

DeRadicalisation
in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Reintegrate



Civic education as preventive measure and inclusionary practice

D10.3 Interactive Toolkit

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This document is available for download at <https://dradproject.com/>

About the Project

D.Rad is a comparative study of radicalization and polarization in Europe and beyond. It aims to identify the actors, networks, and wider social contexts driving radicalization, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. D.Rad conceptualizes this through the I-GAP spectrum (injustice-grievance-alienation-polarization) with the goal of moving towards measurable evaluations of de-radicalization programmes. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalization, which include a sense of being victimized; a sense of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures; and coming under the influence of "us vs them" identity formulations.

D.Rad benefits from an exceptional breadth of backgrounds. The project spans national contexts including the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, Austria, and several minority nationalisms. It bridges academic disciplines ranging from political science and cultural studies to social psychology and artificial intelligence. Dissemination methods include D.Rad labs, D.Rad hubs, policy papers, academic workshops, visual outputs, and digital galleries. As such, D.Rad establishes a rigorous foundation to test practical interventions geared to prevention, inclusion, and de-radicalization.

With the possibility of capturing the trajectories of seventeen nations and several minority nations, the project will provide a unique evidence base for the comparative analysis of law and policy as nation-states adapt to new security challenges. The process of mapping these varieties and their link to national contexts will be crucial in uncovering strengths and weaknesses in existing interventions. Furthermore, D.Rad accounts for the problem that processes of radicalization often occur in circumstances that escape the control and scrutiny of traditional national frameworks of justice. The participation of AI professionals in modelling, analyzing, and devising solutions to online radicalization will be central to the project's aims.

Preface

In the framework of the D.Rad project, WP10 – entitled Civic education as preventive measure and inclusionary practice – seeks to prevent youth radicalisation through civic education and to identify new pedagogical methods and interactive, participatory tools for building pro-social resilience to radical ideologies. We consider as ‘civic education programs’ all those initiatives of instruction that aim at affecting “people’s beliefs, commitments, capabilities, and actions as members or prospective members of communities”¹, as well as foster critical thinking and promoting “civic engagement and support democratic and participatory governance”². Such programs have been found “to help shape personal efficacy (i.e., an individual’s belief in their ability to effect change, political participation, and tolerance”³. Furthermore, “educational tools as such have proven to foster individuals’ desistance from terrorist groups and ideologies by broadening the scope of their political values, ideals, and concepts (e.g., justice, honor, freedom) and by introducing alternative perspectives and worldviews”⁴.

In D.rad’s WP10, the focus is on civic education programs that adopt a participatory approach. This means involving all participants in expressing their ideas and bringing about change. Specifically, these methods empower marginalized voices, promoting civic engagement, problem-solving, and networking. Using techniques like role-plays and interactive tools, these programs foster critical thinking, empathy, democratic literacy, active citizenship, resilience, and socio-emotional learning. Critical thinking involves making reliable judgments based on sound information. It includes steps like asking questions, gathering relevant data, and considering various perspectives. Research shows a positive link between critical thinking and personal efficacy. Empathy is vital in civic and peace education. It means understanding and resonating with others’ emotions. Pedagogical approaches like group work and cooperative tasks nurture empathy, as well as exposure to diverse choices and scenarios. Democratic literacy involves recognizing, valuing, and respecting all individuals as legitimate members of society. Non-formal education, like theatre, is a powerful way to engage communities in raising awareness and fostering democratic literacy. Active citizenship means actively participating in one’s local community with values like respect, inclusion, and assistance. Educational programs equip participants with skills and knowledge for resilient societies built on trust. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from challenges, a crucial skill in personal development against extremist ideologies. Research links resilience to pro-social behaviour and life satisfaction. Civic education fosters pro-social behaviour through empathy and voluntary actions that benefit others. Socio-emotional learning (SEL) includes five key components: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills. Through SEL, individuals understand and regulate emotions, set positive goals, show empathy, build healthy relationships, and make responsible choices. Effective

¹ Crittenden, J., Levine, P. (2018). Civic Education, in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/#pagetopright>

² Rietbergen-McCracken, J. (2018). Civic Education, in *civicus.org*. Available at https://www.civicus.org/documents/toolkits/PGX_B_Civic%20Education.pdf

³ Mouritsen, P., Jaeger, A. (2018). *Designing Civic Education for Diverse Societies: Models, Tradeoffs, and Outcomes*, Integration Futures Working Group, p. 2. Available at <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/CivicEducationDiverseSocieties-FINALWEB.pdf>

⁴ Koehler, D. (2017). *Understanding Deradicalization. Methods, tools and programs for countering violent extremism*, New York: Routledge, p. 224. See also, Horgan, J., Altier, M. B., Shortland, N., Taylor, M. (2016). Walking away: The disengagement and de-radicalization of a violent right-wing extremist, in *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*; Yehoshua, S. (2014). The Israeli experience of terrorist leaders in prison: Issue in radicalization and de-radicalisation, in Silke, A. (ed.), *Prisons, terrorism and extremism: Critical issues in management, radicalisation and reform*, pp. 144-156. London: Routledge.

