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TIENSESTRAAT 41
3000 LEUVEN
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Supervisor: Dr. E. ZINSSTAG
Co-supervisor: Ms. H. SAEED

Master's thesis, submitted by Pieter APPELBOOM as part of
the final examination for the degree of MASTER IN CRIMINOLOGY

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“It’s obviously a rather difficult topic. Look, a criminal with a kilo of cocaine, that’s pretty obvious. That’s illegal, it’s not allowed. But if you’re really religious, are you just promoting your beliefs? So is it freedom of speech? Or is it to recruit people? Recruiting to fight somewhere? Or to commit a terrorist attack?” – Interviewee 7

Abstract

Since 2012 there has been a sharp increase of radicalised European foreign fighters travelling to Syria to allegedly join terrorist networks such as the Islamic State. Instead of only focusing upon their return, are contemporary counter-terrorism policies particularly aiming to domestically prevent radicalisation from escalating into violent extremism. Before any effective counter-radicalisation programme can be initiated, is it first necessary to detect radicalisation. Considering the process of radicalisation is said to have a strong local character, is, amongst others, the community officer expected to play a prominent early signalling role. But to what extent are community officers signalling processes of radicalisation within their daily functioning?

This research project examines the current role of the community officer in the signalling of early processes of religious inspired radicalisation within the Netherlands. For this study a total of eight semi-structured interviews have been conducted with community officers working in those communities where radicalisation is considered most prominent. The results indicate a similar experience for the various respondents, showing that the early signalling role should not be exaggerated. Although the community officers are well aware of the theoretical meaning of the concept of radicalisation, is most-often merely a transition towards a *sudden* profound religious identity observed within their communities. This information is incidentally brought to them by concerned community residents, or by simply functioning as 'ears and eye's of the organisation of the police. It seems that the role of the community officer is not necessarily an early signalling one, but that they do play an important role in the direct follow up when cases of potential radicalisation first emerge.

Keywords: Radicalisation, Community Policing, The Netherlands, Foreign Fighters, Syria.

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III List of abbreviations

AIVD	=	Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst
COP	=	Community Oriented Policing
COT	=	Instituut voor Veiligheid- en Crisismanagement
CSS	=	Centre for Security Studies
CTC	=	Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism
DTN	=	Dreigingsbeeld Terrorisme Nederland
EC	=	European Commission
EU	=	European Union
EUCPN	=	European Crime Prevention Network
INP	=	Inrichtingsplan Nationale Politie
IS	=	Islamic State
ISIL	=	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
NCTV	=	Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid
NYPD	=	New York City Police Department
OSCE	=	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RAN	=	Radicalisation Awareness Network
RAN POL	=	Radicalisation Awareness Network Police
SAT	=	Situational Action Theory

IV Annex list*

Annex A	=	Letter to police chief
Annex B	=	Letter to police chief (Dutch)
Annex C	=	Letter to community officer
Annex D	=	Letter to community officer (Dutch)
Annex E	=	Interview topic-list
Annex F	=	Interview topic-list (Dutch)
Annex G	=	Coding tree
Annex H	=	Coding tree (Dutch)

* The transcribed interviews have not been included in the Annex because often references have been made that could identify the specific community officer or specific community. Also, often names have been mentioned of colleagues or supervisors. The researcher has nevertheless saved the original transcribed interviews as well as the original audio data.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General introduction

The Paris shootings of January 2015 have sent a shockwave throughout Europe, flaring renewed popular interest within the contemporary dilemma of religious-inspired terrorism. These shootings rendered attention towards the proclaimed home-grown aspect of terrorism, resulting in a renewed political and societal tsunami of thoughts and ideas on the processes leading to terrorism; specifically that of radicalisation. Intuitively after such incidents, many urge for an increase of internal security measures as an appropriate and essential response to the perceived increased threat of terrorism. Instead focusing upon detecting the early processes of radicalisation by local police forces or other first-line personnel may prove more worthwhile in tackling the violent minority of religious inspired extremists.

Although radicalisation and terrorism seem to be inevitably intertwined, whereas the one is serving as a prerequisite for the other, the former does not necessarily lead to the latter (Fermin, 2009, pp. 11-12; Richards, 2011). This is also infringed in the conceptualisation as adopted by the European Commission in which radicalisation is "the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas, which *could* lead to acts of terrorism" (EC, 2006). The focus on radicalisation is nevertheless something relatively new (Hofmann, 2012, p. 1), as prior counter terrorism policies generally focused on repressive or so-called 'hard measures' (Spalek & Imtoual, 2007). These hard measures usually involved investing in intelligence services, law enforcement or military intervention in countering terrorism (Romaniuk & Chowdhury-Fink, 2012). Other repressive measures such as target hardening or investing in deterrence have according to Lum et al. (2006, pp. 501-502) not necessarily reached the desired effect. An initial partial preventive approach, as proposed in the United Kingdom through their Terrorism Act of 2000 (section 43 & 44) allowing police officers to stop-and-search proclaimed terrorist affiliated suspects more easily, has according to Choudhurry and Fenwick (2011) only proven ineffective, or even contra-productive.

Whereas the antecedents of 2001 in New York served as a catalyst for enhanced policy and scholarly interest and therefore urged for further re-evaluation and re-modelling of initiated policy, the Madrid (2004) and London (2005) bombings showed the necessity of tackling terrorism at its core. The latter two not only redefined the ill-defined concept

of terrorism into one specifically focusing upon Islamic extremism (Hoffman, 2006, p.18), it also showed growing awareness of home-grown terrorism and the dangers this accompanied. This subsequently led to the concept of radicalisation being coined among policy makers (European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation, 2006, p. 5), initiating a paradigm shift by emphasising on a more preventative oriented approach (Romaniuk & Fink, 2012, p. 4). However, the concept of radicalisation was not profoundly new as it was already being used within the Netherlands in the late 1990s, here also specifically focussing upon the Muslim community (de Kerchove & van Reedt Dortland, 2008, p. 147).

One of these preventative approaches in the context of radicalisation involved the increase of police intervention within the local domain (EU Council conclusions, 2010). The police, whom often operate on a rather local level, are expected to serve and protect civilians and this way ultimately help ensuring their fundamental freedoms (OSCE, 2008). Instead of being traditionally reactive (Murray, 2007, p. 7), here the police are expected to detect or signal processes of radicalisation, therefore potentially impeding individuals from further entering into a trajectory of religious inspired extremism. Early detection of radicalisation could be reached when the pro-active policing strategy of Community Orientated Policing (hereafter: COP) is one of the guiding principles within the policing apparatus. COP is generally understood as a police model in which police officers act pro-actively in cooperation with the community they serve in order to change crime-causing conditions (Friedmann, 1994). This strategy strongly relies on specifically the community officer being a present actor within his or her community. This community oriented approach already became the overlying paradigm of modern-day policing in the 1990s within the Netherlands (Terpstra, 2004, p. 3), allowing specifically the community officer ('wijkagent') to become the 'ears and eyes' of the community (Minister of Home Affairs and of Justice, 2005). This 'ear and eye' function can play a vital role within the contemporary issues regarding homegrown radicalisation.

The signalling of extremist radicalisation by the police has also been acknowledged by the European Union as multiple recommendations have been given to nation-states in order to implement new counter-terrorism measures (e.g. EU Council conclusions, 2010). But, as with many counter-terrorism policies (Lum et al., 2006), the role of the local community police officer has hardly been evaluated. Existing research, such as for instance the OSCE (2014), often makes use of a top-down approach in describing and

analysing the experiences by local police officers. This dissertation will specifically focus on this local dimension as perceived by the local community officer. In doing so, the following research question is proposed:

> What are the perceived experiences in the signalling of religious-extremist affiliated radicalisation by community oriented police officers in the Netherlands?

As the research question clearly states, the chosen emphasis is on the signalling of radicalisation as perceived by community officers, since this is considered a measureable parameter. This as opposed to measuring counter-radicalisation, counter-terrorism, or the evaluation of prevention in itself, which have proven difficult to evaluate due to their elusiveness (Nelen, 2008; de Graaff, 2009). This research question therefore focuses on the actual experiences by police officers in the field. Prior related research done by for instance de Kool (2007) showed the police's ability to possibly detect signs of radicalisation, and showed that this still left room for improvement. It would therefore be interesting to see whether eight years after this study, the police officers have more actual experiences in signalling radicalisation within their community, and whether they have received further empowerment to be able to do so.

1.1.1 Outline

In the remainder of this dissertation, a comprehensive answer will be sought to the proposed research question throughout three consecutive parts. Each part will progressively lead to a wider understanding of the theme and will elaborate on its key-concepts. Before addressing the theoretical and empirical part of this research project, a general overview will be given placing radicalisation in a national and European context.

The first theoretical part of this dissertation will focus upon the definitional dilemma all of the mentioned concepts seem to fall victim of. Central to this research are the concepts of radicalisation, community oriented policing and ultimately its interplay. An overview of the accessible literature will allow exploring the proposed concepts and will constantly try to connect the proposed meaning of the concept in general terms on the one hand, and a more theme-specific analysis on the other.

The first proposed concept is that of radicalisation, and will focus specifically upon radicalisation towards religious extremism. Whilst describing this concept, a four-dimensional distinction will be offered to cover all relevant aspects. First a general

outline will be given on the concept of radicalisation, followed by a description of the expected processes of religious inspired radicalisation. Then a short deliberation on the individual dimension of radicalisation is presented. Finally, in order to make a leap towards the possible role of local community officers, the external dimension of radicalisation will be elaborated.

After having clarified radicalisation, a review will follow on the available research on the concept of community oriented policing. Again a four-way distinction is made; starting with the interpretation of the concept of community, followed by an explanation of the origins of community oriented policing as a policing strategy. Hereafter, the meaning of the concept is elaborated by going through several scholarly works and accepted definitions. Finally, a step towards the local dimension within the Netherlands is made by giving a broad overview of the evolution towards community oriented policing as a policing strategy.

After clearly describing the two main concepts of radicalisation and community oriented policing, its interplay will be discussed by proposing the following three sub-questions:

sq1. What is the role of *communication* in the signalling of radicalisation?
sq2. What is the role of *observation* in the signalling of radicalisation?
sq3. What is the role of *participation* in the signalling of radicalisation?

These three questions describe various aspects of community policing and will therefore help answering the proposed research question on experiences of signalling radicalisation by community officers. Finally these concepts will be seen in interplay with radicalisation and its external dimension and offer a potential helpful insight in contemporary issues regarding radicalisation.

The second part within this dissertation will entail the methodological considerations that have been made in order to find a satisfying answer to the research questions. Both the justification for a qualitative research strategy as the process of sampling will be discussed in detail. Also the research method and terms of reliability and validity will be discussed.

The final substantive part will cover the essence of this dissertation; the qualitative research on the perceived experiences in the signalling of radicalisation by local community officers in the Netherlands. There unfortunately seems to be a serious lack of data on the actual experiences by community officers. Terpstra (2010, p. 65) therefore describes the community experiences as somewhat of a 'black box'. To describe these local experiences, an overview is presented of the collected data, illustrated in places by quotes from the interviews with various community officers. Finally a discussion and short conclusion is presented.

1.1.2 Orientating interviews

Prior to the actual data gathering have three orientating interviews been conducted with members of the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV), the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC) and the Dutch Police Academy. These interviews helped demarcating the research topic and ultimately helped deciding on what direction to take in both choice of research subjects as well as choice of policing regions. Therefore, the study refers several times to these very informative interviews on terrorism, radicalisation and the role of the community officer. Nevertheless, these interviews have been excluded from the data-analysis section, as here exclusively the individual experience as perceived by the community officer will be described. After conducting the interviews with the community officers, an operational expert has been interviewed. This expert is tasked primarily with intelligence on radicalisation and therefore allowed insight in potential recommendations.

1.1.3 Author's note

Whilst the study describes the possible radicalisation of Muslim-extremists, the author does not mean to imply any negative connotation towards the religion of Islam itself in any way. This research project aims to gain insight into processes of radicalisation, contemporarily particularly intertwined with an Islamic ideology as interpreted by a relative minority. Islam does not radicalise people, but its (interpreted) role within the transition towards radicalisation should nevertheless not be disregarded.

It is also worth mentioning that this research project aims to explore the experiences of radicalisation as perceived only by the community officer. This inherently neglects the obvious other side of the coin, being those who are expected to be radicalising. Therefore, whilst reading this dissertation it is important to understand that radicalisation lies in the eye of the beholder.

Finally, a lot has been recently written and discussed about radicalisation by academics, as well as by politicians, the media and the general public. Especially in the aftermath of terrorist related events, a moral panic appears to rise within society. This research tries to put things into perspective by describing the actual experiences in the most vulnerable communities by local community officers, therefore trying to partially debunk this moral panic. Although radicalisation and terrorism are obviously of serious concern, it should not become the safety-paradigm of our time.

1.2 Radicalisation in context

1.2.1 Post-Madrid

As the attacks in Madrid sent a shock wave throughout Europe and the rest of the World, showing vulnerability towards global citizens, soon after the securitisation of Islam was believed to be one of the biggest threats facing Europe in the modern era (Al Raffie, 2013, p. 67). Later the same year, Dutch film director Theo van Gogh was assassinated by Mohammed Bouyeri (member of alleged terrorist organisation "Hofstadgroep") on the streets of Amsterdam on an early November morning, leading to massive controversy among the Dutch general public (Eijkman, Lettinga & Verbossen, 2012). This together with other incidents have raised awareness of vulnerability within the national dimension and re-emphasised upon counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation policy, resulting in various local authorities initiating region-specific counter-radicalisation initiatives as carried out in for example Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague (Vidino & Brandon, 2012, p. 27). Moreover, modern globalisation has led to an ever-shrinking space-time continuum (Giddens, 1985; Harvey, 1990) in which those who seek terror are able to do so with greater efficiency and velocity than ever before, hence further increasing awareness of potential threat significantly.

This raise in awareness of possible threat resulted in the Action-Plan 2007-2011 'Polarisation and Radicalisation' by the Dutch Ministry of Justice, emphasising upon a more preventative approach towards the proclaimed raised polarisation within the Netherlands. The Action-Plan consisted out of preventative, pro-active and repressive orientated measures in order to construct an efficient counter-policy (Action-Plan, 2007). Within this national policy, the local dimension was highlighted resulting in measures being stimulated specifically on the local level, involving various local actors. Local community officers, together with other active first-line personnel, were to play a

vital role within the pro-active function of this policy, and were to receive basic training and education to improve the prevention of further radicalisation and secularisation. This new approach was also accompanied by various repressive and judicial measures to prevent radicalisation from escalation. After this period, the threat of Jihadism and religious inspired radicalisation was seemingly pushed more and more towards the background (AIVD, 2014). Nevertheless, apparently merely the violent and active dynamic of religious affiliated extremism appeared to have changed, meaning that a different modus operandi emerged in practising and expressing their ideology. These changes appeared through more public displays of religious extremist ideas, public provocation and the increase in manifestations and demonstrations to promote the Dawa or foreign Jihad (AIVD, 2014).

1.2.2 Syria

This period of relative stability and minor non-violent incidents, therefore allowing reprioritising terrorism related policies, abruptly ended when in 2013 several cases came to the attention of intelligence services in which predominantly young Muslims seemed to have left for Syria to join the active Jihad (AIVD, 2014). More than one hundred Dutch-Muslims appeared to have travelled to Syria, making national and international alarm bells ring.

This phenomenon of European foreign fighters is nevertheless not necessarily something new (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenman, 2014, p. 2). What is new in these relative recent developments is the sheer attractiveness Syria seems to eradicate within Dutch Muslims. The Netherlands has thus far (December 2014) seen 160 persons believed-to-be-radicalised travelling to Syria, of which 75 of them are still considered active (P. Abels, personal communication, 10 December 2014). There are several proclaimed underlying pull-factors contributing to this development. Firstly, Syria has ever since the uprising of the Arabic Spring been a country in a state of civil war, allowing extremist groups to rise and seek control over vast parts of the region. Terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL later to be renamed IS) have ceased the opportunity and proclaimed the Caliphate under the Caliph Abu Bakr al Baghdadi. Second, religious prophecies such as proposed by Isaiah 17:1, predicting the fall of Damascus, and other 'end-time' thoughts (P. Abels, personal communication, 10 December 2014), contribute to the attractiveness of Syria for religious extremists. Finally, the geographical location of Syria enables willing Europeans to reach their destination through the mainland of Turkey, therefore showing easier accessibility than

any other country of conflict in the Middle East ever had before. This pull-factor of Syria should not be underestimated (D. Weggemans, personal communication, 26 January 2015) and offers significant troubles in countering radicalisation, as this would be considered beyond control of national governments or policy.

1.2.3 Threat to Europe

Not merely the Netherlands, but also Belgium, France and the United Kingdom have received similar worrying intelligence, therefore raising awareness all across the Schengen-area. The International Centre for Study of Radicalisation showed that 18 percent of all active fighters in Syria turned out to be former European residents (Zelin, 2013). Although these numbers are worrying, the real security concern arises from the possible return of these individuals, as they could possibly have been trained in the art of warfare, have been further radicalised or be heavily traumatised (Bakker, Paulussen & Entenmann, 2014, p. 18). The emphasis is placed here on the adjective –possibly-, as no vast numbers on returnees have since emerged, disallowing concrete expectations or trends. In the Netherlands, this concern nevertheless lead to an increase of the risk-assessment level of terrorism activity from limited to substantial in early March 2013 (NCTV, 2013). This transition into a higher state of awareness specifically meant that the chances of an extremist affiliated terrorist attack were to be considered real and acute.

The Netherlands has thus far only been victim of threats of potential wrongdoers, but no concrete case of violent terrorism has since emerged. This does not mean that the threat of Jihadist terrorism is insignificant. Attacks in both Brussels (2014) and Paris (2015) have unfortunately shown that the threat of religious extremist terrorist activity is still considered real within Europe, and again urges for threat-assessment and policy development. This is especially the case as for both of these attacks the perpetrators have previously travelled to countries within the Middle East, known for Jihadist rebellion groups, and stayed there over a significant period possibly enduring training or experiencing other Jihad orientated ideology. Also, according to DTN36 by the Dutch National Coordination of Terrorism Prevention, the attack in Brussels showed that the Europeans coming back from Syria do not necessarily return to their country of origin to commit a terrorist attack (DTN36, 2014), therefore explaining enhanced interest in counter-terrorism policies over the recent period.

1.2.4 Re-emphasising prevention

The, so to speak, import and export of religious extremists towards and from Syria have led to several controversial dilemmas. The most important one lies in the inadequateness of the contemporary security apparatus to keep track of all those who might possibly travel to Syria and moreover, track or pursue all of those who return (Weggemans, Bakker & Grol, 2014, p. 100). This rather responsive method, together with other terrorism plot-disrupting strategies (Borum, 2011), has proven inadequate on its own, therefore calling for a re-emphasis upon preventing the early process of radicalisation. Prior to being capable of actually preventing the process of radicalisation, the transition should above all first be detected (CSS, 2013, p. 2). This signalling is best carried out at a local level, as terrorism and radicalisation are believed to have a strong local dimension (OSCE, 2014, p. 74). Therefore it would be best to empower those local professionals who are interacting with and in particular communities. Community officers are, alongside others, such as social workers, educational staff or community leaders, expected to play a prominent role within this signalling process. After recognising and signalling radicalisation by the community officer, other perceived adequate professionals can initiate a de-radicalising program.

