

INDEX

International Network for Disengagement and Exit



Statement of Purpose – for Consultation

The International Network for Disengagement and Exit (INDEX) is a collection of practitioners involved in tertiary prevention of violent extremism, all over the world. It will be the world's first professional association for practitioners working in the field of deradicalisation, disengagement, exit, and rehabilitation; and will be driven by principles of shared ownership, shared values, and human-centred design.

Consultation

We launched in September 2024 with a series of events, to which we welcomed over 70 practitioners from 30+ countries and from 4 continents. This document incorporates thoughts and feedback from those events. Throughout the rest of 2024, we are continuing a consultation period to better understand the needs of tertiary prevention practitioners, at the end of which we will incorporate INDEX as a Professional Association and fully launch. We are grateful for your input to this consultation period.

We invite you to reflect on this statement of purpose and answer the following questions:

- What do you need as a practitioner?
- How can INDEX help you?
- What should INDEX look like?
- What should INDEX do?
- How can you contribute to the development of INDEX?

For more information about INDEX and to feed into the consultation, please contact Alexander Sievers, programme director and first-line practitioner: alexander.sievers@violence-prevention-network.de

Why INDEX?

Over the last 20 years, a wide range of organisations have developed around the world that use different approaches to help people distance themselves from violent extremist ideologies, movements and behaviours:

- There are exit programmes that offer help to those who have doubts about their previous path.
- There are programmes aimed at those who do not yet have an intrinsic motivation to leave, but who are beginning to question their previous path through cooperation with these organisations.
- In diverse structures considering many different methods, an area has emerged that is making an important contribution to reducing violent extremism and thus protecting society worldwide.

Despite this remarkable development of a completely new professional field, there is no standardised training or course of study to become a deradicalisation or exit counsellor. Furthermore, there is often a lack of understanding for the sometimes very different conditions and requirements for disengagement and exit work in different countries and regions of the world. The continuous exchange of experiences, knowledge and different approaches between practitioners is urgently needed for continuous further development and professionalisation.

In addition, an exchange with actors from other professional groups and adjacent fields is necessary to ensure that best practices are implemented in existing structures. This can be better achieved if a united professional field acts together, supports each other and demonstrates the need for sustainable implementation of deradicalisation and exit approaches.

What will INDEX look like?

INDEX will be a Professional Association, incorporated in the course of 2025. It will be administered by staff from Violence Prevention Network and governed by a board. As a professional association, it will be registered as a non-profit organisation, and all profits received from membership fees, donations, sponsorships, or grants will be cycled back into the organisation to further achieve its mission. INDEX aims to be democratic, with key values, goals, activities, and prioritisation determined by members.

Its mission is: *to professionalise tertiary prevention of violent extremism*

Its starting aims are:

1. *To improve standards among members*
2. *To share knowledge and skills among members*
3. *To solve common challenges experienced by members*
4. *To support members professionally*
5. *To represent members' perspectives with other stakeholders*

INDEX is principally for tertiary prevention practitioners. It aims to define this as liberally as possible, so as to encourage all individuals and organisations, all over the world, to join. However, there are different membership tiers, based on attributes:

1. **Full Membership:** Individuals actively involved as disengagement and exit practitioners
 - Price: 150€ per calendar year (full access)
2. **Organisational Membership:** Organisations actively involved in disengagement and exit practice
 - Price: 1500€ per year (unlimited access for employees)
3. **Associate Membership:** Individuals working in the field of tertiary prevention, but not active practitioners
 - Price: 100€ per year (some activities restricted)
4. **Student/Unemployed Membership:** Individuals seeking to work in the field of tertiary preventions, but not currently employed
 - Price: 75€ per year (some activities restricted)

These membership fees are needed to ensure a minimum of technical infrastructure and organisational support. To improve accessibility, there is a 50% discount to [middle/low](#)-income countries. In addition, we intend to create a scholarship fund, to which those who cannot afford membership fees can apply.

What will INDEX do?

The International Network for Disengagement and Exit (INDEX) will meet the needs of members by:

1. Working with local, national and regional organisations and networks in the field of tertiary prevention to elevate their knowledge and skills.

We hope this to be powered by a give/take culture among members. INDEX will organise working groups, centred around themes and locations. Through these working groups, we will put on activities such as meetings, webinars, training events, and collate resources such as best practices, guidebooks, research, and relevant insights. This can include lessons learned from neighbouring fields and will prioritise practical knowledge and skills that can be applied professionally. Through this we will also create informal spaces for discussion, debate, and idea generation.

2. Supporting individuals working in this field to deliver long-term, high-quality work, while also taking care of themselves.

INDEX will organise training events and supervision sessions so that full members can discuss cases and cross-cutting themes in a safe, mutually supportive environment. We will work with members to identify key themes and needs around which we can develop bespoke training.

3. Establishing and enabling the adoption of quality standards in our field to further professionalise our sector and improve impact.

INDEX will work with members, and draw on pre-existing research, to identify quality standards that should be applicable to tertiary prevention practitioners. This is likely to include specific standards relating to information sharing, law enforcement escalation, psychosocial support, engagement with former extremists, interaction with the media, safeguarding, gender equality, and case management. We will identify which standards are universal, and which are context-specific, and seek to be the standard bearer, aiming to increase adoption of these standards by members. We will co-develop

structures to enable this, such as reporting expectations, accountability mechanisms such as accreditation or certification.

4. Providing information for those seeking new opportunities, e.g., training/employment/funding opportunities.

INDEX will create an opportunities board that all members can access and add to. This will include open job openings, funding calls, academic and vocational education courses, and consulting opportunities.

5. Working with stakeholders in other sectors to achieve better collaboration with disengagement and exit practitioners.

INDEX will advocate for our profession with key stakeholders internationally, ensuring that members have a common voice. We will facilitate the sharing of expertise to policymakers, donors, academics, law enforcement, and the private sector. We will work with members to create cross-cutting solutions with these different sectors. We hope that this can help shape policies, structures, and systems to benefit INDEX members and the tertiary prevention profession in the long term.

Who is leading INDEX?

Violence Prevention Network is a leading German non-governmental organisation with over 20 years' experience of preventing and countering (violent) extremism, employing over 130 practitioners in 10 regional offices across Germany and abroad. Violence Prevention Network has worked with over 3.000 individual cases of violent extremists (Islamist, right-wing, and other forms of violent extremists) within prisons - and many more outside of prison - to change violent behaviours and extremist mindsets and build whole-of-society partnerships geared towards prevention, disengagement, deradicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration.

Violence Prevention Network will act as the secretariat for INDEX and seek to:

1. Administer INDEX in accordance with this statement of purpose under supervision of the board
2. Inclusively convene members and build a network that meets their needs
3. Collaboratively produce products and solutions to the benefit of all members
4. Represent members' interests to multistakeholder bodies

For more information about INDEX and to feed into the consultation, please contact Alexander Sievers, programme director (alexander.sievers@violence-prevention-network.de).