SEL training leads to improved academic performance and positive attitudes. It reduces disruptive behaviours and disciplinary issues. Educators prioritize SEL through activities that encourage communication, cooperation, emotional regulation, empathy, and self-control.

Against this background, the final goal of WP10 was to foster social cohesion, democratic literacy, active citizenship and a shared sense of belonging to counteract tendencies of grievance, alienation and polarisation through the development of a participatory role-play targeting community organizations, youth centres, social/educational workers and interested citizens.

WP10 was carried out in three parallel and complementary phases:

- project partners involved in the WP (EURAC – Bolzano/Bozen, AUP – Paris, FUB – Berlin, BILGI – Istanbul and PRONI – Brcko) analysed civic education programs implemented in their countries to combat radicalisation and violent extremism in order to highlight approaches, practices and challenges that needed to be taken into account in the development of WP10's toolkit; EURAC complemented such analysis with an overall recognition of existing programmes at EU level and beyond;
- WP partners also contacted experts (academics, practitioners, NGO-leaders, public officers at the Ministry of Justice, social workers) in the field of de-radicalisation, civic-education, cultural mediation and theatrical methods to provide both feedback on challenges faced in past projects and opinions on the role-play developed in the framework of WP10;
- EURAC, assisted by project partners and external experts developed a role-play as a preventive tool for youth radicalisation; WP partners then tested the role-play in their respective countries to collect feedback on its implementation and effectiveness.

The role-play thus developed, called "In Search of the Lost Past", is a civic education game encourages participants to reflect on available choices, avoiding adverse and/or violent outcomes. It aims to enhance critical thinking skills in problem-solving and understanding diverse perspectives. Accordingly, it fosters open-mindedness and respect for diversities and alternative worldviews while expanding participants' understanding of values, ideals, and concepts like justice, honour, and freedom. Participants collectively reconstruct stories through backwards journeys, starting from possible endings and envisioning earlier events from assigned character viewpoints. Through embodying diverse profiles and exploring various choice pathways, this reverse storytelling method prompts contemplation on decisions and their nuanced repercussions. Although all stories share a common finale, participants shape unique, parallel narratives based on distinct character perspectives. This imaginative process elucidates how personal experiences shape worldviews and life trajectories. This imaginative process serves to illuminate how personal experiences contribute to the formation of worldviews and life trajectories. Post-activity discussions centre around the decisions made and their far-reaching implications, emphasizing alternative approaches to challenging issues. Stepping into different mindsets not only cultivates empathy but also fortifies critical analysis skills among participants.

"In Search of the Lost Past" serves as a dynamic platform for exploring and understanding the complex interplay of choices, perspectives, and outcomes. Reconstructing the past helps us be open to new and diverse futures.

CIVIC EDUCATION GAME

**IN SEARCH
OF THE
LOST PAST**

A Backwards
Role-Play



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**IN SEARCH
OF THE
LOST PAST**

WHAT IS A CIVIC EDUCATION GAME?

Civic education games are activities that aim to affect the beliefs, commitments, abilities, and behaviors of individuals as current or potential community members as well as foster critical thinking, encourage active participation in civic affairs, and build support for democratic and inclusive governance.

Civic education activities contribute to shape *personal efficacy*, that is, an individual's belief in his/her ability to effect positive change in society. Education tools, like civic education games, strengthen an individual's tolerance and resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism by broadening the scope of his/her political values, ideals, and concepts (e.g. justice, honor, freedom) and by introducing alternative perspectives.

THE GOALS OF “IN SEARCH OF THE LOST PAST”

- * To reflect on **available choices** in order to avoid adverse and/or violent outcomes
- * To strengthen **critical thinking** on problems and solutions, as well as the ability to understand **other perspectives**
- * To instill **open-mindedness and respect** for diversities and alternative worldviews
- * To broaden the understanding of **values, ideals, and concepts** such as justice, honor and freedom

