

## Background

The increasingly heightened polarisation in our society has exacerbated two problems in particular: it has caused a rise in xenophobic violence (e.g. targeting refugee accommodation), on the one hand, and a rise in Salafist and general Islamist radicalisation, on the other.

Current debates about the state and consequences of immigration reveal that a considerable majority of people are sceptical and/or critical of “Islam” and “the refugees” and believe both to be a problem. These attitudes are widespread in Thuringia, too. The discourse is wrought with prejudice and false dichotomies.

Islam in Dialogue aims to establish a joint, basic understanding of humanist principles – democracy, non-violence, human rights and tolerance – and enshrine these values in the world views and religious beliefs of its participants. It also intends to counteract fundamentalism and radicalisation preventively.

## Violence Prevention Network

Violence Prevention Network is a recognised entity in the field of extremism prevention and deradicalisation throughout Germany. Since 2001, it has been making a successful contribution to the reduction of ideologically motivated violence. Based on the four pillars of prevention, intervention, deradicalisation and the online prevention of radicalisation, Violence Prevention Network offers training courses, further-education measures, coaching sessions and counselling to specific target groups.

## Contact/legal notice

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**Demokratie leben!**

## ADVICE CENTRE THURINGIA

 Violence  
Prevention Network

## Islam in Dialogue

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## School workshops

Workshops on intercultural/interfaith education in schools strengthen a trait called ambiguity tolerance: the ability to tolerate the 'other'. They highlight the desirability of democracy and diversity. In addition to promoting acceptance of fundamental rights and human rights for all, they encourage active participation and involvement in the life of society as a whole (empowerment).

### Measures:

- Establishment of an empowerment structure for (Muslim) young people
- School-based intercultural/interfaith workshops that enable young people to distance themselves from extremism and take action. The content of the workshops is adapted to meet the individual needs of each institution and can include theatre, film, social media, etc.

The workshops are aimed at young people who do not (yet) have a closed ideological world view. They use methods that actively encourage participants to reflect on their actions, allowing them to examine the mechanisms that fuel the development of resentment towards people who are (perceived as) different. Young (Muslim) people often find it difficult to process stereotypes of alleged adversaries in their day-to-day life at school. Some suffer from identity crises. Difficult biographical experiences can leave them vulnerable to radicalisation. We want to convey practical skills that help these young people and those around them to live their lives with mutual respect and social cohesion

## Work with refugees

Refugees are constantly targeted by Salafist and Islamist recruiters. People working with refugees on a professional or voluntary basis, including employees and operators of accommodation facilities for refugees, might lack the insight to notice and identify such recruitment attempts and signs of radicalisation. Our offer aims to help them take action, mediate and intervene.

### Measures:

- Specific skills training programmes for people working with refugees

The skills training programmes for people working with refugees are aimed at professionals who notice radical, Islamist or anti-democratic phenomena in their work environment.

## Intervention and casework

Volunteers and professionals are often reluctant to identify instances of radicalisation. In many cases, young people reach advanced stages of the radicalisation process without raising suspicion in those around them. Islam in Dialogue offers one-on-one counselling and intervenes in suspected cases of radicalisation

### Measures:

- Interventions in cases where young people turn to violent Islamism or are suspected of sympathising with it
- Counselling for and dialogue with radicalised individuals, prospective emigrants and returnees

Our intervention measures target those who have displayed extremist or anti-democratic tendencies. These are often people without a completed and consolidated ideology. Their actions can culminate in severe bursts of violence or hate crime.