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The threat of foreign fighters

The threat of foreign fighters and violent extremists and the development of rehabilitative measures through implementation of standardized risk assessment tools



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Abstract

Since the rise of the Islamic State, thousands of people from around the world have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight, support, and participate in the organization. Many of these people came from Western countries, including Norway. For numerous reasons, a great deal of them have returned to their countries of origin. The question now is what threat they may pose to national security, and what the risk that they choose to commit acts of terrorism is. The paper examines the extent to which we can establish this threat, how we can assess the risk they pose, and what we can do with this assessment. To what extent can the knowledge of the threat, and the risk assessments performed, assist in developing strategies for rehabilitation? Is there a way in which we can standardize and systemize these risk assessments in order to gain better insight, and in turn, improve the way we develop rehabilitation programs? The findings show many challenges in both ascertaining the threat posed by foreign fighters, as well as the implementation of standardized risk assessment. However, research and experience also indicate that there is a lot to gain from the different risk assessment tools available. Such tools are able to tell us a great deal about which areas to focus on when developing rehabilitation programs and help us better understand which steps to take when doing so.

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With this paper, I finally conclude my six years as a student, the last two having been spent attempting to grasp the complex, yet intriguing field of societal security. These two years have been filled with exciting classes, skilled professors, a lot of hard work, and a lot of fun! The semester I have spent writing this paper has been both challenging and educational, and thanks to those around me, I have managed to cross the hurdles along the way.

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1. Introduction

International terrorism is an ever-changing phenomenon, bringing about new threat agents as societal and political dynamics develop. One instance of this is the emergence of the Islamic State in 2013 (BBC, 2019). The group's rapid growth, territorial expansion, and ability to quickly recruit members from all over the world caused a great deal of worry to the international community (BBC, 2019). For a long time, focus and attention was given to a territorial defeat, however, many states became increasingly concerned with the threat that could be posed by their nationals returning to their home countries (PST, 2021). Thus, the subject of returning foreign fighters was brought to light. Does this group of people pose a significant terrorist threat, and if so, how is this threat being counteracted? In 2019, the Islamic State was declared defeated, and the territories they once occupied were re-seized (BBC, 2019). However big a feat, the organization remains active. It has been reported that they are still actively recruiting people, targeting younger and more vulnerable individuals. Additionally, support, both locally in the region, as well as internationally, still exists (Stokke, 2021). The challenge of those who have either openly supported the organization, recruited people to join, or themselves traveled to join them is now a pressing security issue for many states. In Norway, although dealing with a smaller number of people than many other states, the issue is considered critical, and finding a way to rehabilitate this group of individuals is pressing (PST, 2021). An estimated 100 Norwegian citizens have been apprehended and imprisoned in the region (Syria, Iraq, and Turkey), of which approximately 40 have returned to Norway (Sørelvmo, 2021). Many of these, as well as others who have not themselves traveled, but have in some form supported the organization, are serving prison sentences in Norway today (Stokke, 2021). Larger numbers are recorded in other European countries, and there is a great focus on developing methods and strategies to deal with the potential threat (Europol, 2020, p. 12). In order to both fathom the threat these people pose, as well as understand how to best deal with this threat, we must examine different methods of assessment. Furthermore, we must look at how these assessments can provide us with information useful for developing further steps. As this challenge crosses borders, examining whether or not a standardized approach to risk assessment could be of benefit, and potentially aid us in laying the foundation for rehabilitative measures.

1.2. Theme and Background

The threat of foreign fighters and violent extremists and the development of rehabilitative measures through implementation of standardized risk assessment tools

The theme of this paper is to investigate how standardized risk assessment tools are used, in particular with persons who have either returned from ISIS, or have affiliations with the group. Furthermore, the paper will examine the threat itself, and how this threat is understood and defined. Lastly, an examination of what these tools can contribute in terms of rehabilitative measure will also be done.

In 2020, Europol recorded 15 completed jihadi terrorist attacks in Europe, twice as many as the previous year (Stokke, 2021). The Norwegian Police's Security Service issued a national threat assessment this year in which they state that Islamist extremists in Europe will continue to pose a threat in the coming years, and that this threat will mainly come from Islamist networks consisting of returned foreign fighters released from prison and convicted terrorists still in prison (PST, 2021, p. 19). This concern is shared by many European countries, including Norway (PST, 2021, p. 20). The reality of this fear has already been seen in the Norwegian context when a 16-year-old boy who was charged with involvement in a terrorist organization, was also convicted of planning to commit an act of terrorism (Stokke, 2021). This incident further reiterates the potential threat posed by foreign fighters and ISIS-affiliates. Europol also reported that "individuals prone to criminal activities, including those currently imprisoned, who radicalize and engage in terrorism, represent a serious threat" (Europol, 2020, p. 13). Thus, it becomes evident that the issue is of priority. As the phenomenon of returning foreign fighters on the scale seen today is rather recent, one must consider that there may be gaps in the existing research on successful methods and measures. Therefore, looking at how the threat is interpreted and described, as well as what tools exist and what they offer in terms of risk assessment is of great interest.

1.2. Problem Statement

Based on the theme of this paper, the following problem statement has been composed:

What is the security threat posed by foreign fighters and other violent extremists affiliated with ISIS, and to what extent can standardized risk assessment tools aid in managing these threats?

1.3. Research Questions

Blaikie and Priest (2019) state that “*a research project is built on the foundations of its research questions*” (Blaikie & Priest, 2019, p. 57) and it is thus crucial to establish questions that will guide the research in the right direction. These questions will also provide some structure for the paper, as well as allow the reader to better understand the process and train of thought.

The questions will be answered in a descriptive way and aim at uncovering characteristics and patterns in certain social phenomena, such as the process of risk assessment and risk management. The paper will also look at the type of people involved, characteristic beliefs or values the people investigated hold, and some characteristic behavior (Blaikie, 2010, p. 71).

The questions asking ‘why’ will attempt to shed light on the causes and reasons for the existence of certain characteristics in a particular phenomenon. It will also aid in understanding the relationships between events, or within certain social processes. An example could be ‘why does this activity have these particular consequences?’ (Blaikie, 2010, p. 60)

‘How’ questions aim at “bringing about change”, focusing on a practical outcome. For instance, one could ask how a particular social process or pattern can be changed, or how to slow down or speed up their rate of change (Blaikie, 2010, p. 60).

Taking these descriptions and explanations into account, I have developed the following research questions:

- Which standardized risk assessment tools are used in order to determine appropriate rehabilitation measures?
- What are the main challenges associated with risk assessment of foreign fighters, and how are these dealt with?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of standardized risk assessment tools?
- To what extent do risk assessments lay the foundation for rehabilitation programs for convicted foreign fighters?

1.4. Structure

This paper is divided into six chapters. These include an introduction, a chapter describing the theoretical framework used, furthermore, a chapter explaining methodology and how the research has been completed, a presentation of the empirical results found, a discussion of these findings, and lastly, a conclusion. The introduction aims at giving a background to the choice of topic, why it is relevant as well as why it is of interest. The introduction will also present the problem statement that has been chosen, as well as the research questions that will further guide the research. The theoretical framework will give the reader a better understanding of the concepts explored, as well as describe some of the work that has already been done in this field. In addition to this, the chapter will also present the reader with a clearer understanding of some of the terms that are relevant. The chapter labeled methodology gives a clear explanation of the methods used to both gather and analyze the data and information, as well as the reasons why such methods have been chosen. In the chapter labeled results, the reader will be presented with the empirical findings that has been gathered. The discussion will aim at understanding what the data tells us, while taking into consideration the theoretical framework. By doing so, the goal is to answer the problem statement and the research questions that have been constructed. Lastly, the conclusion will gather all the strings and summarize the findings of the research.

1.5. Limitations

When selecting the subject and theme for the paper, the main focus was concentrating on a topic that appeared to bear relevance for the current climate. As international terrorism is a dynamic field, focusing on a topic within this field appeared both significant and interesting. However, the field itself is vast, so in order to narrow down the topic, a selection was made based on what appears to be a highly discussed subject today, both within the Norwegian context, as well as in the West in general. Focusing mainly on foreign fighters from ISIS was a choice made based on the fact that it is an ongoing subject and issue, and thus is both interesting and important to better understand. Other demographic groups were not selected, either because they are marginal, or because they bear little relevance to the Norwegian context. The same is the case for other terrorist organization. Choosing not to concentrate on other risk assessment methods was largely due to the large amount of existing research, and the wish to delve deeper into something that appeared more untouched.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that lays the foundation for this paper aims at providing a better understanding of the main concepts and perspectives that aid in answering the problem statement and research questions. Firstly, a short explanation of terrorism will be given. This is important as the term and concept itself is complex and multifaceted, whereas this paper deal with terrorism in a rather narrow context and with a specific group of people. This will serve as an introduction to the Islamic State and its members and foreign fighters. This will give the reader a better understanding of the group investigated. Furthermore, a thorough explanation of radicalization, deradicalization and disengagement will be supplied. These are important concepts to gauge as they help better understand the findings and the discussion. Following this, a brief description of what the concept of risk entails, as well as how it is perceived, will be presented. This will then be followed by an exploration of standardization theory. Thereafter, theory concerning risk assessment will be explained. Lastly, some background concerning rehabilitation and rehabilitative measures will be explained.

2.1. Terrorism

Discussing and researching the concept of terrorism brings about a myriad of definitional challenges. Terrorism is a vastly complex set of phenomena and is used to cover a myriad of different groups of both people and causes (Bjørger, 2005, p.1). In order to maintain coherence throughout the paper, and to provide a clear discussion later on, the following definition of terrorism will be used:

“Terrorism is political violence or the threat of violence by groups or individuals who deliberately target civilians or noncombatants in order to influence the behavior or actions of targeted publics and governments” (Nacos, 2016, p. 37).

In their yearly threat assessment, the Police’s Security Service stated that Islamist extremists in Europe will continue to pose a terrorist threat in the coming year, and the messages preached by groups such as ISIS will continue to entice and mobilize their supporters around Europe (Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste, 2021, p. 20). With ISIS weakened, particularly when it comes to territorial power, the return of foreign fighters who traveled to participate in their cause triggers

a great deal of worry when it comes to security and protecting against potential hostile acts on Norwegian territory (Etterretningstjenesten, 2021 p. 29). Loss of territory has also brought about a shift in strategy in that a heightened focus on branches outside of Syria and Iraq has become of greater priority, and intelligence indicates that future attacks will likely be perpetrated by persons inspired by international terrorist organizations or with ties to such organizations (Etterretningstjenesten, 2021, p. 29). In order to manage this, new legislation has also been passed, so to ensure that the people charged with terrorism-related crimes receive appropriate sentences in which rehabilitation can take place. Such crimes include membership in a terrorist organization, committing violence in the name of terrorism, and recruitment to such acts (Regjeringen, 2016).