1.2.5 European initiatives

So to what extend is the community officer expected to play a prominent role in the signalling of radicalisation? Various European and national initiatives have emphasised upon the liaison role of the community officer in their dynamic and varied local function, allowing in places for a potential signalling role. This is especially highlighted in the CoPPRa-project initiated by the EU under Belgian presidency as well as by the creation of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN).

The CoPPRa project (Community Policing and Prevention of Radicalisation) was initiated in 2010 under the supervision of the Belgian federal police and aimed to create more knowledge on radicalisation related topics among community officers within Europe. The project agreed upon the notion that these so-called first line officers have strong ties within their working community and can therefore potentially signal early signs of radicalisation (Out, 2013, p. 73). In order to create broader as well as deeper understanding of radicalisation and extremism, several goals have been set. The three most practical outcomes within this project were the creation of a pocketsize handbook on radicalisation, a training module for trainers and finally the exchange of good practises. The EU welcomed these initiatives on educating these first-line officers, after

which in 2011 the CoPPRa II project was initiated. This second funded project aimed to keep up with recent developments within radicalisation and therefore emphasised upon new training modules and up-to-date exchange of best practises. The CoPPRa-project therefore expects that when trained well and equipped accordingly, the community officer can play a key role in the midst of signalling radicalisation.

Another European based initiative is that of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) institutionalised by the European Commission to, amongst others, help prevent terrorism and radicalisation. Within the RAN a specific working group has been established focusing specifically upon the role of the first line police officers, called RAN POL. This work group also exchanges good practises, organises work groups, brings experts in the field together and facilitates several CoPPRa training sessions. RAN POL likewise ultimately tries to increase awareness of signs of radicalisation among the member states' community officers (RAN POL working group, 2012, p. 1).

These projects, alongside many other national initiatives by each of the individual member states, opt for a central role for the community officer within the signalling of current forms of radicalisation. Nevertheless, the individual experience has thus far received little scholarly attention. So what is the role of the community officer?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Before describing and analysing the role of local community officers within this context, the elaboration of several concepts is first necessary. Therefore, in the next part the key-concepts of radicalisation, community oriented policing and their interplay will be further discussed.

2.2 Radicalisation

2.2.1 Conceptual dilemma

Not surprisingly new in the field of criminology, certain definitional problems have arisen among academics and policy-makers regarding radicalisation. As with the concept of terrorism (see for example Ganor, 2002; Hoffman, 2006), radicalisation also seems to fall victim of continual disagreement (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009), therefore

disallowing consensus to be reached on a clear-cut definition. Nevertheless, most academics seem to agree that it involves some sort of process or transition (Al-Lami, 2009). Taylor and Horgan (2006) clearly state that within this process, the transition from having radical ideas towards actually undertaking action should in particular be further understood. This is especially true as Atran (2010) for example showed that millions of Muslims are to a certain extent sympathetic towards extremist endeavours, but only a few engage in action. These proclaimed processes of radicalisation will be further discussed in the thesis, but first it is necessary to ask what is exactly understood within the concept of radicalisation?

As previously mentioned, the European Commission has defined radicalisation as "the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas, which could lead to acts of terrorism" (EC, 2006). The Dutch domestic Intelligence service (AIVD) has adopted a wider definition claiming radicalisation to be "the (active) pursuit of and/or support to far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to (the continued existence of) the democratic legal order (aim), which may involve the use of undemocratic methods (means) that may harm the functioning of the democratic legal order (effect)" (AIVD, 2004, pp. 13-14). The European definition clearly focuses on the end-goal of terrorism whilst the AIVD uses a broader concept and does not necessarily demarcate the goal of terrorist activity, but mentions the disruption of social order, in whatever form this may be. Because radicalisation within the Netherlands has particularly resulted in individuals travelling to Syria, which on itself is not considered an act of terrorism, the latter definition is preferred. Gielen (2008, p. 14) describes this willingness to change society as longing for a utopia, here the strongly desired caliphate.

This dissertation will not focus upon the definitional struggle radicalisation seems to encompass, and does not aim to. Radicalisation is above all a relative concept (Schmid, 2013, p. 7), dependent upon ones' paradigm. Here (religious) radicalisation is understood in own terms as follows: the transitional process of individuals towards embracing ideas of political, cultural or societal changes, empowered by (self-proclaimed) religious interpretations, potentially leading to (un) democratic ways to achieve these goals or help others in doing so. This process evolves with divergent velocity and is often enhanced by some form of group-dynamic within the local or virtual dimension. This definition entails all the important factors of the concept of

radicalisation and emphasises the aspect of a process in which most of those radicalised seem to go through to at least a certain extent.

2.2.2 Radicalisation as process

In order for the police to play any role within counter-radicalisation policy, it is important to understand the transition towards religious radicalisation on the individual level. First of, the main premise is that there seems to be no singular type of person who turns to terrorism or who radicalises (Bakker, 2006, p. 53). Demographics in other words, do not seem to play a predictive part, as for example research by Sageman (2004) showed. But, a similar transition is to be expected through different consecutive phases for every radicalising individual. Therefore most authors do not talk about the causes of radicalisation, but generally offer a gradual process (Handleiding voor Beleid en Praktijk, 2013). This phased explanation of the process potentially allows local community officers to recognise particular changes that could indicate a process of radicalisation, after which they can initiate action in whatever form that is deemed appropriate. Here of importance is that these early processes of radicalisation often do not involve any law breaking at all (COT, 2007, p. 7). Also, as here the emphasis is placed upon religious inspired radicalisation, the police should be careful in labelling certain external characteristics to a process of radicalisation, as this might increase feelings of stigmatisation or injustice in those receiving this label.

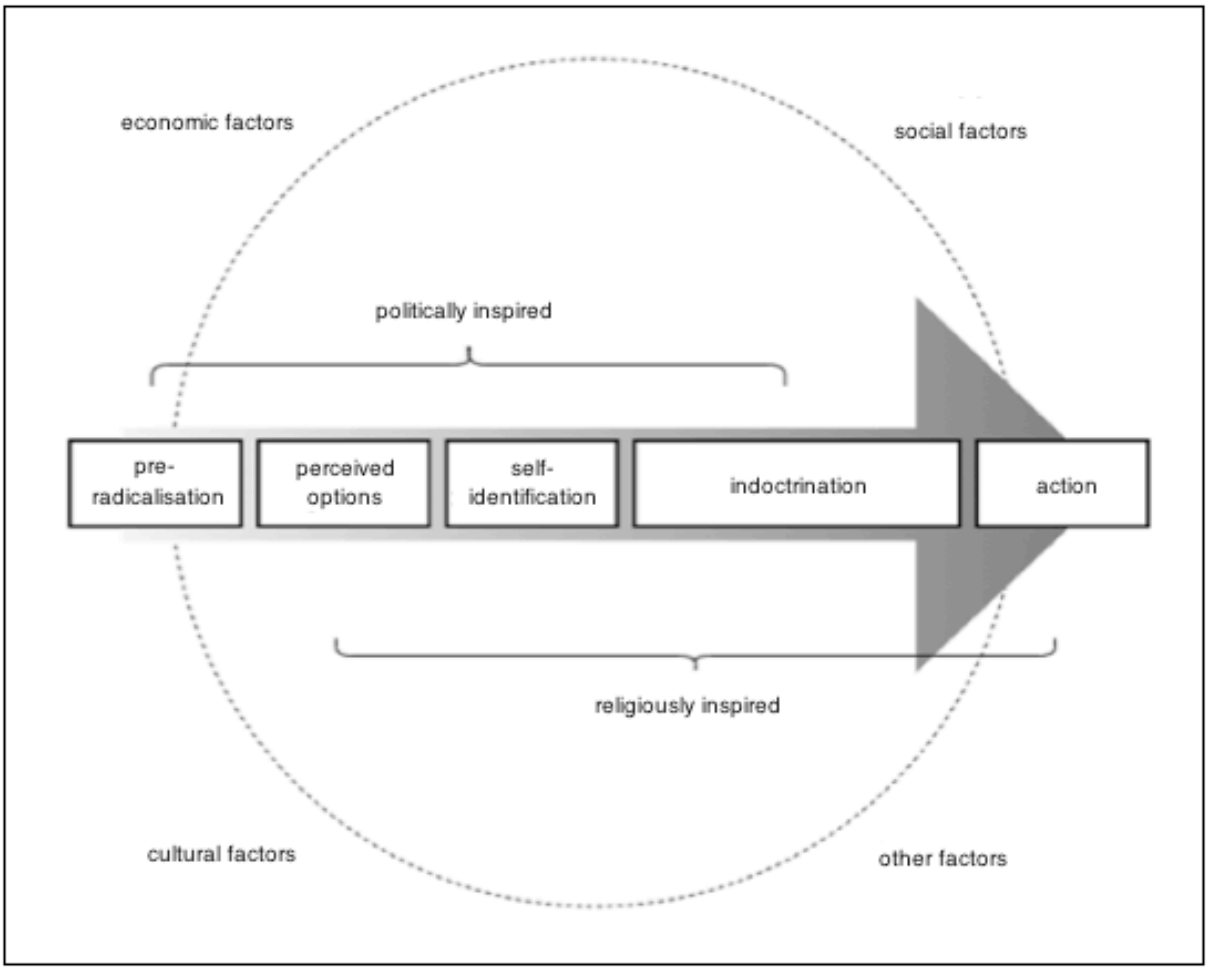
So how does this process of radicalisation look like? Several authors have aimed to describe these processes by creating models of radicalisation. For instance Borum (2003) with his Four-Stage Model of the Terrorist Mindset, Moghaddam's (2005) famous Staircase to Terrorism, Silber and Bhatt's (2007) NYPD Model of Jihadization or Precht's (2007) Model of a 'Typical' Radicalisation pattern. All these theoretical models include different stages, but have no clearly defined beginning or ending (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009, p. 6). These models also share common transitions, but emphasise upon different aspects. In what now follows is a general outline of these models, and accordingly placed in one model specifically focusing upon religious radicalisation. Whilst further elaborating the model as shown in figure 1, emphasis should also be placed upon the variety of outcomes through the model. With this is meant that although a similar process occurs for different people, it can nevertheless lead to a variety of outcomes (Borum, 2011, p. 57).

Figure 1 shows an interpretation of a possible combined model of religious radicalisation and tries to give a general overview of the before-mentioned popular models. Most models share a common understanding of the underlying factors contributing towards setting foot on the trajectory of radicalisation or terrorism; here called the phase of pre-radicalisation. These underlying indirect causes of radicalisation are often considered to be relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970), 'a Muslim identity crisis' (Precht, 2007, p. 34), racism or other feelings of injustice and inequality. None of these factors seem to encompass the silver-bullet in explaining radicalisation alone, but have to be seen in a complex of interaction (Precht, 2007, p. 5).

The second step within this model shows the phase of perceived options. Although none of the models explicitly mention it, here this is understood as the individual assessment of possibilities in personally moving forward, initially trying to break out of the state of relative deprivation or similar perceived injustices. This involves a preliminary quest for potential options to enhance their personal perceived quality of life. Also, here the individual could acknowledge other identical people in similar situations, not moving up or down the social ladder and might therefore get more and more frustrated towards those regarded as the enemy or the out-group holding them back. This phase can be interpreted as an orientation phase in which several options are rationally or subconsciously considered.

The step of seeking alternative routes could result in sidetracking from societal goals and institutionalised means (Merton, 1938), resulting in what Wiktorowicz (2005, pp. 19-20) calls the notion of cognitive opening. This here means that an individual might reconsider their view of the world and seeks new understanding stemming from certain religious ideology (Wiktorowicz, 2005), hence resulting in gaining far-reaching interest in this specific religious ideology. Several trigger factors are able to influence this change, such as active recruitment by a charismatic leader, religious events (rise of Syria) or policy and societal changes, and can further increase this growing interest towards religion (Precht, 2007). Also personal triggers can here lead to a change in cognitive opening, when for instance someone experiences profound personal events such as the loss of a family member (Handleiding voor Beleid en Praktijk, 2013, p. 11).

Figure 1 - Combined Model of Process of Religious Radicalisation*



*Model is based on the 'Four-Stage Model of the Terrorist Mindset' (as seen in: 'Understanding the Terrorist Mindset', Borum, 2003), the 'Staircase to Terrorism' (as seen in: 'The Staircase to Terrorism', Moghaddam, 2005), the 'NYPD Model of Jihadization' (as seen in 'Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat', Silber & Bhatt, 2007) and the 'Model of a Typical Radicalisation pattern' (as seen in: 'Home grown Terrorism and Islamist Radicalisation in Europe', Precht, 2007). Most models share similar characteristics, therefore allowing the representation of their key aspects.

The fourth stage is indoctrination, in which the individual is getting more and more involved in the religious ideology, both for his or her beliefs and for his or her commitment to this ideology (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). It is expected that this phase can vary significantly in duration for each individual. Precht (2007) argues that exposure (network, media, Internet, other institutions) to certain religious affiliated ideology leads to an intensification of this stage. Here one could say the person is radicalised, and is potentially open for a final step towards action. This final step does not necessarily result in violent terrorist activity, but can result in for example openly promoting the Dawa, disrupting certain manifestations or travelling towards Syria to join the active Jihad or supporting the caliphate. This final possible step towards action could be interpreted as an evolution from radicalism to extremism (Noppe et al. 2011).

Figure 1 also shows a differentiation between political and religious inspired phases (Slootman & Tillie, 2006). Although not empirically proven, assumed here is that in the first stages growing ideas towards accepting extremist ideology is mainly initiated through the perceived broad unjust treatment of these individuals within society. Precht (2007, p. 52) for example argues that for many a possible cause for accepting extremist ideology is being frustrated, whilst being at a crossroad in their life. But this perceived unjust treatment also transcends the local and national borders, by what Kundnani (2014) refers to as a 'global war on Islam'. Perceived unjust Western policy against Muslims on a global scale seems to play a vital role within accepting extremist ideology (Neumann, 2006, p. 76). This two-dimensional aspect of setting foot on the trajectory of radicalisation, which could also lead to for instance a criminal trajectory, is in figure 1 defined as 'politically inspired'. Whilst this political dimension creates vulnerability to accepting extremist ideology, it is expected that only then religion seems to play its role as some sort of coping mechanism and as interpreted justification of their actions ('religiously inspired' in figure 1). Then, the process of both political and religious inspired considerations should always be interpreted in light of underlying cultural, economic, social or other unknown factors contributing to one's perceived possibilities and choices in life. Finally, the period in which the subsequent phases follow one another are diffuse, but can happen in tremendous velocity (P. Abels, personal communication, 10 December 2014).

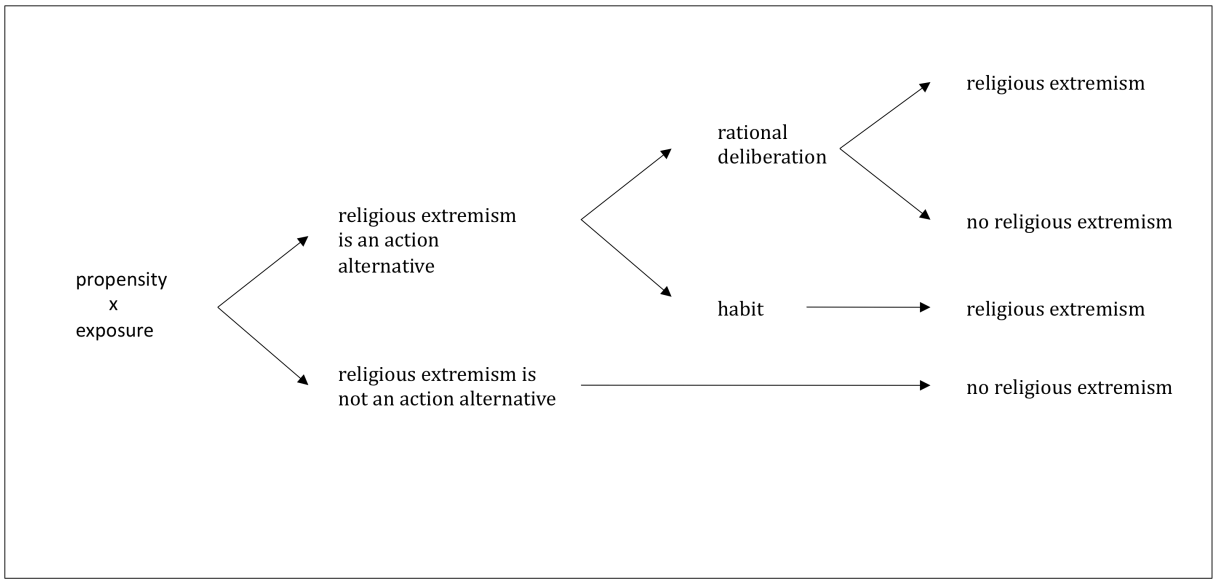
2.2.3 Radicalisation as individual behaviour

So far radicalisation has been interpreted as a process transcending several particular stages. Important here is to understand that these consecutive phases are the result of individual behaviour, what Boudon (1981) calls 'methodological individualism'. This individual behaviour is best understood in terms of the Situational Action Theory (henceforth: SAT) as proposed by Peter Wikström (2004; 2005; 2006). This is essential as many individuals are statistically likely to undergo a process of radicalisation, but only a few actually engage towards action.

The initial aim of the SAT was to explain individual behaviour by explaining moral rule breaking. Whilst in his original work Wikström tried to explain criminal behaviour, some of his later works also aimed to describe acts of terrorism, arguing that these acts are the outcome of similar processes as those leading to traditional criminal offenses (Bouhana & Wikström, 2011). Continuing this line of reasoning, Schils and Pauwels (2014) attempted explaining acts of violent extremism as the outcome of this individual

process. For this research project I chose to exclude the necessity of violence, therefore aiming to describe acts of religious extremism; such as travelling to Syria, promoting the Dawa or showing support for terrorist affiliated networks.

Figure 2 - Simplified model of the Situational Action Theory*



* Original model is originating from: Crime as alternative: Towards a cross-level situational action theory of crime causation. In Beyond empiricism: Institutions and intentions in the study of crime (Wikström, 2004).

As the aim of this research proposal is not to offer new insights in explaining radicalisation, merely a simplified model of the SAT is suggested here (see figure 2). In my personal view, the SAT consists out of two main components particularly interesting for this research topic. The first is what Wikström calls seeing a particular act as an action alternative. With this it is meant that most people, or in this case most Muslims, do not even consider acts of religious extremism being an action alternative. Why one individual does whilst another does not is dependent upon the interaction between someone's (extremist) propensity (P) and someone's (extremist) exposure (E). This will here not be further discussed as it transcends the purpose of this research project (for a more detailed understanding see: Bouhana & Wikström, 2011). For those few who consider acts of religious extremism as a viable action alternative, a process of choice emerges. This individual choice of acting upon their perceived options within their perceived extremist ideas then either results in action or in inaction. This is more or less a rational deliberation towards engaging in action. Of course this individual assessment of engaging into extremist action is not just a rational deliberation on this individual level, but is also influenced by other external factors such as for instance the role of law enforcement, network, family, and many more. The theory finally also suggests that

'habit' plays a prominent role. Here this is interpreted as already having engaged into religious extremist activity, therefore creating a shortcut towards engaging in a second act of religious extremism, as the first act of moral rule breaking has already paved the way. Although only interpreting these two elements of the SAT is a gross oversimplification of the whole theory as offered by Wikström, I merely want to emphasise that religious extremism (or radicalisation) should be seen as an individual action process.

