

RESOURCES TO COMBAT EXTREMISM: IMPACT STUDY REPORT

A review of rapid response challenges for prevention practitioners in Germany & the United States



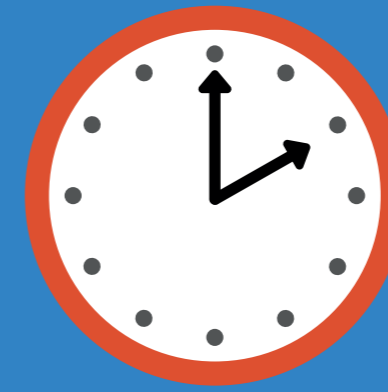
KEY FINDINGS

It took less than **10 minutes** for activists, small business owners, and government officials to acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to address issues of extremism.

- Significant need for these resources was confirmed when participants asked about previous experiences with alleged radicalized individuals or extremist groups. **53% of activists, 47% of business owners, and 40% of local government officials** indicated that they had previous experience with these groups.
- Only **31% of activists and local government officials** said they felt prepared to handle a situation with extremists before reading their audience-specific resource. Conversely, **42% of small business owners** said they felt prepared to manage such a situation.
- Participants greatly improved their knowledge, awareness, and understanding of extremism and extremists after reading their respective audience-specific resources. All three groups - **Activists (+11%), small business owners (+8%), and local government officials (+12%)** - saw significant increases in their understanding of extremism.
- Participants gained the skills to confidently use the strategies and mitigation techniques they learned in practice. Compared to how they felt before reading the guide, after having read the guide...
 - Activists are significantly more confident that they can calm a situation with counter-protestors.
 - Small business owners are significantly more confident that they can effectively

engage someone who is promoting hate speech, conspiracy theories, or extremist ideas.

- Local government officials are significantly more confident they can provide recommendations to government agencies about how to stay safe at mass gatherings.
- Top 4 aspects of the resources audiences rated as most valuable:
 1. "Got me thinking about different situations I might be in."
 2. "Strategies to use when dealing with extremists."
 3. "The list of additional resources was helpful."
 4. "Getting more information about extremists."
- The resources were seen as useful and well-tailored to the audiences. Each group rated the resources as useful and well-tailored to their work/life: **Activists (63% useful, 64% well-tailored), small business owners (63% useful, 55% well-tailored), and local government officials (50% useful, 49% well-tailored).**
- The resources were seen as comprehensive and sufficient. Each group reported that their resource did not need additional information, and would not like to see anything removed from the resource: **Activists (82% nothing to add, 93% nothing to remove), small business owners (78% nothing to add, 92% nothing to remove), and local government officials (83% nothing to add, 97% nothing to remove).**



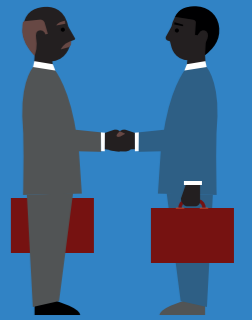
It took less than **10 minutes** for activists, small business owners, and government officials to acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to address issues of extremism.



53% **ACTIVISTS**
HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH EXTREMISTS



47% **BUSINESS OWNERS**
HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH EXTREMISTS



40% **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**
HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH EXTREMISTS



31% **ACTIVISTS**
FELT PREPARED TO HANDLE EXTREMISTS BEFORE READING



42% **BUSINESS OWNERS**
FELT PREPARED TO HANDLE EXTREMISTS BEFORE READING



31% **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**
FELT PREPARED TO HANDLE EXTREMISTS BEFORE READING



+11% **ACTIVISTS**
SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN UNDERSTANDING OF EXTREMISTS



+8% **BUSINESS OWNERS**
SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN UNDERSTANDING OF EXTREMISTS



+12% **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**
SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN UNDERSTANDING OF EXTREMISTS

The resources were seen as useful and well-tailored to the audiences.



63%

ACTIVISTS
FOUND THE RESOURCES USEFUL



64%

ACTIVISTS
FOUND THE RESOURCES WELL-TAILORED



The resources were seen as comprehensive and sufficient.



82%

ACTIVISTS
HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO THE RESOURCES



93%

ACTIVISTS
HAD NOTHING TO REMOVE FROM THE RESOURCES



63%

BUSINESS OWNERS
FOUND THE RESOURCES USEFUL



55%

BUSINESS OWNERS
FOUND THE RESOURCES WELL-TAILORED



78%

BUSINESS OWNERS
HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO THE RESOURCES



92%

BUSINESS OWNERS
HAD NOTHING TO REMOVE FROM THE RESOURCES



50%

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
FOUND THE RESOURCES USEFUL



49%

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
FOUND THE RESOURCES WELL-TAILORED



83%

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO THE RESOURCES



97%

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
HAD NOTHING TO REMOVE FROM THE RESOURCES



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Given the discrepancy between the German and American responses to hate speech, disinformation, conspiratorial thinking, and violent political radicalization, it is no surprise that Germany has already developed many thoughtful, audience-specific resources for managing violent extremist groups. Resources that address violent extremism in Germany have been developed for audiences that span civil society, private industry, and social-public spaces. This project will help develop resources - infographics, pamphlets, short guides - that will give small business owners, local government agencies, and community activists/organizers information and strategies for interacting with hate groups, extremists, and various violent-radicalized organizations.

In partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS), this report represents the culmination of a process wherein researchers at the Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL) identified German resources that target audiences and situations not typically addressed by those developed in the United States. Resources identified focused on how to manage mass gatherings that attract a large influx of White Supremacist patrons, how to advocate for a member historically targeted and marginalized groups, and how activists can prepare for potential violence and counter protests at community events. Researchers at PERIL selected, translated, and modified these German resources to address American audiences dealing with far-right extremist populations across civil society. Once developed, these resources were then assessed and evaluated for their ability to (a) increase the subject's knowledge, awareness, and understanding of extremism, strategies to combat it, and situations where subjects might encounter extremist content; (b) bolster their confidence and willingness to engage with someone about extremism;

and (c) determine how effective and useful the resource is for the specific audiences that it was developed for, i.e. activists-organizers, employees and small business owners, and local government officials.

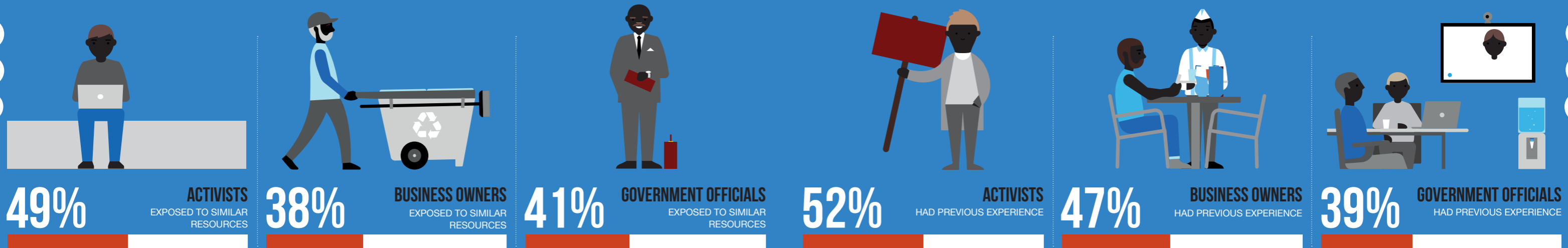
The resources were then assessed by collecting quantitative and qualitative survey data for each population, utilizing pre-test/post-test data analysis to determine the impact of the resource on its audience, as well as evaluating open-ended qualitative responses from each population regarding the efficacy and utility of each resource for each group. Overall, the results suggest that the resources developed for this project are effective in increasing knowledge and understanding of extremism and extremists groups for all three populations. In addition, results suggest that the resources developed improve a subject's willingness to engage and intervene on issues of extremism, and were found to be valuable and well-received resources by activists, small business owners, and local government officials.

This collaborative project between RLS and PERIL provides evidence of each tool's effectiveness in better equipping the target audiences with the skills and knowledge to recognize risk and respond to extremism in their own environments, allowing community members to become better informed and empowered to engage meaningfully in their local environments in the face of rising hate.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROSA LUXEMBURG FOUNDATION (RLS), THIS REPORT REPRESENTS THE CULMINATION OF A PROCESS WHEREIN RESEARCHERS AT THE POLARIZATION AND EXTREMISM RESEARCH AND INNOVATION LAB (PERIL) IDENTIFIED GERMAN RESOURCES THAT TARGET AUDIENCES AND SITUATIONS NOT TYPICALLY ADDRESSED BY THOSE DEVELOPED IN THE UNITED STATES.



PROJECT IMPLICATIONS



Said they had ever read a resource that discussed extremism, radicalization, and/or hate groups

Said they had had previous experiences with radicalized individuals or groups

The **Rosa Luxemburg Foundation**, in partnership with the **Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab**, collaborated on this project to equip American audiences with tools, resources, and guides similar to those developed in Germany for addressing extremism and extremists in civil society. The concept behind this project is that these resources and guides can provide specific audiences within civil society with knowledge, skills, and tools to effectively prevent or respond to individuals who are spreading misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and/or are threatening or engaging in violence.

Overall, this project was a resounding success. Individuals from all three groups – **Activists-Organizers, Small Business Owners, and Local Government Officials** – reported significant increases in their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of extremism/extremists; significant increases in their confidence, ability, and willingness to engage with individuals who are displaying signs of extremism; and reported that these resources encouraged them to think about situations and circumstances where they might have to use these newfound concepts and skills. And all this was accomplished in less than **10 minutes** of respondents in each group reading the resources developed. An important component of this project is that the intervention - reading the resource itself - need not be a long, tedious training program. These resources have created significant changes in people's attitudes and understanding after only a short exposure to ideas and behaviors related to extremism and radicalization.

American civil society is bereft of resources, guides, and tools to address radicalized extremist groups and individuals in their work and in their personal lives. Less than half of individuals in the three groups reported having ever encountered a resource like the ones created for them. Activists-Organizers reported the most exposure - with **49% said they had ever read a resource that discussed extremism, radicalization, and/or hate groups**; however, only **38% of small business owners** and **41% of local government officials** said they had ever encountered that type of resource before. Given how few people in this study had ever read such a resource, and how many subjects have had previous experiences with radicalized individuals or groups (**Activists-Organizers = 52% had previous experience, Small Business Owners = 47% had previous experience, Local Government Officials = 39% had previous experience**), these types of resources are clearly needed and actively fill a void in civil society.

A promising aspect of this type of work is that it can only be refined and improved upon as the resources become more tailored to each population's needs. The audience-specific nature of these resources are a particularly valuable characteristic; resources that feel too general or broad often lose the interest of their audience, because they feel like they can not take their newly learned lessons or apply skills to their life circumstances. However, when these resources are tailored and adapted to their specific job, role, or situation, subjects begin to imagine themselves in these circumstances and can tie their own lived experiences to the information found in the resource. The subjects feel seen and understood, because they can see their potential concerns or problematic situations reflected in the resource. Knowing that tailored effective actions and behaviors to their circumstances improves confidence in utilizing those skills and abilities. It's not enough to increase awareness and understanding, we also need subjects to feel capable of implementing these skills and abilities in their work lives and personal lives.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

There were a few important improvements that subjects noted when assessing the resources. The first and most common suggestion was to clarify the role of police in dealings with extremists. The German-versus-American context is very salient with regards to this topic of police and securitized/carceral responses to extremism. The American political and social histories of law enforcement are fraught and make relying on their help complicated; the police can still play a role when reporting victimization by violent extremists, but how, when, and under what circumstances is more complicated than the German resources contend with. Determining the role that police should play in a given situation is dependent on levels of community trust in police, and dependent on granular specifics of when and where extremism and radicalization are legally considered threats, which goes beyond the scope of these brief, condensed resources.