2.1.1. The Islamic State and Western Foreign Fighters

The Islamic State's, or ISIS' roots can be traced back to al-Qaeda in Iraq, however, they gained the attention of the international community in 2014 when they seized large parts of Syria and Iraq (BBC, 2019). Following this, ISIS began recruiting people from across the globe to travel to the region and join their mission. Although it is difficult to give a precise number of how many people we are dealing with, estimates indicate that as many as 15,000 people have traveled to Syria and Iraq, around 2,000 of whom are from the West (Obe & Silverman, 2014, p. 9). In order to better fathom how to manage the return of these people, here on out referred to as foreign fighters, it is vital to understand who they are and why they have decided to join ISIS. The term "foreign fighter" was not commonly known until the late 1980s, then used in relation with fighters who had travelled to Afghanistan to participate in the mujahidin resistance against the Soviet Union, however, the term was rather dormant until 9/11. Still, a consensus on a clear definition was lacking until recently, when researchers finally attempted to create a systematic definition (Borum & Fein, 2016, p. 249). Different definitions arose, with emphasis on different aspects. Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty define foreign fighters as "non-indigenous, non-territorialized combatants who, motivated by religion, kinship, and/or ideology rather than pecuniary reward, enter a conflict zone to participate in hostilities" (Moore & Tumelty, 2008, p. 412). An alternative definition presented by Thomas Hegghammer suggests that a foreign fighter is "an agent who (1) has joined, and operates within the confines of, an insurgency, (2) lacks citizenship of the conflict state or kinship links to its warring factions, (3)

lacks affiliation to an official military organization, and (4) is unpaid” (Hegghammer, 2011, p. 58)

The two different definitions share in aspects such as lack of citizenship in the state in question in which the conflict is taking place, however, differ greatly in that the former refers to foreign fighter combatants, whereas the latter’s criteria are that the individual is merely taking part in an insurgency (Borum & Fein, 2016, p. 250). In subsequent chapters, the process of assessing the risk posed by foreign fighters will be explored, and in order to better understand some of the challenges this task poses, it is also crucial to understand the implication a lack of clear definitions can have. As mentioned, researchers and authors disagree on what acts constitute the notion of participating in or supporting insurgencies. Thus, four categories of actions have been presented by Borum and Fein (2016). *Direct action* is when an individual takes an active part in combat or fighting. *Operational support* refers to when someone is involved in planning attacks, offers on-site support, or assists in preparing weapons for use in attacks. *Movement support* describes activities such as spotting, recruitment, fund-raising, and media strategy. Lastly, *logistical support* involves enabling activities. These activities can for instance be providing funds, food, lodging, false documentation, communication equipment, or transportation. Another important distinction between the two definitions presented is that of the foreign fighter’s location. Moore and Tumelty specify that the individual is present at the location of the conflict, whereas Hegghammer states that the person must merely operate within the confines, suggesting that physical presence is not always necessary (Borum & Fein, 2016, p. 250; Moore & Tumelty, 2008, p. 412; Hegghammer, 2011, p. 58). These are important distinctions to be aware of when discussing risk assessment and rehabilitation of foreign fighters, particularly in those cases when people have been convicted of terrorism-related acts but have themselves not traveled to Syria or Iraq, or directly committed violent acts.

Furthermore, an understanding of who these people are, why they have decided to take part in the activities of ISIS, as well as why they have returned, is vital. A better grasp of this may provide a clearer idea of what measures are necessary for successful rehabilitation. As this group of people is far from homogenous, the underlying factors will also differ greatly from person to person. Many of those who travelled during the early years did not do so based on animosity towards the West in particular, but rather to join in the fight against President Bashar al-Assad (Obe & Silverman, 2014, p. 14). Besides this reason, four other prominent motivational themes have been presented. Firstly, a belief that the Sunni Muslims are part of a

struggle against the West and Shi'a Islam, and that establishing a caliphate is part of this struggle. Secondly, a conviction that the fight taking place in Syria is a defensive struggle by the global Muslim community against the Assad-regime. Thirdly, a desire to fight against the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Assad-regime, and a belief that the West has failed to respond. And lastly, for some, an eagerness to participate in what some refer to as adventure tourism (Borum & Fein, 2016, p. 256). The difficulty in thoroughly understanding why an individual chooses to travel to a war zone may also be linked to the complexity of the phenomenon of radicalization, which will be presented below.

2.2. Radicalization, Deradicalization & Disengagement

2.2.1. Radicalization

There are numerous ways of describing and defining radicalization, however, to cast a wider net over all the different understandings, one can refer to radicalization as a process leading towards the increased use of political violence. Thus, by contrast, deradicalization indicates reduction in the use of political violence. Studying the two phenomena is thus central in order to provide answers as to how religious or political violence emerges, how it can be prevented, and how it can be contained (Della Porta & LaFree, 2012, p. 5).

However, radicalization is a broad concept, to which there is a great deal of debate as to what best defines the term, and which factors this definition should entail. Throughout the 2000s, when discussing radicalization, one would often refer to a process in which a group or an individual becomes more inclined to commit acts of political violence, or in which they are on direct paths towards religious fundamentalism and terrorism (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 2). Following terrorist attacks in Europe throughout the first decade of the 2000s, an understanding of radicalization as something closely associated with extremism, violence, and terrorism has been prominent, particularly within the research done on jihadist radicalization. The idea has oftentimes been that the outcome of radicalization must be terrorism, and when this is not the instance, it has been interpreted as a “no result” case (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 3). However, this view fails to encompass the numerous nuances within the phenomena of radicalization.

As terrorism is a means of action with the intent of causing an immediate effect, and radicalization deals with a process in which political objectives and ideas develop, terrorism is

merely *one* of several outcomes of radicalization. One of the negative outcomes of this tendency can for instance be an increased likelihood of legitimizing extreme or unnecessary countermeasures, and a clear distinction is thus vital (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 3). We can see similar issues when equating extremism and radicalization. Whereas radicalization is viewed as a process, extremism on the other hand, refers to a condition. Additionally, extremism is often described as a person's rejection of democratic principles, fundamental values, and codes of conduct. When it comes to radicalization, the concept deals less with political systems as such, but rather with an individual's disposition to confront or defy existing political order (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 4). One can presume that extremism, terrorism, and radicalization all require different approaches and methods, and a clear conceptual distinction between the terms is thus of great importance.

To achieve a clearer understanding of the various nuances of the concept of radicalization, as well as better fathom how radicalization takes place, Gaspar et al. (2020) presents three forms of radicalization. The first form is *radicalization into violence*, which is described as the "conventional" understanding of radicalization. The idea is that the process takes place when an individual or a group expands its methods for accomplishing political goals and ideas and moves away from solely relying on non-violent arguments and actions. Within this definition, there is an understanding that a person or group has professed a willingness to use violence as a political tool, as well as rejected the use of legal channels. The emphasis on violence within this understanding of radicalization is particularly beneficial when it comes to developing and implementing security policies (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 7). Secondly, *radicalization within violence* refers to individuals or groups that already use violence, but who radicalize even further (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 8). This may signify an increase in the means of violence, the frequency of the acts, or the expansion of their objectives. This type of radicalization often springs out of a strategic setback and can thus be an effort to regain military initiative. As radicalization within violence often appears within the context of terrorism, most of the available data and empirical studies on this phenomenon comes from terrorism research. For instance, escalation of the means and use of violence often happens when competing terrorist groups who share the same ideology attempt to achieve dominance. Studies have shown that this tendency is highly present within Salafi-jihadists groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, and that the increase in competition between such groups lead to both a rise in the number of attacks, as well as their severity. Moreover, the same tendencies have been seen when a terrorist group is preparing to execute highly lethal acts (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 9). Thus, an understanding of

which context and environment an individual has been present is crucial in understanding the reasons behind a potential increase in violent tendencies, and which countermeasures appear most appropriate. Lastly, *radicalization without violence* refers to instances where people or groups intentionally violate the given framework of the legal system to achieve certain goals and to express their inclination to oppose existing order, however, when these efforts are of a non-violent nature. An example of this type of radicalization is for instance acts of civil disobedience (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 10). In large due to the concern with acute threats when developing security policies, this type of radicalization has been given little attention within the research field (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 10), however, an understanding of radicalization without violence is an important tool when attempting to better grasp the different nuances of the field. Bartlett, Birdwell, and King (2010, p. 10) state that “subscribing to a radical belief does not necessitate engaging in radical actions”. A focus on violence alone will often limit our understanding of radicalization, as well as the behavioral aspects of terrorism (Gaspar et al., 2020, p. 10).

2.2.2. *Deradicalization and Disengagement*

“The term de-radicalization can be understood to simply denote the reversal of radicalization processes” (Della Porta & LaFree, 2012, p. 7). However, to an even greater extent than the concept of radicalization, deradicalization as a concept lacks precision when it comes to the actual processes it entails (Della Porta & LaFree, 2012, p. 7). One can regard deradicalization as a method or tactic in which the basis of knowledge is that the individual still believes in terrorist ideology and is committed to the cause of this ideology (Silke, 2011, p. 19). The deradicalization programs in place today normally carry the goal of convincing the individuals that their ideas and ideologies are faulty and flawed. If this task is completed, the individual is labeled deradicalized (Silke, 2011, p. 19). However, it is argued that this goal may not be neither realistic nor achievable. As mentioned, the process of radicalization is complex and oftentimes difficult to properly grasp, so one can assume that the process of deradicalization is equally difficult and lengthy. The idea of becoming deradicalized implies a process in which one reverses and undoes a gradual process in which someone has experienced social, attitudinal, and behavioral changes that have resulted in an individual’s involvement in terrorist activities, which, with the initiatives available today is not achievable (Horgan, 2009, p. 297). Thus, Horgan (2009) argues that disengagement programs may be much more effective and successful than deradicalization programs (p. 297).

Disengagement can be defined as “the process by which individuals cease to be mobilized in support of a violent extremist movement” (Berger, 2016, p. 3). As disengagement is focused on behavior, rather than internal thought processes of individuals, they are much more quantifiable (Berger, 2016, p. 3). The process of becoming disengaged may happen as a result of two main contributing factors, psychological or emotional causes and physical causes. The psychological or emotional problems that may result in someone becoming disengaged can be a development of negative thoughts and attitudes in cases where an individual may experience negative qualities related to remaining a member of the group or organization. This can for instance be as a result of pressure, anxiety, or disillusionment. These sentiments can in turn lead to a shift in priorities, such as an increased desire to return to a social or psychological state that was present before membership. Another psychological or emotional cause for disengagement is a heightened sense of disillusionment in the methods being pursued by the group. This can for instance be related to political aims or methods of reaching these aims (Horgan, 2009, p. 293-294). Physical disengagement, on the other hand, differs in that it can be identified from the outside. Forms of physical disengagement include for instance apprehension by security services, sometimes followed by imprisonment. Being forced into a new role may also be a sign of this form of disengagement. This shift may for instance be a result of an individual disobeying orders. An additional sign of physical disengagement can be cases where an individual is dismissed from the movement, for instance if arms and weapons haven't been used properly, or other types of comportment in which execution is not warranted (Horgan, 2009, p. 294). The main difference between the two different types of disengagement is that, in the case of psychological disengagement, the person may still be involved with the group or network, as well as still play an important role. Additionally, they may also be engaging in terrorism-related behaviors, even though these behaviors may not be violent in nature. In these cases, disengagement may simply be a migration of roles, meaning that an active terrorist, although not participating in violent acts, may still be supporting and assisting the group or network with other crucial tasks, such as storing weapons or money, or organizing rallies (Horgan, 2009, p. 294). Thus, individual disengagement from terrorism can be both the result of an individual and internal process, as well as a collective and external one. This also means that the process of disengagement may be both voluntary or involuntary in nature, or in some instances, a combination of both (Horgan, 2009, p. 294). In order to reach a better understanding of the threat posed by individuals who have been involved with terrorist organizations or networks,

comprehending this distinction is vital. One can argue that when developing initiatives and measures for these people, knowledge of why they left may have a large impact on which measures are most appropriate, as their motivations for leaving the group can influence how they view the group today, their level of loyalty and allegiance to them, and their likelihood of being receptive to rehabilitation measures. Furthermore, to properly gauge the risk these individuals may pose, an understanding of how risk in itself is perceived is also of great importance. Theory concerning risk and risk perception will be further explained in the following section.

2.3. Risk Perception

The concept of risk brings about many challenges in terms of definitions; challenges which further have an impact on how we understand what a given risk is and which actions we take in order to govern security and risk (Aven, Boyesen, Njå, Olsen & Sandve, 2019). To better grasp the subject of this paper, one can view risk as something that is brought about as a combination of uncertainty and consequence of certain action (Aven et al., 2019). In terms of the threats and risks posed by returning foreign fighters, we can for instance apply the knowledge we have of previous events, such as those in France in 2015 (Europol, 2016). However, there remains a great deal of uncertainty concerning the potential future risks and their subsequent consequences. This particular uncertainty is at the core of risk perception (Aven et al., 2019). In order to get a clearer idea of risk and uncertainty, risk assessments are completed. These aim at gathering information and knowledge about a certain system or societal function, and then produce an assessment of uncertainty (Aven et al., 2019). However, these assessments will often vary depending on who is performing them, as we do not always perceive uncertainty in the same way. Thus, risk depends on both the person responsible for the assessment, as well as what is being assessed (Aven et al., 2019). It is also quite common to use the term risk in reference to the dangers posed by unwanted incidents on people, environment, economy and other societal values, and danger in this sense bears the same meaning as uncertainty in terms of potential consequences society and its values might suffer from (Aven et al., 2019,).

