

MAXIMA/Teach2Reach

Educational Workshops and Training
Courses about religiously motivated
Extremism



Violence
Prevention Network

Introduction

Rampant recruitment attempts by Salafist groups and a widespread fascination with war in contemporary youth and popular culture have been posing considerable pedagogic challenges in the recent past. Neo-Salafism derives a great deal of its attractiveness from topics and practices that have been popularised by youth culture: the way in which the so-called Islamic State presents itself in its propaganda films and on social media platforms is very much congruent with the ideals that define modern youth culture.

It comes as no surprise that inter-religious conflicts and misunderstandings are increasingly severe: they are either fuelled by considerably greater identity-related momentum or are, at least, perceived as such. Everyday life – in institutions, at work, in school contexts, etc. – frequently produces situations that defy the comprehension of those involved. This often results in greater vulnerability to extremism, radicalisation and disintegration, especially among young people. The irreconcilability of religion and democracy as perceived by this target group is fertile soil for anti-democratic attitudes and radicalisation.

Educational work based on the most prominent problems of the target group and the facilitation of inter-religious dialogue are effective methods of counteracting such developments. Not only is it necessary to target young adults who may be at risk of radicalisation directly by way of preventive programmes, it is similarly crucial to provide training to professionals who frequently engage with such persons in work contexts.

*„We make a contribution
to social cohesion
in Berlin.“*



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The Teach2Reach project is a response to the growing need for preventative political education in order to address the phenomenon of religiously motivated extremism. Its goal is to provide education about extremism and recruitment strategies as well as to develop potential courses of action for young people and professionals when signs of radicalisation arise. Other objectives are to demystify the phenomenon of jihadism and to increase the ability of young people to distance themselves from extremism. The training programmes offered to teaching staff and professionals from the field of child and youth welfare aim to expand their competences in dealing with young people at risk of radicalisation. Our workshops are tailored to the specific context of the particular institution, allowing young people to respond critically to the recruiting efforts of the extremist scene rather than feeling powerless.

We currently offer workshops on the topics of inter-religious competence, Islam, democracy and human rights, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and education about and dealing with religiously motivated extremism. Upon request, we refer those in need of support to employees at the mobile KOMPASS advice centre, who are available at any time. These professionals can take immediate action in recognisable individual cases that require more intensive support.

Our workshops are process-oriented. We develop their concrete content in cooperation with you and in consideration of your specific interests and requirements. We are also happy to provide counselling services upon request.

The employees and trainers involved in Teach2Reach have long-standing experience in the field of youth work and far-reaching connections within the Muslim community. They are qualified Diversity and AKT®-Trainers with practical experience in the following fields:

- › Workshops and seminars on the topics of Islam and religiously motivated extremism in and outside of schools
- › Workshops for young people and multipliers on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- › Intercultural and inter-religious dialogue events and conflict training
- › Anti-bias and Betzavta training
- › Empowerment training with a focus on anti-discrimination
- › Dialogue moderation (completed training and multiple years of work with the Federal Agency for Civic Education)
- › Members of the police prevention network
- › Pastoral care for prisoners
- › Anti-violence and competence training (AKT®) in juvenile prisons and youth welfare/district work
- › Mediation and conflict management

→ Pedagogic objectives

The preventive efforts of Teach2Reach consist of communicating with young people at risk of becoming religiously or politically radicalised and involving them in an inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, as well as using workshops to expand their knowledge, such as about Islam, but also about other religions, democracy and human rights. Its overarching pedagogic goals are as follows:

- Expanding knowledge of inter-religiousness, identity and religiously motivated extremism
- Raising awareness of the recruitment strategies of extremists and the stigmatisation of groups
- Enabling positioning in a pluralistic society
- Strengthening skills such as media literacy and awareness of tolerance
- Developing action strategies for dealing with recruitment attempts and religious extremism

At this point, the intervention team of the KOMPASS advice centre may be called in as a partner at any time.

→ Target group – Who is Teach2Reach for?

The Teach2Reach educational workshops about religiously motivated extremism are intended for pupils from grade 9 to upper secondary level and beyond as well as youth welfare institutions. We also offer our services to institutions and social/cultural organisations that work in education and require advice or support in dealing with religiously motivated extremism.