Pro-active counter-radicalisation policy aims to reduce the amount of people seeing religious extremism as an action alternative, and perhaps demands more fundamental changes within society. Interesting for this research project is probably the next step, focussing on those Muslims who are considering acts of religious extremism but did not necessarily engage yet. This phase could be considered the initial step towards radicalisation and is where most likely the community officer can play a prominent role.

2.2.4 External dimension of radicalisation

The previous part tried to illustrate a general outline of the processes of radicalisation and what can be expected here. The vital part of acknowledging these consecutive phases is the encompassing external dimension. This is especially of great importance for the police, as an external aspect of the radicalisation process can allow community officers to recognise these processes and therefore potentially help prevent a further trajectory into this extremist identity. Radicalisation is best detected in the earliest phases, but this is easier said than done (Handleiding voor Beleid en Praktijk, 2013). So what exactly entails this external dimension and could it possibly play a role within current counter-radicalisation policy?

Often mentioned within the idea of signalling indicators of radicalisation are the notions of the 3 I's and 6 V's (NCTV, 2005). The latter stands for the Dutch interpretation of signals of terrorist activity and would be translated into English, losing inherent logic of its comprehensive name: Currency, Residency, Preparation, Objects, Transportation and False documents. Although these indeed could indicate terrorist activity, within the framework of early detection by the community officer these indicators take place in a final (action-) stage of radicalisation (see figure 1). The aim of this research is investigating the role of the community officer in a more preventative role, hence focusing on the earlier stages of radicalisation. The 3 I's in this respect then offer a more coherent answer to this ultimate goal, defined as:

- Ideology
- Indicators relating to behaviour
- Identity and appearance

'Ideology' according to the NCC (2005) stands for a pursuit of ideals of social, political or religious ideology. This is not the most overt aspect of radicalisation but can nevertheless in some instances be potentially detected. An ideological change, happening in the early stages of radicalisation can for instance result in attending religious inspired debates, open protesting or strongly expressing their ideology in the virtual world. Although the latter is not directly detectable by local community officers, it could be monitored and subsequently briefed to the officiating officer. Also a sudden strong tendency towards growing interest for religion would be considered as an ideological change. 'Indicators relating to behaviour' include more visible aspects, and are therefore more easily signalled. This could include the refusal of shaking a particular person's hand or reluctance towards other generally accepted norms. Here it should be noted that these indicators should be looked for in multiple social domains, because only then could one speak of potential radicalisation patterns (VNG, 2006). Merely behavioural changes in one domain could indicate a person simply going through adolescence or through any other particular phase in their life. Also being absent from school, sport related activities or attending particular imam's preaching could here be considered as indicators. Many of these indicators might have an underlying foundation of hostility and feelings of injustice creating justification for their change of behaviour. The final indicator within this concept of the three I's is that of 'identity and appearance', and for instance entails changes in one's outer appearance. This could result in dressing according to perceived traditional standards, growing of a beard or the changing of their name to a more Islamic originated variant.

The 3 I's are merely possible indicators, and do not necessarily result in religious radicalisation or eventually terrorist activity whatsoever. Hence, there should be caution in using these, as misclassification can lead to perceived stigmatisation and can prove counter-productive (Handleiding voor Beleid en Praktijk, 2013).

Another more practical perspective upon the external dimension is that offered in the Manual for Policy and Practise (2013) constructed by four mayors of different Flemish

cities in Belgium. They suggest the following typical signs of radicalisation, partly overlapping with the before-mentioned aspects:

- Withdrawal from core institutions
- Radical identity is apparent
- The 'other' is de-personalised
- Social isolation
- Participation in (enclosed) events
- Engaging in outreach-strategies (Dawa)
- Conflicts with parents / family
- Attending religious inspired lectures
- Change to Arabic name
- Change of clothing
- Interest in radical websites

These proposed characteristics show a more detailed elaboration of the possible external dimension of radicalisation and perhaps offer more tangible ideas for local actors. The authors here also do not proclaim suggesting the ultimate truth, but try to offer a better understanding for the actors involved in the preventative field, such as local community officers.

The proposed characteristics of the external dimension of radicalisation mainly involve the earlier stages of radicalisation, leading up to the stage of indoctrination and perhaps sometimes action. By acknowledging these possible factors, local actors can be trained and somewhat guided in recognising these. Once processes of radicalisation have been signalled, the next step would be engaging into particular de-radicalisation processes. This surpasses the role of the community officer and should be initiated by other trained professionals. Moreover, these indicators should be seen as interwoven meaning that multiple indicators would obviously prove a better predictor for radicalisation than merely just one. Again, what is important is that the proscribed characteristics should be visible in more than one social circle or network, therefore leading to saturation in all aspects of the individual's personal life.

In conclusion, when one would establish that radicalisation involves some sort of individual process, and this process then entails an external dimension that is visible,

then social actors close to the potentially radicalised can notice these early signs of this transition and potentially lead them, through careful cooperation with other actors, away from radicalising in religious affiliated extremism. By accepting and utilising this proposed notion of radicalisation, the community officer could play a significant role by establishing themselves in local community networks and therefore being capable of detecting early signs of radicalisation.

2.3 Community Oriented Policing

Before coming to a satisfying answer to what role local community officers can play in the signalling of processes of radicalisation, also the aspect of community oriented policing on itself should be further examined. First the notion of community will be described hereafter, followed by the origin of the concept of community orientated policing. The third part will entail the understanding of the term in academic literature and will then apply it regarding to radicalisation. Finally a short overview will be given on this policing strategy within the Netherlands.

2.3.1 Concept of community

The notion of community in itself is considered problematic and not uncontested in both the academic and the policy-making world (Spalek, 2011, p. 11). Therefore a simple answer to what community exactly entails is utterly impossible. For instance, community cannot simply be defined as an entity and the sum of its members (Peck, 1987: p. 234), but is better understood as "sites at which the social world is experienced, acted upon and understood, even though these sites may be temporary" (Spalek, 2011, p. 11). The community is nevertheless often considered as a geographical or organisational structure, inherently consisting of intra-community social dynamics allowing the development of for instance self-governance and problem solving mechanisms, ultimately resulting in increased social cohesion (Herbert, 2006). The notion of community is therefore not one easily defined. Moreover, people do not simply belong to one community, resulting in even greater vagueness of the term.

Although defining the community as a designated geographical area, with clear borders where one community ends and the other one begins would be a sheer oversimplification, it is the basic premises of the concept in relationship to community oriented policing. Within this framework the concept is often more or less used as a synonym for neighbourhood (Herbert, 2006), and is therefore clearly demarcated.

Gusfield (1975) also argued that in defining community, there should be a differentiation between two notions of community, one being geographical, whilst the other is more relational. Again, the geographical aspect of the community is considered most relevant within the framework of community oriented policing as local community officers are assigned to certain areas or communities, therefore accepting the meaning of the geographical proximity. The community officer this way clearly understands what his or her community is, and what not (Easton, 2010, p. 14).

Nevertheless, the relational dimension makes local residents potentially feel a wider understanding of their sense of community through aspects such as ethnicity, religion, culture or politics (Spalek, 2011, p. 12), possibly resulting in wider concerns or experiences of certain social issues. Through this multi-communal identity, it is possible that several community residents experience radicalisation in one of their perceived communities and therefore transcend the notion of the geographical-set community of the community officer. The community officer should initiate contact with their community to potentially get informed of cases outside of their local scope. Correspondingly, the processes of radicalisation could also partially develop outside the boundaries of the police's notion of their community, therefore increasing the difficulty of the signalling of the process. This indicates that community intelligence should be shared between colleagues and be acted upon accordingly in cooperation with others. This refers to the policing strategy of Intelligence led policing and is often referred to as being complementary to community oriented policing (OSCE, 2014).

2.3.2 Origin of COP

The underlying paradigm of community oriented policing dates back to the early 19th century when Sir Robert Peel introduced his famous Principles of Law Enforcement in the United Kingdom through the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. Peel stated that "the police are the public and the public are the police", already emphasising on their crucial two-way relationship. This together with Peel's early acknowledgement of the preventative character that the police should aspire laid the foundations of modern community oriented policing.

Nevertheless, the first real interest and empirical research done on the possibilities of this method date back to Boydstun and Sherry's work in San Diego (1975) in which they argued that police-community ties were to be of vital importance to enhance effectiveness of the police apparatus. The model intended to create a police that

understood and tackled societal problems before applying typical or traditional police follow-up (Easton, 2010). After also Goldstein (1977) emphasised upon the non-responsive but rather pro-active side of policing, this new approach gained real popularity through the 1980s. The traditional way of policing was losing ground as it proved ineffective in reducing crime (Wilson & Kelling, 1982), and resulted in a desire for this more preventive or pro-active policing approach. This policing strategy gained world-wide popularity through the work of police Commissioner William Bratton and Mayor Rudy Guilliani, as they proclaimed that changes in policing strategy (alongside others) were the key to success in lowering New York's crime numbers (Zimring, 2011), commonly known as the 'New York miracle' (Jacobsen, 2005).

Although receiving early scepticism, it later turned out to be a key-asset to modern policing (Greene, 2000). Community policing has since then widely emerged and is claimed to be one of the most influential changes in the organisation of the police (Skogan & Roth, 2004; Verhage & Ponsaers, 2012). Although the basic presumptions are generally accepted, the precise concept of community oriented policing faces several conceptual difficulties and results in diversity in understandings (Bayley, 1988).

2.3.3 Defining Community Oriented Policing

So the transition towards a policing model focusing on community oriented policing seems clear, but what does it exactly stand for? Unfortunately, a crystal-clear demarcation of the concept has also here proven remarkably difficult and often merely resulted in a vague umbrella concept (Goldstein, 1987). But it is generally accepted that there is a two-way interaction between the public and the police in order to prevent crime or social disorder. One's paradigm can nevertheless determine his or her understanding of the term, leading to different interpretations across the globe (Bayley, 1994). Some claim the implementation of a more community-minded approach as a change of program or tactic, whilst others define community policing as a whole new policing paradigm (Bayley, 1989; Bennett 1994) or renewed philosophy (Goldstein, 1987). The change towards community policing is therefore distinct from other policing strategies, as most strategies often involved a response to a specific problem (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). Many seem to agree upon this overarching definition (Seagrave, 1996, p. 6) and could imply that the implementation of this community approach has led to a change in policing, even more than in the organisation of the police itself.

So accepting the concept of community policing as a change in policing style enables further elaborating. Most simply put, community policing entails law enforcement that is more pro-active and community focused (Greene, 2000) instead of responsive and repressive. Goldstein (1987, p. 7) argued that in order to reach these basic premises of community policing, police officers should be assigned to certain communities to increase levels of trust, listen to the needs of the community and be provided with adequate resources to achieve this. Skogan (2006) defines community oriented policing as: some sort of community involvement, the aspect of solving problems and a form of decentralisation. For the sake of this research project, I have chosen to write up the definition of the concept on the grounds of Terpstra's (2009, pp. 65-66) interpretation from different scholars in the field (e.g. see Tilley, 2003; Brogden & Nijhar, 2005). He broadly distinguishes five key-aspects to what community policing entails:

1. Proximity: the police should be there in the community. They should be visible and approachable for the residents of their community and to those who are simply passing through. This enables increasing levels of trust, allowing increasing effectiveness of this strategy and the police as a whole.
2. Broader scope: the local police should not only be reducing or preventing crime but should also focus upon wider problems within the community.
3. Re-focusing: within this strategy there should be more room for pro-active or preventative approaches in order to tackle crime, disorder or other minor incidents. The repressive side should nevertheless never be fully abandoned.
4. Co-operation: police officers should cooperate with all actors in the community, and be out-reaching.
5. Citizen involvement: community members should be actively involved in the process of deterring crime and disorder or preventing conflicts from escalating. This creates intra-community responsibility.

These five aspects cover the most essential aspects of community oriented policing in regard to the tackling of religious extremism and radicalisation. These five aspects are applicable to the geographical notion of the community. If not already evident, for the sake of this research project I have chosen to exclusively focus upon the community officer within the organisation of the police, as they are considered the embodiment of community oriented policing.

One last aspect not mentioned in Terpstra's definition is a shift in police accountability (Friedman, 1992). Police accountability within the community oriented policing approach entails that the community officer is no longer just accountable towards their superiors, but also to the community that they serve. If radicalisation is a concern within the community, the community officer is to a certain extent expected to initiate action. This is closely related to the de-centralisation of decision-making and the widened practicality of what is called police discretion. This means that police work often involves the exercise of choice or judgement (Bronitt & Stenning, 2011) and allows local community officers to take decisions perceived most suitable for the situation based on their prior experiences. Also within issues regarding radicalisation the community officer is expected to exercise police discretion in such a manner that he or she initiates action when deemed appropriate by them, the community or ultimately the police organisation.

2.3.4 Community policing in the Netherlands

The Netherlands had already implemented some sort of community policing with the introduction of 'beat-constables' in the late 1940s, allowing officers to become the 'ears and the eyes' of the communities they served (Punch et al., 2002). The role of this beat-constable was rather vague and resulted in unclear expectations both from the organisation of the police as well as from the side of the general public. When in the 1970s the United States saw a major shift towards a more community oriented approach, the Netherlands also started to re-evaluate their strategies and the first real initiatives were taken (Terpstra, 2011). This together with the growing unrest and rising dissatisfaction about the effectiveness and performance of the police (Schoonenberg, 2012), led to the introduction of a system called 'neighbourhood team policing' (Projectgroep Organisatie Structuren, 1977). This system allowed certain teams to be responsible for certain communities, for all aspects that could fall under the wide umbrella of policing (van der Vijver & Zoomer, 2004, p. 256). This strategy was nevertheless only adopted by a limited amount of cities or regions. Therefore, the third and final transition emerged in the 1990s, with the introduction of 'area-bound policing' and emphasised upon the same tactic of policing as with the early beat-constable but redefined the role and moreover, embedded them more vastly into the organisation of the police (Punch et al., 2004). In the early 1990s, the community approach became the overlying and dominant police model within the Netherlands (Punch et al., 2004).

Hence, the community approach within the Netherlands was already an aspect of policing that goes back to the end of the Second World War. But, what is of importance here is how the role of specifically the local community police officers ('wijkagent') is currently described and what is expected of them. The Dutch legislation on the organisation of the police of 2012 includes article 1j explicitly mentioning the community officer. Article 38a then implies there should be one community officer for every 5,000 inhabitants within the Netherlands. Regardless of the importance of mentioning the local police officer in current legislation, it does not provide clear expectations or interpretation of the role. In order to have a better understanding of this role, I will describe here very briefly some key-aspects regarding their role within the Layout of National Police 2012. The role of the local community officer is considered an important link between de local dimension and the organisation of the police, and he or she is expected to utilise 80 percent of his/her time for the community (Inrichtingsplan Nationale Politie, 2012). The use of the word 'for' is deliberate here, as community policing is not only done from within the actual community. Dinten et al. (2011, p. 19) describe the routine of a local community officer as one-third being responsive to emergency-calls, one-third in participating in meetings and consultations, and the final one-third as working within the borders of their community. Whilst performing this local function, community officers are expected to be visible, talk with the local residents or visitors and keep an eye out for certain developments (INP, 2012). In doing so, this role is associated with the above-mentioned police discretion and results in community fitted key-to-door responses for particular situations (INP, 2012, p. 12), potentially allowing pro-active or preventative policing.

2.4 Interplay radicalisation and COP

As thus far both the concepts of radicalisation and community oriented policing have been thoroughly discussed, it is now possible to elaborate on its expected interplay. In order to describe the role of the community officer in the signalling of radicalisation, three concepts have been derived from the theoretical framework that are expected to play a prominent role. These constructed concepts are: 'Communication', 'Observation' and 'Participation' (in short COP) and will be elaborated twofold. First these concepts will be shortly discussed in their more general purpose, followed by a more radicalisation-specific rendered meaning. Finally a possible interplay of radicalisation, its external dimension and COP will be presented. On a final remark it should be noted

here that (the signalling of) radicalisation is often considered a mere by-product of the daily functioning of the community officer (OSCE, 2014).

2.4.1 Communication

The concept of communication is here to be understood as community engagement by the community officer, and is believed to play a key-role in counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation strategies (Briggs et al., 2006). Establishing regular contact with residents can prove fruitful in their later willingness to contact the community officer with concerns on radicalisation (R. van der Wal, personal communication, 17 February 2015). The community officer should therefore participate in the community and for that reason emphasis is placed upon the tactic of 'to know and to be known', proven to be of vital importance within the general effectiveness of community policing (Adang, Quint & van der Wal, 2010). With the earlier mentioned two-third of their actual community time, the community officer should therefore actively approach and be approached by the community, whilst trying to establish high levels of trust.

In terms of radicalisation this would mean that the community should be actively involved and closely collaborate in some sort of horizontal approach (see: White & McEvoy, 2012). This means that those community residents that have genuine concerns from within or outside of their local community should be able to actively approach their community officer regarding this. This does not necessarily have to be family of those who are potentially radicalising, but can also be neighbours or even unrelated locals who sense particular changes within a group or individual. This way community intelligence is improved through applying a local approach to policing (Innes, 2006). Within the signalling of radicalisation, communication is expected to play the most vital role as this allows obtaining information from within the community. As radicalisation is such a complex and delicate phenomenon, it is most likely only visible for those in one's individual immediate vicinity. This communication function also transcends the borders of the policing community as certain residents might have concerns outside of their geographical community. Moreover it should be acknowledged that the community officer should be perceived as legitimate, as only then a two-way approach of open and honest communication can be established.

2.4.2 Observation

The second concept regarding the role of the community officer is that of observation. This entails the second part of the literal meaning of the 'ear and eye' function of the

police, meaning the observations the community officer makes whilst working their assigned geographical zone.

In terms of radicalisation this would first mean that the community officer observes changes within an individual or group and therefore raising his or her awareness of potential processes of radicalisation. As stressed before, here the familiarity of the community officer with his or her community is of the essence, therefore being able to signal changes between period X and period Y in an individual (D. Weggemans, personal communication, 26 January, 2015). Without this familiarity, possibly certain proclaimed characteristics of radicalisation can be falsely attributed to several residents, therefore potentially increasing feelings of stigmatisation. Second, many of the stages of radicalisation are at a certain point expected to involve some sort of group dynamic (Sageman, 2004; Buijs et al., 2006). This could allow officers to observe these processes more easily as this networking could result in attending open demonstrations, lectures or other extremist inspired activity. Lastly, observation can be influenced by the other two components of community oriented policing. For communication this entails that the community officer could receive notice on processes of radicalisation by residents, consequently paying closer attention to these individuals.

