



# TARGETING EXTREMISM AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

## The Eurabia Conspiracy Theory in a Scandinavian Context



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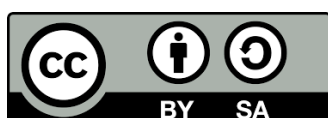


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Ethnotolerance

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## The Eurabia conspiracy theory in a Scandinavian context

### Introduction

#### **Context:**

Eurabia is an anti-Muslim conspiracy theory. According to the Eurabia myth, Muslim immigration to Europe is allegedly part of a secret project to make the West part of a Muslim world domination. The conspiracy theory was first introduced by the amateur historian Gisèle Littman, under the pseudonym Bat Ye'or, in her book *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* (2005). In short, she claims that Europe is being enslaved by the Arab world, that Muslims are moving to Europe to demographically take over the continent as part of a "jihad" (holy war), and that this has been going on systematically since the 1973 oil crisis.

The Eurabia conspiracy theory became widespread in the anti-Muslim milieu, not least within the far-right counterjihad movement. In Scandinavia the conspiracy theory became popular within these environments and is still prevalent to this day. In 2011 the Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik carried out an attack in Oslo and at the Island Utöya that killed 77 people and injured over 350. Breivik was heavily influenced by the Eurabia conspiracy theory. After the attack, the myth was examined and criticised by journalists and researchers. Nevertheless, it lives on in the anti-Muslim milieu. In Sweden the conspiracy theory has been prevalent among far-right political parties, even in the parliament. The alternative media news site Samnytt (previous Axpixlat) has published "news" about Eurabia on several occasions.

#### **TEACH Context:**

The Eurabia conspiracy theory was part of the TEACH study as a national scale. This means that only Swedish participants of the survey were asked about statements about Eurabia.

The survey included 5 statements about the Eurabia conspiracy theory and the adult educators were asked how often they encountered these statements in their classroom. 2,4% of the participants in the survey answered that they heard the statement "Swedes are at risk of becoming second class citizens" very often to frequently (if added the answers for hearing the statements sometimes it increases to 6,7%). The statement "Muslims islamize Sweden through high numbers of childbirth" was heard by 4,2% of the participants very often to frequently (10,9% sometimes).

For more information on the survey results, visit: [www.teach-erasmus.eu](http://www.teach-erasmus.eu)

### **Aims of this Module**

The goal of this module is to closely examine the Eurabia conspiracy theory in a Scandinavian context. In addition to presenting basic terminology, this module serves to give insight to various facets of the Eurabia conspiracy theories. The central aim of the module is to provide adult educators with assistance in dealing with the Eurabia conspiracy theories.

The overall goal is to empower adult educators in their ability to deal with the Eurabia conspiracy theories and to develop ideas for dealing with it in their own classrooms.

### **How to use**

This programme is primarily intended as a training for adult educators in Sweden. This programme can be used as part of a continuing education course or in combination with other modules (e.g., our module on anti-Semitism) or as a single workshop day unit.



### Warm-up: Introducing Eurabia

<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this warm up activity is to introduce the participants to the conspiracy theory of Eurabia and to mention some people who have been involved in the creation and spread of the conspiracy theory in Scandinavia and beyond.
<b>Duration</b>	40 – 60 minutes
<b>Preparation</b>	<p>The trainer goes through the slides and carefully reads through the quotes and explanations. The trainer can deep dive further into the conspiracy theory Eurabia by reading the article “The myth of Eurabia: how a far-right conspiracy theory went mainstream” written by Andrew Brown published on Fri 16 Aug 2019 06.00 BST by The Guardian. Following this link below or search for the title in Google to find the article.  <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/16/the-myth-of-eurabia-how-a-far-right-conspiracy-theory-went-mainstream">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/16/the-myth-of-eurabia-how-a-far-right-conspiracy-theory-went-mainstream</a>.</p> <p>Article in Swedish published by the site Expo and updated the 2019-06-12. Search on Expo’s webpage for “Eurabia” or access via the following link: <a href="https://expo.se/fakta/wiki/eurabia">https://expo.se/fakta/wiki/eurabia</a></p>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projector and computer for the trainer</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">warm_up_quotes</a></li> </ul>

### Instruction:

#### Step 1: Quotes about Eurabia (20 - 30 minutes)

- The trainer first explains that he or she will show some statements made by conspiracy theorists.
- The trainer projects the three different quotes provided in [warm\\_up\\_quotes](#).

