

From theory to tools

Arjan de Wolf is a Dutch expert on radicalisation processes. Together with professor Doosje he wrote a book on an approach of de-radicalisation that is based on the analysis of social-psychological processes underlying radicalisation. In the development of tools based on this work, TERRA takes an important next step, so he writes.

Arjan de Wolf: "Radicalisation poses a serious threat to a safe and secure society. A lot of initiatives have been launched to counter radicalisation and terrorism. These initiatives are very diverse in nature – from organising neighbourhood bbq's to guided tours for youngsters to concentration camps. Yet, little research has been done to evaluate the effect of these initiatives. To counter radicalisation and terrorism successfully, professionals in the social domain need to know how to recognise and counter radicalisation. Interventions of de-radicalisation are more effective if they (1) are based in theory, (2) are offered at the right moment in the radicalisation process and (3) are aimed at the right target group.

To give an insight into this subject, Bertjan Doosje and I wrote the book "Aanpak van Radicalisme: Een psychologische analyse" (Dealing with radicalisation: A psychological analysis). In this book we provide a thorough and in-depth social-psychological analysis of the radicalisation process. Based on this analysis, we make recommendations for dealing with radicalisation in each phase of this process. As an author you hope, of course, that these recommendations will encounter follow-up, and will lead to useful tools. Although the recommendations we give should theoretically work, this still doesn't give a full guarantee of success. Most of the recommended interventions haven't been fully examined on their effectiveness yet. So, they must still be demonstrated in practice. The TERRA project builds on our research findings. It translates theoretical recommendations into practical tools and guidelines to be used by frontline workers. Besides that, it comprises assessment of the effectiveness of these tools. Thus, TERRA takes an important next step in dealing with radicalisation and terrorism in Europe."

For more information on the book, you can contact the author by sending a mail to info@dwta.nl