It is common to use two different perceptions of risk: the technical and scientific approach and the socio-economic approach. However, these are not mutually exclusive and aspects of both

tend to be applied in accord (Aven et al., 2019,). Through the scientific approach to risk, one normally employs mathematical models to the analysis in order to express risk in a quantitative and numerical manner. This method is common in relation to technological and economic businesses in order to determine what an acceptable risk is. Conversely, the socio-economic approach is more concerned with the individual or collective perception of risk (Aven et al., 2019). Countless risk analyses can be produced, claiming that the uncertainty and dangers of a given activity or threat are low, however, people's perception is influenced by numerous other factors. Thus, there may still be great worry among the population, and this needs to be taken into account by decision makers on organizational levels when attempting to regulate risk through governance (Aven et al., 2019). In regard to the subject of this paper, one can argue that there lies a somewhat elevated concern in the population when it comes to the risks posed by returning foreign fighters. Hence, in terms of risk governance, it might be necessary to employ a combination of the two approaches to risk in order to both approach the issue from a scientific and logical point, as well as ensuring a sense of safety among the population. It is also important to note that phenomena such as terrorism, radicalization, and violent extremism are not regarded as unknowns and uncertain future crimes that are impossible to calculate, but are rather seen as manageable risk (Virta, 2019, p. 137). What is thus interesting, as these risk are seen as manageable, is how theory of standardization, as well as the act of standardization in itself, can aid in dealing with said risks.

2.4. Standardization theory

The term 'standardization' can be defined as the manner of 'rendering things uniform' (Timmermans & Berg, 1997, p. 275), and refers to the manner in which an organization deals with risks, hazards, and dangers (Jore, 2019, p. 153). Thus, one can say that standards are "generalized and formalized rules that serve to prescribe and document efficiency, similarities, hegemony, and control within and across organization" (Jore, 2019, s. 153). One of the aims of standardization is to improve the predictability of normal operations, as well as enable transfer of information within an organization. (Bowker and Star, 2000). Through standardization, safety standards are developed in order to help organizations and institutions successfully perform risk assessments. One major benefit of such standards is that they describe how to conduct terrorism risk analyses across multiple sectors of an organization. However, they lack in that they do not give any clear directions for setting up a security management system (Jore, 2019, p. 153). What can be drawn from this is that they are rather helpful for those organizations

that don't normally deal with such tasks, in particular by providing a conceptual understanding of the risk associated with terrorisms, as well as knowledge of the categories that should be considered during a risk management process. In addition to providing a guideline to follow, such standards say something about what is relevant, valued and important (Jore, 2019, p. 153). Consciousness of these factors are of great significance to those performing a risk assessment as they give important indications of what must be secured, and which threats are relevant. In order to thoroughly comprehend this, the standards must be seen in relation to the perception of terrorism, as well as the historical and political context in which one is dealing with it (Jore, 2019, p. 153).

The methods concerning safety management, meaning the protection from unintentional events and crimes, have long been based on standardization and formalized rules and regulations. This has provided a number of benefits when it comes to reducing the harm and consequences of such events. As the threat of terrorism in the West has seen an increase over the past years, methods of standardization and bureaucratization has also reached the field of security management, that is, the protection against intentional crimes (Jore, 2019, p. 150). Risk assessment and analysis tools have long exclusively been used within the field of safety management; however, these are becoming more common within organizations who deal with security governance. The issue with this trend is that the management of security threats differs greatly from that of safety management, as they deal with different types of risk. This brings up the question of whether or not it is useful to standardize the management of security risks, such as that of terrorism, in the same manner, and what the potential disadvantages of this could be (Jore, 2019, p. 151). In the past couple of decades, several countries in the West have devoted more focus to the importance of protection against acts of terrorism, and as such, looked to risk analysis as a suitable tool for improving preparedness. In the Norwegian context, although many counterterrorism measures were implemented after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, other issues have had an impact on how such measures have been perceived by the public, and how they have been justified. Precaution and moral obligations, to name a few, have played a role in this. Furthermore, prior to 2011, Norway has been regarded as a low-risk society, which has also had an impact on the development and implementation of counterterrorism measures (Jore, 2019, p. 151). After the terrorist attack that took place on July 22nd, 2011, and the attack in In Amenas, Algeria where five Norwegians were killed, there was an increase in the demand for private and public companies to take greater responsibility for security risk management (Jore, 2019, p. 151). Additionally, Europe has seen an increase in terrorist attacks in public spaces

perpetrated by the Islamic State in the past years, further increasing a public demand for protection from terrorism. This trend has also resulted in security management becoming a task not only limited to high profile targets. Furthermore, the responsibility of counterterrorism is now shared between multiple actors in society (Jore, 2019, p. 152). As a result of this, new laws, regulations and strategies have emerged. One example of this is the Object Security regulation that was passed in Norway in 2011, a regulation which made owners of critical objects responsible for national security protection of these objects. At the base of these regulations lies either a 'functional' or 'soft' approach to security, and the expectation that security measures should be based on risk assessments, rather than prescriptive requirements (Jore, 2019, p. 152). Thus, guidelines for how to conduct security risk analysis for objects critical to national security have been published. These guidelines have also been published for organizations that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the National Security Law. In addition to this, three new security risk analysis standards have been published. These standardized approaches all recommend the same approach to security risk management, and ascertain that risk should be understood as a combination of threats, values, and vulnerabilities. This is the same definition presented in this paper; however, it is important to mention that the definition used in other well-recognized standards within the safety field differs in that it describes risk as a combination of probability with associated uncertainty (Jore, 2019, p. 152).

2.5. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment at its core deals with measuring uncertainties based on observations and knowledge, as well as methods for identifying correlations and relationships between these uncertainties and their potential outcomes and consequences. Such assessments are often influenced by values, attitudes and experiences we have as people, so the assessments may oftentimes bear signs of this (Engen, Kruke, Lindøe, Olsen, Olsen & Pettersen, 2016, p. 81). In order to put the concept of risk assessment into the context of this paper, it is necessary to delve deeper into the way in which risk assessment of terrorists and extremists is performed, more specifically, within correctional facilities. The main reason for narrowing the concept down to such an extent is that these types of risk assessments deal with a rather specific group of people, and therefore devote focus and attention to aspects and factors not relevant in other risk assessment situations. It is important to note, however, that the knowledge available, as well as the general understanding of risk assessment of terrorists and extremists is still developing, and an abundance of information is not readily available. Nonetheless, there are some lessons from

which it is possible to reach a better understanding of what these processes entail. Firstly, it is important to understand that categorizing terrorists into one specific type or profile is impossible, both when it comes to individuals as well as terrorist groups. Because of this, each group or movement must be regarded in its own political, social, and aspirational context. The same is true for individual members (Silke, 2014, p. 246). In addition to this consideration, understanding and recognizing the different role a person can play within an organization or a movement is also crucial as it results in a prison population consisting of many different types of terrorists (Silke, 2014, p. 247). There is a clear link from this idea to that which was mentioned earlier with regards to reasons for demobilization. Again, one can assume that the vast difference from one terrorist to another necessitates different approaches to both risk assessment and rehabilitation measures. Within this population of terrorist prisoners, four groupings are pointed out: radicalized extremists, affiliates, prison recruits, and vulnerables. Radicalized extremists as a term refers to those holding extremist views and who had engaged in extremist acts before incarceration. The group may include killers, bombers, ideologues, and recruiters (Silke, 2014, p. 248). Affiliates are those who may have been involved in extremism or terrorism before imprisonment, but where there is reason to believe that they were not radicalized when doing so. Reasons for this may have been coercion or lack of awareness regarding the seriousness of the act (Silke, 2014, p. 249). Prison recruits is used to refer to those who have gone through a process of radicalization within prison. What is unique, and sometimes worrisome about this group is that they have had no prior involvement in extremist networks, and thus, their risk assessments may not have been able to identify extremism as a factor to consider (Silke, 2014, p. 249-250). Lastly, vulnerables are those who have not yet been radicalized, but who are considered prone to such a process under the right circumstances. The assessment of these individuals will oftentimes have to do with who they are allowed to affiliate with, as well as possible preventative measures. These groupings are important to present and explain as risk assessment processes must take into account the differences within the terrorist prison population and recognize that factors important for one prisoner may not bear significance for another (Silke, 2014, p. 250).

Within the process of risk assessment, different models focus on different issues and factors. Andrew Silke has presented seven key factors pertinent to terrorist risk assessment (Silke, 2014, p. 255). The first factor is *ideology*, and although it is important for the assessor to comprehend the ideological framework of the particular movement or group, ideology is not viewed as the most important factor to consider (Silke, 2014, p. 255-256). *Capability* deals with whether or

not an individual is able to to act on their ideology. When assessing this, a deciding factor to look for is the level of experience and training a person has, as this increases their level of capability. Moreover, *political and social environment* is vital to take into account as terrorist campaigns are greatly affected by the political and social contexts surrounding them. Thus, looking at what community a terrorist is associated with is of great importance (Silke, 2014, p. 256). Taking into account a person's *affiliations* is vital as terrorism is, more often than not, a group phenomenon. Aspects such as social ties and a sense of belonging can oftentimes be strong incentives for either becoming involved in, or remaining in a group. When assessing affiliations, it is important to consider whether or not the prisoner has a choice when it comes to staying in, or leaving a group. This can be beneficial in determining where within the prison the person should be placed. *Emotional factors* also play an important role in risk assessment, as these can say a lot about the persons involvement in terrorism. The main emotional factors to look at are grievance, perceived injustice, anger, and revenge. It is also important to note that many people who commit acts of terrorism often bear a conviction that these acts are justified, so considering the persons psychological processes can be beneficial for the assessor (Silke, 2014, p. 257). Furthermore, *behavior in custody*, as with all prisoners, is also an important factor when assessing terrorist prisoners. For instance, if a prisoner is violent or engages in protests, this can indicate that the individual is still greatly committed to the cause, as well as an eagerness to act in a violent manner in the name of this cause. Conversely, good behavior may indicate eagerness to both comply with the rules, as well as reform and rehabilitate (Silke, 2014, p. 258). Lastly, an important factor lacking in many models of risk assessment concerns *disengagement factors*. In order to assess whether there are disengagement factors present, there are various signs to look for. Many of them have been explored already, however, a few more should be brought to light. A heightened fear of harm or future incarceration may sometimes entice someone to consider whether or not they are willing to accept these potential costs. In addition to this, spending time away from the offending environment provides the person with time and space to contemplate, which further allows them to re-evaluate their previous actions, as well as their goals for the future (Silke, 2014, p. 259-260).

Moreover, another critical step in risk assessment is identifying which sources of information can contribute to the necessary insight. There are three such sources most commonly used; interviews with the person being assessed, specialized testing, and third-party information. The interviews performed with the prisoner are of greatest importance, however, cannot be the only source of information. The main reason is that the prisoner will oftentimes attempt to downplay

their actions, present themselves and their attitudes in a better light, and sometimes lie (Silke, 2014, p. 261-262). They do, however, allow for the assessor to thoroughly explore the factors mentioned above. Specialized testing tools are meant to assess features of the person's mentality, their intentions, and their capabilities (Silke, 2014, p. 264). The tools used, however, will not be described in detail here as they will be thoroughly presented later on in the paper. Lastly, third-party information can include court reports, prison reports and documentation, police reports, and assessments by prison and probation staff. This type of information is essential in that they provide an overview of the person and situation, and can help guide the interview process (Silke, 2014, p. 265).

It is evident from these descriptions that risk assessment of terrorist prisoners is a complex and difficult process, in which the assessor must be aware of not only the 'type of terrorist' they are dealing with, but also the myriad of different factors that impact the assessment process, as well as the credibility of the sources of information. However, if managed successfully, one can expect that by taking all these factors into account, developing rewarding rehabilitation programs may be more achievable.