*The first quote comes from a Norwegian man who calls himself Fjordman and who is a conspiracy theorist who believes in and is actively spreading and reproducing the conspiracy theories Eurabia and CounterJihad.*

*The second quote is made by Bat Ye’or, the author of the book “The Euro-Arab Axis” that is considered the foundation for the Eurabia conspiracy theory.*

*The third quote comes from Anders Behring Breivik’s manifesto published right before the attack in Oslo and Utöya 2011.*

- After showing the first quote ([warm\\_up\\_quotes](#)) the trainer asks the participants the following questions:
  - *What is your first reaction when reading/hearing this?*
  - *Has anyone heard about Eurabia before?*
  - *What do you think Fjordman is aiming at when saying “the greatest betrayal in the history of western civilization”?*

*If no one has heard of any of the terms or knows what the quote is aiming at the trainer just acknowledge that this is okay and that you will go through the quotes later on and explain their meaning.*

- Then the trainer shows the second quote ([warm\\_up\\_quotes](#)) and asks the participants the following questions:
  - *Are there any words or phrases that are unfamiliar to you?*
  - *What do you think the author is aiming at when saying “a mutation of Europe’s civilisation” and “giving birth to a hybrid culture: Eurabia”?*
- The trainer shows the last quote ([warm\\_up\\_quotes](#)) and then asks the participants:
  - *What is the conspiracy that is proposed in this quote?*
  - *Who are pointed out in this quote as the conspirators and who are the victims?*

*Support for trainer:*

*The conspiracy theory presented in this quote is part of the Eurabia conspiracy theory where people believe that European multiculturalism is a support for Islamic countries to colonize Europe.*

*The European governments and the “politically correct” mainstream media are pointed out as the conspirators. Claiming that 90% of EU parliamentarians and over 95% of journalists are supporters of the ongoing Islamic colonization of Europe. The victims according to this quote are the European people.*

**Step II: Uncovering the quotes (20 - 30minutes)**

Following the quotes in [warm\\_up\\_quotes](#) are three slides that provide explanations to some of the people and the conspiracy theories they represent. The trainer goes through all the slides and stops after each slide to see if there are any questions or things that are unclear to the participants.

### Exercise 1: Eurabia in a Scandinavian context

<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this exercise is that the participants learn more about Eurabia in a Scandinavian context. Furthermore, the participants will gain knowledge of how the Eurabia conspiracy theory has had real life consequences and learn more about the conspiracy theory in connection to Swedish politics. The participants will moreover discuss and reflect upon how conspiracy theories are being spread, what consequences they might have and ways to prevent them.
<b>Duration</b>	2,5 hours
<b>Preparation</b>	<p>The trainer reads through the articles provided in the resources to have a broader idea of the topics the participants should research.</p> <p>The trainer arranges three tables separate from each other in the classroom. On each table the trainer prints and places one of the discussion sheets, see <a href="#">exercise_1_discussion_stations</a> in the appendix.</p>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computers/laptop or smartphones with internet connection</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Some examples of articles for the participants to read during their research. Also good for the trainer to learn more about the topic in advance. On the Swedish webpage Expo, use the search words "CounterJihad", "Eurabia", "Breivik" and/or "Bat Ye'or" and you will find articles about the topics. Furthermore, Google search "Samband mellan Fjordman och Breivik" to find an article in Svenska Dagbladet about Fjordman. See the links below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CounterJihad: <a href="https://expo.se/fakta/wiki/counterjihad">https://expo.se/fakta/wiki/counterjihad</a></li> <li>Eurabia, Breivik and Bat Ye'or: <a href="https://expo.se/sagan-om-europas-underg%C3%A5ng">https://expo.se/sagan-om-europas-underg%C3%A5ng</a></li> <li>Fjordman: <a href="https://www.svd.se/samband-mellan-fjordman-och-breivik">https://www.svd.se/samband-mellan-fjordman-och-breivik</a></li> <li><a href="#">exercise_1_discussion_stations</a></li> </ul>

#### Instruction:

##### **Step I: Group work, find out more about... (60 minutes)**

- The trainer explains to the participants that Eurabia is a conspiracy theory that has been the motive behind some horrible events in Europe.
- With one example being the attacks in Oslo and Utöya 2011 by Anders Behring Breivik.
- The participants are divided into three groups. The groups will all choose one of the three topics presented below (it is optimal if all the topics get picked).
- Topics:
  - Topic 1: Utöya and Anders Behring Breivik



