

# =TOLERANCE=

Open Educational Resources  
for educating in diversity

## Dialogue space

### *Example of use*

#### **Description of the Tool**

Tracing reports of racism and terrorism in the news; establishing a space for dialogue; teaching students about cultural diversity.

Proposal for use: Vocational education at secondary level.

Target group: Class of 20 students aged 16-25, welcoming immigrants, around 80% of them were not born in Austria; mainly male.

Pedagogical method: case study

Objective: Teaching team in secondary vocational school including trainers with humanistic education, a social worker and a counsellor.

Description: The dialogue space is a useful place for drawing attention and focusing on the question of challenging discrimination and stereotypes in educational environments.

#### **The class**

Lessons for preparing examinations to obtain the Austrian compulsory school leaving certificate; courses taking place from Monday to Friday; each day the students spend around 7 hours together in class; the whole session lasts in average around 9 months to 1 year; the teaching team consists of three women. All teachers attended at least two workshops related to deradicalisation, jihadism, islamism, salafism in their past.



## **Description of the case**

A 24 year old man who has been in class for approximately 8 weeks starts to change both his external appearance (growing a long beard and suddenly wearing traditional Afghan clothes although he used to be casually Western style dressed before) and his behaviour changes drastically: he is often unconcentrated, and tired; is absent without excuse; does not demonstrate not even a shadow of interest in the lessons anymore; behaves rudely and aggressively towards his teachers, ignores and rejects instructions of the teachers; loses quickly his temper and changes from high spirits to depressions; makes strange gestures like palpitating with the hand to his heard and there upon distending his fist towards heaven. The student's Facebook profile contains a number of contents glorifying violence.

## **Involvement of teachers and educators**

They try to observe everything attentively, collect as much information as possible, exchange their personal impressions and experiences in daily meetings where several feasible theories of his behaviour are considered. They search to establish a good relationship to the student in order to be able to have a fundament for good communication and avoid situations where he could freak out. The head of project got informed.

## **Build up a network**

The head of our institution gets informed. Because of exigent circumstances (imminent danger, the above mentioned festival with thousands of visitors is taking place in a few days) a multiprofessional team of our institute's employees build a sort of "crisis squad" and start contacting all possible helping points, information centres for de-radicalisation like an organisation who is member of the European RAN – Radicalisation Awareness Network. The contracting partner who sent the student to us gets informed.

The class mates of the student get the following information: The teachers are thanking them for having passed on all information regarding suspicious occurrences. They forwarded everything to official agents who are now responsible of investigating and dealing with such cases.

## **Set up a workshop**

It is decided that the whole class visits a workshop regarding extremism and radicalisation. The workshop is held by an external organization. During this workshop our student in question can be observed without abstracting attention. The student behaves rather passively and nothing special can be noticed. During the workshop the students had the change to discuss, what happened, how they got involved, how they feel about it.

Further, with the help of our contracting partner, a contact to an external youth worker is established. He is not a designated expert on the field of radicalisation but enjoys the confidence of our contracting partner and apparently gets chosen because he comes from abroad and has Islamic background. After a first conversation with the student, this social worker ensures us that student is "not hazardous".

## **Evaluation of the learning process**

Another de-radicalisation shows a great deal of interest in the case and recommends that the teachers should download literature and worksheets etc. from website. This is material which is designed for prevention and for the use in workshops. This material was also used as a base for some discussions regarding this user case in the class. Furthermore all outcomes of the workshop were discussed again after a while in the class also to cover all open questions and to make sure that everybody was now more comfortable with this situation and also within the class.

Because the student does not fulfil the contract and fails with his school performances he needs to get suspended.

Since then, a student's workshop regarding extremism and de-radicalisation is held on a regular basis in our institute. Its target is sensitizing, awareness raising and how to react for prevention.