

Media Interaction to Prevent Violent Extremism (MIPE)

Abstract:

Violent extremism and group-hatred – ultimately, terrorism – is on the rise among at-risk young people throughout Europe, and globally. The Internet, (social) media, and sub-cultural fiction narratives are prime recruiting platforms. Youth workers, teachers, and (media) educators are at loss; additionally, academia – the humanities, in particular, face painful allegations of being of little help for first-line practitioners.

MIPE's fundamental research approach aims to identify how fictional media-based interventions could strengthen susceptible young people's resilience against – or persuade them to leave – violent extremist environments (e.g., militant Jihadism and neo-Nazism). MIPE asks (a) how these persons use – and mentally interact with – their chosen fiction narratives (films, novels, song lyrics, etc.) to develop their identities and cope with conflict and psycho-social challenges, (b) which "impact potentials" these narratives carry, and (c) which principles/tools of media pedagogical work can facilitate personal development.

Media Interaction Research will employ novel methods of (a) in-depth biographical reader/viewer research, (b) interactional fiction text analysis, (c) media experience interviewing, and (d) research on social/therapeutic interventions. Our research approach explores the intersections of media/culture studies (narratology, linguistics), biography research, psycho-trauma/therapy studies, and criminology. Humanities' inter-disciplinarity will greatly benefit, as MIPE pursues inter-methodological research on fiction texts, persons and pedagogical interventions.

MIPE will (a) define and probe its research design, (b) produce exemplary case studies on at-risk young people's mental fiction media interaction, (c) create and test manuals/trainings for (1) researchers and (2) teachers and youth workers, and (d) begin building an *European Centre of MIPE Competency* – emphasizing on east and south (HU, GR).