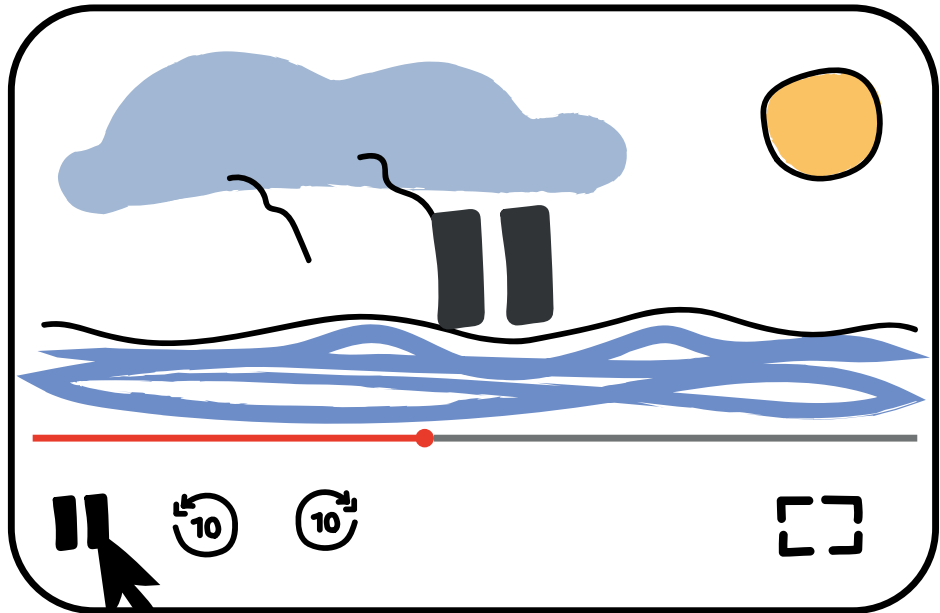
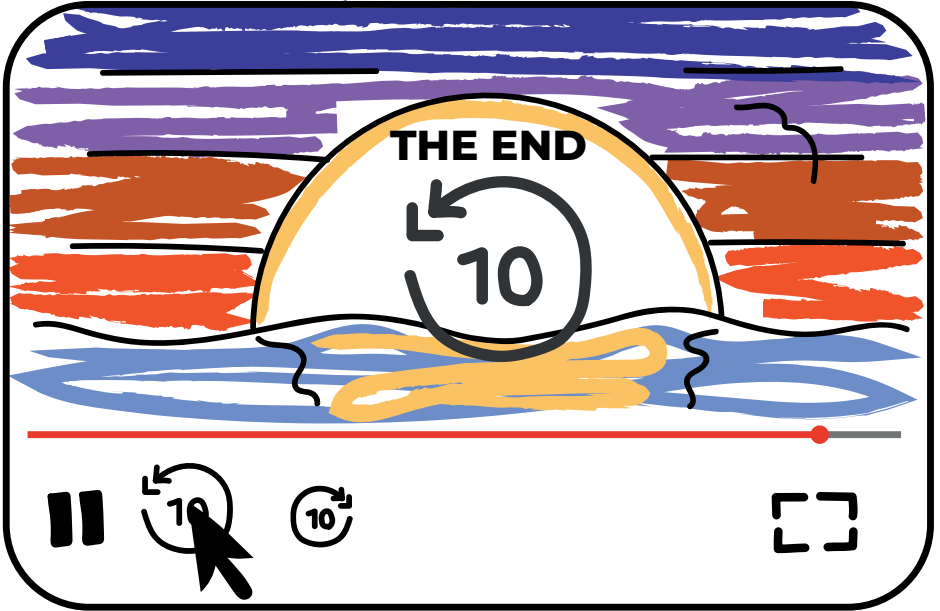
OVERVIEW OF “IN SEARCH OF THE LOST PAST”

The aim of the game is to reconstruct stories as backwards journeys, starting from a set of **Possible Endings** provided as part of the game. Participants assume the role of distinct assigned **Characters** and reconstruct their unique journeys that have led them to the chosen Possible Ending. In this way, participants create a series of **parallel stories** which, although sharing a common ending, are shaped by the distinct profiles and choices of their Characters.



For each turn, participants imagine and narrate their **story in reverse** by embodying the assigned Character's perspective, thereby envisioning their Character's **lost past** and specifying the choices made throughout the journey. The story's events, akin to **frames in a movie**, can be entirely fictional or inspired by personal experiences.

The backwards journey concludes with a **final reflection** among the real participants, focusing on the decisions made by the Characters and the diverse trajectories of their stories.



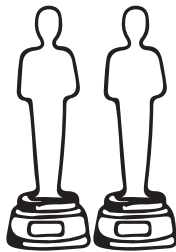
THE BACKWARDS ROLE-PLAY

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

“In Search of the Lost Past” requires **at least 2 participants and a facilitator**. There is no maximum number of participants, although with more than 25 participants it may become difficult to effectively organize and run the role-play. There are 4 Characters available. **If there are more than 4 participants, groups can be formed and assigned to a single Character**. In this case, the group should indicate a spokesperson.

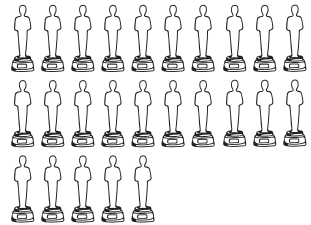
minimum

2



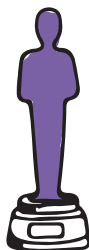
maximum

25



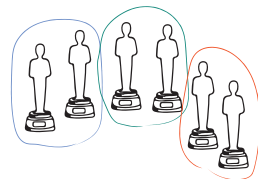
1

facilitator



4+

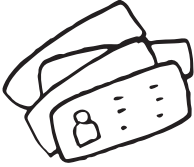
you may
group
participants



TIME FRAME

The Role-Play requires approximately **90 minutes**.