Our training courses are aimed at participants who are engaged in constant dialogue with young people at risk from extremism (teaching staff, professionals in the field of youth welfare, etc.).

The Workshop Programme





*„I never knew how much Jews,
Christians and Muslims had
in common.” – Fatma, 15*

→ Inter-religious competence

Schools and youth welfare institutions are becoming the sites of inter-religious and inter-cultural conflicts with increasing frequency. These conflicts are usually characterised by mutual prejudice, false dichotomies, defamation and a lack of knowledge of the other party. The topics of identity, religion/world view, culture and origin tend to be at their centre. Our inter-religious workshops focus on these specific topics in order to improve the young participants' self-respect and their respect for others; they highlight more respectful potential courses of action and convey the notion of diversity as a resource.

Based on the experiences and interests of the participating young people, our workshops include interactive exercises that probe and process existing prejudices and biases in order to convey knowledge in an engaging manner.

The workshops are guided by inter-religious teams of two trainers whose own backgrounds – as practising Jews, Christians or Muslims with or without a background of migration – make them authentic role models by showcasing social togetherness, thereby helping participants question perceived dichotomies. They highlight and emphasise the common humanity that connects us all despite our differences in nationality, religion, culture, rituals and traditions.

In order to strengthen this notion, the trainers organise excursions to the various places of worship of the three main monotheistic world religions. At the same time, the workshops allow for sufficient space to address social conflicts and personal experiences of discrimination. These experiences as recounted by the participants are then used to derive rules for respectful and peaceful human relations.

Using the topic of religion, the trainers encourage the perception of inter-religiousness as an opportunity for greater social cohesion.

Our workshops flexibly engage with the following topics:

- The basic principles and everyday religious practice of the three monotheistic world religions
- The core values shared by the three monotheistic world religions
- Islam and human rights
- The role of women in Islam
- Traditionalism and concepts of honour
- Dealing with other religions and world views
- Anti-Semitic attitudes and statements
- Religiously motivated violence
- Religiously motivated conflict at school, e.g. bullying

Target group:	pupils from grade 9 to upper secondary level and beyond
Duration:	3 days
Location:	our facilities or your institution
Excursions:	Jewish Museum, Genezarethkirche, visit to a mosque



*„We finally got a chance
to talk about the things
that matter to us.” –
Sahar, 16*

→ Workshop on the topics of Islam and religiously motivated extremism

Young people are often uncertain about the role their own identity, religion, origin and culture play in their lives. However, especially for young Muslims, religion tends to be an important component of their lives and a source of orientation and stability. At the same time, they easily feel excluded from mainstream society because of their faith. Actual and perceived discrimination, a lack of prospects for the future, limited participation in society and rather basic religious knowledge combined with traditionalist thinking can cause and strengthen prejudice. This makes many of these young people more receptive for radical lines of argument and extreme views, which they frequently accept and perpetuate unquestioningly. Their non-Islamic environment responds to their tendencies with a lack of understanding or even downright rejection; this fuels an atmosphere of insecurity that easily develops overtones of aggression. Conflict is likely.

Our workshops, which can be held on one or multiple days, educate participants about the basics of Islam and combat extremism by highlighting alternative approaches and ways of action. They teach the young participants to resolve the existing tension between their religious identity, on the one hand, and experiences of discrimination, on the other, without adopting extremist mentalities. The young people learn to question ways of thinking rather than accepting them unquestioningly, which encourages them to change their perspective and strengthens their sense of responsibility as members of society.

Thanks to our trainers' Muslim faith, socialisation, migration background and network within the community, they are authentic role models for the young people. They represent a genuine, democratic and cosmopolitan approach to religion, thus providing a plausible and, above all, credible alternative to radical/extremist worldviews.