2.4.3 Participation

The final aspect of the understanding of community oriented policing here is that of participation. Although very similar to the first notion of communication, there is a small distinction in that here a more professional communication is meant between different social actors within the community. It could be seen as a horizontal cooperation between the different professional actors in a certain communal area, therefore establishing an unofficial or official partnership in which both parties participate to signal and ultimately possibly prevent radicalisation.

Open collaboration between different professional social actors in the community can prove of great importance in the identification process of those radicalising (EUCPN, 2012, p. 33). Contact between the local police and actors such as local imams, social workers, teaching staff or other first-line personnel can establish awareness of people at risk. This is expressed or sought for through open communication (Spalek, 2011) from both parties and is therefore specifically rendered towards radicalisation. It goes without saying that next to the community officers, also these other professionals do not want 'their' people to radicalise or join violent conflicts abroad. It is expected that the

community officer as well as the professional actors can establish a rather transparent way of communication between them as they aim for similar goals. Especially as radicalisation seems to occur particularly among youth (Bizina & Gray, 2014), participation could be a great benefit in signalling radicalisation as many young people are often still more or less obliged to several social institutions.

2.4.4 Possible interplay of proposed concepts

To conclude the theoretical framework aimed at understanding processes of radicalisation and the potential role of the community officer, I will shortly discuss the interplay of the proposed concepts. To what extent can communication, observation and participation be expected to play a role within the signalling of radicalisation?

Table 1 shows a possible interplay between radicalisation, its suggested external dimension and the shortly above-mentioned concepts of communication, observation and participation. The first aspect of pre-radicalisation is not expected to encompass any specific external dimension, therefore downsizing the role of the community officer in the signalling of these early processes.

Table 1 - Table of possible interplay between Radicalisation, the External Dimension and the different concepts within COP*

Phase of radicalisation	External dimension	C.O.P.
Pre-radicalisation	-	
Perceived options	-Initial interest -Social isolation -Conflicts	-Communication -Participation
Self identification	-De-personalising other -Social isolation -Conflicts -Attending lectures	-Communication -Observation -Participation
Indoctrination	-Name / Appearance -Networks -Withdrawal -Depersonalising	-Communication -Observation -Participation
Action	-Outreach strategies	-More reactive role

* The present table is based upon the model as seen in figure 1 and on the external dimension as described in the Manual for Policy and Practise (2013). Also, this external dimension is by no means exclusive or represents the ultimate truth. Furthermore, the characteristics can vary between phases, and it should be emphasised that this is only a possible interplay.

The following consecutive phases are those where the community officer is expected to play a potential role. In the first above-mentioned phase of perceived options, the individual is possibly initially interested in a religious ideology, identity or extremism. This phase could be accompanied by several mentioned external characteristics as proposed in the Manual for Policy and Practise (2013) such as social isolation or conflicts with parents or direct relatives. Nevertheless could these characteristics also merely indicate going through adolescence or any other stage in life. Within this stage of perceiving options, also an initial interest in the Islam is expected to grow. The community officer is only expected to play a role through 'communication' and 'participation' as these external characteristics are only visible to those closely related.

The role of the community officer is expected to increase whilst the individual is setting foot further onto the trajectory of radicalisation as more signs will become apparent. Therefore through all three suggested tactics (= COP) the community officer is expected to obtain or retrieve information on cases of radicalisation. Changes in outer appearance or attending particular open lectures are for instance expected to be visible through 'observation' whilst information on social isolation or withdrawal from core institutions by particular individuals is perhaps more often received through 'participation'. The indicators as presented in table 1 merely offer a possible interpretation of the radicalisation process and the role of the community officer. This particular table is essentially meant to offer an overview of the discussed concepts and place them into a more tangible and practical overview, but is by no means meant to be exclusive or speaking any profound truth.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The following part will discuss the different methodological aspects of this dissertation in order to create a comprehensive and satisfying answer to the proposed research questions. In order to describe the experience of the community officers in the signalling of radicalisation and Muslim extremism in the Netherlands, a qualitative method of research has been chosen here. In the following a justification for this particular research method is elaborated after which the choice of semi-structured interviews will be further explained. Furthermore a detailed description of the sampling process is also

included. Finally the processing of the data and matters of validity and reliability will be briefly discussed.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the orientating interviews with members of the NCTV, CTC, the Dutch Police Academy and with the operational expert will not be included in the analysis. Therefore they will not be explicitly mentioned within the following methodology.

3.2 Qualitative design

Despite the broad possible interpretation of the term qualitative research, the basic premise holds that this particular type of research aims to offer an exploratory or descriptive understanding of the individual experience (Hart, Boeije & Hox, 2005, p.253). Qualitative research allows the creation of a deeper understanding of a particular phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), often emphasising upon the individual's lived experience (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 26). This intrinsic subjective approach is ventured by proposing questions of 'what' or 'why' (Patton & Cochran, 2002), whilst its quantitative counterpart generally aims for quantification ('how many' or 'how much') and representation in their empirical explanation (King, Keohane & Verba, 1994, p. 3).

There are various reasons to why a qualitative method has been chosen here. Particularly the complexity of radicalisation, its external dimension, the role of the community officer and its interplay ask for an in-depth exploration and description of the lived experience as perceived by the community officer. Complex phenomena like these are challenging to measure quantitatively without first attempting a broader understanding (Curry, Nembhard & Bradley, 2009, p. 1443). Quantification would also prove challenging as only a limited number of community officers encounter radicalisation and religious extremism on a regular basis, as it appears to be restricted to certain particular urban settings (Bakker, 2013). Also, due to changes in how radicalisation has manifested itself in the public sphere over the last two years, it is important to undertake qualitative research with a strong descriptive character (Maso & Smalling; 1998) to describe the ongoing current processes. Finally, although previous research on this topic such as for example carried out by Garssen (2006) or the OSCE (2014) have likewise adopted a qualitative research strategy, they preferred a top-down approach in describing these experiences. Qualitative micro-level research by

interviewing those directly involved could potentially offer new or more detailed insights in our contemporary understanding of the role of the community officer.

3.3 Research strategy

3.3.1 Semi-structured interview

Whilst a qualitative research design allows a variety of data-collection methods, here I have chosen to exclusively make use of face-to-face interviews to describe the lived experience of the community officers. Interviews allow asking those questions that can help construct an understanding of the proposed research question (Maxwell, 2013, p. 101).

Gill et al. (2008, p.291) distinguish between three different fundamental types of interviews: the structured, semi-structured and the unstructured interview. The semi-structured variant is preferred here as this allows maintaining a predesigned outline of general open-ended questions whilst offering enough flexibility to possibly alter these questions or follow up on particular answers when deemed appropriate by the interviewer (Lichtman, 2014, p. 248). In other words, the semi-structured interview uses a predetermined set of topics or questions (Mortelmans, 2013, p. 232) regarding the community officer's role within the signalling of radicalisation, but nevertheless allows both the interviewer and the community officer enough freedom to stimulate spontaneous interaction and therefore topic of conversation (Mack et al., 2005, p. 4). Semi-structured interviews also allow the interviewer to ask follow-up questions or ask for more information on certain discussed themes. This is often called probing in qualitative research (Hutchinson & Skodal-Wilson, 1992) and allows creating a better or deeper understanding of complex phenomena. Most importantly, the open structure of questioning within semi-structured interviews allows following-up on new insights offered by the interviewee that have not a-priori been addressed by the interviewer.

Although the semi-structured interview could this way be interpreted as a two-way communication between two equals, the interview should nevertheless be seen as a "professional conversation with a clear power asymmetry between the researcher and the subject" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 33). This asymmetry is necessary to guide the interview in the desired direction and therefore allows covering all predetermined aspects deemed necessary for a full understanding of the individual experience.

A potential downside of solely conducting face-to-face interviews is the lack of methodological triangulation. Web et al. (1966, p. 3) argued that two or more different research methods would enhance the persuasiveness of the qualitative evidence. The experience of the community officer could for instance also be explored by doing in-field observations. Although initially considered, the expected minimal presence of radicalisation within the community officer's day-to-day work would demand doing numerous observations in order to potentially document a few useful cases. Also, as radicalisation is often interpreted as a gradual process, changes in an individual's particular behaviour or outer experience are only visible over time and moreover, are only detectable by those directly involved. Mere observations would therefore not contribute to the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon. For this reason interviews are here preferred, as this way we can "find out things we cannot directly observe" (Patton, 1990, p. 196).

3.3.2 Sampling process

Qualitative research demands a critical reflection on the sampling process. Considerations on whom to include or where to conduct research are an essential aspect of the qualitative research method (Maxwell, 2013, p. 96). As Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 41) stated, it is important to ask yourself why certain people are involved whilst others are excluded from participation. As the research question suggests, the obvious actor of interest is the community officer ('wijkagent') within the Netherlands. Nevertheless several considerations have been made on where to conduct the semi-structured interviews and moreover with whom. I have chosen to distinguish between inter-organisational and intra-organisational considerations to conduct the qualitative data gathering.

3.3.2.1 Inter-organisational sampling

In order to describe the experiences as perceived by the community officer, first a geographical consideration has been made. Not all policing districts seem to experience similar issues regarding radicalisation, therefore excluding a great number of police organisations within the Netherlands.

Certain areas within the Netherlands experience more radicalisation than others, but not much official data is up for grasp. As for instance seen in the response to several parliamentary questions regarding the hot-spots of radicalisation, official

announcements on national level have been rather evasive, distributing responsibility of public announcement towards local governments (see for example: Antwoord kamervragen over Jihadsteden in Nederland, 14 May 2014). These local governments do not always share this type of information with the general public. This is a trend not only seen in the Netherlands, but is also common in other European countries. Media on the other hand have attempted publishing detailed overviews on the numbers of cases of radicalisation, as for instance published by the French newspaper 'Le Monde' (2015) on the issues in France, or by the Dutch journal 'Nieuwsuur' (2015) on Dutch numbers of radicalisation. Whilst these often offer an interesting insight in what is publicly known, the reliability of these numbers and the general instability of the phenomenon of radicalisation must be taken into account when using media sources (Bakker, 2013). That being said, both official and unofficial data seem to suggest that radicalisation seems to manifest itself particularly in relatively big cities throughout the Netherlands, with an emphasis on The Hague (Bakker, 2013). Other often cited cities are Almere, Amsterdam, Arnhem, Delft, Gouda, Rotterdam, The Hague, Zeist and Zoetermeer. Lately also Maastricht has been said to have rising numbers of cases of radicalisation.

As conducting research in all above-mentioned cities would not be feasible, further demarcation has been attempted by focussing upon five cities: Arnhem, The Hague, Delft, Zoetermeer and Nijmegen. This initial purposive sampling (Palys, 2008) is based on official documents, media coverage on evicted 'Syria travellers', advice given in the discussed orientating interviews and moreover on the network of the researcher with possible gatekeepers enhancing feasibility (Broadhead & Rist, 1976). As here an exploration of the individual experience is central, any of the above-mentioned cities could have been selected, as they all seem to more-or-less encompass similar numbers of radicalisation and thus similar experiences. Although Nijmegen is not often mentioned as experiencing high numbers of radicalisation, it has nevertheless been included (see 3.2.2.2).

This inter-organisational aspect of the sampling process should in particular be understood as only including a limited number of cities, therefore logically excluding most other Dutch policing regions. Therefore the results of this study should not be seen as representative for the Netherlands as a whole.

3.3.2.2 Intra-organisational sampling

Whilst most police organisations have been excluded from the scope of this research, within those remaining few not all community officers are expected to have similar experiences with radicalisation. Therefore, applying the principle of random criterion whilst sampling would potentially result in selecting respondents who have no experience with radicalisation whatsoever (Mortelmans, 2013, p. 153). As common in qualitative research, here those "informants that are 'richer' than others are more likely to provide insight and understanding" (Marshall, 1996, p. 523).

Therefore intensity sampling is preferred, and allows pinpointing those actors who have experienced radicalisation intensely (Patton, 1990). This means that within the boundaries of the selected Dutch cities, a further selection has been made. This nevertheless faces similar difficulties as addressed in the previous section, as information on which community officer experiences radicalisation is not often shared with the general public. Therefore initially various police chiefs have been contacted by means of a standardised letter (included in annex), explaining the aims of this research and asking for their cooperation. These intra-organisational gatekeepers, who control the accessibility of potential respondents (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 6), would then proceed by selecting specific officers and asking for their approval. This way of partial snowball- (Morrison, 1988) and convenience sampling (Weis, 1994) allowed gaining access to certain rather hard-to-reach populations. A total of eight selected community officers have then been contacted through email (see annex) explaining the goals and practicality of their participation. Table 2 shows an overview of the final selection of respondents.

Initially four interviews were planned for three different cities. Nevertheless, ultimately it was decided to include five cities and only conduct eight interviews. This is mainly due to the large amount of time needed in organising the interviews, due for example to the difficulties in managing to contact the right person within the police organisation. Finally, also Nijmegen has been added in this study as this was suggested by one of the initially contacted police chiefs. Therefore, within the analysis of this study three respondents are working in Arnhem, two in Delft, one in Nijmegen, one in The Hague and one in Zoetermeer. This allows a broad overview of various experiences throughout the Netherlands. Finally, two respondents are working within the same community, but nonetheless work almost exclusively individually in their community engagement. This

therefore still allows two different individual experiences with their community residents and professionals.

Table 2 - Overview of respondents

#	Gender	Age	Religious	District	Experience police	Experience community*	Level radical.**
1	Male	42	-	'Oost-Nederland'	17 years	2 years	High
2	Female	38	Christian	'Oost-Nederland'	17 years	2 years	Moderate
3	Male	52	Non-practising Catholic	'Oost-Nederland'	29 years	5 years	Moderate
4	Male	55	Non-practising Catholic	'Oost-Nederland'	36 years	7 years	Moderate
5	Male	44	Catholic	'Den-Haag'	14 years	5 years	High
6	Male	45	-	'Den-Haag'	18 years	5 years	High
7	Female	45	-	'Den-Haag'	15 years	3 years	High
8	Male	54	-	'Den-Haag'	32 years	1 year	Moderate

* Only the years within the community in which radicalisation has been signalled has been included. Most community officers had longer working experience in the institution of the police or had been community officer also in other regions.

** Level of radicalisation has been operationalised in the categories high and moderate. 'High' is considered having five or more cases of radicalisation (or travellers to Syria) ($X \geq 5$). Respondents with less than five cases have automatically been labelled 'moderate' ($X < 5$). The category 'low' has not been included as all respondents are sampled for having experience with cases of radicalisation.

The variation between respondents as seen in table 2 is coincidental. Apart from their community and their experience with radicalisation no other selection criteria has been applied. This is mainly due to the sensitivity of the topic, disallowing access to a great number of officers. This is for example illustrated by the selection procedure in Arnhem, where first the request of interviewing the community officers had to be discussed with various members of the local municipality. Only after their approval, followed by voluntarily approval of the individual community officer, was I allowed to approach them. Adding certain selection criteria, such as for instance a minimum amount of years of experience, would therefore have potentially restricted the access even further.

3.4 Data-gathering

3.4.1 Setting

All the interviews have been conducted in more-or-less similar settings within the community officer's own occupational setting, therefore enhancing convenience for the respondent. In all police stations the community officer facilitated an (semi-) enclosed space, where the semi-structured interview could then take place. This was beneficial to the quality of the interview as it could take place in a relaxed atmosphere, and moreover in an anonymous manner.

3.4.2 Interview

Before the interview, a preliminary introduction was given to allow a full understanding of the research purposes. After this, the interviewer asked the respondent to sign the confirmation of approval (attached in annex), therefore creating written consent for their participation. Only one respondent did not want to sign anything. Finally the use of a voice-recorder was requested to the interviewee, to stimulate a more conversational style of interview and also to ultimately enhance the quality of the gathered data. All respondents agreed with this request.

The actual interview started by asking the respondent some personal characteristics. Only the respondent's date of birth, gender, religious background, years of experience within the police and their community were asked for, to prevent deductive disclosure as much as possible (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p.68). Proposing these questions nevertheless allowed creating a better understanding of the respondent, and therefore helped in later question formulation during the interview (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003, p. 145). After this, several questions about their role as community officer and their community were asked to initiate a subject that is considered familiar (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003, p. 145). This way the interviewee could get used to the interview before questions on radicalisation were addressed. After this, the topic-list and its underlying questions (attached in annex) have been further followed in a more-or-less similar fashion across the different respondents. Whenever a new topic of interest arose or certain particularities were not clear to the interviewer, sidetracking from the topic-list was self-evident. During the interviews several probing techniques were used such as the 'silent-probe', the 'echo-probe' (Russel-Bernard, 2011, pp. 218-219) and the 'uh-huh-probe' (Matarazzo, 1964). Nevertheless the intentional probing occasionally was very

close to unintentional prompting. But this was reduced to a negligible minimum as the interviewer gained more experience and confidence while doing the interviewing.

The interviews generally lasted for approximately 1.5 hour, allowing room in the final ten minutes for the interviewee to add any experience or thought they still wanted to share. After this, the voice-recorder was turned off and the interview was concluded. Often the respondent showed interest in the completion of the dissertation, and asked for the final version once finished.

3.5 Data analysis

The analysis of the data was handled in such a manner that it followed particular consecutive steps. First the audio-recordings of the interviews were transcribed by manually putting them into a word-document. Although the interviews have been transcribed word for word, a form of what Edwards and Lampert (1993) call 'practicality transcribing' has been preferred here. This means that not all pauses or intonations of the respondent's answers have been included, creating a more comprehensive outline and therefore stimulating easier data processing. To allow early acquaintance with the data, stimulating later data analysis, only the interviewer carried out the transcriptions (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 167). Also, the transcription usually followed soon after the conducted interview as this allowed developing preliminary thoughts on the retrieved data and could therefore lead to minor adjustments of the topic-list in the following interviews.

After the transcription, the heuristic three-dimensional model as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998) for data analysing has been followed. First the principle of 'open coding' has been applied. This means that the bulk of retrieved data was carefully read, reread and labelled with particular codes. By means of open coding the data is therefore reduced to generate a more comprehensible overview. Although the topic-list used in the interview already predetermined various codes, whilst reading the interviews an open attitude was strived for to not turn a blind eye for new categories or labels that could potentially come up. This process led to various codes describing the experience of the community officer. Yet important to mention here is that a distinction was made between actual experiences of radicalisation and the community officer's ideas on radicalisation. Also a distinction was carefully made between experiences of early signalling and other experiences related to radicalisation.

After this, a process of axial coding followed. Axial coding allows creating more structure within the long list of established codes in the previous process (Mortelmans, 2007, p.389) by aiming to find clear links between the various codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). By means of constant comparison ('t Hart, Boeije & Hox, 2005, p. 276) the various codes were brought together under a common variable, often in an abstract form and closely related to the theoretical assumptions (Boeije, 2005). The categories and subcategories are best represented by means of a coding tree, which is attached in the Annex. Then the phase of selective coding followed. In this final stage the central core concepts were determined and allowed focusing upon that data which is believed to be most valuable. The various topics were then bundled according to their central theme, allowing easy comparison between the various officers. Some codes have been added to more than one topic as they include multiple facets. Finally all the transcripts were reread one last time to ensure that the main line of the respondents were still in accordance with the loose structured data.