MATERIALS



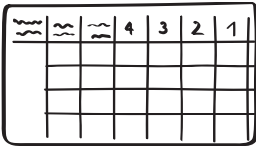
- ◆ (4) Character profiles



- ◆ (6) Possible Endings



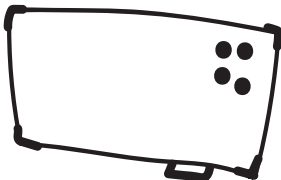
- ◆ Character's Questionnaire



- ◆ Storyboard Template



- ◆ Paper, pens
(not included)



- ◆ A whiteboard or flipchart
(not included)

BEFORE PLAYING

1. CHOOSE THE ENDING

The facilitator chooses one ending from among the six **Possible Endings** that will constitute the starting point of the backwards journey and from which participants will reconstruct their previous actions and choices. Each Possible Ending consists of a **Last frame of the story** (a fictitious event) and a **State of mind** (a feeling experienced by the participants/Characters). The facilitator selects the Possible Ending by taking into account the **context, needs and attitudes** of the group of real participants. Then, the facilitator presents the Possible Ending and, if desired, adjusts and elaborates additional details of the Last frame of the story.

2. ASSIGN THE CHARACTER

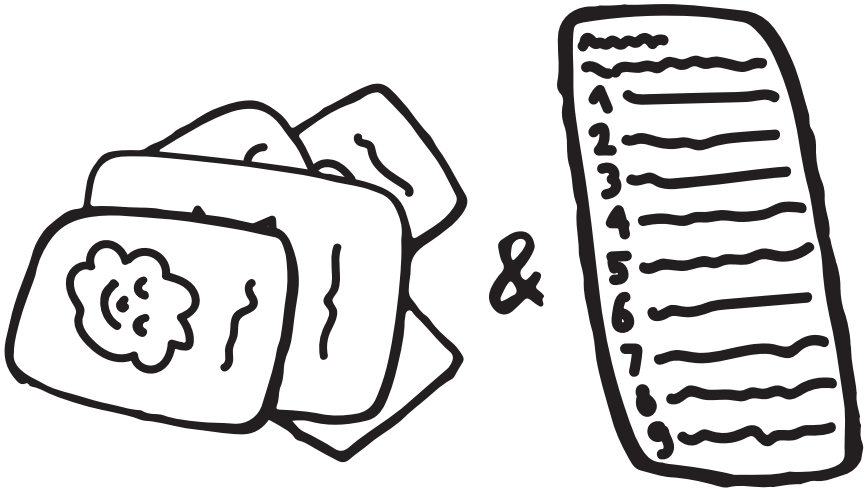
Now that the Possible Ending has been chosen, the facilitator assigns to each participant (or group of participants) one of four available Characters: **Reflective, Impulsive, Curious and Anxious**. Each Character has a particular personality profile that will guide and orient his/her behaviors, choices and decisions throughout the course of the backwards journey. The same Character cannot be assigned to more than one participant or group of participants. If there are more than four participants, they can be organized into teams and assigned to a single Character. In this scenario, the group should select a spokesperson. Note that it is not necessary to play with all 4 Characters.

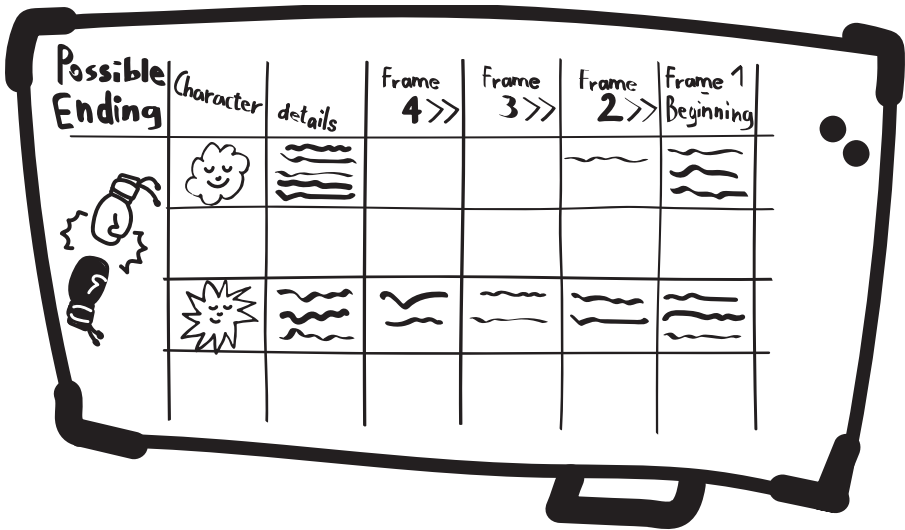


Think about
your Character!

3. DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER

Once participants or groups of participants have been assigned to a specific Character, they carefully read the information contained in the **Character Profile**. Then, they have 5-10 minutes to elaborate in greater detail on the personal features of their Characters. To help participants in describing the assigned Character, they can answer some of the questions of the **Character's Questionnaire** and keep in mind the context of the selected Possible Ending.





4. VISUALISE THE BACKWARDS JOURNEY

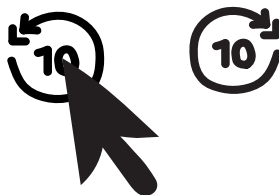
Using the **Storyboard Template**, the facilitator visualises the main elements of the role-play on a whiteboard, flipchart or sheet of paper, including the chosen Possible Ending, the Character's Profiles, and some details from the Character's Questionnaire. The sequence of frames will be filled in during the role-play.

THE ROLE-PLAY STARTS

Starting from the Possible Ending selected by the facilitator, the first participant/group explains how and why his/her Character found him/herself in this situation on the basis of his/her Character's Profile. In other words, participants **depict the previous frame of their story**.

To help participants describe this previous frame, the facilitator can pose the following questions, which can be written on the whiteboard or flipchart:

- * ***What did you do to get into such situation?***
- * ***What events immediately preceded and caused the present situation?***
- * ***Which feelings were triggered by your action?***



The facilitator encourages each participant/group to reconstruct the frame with **as many details as possible** (action, context, place, people involved, reactions, emotions, etc.). Other participants can also ask questions to better understand the choices made.



The facilitator **gathers and summarizes** the information from each frame into the storyboard, which serves as the record of the backwards journey to be used during the final discussion.

THE ROLE-PLAY CONTINUES

After the first participant/group has reconstructed his/her first frame, the second participant/group reconstructs the next frame of his/her backwards journey according to his/her Characters' profile. In this way, participants **create a series of parallel stories** or 'parallel universes' which, although sharing a common ending, are shaped by the personal features and subsequent choices of each Character.

What if I don't know how to go on...

If participants/groups struggle to describe their backwards journey, they can ask other participants for help by saying "I can't see my past!". In response, fellow participants can step in to collectively reconstruct this portion of the lost past.

*In the first frame
of my journey,
my Character...*



THE ROLE-PLAY ENDS

The backwards journeys continue until all the participants/ groups have completed **at least four turns**. Once the lost past has been reconstructed, the participants arrive at the beginning of their story. Participants figuratively take off their Characters' shoes and engage in a **final discussion** on the parallel stories. The participants, **no longer embodying their Characters**, but speaking from personal standpoints, can freely express their thoughts, ideas, and impressions developed throughout their journey.

The facilitator moderates the discussion and encourages **comparison** between the parallel stories, **points of view** and the **experiences** of the participants in order to reflect on the **varied consequences** that emerged from different **behaviors, attitudes and choices**.

The facilitator prompts the participants to consider the **connections** between the insights gained from the backwards journeys and their **own life experiences**. Note that the facilitator should plan at least 15 minutes for the final discussion.

Each other's shoes

During the concluding discussion, participants have the option to step into other Character's shoes to gain a deeper comprehension of why a particular Character made specific choices or exhibited certain behaviours. Participants can briefly reenact certain frames from the perspective of a different Character. This enables a more comprehensive understanding of the decisions made and provides an opportunity to elucidate various possibilities and alternatives that the Character may not have perceived.



... AND ACTION!

As part of the final discussion, some useful questions for reflection might be the following:

- * *What did the parallel stories have in common? How did they diverge?***
- * *How did the parallel stories reflect the different points of view of their characters?***
- * *How did you experience the role-play? Were there aspects that were surprising or uncomfortable?***
- * *What connections did you see that linked the different behaviors, attitudes, and choices with the subsequent outcomes?***



To encourage further reflections the facilitator may also raise the following questions:

- * *Had you played as yourself, would have your actions been the same? What would have changed in your backwards journey?***
- * *What was the turning point of your backwards story? Which alternative choice/action would have completely changed the ending?***
- * *Do you think the ending is fair? Given that now you know the whole story, was it also predictable?***

The observations that emerge from each participant/group are collected by the facilitator on a whiteboard or a flipchart as a conclusive synthesis of the backwards journey.

Do you want to know more?