The workshop focusses on the following topics:

- Basic principles and values of Islam
- Islam, democracy and human rights
- The role of women in Islam
- Branches of Islam and their cultural backgrounds
- Tolerance and respect in dealing with other religions and worldviews
- Religious fundamentalism
- Traditionalism and concepts of honour
- Religiously motivated violence
- Religiously motivated conflicts at school

Target group:	pupils from grade 9 to upper secondary level and beyond
Duration:	1 – 3 days
Location:	our facilities or your institution

→ „Demystify extremism“

Education about and dealing with religiously motivated extremism

Rampant recruitment attempts by Salafist groups and a widespread fascination with war in contemporary youth and popular culture pose considerable challenges for pedagogues. Especially young Muslims with experiences of social disintegration often struggle to approach these phenomena critically. They tend to perceive their religion to be irreconcilable with the values of democracy, which can give rise to anti-democratic attitudes and facilitate radicalisation. Our workshop makes its young participants aware of recruitment strategies and demystifies the false dichotomies presented by extremists by elucidating the ideology on which they are based.

This workshop can be booked as a complementary addition to our Islam workshop in order to provide further-reaching insights into the recruitment strategies of religiously motivated extremists and immunise young people more effectively. Alternatively, it can be booked as an independent course.

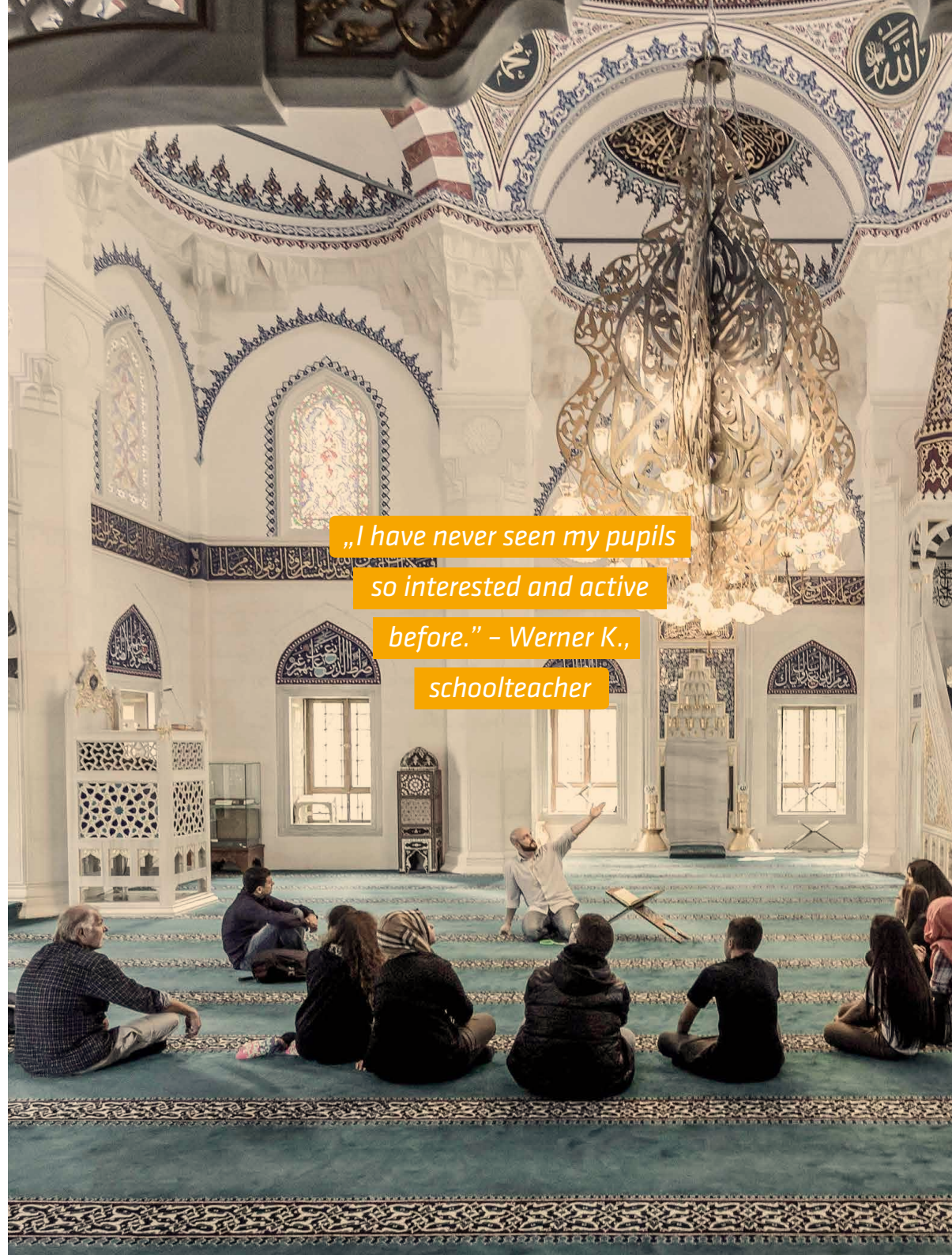
The workshop focusses on the following topics:

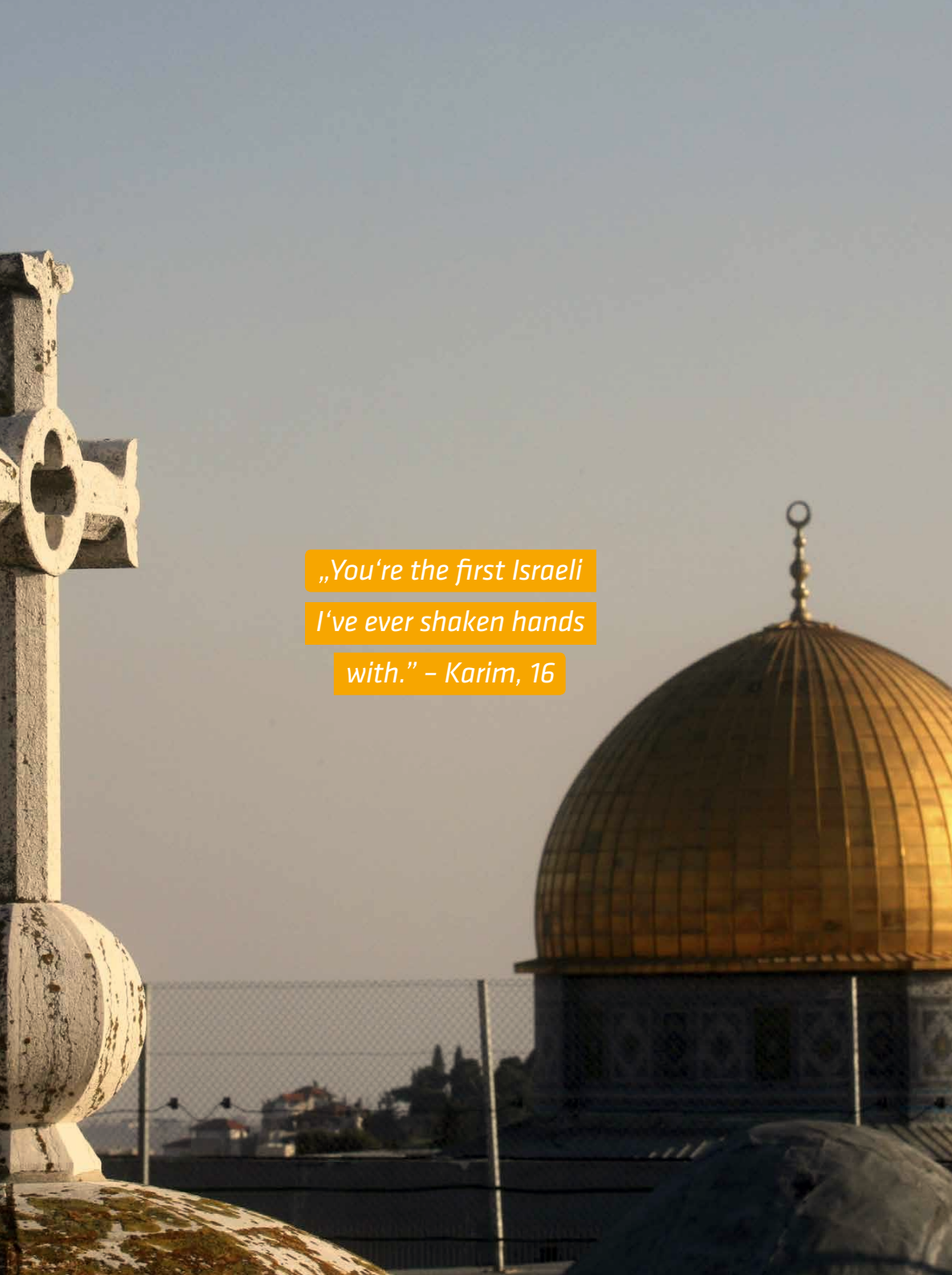
- Education about radicalisation processes involving teenagers
- Analysis and deconstruction of extremist argumentation strategies
- Recruitment attempts by extremists in the media (social networks, etc.)
- Insight into the scene of religiously motivated extremism (with a focus on Germany)
- Action strategies in dealing with religiously motivated extremism