Brevity was a lauded characteristic of each resource, but audiences wanted more concrete examples and real-world situations where members of their group successfully dealt with radicalized individuals. Some subjects also wanted to bystander intervention and de-escalation strategies to be provided within the resource. These skills and trainings can be included in future resource lists linked at the end of the guide. Finally, audiences wanted information about digital safety and ways to protect themselves as individuals, as well as organizations/institutions, from online harassment, doxxing, and other forms of digital aggression.

CONCLUSION

In summary, RLS and PERIL co-collaborated on a project to bring tailored, audience-specific resources to activists, business owners, and government officials who need information and skills to manage situations with extremists and radicalized groups. These resources were selected, translated, and adapted from a German framework and transformed into an American context.

These resources targeted distinct layers of civil society, and focused on improving knowledge and skills acquisition. The goal is to help individuals and institutions prevent situations with extremists from occurring in the first place, and to help prepare individuals and institutions to manage situations once extremists have arrived on the scene. The three resources developed for Activists-Organizers, Small Business Owners, and Local Government Officials have been assessed and their effectiveness demonstrated empirically.

This is only one step in a larger process of developing targeted guides, toolkits, and resources to equip all levels of civil society with the information and capability to prevent and intervene when disinformation, conspiracy theories, and hate incidents occur in their work and in their life.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

This section outlines how we identified and chose the resources, how we designed the assessment of the resources, how we reached potential reviewers, and how we assessed the results.

RESOURCE SEARCH STRATEGY

The resources desired for this project were ones that provided advice to three targeted groups: local government officials, activists and organizers, and small business owners and their employees. To accomplish this task, we used google.de to search for the German resources using combinations of the following keywords: Rechstextremisten, Reschsextremismus, Geschaeft, Rat, "was tun", Hilfe, Neo-Nazi, Wortergreifungsstrategie, Buergermeister, Gewerkschaft, Restaurant, Hotel, Gastronomie, Handlungskonzept, Kommunen, Ratgeber, Nazis, Extremismus bekaempfen, Gaststaette, and Buchhandlung.

Once the resources were identified, we reviewed whether the host organization published other relevant resources. If resources included a bibliography, they were also reviewed for any other relevant publications. Finally, we reviewed various resources that local Mobile Beratungen advertised as their own or featured under their recommended resource lists.

INITIAL SELECTION STRATEGY

These online searches led to a range of resources (n = 53), some of which were local variants of a regional concept. We first selected resources based on uniqueness to avoid duplicates. Next, we prioritized resources which offered practical advice over research reports. While research reports are valuable contributions to the field, the nature of the recommendations we are trying to provide in these resources, i.e., functional, pragmatic, real-world advice, dictates that we translate and adapt resources that are actionable for specific audiences targeted by extremists. We reviewed all resources and rated them on applicability, practicality, translatability, and uniqueness. We selected those which rated highest on all these metrics for translation.

CATEGORIZATION PROCESS

The category Resources for Local Government Officials is the broadest of the three groups, spanning resources that target officials working in civil society or local government, to help local officials institute policies that will protect their communities from targeted harassment, disruption, and inadvertently providing a platform for hate speech or extremist recruitment.

Categorizing resources aimed at Small Business Owners is the most straight-forward of the three categories; these are resources that provide information and guidance to clubs, bars, hotels, restaurants, or any privately owned company that offers services to the public. The resource should be designed to encourage thoughtful reflection about how the business can protect itself, its customers, and the public from harassment and exploitative practices by hate groups. That could be providing guidance on creating a business contract that explicitly protects the company if they must revoke a group's application for use or tips for de-escalating a situation where a gathering could become violent.

Finally, the category Activists, Organizers, and Everyday Life denotes resources that address individuals who come upon hate speech or organized extremism as they themselves

are organizing community actions, protests, boycotts, political or social events, are walking down the street, taking public transportation, or are a customer at a concert, restaurant, or outdoor activity. The resource for this category should help people who are not witnessing extremist behavior while acting in a professional/work capacity, who nevertheless would like to address hate speech and extremism happening in their midst.

These three categories cover resources that provide specific information to targeted groups on how to manage threats from far right and extremist groups (applicable), they are written at a level that makes them accessible to non-academic audiences (translatable), and they provide interventions and insights that can be directly applied to these contexts (practical), and have minimal overlap between each other (uniqueness).

We selected the highest quality resources (n = 6) from the total (n = 53) selected for translation and adaptation. Our approach was not to directly translate any single resource, but to create a new, translated, and adapted resource tool for each category, drawing on the resources we have identified as relevant, well-designed, and of high quality.

THESE THREE CATEGORIES COVER RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO TARGETED GROUPS ON HOW TO MANAGE THREATS FROM FAR RIGHT AND EXTREMIST GROUPS (APPLICABLE), THEY ARE WRITTEN AT A LEVEL THAT MAKES THEM ACCESSIBLE TO NON-ACADEMIC AUDIENCES (TRANSLATABLE), AND THEY PROVIDE INTERVENTIONS AND INSIGHTS THAT CAN BE DIRECTLY APPLIED TO THESE CONTEXTS (PRACTICAL), AND HAVE MINIMAL OVERLAP BETWEEN EACH OTHER (UNIQUENESS).