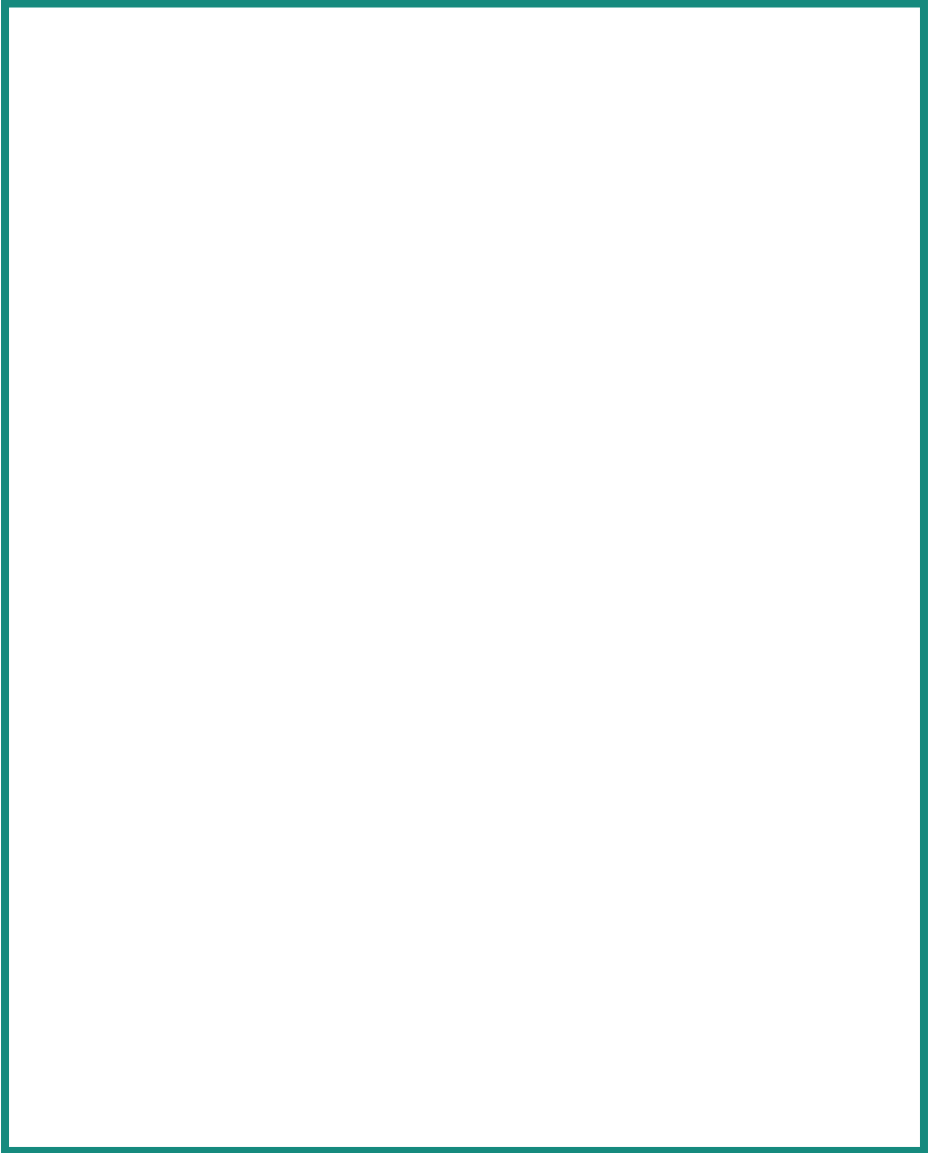
You can download the role-play “In Search of the Lost Past” and the Explanatory Notes on civic education, radicalisation, violent extremism and preventive measures at:

<https://www.eurac.edu/en/institutes-centers/institute-for-minority-rights/projects/pedagogical-tools>



Materials





The role-play “In Search of the Lost Past” is a civic education game that seeks to foster critical thinking, encourage active participation in civic affairs, and strengthen resilience to radicalisation and violent extremism. This role-play is intended for use in community organisations, youth centres, social and educational institutions. “In Search of the Lost Past” was developed within the Horizon-funded D.Rad project, a comparative study of (de)radicalisation in Europe and beyond.

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D.Rad

DeRadicalisation
in Europe and Beyond:
Detect, Resolve, Reintegrate



Istanbul
Bilgi University



AUP The American
University of Paris



APIS



FORUM
PRODUCTION | PRESENTATION



14 years +



2-25



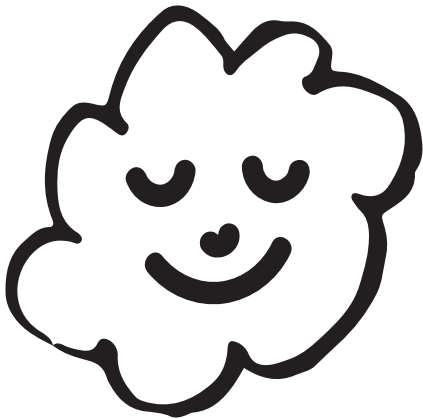
90 mins

Reflective



- Thoughtfully assesses the pros and cons of each decision from multiple perspectives.
- Frequently experiences doubts before making decisions.
- Often worries that his/her choices may be incorrect.
- Readily engages in self-questioning.
- Demonstrates a constant willingness to challenge his/her own ideas and certainties.
- Possesses a keen ability to notice details that often go unnoticed.