Target group: pupils from grade 9 to upper secondary level and beyond

Duration: one day

Location: our facilities or your institution





*„You're the first Israeli
I've ever shaken hands
with.” – Karim, 16*

→ The Middle East workshop

Discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be very challenging for educational staff. The topic has considerable potential for conflict among teenagers: personal involvement with the Middle East or Islam tends to impede objective analysis of the conflict and introduce severe bias, prejudice or even anti-Semitic/anti-Israel resentment to the discussion.

Our workshop is run by experienced teams of one Palestinian trainer and one Israeli trainer, who engage with the various positions and their causes. By way of interactive methods, role-plays about conflict scenarios and the involvement of personal backgrounds, the trainers facilitate a discussion about the young people's existing knowledge and past experiences and introduce them to different perspectives.

The main objectives of the workshop are:

- Education about the history and current situation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Dismantling of prejudice and stereotypes, encouragement of independent thought
- Establishment of non-violent, peaceful alternatives on both the Israeli and Palestinian side
- Development of social competence, communication skills and cooperation
- Strengthening of the participants' ability to deal with conflict, including in everyday situations

Target group	pupils from grade 9 to upper secondary level and beyond, multipliers, youth welfare institutions
Duration:	2–3 days/1 day/upon individual agreement
Location:	our facilities or your institution



→ Multiplier training

Dealing with extremism and fundamentalism in schools and youth welfare institutions

By working with young people, one can be confronted with extremist or fundamentalist attitudes and behaviours. It is usually difficult to respond appropriately in such situations. Often one feels overwhelmed in a specific situation and does not know what to do. The overarching goal of this training course is to convey the ability to recognise extremist argumentation and to develop possible resolution strategies concerning this argumentation. It is aimed at participants who are engaged in constant dialogue with young people at risk from extremism.

The emphasis is placed on practice-oriented pedagogical thinking and behaviour. The starting points are particularly the experiences of the participants in their professional fields. While encountering these young people is certainly commonplace, conscious dialogue and intentional communication is not. To this end, new courses of action are presented. The goal of the training is to develop a wider understanding of the professional role, which makes dialogue possible with young people who display extremist thought patterns.

Module 1

Differentiated identifying features of extremism and fundamentalism

- Public debates: crime among young migrants, migration, “honour killings”, “Parallel societies”
- Personal experiences with extremist lines of argument at work
- My own perception of Islam
- The five pillars of Islam – A brief overview of the religion
- Islam and its teachings about human and civil rights, non-violence, equality and freedom of religion
- Definitions of terms related to religiously motivated extremism
- Classic lines of argument employed by religiously motivated extremists
- Traditional notions of honour in the context of violent conflict
- Extremist thinking as a justification for violence

Methods:

Keynote speech, work in small groups, film screenings, group discussions, excursions

Module 2

Establishing dialogue and facilitating the adoption of new perspectives

Fruitful dialogue lives from relationships between the individual parties. Relationships begin with oneself. This module focusses on the following questions:


- What emotions arise?
- What images arise?
- What is used as a comparison (including one's own religious education)?

The participants are encouraged to clarify where their own (especially affective) "points of contact" are. What is the perspective of (one's own) possible positions? What are one's own experiences regarding migration / demarcation / excessive community-based or origin-based thinking / perceived and real injustices? The idea is to see oneself clearly and to be able to justify one's own positions. Its objective is to find answers to the following questions:

- How do I develop a working relationship with young people with inhumane attitudes?
- How do I start to address the topic in everyday working life?
- What position can I develop for myself?
- How can I make inhumane positions arguable, and thereby create uncertainty?