TRANSLATION / ADAPTATION PROCESS

The translation and adaptation process requires synthesizing multiple existing resources in each category, distilling them down to their essential features for our three target audiences (Activists-Organizers, Small Business Owners, Local Government Officials), and removing any Germany-specific content. Many of the resources selected had advice and legal strategies specific to the German social, political, and legal context that was inapplicable to our American audiences.

A native German-speaking graduate student researching extremism at PERIL was tasked with translating the resource and distilling its content for each of the six resources. Once the resource was translated into English and distilled down, the PERIL research team adapted and reframed the content for American audiences in each category. Adaptation of the resource considers who the target audience is, what reason they would have for seeking out resources on far-right extremism and violent hate groups, and what is the most likely situation they would find themselves in.

SURVEY DESIGN

To test whether these resources would have the desired impact in the U.S. context, we designed a quantitative assessment that evaluated the resources on three broad criteria: the resource's ability to increase knowledge, the resource's ability to motivate behavior, and how well-tailored the resource is to its specific audience. The survey included a 5-question pre-test assessment that would give us an understanding of how much previous relevant knowledge and experience the participants already had about extremism/extremists. These questions included whether participants had seen similar resources, whether they had any direct experience with rightwing extremists, whether they feel prepared to manage

situations with extremists and, if applicable, whether they have any rules, guidelines, or strategies in place to protect themselves against right-wing extremists' attacks when they organize events.

For each audience, we designed five more questions to assess whether they had knowledge, awareness, or understanding of extremism or extremists. Examples of specific knowledge-based questions include strategies used by extremists to recruit people or gain access to public/private event spaces, the radicalization process, ways to keep yourself and others safe from extremist groups, and what to report to authorities in case you are witness to violence/harassment.

We also assessed people's willingness to act in case of disruption by far-right extremists. Questions that assessed this behavioral willingness included questions about how to advise people to stay safe in the case of extremist counter-protesters; their willingness to engage to calm a situation if a protest or event is disrupted by an extremist group; their confidence and willingness to engage with someone expressing conspiracy theories; and finally, whether they would know how to report any incidences to public authorities.

Then, activists, business owners, and local government employees were given the opportunity to answer these same questions again after having read the resource. We re-administered the questions measuring the willingness to change behavior and the audience-specific knowledge/awareness questions. This permitted us to conduct a pre-and post-test to evaluate the impact the resource had on participants' knowledge, willingness, and confidence in their ability to react to right-wing extremists.

Additionally, we concluded with questions that measured the participants' assessment of the resource itself. This post-test assessment included 8 questions on whether the participants found the resource useful, and if so, what they found useful. We also asked whether the resource is applicable and well-tailored to their needs and whether they would like it shortened or expanded. We also inquire whether they learned new information about extremists.

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Data collection took place in July 2022. For the survey, we used a recruitment survey platform called Prolific. We recruited a minimum of n=155 for each audience and paid respondents \$1.80 as compensation. We pre-screened each group to ensure we are targeting the right people. For example, for Activists-Organizers, we asked them if they had ever participated in a boycott or political action of any kind; for Small Business Owners, we asked if they currently own a business, and for Local Government Officials, we asked if the subjects worked in state or local government.

We had **842 total participants respond to the study, 379 of whom were activists, 228 of whom were local government employees and 235 of whom were small business owners.** After we cleaned the data, we had **165 surveys from activists, 198 from government employees and 158 from small business owners.**

STATISTICAL EVALUATION

To quantitatively assess the impact of the resource on knowledge and behavior intention, we conducted a pre-and post-test assessment using paired-samples t-tests on each of the three audiences - Activists-Organizers, Small Business Owners, and Local Government Officials. We used Prolific to recruit subjects, used Qualtrics to collect the data, and used STATA to conduct the data analysis. Our survey also included open-ended questions to collect qualitative data as well, which we evaluated in Qualtrics.

We had 842 total participants respond to the study



379

ACTIVISTS
RESPONDED TO STUDY



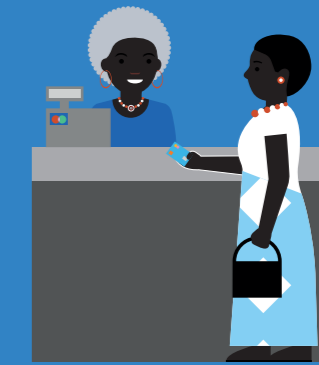
165

ACTIVISTS
RETURNED SURVEYS



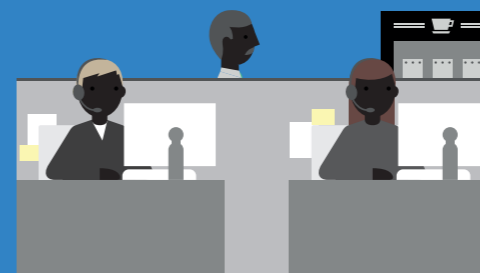
228

BUSINESS OWNERS
RESPONDED TO STUDY



198

BUSINESS OWNERS
RETURNED SURVEYS



235

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
RESPONDED TO STUDY



158

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
RETURNED SURVEYS

156 activists
took the survey.
The average time
that activists spent
reading the resource
was **9** minutes.



APPENDIX B: RESULTS AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

ACTIVISTS-ORGANIZERS

156 activists took the survey. The average time that activists spent reading the resource was 9 minutes.

53% of activists had a previous experience with extremists. Before they read the resource, only **31%** said they felt prepared to manage situations with extremists, with **2%** saying 'definitely yes' and **28.5%** saying 'probably yes'. **44%** said they did not feel prepared, with **10%** indicating they were 'definitely' not prepared, and **34%** indicating they were 'probably not prepared'. **25.5%** indicated that they were uncertain whether they were prepared. **48%** had read a resource guide that discussed extremism previously, while **38%** indicated that this was their first time reading such a resource.

