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ARMOUR - A radical model of resilience for young minds

PRESS RELEASE

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Tackling radicalisation and extremism through the ARMOUR Model

The ARMOUR (“A radical model of resilience for young minds”) Project, implemented with the financial support of the European Commission over a period of thirty months, explored models of intervention, capitalizing on the capacity of individuals, civil society, and institutions’ representatives to occupy public discourse and help maintaining the social cohesion within the natural differences. As a result, the ARMOUR Model was produced as a preventative approach to address the vulnerabilities which feed the breeding ground for radicalisation, providing for a set of tools for first-line practitioners.

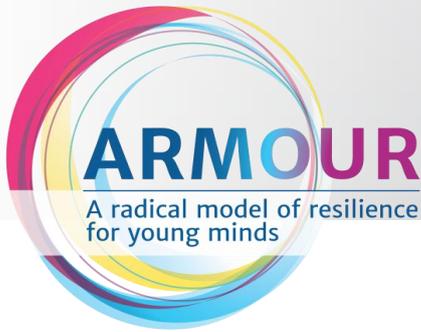
ARMOUR Project, 29 June 2021 – In 2019-2020, ARMOUR worked on building a model for the prevention of radicalisation which worked on different levels and involved multiple social actors. The in-depth analysis of the factors that contribute to the phenomena of radicalisation and societal polarisation served to validate the pre-design architecture of the ARMOUR Experimental Labs on development of individual agency, community empowerment and resilience, and moderate and proportionate state response. The methodology, curriculum and guidelines for each lab were later delivered in the form of Trainer's Manuals, available in English, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Dutch, Greek, and Bulgarian.

To ensure the sustainability of the Experimental Labs’ concepts, ARMOUR further provided:

- A three-day train-the-trainer program and accompanying manual intended for first-line practitioners like teachers, police officers, youth workers, youth care workers, therapists, etc. who encounter young people in their daily work and who strive to contribute to the prevention of radicalisation. Available on ARMOUR’s



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website www.armourproject.eu and www.firstlinepractitioners.com in 7 EU languages.

- One-day workshop scenarios with guidelines and hands-on materials for each of the seven sets of skills and competences, already presented in the labs, to support the professionals in making effective interventions aimed at young people 10-18 years of age. Available on ARMOUR's website www.armourproject.eu and www.firstlinepractitioners.com platform in 7 EU languages.
- e-Learning Course, organized in six modules and designed for first line practitioners, parents and others who are interested in the topic of radicalisation and its effective prevention. Available on www.traininghermes.eu in 7 EU languages.

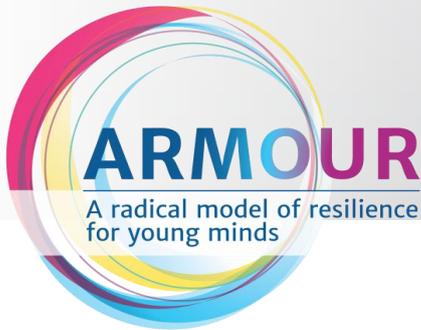
As the ARMOUR project employs social and psychological intervention to prevent and build resilience to radicalisation, an impact assessment prototype was designed to help explaining the possible evaluation strategies that can be used in relation to these approaches. It was continuously developed throughout the project resulting in a set of guidelines that practitioners can follow for the design, data collection and analysis, presentation of the findings and the follow-up when working on their own intervention programmes and impact assessment activities.

Closing the cycle, the training phase of the project not only delivered these tools but implemented the train-the-trainer programme in various set-ups providing the practitioners involved with a diverse list of considerations and exemplary approaches towards conducting trainings on their own. The practical training sessions and follow-up assessment effectively validated the ARMOUR Model in real life. Participants' feedback was very positive and many professionals stated that the training programme helped them not only to better understand the diverse radicalisation phenomena but also to develop skills for recognising and supporting vulnerable people. In addition, many commented that the usefulness of some themes and exercises was not limited to young people or to the prevention of the radicalisation process and could further support their day-to-day professional interactions.

Engaging with national professional organisations and competent authorities to structurally embed the ARMOUR concepts and materials into schools' or professional training curricula could guarantee further sustainability of ARMOUR's outcomes.

For more information on the use of the ARMOUR Model in practice, please visit www.armourproject.eu.





The ‘A radical model of resilience for young minds’ project – ARMOUR, aims to address societal polarization by providing a unique model for strengthening resilience of individuals, communities and vulnerable groups (such as children, youth, etc.) to polarisation, and promoting interaction and cooperation between different local actors from public sectors that specialise in working with vulnerable groups in preventing extremism. ARMOUR seeks cost-effectiveness and accessibility of its model by focusing not only on the nature of the model itself but also on how it is being implemented.

Behind the ARMOUR project (01/2019 – 06/2021) is a consortium made up of 9 entities from 8 different countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, and Spain.

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Contact:

Alexandra Tsvetkova, LIBRe Foundation	Javier Ruipérez, Euro-Arab Foundation for Higher Studies
ARMOUR Dissemination Team	ARMOUR Project Coordinator
office@armourproject.eu	proyectos2@fundeia.org
00359 885 038 35	0034 958 206 508
https://armourproject.eu	https://armourproject.eu