3.6 Research quality

Qualitative research is expected to take both matters of reliability and validity in consideration whilst being carried out to improve to ultimate quality of the research. Reliability is most simply defined as the "extent to which the studies can be replicated" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 35) and whether this would then produce similar results (Blood & Wood, 2006). Validity on the other hand refers to the absence of systematic bias (Maso & Smaling, 1998), thus to what extend the results are a good representation of reality.

3.6.1 Reliability

Whilst looking for reliability within this study, a distinction is made between internal and external reliability. Internal reliability is of no concern here as only one researcher carried out the interviews, transcriptions and the analysing of the data, disallowing inter-researcher effects. External reliability refers to the possibility to replicate the study (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Radicalisation is expected to be constantly changing, therefore similar levels of experience with radicalisation by the community officer is questionable for future research, disallowing full replication of the study. Nevertheless, external reliability can be enhanced by a transparent research approach. Therefore the process of sampling, data gathering, the analysis of the data and also the analytic

constructs have been discussed in detail in the previous parts. Also the topic list has for this reason been included to allow replication of this particular study. Finally, the recording of the interviews and the word-for-word transcription stimulates reliability in terms of the gathered data. Although these transcripts have not been included here, they have been saved allowing insight by third parties when deemed necessary.

3.6.2 Validity

Validity is also characterised by two components, internal and external validity. What is meant here by internal validity is whether the conclusions are based on critical reflections on the data (Verhoeven, 2007). It is easy to fall for what Silverman (2013) calls anecdotalism, emphasising upon those particularities that support preliminary expectations. For instance, empowering the role of the community officer in the signalling of radicalisation by simply illustrating one or two suitable cases. Although this research is largely descriptive and therefore not seeking confirmation of hypotheses, anecdotalism is reduced by also actively seeking for deviant cases (Silverman, 2013, p. 292). This here means that also those community officers with minimal signalling experiences are mentioned. Also quantification will be used to increase the internal validity. This means that not only examples are given of particular experiences, but that the experiences are quantified to show numerical persuasiveness. Finally, in order to create a transparent view on the analysis and its conclusions, direct quotes have been added to illustrate how certain interpretations have been made out of the data (Corden, Sainsbury, 2006).

External validity refers to the possibility of generalising the results of this research. The findings of this research are per definition not applicable to all community officers in the Netherlands. This is obvious as only those community officers have been involved that have had experiences with some form of religious inspired radicalisation. Nevertheless, as the sample consisted of various officers in five cities, the results could potentially be interpreted as valid for the wider group of community officers with experiences of radicalisation.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The following will illustrate the most insightful information on the experiences of community officers regarding the signalling of radicalisation within their community. The outline of topics as used within the theoretical part of this study will be similarly followed throughout this analysis to create a sensible structured overview of the data.

The interviews allow insight on a variety of aspects regarding radicalisation and the job of the community officer. As the data analysis will particularly focus upon the early signalling role of the community officers, is chosen here to first *very* briefly discuss those other relevant issues brought up by the respondents. First, all respondents mention having had training on radicalisation at local or (and) national level. All of the respondents mention being very pleased with the offered content and professionalism of these recently undergone programmes. Various officers also indicate having familiarity with the theme through previous positions within the police, or having profound interest in the topic resulting in various forms of self-education. Their knowledge on radicalisation is therefore considered competent, which also shows from the jargon used during the interviews, and corresponds to the understanding of radicalisation as previously discussed. Whilst the study of de Kool (2006) indicated that knowledge of especially the external dimension of radicalisation was unsatisfactory, here without having explicitly asked, all respondents mention various proclaimed indicators of radicalisation throughout the interview.

The actual experiences within their communities are considered more valuable, and will therefore be discussed in the following. First radicalisation as experienced by the respondents will be illustrated, followed by their role as community officer. Then the signalling function will be elaborated by distinguishing between 'communication', 'observation' and 'participation'. Finally the role of police intelligence and the processing of their community signalling will be discussed. When deemed appropriate, quotes will be used to illustrate their understanding, as well as tables or figures to establish a more structured overview. English translations of the quotes can be found in the footnotes. Typical Dutch sayings or words have been translated as much as possible to a comprehensible English context.

4.2 Radicalisation

4.2.1 Experiences with radicalisation

As the ideas on radicalisation are consistent with the knowledge received through various training programs, it is more interesting to consider the actual experiences with potentially radicalising community residents. Although respondents mention radicalisation is not necessarily interwoven with religion, all of the respondents' experiences indicate seeing radicalisation particularly as a change of (often sudden) beliefs towards Islam:

> "Wat je merkt in de wijk is een opvallende ommezwaai naar de Islam. Dus mensen die eigenlijk eerst helemaal niet bezig waren met de Islam, die in één keer heel erg geïnteresseerd zijn in de Islam." – Interviewee 3 [1]

Another key aspect of radicalisation as experienced by the respondents is the role of the network of those individuals believed to be radicalising. Whereas various respondents mention that they suspect radicalisation to initiate on the individual level, six respondents experienced that the network of the individual exists of other likeminded individuals. Officers often indicate that they 'all know one another at some point in time'.

Respondents also generally experience radicalisation being a process that can happen in a relative short time span, but are nonetheless unable to point out an exact time frame. Nevertheless, two respondents specifically experienced the process of radicalisation to happen over a time-span of approximately one year to one-year-and-a-half:

> "Hij gaat van gewoon slecht mens, slecht kind, slechte jongen, gaat hij naar, nou ja, het strengste, het zwaarste, het heiligste. Gaat hij zich voordoen. En dit in een tijdstip van een jaar, anderhalf jaar. Dat vind ik bijzonder." – Interviewee 1 [2]

All officers argue that the discrepancy between radicalisation and a genuine interest in Islam is very vague, making it very difficult to label cases with radicalisation. They all

[1] "What you notice within the community is a remarkable change towards the Islam. So, people who were really not involved with the Islam, they all of a sudden have a great interest in the Islam."

[2] "He simply goes from being a bad person, a bad kid, a bad guy to, well, the most strict, the most serious, the most holy. He appears.. And this within the time span of a year to a year-and-a-half. I think that's remarkable."

seem to implicitly argue that travelling to countries of conflict (here Syria) is the only straightforward indicator of a (finalised) radicalisation process.

Finally, several community officers mention seeing those believed to be radicalised individuals to have fallen victim of recruiters, luring them into an extremist ideology. Radicalised young residents are often considered vulnerable and therefore easy to manipulate. Whilst therefore they are generally considered as victims, a clear condemnation is expressed for those persons recruiting them into joining certain extremist movements.

4.2.2 Profile of radicalisation

All of the respondents were asked whether they could give a general profile of those being radicalised within their community. Apart from this explicit questioning, the discussed cases of potential radicalisation throughout the interview also allow further insight. They agree that there seems to be no general profile for radicalisation. Nonetheless various characteristics have been mentioned and have been included in table 3.

Table 3 – Number of officers mentioning profile characteristics experienced

Profile characteristics	Total (maximum N = 8)
Young	8
-Adolescents (12-20)	5
-Young adults (21-28)	3
Male	8
Female	4
Low educated	5
High educated	3
Criminal antecedents	4
"Dutch" converts to Islam	3

All of the respondents mention having exclusively young people who are expected to be radicalising or who left for Syria. One respondent even mentioned a twelve-year-old resident to have been radicalised, and expressed the desire to travel to Syria. Furthermore, although various female cases have been discussed, their main profile of radicalised youngsters involved young men. This is also apparent in their constant referral to the male sex whilst describing radicalisation. Then, respondents mention having experienced radicalising residents that have little to no education, as well as

those that are known to be highly educated. This therefore disallows clear risk-factors regarding education. Four respondents also mention that their young persons had criminal antecedents, ranging from low to high profile crimes. Finally they mention having cases of 'Dutch' individuals being converted to Islam and having left for Syria.

4.3 Community policing

4.3.1 Community officer

Respondents describe their role as being in the community, and especially as being there *for* the community. They often describe their role particularly as serving as 'intermediary' between on the one hand the community residents, and, on the other, the police as an institution:

> "Als intermediair tussen politie en burger. De 'Haarlemmerolie' ertussen ook een beetje. Je bent aanspreekpunt voor de wijk, voor de politie. Twee kanten op. Je maakt elke keer de vertaalslag." –Interviewee 1 [3]

Contact between them and residents, as well as with institutions and professionals are a vital aspect of the community officer's job. Others describe themselves similarly as being a 'spider in the web', having different threads with all of the community actors. Especially contact with his or her residents is considered vital, although not every officer seems to have similar satisfying levels of contact. Community officers also mention acting pro-actively and seeking for longer lasting solutions to community problems than for instance their colleagues doing regular surveillance police-work, of whom they mention having a more reactive role. Nevertheless, almost every community officer clearly mentions being a police officer in the first place.

The establishing of regular contact with their residents is at times considered to be problematic due to the limited amount of time they are able to spend in their actual community. The official 80:20 ratio is generally understood as being in the community, whilst it should be understood as being there *for* the community. None of the respondents nevertheless mention being able to spend this 80 percent of their time within the actual community. Most officers mention spending about half of their time in the actual contours of their community, whilst one officer mentions only reaching 30

[3] "As intermediate between the police and the resident. A little like 'Haarlemmerolie' (an all-cure) as well. You are the contact person for the community, for the police. In both directions. Every time you have to make this translation."

percent. Another officer nevertheless argues that s/he reaches 70 percent of actual community time. Most often cited reasons for this lack of presence are 'dealing with administration', 'attending various meetings' or 'following up on crime'. Then, the official norm of having one community officer for every 5,000 inhabitants is not always consistent with the experiences of the respondents in their mostly ethnic diverse and lower class communities. Four respondents even mention their community exceeding 13,000 residents. Nevertheless, various community officers mention having colleague community officers working within the same community. When anticipating on this, the officer-to-resident ratio still exceeds the norm for three officers, per at least 1,500 residents. Not surprisingly, these officers also seem to indicate having less (good) contact with their residents.

4.3.2 Radicalisation within community policing

All respondents indicate that one or two years ago radicalisation was not part of their curriculum. Now, radicalisation has become a vast -and at times prioritised- part of their work and results in amongst others: 'attending meetings on potential cases of radicalisation', 'following up on potential cases' or what some call 'feeding the police system'.

There is nevertheless interestingly a lot of discrepancy in the amount of time spent on radicalisation. One respondent mentions no longer being a regular community officer, but being specifically, and only, tasked with radicalisation within his/her role of community officer. Two other respondents are likewise tasked with this specific position for their region, as the phenomenon seems almost exclusively present within their community, but also have to deal with regular community police work. Radicalisation for them is contemporarily taking up almost half of their working time:

> "… door de radicalisering die daar heeft plaatsgevonden, vooral in mijn wijk, zie je dat er een verschuiving is ontstaan van de, ik noem het maar de incidenten met de blaffende hond, naar het incident waar we het nu met elkander over hebben. En dat neemt heel veel tijd in beslag." – Interviewee 5 [4]

Another respondent mentions spending around 20 percent of the time on radicalisation-related work. Finally, two officers mention spending less than 5 percent of their time on

[4] "Because of the radicalisation that happened, particularly in my community, you can see that some sort of transition has taken place from what I'd like to call the incidents with the barking dog, to the matter we are currently discussing. And this demands a whole lot of time."

this, but are also situated in areas whereas radicalisation is considered less apparent. For them it is just considered 'a regular aspect of their job', amongst many others. The other respondent did not specifically mention the amount of time spent on radicalisation, but indicate that it varies with wave-like motions. This being said, when radicalisation becomes apparent within their community, all of the respondents mention it becomes almost top-priority:

> "Laat ik het zo zeggen, als de gemeente zegt: ik wil dat je daar eens wat meer informatie gaat halen, dan laat ik eigenlijk gewoon de rest liggen en ga ik daarmee aan de slag" – Interviewee 3 [5]

4.4 Signalling of radicalisation

4.4.1 Signalling by communication

So are community officers informed on possible cases of radicalisation by engaging in communication with various local residents? Yes, to a certain extent the respondents mention having received worrisome information on potentially radicalising residents from either a local resident, a concerned family members or by engaging into contact with the individual him or herself. Especially the concerned community resident seems useful in this early signalling function:

> "En je krijgt informatie van andere mensen in de wijk. Van hey, Ik heb nu gezien dat die en die... Of ik hoor van die, dat die dat doet... Of dat ie in één keer gaat bidden, of dat hij in één keer naar de moskee gaat, terwijl hij dat eerst nooit deed. Ja, dat soort informatie krijg je ook wel door de wijk." – Interviewee 3[6]

Nevertheless, of those respondents having received information by communicating with the local residents, everyone mentions the frequency to be 'sporadic', 'a handful' or 'very rarely'. Two of the community officers also mention having received similar information from local residents, but add that they received this only in the very beginning, when first concerns were raised on people radicalising in the Netherlands. The information that was shared by the community-residents particularly involved signs of sudden

[5] "Let me put it this way. When the local government asks me: I want you to go there and retrieve more information. Then I just leave all other things, and take care of it."
[6] "And you get information from residents in the community. Like, hey I've seen that this or that guy… or that I hear that this person does that… Or that he is suddenly praying, or suddenly attending mosques, whilst he never did that before. Yeah that's the kind of information that we also receive from the community."

interest into religion, outer-appearance changes or general divergent behaviour within the community.

Then, several respondents also mention actively seeking for information from within their community by engaging in seemingly random 'chitchatting'. Although not necessarily addressing worrisome thoughts on local cases, they still try to retrieve useful information from these residents:

> "Gewoon praatje pot doen noemen we dat. En als daar gevoelens bijkomen waarvan je denkt, nou dit is raar of dit vertrouw ik niet, dan zet je het vast in het systeem en dan gaan we het bekijken." – Interviewee 7 [7]

This officer nevertheless mentions being as honest as possible in this type of communication with the residents. Those respondents that actively seek this kind of information are generally speaking not receiving much insightful information from this. Other respondents mention not initiating similar contact due to a rather difficult experienced relationship with their residents.

Table 4 – Table of respondents having received signals of radicalisation

	Total N = 8
Local resident	6
Individual believed to be radicalising	2
Family member	1

As presented in table 4, some cases of potential radicalisation got first signalled by means of having contact with those individuals believed to be radicalising. Two officers mention having known a particular individual and then noticed sudden changes whilst engaging in contact with them:

> "Daar sprak ik hem geregeld over de normaalste zaken van de wereld, auto's, westerse dingen, dat soort zaken. En ineens gaat ie het hebben over het geloof, dat ie toch meer bezig is met het geloof. Dan zie je een heel proces van, dat ie steeds meer bezig is met het geloof. Hij gaat zich anders kleden, hij laat zijn baard staan. En zegt ook dat ie steeds meer bezig is met zijn geloof. Vraagt ook aan mij hoe ik

[7] "Just chitchatting is what we call that. And when you then feel, this is weird or is something you don't trust, then you put it in the system and we're going to look into it."

> bezig ben met mijn geloof. En als ik dan zeg dat ik atheïst ben dan gaat hij daar echt wel mee verder en probeert ie me over te halen om toch vooral Moslim te worden want dat is toch het enige ware geloof." – Interviewee 6 [8]

One community officer finally mentions occasionally being tipped off by families with concerns for their son or daughter on recently arisen ideas on life in general or their religious beliefs in particular, therefore allowing insight in a case of potential radicalisation.

4.4.1.1 Experienced difficulties

Officers mention various difficulties in receiving early information on potential cases of radicalisation. Six respondents mention 'not being present in the community enough,' therefore not being able to have regular contact with their residents, as a key problem. Others mention thinking that contacting the police is too big of a step for many residents to take. Even if residents contact them, most respondents clearly present themselves as being a police officer, therefore also mentioning that any concrete incriminating information will be passed forward:

> "Als de informatie zo specifiek wordt, en de vertrouwensband is alleen tussen mij en die persoon zeg maar, dan kom je echt in een spagaat terecht. En moet je eigenlijk zeggen van ja, ik wil het eigenlijk heel graag horen, maar besef wel dat als je het aan mij vertelt, dat ik het ook op papier moet zetten en jouw naam er bij moet zetten." – Interviewee 6 [9]

They mention that the resident then simply shares less information than planned upon. Various other cited arguments are: 'an experienced language barrier', 'families being ashamed', 'not recognising radicalisation' or 'an experienced general scepticism towards the police'. Respondents of one city argue that due to distorted follow-up of early cases of radicalisation by the police due to (the then) unfamiliarity with the topic led to unwillingness to cooperate with the police in later cases. Finally, for some residents radicalisation is not considered or experienced as a very urgent matter, but instead

[8] "That's where I talked with him regularly about very normal things, cars, Western things. And all of a sudden he starts talking about religion, that he is getting more involved with religion. Then you see a whole process, that he keeps getting more involved with religion. He starts dressing differently, also grows a beard. And also tells me he is getting more and more involved in his beliefs. And when I told him that I'm an atheist, he really followed up on this and tried to convince me to convert to the Islam, as that is the only true religion."

[9] "When the information becomes so specific, and the bond of trust is only between that person and myself, then you really have some sort of a struggle. And then I have to say, I really want to hear it, but realise that when you tell me, I will also have to officially document it and I have to include your name."

communicate with their community officer on other typical community related matters such as for instance 'petty crime' or 'waste in a neighbour's garden.'

4.4.1.2 Post-radicalisation signalling

Respondents very often mention being made aware of cases of radicalisation only *after* those individuals had left for Syria. Five respondents mention having experienced family approach the police with concerns of family members, after they had already left. It is not always clear whether the families approached the community officer, or whether they directly contacted the local police within their area of residence. Most respondents mention that many families are worried and do not particularly support their son or daughter travelling to countries of conflict, whatever the underlying reason may be. This shared concern of both the community officer as well as the family members resulted at times in a rather transparent form of communication, as one respondent clearly describes:

> "Nadat die jongen weg was, nou toen was de politie hun grootste vriend. En die, ze vertelden alles. We mochten inloggegevens, alles werd verteld. Alles, alles, alles! Als die jongen maar terug kwam." – Interviewee 1 [10]

One respondent nevertheless mentions that once the family member had been located, the communication would stop as quickly as it was initiated. S/he also mentions that some parents were pressured from their children who had left for Syria to withdraw their official statement. Others mention that particularly after their child had returned home, they experienced that the need for continuous contact was clearly no longer desired on the family's behalf. Only one officer mentions having regular contact with a family member after their son had returned home.

Finally one respondent mentions that most of their information regarding potentially radicalising youth had been retrieved by getting into contact with a community resident who got into a fight with the recruiter of his son that had left for Syria. This allowed insight in the network of the son and exposed many like-minded individuals who were planning on undertaking similar activities.

[10] "After the boy had left, the police became their best friend. And they told us everything. We got credentials, they told us everything. Everything, everything! As long as their boy would come back."

Table 5 – Table of respondents having received info on people having travelled to Syria

	Total N = 7*
Local resident	-
Family member	5

-* One community officer mentioned not being aware of any community resident that travelled to Syria or other country of conflict. Therefore this respondent is excluded from this table to stay honest with the data.