After reading the resource, respondents showed **11%** improvement at the **99%** statistical significance in measuring knowledge, awareness, and understanding from before to after reading the guide. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score recommendations from pre-test ($m = 0.75$, $SD = .2$) to post-test ($m = 0.86$, $SD = .16$). The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(165) = 6.90$, $p < .001$]

The resource also increased the ability of activists to provide safety recommendations. The average change was **29%**. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the ability to provide recommendations from pre-test ($m = 2.38$, $SD = .99$) to post-test ($m = 3.07$, $SD = .77$). The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .01$ level [$t(165) = 9.40$, $p < .001$]

Moreover, the resource increased the confidence of activists that they would be able to remain calm in a situation, where they would be faced with counter-protesters by **16%**. Once again, the t-test was significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(165) = 5.40$, $p < .001$] with an improvement from pre-test ($m = 2.47$, $SD = 1.05$) to post-test ($m = 2.87$, $SD = .88$). Similarly, activists' confidence that they would be able to effectively engage with someone promoting hate speech, conspiracy theories, or extremist ideas increased by **14%**. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the ability to provide recommendations. The effect showed an increase from the pre-test ($m = 2.48$, $SD = .96$) to post-test ($m = 2.81$, $SD = .87$), which was significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(165) = 5.50$, $p < .001$].

Finally, **63% of activists** found this resource very useful or extremely useful. Impressively, **64%** also indicated that the resource is applicable and tailored to their work and life. Three aspects were listed as most helpful: **28% of activists** lauded the opportunity to think through different situations, in which they may find themselves. Secondly, **26% of activists** said the resource gave them strategies to try when faced with extremists. Finally, **24% of activists** appreciated getting more information about extremists.

The findings also indicate that activists feel more prepared to respond to real-life situations. **73% of activists** indicated they learned things about extremism/extremists that will help them respond, should they be faced with extremists in the future. **82% of activists** said they learned useful strategies for dealing with extremists.

Activists also rated the resource as comprehensive, yet succinct. **82% of activists** said there was no additional information they'd like added to the resource, and **93% of activists** would not like to see anything removed from the resource.



53% **ACTIVISTS**
HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH EXTREMISTS



31% **ACTIVISTS**
FELT PREPARED TO MANAGE SITUATIONS WITH EXTREMISTS



2% **ACTIVISTS**
DEFINITELY YES TO BEING PREPARED TO MANAGE SITUATIONS



16% **ACTIVISTS**
FELT ABLE TO FACE COUNTER-PROTESTORS CALMLY



+14% **ACTIVISTS**
GAINED CONFIDENCE TO ENGAGE WITH EXTREMISTS



63% **ACTIVISTS**
FOUND RESOURCE VERY OR EXTREMELY USEFUL



25.5% **ACTIVISTS**
PROBABLY YES TO BEING PREPARED



44% **ACTIVISTS**
DIDNT FEEL PREPARED TO MANAGE SITUATIONS



10% **ACTIVISTS**
DEFINITELY NOT PREPARED TO MANAGE SITUATIONS



64% **ACTIVISTS**
INDICATED RESOURCE IS APPLICABLE TO THEIR LIFE



28% **ACTIVISTS**
LAUDED OPPORTUNITY TO THINK THROUGH DIFFERENT SITUATIONS



26% **ACTIVISTS**
FELT PREPARED TO HANDLE EXTREMISTS BEFORE READING



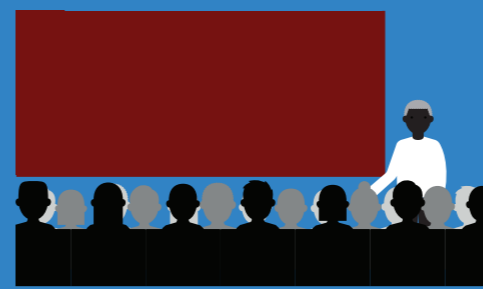
34% **ACTIVISTS**
PROBABLY NOT PREPARED TO MANAGE SITUATIONS



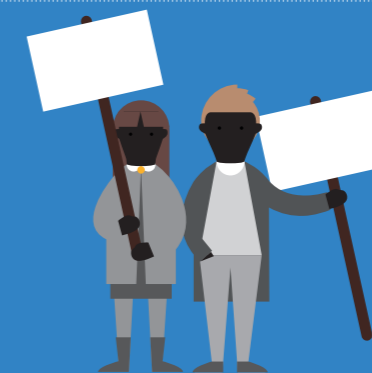
25.5% **ACTIVISTS**
FELT UNCERTAIN ABOUT BEING PREPARED



48% **ACTIVISTS**
READ A RESOURCE GUIDE DISCUSSING EXTREMISTS



24% **ACTIVISTS**
APPRECIATED GETTING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EXTREMISTS



82% **ACTIVISTS**
LEARNED USEFUL STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH EXTREMISTS



82% **ACTIVISTS**
NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED ADDING TO RESOURCE



38% **ACTIVISTS**
1ST READ OF A RESOURCE GUIDE DISCUSSING EXTREMISTS



11% **ACTIVISTS**
IMPROVEMENT AFTER READING THE RESOURCES



29% **ACTIVISTS**
INCREASED ABILITY TO PROVIDE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS



93% **ACTIVISTS**
WOULD LIKE NOTHING TO BE REMOVED FROM RESOURCE



SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

158 people in the private sector, and particularly the business sector, took the survey. On average they spend **9 minutes** reading the resource.

