importance of having religious chaplains employed. Commissioning priests, imams, etc., who are moderate can diminish potential violent radical extremists in their quest to convert and recruit others. It is often seen that radicalizers use “cut-and-paste versions of the Koran to recruit new members” (Hamm, 2007, p. 20) which emphasizes their own personal agenda, rather than employing the whole Koran/Bible/Torah etc., to really understand its meaning (Hamm, 2007, p. 20). This is where the priests and imams can be seen as a protective factor by assisting the inmates in gaining a nuanced and moderate religious education (National Institute of Justice, 2015; Hamm, 2007; Hamm, 2013; Jones, 2014; ICSR, 2010; Mulcahy et al., 2013; Olsen, 2008; Kruglanski et al., 2014). In addition, they are often expected to partake in the role as welfare officers, therapists, social workers, and experts regarding terrorism and radicalization (ICSR, 2010, pp. 33-34). This is clearly seen in the results from the comparative analysis.

While prison chaplains, whether it be imams or priests, are significant in preventing extremists in gaining religious ground (ICSR, 2010), it is also a question of having a sufficient amount available for the inmates who need it. The Danish Institute for International Studies recommends that the Prison and Probation Services (mainly in Denmark) acquire

...qualified imams and offering better relationships for practicing Muslims. For example, this could be easier access to the imam by having him several hours in the individual prison, thereby reducing waiting time for conversation, providing better facilities for holding religious ceremonies and Friday prayers so that they do not have to use random empty rooms (Olsen, 2008, p. 6).

The problem of not having enough religious chaplains is often related to the abovementioned risk factor of overcrowding. When prisons are overcrowded, there are too many inmates and too little time for chaplains (as well as prison guards) to provide help for them (Hamm, 2007, p. 79). Therefore, as an inmate stated in an interview with Hamm (2007), “The potential for radicalization is there, no doubt. There is on one from the outside who will radicalize us. That can only happen from the inside” (Hamm, 2007, p. 87). Furthermore, a problem emerges, of whether or not the Danish and Swedish prisons focus on rehabilitation and treatment of prisoners should include or concern religion. Religious radicalization is highlighted in both countries as a prominent problem; however, one does not “treat” religion. Substance abuse and mental illnesses (to some degree) can be cured; social abilities and skills can be learnt, but one does not “treat” religion. Or can it be? This seems to be the notion when the emphasis on religious chaplains who are moderate in their beliefs and can articulate this to those who either are susceptible towards radicalization or those who should be “cured” of their radical beliefs. Therefore, the question is how to then prevent a radical and ideological religious experience or conversion from occurring if we are not supposed to or able to “treat” religion? One of the potential answers to this question will be discussed in the next sub-category, namely, sectioning.

Sectioning

Sectioning or the placement of inmates can be a valuable practice when trying to prevent radicalization. As was explained in the assessment model, there are several types of sectioning practices that can be utilized. For example, if a prisoner proves to be dangerous towards fellow inmates, sectioning can serve as a protection and prevention tool for the correctional staff to employ. The analysis showed that neither Denmark nor Sweden disclosed exactly what type of sectioning they employed - only that it was a possibility and that the Danish Ministry of Justice wanted to increase the use of it (2015a, p. 26).

When first acquainted with the practice of sectioning, it would seem that there are multiple benefits to organizing inmates based on their level of dangerousness (e.g. history of violence or radicalization). A common opinion is that terrorists or extremists should be isolated. The case of Norwegian mass murderer and terrorist, Anders Behring Breivik¹⁰, is an example of this. However, the ICSR (2010) calls for caution when doing so. There are potential risks when/if an extremist individual or a radicalized person is placed in isolation e.g. in order to protect fellow inmates from the individual. These risks are amongst others the inmate feeling marginalized (Hamm, 2007), perhaps leading to a verification of his or her beliefs/ideology and/or empowering the “simplified mono-causal interpretation of the world where you are either with them or against them, part of the problem or part of the solution” (Schmid, 2013, p. 10). In addition to this, as was the case with Anders Behring Breivik who filed a lawsuit against the Norwegian State for violating the European human rights convention article 3¹¹; Breivik claimed that he was subjected to torture like treatment since the beginning of his imprisonment (“Norge krænkedde Anders Breiviks menneskerettigheder”, 2016).