4.4.2 Signalling by observation

All respondents mentioned that seeing processes of radicalisation through observation has proven very difficult, if not impossible. Although most officers mention knowing their community rather well, to determine the difference between radicalisation and simply having religious interest faces several difficulties. Although all acknowledge that profiling someone to be radicalising is very closely intertwined with stereotyping, particular observations led to certain awareness:

> "Stereotypering krijg je. Ik zie bijvoorbeeld een jongen in zijn djellaba op de brommer zitten. Twee jongens in een djellaba op een brommer. En ja, ik vind dat bijzonder. Het is niet strafbaar. Ik zeg niet, je bent een terrorist, je wil de hele wereld opblazen of je bent een Syrië-ganger, maar ik vind het wel bijzonder." – Interviewee 1 [11]

Therefore, despite not necessarily seeing processes of radicalisation, all respondents mention that they *could* see processes of increasing, and often sudden, interest in Islam. These, what one officer refers to as 'soft signals', are in various manners mentioned by all respondents that have experienced potential cases of radicalisation within their community. Table 6 illustrates that particularly the individual's 'change in clothing' or 'the growing of a beard' is very often signalled within each community. Whilst three officers mention that these particular obvious changes towards a seemingly more religious identity is more a thing of the past and therefore no longer really apparent in their community, another respondent mentions that it is very hard to distinguish the 'good from the bad' as almost everyone in her/his community have similar 'traditional' outer characteristics.

[11] "Stereotyping is what you get. For example, I see that guy in his djellaba on a scooter. Two guys, wearing a djellaba on a scooter. And well, I think that's remarkable. It's not criminal. I'm not saying, you're a terrorist, you want to blow up the whole world or you want to travel to Syria, but I do think it's remarkable."

Table 6 – Table of respondents signalling aspects of potential radicalisation

	Total N = 7*
Traditional / symbolic clothing	7
Growing of a beard	6
Persuading to convert / recruiting	2
Distributing (political) flyers	2
'Jihad' symbolism at home	1
Attending IS demonstrations	1
Preparing for travel to Syria	1

-*One community officer mentioned having people who travelled to Syria and came back, but experienced no other cases of potential radicalisation within her/his community. As this table is on early signalling, this respondent has been excluded.

Nevertheless, all the officers mention that these indicators are by no means accurate or exclusive in the signalling of radicalisation, as one officer clearly mentions:

> "Als je iemand ziet waarvan je denkt, dat is een klassieke Moslim. Dan is het waarschijnlijk precies wat je ziet. Iemand is gewoon klassiek Moslim, en die gedraagt zich er naar…" – Interviewee 4 [12]

The observed characteristics as presented in table 5 serve especially as possible indicator when they suddenly seem to happen. Whilst acknowledging a potential legitimate interest in the Islam, various respondents mention that they do see changes that could be interpreted as outstanding:

> "… zijn er ook meisjes die de ene keer in een te korte afgeknipte broek, heel modern in ieder geval, zich beetje sletterig gedragen. Die dan uiteindelijk helemaal bekeren en de andere kant op gaan. Dus dat zien we wel gebeuren." – Interviewee 7 [13]

Officers that experienced radicalising young people in their community that have criminal antecedents mention that this transition towards a seemingly other identity, is especially remarkable. Finally, some discussed cases that appear to be coincidental of having the right officer at the right moment at the right time. One respondent for

[12] "When you see someone of whom you think, that's a traditional Muslim. Then that's most likely exactly what you see. Someone is just a traditional Muslim, and acts upon this…"
[13] "… there are also girls who wear shorts that are very short, well very modern at least, and acting a bit slutty. Who ultimately then completely convert, and move towards a total different direction. Yeah, we do see that happen."

example mentions, whilst being off-duty in another, where he observed indicators of potential radicalisation.

> "En ook omdat ik er privé mee te maken kreeg bij een sportwinkel met buitensport artikelen, Beversport. En daar was ik privé, en daar zag ik een aantal jongeren die ik ken uit de wijk, die op dat moment aan het winkelen waren met, en allerlei kleding kochten voor kougebieden, en vooral op camouflage kleding gericht. En zo is bij ons dat balletje gaan rollen." – Interviewee 6[14]

4.4.2.1 Experienced difficulties

For the limited experienced usefulness of being able to signal radicalisation by means of 'observation' the respondents mention various underlying reasons. Apart from the difficulties in defining radicalisation versus simply aspiring to a religious identity, four respondents also mention not seeing their community residents enough to be able to determine whether someone is radicalising. Others mention that they have the feeling that radicalisation seems more and more to take place behind closed doors, 'similar to the period in which the Hofstadgroep was active'. Closely related to this, six respondents mention that they think that potential radicalising young individuals are being more 'safety aware' than before, due to the rising attention for this phenomenon. The only respondent that does not make mention of this is the community officer working in one of the most densely ethnic diverse communities, where indicators of for example dressing traditionally are by no means an exception.

4.4.3 Signalling by participation

Respondents clearly stress the importance of other professionals active in the community for signalling potential cases of radicalisation. Many argue that especially teaching staff or youth workers are able to signal these processes as they have contact with these young people on a more regular basis. Also contact with leaders of local mosques seems to play a prominent role in the signalling of these processes. Four respondents mention having received worrisome information on various locals by visiting local mosques. The three respondents that are specifically tasked with radicalisation also regularly visit mosques outside of their specific community, and mention that people there at times 'report cases of youngsters potentially getting off track' or 'youngsters behaving peculiarly whilst attending services'. Contact with some

[14] "Also because I experienced it in my off-duty time, in a sports shop selling outdoor products, Beversport. I was there, off-duty, and I saw a couple of youngsters that I knew from my community. They were shopping and bought outdoor thermal clothing, mainly focussing upon camouflage. And that's how we first started looking into it."

mosques is nevertheless better than with some others. One respondent for example mentions not having received any information from the mosque within his/her community. Others simply mention they do not have a mosque within their direct vicinity. Also youth centres or social workers have been a source of information regarding several adolescents, as one respondent describes:

> "Maar wel gewoon wat we zien, op het leven, in de wijk, de jongens die we allebei kennen. Of de jongens waar we ons allebei zorgen over maken. In welk opzicht dan ook. En dan komen ook de Jihadisten naar voren." – Interviewee 1 [15]

Nevertheless, both respondents who mention having received this kind of information add that they have to actively seek this information, rather than being contacted spontaneously. This is understandable as some professionals have relationships with adolescents specifically built on certain levels of trust, they add. Table 7 also illustrates that schools are a source of information, but this will mainly be discussed in the following paragraph (4.5.1). Probation allows community officers to get in contact with several adolescents, therefore also having allowed signalling. Finally, although not typical for the various community officers, interestingly one officer mentions having had a so-called 'community father' contacting them on certain serious concerns.

> "We hebben Marokkaanse buurtvaders die zeg maar 's avonds wel eens patrouilleren, of in ieder geval wel een rol hebben in de wijk, en dan wel eens dingen aan ons vertellen. Niet in de verklikkende sfeer maar gewoon uit zorg. En we hebben een meisje van 15 zo tegen kunnen houden, dat er een buurtvader naar eens van mijn collega's is gekomen…" – Interviewee 7 [16]

Although this respondent mentions it was not his/her personal contact, the officiating officer who received the signal is nevertheless a community officer, and perfectly exemplifies a non-professional form of participation between the police and (here considered) semi-professional actors. Finally, it is mentioned that it is important for this two-way communication that both parties consider certain behavioural aspects as

[15] "But just about what we see, in life, in the community, about the guys we both know. Or the guys of whom we are both concerned. Whatever concern we have. And well, then we also discuss Jihadists."

[16] "We have what we call 'community fathers', and they sometimes patrol at night, or have at least some sort of role within the community. And they sometimes tell us things. Not in a very accusing manner, but just out of concern. And well, because of this we were able to stop a fifteen year old girl, because a community father approached one of my colleagues."

problematic or worrisome, instead of just a phase that the young individual is going through.

Table 7 – Signalling by participation

Professional actors	Total (max n = 8)*
Mosque**	4 (max n = 5)
High school	2 (max n = 5)
'Community father'	1 (max n = 1)
Youth centre / social work	2
Probation / youth detention	1

-*N = 8 except for mosque, school and 'community father'. From the data it is clear not all communities have these (semi) professional actors, so N is presented per institution. For the other mentioned actors it is unclear whether they are located in the community or within their district. Contacts like these can easily transcend the border of the community, and therefore N is kept at eight.

** With mosque is also included a building used regularly for prayers or religious inspired get-togethers that is not officially considered a mosque.

4.4.3.1 Local council

The most important way of getting informed about cases of radicalisation is almost exclusively mentioned to be by attending particular local councils dealing specifically with radicalisation, or through someone with a different position within the organisation of the police that is attending these meetings for them. There are various counsels on either police- or local-level that weekly discuss potentially radicalised young residents and determine a further well-coordinated approach. Within these councils, often under supervision of local municipalities, various chain partners come together such as schools, housing services, GGZ (mental healthcare), probation, specialists and so on, and share information under the umbrella of a mutual agreement. Six respondents clearly mention that this is where their information is most commonly derived from. Also, this council seems to have taken over the direct line between professionals and the community officers on radicalisation-specific themes as one respondent clearly mentions:

> "Eerste instantie wel naar mij als wijkagent. Maar inmiddels is ook contact over die meisjes rechtstreeks bij het centrale team neergelegd. Dus dat loopt nu via die lijn." – Interviewee 2 [17]

[17] "In the first instance, towards me as community officer. But, nowadays, contact regarding these girls is directly with the central team. So now it just goes up the line directly".

The information on potential cases of radicalisation is *very* often the input of schools, various officers argue. Without going into detail on the precise content or cooperating partners within these councils, interesting is that the various officers have different channels for receiving case-specific information from these meetings. The three officers tasked with radicalisation participate in most of these councils. They argue that sometimes a lot of identical information is passed through the system and that they often discuss the same individuals. Other respondents mention being represented in this council by someone from the police, who then informs them on relevant cases or information when deemed necessary. One respondent mentions being mainly informed by an operational expert that is specifically tasked with radicalisation within his or her region. These four respondents all argue that they do not get all the information available on the subject, based on the idea of 'need to know, nice to know':

> "Het kan dus ook best wel zo zijn dat het niet wenselijk is dat wij bepaalde informatie krijgen. Wij willen graag alles weten, daarentegen mag je soms niet alles weten." – Interviewee 8 [18]

Although they expect not to receive all the available information there is, they do believe they receive the appropriate information on their community when it is deemed necessary. One respondent here adds that sometimes some of this information 'leaks' to them, but that nonetheless most people were already aware of this, therefore making it something like a 'public secret'.

Within these councils, the role of the community officer is most often described as potentially bringing in a small piece of the bigger radicalisation puzzle. Although all respondents mention their signalling role to be of great value, it seems to particularly focus upon the follow-up on potential radicalising youngsters instead of bringing in new cases:

> "En het is dan niet meteen de bedoeling dat ik heel actief contact maak, maar wel dat ik dingen vast leg. Als ik bijvoorbeeld diegene zie rijden in een auto, dan noteer

[18] "It could also be that it's not desirable that we get some specific information. We would like to know everything, but nevertheless sometimes you're not allowed to know everything."

ik dat. Als ik hem om zie gaan met anderen, dan noteer ik dat ook met wie en waar ze stonden. Hoe ze gekleed waren, dat soort informatie." – Interviewee 2 [19]

Others indicate that they usually have to intensify the contacts with various residents, and then report their findings back to their liaison that represents them in the council.

4.4.4 Signalling by intelligence

Three officers mention that sometimes they have received information from their intelligence department (or criminal investigation department). Unfortunately this kind of information is not always directly shared with the involved community officers because it involves a criminal case, and therefore confidentiality. One respondent that was involved in a related criminal investigation here mentions the 'laundering' of information from this criminal investigation through the community officer:

"Door wijkagenten aan de bel te sturen, die wisten helemaal niet wie verdachte was en wie niet. Van, ga daar eens kijken, daar is wat aan de hand. Dat wisten wij dan al uit het opsporingsonderzoek, en dan ging een wijkagent aan de bel en die is ergens in gesprek gegaan en die informatie wordt gewoon in onze informatiesystemen opgetikt en dan kon het gedeeld worden." – Interviewee 7[20]

Table 8 – Signalling by various police actors

	Total (max n = 8)
Police intelligence	3
Colleague surveillance	3

Through this staged signalling function of the community officer, numerous cases of potential radicalisation have been revealed; even involving female residents aged only fourteen years. Three officers mention having received information from colleagues working in regular surveillance on possible indicators of radicalisation that they experienced on-duty. Finally, respondents indicate that they have regular contact with their colleague community officers, also on worrisome cases of radicalisation. Nevertheless contact on this topic is only established when it is considered relevant for

[19] "It's not really expected of me to seek contact, but more that I signal things. Like, if I see that person driving in a car, I'll note it down. When I see him with others, I'll write down with who and where. How they were dressed, that sort of information."

[20] "By sending community officers there, that had no clue who was being a suspect and who wasn't. But like, go have a look; something is going on there. But we knew that already from the criminal investigation. And then a community officer goes there, talks with the residents, and this information then gets included in our system and can then be shared with others."

the particular officer. Contact with colleagues outside of their local department is considered more problematic.

4.5 Post-signalling

To conclude this analysis, it might be interesting to briefly illustrate to what extent the respondents are processing the retrieved information on their community residents, and what their next steps are.

4.5.1 Processing information

All respondents seem to agree that the information they retrieve from their communities might be a missing piece of the bigger radicalisation puzzle. Therefore gathered information on especially sudden religious interest is often processed in a timely manner:

> "… vaak zijn het jongeren, als die in één keer interesse tonen in de Islam, zou dat voor mij al een reden kunnen zijn om dat vast te leggen. Want dan leg ik gewoon vast van, nou Abdel of Mohammed die en die, toont in één keer verregaande, of Jantje of Klaasje, toont in één keer verregaande interesse in de Islam. Terwijl hij dat daarvoor helemaal niet had." – Interviewee 3 [21]

There seems to be a different way of processing the data once retrieved for the various respondents. Those officers that are specifically tasked with radicalisation (see 4.3.2) mention sending the appropriate information to the above-mentioned local councils. From there on they decide on the follow up and the extent to which the police and specifically the community officer are to act. One adds s/he also immediately processes the obtained information with a certain code, and implementing it in a specially designated system. Three other respondents mention this ISTER system, and imply it is their direct follow-up:

> "Op het moment dat ik een onderbuikgevoel krijg op straat, van, die jongen zegt dat de broer van Pietje vertrokken is naar Syrië, dan leg je dat vast. En bij ons kun je daar een code aangeven, ISTER, Islamitisch Terrorisme denk ik. En zo gauw je dat

[21] "Often youngsters that suddenly appear interested in the Islam. That could for me already be a reason to report it. Because then I would just report, Abdel or Mohammed appears to suddenly have far-reaching, or John or Tom, suddenly shows far-reaching interest in the Islam. Whilst before he definitely didn't have this."

doet, die code. Bij ons heb je allerlei recherche afdelingen en die beginnen dus een veredeling.." – Interviewee 4 [22]

Of those respondents mentioning using this system as immediate follow up, only one mentions the possible consequences this could cause. The other respondents also make mention of this code, but also address the perceived consequences making them hesitant in using it. Although unsure what exactly the consequences are, various officers experienced that once the case is labelled, many 'different authorities are able to read their input'. The attribution of the code could also possibly result in direct serious consequences for the (suspected) radicalising individual, such as for instance limitation in international travelling. The last follow-up entails carefully transcribing the information and sending it to their local specialist. These can then decide on the desired further action. One respondent here clearly mentions that this expert has previously often downplayed the suspicion on a potentially radicalising individual, therefore making official further follow-up redundant.

Table 9 – Signalling by police intelligence

	Total (max n = 8)
Register in system	4
Send to local specialist	3
Send to local counsel	3

4.5.2 Following up information

To conclude, apart from passing on the retrieved useful information on potential cases of radicalisation, most respondents very often mention maintaining a certain relationship with those radicalised and often their families. Although this contact is also the result of individual initiative by the community officer, very often the local counsel determines on this follow-up. These counsels decide whether they want the community officer to actively retrieve more information, or whether a more covert approach is desired. Respondents mention that amongst others this led to 'increasing contact with believed to be radicalised individuals' or simply 'observing their activities'. Sometimes the community officer is also expected not to initiate any action whatsoever. The information retrieved by these actions is then instantly passed on to the perceived right

[22] "The second I get a gut feeling on the streets, like, that guy says that the brother of John left for Syria, then I report it. And within the police you can label this with a code, ISTER, Islamic Terrorism I think. And the minute you do this, this code. We have various criminal investigation departments that then start working on it."

person or police system. So although this transcends the early-signalling function of radicalisation, these contacts or observations may allow more insight in individual's potential radicalisation process.

Respondents mention that they try to be as transparent as possible in the communication. This is true for contact with the potentially radicalising individual as well as with their families, whom are certainly approached when it involves minors. Here they also very often openly express their concerns on the particular individual's behaviour. This contact is very often not strongly desired by the community residents, but is particularly meant as being outreaching in case they (later) seek help or advise. Displeasure is especially expressed about the obvious visibility of the police uniform at the resident's front door.

Finally some respondents follow up initial worries by actively searching for information online by for example visiting certain social media. Although there seems to be a clear consensus on the importance of the Internet within the radicalisation process by the respondents, most mention not seeking for information themselves. They add that this should be carried out by other departments within the police or by domestic intelligence services.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The following discussion consists out of three different sections. The first part will discuss the most interesting findings of the data analysis and will particularly focus upon the mutual importance of the various experiences by the community officer. A continuous emphasis is here first placed specifically upon the *early*-signalling function by community engagement. Then a short discussion will follow on the limitations of this research-project. Finally suggestions for further research are presented, as well as potential recommendations.

5.2 Signalling 'radicalisation'

The community officer is most-often made aware of potentially radicalising residents through directly or indirectly receiving information originating from the various local councils (overlegorganen) that are specifically designated to discuss the topic of

radicalisation. This is not surprising as within these councils numerous organisations and professionals are represented, therefore centralising information from all different kind of directions. This can prove particularly noteworthy as here multiple indicators from various social domains can be discussed, obviously allowing a more complete view on who is radicalising and who is not. Similar to previous research, as for example carried out by Sageman (2004), does radicalisation seem to be particularly experienced as a phenomenon present amongst adolescents and young adults. This undoubtedly makes professionals such as school staff or social workers of imaginable value, as they are able to maintain more regular and frequent contact with these youngsters than for instance the community officer. These professionals nevertheless need to similarly see radicalisation as a concern, as only then they will notice and report potential cases of individuals perceiving radicalisation as an action alternative. The local councils have for issues concerning radicalisation largely replaced the direct line between the community officer and the professional, presumably due to the sensitivity and perceived urgency of the topic. Merely a continuous direct form of participation (see 2.4.3), or what Terpstra 2009) refers to as 'cooperation' within his understanding of community oriented policing, is apparent between the community officer and members of the local mosque. These members still regularly and directly inform the community officer on radicalisation related concerns, after which the community officer can decide to directly or indirectly pass on this information. Nonetheless, as most information on potentially radicalising residents is passed on from these councils to the community officer, this suggests that specifically an early-signalling role is one not necessarily carried out by the community officer.