Here as well, almost half of the small business owners (**47%**) reported that they had actual experiences with extremists. **42%** of businesspeople indicated that they felt prepared to manage a potential situation with extremists, with **31%** percent saying they are probably prepared, and **12%** indicated they are prepared. On the other side, **31%** estimated that they were probably not prepared. Only **5%** thought they were unprepared.

Reading the resource did increase knowledge, awareness, and understanding regarding risky situations with extremists among small business owners. There was an increase in knowledge of **8%**. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score from the pre-test ($m=.73$, $SD=.22$) to the post-test ($m=.81$, $SD = 2$). The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(156) = 4.90$, $p < .001$].

Additionally, the resource affected the business owners' intention to act, when faced with the activities of extremists. For example, reading the guide increased the intention of refusing a customer who was promoting conspiracy theories at their place of business. Here again, the change was **8%**, with an effect from pre-test ($m=2.86$, $SD= 1.2$) to post-test ($m=3.1$, $SD = 1.16$). The biggest jump was for the category of 'definitely' prepared. While it was **39%** pre-test, after reading the resource, **51%** of small business owners indicated they felt 'definitely' prepared. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(156) = 4.40$, $p < .001$].

The resource also significantly increased the willingness of businesspeople to proactively develop policies for reporting hate incidents at work. The average change was **5%** from pre-test ($m=3.3$, $SD=.91$) to post-test ($m=3.45$, $SD=.85$) and a t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .003$ level [$t(157) = 3.90$, $p = .003$].

Small business owners also reported increased confidence in their ability to effectively report harassment if they were to witness it. The change from pre-test ($m=2.97$, $SD=.92$) to post-test ($m=3.2$, $SD=.87$) was **8%**. A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .003$ level [$t(157) = 3.90$, $p = .003$].

They also felt more confident that they would be able to effectively engage someone who is promoting hate speech, conspiracy theories, or extremist ideas. That confidence increased on average by **10%** from pre-test ($m=2.78$, $SD=.91$) to post-test ($m=3.05$, $SD=.87$). A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(157) = 5.00$, $p = .001$].

The resource also impacted the business owners' willingness to engage people, who are close to them, if they witness warning signs that indicate conspiratorial or extremist thinking. The willingness changed by **9%**, from pre-test ($m=2.86$, $SD=1.04$) to post-test ($m=3.11$, $SD =1.05$) and a t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(157) = 4.70$, $p < .001$].

At **63%**, most small business owners found the resource either very or extremely useful. The three components that they highlighted as most helpful were getting more information regarding extremists (**25%**), learning strategies on how to respond to extremists (**25%**), and the opportunity to think about different situations (**22%**). **75%** of small business owners learned information about extremism/extremists that they thought would help them when dealing with them in the future. **74%** of small business owners said they learned useful strategies for dealing with extremists.

The resource once again was found to be well designed, comprehensive, and succinct: **55%** of the small business owners found this resource applicable and tailored to their work and life. **78%** of small business owners said there was no additional information they'd like added to the resource, and **92%** of small business owners would not like to see anything removed from the resource. **198 people** employed in the public sector, such as local government officials, reviewed the resource. They spend on average **8 minutes** reading the resource. Here again, previous exposure to extremists existed: **39%** of local government officials reported having had a previous experience with extremists.

Most government employees, **43%**, indicated they did not feel prepared to manage a situation that involved extremists. **30%** said they were probably not prepared, while **13%** admitted they were 'definitely' not prepared. In contrast, **31%** felt prepared, with **25%** saying they were 'probably' prepared, and **6%** indicating they were 'definitely' prepared.



158 BUSINESS OWNERS TOOK THE SURVEY



9 MINS BUSINESS OWNERS SPENT ON AVERAGE READING THE RESOURCE



47% BUSINESS OWNERS HAD ACTUAL EXPERIENCES WITH EXTREMISTS



+8% BUSINESS OWNERS CONFIDENCE TO REPORT WITNESSED HARASSMENT



+10% BUSINESS OWNERS INCREASED CONFIDENCE TO REPORT WITNESSED HARASSMENT



+9% BUSINESS OWNERS (POST-TEST) WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE PEOPLE WHO CLOSE TO THEM



42% BUSINESS OWNERS FELT PREPARED TO MANAGE A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



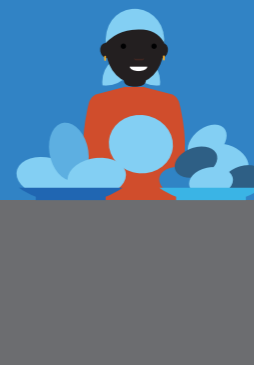
31% BUSINESS OWNERS PROBABLY PREPARED TO MANAGE A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



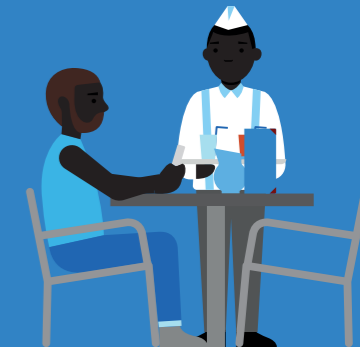
12% BUSINESS OWNERS ARE PREPARED TO MANAGE A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



63% BUSINESS OWNERS FOUND RESOURCE EXTREMELY USEFUL



25% BUSINESS OWNERS HIGHLIGHTED GETTING MORE INFORMATION FROM RESOURCE



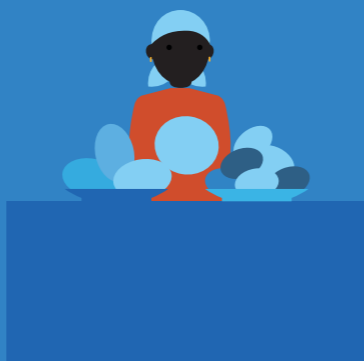
25% BUSINESS OWNERS LEARNING STRATEGIES ON HOW TO RESPOND TO EXTREMISTS



31% BUSINESS OWNERS PROBABLY PREPARED NOT MANAGE EXTREMIST SITUATION



5% BUSINESS OWNERS UNPREPARED TO MANAGE A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