What is important in order to use sectioning efficiently is to have an overall structural strategy in the first place and then use risk assessments in order to correctly place the individuals from the beginning, such as the Swedish Prison and Probation Service proposes. This will be elaborated on in the next paragraph.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment tools are beneficial for assessing which individuals are dangerous or potential radicalizers, which facility/institution they should be placed, and if they are already placed and have become radicalized should they then be transferred to other facilities. There are several risk assessment instruments for predicting levels of e.g. violence, such as the Historical Clinical Risk Management-20 scale (HCR-20) or the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA). However as mentioned in the explanation for the assessment model, two instruments targeting violent extremism specifically, have been developed. These are the VERA (and VERA-2) as well as the ERG 22+. Both of the instruments are Structured Professional Judgment (SPJ) tools, meaning that the instruments combine the actuarial (statistics) and clinical approach (Doyle & Dolan, 2002). This means, that the instruments can be considered systematic, consistent yet “flexible enough to account for case-specific influences and the contexts in which assessments are conducted” (Doyle & Dohan, 2002, p. 652). As found in the

¹⁰ Anders Behring Breivik, Norwegian citizen, a right-wing radical terrorist, who committed a comprehensive terrorist attack in Norway, July 22nd, 2011. He bombed the government district, which killed eight civilians, and thereafter shot and killed 69 people at the Labor party’s annual youth summer camp at Utøya (“Anders Behring Breivik”, 2016).

¹¹ Article 3 states that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (European Convention on Human Rights, 2010, p. 6).

analysis, Sweden use both of these in their work. But why should the prison staff conduct continuous risk assessments as proposed in the assessment model? It is believed in certain strands of criminology that people are in fact able to change. This is mainly due to the branch of life-course and developmental (DLC) criminology, and more in particular Sampson & Laub's notion of turning points and desistance from crime (2003; 2005). Sampson & Laub's (2003) book *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives* drew upon the study conducted by the Glueck's in the 1950s, in which Sampson & Laub tracked down the 500 delinquent and non-delinquent men who had participated in it. It was within this study they emphasized the meaning of turning points within an offender's life which could lead them to desist from crime by choice or default. These turning points could be marriage, getting a steady job, or joining the military. What should be taken from this is the fact that Sampson & Laub believed that offenders could change. Adding to this notion, it was explained in the assessment model that prisons could cause people to change their lives. Therefore, by conducting continuous risk assessments such as the VERA 2, it will enable subtle changes within the offender to be registered such as the person's attitude as well as if the protective measures have worked, thus adhering to the RNR model's principles. In addition, as mentioned before, it also serves as a way to distinguish the ordinary offenders from the radicalized offenders. However, risk assessments are not the only way to observe changes within an offender. Monitoring and supervision can also reveal signs of change in an offender. *How* prisoners are monitored will be discussed next.

Monitoring and Supervision

It should not come as a surprise to anyone that inmates are monitored. However, *how* they are monitored and supervised can be discussed. The assessment model identified that monitoring could in fact be beneficial, especially in relation to potential desistance and disengagement from crime and/or extremist environments. In the analysis it became clear that the Danish Prison and Probation Service had increased the supervision of the prisoners, their visitors, and the prison staff. The increase in supervision is due to the problem of smuggling cellular phones into the prisons, thus enabling the inmates to have unsupervised contact to the outside world.

Sweden followed in the footsteps of Denmark by stating that in order to prevent radicalization it is necessary to control visitation and the inmates' access to phones, etc. (Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2015b). Controlling and monitoring the inmates' visitation, use of phones and the Internet, reading material, reading their letters, etc., enables the staff to investigate possible threats posed by an inmate or their associates. The DLC theories are relevant here as well as they (especially Sampson & Laub, 2003) emphasize the meaning of social bonds. Social bonds can either keep a person in a criminal environment or help them to desist from that particular lifestyle (Carlsson, 2012; Sampson & Laub, 2003). If one or some of an inmate's particularly pro-criminal associates were prohibited from visiting as well as the prison staff controlling the flow of communication between these individuals, the opportunity for desistance from criminal activity could, in fact, occur. If making it difficult to uphold contact with pro-criminal associates perhaps the inmate would become discouraged and thus more susceptible towards participating in rehabilitation program or receiving a mentor who can show him or her how to lead a crime free lifestyle, especially upon release. While this can be argued to have a manipulative streak to it, it can potentially bring something positive with it, namely, a positive change in the

inmate's life. This leads us towards the use of rehabilitation programs which will be discussed in the following section.

Rehabilitation Programs

Most prisons employ rehabilitation programs in one way or the other (ICSR, 2010; Schmid, 2013; Bonta & Andrews, 2017; Silke, 2014). However, what is interesting to note is that not every prisoner is enrolled or even offered to participate in a program (ICSR, 2010). When it comes to programs targeting violent extremism and radicalization, the assortment of programs are scarce if not virtually non-existent. An example of a successful program was when Denmark collaborated with the European Union to develop their mentorship program to target the increasing population of radicals or extremist prisoners (Directory for the Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015). The program, called "Back on Track", has continued after the pilot project was finished and is funded by the Danish Prison and Probation Service itself (Directory for the Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015).