2.6. Prison rehabilitation

Many nations are increasingly concerned with methods in which they can deal with and manage prisoners with violent extremists or jihadist background (Speckhard, 2011, p. 4). Further adding to this challenge is the vast majority within this population. As mentioned earlier, this group of people include all from combatants, those who have carried out acts of terrorism, and those who have only supported terrorist groups and organizations. One major challenge in developing appropriate rehabilitation programs is assessing the factors which contributed to involvement in terrorist organizations, how committed the person is, and what their motivations were. What an individual's rehabilitation needs are also present challenges, as these needs vary greatly (Speckhard, 2011, p. 4). One important component necessary in order for a rehabilitation program to be successful is that it must be voluntary (Speckhard, 2011, p. 10). In terms of what the program should entail, there are different opinions and different experiences. Those factors which have been tested and generated some levels of success in the past include tactics such as employment upon release, access to education and job training during the sentence, spiritual guidance, psychological counseling, and in some cases, support for the prisoner's family. Some countries, such as Saudi Arabia, have also assisted in arranging marriages after release, as well

as offered financial support (Speckhard, 2011, p. 10). One important task for prison authorities though, is to determine the level of radicalization of each individual being rehabilitated, accomplished through using assessment tools. Once this has been done, programs can be tailored to address the specific characteristics of the person in question. Furthermore, the person must be met within their own context for the program to be successful, this to ensure that the prison staff is dealing with issues that are of importance to them. For the program to be completely successful, it is also advised that motivational incentives that deal with their specific needs and motivations for involvement in terrorism or extremism are offered. What is furthermore common for successful rehabilitation programs is the ability to build good relationships with someone the person can trust, be that a religious cleric, psychologist, or mentor. Lastly, many prisons opt to make use of family members to ensure continued support and follow-up (Speckhard, 2011, p. 11). What is evident is that comprise of numerous components, however, these must be developed with the individual in mind, and their specific needs.

3. Methodology

This chapter aims at presenting the choices made regarding research strategy, research method and data collection. I will present background about the different methods that have been chosen, why these have been selected, and how I plan on executing my research. In terms of data collection, I will present the documents that have been used, as well as the informants who have been interviewed. This will give a clearer idea as to what the selections can offer in terms of information, knowledge and understanding, and how they are beneficial in answering the problem statement and research questions of the study.

3.1. Research Strategy

Selecting a research strategy is a crucial step as it lays the groundwork for how the research will be conducted, and presents the researcher with the necessary guidelines for the process. Thus, it is arguably one of the most important decisions one makes when designing research (Blaikie & Priest, 2019, p. 107). Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen and Karlsson (2002) presents four different strategies: deduction, induction, retroduction and abduction. In order to assess the use of standardized risk assessment tools when evaluating individuals charged with terrorism-related acts, I will apply the method of abductive inference. In this strategy, a phenomenon is interpreted on the basis of a certain frame of interpretation, or rule. This frame is not necessarily the only frame of interpretation that can be used, nor is the interpretation. What is common for abductive inference is that the conclusions drawn are supposed to offer new insight and understanding of a phenomenon by employing a new frame of interpretation (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 90). Instead of attempting to prove that something must be in a certain way, abduction aims at explaining how something might be (Habermas, 1972, p. 113). One can also explain the essence of abduction by saying that it is the act of moving from one perception of a case or occurrence, to a different one by comprehending the original idea about the phenomenon within a new set of ideas (Collins, 1985, p. 188). Abductive inference can also be referred to as redescription or recontextualization (Jensen, 1995, p. 148). By doing so, one can find and present new meaning to known phenomena, as well as discover connections and relations that were previously not obvious (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 91). Through the examination of what abductive inference entails and provides, it becomes evident that it is the most appropriate method of research for the scope of this paper. The reason for this is that I am exploring existing

literature and research on the methods of risk assessment and rehabilitation separately, while aiming at a better understanding of how these can be used together. Thus, I will be using an existing framework of ideas, however, with the purpose of reaching a new interpretation of these. Thus, the abductive strategy is fitting in this case.

3.2. Research Method & Data Collection

In order to properly answer the problem statement and the research questions on which this study is based, a couple of different methods have been employed. The main part of the data collection has been done through document analysis. Through the documents used, I have been able to better gauge what the different methods of risk assessment are, and how these have been used within the relevant fields. Additionally, I have used documents that have given me a better understanding of the group of people in focus, that is, returning foreign fighters from ISIS and other individuals convicted of terrorism related acts. Adding to the document analysis, I have conducted two interviews with informants who possess knowledge related to risk assessment, radicalization and rehabilitation. These interviews have provided me with a clearer understanding of the experiences of those in the field, working directly with the target group. Using this type of qualitative research method will allow me to obtain a thorough and deep understanding of the processes and methods that I'm examining in my research (Blaikie & Priest, 2019, p. 215).

3.2.1. Document Analysis

Document analysis can be described as a systematic method in which one reviews and examines different documents in order to draw out meaning, acquire understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). By using different documents and material, one attempts to answer a problem statement or research question through collecting, interpreting, and analyzing other people's words, accounts, and knowledge about a given subject (Sander, 2019). Document analysis is a form of qualitative research method in which the researcher gathers data in order to create a systematic and objective description of the contents (Sander, 2019). The researcher must do both a superficial and a thorough examination, and finally, interpret the findings. There are a number of advantages of conducting a document analysis. Firstly, it is less time-consuming than performing quantitative studies as it focuses on data selection, rather than data collection (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). This can allow the researcher to obtain a great deal of

data and information more quickly. Moreover, document analysis is less prone to issues regarding reflexivity as “documents are ‘unobtrusive’ and ‘non-reactive’” (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). Lastly, has a great advantage in terms of availability, as many documents are accessible to the public (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). The researcher can therefore obtain any and every document, so long as it is of public record. However, one potential challenge with document analysis is the lack of detail in the documents used. Many reports, articles, and other forms of documents are produced for a specific purpose, thus they may not always be able to provide enough details to answer the research questions. In addition, not all documents are retrievable (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). This can counteract the advantage of availability, as one can come across some documents that are not possible to retrieve. However, with the abundance of existing research, completing a document analysis seemed the most effective and beneficial choice of method.

Through the analysis, my aim is to filter out the information I have chosen not to include in my study and thus be left with relevant data and material. This will make it easier to categorize and further interpret and analyze the contents. By doing so, it will be easier to make comparisons where relevant, and further gain insight into the processes of risk assessment.

The documents chosen for this paper will be interpreted based on the research questions selected. By using these questions as a guideline, it will be possible to find the information relevant to the scope of the papers. When gathering data from different documents, I have looked for and selected articles, reports, directories and guidelines that all cover different aspects of the topic studied. This has allowed me to gain a better overview of how the threat posed by returning foreign fighters and convicted terrorists is perceived, as well as what methods are implemented to deal with this threat. Additionally, it has provided a better understanding of how risk assessments are conducted, their advantages, as well as their shortcomings. In order for the reader to get a better grasp of the documents used, I will present the titles and the type of document in a list below.

Name of document	Description of document
Applying the violent extremism risk assessment (VERA) to a sample of terrorist case studies	The paper discusses terrorism and risk assessment of terrorism, as well as provides both background information and experiences with the use of risk assessment tools for violent extremism
Extremism Risk Assessment: A Directory	The report offers a detailed overview over six different frameworks for risk assessment of extremists
Returning Jihadist Foreign Fighters	The paper discusses challenges related to threat assessment of Jihadist foreign fighters, as well as suggestions for better practices
How to manage returned foreign fighters and other Syria travelers? Measures for safeguarding and follow-up	The report offers insight into measures that can be employed for managing, following up, and safeguarding returning foreign fighters
The Practitioner's Guide to the Galaxy - A Comparison of Risk Assessment Tools for Violent Extremism	The paper provides a comparison between seven different risk assessment tools for violent extremism and elaborates on the tool's purposes and practical implications
Prisons and Terrorism: Extremist Offender Management in 10 European Countries	The report analyzes prison's role in radicalizing and reforming prisoners, and presents practices that may help policymakers better manage extremist offenders

Responses to Returnees: Foreign Fighters and their Families	The manual offers different responses to foreign fighters and their families, and gives suggestions to practitioners regarding possible responses
European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report	The report presents facts about trends in terrorism in European Union member states, as well as figures and numbers regarding terrorist attacks and arrests in the EU

Table: 1. List of documents

3.2.2. Interviews

To gather primary data from the informants, I will be using semi-structured interviews based on an interview guide that I will have developed beforehand. Using such interviews is an important method of qualitative data collection and is widely used when conducting research (Sandy & Dumay, 2011, p. 238). When conducting a semi-structured interview, the researcher has prepared a number of questions based on some identified themes. The interview is done in a rather systematic manner, but with the possibility for further inquiry to extract more elaborate responses. The themes on which the questions are based serve to direct the conversation toward the subjects and issues that are of interest to the interviewer. This type of interview inquiry is popular due to its flexible nature. Moreover, it is often able to disclose important aspects of human and organizational behavior otherwise hidden. It also allows the interviewee to give answers in their own terms and according to how they themselves think (Sandy & Dumay, 2011, p. 246). The aim of using semi-structured interviews is to facilitate a less restricted conversation in which the interviewee is free to elaborate on their own knowledge and thoughts, as well as provide information about aspects that may not have appeared evident to enquire about. As mentioned, a set of questions must be prepared in advance. This was done with the problem statement and research questions in mind, in addition to the thematic framework of the study. They were then sent to the informants to allow them time to reflect on the topics that

would be covered. Based on previous experience, this method has proven effective as it ensures that the interviewee is prepared for what will be discussed and can therefore provide more elaborate answers and insight.

The informants were chosen based on their knowledge on the field in question. Informant number one has previously worked with evaluation of the mentoring program used in prisons in Norway, and has completed a great deal of research on the field, thus, was thought to have important insight and expertise to contribute with. Informant number two is an employee at a regional resource center which, among other topics, work with radicalization and deradicalization. This experience also seemed highly relevant for my research.

3.3. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the idea that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to by the reader. The inquirer must thus be able to convince the audience that this is the case (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 190). Conventionally, research inquiries are judged based on external and internal validity, reliability, and objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 190). However, a set of new terms have been proposed so to better fit naturalistic epistemology. These terms are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 219). *Credibility* refers to the “truth value”, in other words, how can confidence in the truth be established. This must be established both with the subjects of the inquiry, as well as the context in which it was carried out in. *Transferability* deals with the extent to which the findings of one particular inquiry can be applied in other contexts or with other subjects, in other words, the applicability of the results. *Dependability* can be referred to as consistency, and has to do with determining whether or not one would receive the same results were one to replicate the inquiry with similar or identical subjects, and within a similar or identical context. Lastly, *confirmability* deals with the extent to which one can establish that the results are determined by the subjects and conditions, rather than by the biases, motivations, interests, or perspectives of the inquirer (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 190). To achieve trustworthiness, a number of different techniques and methods are presented. The first criteria, credibility, can be achieved through three different steps. The first method is *prolonged engagement*, which means spending enough time in the field to thoroughly understand the setting or phenomenon being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). As the findings of this paper will not be based on field studies in which the phenomena are observed, this will not be possible to achieve, and credibility will

rather be ensured through the next method, that is, *persistent observation*, which is the act of identifying the characteristics and elements that bear most relevance to the case or issue being studied, and that have been discovered through prolonged engagement. The purpose of this is to provide more depth in the knowledge and information acquired (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). As the majority of the data used in this study is collected through document analysis, persistent observation will be done on the basis of other completed studies that deal with the phenomena of interest. This way, it will be possible to identify the aspects and elements that have been uncovered and that are of relevance to the scope of this paper. Lastly, *triangulation*, in other words, using different data sources to give a better understanding, is used to ensure that the findings are comprehensive and properly developed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). This will be achieved by using different sources of information in the document analysis, such as reports, field studies, and in-depth analyses of certain phenomena, tools and methods. Additionally, this will be discussed alongside informant interviews to assess where the theories and findings in the documents are corroborated. The second criteria, transferability, can be achieved through *thick description*. This is described as a way of ensuring what is otherwise referred to as external validity. The way this is done is by describing an issue or a phenomenon in ample detail in order to assess the extent to which the conclusions can be transferred or applied to other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). So to achieve this, different topics and aspects relevant to the study will be explored and described in both the chapter dealing with the theoretical framework, as well as the chapter that presents the findings. Dependability is achieved through *inquiry audit*, which means that a researcher who is not involved in the inquiry assesses the process of inquiry, as well as the conclusions produced in order to evaluate if the findings are supported by the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). This form of audit has been completed consistently throughout the research process in which such assessments have been done with an external researcher. The last criteria for trustworthiness, confirmability, is also achieved through a few different steps. Firstly, an audit is again performed to ensure confirmability. Then, the inquirer must complete an *audit trail* in which a description of the research steps and what has been done in the study is produced (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). A description of the steps of this research has been written and presented in earlier chapters that deal with research strategy and method, as well as method of data collection. Triangulation is also completed for the purpose of achieving confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 323). *Reflexivity* is mentioned as an important trait of the inquirer in order to consistently attend to knowledge construction in a systematic manner (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). I will attempt to achieve this by using different sources for data collection, as well as presenting different

perspectives and theories that exist within the field. By doing so, I hope to achieve a discussion that takes into account different understandings and that presents the different views present in the literature.

