

The Multiculturalism Program and Radicalization
ISSUE BRIEF

<p>1. Policy Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to explain CIC's policy objectives on the issue of radicalization and explore possible programming directions, including through the Multiculturalism Program.
<p>2. Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the Multiculturalism Program approaches the issue of radicalization as part of its Program objective of building an integrated, socially-cohesive society. Identify potential links with other CIC branch policies and activities.
<p>3. Drivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada's changing demographics, with increased cultural and religious diversity, is challenging Canadian social cohesion due to, for example, gaps in equality of opportunity and lack of inter-cultural and inter-faith understanding, both of which can contribute to racism and discrimination, social exclusion, marginalization, and radicalization. Multiculturalism Program's 2008 priorities included addressing radicalization, with a focus on youth at-risk. Radicalization in Canada, whether it is non-violent or violent, has had a high level of media, public, and government attention since 9-11. As a result, GoC departments and agencies and those of foreign governments are seeking greater cooperation to effectively understand and address radicalization, with emphasis on the risks associated with violent extremism.
<p>4. Strategic context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GoC currently lacks an all-of-government policy framework to address "radicalization". However, the Citizenship and Multiculturalism Branch, given its mandate and objectives, addresses non-violent radicalization through the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new objectives of the Multiculturalism Program, specifically working with Canadians to build an integrated, socially-cohesive society by supporting initiatives designed to increase civic memory and pride, respect for core democratic values, and inter-cultural and inter-faith understanding. The Citizenship Action Plan and the GoC's priority of strengthening citizenship rights and responsibilities. These objectives and initiatives support the proposed Program Priority Architecture (PAA) Strategic Outcome 3: Newcomers and citizens participate to their full potential in fostering an integrated society.
<p>5. Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Multiculturalism Program approaches radicalization as primarily a socio-psychological phenomenon. The Program focuses on the type of non-violent radicalization that may create challenges to social cohesion in Canada in terms of adversely impacting the ability of all Canadians, particularly youth, to participate to their full potential in fostering an integrated society. Funding initiatives focussing on early prevention and individual/community support, the Program complements other GoC initiatives designed to address radicalization in its various manifestations. No legislative or regulatory changes are anticipated.
<p>6. Considerations</p> <p><u>Operational:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance intradepartmental coordination to identify overlaps and gaps. Some of these may have arisen from the change in the machinery of government in light of the transition of the Multi program to CIC. <p><u>Conceptual/Policy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to clearly identify correct terminology, roles, and resources (and limitations), e.g. non-violent religious radicalization vs violent religious radicalization; Multiculturalism Program/CIC's mandate vs OGD's mandates (PS, RCMP, etc.), the latter whom are primarily focused on short-term objectives related to addressing violent extremism Ensuring a balanced approach that does not focus or, in some cases, further, marginalize specific communities and respects individual and collective contexts. Recognition of the potential intersection of many factors including identity, grievances, religion, ideology, social networks, race, age, economic opportunity, relationships with authorities, international events and conflicts, technology, etc. Recognition that the majority of "radicalized" individuals are generally well integrated socio-economically. Extent to which this issue is related to newcomers and/or established Canadians and potential impact on CIC's policies and programming on radicalization. Research on radicalization has increased in recent years, and the GoC's understanding of the issue(s) has evolved as a result. No resource requirements are identified.
<p>7. Consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations are necessary with CIC branches and OGDs involved in security, e.g. DoJ, Public Safety, RCMP, and other issues that touch on CIC's approach to radicalization, e.g. PCH, HRSDC. The Multiculturalism Program engaged its regional offices on the issue of radicalization in late 2008 and early 2009.
<p>8. Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of Deck to Policy Committee
<p>9. Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the most strategic role for the Multiculturalism Program to address radicalization within CIC? How can ongoing initiatives be rendered more effective? Are there policy initiatives in other branches and OGD's that need to be considered, e.g. Selection, Settlement, liaison with CBSA, HRSDC, PCH? What can we learn from these initiatives? Given attribution challenges related to this issue, how can the Multiculturalism Program and the Department demonstrate effectiveness of its programs?