+8% BUSINESS OWNERS INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF EXTREMIST SITUATIONS



22% BUSINESS OWNERS OPPORTUNITY TO THINK ABOUT DIFFERENT SITUATIONS



75% BUSINESS OWNERS LEARNED INFORMATION ON EXTREMISTS FOR FUTURE INTERACTION



74% BUSINESS OWNERS LEARNED USEFUL STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH EXTREMISTS



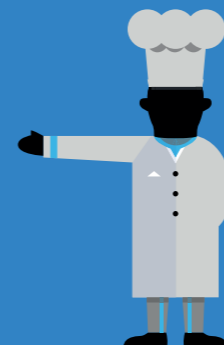
+8% BUSINESS OWNERS FELT (PRE-TEST) LIKELY TO REFUSE A EXTREMIST FROM BUSINESS



+39% BUSINESS OWNERS (PRE-TEST) DEFINITELY PREPARED TO REFUSE A EXTREMIST



51% BUSINESS OWNERS (POST-TEST) DEFINITELY PREPARED TO REFUSE A EXTREMIST



55% BUSINESS OWNERS FOUND RESOURCE APPLICABLE & TAILORED TO THEIR WORK & LIFE



78% BUSINESS OWNERS DONT NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ADDED TO RESOURCE



92% BUSINESS OWNERS WOULD NOT LIKE ANYTHING REMOVED FROM THE RESOURCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Reading the resource led to a significant increase in awareness and understanding of extremism among small business owners. The knowledge increase was on average 12% from pre-test ($m=.62$, $SD=.19$) to post-test ($m=.74$, $SD=.19$). A t-test was conducted to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(194) = 8.90$, $p < .001$].

Most impressively, the average change of public sector employees, who indicated confidence in their ability to provide recommendations to government groups/agencies about how to stay safe at a political event, jumped by 47% from pretest ($m=1.66$, $SD= 1.04$) to post-test ($m=2.45$, $SD=.94$). Once again, we conducted a t-test to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(196) = 12.00$, $p < .001$].

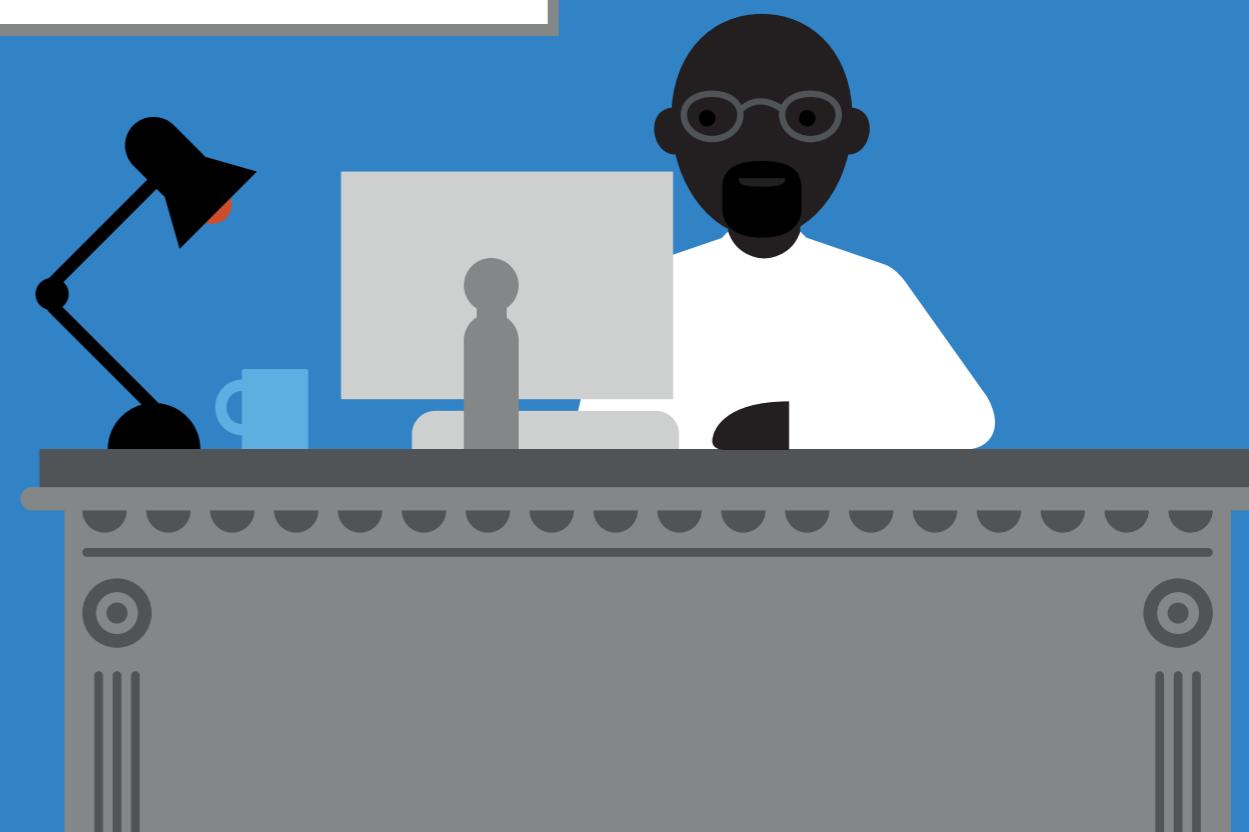
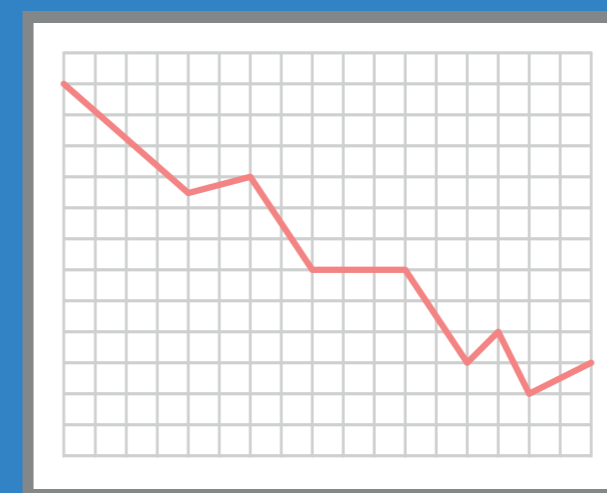
The resource also significantly increased the ability of public sector employees to build a coalition/working group addressing extremism in their workplace. The average change was 22%. We conducted a t-test to compare the effect of the resource pre-test ($m=2.04$, $SD=1.1$) to post-test ($m=2.49$, $SD= .99$). The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(195) = 8.50$, $p < .001$].