CHARACTER PROFILE



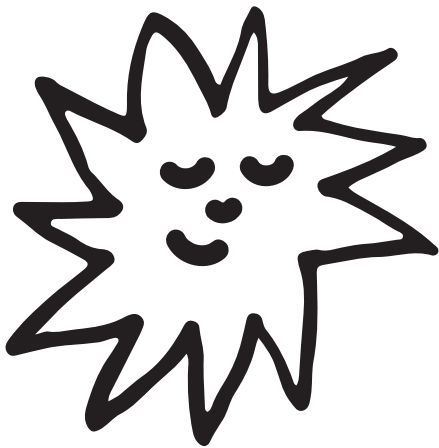
REFLECTIVE



Impulsive

- Always follows the inspiration of the moment.
- Often makes impulsive decisions.
- Prioritizes what he/she feels is necessary in the present moment.
- Embraces risk as he/she finds it useful and stimulating.
- Tends to be guided by emotions rather than rationality.
- Pays minimal attention to the effects associated with his/her choices.

CHARACTER PROFILE



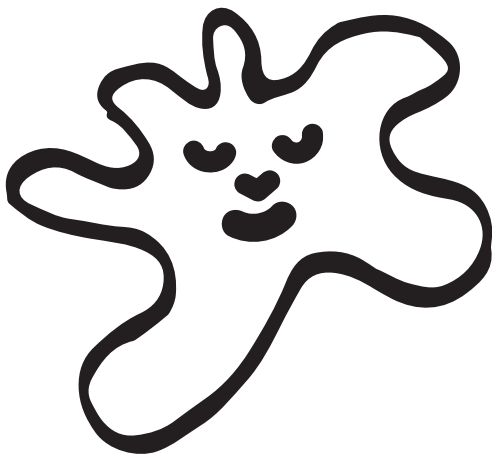
IMPULSIVE



Curious

- Always looks for something new.
- Open to experimentation.
- Actively searches for new possibilities from other perspectives.
- Fascinated by the unknown.
- Constantly seeks to expand his/her knowledge.
- Willing to take into consideration new proposals.

CHARACTER PROFILE



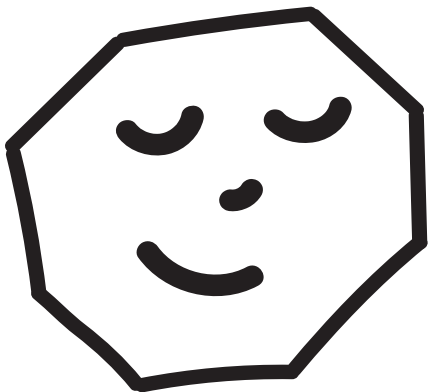
CURIOUS



Anxious

- Experiences situations with stress and concern about the consequences.
- Fears encountering unforeseen new situations.
- Frequently grapples with numerous unanswered questions when facing unfamiliar situations.
- Consistently apprehensive about negative outcomes.
- Occasionally rushes decisions to escape challenging situations.
- Frequently and persistently besieged by doubts.
- Risk averse.

CHARACTER PROFILE



ANXIOUS

WHAT HAVE I DONE?

Last frame of the story

School has just finished for the day. You are walking towards the bus stop when you see him/her there, laughing with his/her friends. It seems strange, but his/her happiness makes you sad. You run towards him/her and punch him/her in the back. He/she falls down, and you suddenly realize what you've done.

State of mind

You have lived a conflictual story that had a negative outcome for you and now you are surrounded by strong and painful emotions. You cannot change the course of events. The sense of frustration you feel is very intense, as is the regret you feel for how you have faced and managed the whole situation. You realize that you have made a mistake in the path you have taken, and you have the feeling you have overlooked other options but that now it is too late to remedy.

POSSIBLE ENDING
1



WHAT WAS I THINKING?

Last frame of the story

You are at your **office**. You get along with nearly everybody except this one colleague. You are really tired of him/her. One day, you suddenly decide to spread the lie that he/she has stolen something from the office. A few days later you find out that this colleague has been transferred to a different office and now has a lower-ranking position. You feel very sad about it. How could you do that?

State of mind

You have just lived a conflictual story that had a negative outcome for you and now you are surrounded by strong and painful emotions. You cannot change the course of events and the sense of frustration you feel is very intense, as well as the regret for how you have faced and managed the whole situation. You realize that you have made a mistake in the path you have taken, and you have the feeling that you have overlooked other options but that now it is too late to remedy.

POSSIBLE ENDING
2



IS THERE A WAY OUT?

