

What we offer

The City of Biel/Bienne Contact Centre for the prevention of extremism and violence provides private individuals and local government departments with direct advice on matters related to extremism and radicalisation. It also puts them in touch with relevant authorities (e.g. police, women's shelter, victim support groups, etc.) for all other matters related to the prevention of violence (domestic violence, risk of acute violence, threats to public authorities and government agencies, etc.).

The characteristics of extremism and radicalisation

Extremism can take many different forms. Radicalisation can occur for social or political reasons, or it may be religious in origin. It can cause those who embrace it to pursue their own belief system or world view as the only true way, and to impose themselves on others using violent means.

Extremist attitudes are characterised by:

- An absolutist stance: "There is only one truth, and that's the one we represent!"
- "Friend-or-foe" paradigm: "If you're not for us, you must be against us!"
- Degradation of those with different ideas and faiths
- Rejection of a democratic legal system and its associated institutions
- Shrouding of leading figures in an aura of mystery
- Complete personality change, sometimes accompanied by social isolation of the person concerned
- Change in style of clothing or outer appearance
- Often, the person concerned is going through some kind of crisis (e.g. relationship, work, or financial problems; they may feel excluded or uprooted, etc.). Radical ideologies give them a sense of direction, purpose, and belonging.

Target group

The Contact Centre for the prevention of extremism and violence is open to all people living in Biel/Bienne, and to the city's local government bodies. The following target groups are identified:

- Individuals undergoing radicalisation or who have already been radicalised, but who do not currently present an acute risk
- Individuals who would like to escape from an extremist environment
- Family members and third parties who are concerned about the possible radicalisation of their children, partners, friends or acquaintances
- Government offices and agencies and the specialist personnel they employ (teachers, school social workers, social education specialists, health sector workers, etc.).

The advice we offer

We offer advice:

- Individually, by phone or in writing (email)
- In German or French, and in other languages if need be using an interpreter or translator
- With a separate room available, for conversations in strict confidence and observing your anonymity
- With contacts to specialist personnel who can provide you with tailor-made solutions and services
- Our advice is free of charge

How to contact us

Ortspolizei / SIP der Stadt Biel
Police locale / SIP de la ville de Bienne
Ansprechstelle Extremismus- und Gewaltprävention
Neuengasse 28 / Rue Neuve 28
2501 Biel / Bienne
T: +41 32 326 18 80
ansprechstelle-eg@biel-bienne.ch

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for the prevention of
extremism and
violence

Biel
Bienne