3.4. Limitations

One of the major limitations I have experienced with my choice of research method is the inability to access the insight of those who have produced the documents analyzed. This has left me to make independent interpretations of the data. Moreover, the subject of returning foreign fighters from ISIS is still rather new, and complete information and knowledge is not as available as subjects that have been studied and investigated for several years. Additionally, risk assessments made when working with individuals convicted of the type of crimes discussed in this paper often contain sensitive information about the person, or are classified for security reasons, and thus, extensive information about the individual processes are not available.

4. Results

4.1. Document Analysis

The findings from the documents that have been selected for the analysis will now be presented according to the research questions presented earlier.

Which standardized risk assessment tools are used to determine appropriate rehabilitation measures?

In a paper published by the ICCT in which different methods and tools of risk assessment are compared, van der Heide, van der Zwan and van Leyenhorst state that what is of great importance to prison authorities and prison staff is gathering information and determining the risk posed by violent extremists (van der Heide, van der Zwan & van Leyenhorst, 2019, p. 3). In 2020, Europol released a Terrorism Situation and Trend report, in which they stated that between the years of 2015 and 2019, 3,057 individuals with ties to Jihadist terrorism were arrested on suspicion of terrorism-related offenses, 1,004 of whom were arrested in 2019. These numbers were accumulated from 19 EU Member States (Europol, 2020, p. 12). As stated by van der Heide et al., the important task now faced by prison authorities requires “the implementation of proper risk assessment tools” (van der Heide et al., 2019, p. 3). In the past years, a number of such tools have been designed for offenders at risk of engaging in violent extremism (van der Heide et al., 2019, p. 3-4). These tools can be divided into three categories: professional judgement, actuarial tools, and structured professional judgement, or SPJ. These categories are further described in a manual published by the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN). It is explained that professional judgement develops risk predictions based on the experience and knowledge of a professional conducting a risk assessment of an individual, whereas actuarial tools are based on checklists of indicators after which an overall risk prediction is made based on a given formula. SPJ tools, on the other hand, combine the two aforementioned methods. When using this method, a systematic process is followed in which risks are identified and the individual is evaluated in context. The focus within SPJ is both the presence and the relevance of risk factors (RAN, 2017, p. 29). Several such tools exist and are used today, such as Violent Extremism Risk Assessment, version 2-Revised (VERA-2R) and Extremism Risk Guidelines (ERG22+), among others. The common trait between these tools

is that they employ lists of indicators for similar factors, such as beliefs and attitudes, context and intent, history and capabilities, and so on (RAN, 2017, p. 29).

The VERA-2R, as mentioned, is an SPJ tool intended at offering a structured and standardized approach to evaluating a person's risk of violent extremism (Lloyd, 2019, p. 40). In a report published by the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats, Lloyd describes a number of different risk assessment tools, including the VERA-2R. It is explained that the evaluation itself is based on elements such as beliefs, attitudes and ideology; social context and intention, history, actions and capacity, and commitment and motivation of the individual being assessed. This updated version of the tool comprises 34 main indicators, three additional motivational indicators relevant to radicalization to violence, as well as 11 additional indicators related to non-violent criminal history, personal history, and mental disorders. The indicators are presented with a scientific explanation, and the result is based on whether the criteria receive a score of low, moderate, or high. The indicators are also accompanied by lead questions and extra information for the assessor with the intention of ensuring a more neutral assessment. The risk assessment process evaluates all available information and data related to the different indicators, and ultimately produces a professional judgement based on different risk scenarios. By aiding in the identification of potential risk scenarios, appropriate methods of intervention and risk management can be developed and implemented (Lloyd, 2019, p. 41). The author further explains that this new and updated version of the tool differs from the older models (VERA and VERA2) in that the indicators are more clearly and concisely described, in addition to being better explained, thus making the tool more manageable. This improvement has been made possible by employing advice and pointers from terrorist experts, national security analysts, law enforcement analysts, psychologists, and other professionals. The VERA-2R tool is characterized by a great deal of strengths (Lloyd, 2019, p. 39). Some of the strengths of the tools are then explored, and it is stated that, since the tool has been updated and improved by experts, its empirical foundation and knowledge base has increased (Lloyd, 2019, p. 45). Furthermore, the author explains that it's clear focus on violent extremism gives the tool strong construct validity. It also allows the assessor to add specific indicators deemed relevant to the individual being assessed, ensuring a less restrictive approach to the assessment process. As mentioned by the author, all the criteria are well described which in turn enables objective assessments. Lastly, in cases where information is available for each indicator, it is emphasized that the tool provides an extensive source of detail for risk assessment, as well as risk management (Lloyd, 2019, p. 45). However, the author also highlights some limitations to the

tool. Firstly, it is not designed to assess terrorist pathway offences that don't possess aspects of violence, be that violent action or the support of violent action. As indicators are added consecutively in light of new research and information, it is argued that the tool can lose some clarity down the line. As each indicator requires both quantitative rating and qualitative information from numerous sources, the process can be quite time consuming in certain contexts. Moreover, there is oftentimes a need for classified information not readily available to clinical or correctional practitioners, further limiting the assessment. Lastly, the author notes that there is still a need for more empirical studies to offer greater evidence for the validity of the tool (Lloyd, 2019, p. 44-45).

The second tool mentioned earlier, namely the ERG22+, is also presented in the report. This tool however, as Lloyd mentions, is not as widely used (Lloyd, 2019, p. 12). The reason for this, she explains, is that its intellectual property is owned by the HMPPS (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) (Lloyd, 2019, p. 12). The ERG22+ is also an SPJ tool and offers an empirically informed systematic and transparent method for assessing risk and need amongst convicted extremists. Lloyd explains that the tool was developed through analyzing casework from convicted terrorist offenders, as well as comparative analyses of criminological profiles of extremist offenders compared to mainstream criminal offenders. The findings were then reviewed by an advisory panel of experts in the field who further suggested an approach based on the individual's offending in order to identify the factors relevant to involvement in extremism (Lloyd, 2019, p. 12). It is further clarified that the tool aims to assess the extent to which a person is committed to an extremist group, cause or ideology, as well as the individual's motivation to offend on their behalf. Furthermore, the tool assesses whether or not the person in question appears ready or intent on offending, as well as their capability to do so. The tool further provides information about the individual's likelihood of either contributing to or committing a future extremist offence. Lastly, the tool provides information on sentence planning and recommends interventions or other appropriate strategies to manage a person's risk (Lloyd, 2019, p. 13). An outline of the structure is then described. Said structure includes three dimensions; engagement, intent, and capability. These three categories seek at answering different questions, such as an individual's need for justice or a sense of belonging to a group, inclination towards indoctrination, willingness to act violently or illegally, and ability to carry out such acts (Lloyd, 2019, p. 14). As with the VERA-2R, Lloyd explains that this tool is also characterized by both strengths and weaknesses. One of the benefits mentioned is that it is linked to the Healthy Identity Intervention (HII), a treatment program which addresses factors

identified in the ERG22+. Moreover, as it requires competence, experience, and specialist training, it offers quality assurance of the assessment. Lloyd also explains that it is “completed in collaboration with the offender and contains their own insight” (Lloyd, 2019, p. 17). It further provides information beyond sentence planning, such as appropriate intervention and release planning. The tools' factors and indicators are dynamic in nature, meaning that it is possible to alter the framework over time, in addition to allowing additional factors to be included if deemed necessary. Lastly, it has a strong ethical focus on the individual's rights, and, as opposed to centering on extremist beliefs in particular, it rather focuses on the potential harm an individual can cause, as well as the rehabilitation and reintegration of the person (Lloyd, 2019, p. 17-18). On the other hand, there are a few limitations to the ERG22+ as well. Firstly, there is a lack of readily available information and data on the reliability and validity of the tool. Moreover, the author explains that the assessment requires accurate and abundant information regarding the individual being assessed, and in instances where this information is not available, it could negatively affect the results. Lastly, and as mentioned earlier, the tool is the intellectual property of HMPPS, and is thus not available for casual use (Lloyd, 2019, p. 18).

The report published by RAN further elaborates on one main limitation of these two tools, as well as other similar risk assessment tools, namely that they are not specifically intended for foreign fighters and thus don't necessarily take into account the specific considerations relevant to this group of people (RAN, 2017, p. 30). Therefore, based on experience with these tools, the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) has created a risk investigative tool specifically aimed at returnees. They explain that their tool, the RAN CoE Returnee 45 is meant to be used with foreign fighter returnees with the aim of helping organize operational planning for potential intervention, as well as reduce the threat of violence. This tool, they state, is unique in that it includes concrete risk behaviors specific for foreign fighters. It is further elaborated that the RAN CoE Returnee 45 offers a guide for how to organize data on returnees in order for specific focus areas to be identified and isolated. The tool itself is a checklist which provides an overview of risk levels. Once the risk levels have been identified, the assessor can see where further investigation is needed (RAN, 2017, p. 30). However, also noted that this risk assessment tool does not have predictive abilities but is rather to be used as a method of singling out and organizing different risk behaviors. Once this has been done, professionals can further assess the individual and their specific situation and needs (RAN, 2017, p. 30). Furthermore, the way the tool works in practice is elaborated. The different sections of the tool include risk

rating systems; high, medium, and low. These help indicate which risk behaviors may need further follow-up. The assessor will also need to analyze the reason an individual has received a certain rating, as well as establish which aspect or area is in need of further examination (RAN, 2017, p. 30). The main purpose of the tool, the report states, is to serve as a foundation of multi-agency discussions in which decisions on intervention and mitigation are made. It is also emphasized that the risk behaviors must be seen in relation to protective factors, such as stable and supportive family ties, and that these must be included in the overall risk assessment (RAN, 2017, p. 30).

What are the main challenges associated with risk assessment of foreign fighters and how are these challenges dealt with?

Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2014 highlight the importance of understanding that some of the challenges associated with this specific group of individuals appear before risk assessment even takes place. They elaborate by explaining that, with regards to European jihadi foreign fighters, traveling through the Schengen area is quite easy, which means that intelligence agencies and state authorities will have great difficulty establishing both the number and the identities of those who have traveled to Syria. Furthermore, they explain that it can oftentimes be difficult to ascertain whether or not an individual has in fact joined extremist groups such as ISIS. Further gaining knowledge into how many have returned, as well as how and when they returned, they say, is an additional challenge for authorities (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2014, p. 19). Furthermore, the authors state that in addition to the mere fact of their return, information and knowledge about why they left in the first place, as well as why they have returned is required. For many state authorities, this information is not readily available, and thus, creates a hindrance for further processes in risk assessment (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2014, p. 20). They explain that there have been many efforts to improve intelligence in Syria, however, an incomplete picture of where those foreign fighters who have yet to return are is a pressing issue. Oftentimes, authorities also lack information on how many actually left, who has died and who has returned. Knowledge of which unit or subgroup individuals are fighting with, if they are in fact participating in combat, or if they are playing supportive roles is also missing. Lastly, authorities are often unaware of whether or not individuals have become further radicalized, as well as the potential presence of disillusionment and trauma (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2014, p. 20). Christensen and Bjørge add to this

point by stating that “identifying an individual’s own narrative, network and needs at an early state is vital in risk assessment processes” (Christensen & Bjørge, 2018, p. 44).

In order to best deal with some of these challenges, Bakker et al. present a number of suggestions. Firstly, they state that the coordination between different governmental agencies and other relevant actors must be strengthened, a task which may be done through building and improving relations and trust with Islamic communities, families and friends of foreign fighters, as well as civil society organizations (Bakker et al., 2014, p. 30). They state that “*good relations between the authorities and parents, family members and friends of those who have returned or might return are not only needed to make an accurate threat assessment regarding these returnees, but also for preventative, supportive and reintegration purposes*” (Bakker et al., 2014, p. 21). They expand on this idea by explaining that governments must make a choice about how they are going to approach the situation, whether they will regard it mainly as a security threat, or rather a socio-political issue. In addition, a balance between hard and soft measures must be reached. Hard measures may serve to alienate the government from those who are necessary for accurate risk assessments, such as the families and friends of the foreign fighter. However, softer measures may be viewed as naive and dangerous. The authors propose that “*countries have to develop a mixed approach within the framework of the rule of law*” (Bakker et al., 2014, p. 21). Moreover, they inform that knowledge and experience should be shared locally, nationally, and internationally. Additionally, sharing best practices for risk assessment would also be of great benefit, in those cases where this would be possible. In order to be successful in dealing with the risk assessment challenge, however, the authors emphasize that it is fundamental to reach a shared understanding of the phenomenon itself, as well as the definition of what a foreign fighter in fact is (Bakker et al., 2014, p. 31).