In Sweden such programs targeting violent extremism are assumed to not exist as no information on it could be found. What is interesting though is that Silke (2014) noted that "overall, probably less than five per cent of all released terrorist prisoners will be re-convicted for involvement in terrorist-related activity" (Silke, 2014, p. 6). Should we then focus so much on developing rehabilitation programs for radicalized violent extremists within prison? The answer is yes. Even though it might seem futile to do so, there is still a responsibility towards the individuals who are imprisoned, which is also seen in the Danish Corrections Act §3.

The mentorship program could in fact assist in disengagement or de-radicalization in collaboration with a religious chaplain. Jones (2014) explains that, "for some, conversion has a positive influence and implies spiritual enlightenment, rehabilitation, a new path in life or dealing with the pains of imprisonment" (Jones, 2014, p. 80). However, most of the research has in fact found it difficult to find successful programs targeting radicalization and violent extremism. What is duly noted though, is that "good programmes pay attention to facilitating prisoners' transition from prison back to mainstream society" (ICSR, 2010, p. 57). Focusing on educating the inmates, having skills labs or training for several types of employment or indeed "just" helping them tackle everyday problems would be extremely beneficial (ICSR, 2010; Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b; Danish Ministry of Justice, 2015a; "Vejen ud af kriminalitet, n.d.). This is where especially the mentorship program should enter the equation. The mentorship programs help the inmates with practical, everyday problems and can assist in preparing them for entering society again ("Mentorer", n.d.). In the specific mentorship program "Back on Track", which was mentioned earlier, has the extra dimension of helping the inmate to build positive, non-criminal and non-extremist relations ("Back on track, preventing radicalization among prison inmates", n.d.). The evaluation reports have not been accessible for the author; however, the Confederation of European Probation notes that "the overall assessment that individual and specialized interventions such as this type of mentorship scheme for this target group is much needed and of great value" ("Back on track, preventing radicalization among prison inmates", n.d.).

Education of Staff

The last emphasized theme, which was identified in the literature, is the notion of continuous education of the prison personnel (Schmid, 2013; ICSR, 2010). Both

Denmark and Sweden acknowledge the importance of this and have drafted action plans regarding education of personnel. They especially target educational workshops towards the telltale signs of radicalization as well as the cultural backgrounds of the extremist environments (Directory for the Danish Prison and Probation Service, 2015). With the emerging literature on the various extremist environments and multiple conferences where personnel can share experiences from their particular contexts, a “checklist” of potential radicalization signs would not be too difficult to compile. Schmid (2013) provides several possible indicators of radicalization. A few of these include,

- Visible changes in style of clothing and behaviour;
- Break with their own family and turn to ‘new friends’;
- Religion becomes an explanation for everything and is constantly referred to;
- Other Muslims who do not follow strict religious practices are denounced as unbelievers (Schmid, 2013, p. 27)

Schmid includes several more; however, the abovementioned can also be applied in a prison context – especially the Danish and Swedish context as prisoners are allowed to wear their own clothes rather than a prison uniform - as well as other violent extremist groups (with small changes to the wording). Such observations could easily be shared with colleagues at workshops or conferences in which radicalization was the topic. It would also allow for colleagues to compare observations and experiences, and, thus expand the repertoire of first-hand knowledge in this field.

It has been discussed that the problem within the field of radicalization (and especially within a prison context) is that most of the literature is based on secondary knowledge rather than new empirical studies (ICSR, 2010; Swedish Prison and Probation Service, 2016b; Jones, 2014). There are multiple reasons for this. Hamm (2007) explains the difficulty of gaining access to prisons, the inmates as well as the staff. Gaining access to prisons and its inhabitants is not the only problem. Another issue is funding (King & Liebling, 2008) as well as the considerable amount of time needed to conduct good research (King & Liebling, 2008). This is especially a problem if a particular organization or institution serves as both a gatekeeper and primary sponsor for the research, “which also means that it has considerable control over what is published and when” (King & Liebling, 2008, p. 433). A theoretical example of this could be a project funded by a country’s government or ministry of justice, where the purpose is to map how big a problem radicalization actually is in a prison context, and the researcher finds that the problem is virtually non-existent. If the particular government has used this argument in their election campaign, e.g. that they will bear down hard on radicalization as this is supposedly a problem, the negative findings will indeed have an impact on the public’s perception of the government. Therefore, they could control whether or not the findings are publicized. How does this then impact the accessible research? Therefore, one must be critical towards the available research as well as pondering why there are not more studies and literature on certain subjects. Furthermore, when conducting research in prisons there are no guarantees that e.g. the inmates will actually participate in interviews. However, as many scholars still comment, primary research is needed in order to gain a better understanding of the various phenomena such as radicalization and its processes within prisons. This knowledge will in turn add to a better-equipped and educated correctional staff.