Local government employees also indicated that the resource increased their willingness to approach someone close to them who is showing warning signs of conspiratorial or extremist thinking. The average effect was a 9% increase from pre-test ($m=2.7$, $SD=1.05$) to post-test ($m=2.94$, $SD=1.01$). We conducted a t-test to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .001$ level [$t(195) = 4.40$, $p < .001$].

The resource also significantly increased confidence in the ability of public sector employees to effectively engage someone who is promoting hate speech, conspiracy theories, or extremist ideas. The average change in this confidence was 8% from the pre-test ($m=2.25$, $SD= .98$) to post-test ($m=2.44$, $SD=1.01$). We conducted a t-test to compare the effect of the resource on the score. The effect was found to be significant at the $p < .03$ level [$t(196) = 3.30$, $p = .03$].

The resource was also rated as helpful. 50% of local government officials found this resource very useful or extremely useful. Firstly, 34% indicated that the resource gave them strategies on how to react when faced with extremists. A quarter of respondents indicated that the resource encouraged them to think about situations that they may face, and another quarter mentioned that the additional resources that the guide provides were helpful.

Government officials indicated that the resource was well designed, comprehensive, not too long, and very helpful. At 49%, almost half of the government officials found this resource applicable and tailored to their work and life. 60% of local government officials learned information about extremism/extremists that will help when dealing with them in the future. 71% of local government officials said they learned useful strategies for dealing with extremists. 83% of local government officials said there was no additional information they'd like added to the resource, and 97% of local government officials would not like to see anything removed from the resource.





198 GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
TOOK THE SURVEY



8 MINS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
SPENT ON AVERAGE READING
THE RESOURCE



39% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES
WITH EXTREMISTS



+9% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
WILLINGNESS TO APPROACH SOME-
ONE SHOWING WARNING SIGNS



8% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE SOME-
ONE SHOWING WARNING SIGNS



50% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
(POST-TEST) WILLINGNESS TO EN-
GAGE PEOPLE WHO CLOSE TO THEM



43% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
FELT UNPREPARED TO MANAGE
A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



30% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
PROBABLY NOT PREPARED TO
MANAGE EXTREMIST SITUATION



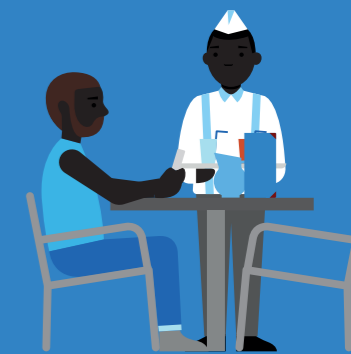
13% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
DEFINITELY NOT PREPARED TO
MANAGE EXTREMIST SITUATION



34% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
FOUND RESOURCE EXTREMELY
USEFUL



49% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
HIGHLIGHTED GETTING MORE
INFORMATION FROM RESOURCE



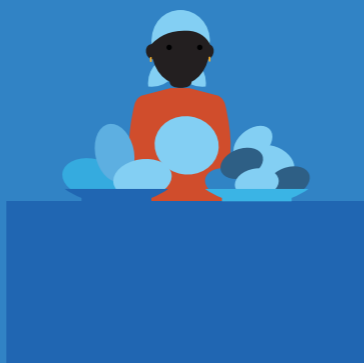
60% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
LEARNING STRATEGIES ON HOW
TO RESPOND TO EXTREMISTS



31% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
FELT PREPARED NOT MANAGE
EXTREMIST SITUATION



25% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
PROBABLY PREPARED TO MANAGE
A SITUATION WITH EXTREMISTS



6% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
DEFINITELY PREPARED TO
MANAGE A SITUATION WITH



71% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
LEARNED USEFUL STRATEGIES
TO DEAL WITH EXTREMISTS



83% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
DONT NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMA-
TION ADDED TO RESOURCE



97% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
WOULD NOT LIKE ANYTHING RE-
MOVED FROM THE RESOURCE



+12% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN
AWARENESS OF EXTREMISM



+47% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO
PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS



+22% GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
ABILITY TO BUILD GROUP AD-
DRESSING EXTREMISM

 **AUTHORS**

This report was written by **Natalie Chwalisz, Meili Criezis, Pasha Dashtgard, and Annett Graefe-Geusch**, building on research conducted by **Meili Criezis and Annett Graefe-Geusch** in summer 2020, under the supervision of **Cynthia Miller-Idriss** in the **Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL)** at American University.

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