What are the benefits and disadvantages of standardized risk assessment tools?

There appears to be a certain level of disagreement regarding the effectiveness and usefulness of standardized risk assessment tools. Christensen & Bjørge argue in their report on dealing with returning foreign fighters, that “*there are no standardized solutions, but the development of a flexible individual-based policy is important for the success of the initiative*” (Christensen & Bjørge, 2018, p. 44). On the other hand, Beardsly and Beech argue that structured professional judgement approaches are advantageous tools due to their systematic yet flexible nature, as opposed to ‘unaided clinical judgement’ and actuarial methods, which are either too

subjective or too rigid (Beardsly & Beech, 2013, p. 4). In their report, the VERA assessment tool was applied to a sample of terrorist case studies. The case material was scored by two raters, and the level of agreement between the two raters was 85.7%, indicating high interrater reliability. Moreover, the authors explain that the VERA tool includes factors common to several terrorists, arguing that this may indicate the usefulness of the tool in risk assessment processes. Lastly, they argue that the majority of the factors included in the tool appear relevant and important to risk assessment and can thus be applied to a variety of cases (Beardsly & Beech, 2013, p. 7).

One area in which there is some debate, and where some disadvantages seem to appear is regarding language, for instance, the ‘terrorist profile’. As mentioned by Beardsly and Beech, the experience was that the indicators of the tool appeared to be applicable to the different cases studied. However, they also explain there is no profile of a typical terrorist, and it can thus be challenging to decide which factors should be included. The existence of different theories of terrorism further adds to this problem (Beardsly & Beech, 2013, p. 5). Furthermore, it is argued that using the term ‘tool’ may be misleading, as they lack predictive abilities. Rather, they are more useful for structuring and categorizing information, and providing a rationale for action plans and interventions (van der Heide et al., 2019, p. 22). Moreover, Basra and Neuman explain that the outcome of a risk assessment is greatly based on the input, and in instances where the information is lacking or inaccurate, the assessment can oftentimes be flawed (Basra & Neumann, 2020, p. 28). They further state that one must acknowledge that obtaining complete information is quite challenging, if not impossible. Due to this, they explain, many practitioners emphasize the value of information gathered from everyday interactions between prison staff and inmates. However, the challenge with this is achieving the necessary level of trust needed for the inmate to share their thoughts. The authors further explain that this goal can often take a long time to achieve (Basra & Neumann, 2020, p. 28). The way to deal with this challenge, the authors state, is by gathering information from other sources, such as original investigative files and court reports. By using such sources, the radicalization process of an individual may be better comprehended (Basra & Neumann, 2020, p. 28).

Another issue that may arise in a risk assessment process is false compliance, and the possibility that an inmate may say whatever necessary to check off the right boxes in their assessment. This may also be the case if an inmate is in contact with other inmates who have already participated in the risk assessment processes and pass on knowledge of what to say (Basra &

Neumann, 2020, p. 29). The authors explain that there have been several instances where people who were considered ‘model inmates’ and who had participated in rehabilitation and disengagement programs, but who have carried out various attacks after their release from prison. They elaborate on this by presenting the example of Usman Khan who carried out the 2019 London Bridge attack. Prior to his release, Khan was considered a success story, and had participated in all the programs aimed at rehabilitation and reintegration (Basra & Neumann, 2020, p. 29-30).

To what extent can risk assessments lay the foundation for rehabilitation programs for convicted foreign fighters?

In the aforementioned report presented by RAN, upon incarceration, there are two main focal areas. The first is safety and security, both for the prisoner and those around. The second area is rehabilitation and reintegration (RAN, 2017, p. 39). They then explain that “the initial risk assessment that was carried out pre-trial will form a basis for the prison to work with the offender” (RAN, 2017, p. 39). It is, however, emphasized that risk assessments must be repeated in order to track any potential changes in the individual’s risk profile. They further explain that by doing so, practitioners and prison staff will be able to better understand which interventions should be put in place, both in terms of safety and security, as well as rehabilitative measures (RAN, 2017, p. 39). The report further explains that it is increasingly common to use specific risk assessment tools, such as the VERA-2R and the ERG22+, in addition to ‘regular’ tools which lack focus on ideological aspects. By doing so, they state, “*they can inform the level of safety and security measures to be taken but also the tailored rehabilitation plan for an offender*” (RAN, 2017, p. 40). The report informs that “*according to prison practitioners, these risk assessments have also been used in returnee cases, in which they have proven to be helpful*” (RAN, 2017, p. 40). It is further explained that rehabilitation programs should be individually tailored, and that these programs often include a combination of interventions, all based on the individual risk- and needs assessment. The report also states that “*risks and needs assessments are key to designing effective reintegration programmes*” (RAN, 2017, p. 46). Furthermore, it is elaborated that individualizing the assessments is crucial, and that multi-disciplinary teams should assess the individual needs and risks of the offender together (RAN, 2017, p. 46).

4.2. Informant Interviews

4.2.1. Interview 1

Defining radicalization

When posed the question of what definition of radicalization and radicalized person appears to be prominent within prisons in Norway, informant nr. 1 explains that, such as within the field of research itself and amongst experts and professionals, a clear and concise definition is hard to come by. However, certain characteristics are pointed out. The informant explains that a breach in communication, in which one party is no longer able to communicate his or her thoughts and concerns to the counterparty, can often lead to an inclination to the use of violence to get their message across. The informant further explains that the focus lies on both actions and attitudes. Moreover, the work of Tore Bjørgo, a Norwegian expert on the field of radicalization and extremism, is pointed out as both influential and important when dealing with the target group. The informant mentions the concept of root causes of radicalization, and highlights that one does not become a criminal “overnight”, but that there are holes, such as lack of education or unemployment, that have yet to be covered. Furthermore, both the informant and the author emphasized the need for a “way out” in order to give radicalized persons certain incentives to change their path. When it comes to selecting those eligible for the ‘mentor-program’ within prisons, a program aimed at rehabilitation, the informant states that a conviction of either involvement in terrorist organizations, former attempt of an act of terrorism, or having traveled to join a terrorist organization are prerequisites. When talking about the program itself, the informant explains that the foundation for its development was prevention of radicalization, and that some inmates may therefore not have been selected based on not being ‘radicalized’ enough. Additionally, some were not chosen because they weren't considered capable of following through with the program due to psychological issues or other health related challenges. It is further explained that the program was initially a trial project, and thus quite limited in terms of funding, resources, and locations. It is also highlighted that one of the prompting causes for initiating such a program was political pressure and the desire to show the general public that something was being done.

When asked about how the process of radicalization is understood within the Norwegian correctional facilities, the informant explains that they operate with the same definition laid out by the Security Service (PST), **this definition is mentioned earlier in the paper**. The informant further explains that it is important to bear in mind that interpretation of signs of radicalization differ, be that actions or attitudes, both between professionals and employees as well as from prison to prison. During previous employment, the informant has completed a great deal of work in terms of developing a handbook to improve the general understanding of what to look for and to be aware of signs in someone's behavior, attitudes and utterances.

Risk of radicalization

Concerning the risk of radicalization within prisons in Norway today, the informant emphasizes the importance of a nuanced approach to the subject. Firstly, it is stated that the general media plays a role in popular opinion, as well as worry. The informant then explains that in the Norwegian context, the number we are dealing with is rather small compared to other nations. However, he notes, the manner in which the threat they pose is conveyed makes it appear much greater, especially to the general public. He further emphasizes that the intention is not to minimize the threat itself, but rather to put it in perspective. Furthermore, the informant explains that when dealing with radicalization behind bars, one needs to be aware that this also entails different methods of radicalization. To elaborate on this, he explains that on the one hand, we have what is referred to as radicalization in prison, which entails external forces. These external forces are further described as for instance visitors, connections and inmate had prior to incarceration, information received from the outside, and so on. The main idea, he explains, is that it is a process impacted from the outside world. On the other hand, he continues, we may be dealing with prison radicalization. This process is explained as a result of internal dynamics and is often a consequence of the conditions of one's imprisonment. The informant further emphasizes that, although this has happened in the Norwegian system as well, it is quite rare compared to other countries. It is explained that the reason for this is mainly the conditions within the Norwegian prisons, in particular that the employee to prisoner ratio is 1:1, meaning that the staff can maintain a rather extensive overview of what is happening, as well as offer consistent and thorough follow-up. Additionally, he explains, the in-prison culture is rather different from that of other states, further hindering the chance of radicalization. The causes of higher frequency of prison radicalization in other countries can in part be due to overcrowding, leading to poorer overview and follow-up, the informant elaborates. Moreover, it is clarified

that this overcrowding and lack of counseling may lead to desperation, a state in which people may be more vulnerable to persuasion by charismatic people seeking to push their agendas. He then tells that in the few cases this has occurred in Norway, it has been due to the same reason; a charismatic person who appears to be a leader-type and can exert influence over other inmates. In the cases where this is of worry to the staff, the informant states that the countering measure has been to move inmates around. This could be within one prison, that is, to a different area, or to a different prison. Additionally, the staff will dedicate more time and attention in order to properly assess and evaluate the situation at hand. When asked about who are considered at risk of being radicalized within the prison system, the informant points to certain backgrounds. One of the vulnerable groups is young people with recurring sentences related to petty crimes. Further, the informant points to persons with immigrant background also convicted of petty crimes. Lastly, inmate population who has experienced an intensification in their faith, but who lack proper spiritual guidance, and are thus at risk of having their new-found faith exploited. To deal with the challenges posed by this group of people, the informant highlights a few measures. Firstly, the conditions within the prison must facilitate future prospects, such as work or education, in order to motivate the inmate. There must also be monitoring and control in place when it comes to potential “radicalizers”. Lastly, controlling what comes from outside the prison is also crucial.

Measuring the success of rehabilitation programs

When posed the question of how to measure the success of rehabilitation programs, the informant clearly states that recidivism is the main indicator of this. He further tells that there are a few milestones when measuring recidivism. Within the first five years of release from prison, one cannot, with certainty, say that the rehabilitation has been successful. However, at the ten-year mark, one can make such a claim. He also explains that if an individual returns to committing criminal acts, but of a non-extremist nature, the rehabilitation would still be considered a success. When asked how the information and evaluations made within the prison are communicated to those in charge of following up the individual, the informant explains that a great deal of information is passed on to ‘Frirmsorgen’, those in charge of post-release follow-up, however, a portion of the information is classified and therefore not shared. He further highlights the importance of good communication and exchange of information in order to thoroughly continue to evaluate these individuals.

What are the disadvantages of standardized risk assessment?

Regarding the question of whether a standardized approach would be beneficial for this inmate population, the informant explains that such methods would be too difficult to implement. The reason for this, he clarifies, is that it is impossible to prove, with a numerical value, what a person thinks, and whether or not their attitudes correlate to what they say. The answers a person will give may also be affected by various other factors. It is further explained by the informant that the interviewee can choose to lie in order to speed up the process, qualify for early release or other benefits, or simply not want to share their true thoughts. The informant also mentions that having extremist or radical ideas is not illegal in a democratic state, so including this in a risk evaluation may result in conclusions that don't necessarily contribute to better understanding. Furthermore, the informant explains that one challenge with such methods and tools is that not everyone has the analytical skills required to use them, and it could therefore become difficult and costly to implement. He therefore states that in place of such tools, focusing on a continued development and improvement of the mentor-program is more beneficial. The reason for this, he states, is that with this method, the correctional facilities will use qualified evaluations from professionals within different fields, such as doctors, prison employees and mentors, in order to reach a thorough and complete assessment.

The informant then shares some final remarks. Firstly, he reiterates the importance recidivism plays on evaluating the success of rehabilitation. However, and as the topic of the paper is the process that takes place within correctional facilities, he explains that one must pay great attention to the inmates' focus on their own future, as well as their attention to people around them. If an inmate shows that they are focused on, and concerned with their future prospects, this should be interpreted as a good indication of successful rehabilitation.