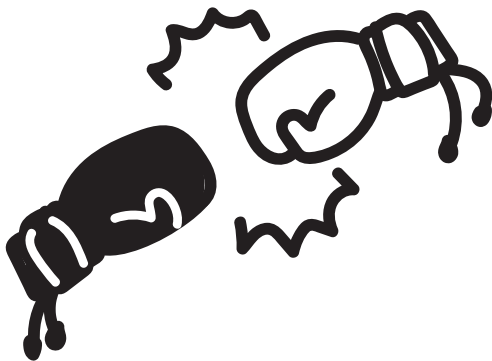
Last frame of the story

It's midnight. You and a couple of other people from your group have long been planning this attack to the headquarters of your **rivals**. You are ready to go, everything is planned. But you are thinking "is this actually too much?". You cannot cancel the attack, but you don't want to go ahead with it.

State of mind

Between tensions, conflicts and misunderstandings, it was not easy to maintain a balance. But now the situation has suddenly deteriorated, and you no longer have the possibility of making choices. You feel that you have been pushed and forced into a situation from which you would absolutely like to get out, but you cannot find a way to do so. You feel that the situation has deteriorated beyond your control, but a part of the blame is certainly also yours in an active or passive form. You feel that you are not completely innocent.

POSSIBLE ENDING
3



HAVE I GONE TOO FAR?

Last frame of the story

In the last few months, you were really into the violent ideology of a movement. You find their ideas very interesting, and you start sharing their posts on your **social networks**. Now everybody thinks you are an extremist. Suddenly, you hear the doorbell. It's the police, and they are there to question you about your online activity. Only now, you realize you may have gone too far.

State of mind

Between tensions, conflicts and misunderstandings, it was not easy to maintain a balance. But now the situation has suddenly deteriorated and you have no longer the possibility of making choices. You feel that you have been pushed and forced into a situation from which you would absolutely like to get out, but you cannot find a way to do so. You feel that situation deteriorated beyond your control, but a part of the blame is certainly also yours in an active or passive form. You feel that you are not completely innocent.

POSSIBLE ENDING
4



WERE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

Last frame of the story

You are once again running from the police because you were throwing stones at them during a **political rally**. You are tired of living these days, of running, of hiding. However, while you have thought about other ways of spreading your ideas, they always seem too weak and ineffective.

State of mind

Violent acts, once committed, cannot be erased. The consequences of our actions leave a mark outside and inside us. It is hard to understand how you got to this situation. Nevertheless, this is how things turned out, even if it was not your intention, even if you don't remember now the decisions or choices you made. You recognize that the destiny you encountered didn't favor you; instead, it only created a lot of difficulties. Often, refraining from engaging in a conflict doesn't necessarily equate to staying uninvolved.

POSSIBLE ENDING
5



WAS THIS TIME TOO MUCH?

Last frame of the story

It is an important match for your **sports team**, and you see someone mistreating a teammate. This isn't the first time it's happened. You choose to step in and confront the person hurting your friend and decide to attack him/her. Things get out of hand, and you end up hurting him/her badly. It's such a shock that even your friend can't believe what you did. But you were really tired, and this time you thought it was just too much.

State of mind

Violent acts, once committed, cannot be erased. The consequences of our actions leave a mark outside and inside us. It is hard to understand how you got to this situation. Nevertheless, this is how things turned out, even if it was not your intention, even if you don't remember now the decisions or choices you made. You recognize that the destiny you encountered didn't favor you; instead, it only created a lot of difficulties. Often, refraining from engaging in a conflict doesn't necessarily equate to staying uninvolved.

POSSIBLE ENDING
6

02 04

Character's Questionnaire

1. What's the Character's name? Does he/she have a nickname?
2. When and where was he/she born?
3. How tall is he/she? What color is his/her hair? Eye color?
4. Who are the Character's parents and what are they like? What kind of relationship does the Character have with his parents?
5. Does she/he have any siblings? What kind of relationship does the Character have with his/her brothers and/or sisters?
6. Is he/she in a romantic relationship? What is the status of this relationship?
7. Does he/she have many friends?
8. What are his/her long-term goals? What are his/her immediate ones instead?
9. What is he/she most afraid of? Why?
10. What is he/she most proud of?
11. What in his/her past is most embarrassing to him/her?
12. Is he/she religious?
13. Where does he/she live now? In the same city where he/she was born? What is his/her relationship to the place where he/she lives (does he/she love the place, would he/she like to get away...)? Does he/she live in a flat, in a villa, in a residential area, in the suburbs?
14. Does he/she care about his/her body? If yes, in what way? Does he/she go to the gym occasionally or every day? Does he/she follow a diet?
15. Is he/she satisfied with himself/herself? With his/her body? What would he/she change about himself/herself?
16. Is he/she part of a group, sports team or association?
17. Is he or she poor?

STORYBOARD TEMPLATE

To be filled from the left to the right.

In Search of the Lost Past
A backwards role-play

Possible Ending	Character	Character details	Frame 4 >>	Frame 3 >>	Frame 2 >>	Frame 1 Beginning
	Reflective					
	Impulsive					
	Curious					
	Anxious					