Methods:

Keynote speech, brainstorming, case studies, work in small groups, group discussions, dialogue exercises on selected topics



*„I have a much better
connection to my pupils
now.” – Helga S., teacher*

Information and education events about religiously motivated extremism for girls and young women in schools and youth welfare institutions

The MAXIMA project is a response to the growing need for preventative political education in order to address the phenomenon of religiously motivated extremism. It is aimed especially at girls and young women. Religion is an important component of the lives of young Muslim women; it functions as a source of orientation and stability. At the same time, they easily feel excluded from mainstream society because of their faith. Actual and perceived discrimination, a lack of prospects for the future, limited participation in society and rather basic religious knowledge combine with traditionalist ways of thinking. This can cause and strengthen prejudice. As a result, some of these young women are more receptive for radical lines of argument and extreme worldviews, which they accept and perpetuate unquestioningly.

Pedagogic objectives

The preventive efforts of MAXIMA consist of communicating with girls and young women at risk of becoming religiously or politically radicalised and involving them in an inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue at an early stage. This dialogue takes place in parallel to educational measures conveying knowledge about the topics of Islam and its interpretations, democracy and human rights. It aims to develop strategies for girls and young women when signs of radicalisation arise in peer groups. This approach demystifies the phenomenon of modern Islamism and teaches participants to distance themselves from extremism effectively.

Its overarching pedagogic goals are as follows:

- Analysis of Islamist recruitment strategies aimed specifically at women
- Prevention of radicalisation by way of political education
- Reflection on one's own background in terms of family life, gender roles and personal goals

Content

Topics that may be discussed during the events include:

- Theological foundations of Islam and everyday religious practice
- Branches of Islam and their cultural backgrounds
- Islam in the context of human rights, democracy and non-violence
- Freedom of religion: dealing with other religions and worldviews
- The role of women in Islam – Traditionalism and concepts of honour
- Oppression of women: The double standards of conservative concepts of honour
- Dealing with conflict in/with society
- Religiously motivated violence

Our offer

- Information and education events for girls and young women
- Discussion forums and counselling
- Education on specific topics

Our team

Young Muslim women are more open to arguments presented by people within their own demographic characteristics. Thanks to our trainers' actively practiced Muslim faith, socialisation and migration background, they constitute authentic role models for the young people. They represent a genuine, democratic and cosmopolitan approach to religion, thus providing a plausible alternative to radical/fundamentalist worldviews.

These offers can be booked as an addition to our workshop on Islam or as an independent course. Our trainers adapt their content to individual requirements and target groups.