4.2.2. Interview 2

Informant nr. 2 begins by explaining some of the tasks and responsibilities of RVTS. It is clarified that RVTS is in a sense a service for the services, meaning that they assist a number of different institutions, governmental agencies, NGOs and other services in terms of competence development, information, training, workshops et cetera. Following the action plan

against radicalization in 2016, they began sharing information concerning radicalization and the processes in and out of such environments. They work both alongside the field of research, as well as with regional and national institutions. The informant's main field of work is with radicalization and extremism, and one of the core tasks is coordination of preventative work with this demographic.

Defining radicalization

The first question posed deals with how one defines radicalization, and which definition they themselves operate with. To this, the informant states that one never stops asking oneself this question, as there has yet to emerge one unison definition that everyone can agree on. Furthermore, the informant explains that it is important to understand that radicalization is to a great extent a political term, and that for as long as history can recount, there have been processes of radicalization occurring, however, the term itself has become more frequently used in the recent past. Thus, he informs, a consensus on a clear definition has yet to be reached. It is further explained that it is important to bear in mind the changes within radicalization and extremism, and to note that the phenomena have taken on a more transnational nature and have furthermore become more present in the digital spheres. This also means that the groups are differently organized than previously, and that people who are of concern to authorities may not be members of a physical group, but rather a digital community, he explains. When delving deeper into what may be factors in a definition, the informant states that radicalization can be seen as a way to organize chaos, and as such radicalization is not the goal, but rather the means. To clarify, he says that a person seeking to find a path in their own chaos may just as easily end up abusing narcotics, committing non-extremist violent acts et cetera. The informant further states that in many instances, radicalization can be seen as an escape from chaos. In terms of what criteria RVTS considers when determining if a person could be, or has been, radicalized, he informs that there is not an unambiguous answer, as no two people's developments, ideas and thoughts are identical. One may on the one hand look at their inclination to commit violent acts, but on the other hand look at ideology and what final goals they envision. However, the informant emphasizes that, contrary to what many think, evaluating someone's ideological ideas is just as important as evaluating their inclination to violence. Furthermore, it is explained that there are no typical factors one looks at, but rather many smaller indicators, covering a large specter of topics. This can be background and upbringing, social environments and connections, desire for excitement and action, moral convictions and what some may consider duties, such

as Muslims traveling to Syria and Iraq as a moral obligation to fight on behalf of those they consider to be oppressed and persecuted, and so on. Thus, the informant concludes that there is not one clear answer to what radicalization is and who a radicalized person is, but rather many different factors, indicators, and considerations.

Risk of radicalization

In terms of whether the risk of radicalization appears to be high in Norway today, the informant explains that it is quite challenging to give a clear answer to this, as the risk of violence is difficult to predict. He then says that those instances where such predictions are easier is when an individual has a history of impulse control, however, in most other cases, such predictions are nearly impossible. What he further states as an indicator one could possibly look at in order to better determine this risk is violent past, as the best prediction for violence is previously committed violence. However, what is more important than attempting to reach such conclusions is again emphasized to be continuous follow-up and mentoring. The informant also mentions that in the case of foreign fighters, it is difficult to see specific characteristics that indicate a person's inclination towards violence, and that this does not characterize foreign fighters. Rather, what was important was those who recruited. Thus, looking at other aspects in a person's life could be more beneficial than examining whether they are prone to violence. To further explain this idea, the informant says that there are a number of risk factors that one can consider when there is a fear of radicalization taking place. Some of the factors he mentions as important to look at are history of violence, lack of support from family and friends, lack of social communities and friends, issues with mental or physical health, issues with anger management and drug-related problems. However, the informant points to one particular indicator to be vary of, and that is a sudden change in lifestyle. This can be change of religion, moving away from one's community, quitting one's job, purchasing items with heavy symbolism, both religious and political, or in general severe alterations in one's normal routines. This idea spills over into the next question, which deals with what factors bear the heaviest weight in risk assessments of radicalized people or people at risk of becoming radicalized. The main indicator is, as the informant already mentioned, sudden changes in everyday activities. Furthermore, becoming part of a new network, and certain types of training, for instance training for a weapons license, which would indicate an increase in the capacity to commit violent acts, are also pointed out. Lastly, the informant also adds that the radical element of someone's beliefs is not inherently negative, and has been at the base of many important

changes and improvements in society. Thus, he clarifies that preventing people from having radical attitudes should not necessarily be the goal, rather, hindering those radical ideas that lead to violent acts should be at the center.

Threat posed by returning foreign fighters

When asked about the threat posed by returning foreign fighters in Norway today, the informant explains that it is important to bear in mind that we are dealing with a rather small number of people, and that some of those who were considered of high risk have been killed in battle abroad. The informant continues to say that this group is not homogenous and should be treated as any other inmate, or newly released person who has committed violent and criminal acts, and that risk assessments should be performed on an individual basis. Furthermore, the informant states that this group doesn't appear to pose a greater threat than any other person who has served a sentence for violent crime, and that there is no reason to believe that they are more dangerous. Furthermore, an important note the informant mentions is that there is a lower level of mobility within this community at the moment. Due to restrictions in terms of travel, people are not exiting or entering the country, and attempts of radicalization and recruitment have seemed to decrease. In terms of measures of rehabilitation and reintegration, the informant states that this must be rather tailored to the individual in question, but that other than this tailoring, there are no national programs in Norway specifically aimed at people who have committed terrorism-related crimes. Furthermore, these programs and evaluation are not standardized as each person's reason for having become radicalized is unique and cannot be systematized. What is highlighted by the informant as a crucial element, however, is continuous follow-up through a post-release mentor-program. The informant explains that this program is voluntary and meant to be as neutral as possible to ensure trust building and openness. Based on the informant's experiences, a large number of people chose to participate in this program after release, much due to the neutrality it aims to achieve. The informant further explains an important note to consider, which is the background of many of the persons in question. Many have faced a great deal of adversity in their lives, and many also have a history of not accomplishing the achievements they may have had in mind, thus making them understand that those in charge of helping them rehabilitate are in fact on their side will take time, and creating a trust between mentor and former inmate will be a continuous process that requires patience.

Frequency of risk assessments

When posed the question of how often risk assessments and evaluations are updated, the informant states that this varies greatly from region to region, and also depends on who is in charge of the case. He explains that when the police are following up a case, and see no signs of deteriorating behavior, they may determine that there is no need for a new evaluation. Similarly, when there is a great deal of trust between a mentor and a newly released inmate, information is shared more openly, and there may not be necessary to conduct assessments as often. However, on a general basis, the informant can inform that risk assessments of those incarcerated or recently released are conducted approximately every six months. He further adds that whether or not such assessments are conducted more frequently would then depend on whether or not the person in charge sees signs of physical or mental issues deteriorating, surrounding conditions worsening, or any form of criminal acts being committed.

What are the benefits and/or disadvantages of standardized risk assessment?

In terms of using standardized tools when conducting risk assessments of foreign fighters, the informant explains that a mapping tool based on the RAN CoD, which is explained earlier in the paper, could be beneficial when it comes to having a clear and concise starting point, however, there are many challenges with using such tools, as well as a great deal of debate as to their effectiveness. The informant further explains that the RAN CoD, as well as other similar tools, generates a score of either low, moderate, or high, and a person who scores high indicates a need to be wary and follow up closely. However, he adds that a person who receives a low score is not necessarily of no worry, and thus, the score may at best be an indication of who to monitor, and at worst be arbitrary. The informant points out a number of challenges with using such tools. Firstly, he explains that the results are mainly based on the answers of the person being evaluated, and there is not always a way to determine whether or not the individual is being truthful or not. Additionally, people may attempt to conceal information, further impacting the overall score in a negative manner. Furthermore, such tools require a great deal of training and are normally quite costly. Moreover, in order to successfully implement standardized tools, they must be implemented in all prisons around the country, which would require training a large number of people. They also require a great deal of time which, in many cases, could be used to directly follow up the people in question. Lastly, the different indicators

bear different weight, which may prove difficult to put into a standardized approach. The informant does state that they may be quite beneficial in terms of general mapping and overview, but that at the end of the day, risk assessments must take context into consideration. In terms of which benefits such tools may present, the informant mentions a few. Firstly, when dealing with people who are at risk of becoming radicalized, they can be useful when it comes to generating a greater overview, and assisting the police, schoolteachers, and the authorities in seeing the bigger picture. The informant explains that when a person, for instance a teacher, contacts the police informing them that they have a student they are worried about, it is easy to see every act and statement as a warning sign. In these cases, the informant explains, a standardized mapping tool can be useful in showing exactly what one should worry about, if anything. Furthermore, standardized tools can be quite useful in following up released inmates to map how the rehabilitation and reintegration process is going, and whether there are particular factors that require more attention. The informant finishes by saying that, at the end of the day, an assessment is merely an assumption, and cannot be the only basis for further rehabilitation and reintegration.

How is information shared across different institutions and state apparatuses?

Lastly, when it comes to sharing information gained from risk assessments with other practitioners, institutions et cetera., the informant explains that there are great variations to these practices. Those who are in charge of following up a person upon release will usually have access to the pertinent information, however, a portion of this information is classified and can therefore not be shared. This is particularly the case with medical professionals, as they have rather strict rules when it comes to patient confidentiality. The informant also states that there seems to be a lack of automatization in terms of information sharing from medical institutions. When it comes to the police, the informant says that they appear to be the ones who receive the greatest deal of information and can thus assess what they know in the way they seem fit. The informant further explains that although there are strict rules when it comes to sharing classified information about a person, if there are instances where someone experiences great worry, there is also a duty of informing those who need to know.

As finishing remarks, the informant explains that radicalization is a phenomenon in development, and as an agreement of what exactly radicalization is lacks, it is also difficult to measure. It is further stated that the threat from radical Islamist communities seems to be

lessening, much due to internal fragmentation. Thus, he informs that the subject is prone to disagreement and ambiguity.

4.2.3. Summary

The two informants were posed rather different questions, as their work has been focused on different aspects of radicalization and rehabilitation. They both do, however, present their views on what the definition of radicalization entails. They agree in the sense that the term is nuanced and requires a comprehensive approach and understanding. Additionally, they both point to the importance of looking at indicators that a person is inclined to committing violent acts, rather than whether they fit the general definition of what a radicalized person is. The interview with informant nr. 1 is more focused on what happens within prisons, and the type of work that is done there. When speaking on the risk of radicalization within this setting, although not minimizing the threat of this occurring, emphasizes the importance of remaining nuanced. However, the informant does mention the importance of creating an environment in which people have prospects, such as jobs, that steer them away from returning to, or becoming part of, radical and extremist communities. What can be drawn from this interview is that the informant emphasizes the importance of good mentorships in assessing and rehabilitating radicalized people, rather than standardized approaches to risk assessments. Furthermore, it is also pointed out by the informant that recidivism plays a very important role in assessing whether or not a person has been successfully rehabilitated. When it comes to standardized risk assessments, the informant voices some concerns with implementing such tools, and explains that they are difficult to employ, and don't necessarily provide very useful or reliable information and knowledge. Informant nr. 2 speaks in more detail about foreign fighters and the threat they may pose. However, the informant also reiterates the importance of a nuanced view. It is explained that different measures are needed for different people, regardless of whether they share in that they have travelled to Syria or Iraq to join IS. The informant also highlights the significance of good mentoring and building trust between mentor and mentee. In terms of the usefulness of standardized risk assessment, the informant is positive about what they may be able to add, and points to their ability to offer a better overview of the person and the situation being assessed. However, the challenges are also highlighted. As with informant nr. 1, informant nr. 2 also mentions that these tools and methods may not necessarily offer very useful information. Furthermore, the informant states that they are difficult to implement as

they require a great deal of training and time. To summarize, both informants voice some apprehension in implementing standardized risk assessment tools as the basis of the development of rehabilitation programs for radicalized individuals, as they appear to present more challenges than benefits. Rather, well-developed mentoring programs and thorough follow-up are measures underlined as advantageous.

5. Discussion

In order to present a cohesive and thorough discussion, the various findings will be examined and discussed in two main categories. These two categories have been selected based on the main problem statement.

What is the security threat posed by foreign fighters and other violent extremists with affiliations to ISIS?