CONCLUSION

During the course of this thesis contemporary literature on radicalization, deradicalization, and violent extremism within a prison context have been identified. This contributed to the development of an assessment model for counter-radicalization strategies within prisons. The assessment model was based on the three core principles within the Canadian risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model which is one of the most applicable models regarding offender rehabilitation and treatment within correctional facilities. It was then further expanded with seven themes identified within the contemporary literature on radicalization, deradicalization, violent extremism, and all of the aforementioned within a prison context. These were a combination of risk- and protective factors which resulted in the following seven themes, 1) overcrowding, 2) religious chaplains, 3) sectioning, 4) risk assessment, 5) monitoring/supervision, 6) rehabilitation programs, and, 7) education of staff. The model was then used as a framework for a comparative analysis of the Danish and Swedish Prison and Probation Services' counter-radicalization effort within their adult correctional facilities.

It was found that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service implements much of the existing knowledge from research and in particular criminological research. This is more than can be said for the Danish Prison and Probation Services. It would seem that even though the Swedish Prison and Probation Service seemingly rely heavily on the Danish experience in preventing radicalization, they take it to the next level by incorporating existing knowledge and applying it to their action plan, methods, and goals. Here, it is particularly regarding their use of violence risk assessment instruments which is thought of. The application of instruments such as the VERA-2 and the ERG 22+ can be seen as valuable in assisting the prison staff in their work and assessments of potentially dangerous individuals. In addition, the recognition and approval from the scientific community regarding these tools (Beardly & Beech, 2013) will allow the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's members to gain more reliability in their work seen from the outside. In other words, by implementing a lot from the current research it can be argued that they, in theory, are better equipped to prevent radicalization than e.g. Denmark seemingly is. However, this conclusion is based solely on the accessible knowledge provided from both Prison and Probation Services, meaning that there was in fact some missing data from both countries. From Denmark there was missing data on risk assessment. While the data is missing from the official documents, it has to be assumed that they have some sort of instrument assisting them with determining the inmates' level of risk. From Sweden there was missing data on rehabilitative programs targeting radicalization; on the other hand, as they have just begun to address this problem, it is understandable that they have not implemented any programs targeting this yet. Therefore, it will be interesting to see the development of the counter-radicalization strategies from both countries in the years to come. In addition, it was observed that there were in fact great differences between the two countries' prison perceptions, perspectives, levels of trust and transparency on the ground level, i.e. the prison services as well as on the top level, i.e. the Government. It was discussed that the Danish context was less transparent in their material as well as the senders of the material was the top level, whereas it was opposite for the Swedish context.

After the comparative analysis, the results were discussed in relation to contemporary literature as well as relevant criminological theory. Especially life-

course and developmental theory with Sampson & Laub's notions of turning points, offender change, and desistance were discussed regarding the importance of conducting continuous risk assessments to register change in the offender. In addition, Sampson & Laub were also discussed in the paragraph regarding increased supervision of inmates and controlling visitation, access to phones and the Internet as these could be related to the opportunity of desistance.

How big a problem is prison radicalization then? Realistically, we do not know. There is a lack of empirical evidence and what little empirical data that is available is somewhat outdated. Much of the literature, including this thesis which applies comparative analyses, only includes a small number of cases and relies on secondary research. It is therefore difficult to make universal conclusions regarding counter-radicalization strategies which can be applied to different contexts. Thus, with the emergence of Daesh and their radical ways of recruiting, and especially their recruitment of individuals with criminal histories, more research is called upon. Empirical studies including interviews with inmates, staff and families could provide valuable information. This information could be related to signs of radicalization, what has worked for those who have become deradicalized or disengaged, as well as assisting in mapping the actual scope of the problem. In addition, even though there is an upsurge of militant Islamism, the other types of violent extremism should not be neglected. With the increasing focus on militant Islamism and the moral panic targeting all Muslims, an equal level of reaction from the far right-wing extremists can be expected (Hagtved, 1994). Therefore, it is important for researchers, policy-makers, the police, and the intelligence agencies to broaden their focus to all of the violent extremist environments.

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