So are there other ways in which the community officer could be informed on cases of potential radicalisation? For both communication (see 2.4.1) and observation (see 2.4.2) it is first important to understand that radicalisation is then particularly perceived as a transition towards a seemingly profound religious identity. Then indeed the community officer is occasionally informed on 'radicalisation' by the community resident in a seemingly horizontal approach (White & McEvoy, 2012). These concerns often involve sudden religious activity or openly expressing religious interest by *fellow* community residents. In other words, radicalisation experienced by residents *outside* of their own geographical notion of their community is either not signalled, or simply not reported to the community officer. Gusfield's (1975) relational dimension of the individual's perception of the community does therefore not contribute to an early-signalling role of

the community officer. Those community residents that are most likely able to transcend this basal notion of 'radicalisation' are simultaneously those residents most closely related to the potentially radicalising individual. Families are for instance generally experienced as being hesitant in approaching the police when early signals of a potential radicalisation process seem apparent. This hesitation is for obvious and understandable reasons. Only when young residents have indeed travelled to Syria, families are experienced to be eager to contact the police. Although communication with local residents is a vital aspect of community oriented policing, does this two-way interaction not necessarily play a considerable role in an early signalling function by the community officer as for instance suggested by Briggs et al. (2006).

That leaves the early signalling role by means of observation. Although the community officer clearly understands that radicalisation is a complex phenomenon that is by no means necessarily interwoven with any form of religion, does thus-far their experience indicate that Islam contemporarily plays a considerable role. Radicalisation is particularly experienced as indeed a transition towards a seemingly profound religious identity or lifestyle. In addition is this sudden far-reaching religious interest experienced as a common denominator in those residents who have either travelled or expressed willingness to travel to Syria, also identified as a perceived individual act of radicalisation. This transition corresponds with the phase of self-identification as described in most theoretical models of radicalisation, or what Wiktorowicz (2005) refers to as the notion of cognitive opening. This transition is therefore experienced as a (visible) indicator of a potential (!) radicalisation process. This transition is particularly observed by means of seeing changes in one's 'Identity and Appearance' as described by the NCTV. The community officer acknowledges that this seemingly grey-area between being labelled radical or merely expressing religious interest is very vague. Nonetheless, especially when it involves a seemingly *sudden* transition, alarm bells seem to start ringing. Although a sudden transition from being an individual involved in for instance drugs and/or petty crime becoming a devout Muslim quitting his previous life of crime is a seemingly positive change of lifestyle, it is not surprising however that it is considered remarkable or worthy of attention. Especially when one considers the current attention radicalisation receives in the public debate, as well as the general suspiciousness inherent to the job of the police officer. When for instance drugs would be a considerable community problem, the community officer is also more likely to be suspicious of young people suddenly acting offbeat. Finally, other often-suggested

indicators or consecutive phases of a radicalisation process that entail more than mere religious interest are simply less evident in a community. Can one expect the community officers to signal for instance 'political dissatisfaction', 'social isolation' or 'the depersonalising of the other' (see 2.2.4) in the limited amount of time present within their already demanding communities? Those relatively clear-cut indicators of radicalisation that *do* get signalled are often a result of simply having the right officer at the right time in the right place. Finally, although 'radicalisation' is clearly observed by the community officers, would it not be surprising if other community actors simultaneously make these observations, therefore already informing the designated local councils.

Previous literature as well as various initiated projects expected the community officer, amongst many others, to play a considerable role in the early detection of processes of radicalisation. The data analysis illustrates that this role should perhaps not be exaggerated. Although the community officer can be seen as the embodiment of the policing strategy of community oriented policing, is their actual community time still relatively limited. This could disallow a real early signalling role. Nonetheless is it not clear whether increasing community time would allow the community officer to transcend the notion of 'radicalisation', and portrait a stronger early signalling role of real signs of radicalisation. Similar to suggestions made by the OSCE (2014) should the signalling of radicalisation perhaps indeed be seen as a mere by-product of the community officer's daily work.

With this being said, does this limit the role of the community officer in an early preventative approach of radicalisation? The answer is quite simply no. Although the community officer only sporadically (early-) signals radicalisation, is the immediate follow-up of raised concerns similarly essential in a pro-active approach. Either on own initiative, but more-often decided upon by the previously discussed council, is the community officer engaging contact with those individuals expected to be radicalising, as well as with their families when it involves minors. Here the community officer then truly serves as an intermediary between the community resident and the organisation of the police and the council. This active information seeking of radicalisation has currently become almost a top priority when this is desired. Considering the council most often decides upon the further follow-up is the community officer's police discretion here rather limited compared to other job aspects. Whilst contacting those community

residents involved in cases of radicalisation, the community officer offers a transparent form of communication and often openly expresses his or her concerns. These contacts can be valuable as information can be brought up on the network of the radicalised individual, which has proven to play an important role in the radicalisation process. Although contact with the police is most often not very strongly desired when someone is expected to be radicalising, acting outreaching to those community residents involved can prove fruitful in future follow up. The community officer can this way bring in a piece of a bigger radicalisation puzzle, but could likewise debunk this by suggesting that it merely involves a puzzle of genuine religious interest. Contact here seems key.

In case the community officer signals radicalisation (or 'radicalisation') through actual community time, is there a seemingly discrepancy in the direct follow-up of this retrieved community information. Similarly to community experiences with for instance petty crime or communal complains, are transcribed digital records made of experiences regarding potential radicalisation. But whom the information is shared with, differs for the various community officers. Some register it directly onto a radicalisation specific police system, whilst other mention being cautious with this due to the unfamiliarity of the exact destination at the receiving end. Considerable caution should be applied every time information simply suggests an individual is gaining far-reaching religious interest, as this is not necessarily of police 'business'. Although this is justified as potentially bringing in new valuable information regarding a bigger radicalisation puzzle, others prefer sending it to their local specialist or attendee of the local council first.

Although this research project did not aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of the concept of radicalisation, it does offer an interesting view on how radicalisation is currently understood in practice. Definitions such as offered by the European Commission or the AIVD do not mention religion to be a part of the radicalisation process, as they aim to offer an overarching definition that entails all different kinds of extremism. Nonetheless, it seems clear that in contemporary issues regarding radicalisation religion (Islam) cannot be excluded, especially when travelling to Syria is in practise almost instantly considered an act of extremism.

The desire to travel to Syria *can* be strongly motivated by feelings of injustice towards a seemingly global Muslim identity, therefore transcending national borders. The role of a shared feeling of identity should not be ignored, as recently similarly seen in the case of

Aruban Mitch Henriquez[23], where particularly the Aruban community felt and still feels mistreated in a shared identity. The underlying motive for travelling to Syria is most often not a very obvious one, but could similarly be a political one concerning the Muslim identity. Nonetheless, travelling to Syria and joining organisations such as IS are criminalised, and should be criminalised. Motivations for travelling to Syria or radicalising are ones not easily understood, and therefore not easily signalled. This is even more true as radicalisation seems more and more to take place behind closed doors or in virtual communities. Therefore perhaps other professionals or intelligence services are more important/adequate in the desired early signalling role, whilst the community officer can play an important role in the direct follow-up.

5.3 Limitations and further research

This research project faces several additional shortcomings on top of the ones already suggested earlier in the method section. As acknowledged shortcomings often simultaneously are problematic for the research at hand and offer ideas for future research, both will be discussed below.

First and foremost the sample of the community officers is relatively small. Although this is not uncommon in qualitative research, a bigger sample within each of the policing regions would have offered a more complete overview of the general experience of the community officer. Perhaps even a quantitative research strategy could have been aspired to describe the experiences of all community officers that have come across radicalisation within their community. It should also be acknowledged that the sample of respondents particularly consists of those community officers that are interested in the topic of radicalisation, and were therefore eager to participate. For this reason, community officers that are not necessarily very interested in this topic are unfortunately excluded even though they experience radicalisation to a similar degree within their community. Also unfortunately no respondent has been interviewed with a Muslim background. It could be interesting to see whether these community officers have different experiences, or whether the uniform plays a more prominent role. Future research could try and include these community officers, although familiarity with possible gatekeepers of the organisation of the police is then strongly recommended.

[23] See for instance: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-3143789/Police-protesters-clash-Netherlands-death-Caribbean-man-arrest.html

Furthermore, this research project only includes the perspective of the community officer. As radicalisation is a relative concept, the experiences of other professionals could also prove very insightful for further counter-radicalisation policy. Similarly research on how intelligence services retrieve their intelligence would be very interesting, but face obvious problems of feasibility. Whilst these ideas all suggest only one side of the radicalisation coin, more research should be done on understanding the radicalisation process from the 'radicalised' point of view, as well as their motives to travel to countries such as Syria or Iraq.

5.4 Recommendations

Considering that the experiences of the community officer have now been thoroughly discussed, several recommendations can be suggested. These recommendations are also based on the interview held with an operational expert as discussed in the introduction. Finally, some of these recommendations have already been put to practise in some of the police organisations and need therefore not be taken into account by them.

Figure 3 – Possible recommendations for policing areas experiencing radicalisation

1. Let the community officer be a community officer.
Radicalisation seems to have become a prioritised and vast task within the curriculum of the community officer. The more radicalisation in a community, the more time is simultaneously spent on the subject indoors. To improve the role of the community officer, he or she should be able to engage in more regular contact with the community. The idea of a community officer is to be a liaison with the community, not 'hunting' for radicalisation.
2. Appoint an operational expert (O.E)
In order to facilitate the above-mentioned, it seems wise to appoint an operational expert per region that is only concerned with radicalisation. This O.E could be the main contact point for both the local council as well as the community officer. The community officer could this way send his or her concerns to this specialist that will then decide on further follow-up. This O.E could either take over contact with those perceived to be radicalising (e.g. without uniform), or instruct the community officer

on further action. This specialist could also regularly visit other professionals or institutions.

In case radicalisation is not a problem very actively experienced within the policing region, it could be an added task of one community officer. When this task comes to neglect the regular work of the community too much, a separate E.O could then be appointed.

The E.O could also serve as liaison between the community officer and the other departments within the police organisation.

3. Train the trainers

Acknowledging budgetary constraints, instead of facilitating training programmes for all community officers could first the above-mentioned E.O's be intensively educated. Not only in the most recent developments of radicalisation, but also on how to present this to their colleagues within their police department (see 4.).

4. Inform the community officer

It seems wise to still inform those community officers that could experience radicalisation within their community. The O.E could facilitate a local training session for local community officers in which the basics of radicalisation can be discussed whilst simultaneously translating this to the local context. Also basic information on multiculturalism could be offered here.

5. Create a basic guidebook on radicalisation

The creation of a basic guidebook on radicalisation could inform all community officers on the very basics of the phenomenon. This guidebook could for instance include the basic notion of radicalisation, how to recognise radicalisation, experiences of community officers and finally best practises of various departments. This preferably compact handbook could be fruitful as, due to increased safety awareness amongst radicalising individuals, radicalisation could become apparent in other regions too.

This handbook could be offered to the community officers to make them aware of what radicalisation is, but also what it is *not*.
6. Offer transparency
It seems wise to offer transparency to either the community officer or to the O.E about the way in which the input of the community officer is processed. This way the community officer is more aware of the follow-up and is able to make more deliberate decisions on what to report, and what not.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research-project was to describe the experiences of the community officer in the signalling of religious inspired radicalisation in the Netherlands. In order to establish a deeper understanding of this signalling role, have only those community officers been included that actually experience(d) radicalisation within their community. The research question and the underlying sub-questions aimed to find the extent to which 'communication', 'observation' and 'participation' seem to play a role within this early-signalling function. Due to the strong local dimension of the job of the community officer is he or she expected to detect radicalisation by both community engagement, as well as by serving as 'eyes and ears' of the police organisation.

It appears that the early-signalling role of potential cases of radicalisation is not one necessarily carried out by the community officer. Awareness of potentially radicalising residents is often raised by means of a local council that includes representatives of various professionals and organisations. Signalling through community engagement is experienced, but not very extensively. Particularly sudden transitions towards a seemingly profound religious identity are signalled, corresponding with the phase of 'self-identification' or 'indoctrination' as offered by most of the theoretical models on radicalisation. Other indicators of a potential radicalisation process, implying seeing an act of extremism as an action alternative, are simply not easy to be signalled. Enhanced religious interest is visible, but is obviously not criminal. Although the community

officers are more often made aware of radicalisation than making aware of radicalisation, are those incidental cases of community intelligence on 'radicalising' individuals processed in a rather timely and prioritised manner.

Radicalisation has altogether proven to be a phenomenon not easily understood. The community officers, as well as many other professionals, do not want their residents to travel to Syria and potentially join terrorist networks. This is not only because of the potential threat of terrorist activity upon their possible return, but also because of the experienced impact in those families directly involved. As sudden religious interest has proven to be a common denominator for those having travelled to Syria, is it not surprising that this is paid close attention to. It does unfortunately seem to make it a bad time to turn to Islam. The role of the community officer nonetheless seems particularly present in the direct follow up of radicalisation, after been made aware of potential radicalising residents. In this role they can bring in an extra piece of a potential radicalisation puzzle, but can also act out-reaching towards those individuals or families involved. The community officer here seems to be a great fit for being able to portrait a pro-active rather than reactive role within the community, illustrating cooperation rather than being at opposite ends.

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ANNEX A – Letter to police chief

Faculty of Law
KU Leuven

Dear X,

My name is Pieter Appelboom and I am currently enrolled in the 'Master of Criminology' at the KU Leuven, and I am conducting research on the experiences of community officers in the signalling of radicalisation and Islamic extremism within the Netherlands. Especially in light of recent events it would be of great interest to see what community officers experience in their daily functioning. Previous research has often mentioned the role of the community officer as crucial, but the actual experience by the community officer has nevertheless barely been explored. Because of this, I would like to conduct interviews with local community officers that experienced radicalisation within the own community.

Regarding this dissertation, I am focusing on a very specific group of community officers that are active in those regions where radicalisation has been reported. Particularly by having spoken with members of the NCTV, CTC and the Police Academy have I decided to include only a few policing regions. For this reason I deem your policing region X as very interesting to include in my research project.

For this I would like to request your cooperation. I would like to ask whether you could bring me in contact with those community officers that have experiences with radicalisation in their community.

With your permission I would like to contact the community officer by e-mail, to motivate him or her to cooperate with my research project. The interviews will maximally last for 1,5 hour and will be held at a location deemed most convenient for the community officer. The desired period of interviewing is between early March until the beginning of June 2015.

The data will be handled in such a manner that the anonymity of the participating community officers is guaranteed. Only policing region and several personal characteristics such as age or religious background will be included to enhance the quality of the data. The supervision of this research project is in hands of Dr. Estelle Zinsstag and Ms. Huma Saeed.

Would you be willing to cooperate with my request? I would like to ask you whether you could contact me as soon as possible by means of the contact details presented below. In case you are interested, I will send you the final version of this research project.

In case you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Pieter Appelboom
Student Master of Criminology
KU Leuven

Dr. Estelle Zinsstag
Leuven Instituut voor Criminologie (LINC)
Faculty of Law, KU Leuven
Herbert Hooverplein 10
3000 Leuven

Contact details:
E-mail:

Tel:

Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid
KU Leuven

Geachte X,

Mijn naam is Pieter Appelboom en in het kader van mijn opleiding 'Master in de Criminologische Wetenschappen' aan de KU Leuven doe ik onderzoek naar de ervaringen van wijkagenten met betrekking tot het herkennen van radicalisering en Islamitisch extremisme in de eigen wijk. Zeker gezien de recente ontwikkelingen is het erg interessant om te zien in welke mate bepaalde wijkagenten radicalisering tegen komen in hun dagdagelijkse functie. Graag zou ik hiervoor interviews willen houden met verschillende wijkagenten.

In het kader van dit onderzoek richt ik mij tot een zeer specifieke groep van wijkagenten die werkzaam zijn in die regio's waar radicalisering aanwezig is gebleken. Mede door voorgaande oriënterende gesprekken met personen werkzaam binnen de NCTV, CTC en de Politieacademie, leek mij de politieregio X één van de geschikte regio's om te onderzoeken.

Dit is dan ook de reden dat ik u contacteer. Graag zou ik u willen vragen of u uw medewerking zou willen verlenen om mij in contact te brengen met de juiste wijkagenten.

Ik zou mij graag per e-mail willen richten tot de betreffende wijkagent om hem of haar zo te kunnen motiveren om mee te werken aan dit onderzoek. De interviews zullen maximaal anderhalf uur duren en zullen afgenomen worden op het politiebureau, hetzij in een andere vertrouwde setting. De gewenste periode van onderzoek is van februari 2015 tot begin juni 2015.

De onderzoeksdata zal in volledige anonimiteit verwerkt worden. Naast enkele gebruikelijke persoonsgegevens zoals geslacht en leeftijd, zal enkel de politieregio in het onderzoek worden vermeld om de betrouwbaarheid van het onderzoek te waarborgen. De opbouw en verwerking van dit onderzoek wordt gesuperviseerd Dr. Estelle Zinsstag en Ms. Huma Saeed.

Zou u bereid zijn om uw medewerking te verlenen aan dit onderzoek? Graag zou ik u willen vragen of u dit mij dit zo snel mogelijk zou kunnen laten weten. Uiteraard wordt u, mocht u dit willen, als tegenprestatie een exemplaar van dit onderzoek bezorgd.

Mocht u vragen of opmerkingen hebben aarzel vooral niet om contact met mij op te nemen middels onderstaande gegevens.

Hopend op een positief vervolg, hoor ik graag van u.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Pieter Appelboom
Student Master in de Criminologische Wetenschappen
KU Leuven

Dr. Estelle Zinsstag
Leuven Instituut voor Criminologie (LINC)
Rechtenfaculteit, KU Leuven
Herbert Hooverplein 10
3000 Leuven

Contactgegevens:
E-mail:

Tel:

KU Leuven
Faculty of Law

Dear X,

My name is Pieter Appelboom and I am currently enrolled in the 'Master of Criminology' at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven), and I am conducting research on the experiences of community officers with the signalling of radicalisation and Islamic extremism within their community. Through interviews I would like to describe the individual experience of the community officer to create a better understanding of this phenomenon. Due to the fact that your area of policing is X, I would like to ask you whether you would like to cooperate with my dissertation.

The last two years a significant increase has been seen within the Netherlands on numbers of radicalised individuals and individuals travelling to countries in the Middle East for ideological purposes. It is said radicalisation has a strong local character, and for this reason it would be extremely interesting to describe your local experiences as being a community officer. The aim of this research is specifically to describe the experiences of the community officer in the signalling of processes of radicalisation.

Content of participation

The date and the location of the interview will be further discussed according to your availability. The interview will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. During the interview several topics will be discussed, generally focusing on your experiences as community officer and the detection of processes of radicalisation. Due to the fact that the central element of research here is your experience in your daily function, no specific prior knowledge is needed.