Challenges appear to arise already when determining the actual threat posed by foreign fighters and violent extremists, for a number of reasons. As presented earlier, readily available, and complete information about these individuals is not yet sufficient, and one can imagine that this challenge causes issues when attempting to determine who is in need of supervision. However, remaining on the subject of those who are in fact already incarcerated, the literature also indicates that there are difficulties in obtaining reliable information about the person's role within the organization, as well as what acts they have taken part in. Thus, it is conceivable that an individual may pose a greater threat than what prison authorities are aware of, and thus obstruct their ability to properly deal with said threat. However, as mentioned, reliable information can also come from others sources, so it appears as though building trust with the persons community and family can be of great benefit. Furthermore, it has become evident that the people in question belong to a rather diverse and heterogeneous group, a fact reiterated both in the documents, as well as in the interviews. Thus, one can perhaps not assume that anyone who fits within the definition of foreign fighter will pose the same threat. This idea brings up the next problem that appears to arise; there is not a consensus on the very definition itself. As presented in the theoretical framework, there are different definitions of foreign fighters used, definitions which focus on different factors, as well as different acts. It is imaginable that this fact creates great hindrances in determining who fits the profile of foreign fighter. What might then become an issue, when for instance using assessment tools designed for foreign fighters, is that not everyone who may require this type of assessment process will receive it. It appears rather pressing that a consensus on such definitions must be in place as soon as possible to best be able to determine the actual threat. On the other hand, one can argue that if monitoring in prison is done thoroughly, prison staff will be able to single out those in need of additional assessment and follow-up. Furthermore, what appears to be a lack of agreement on whether a person must participate in violence actively, or merely support the group or organization may

also present difficulties in determining the threat that the individual poses. If one assumes that an individual must have directly taken part in violent acts in order to be categorized as a foreign fighter, other people may be overlooked. One can for instance gather from the literature that supportive roles also play an important part in facilitating acts of terrorism, so it is to assume that a person who has 'solely' been in charge of storing weapons has still held an important role in the organization. One should also consider that said person has a certain level of devotion to the organization and its cause, something which may require thorough assessment and follow-up. That is not to say that such assessments are not done unless a person has committed violent acts, but rather processes that might be easier to facilitate if an agreement is reached on definitions and categorizations. It also becomes evident from the second interview that, as this specific group of individuals is not homogenous, they should be treated as any other inmate. A possible problem with this may be that information and knowledge about the overall threat may be missed. One can assume that a person who has committed violent acts inspired by strong devotion to a specific ideology may require a different risk assessment process than other inmates who bear no ideological affiliations. Perhaps, while not regarding this group as uniform, one should however employ similar methods of assessment. This could also assist in swiftly finding out who may not need additional follow-up, and thus save time and resources for the prison and prison staff. It is also stated in the same interview that there is no reason to believe that these people pose any greater threat than other inmates convicted of violent acts. However, based on a great deal of the material presented, as well as the national threat assessments, these specific individuals are pointed to as a significant threat to national security. Thus, one may assume that there is a need for a more extensive and systematic approach. Lastly, what appears to also affect the challenge of agreeing on the level of threat, is the lack of agreement on what constitutes radicalization. What becomes evident is that, in order to assess the threat someone poses, one must understand why they have engaged in certain acts. However, if one cannot agree on what drives that person to commit those acts, it might also be rather difficult to grasp the threat they now pose. Thus, one can argue that a more systematic approach, as well as clearly defined factors as to why and how someone becomes radicalized may be highly beneficial. What can be gleaned from the literature is that, although radicalization processes are complex, there may often be catalyzing factors. If one regards the individual with these factors in mind, while also attempting to understand their current context, assessing whether or not they pose a threat may also be easier. If this threat is established, one may also assume that understanding how to interpret the results of a risk assessment may be more achievable.

To what extent can this threat be managed through the implementation of standardized risk assessment tools?

It becomes evident that there is great demand for different tools and methods that can assist practitioners and authorities in conducting thorough risk assessments, however, it is also clear that the general opinion is that those tools available, although helpful in many ways, come with limitations. From both informants interviewed, it was stated that one of the challenges with standardized risk assessment tools is the possibility of receiving untruthful answers from the person being assessed. This indicates a large limitation in such tools, as it has become evident that the most important source of information comes from the individuals themselves. One can thus assume that the final assessment is lacking in that it is not completely reliable. A conceivable outcome of this is that the subsequent measures implemented to rehabilitate the person may be wrong and thus inefficient and ineffective. It is of plausible assumption that when measures are implemented based on the individual's context and needs, they must be highly tailored to said needs. If prison authorities don't possess the right skills or training to properly identify these needs, it becomes evident that whatever measures are implemented may not be effective or successful. Furthermore, a challenge both mentioned in the interviews, as well as in the documents analyzed, is the amount of time and resources these tools require. One could perhaps argue that these resources are better spent monitoring and following up the individuals directly, as it is also mentioned that daily interactions between inmates and prison staff generates valuable insight and knowledge. This type of practice may also be more beneficial in that it allows prison staff to observe the inmate's behavior, interactions, and utterances, which may provide very useful information about necessary measures. However, there is nothing in the empirical data that suggests that this type of monitoring is not done, regardless of the method of risk assessment. Another challenge that becomes evident is the act of determining the risk someone poses in such a narrow manner. It is to be expected that an individual, within their own context, is more complex than what can be expressed with these tools and the scores they generate. Furthermore, an important note that was pointed out was that, and again, due to the risk of someone concealing information, someone who receives a low score through using one of these tools may still be of worry. One can therefore imagine that relying on the assessments generated by these tools could provide a false sense of security, as well as lead to inadequate measures.

On the other hand, a great deal of possible advantages also become evident. Firstly, as mentioned in the first interview, following a systematic and standardized risk assessment tool can provide a clear image and overview of the situation at hand. It can also benefit in giving a better understanding of what the starting point is. One can imagine that having such an overview, as well as a clear starting point, can provide some level of general information that tells the assessor and prison authorities which measure *could* be appropriate. Something that was also mentioned in the interview, as well as in the literature, is the importance of seeing this in the context of the individual. Again, the assumption that a person comes with their own complex set of qualities, thoughts, and paths that have led them to become radicalized is a fair one to make. Thus, it is reasonable to think that each risk assessment process must be at least slightly altered to fit the specific individual. Moreover, the literature and empirical data presents some interesting knowledge about the experiences with using such tools. This does not, however, mean that it is impossible to employ a standardized tool. One can for instance go through the different indicators of a risk assessment tool systematically, while also interpreting the result with consideration of the specific context, and thus arrive at a more comprehensive understanding. As has been mentioned, many practitioners have had positive experiences when employing structured risk assessment tools. One must therefore assume that they provide a great deal of benefits as well. It is fair to think that, although they can perhaps not give a clear and reliable answer to the risk or threat a person poses, they can tell practitioners and others involved a lot about which areas to focus on. For instance, one can imagine that if a person scores high on a specific indicator, it becomes evident to the prison authorities which measures are fitting for that person. As the overall problem statement deals with what standardized risk assessment tools can contribute in terms of risk management, it is reasonable to think that appropriate and fitting rehabilitation should be one of the goals. If such a tool is capable of indicating how a rehabilitation program should be tailored, aforementioned as one of the uses of these tools, one can perhaps assume that they are effective in this specific task. As also mentioned, risk assessment tools are used for this specific purpose by many. So long as one bears in mind that they are a component of developing rehabilitation programs, rather than the sole source of information, they will likely be able to provide a great deal of insight. Lastly, an important note to be aware of as well is that they do not appear to have any predictive capabilities in terms of informing about the future. Thus, these tools appear more useful for dealing with the present, and rather for continuous information and knowledge update about a person's development.

6. Conclusion

Throughout the research and the subsequent analysis of the findings, it becomes evident that many questions are still left unanswered, and there are yet gaps to be filled. It is also clear that there is a great deal of disagreement on many of the topics discussed.

With the problem statement in mind, ascertaining the risk posed by returning foreign fighters appears somewhat difficult. This due to the fact that there is a lack of complete knowledge in terms of who they are and what characterizes them. Furthermore, a lack of agreement on what constitutes a foreign fighter further adds to this challenge. Not possessing reliable information as to which activities they have engaged in while in Syria or Iraq is also a factor which renders threat assessment difficult. However, these challenges appear to be dealt with by regarding each person within their own context and being aware of aspects unique in their individual cases. Thus, knowledge and information about the potential threat they pose appears to be reached more easily.

Moreover, employing standardized risk assessment tools also presents some hindrances. The main challenge here appears to be the inability to rely fully on the information provided by the individual being assessed. Additionally, employing one tool to such a diverse group of individuals also seems to cause some hesitation. However, one can also see some benefits of such tools. The main benefit appears to be the fact that they can provide a cleared image of both the person and their context. By doing so, it is more feasible to gain an understanding of what possible interventions, as well as rehabilitative measures are necessary. If these standardized tools are able to provide indications of such measures, they are arguably of great value and benefit to prison authorities and staff.

Further Research

The topic of this paper is still developing, and we are continuously gaining new information, insight, and knowledge. What would be interesting to delve deeper into is the prisoner's own experiences with these types of risk assessment processes. Although this may be difficult to see through, it would provide invaluable understanding. Furthermore, more extensive research on how practitioners experience the use of standardized risk assessment tools would not only aid in providing more empirical data, but it could also tell us something about possible amendments

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or challenges. Lastly, examining precisely how the risk assessments are utilized in the development of rehabilitative measure would be of great interest. This information was not readily available, and was therefore not included in this paper.

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Attachments

Attachment 1: Interview guide – Researcher on prison rehabilitation

<p>Part 1 - Guidelines and Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify that the informant will remain anonymous and that notes of the interview will be taken down by hand. rather than recorded • Clarify that the name of the institution or organization will be used in place of names • Ask the informant about their background, typical tasks and area of responsibility in their work
<p>Part 2 - Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the work done with evaluation and rehabilitation of inmates who have been radicalized, what definition of ‘radicalization’ and ‘radicalized person’ is most prevalent? • Which understanding of the process of radicalization appears to be most prevalent in Norway today? • Is the risk of radicalization within prisons viewed as high in the current Norwegian climate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Which measures are implemented, or should be implemented, to counteract this risk? • Which factors are most focused on in evaluations and risk assessments of radicalized inmates? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Is there a greater focus on attitudes or utterances? • How often are the evaluations and assessments updated? Are there certain conditions that result in more frequent updates? • Are standardized tools or methods used when performing such evaluations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If not, which methods are utilized? • Upon release, how are the assessments and their results communicated to those in charge of following up the inmates?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on your own experience, what can be done to contribute to, and facilitate better rehabilitation of radicalized inmates?
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Attachement 2: Interview guide – RVTS employee

<p>Part 1 - Guidelines and Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify that the informant will remain anonymous and that notes of the interview will be taken down by hand. rather than recorded • Clarify that the name of the institution or organization will be used in place of names • Ask the informant about their background, typical tasks and area of responsibility in their work
<p>Part 2 - Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the work done with evaluation and rehabilitation of radicalized people, what definition of ‘radicalization’ and ‘radicalized person’ is most prevalent? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are there specific criteria you focus on for when you may say that a person has been radicalized? • Which understanding of the process of radicalization appears to be most prevalent in RVTS and in Norway today? • Based on your experience, does the threat posed by foreign fighters appear to be high in Norway? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which measures are, or should be implemented to manage this threat? ○ Who are considered to be at risk of becoming radicalized, and how does one hinder those who are already radicalized in becoming more radicalized? • Does the risk of radicalization appear to be high in Norway today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which measures are, or should be implemented to counteract this risk? • Which factors are most focused on in evaluations and risk assessments of radicalized people? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is there a greater focus on attitudes or utterances? • How often are the evaluations and assessments updated? Are there certain conditions that result in more frequent updates?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can tools used in risk assessments of foreign fighters be used with other people who have gone through a process of radicalization, or who have ties to radical and extremist communities?• What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of a standardized approach to risk assessment?• Are the risk assessments used as a foundation of rehabilitation or to hinder further radicalization?• What are the guidelines and rules in terms of sharing the results of these risk assessments?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Who has access to the information?○ How is flow of information between different institutions facilitated?• Are there tailored programs developed for those who have served sentences for terrorism-related acts and crimes, or for those with strong ties to communities that condone or encourage such acts?• Based on your experience, which factors can help in facilitating successful rehabilitation of radicalized people?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Can standardized risk assessments be beneficial tools for developing rehabilitation programs?
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