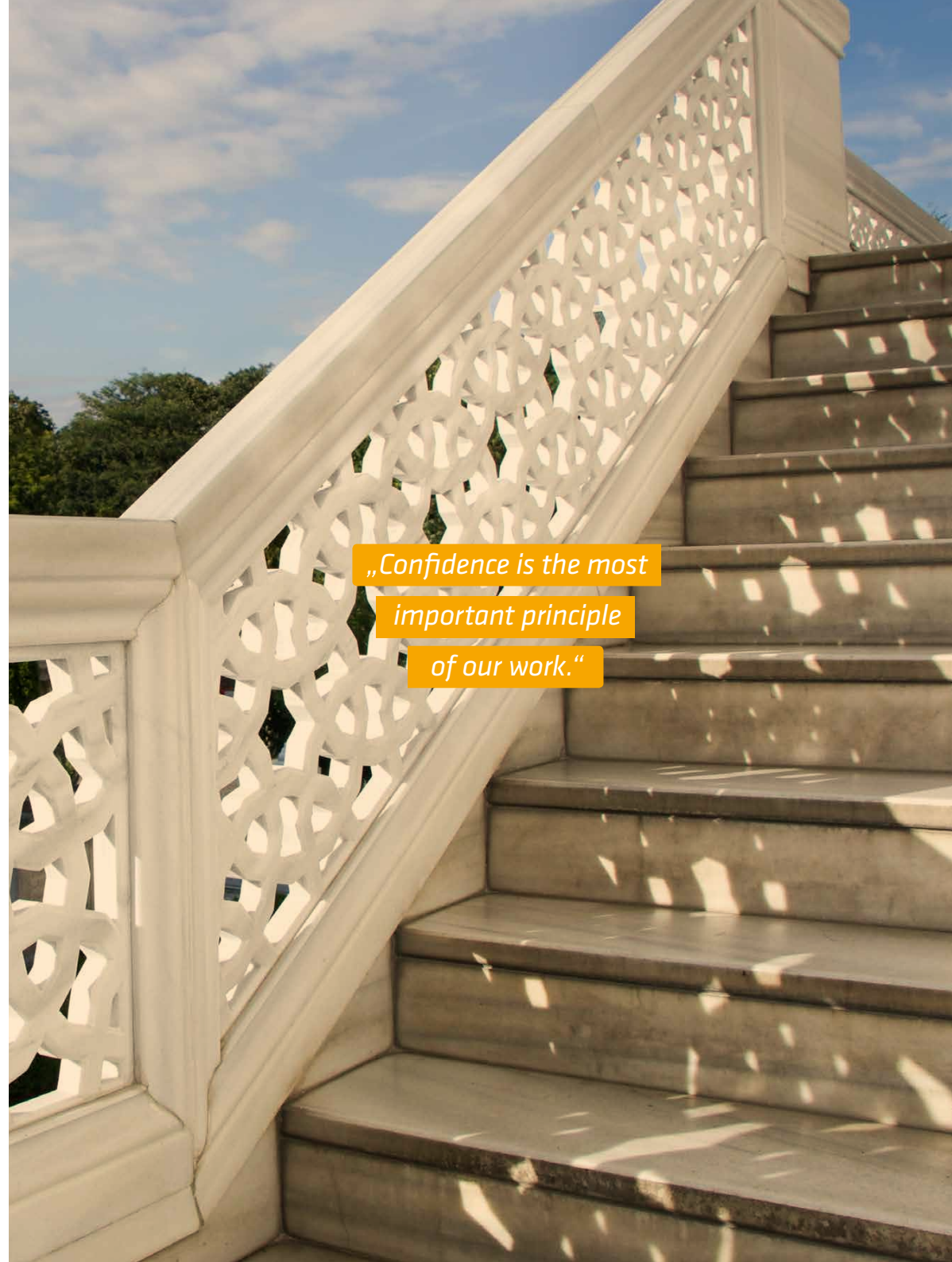
Target group:	girls and young women
Duration:	1-2 days or upon agreement
Location:	our facilities or your institution



Violence Prevention Network

Violence Prevention Network is a group of experienced specialists who have been active in the field of prevention of extremism and deradicalisation of extremist-motivated violent offenders with great success for many years. Since 2001, the Violence Prevention Network team has been working successfully in reducing ideologically and religiously motivated serious crime and extreme acts of violence committed by adolescents and young adults.

Das Team von Teach2Reach / MAXIMA



*„Confidence is the most
important principle
of our work.“*

→ Update information – contact

Detach and send to:

Violence Prevention Network

Teach2Reach/MAXIMA

Bergmannstraße 5, Haus 2 - 3. OG

10961 Berlin

Per Fax an:

030 749 29 582

- ☐ Copies of brochure „Teach2Reach/MAXIMA“
- ☐ Copies of flyer “KOMPASS Advice Centre“
- ☐ Copies of brochure “BAHIRA Advice Centre“
- ☐ Copies of brochure “Deradicalisation – Intervention – Prevention - The work of Violence Prevention Network“

☐ I am interested in the following workshop: _____

☐ I would like a customised offer.

Name _____

Institution _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

→ Everyone can change their behaviour

The skills that a person needs to change his or her behaviour – the ability to relate to others, empathise, have a sense of responsibility and self-reflect – can be learned. The activities of Violence Prevention Network are based upon this educational attitude, which involves a commitment to humanist principles.

Contact/legal notice

Violence Prevention Network e.V.

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If you are interested in our offers, give us a call or send us an e-mail. All services are provided free of charge.

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**Landeskommission
Berlin gegen Gewalt**

Islam-ist

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Prevention Network