If you grant permission, a voice-recorder will record the interview. This is to ensure the quality of the data collected and it would be greatly appreciated if you decide to allow

this. As your cooperation to this research is voluntarily, you can at any given time choose to not answer a certain question or decide to not discuss a certain theme.
The data retrieved in this study will be handled confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of this research. Anonymity of your participation will be ensured, therefore making it impossible for the tracing back of the data to any person that participated. Only several personal characteristics such as age or years of experience will be mentioned, together with the policing region in which you serve as a community officer.

After the data-analysis is done, I will potentially contact you once more in case any ambiguities have arisen. Moreover, you can contact me at any point in time in case you have troubles or remarks; please do not hesitate to contact me.

Permission
In case you grant permission to cooperate with this research, I would like to ask you to contact me by my contact information provided below. Before the interview I will ask you to sign this document to confirm your approval for this cooperation. With this signing you also acknowledge the main goal of the research, the brief outline of the interview and that anonymity is ensured.

Hoping for a positive response, I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Pieter Appelboom
Student Master of Criminology
KU Leuven

Dr. Estelle Zinsstag
Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC)
Faculty of Law, KU Leuven
Herbert Hooverplein 10
3000 Leuven (Belgium)

K.U. Leuven
Rechtenfaculteit

Geachte X,

Mijn naam is Pieter Appelboom en in het kader van de opleiding 'Master in de Criminologische Wetenschappen' aan de KU Leuven doe ik onderzoek naar de ervaringen van wijkagenten met betrekking tot het herkennen van radicalisering en Moslimextremisme in Nederland binnen de eigen wijk. Middels interviews zou ik graag de individuele ervaring van de wijkagent willen beschrijven. Aangezien u werkzaam bent binnen de regio X, zou ik u graag willen vragen of u mee zou willen werken aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek.

De laatste twee jaar is een behoorlijke toename in aantallen uitreizigers en radicaliserende jongeren geconstateerd in Nederland. Aangezien radicalisering een sterk lokaal karakter lijkt te hebben zou het enorm interessant zijn om uw rol als wijkagent te beschrijven met betrekking to radicalisering. Het doel van dit onderzoek is in het bijzonder om de ervaring van de wijkagent in kaart te brengen met betrekking tot het herkennen van radicalisering in de eigen wijk.

Inhoud deelname
De datum en locatie van het interview zullen samen met u zo snel mogelijk worden kortgesloten. Verder zal het interview ongeveer 1 tot maximaal 1.5 uur duren. Gedurende dit interview zullen een aantal verschillende thema's aan bod komen samenhangend met ervaringen binnen uw functie als wijkagent in het kader van radicalisering. Aangezien dit onderzoek uw ervaring betreft in uw dagdagelijkse functie, is geen extra voorkennis benodigd.

Het interview zal, mits u er toestemming voor geeft, opgenomen worden aan de hand van een dictafoon. Dit is van belang om de kwaliteit van de verzamelde data te garanderen en zou indien u dit zou toelaten, enorm worden gewaardeerd. Aangezien

deelname aan dit onderzoek vanzelfsprekend volledig op vrijwillige basis is, kunt u op ieder gegeven moment beslissen om een onderwerp of vraag niet te beantwoorden.

De gegevens in dit onderzoek zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld en zullen uitsluitend gebruikt worden in het kader van dit onderzoek. De gegevens zullen tevens anoniem verwerkt worden waardoor geen verdere identificatie van uw deelname mogelijk is. Uitsluitend persoonskenmerken zoals leeftijd, jaren ervaring als wijkagent en de regio waarbinnen uw werkzaam bent zullen met uw toestemming worden vermeld.

Na de analyse van de data zal ik mogelijk nog eenmalig contact met u opnemen om eventuele onduidelijkheden weg te nemen. Bovendien kunt u mij ten alle tijden bereiken middels de onderstaande contactgegevens mocht u onverhoopt nog vragen of opmerkingen hebben.

Toestemming
Mits u bereid bent om medewerking te verlenen aan dit onderzoek, zou ik u graag willen vragen om mij te bereiken via onderstaande contactgegevens. Vooraf aan het interview zal ik u ook vragen om dit document te ondertekenen, om de bereidheid tot medewerking daarmee te bevestigen.

Hopend op een positief vervolg, hoor ik graag van u.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Pieter Appelboom
Student Master in de Criminologische Wetenschappen
KU Leuven

Dr. Estelle Zinsstag
Leuven Instituut voor Criminologie (LINC)
Rechtenfaculteit, KU Leuven
Herbert Hooverplein 10
3000 Leuven

Semi-structured interview

Community: ……..
Police region: ……...
Date: ……..
Interviewer: ……..
Interview #: ……...

Introduction

-Personal information
-Subject thesis
-Confidentiality interview
-Possible overlap in questions
-No right or wrong answers

1. Personal characteristics

-Gender
-Date of birth
-Job
-Religious background
-Community
-Choice of community
-Years in police
-Years as community officer
-Motivation community officer

2. Role community officer

-How would you like to describe your role as community officer?
-How much time do you approximately spend in your community?
-Are there other community officers working in your community?
-How would you like to describe your relationship with the community?
-Have you received any training regarding radicalisation?
-Would you like more training regarding radicalisation?

3. The community

-What is the size of your community?

-How would you like to describe the ethnic diversity in your community?

-Do you think you fit in well with the community?

-Do you have regular contact with the Muslim community?

-Have there been people travelling to Syria?

4. Radicalisation

-How would you like to describe radicalisation?

-Have there been cases of radicalisation in your community?

-Are you under the impression that at the moment there are still people radicalising?

-How did you find out there were people radicalising?

-How would you like to describe a person that is radicalising?

-Are you under the impression that there is a radicalisation process?

-According to your experience, do you think radicalisation is an individual or more of a group process?

5. Communication

-Have there been community residents approaching you with concerns on radicalisation?

-Is this on people from their own community or more a general concern?

-Do you actively approach residents with concerns on radicalisation?

-Do you approach, or do Muslims approach you with these concerns?

6. Observation

-Have you recognised radicalising individuals within your community?

-What do you look for, or what do you think you are looking for?

-Do you think it is possible to recognise radicalisation as a community officer?

7. Participation

-How would you like to describe the role of other professionals regarding radicalisation (for instance teaching staff, social worker, imams etc.)?

-Have these professionals contacted you with concerns on radicalisation?

-Have you contacted these individuals regarding concerns on radicalisation?

-Are you part of particular meetings or counsels regarding radicalisation?

-Would you describe your role here as participating or more as signalling?

8. Means to signal

-How much time do you approximately spend on radicalisation?

-Do you think this is enough?

-Do you think it is possible to improve the role of the community officer in the signalling of radicalisation?

9. Intelligence

-Do you receive information regarding radicalisation from other members working for the police organisation?

-Do you approach other members of the police organisation with concerns?

-Do your colleagues have similar experiences with radicalisation within their communities?

10. Expectations

-Once you signal radicalisation, what are your next steps?

-Various sources describe the role of the community officer as of great value in the signalling of radicalisation. Do you agree with this?

-Do you expect radicalisation to keep occurring in your community?

Do you have any other thoughts or experiences in how you signalled radicalisation that we did not discuss thus far?

End interview

Semigestructureerd interview

Wijkagent: ……..
Politie regio: ……..
Datum: ……..
Interviewer: ……..
Interview #: ……..

Introductie

-Persoonlijke informatie
-Onderwerp thesis
-Vertrouwelijkheid van het interview
-Mogelijke overlap tussen verschillende vragen
-Geen goede of foute antwoorden op de vragen

1. Persoonsgegevens

-Geslacht
-Geboortedatum
-Werk
-Religieuze achtergrond
-Gebied werkzaam
-Keuze wijk
-Jaren in de politie
-Jaren als wijkagent
-Motivatie wijkagent

2. Rol wijkagent

-Hoe zou u uw functie als wijkagent willen omschrijven?
-Hoeveel tijd spendeert u in uw wijk?
-Zijn er andere wijkagenten werkzaam binnen uw wijk?
-Hoe zou u uw relatie met de gemeenschap willen omschrijven?
-Heeft u een training of cursus ondergaan omtrent radicalisering?
-Zou u meer training of cursussen willen krijgen omtrent radicalisering?

3. De gemeenschap

-Hoe groot is de gemeenschap waarbinnen u werkzaam bent?
-Hoe zou u de etnische diversiteit willen omschrijven in uw wijk?
-Heeft u het gevoel goed in de wijk te passen?
-Heeft u doorgaans contact met de Moslimgemeenschap? (en hoe?)
-Zijn er, naar uw weten, mensen die naar Syrië zijn uitgereisd?

4. Radicalisering

-Hoe zou u zelf radicalisering willen omschrijven?
-Hebben er vormen van radicalisering plaatsgevonden in uw wijk?
-Heeft u het idee dat er op dit moment nog mensen, zogezegd aan het radicaliseren zijn?
-Hoe bent u hiervan op de hoogte gekomen?
-Hoe zou u een persoon willen omschrijven die zogezegd is geradicaliseerd?
-Denkt u dat er sprake is van een radicaliseringproces?
-In uw ervaring, denkt u dat radicalisering meer een individueel of meer een groepsproces is?

5. Communicatie

-Zijn er bewoners in uw wijk die u benaderen met zorgen omtrent radicalisering?
-Betreft dit zorgen uit de eigen wijk of omgeving of meer algemeen?
-Welke mensen benaderen u het meeste?
-Benadert u bewoners binnen de gemeenschap met zorgen of vragen omtrent radicalisering?
-Benadert u, of wordt u benaderd door Moslims omtrent zorgen van radicalisering?

6. Observatie

-Heeft u radicaliserende personen herkent in uw wijk?
-Waar let u op, of denkt u dat u op moet letten?
-Denkt u dat het mogelijk is om radicalisering waar te nemen als wijkagent?

7. Participatie

-Hoe zou u de rol van andere professionals willen omschrijven met betrekking tot radicalisering (zoals leraren, sociaal werkers, imams etc.)?
-Nemen deze verschillende personen contact met u op als zij zich zorgen maken om radicalisering?

-Neemt u contact op met deze personen als u zich zorgen maakt om radicalisering?
-Zit u bij bepaalde overleggen of vergaderingen omtrent radicalisering?
-Heeft u hierbinnen een meer participerende of signalerende rol?

8. Middel om te signaleren

-Hoeveel tijd spendeert u ongeveer aan radicalisering?
-Denkt u dat dit voldoende is?
-Denkt u dat het mogelijk is de rol van de wijkagent in het signaleren van radicalisering te verbeteren?

9. Informatie

-Krijgt u informatie met betrekking tot radicalisering van andere leden binnen de politie organisatie?
-Gaat u met zorgen of informatie met betrekking tot radicalisering naar andere medewerkers van de politie?
-Hebben uw collega's ook ervaringen met radicalisering binnen de wijk waarin zij werkzaam zijn?

10. Verwachtingen

-Zodra u radicalisering vast stelt, wat zijn uw vervolg stappen?
-Verschillende bronnen beschrijven de rol van de wijkagent als enorm belangrijk in het herkennen van processen van radicalisering. Bent u het hier mee eens?
-Verwacht u dat radicalisering blijft ontwikkelen binnen uw wijk?

Heeft u nog overige ervaringen of gedachtes die u zou willen delen met betrekking tot het herkennen van radicalisering, die we nog niet hebben besproken?

Einde interview

Profile

- -Gender
  - -Male
  - -Female
- -Age
- -Religious background
- -Function
- -Work
  - -Fulltime
  - -Part-time
- -Experience
  - -Experience police
  - -Experience community officer
  - -Experience community
- -Personality

Understanding radicalisation

- -General
- -Knowledge radicalisation
  - -Training
    - -Local level
    - -National level
  - -Personal interest
  - -Previous job
- -Description
- -Characteristics
  - -Cause
  - -Process
  - -Sudden change
  - -Fast
  - -Network
  - -Religion
  - -Internet
- -External dimension
  - -Appearance
  - -Traditional clothing
  - -Online interest
  - -Prepare travel
  - -Distributing flyers
  - -Withdrawal social institutions
  - -Attending meetings
  - -Openly carrying of the Koran
- -Difficulties labelling

Community

- -Police region
- -Type of community
  - -Working-class
  - -Middle-class
- -Ethnic diversity
- -Size community
- -Social institutions
  - -School
    - -Primary school
    - -High school
  - -Mosque
  - -Social services
  - -Probation
- -Radicalised individuals
  - -Radicalised
  - -Travelled to Syria
  - -Individuals returned from Syria
  - -Recruiters
- -Profile radicalised individual
  - -Gender
    - -Male
    - -Female
  - -Criminal antecedents
  - -Education
    - -High
    - -Low
  - -Age

Community officer

- -Characteristics community officer
  - -Primary police role
  - -Liaison role
  - -Deep in the community
  - -Accessibility
- -Task radicalisation
  - -Wave-motion
  - -Priority
  - -Secondary task
- -Tasks community officer
  - -Advising
  - -Signalling
  - -Observing
- -Choice of community
  - -Policy
  - -Own initiative
- -Motivation community officer
- - Presence in community
  - -Official

- -Actual
  - -Administration
  - -In community
- -Contact with community
- -Other community officers

Communication

- -General
- -Conditions for contact
  - -Relation of trust
  - -Contact taken seriously
- -Contact (→ X →)
  - -Contact residents
  - -Contact family
  - -Contact radicalised individual
- -Difficulties
  - -High threshold police
  - -No experiences R
  - -Culture of silence
  - -No responsibility
  - -When to inform
  - -No contact R

Observation

- -General
  - -Indication experience
  - -Suspiciousness
- -Observing
  - -Community
    - -Clothing
    - -Appearance
    - -Distributing flyers
    - -IS-symbols
    - -Attending demonstrations
    - -Preparing travel to Syria
    - -Recruitment
  - -Digitally
    - -Political expressiveness
- -Difficulties
  - -Safety awareness
  - -Grey area
  - -Coincidence
  - -Capacity
  - -Presence in community

Participation

- -General
- -Their initiative
  - -Social work

- -Probation
- -School
- -Mosque
- -Own initiative
- -Social work
- -Probation
- -School
- -Mosque
- -Local counsel(s)
- -Bringing in signals
- -Receiving signals
- -Difficulties
- -Relationship of trust
- -No contact

Intelligence

- -General
- -Contact police
- -Intra-organisation contact
- -Colleague community officer
- -Other departments
- -Inter-organisation contact
- -Specialist
- -Digitally
- -Internet
- -Systems
- -Difficulties

Follow-up

- -General
- -Processing information
- -Follow-up
- -Contact
- -Radicalised
- -Family
- -Observation
- -Receiving information back
- -Difficulties
- -Consequences registering
- -Contact not desired

General

- -Alertness
- -General role community officer
- -Openness
- -Time spent on R
- -Expectation

Profiel

- -Geslacht
- -Leeftijd
- -Religieuze achtergrond
- -Functie
- -Werkzaam
  - -Fulltime
  - -Parttime
- -Ervaring
  - -Ervaring politie
  - -Ervaring wijkagent
  - -Ervaring wijk
- -Persoonlijkheid

Visie radicalisering

- -Algemeen
- -Kennis Radicalisering
  - -Training
    - -Nationaal
    - -Lokaal
  - -Persoonlijke verdieping
  - -Vroegere functie
- -Beschrijving
- -Kenmerken
  - -Oorzaak
  - -Proces
  - -Opvallende ommekeer
  - -Snel
  - -Netwerk
  - -Geloof
  - -Internet
- -Kennis externe dimensie
  - -Uiterlijk
  - -Traditionele kledij
  - -Online interesse
  - -Voorbereiden uitreis
  - -Actief flyeren
  - -Sociale instanties afkappen
  - -Bijeenkomsten
  - -Openlijk dragen Koran
- -Moeilijkheid duiding

Wijk

- -Politieregio
- -Type wijk

- -Arbeiderswijk
- -Middenstandswijk
- -Etnische diversiteit
- -Grootte wijk
- -Instanties in wijk
  - -School
    - -Lagere school
    - -Middelbare school
  - -Moskee
  - -Jongerenwerk
  - -Reclassering
- -Aantal geradicaliseerde
  - -Geradicaliseerde personen
  - -Uitreizigers naar Syrië
  - -Teruggekeerde personen
  - -Ronselaars
- -Profiel geradicaliseerde
  - -Geslacht
    - -Man
    - -Vrouw
  - -Criminele antecedenten
  - -Opleiding
    - -Laag
    - -Hoog
  - -Leeftijd

Wijkagent

- -Kenmerken wijkagent
  - -Primair politie
  - -Liaison rol
  - -Diep in wijk
  - -Toegankelijkheid
- -Taak radicalisering
  - -Golfbeweging
  - -Prioriteit
  - -Neventaak
- -Taken wijkagent
  - -Adviseren
  - -Signaleren
  - -Observeren
- -Motivatie wijkagent
- -Aanwezigheid wijk
  - -Officieel
  - -Praktijk
    - -Administratie
    - -Buiten zijn
- -Contact met wijk
- -Collega wijkagenten

Communicatie

- -Algemeen
- -Voorwaarden voor contact
  - -Vertrouwensrelatie
  - -Contact serieus nemen
- -Contact (→ X →)
  - -Contact bewoners
  - -Contact familie
  - -Contact geradicaliseerde
- -Moeilijkheden
  - -Ervaren drempel
  - -Onwetendheid
  - -Zwijgcultuur
  - -Verantwoordelijkheid
  - -Wanneer informeren
  - -Geen contact met R

Observatie

- -Algemeen
  - -Indicatie ervaring
  - -Achterdocht
- -Observeren
  - -Wijk
    - -Kleding
    - -Uiterlijk
    - -Uitdelen pamfletten
    - -IS symbolen
    - -Bijwonen demonstraties
    - -Voorbereiden uitreis
    - -Ronselen
  - -Digitaal
    - -Politieke uitingen
- -Moeilijkheden
  - -Veiligheidsbewustzijn
  - -Grijs gebied
  - -Toeval
  - -Capaciteit
  - -Aanwezigheid wijk

Participatie

- -Algemeen
- -Brengcultuur
  - -Jongerenwerk
  - -Reclassering / jeugdinrichting
  - -School
  - -Moskee
  - -Overig
- -Haalcultuur
  - -Jongerenwerkwerk

- -Reclassering / jeugdinrichting
- -School
- -Moskee
- -Overig
- -Overlegstructuur
- -Signalen aandragen
- -Signalen krijgen
- -Moeilijkheden
- -Vertrouwensfunctie
- -Geen contact

Intelligence

- -Algemeen
- -Contact politie
- -Intra-organisatie contact
- -Inter-organisatie contact
- -Specialist
- -Digitaal
- -Internet
- -Systemen
- -Moeilijkheden

Opvolging informatie

- -Algemeen
- -Verwerken informatie
- -Opvolgen info
- -Contact
- -Geradicaliseerde
- -Familie
- -Observeren
- -Informatie terug krijgen
- -Moeilijkheden
- -Gevolgen registreren
- -Contact niet gewenst

Algemeen

- -Alertheid
- -Algemene rol wijkagent
- -Openheid
- -Tijdsbesteding
- -Verwachting