- Topic 2: Fjordman and the CounterJihad Movement
- Topic 3: Eurabia and Swedish politics
- The groups who picked topic 1 should research more about the motives and influence the Eurabia conspiracy theories had on Anders Behring Breivik. The group is free to use online material in the form of articles, books, videos and/or podcasts etc to find out more. They should try to answer the questions:
  - *In what way was Breivik's attack connected to the Eurabia conspiracy theory?*
  - *What were his beliefs and why did he attack a summer camp for social democrats?*
- The group who picked topic 2 should research more about Fjordman and the Counter Jihad movement. The group is free to use online material in the form of articles, books, videos and/or podcasts etc to find out more. They should try to answer the following questions:
  - *Who is Fjordman and how is he connected to the Eurabia conspiracy theory?*
  - *What is the CounterJihad movement?*
- The group who picked topic 3 should research more about how Eurabia has been visible in Swedish politics. The group is free to use online material in the form of articles, books, videos and/or podcasts etc to find out more. They should try to answer the following questions:
  - *How is Eurabia represented in Swedish politics and by whom?*

### **Step II: Sharing the results (30 minutes)**

- The three groups share their results from the research and describe to the other participants what their topic was about and what they found during the research.
- Each group spends no more than 10 minutes presenting their findings.
- Participants are encouraged to ask questions and discuss the findings.

### **Step III: Discussion (45-60 minutes)**

- The trainer arranges three "stations" around three tables in the classroom. By each table the trainer provides the worksheets from [exercise\\_1\\_discussion\\_stations](#) with discussion points for the groups to talk about.
- The participants form three groups and spend about 15 minutes around each station to discuss the different topics.
- The trainer should signal when the time is up and the groups rotate to the next station. This is repeated until all three groups have been at all three stations.
- Below the questions are provided some supporting words that the groups can use if they struggle to get the conversations starting.

## **Exercise 2: How to talk to a firm believer**

<b>Aim</b>	<p>Talking to a firm believer of a conspiracy theory can be a real challenge, trying to convince them that their beliefs are incorrect can be even harder.</p> <p>In this exercise the participants will learn some helpful skills on how to talk to someone who firmly believes in conspiracy theories as well as practicing these skills in a group setting. The aim is to prepare the participants to better meet, respond and hopefully help people they encounter to rethink their conspiracy beliefs.</p>
<b>Duration</b>	2 - 3 hours
<b>Preparation</b>	The trainer carefully goes through the PowerPoint presentation and reads the notes to the slides.
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computers/laptop or smartphones with internet connection</li> <li>• Pen</li> <li>• Paper</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Exercise 2_scenario_1</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Exercise 2_scenario_2</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Exercise 2_PowerPoint_Presentation</a></li> </ul>

### **Instruction:**

#### **Step I: Presentation (30-45 minutes)**

The trainer opens the PPT-presentation ([Exercise 2\\_PowerPoint\\_Presentation](#)) and goes through the slides with the participants. In the PPT-presentation the trainer will notice some blue speech bubbles, which indicates that the trainer should ask for input by the participants. In the note section of the presentation the trainer will find supporting notes for the presentation.

#### **Step II: Practicing scenarios (60-90 minutes)**

The participants divide in two groups and are assigned one scenario each ([Exercise 2\\_scenario\\_1;2](#)). All the instructions they need are supplied in the worksheets. If the participants don't remember all the information from the previous presentation the trainer can offer support by leaving the presentation open and go back to specific slides if the groups need it (or print the slides for each group).

The participants should have some background knowledge on the conspiracy theory that is used in the scenarios but if they need they can research some additional information to answer all the questions in the worksheets. Furthermore, the trainer can encourage some creativity, if the groups want to create responses from the student to make the

interaction longer that is totally okay. The main idea is that the participants get a chance to put the knowledge from the presentation into practice.

**Step III: Presentation of results (30 minutes)**

When the groups are finished with the scenarios, half of the participants from group 1 move over to group 2, and half of the participants from group 2 move over to group 1. There should now be two new groups with half of the participants being from group 1 and half from group 2.

In the two new groups the team members that worked together with the scenarios present their results to the other team members (that they did not work with before) and vice versa. The team members that are not presenting the results are encouraged to ask questions and offer alternative solutions/questions/ideas.

### Wrap-up: Fact, question, aha, action

<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this exercise is to reflect upon what the participants learned during the training. This by thinking of new things they learnt, questions that might not have been answered and they want to look into more, ideas and inspiration they might have gotten and actions to implement in their work life.
<b>Duration</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen</li> <li>• Paper</li> </ul>

### Instruction:

- Ask the participants to write four headings on a sheet of paper. For the first heading they write "Fact", the second heading they write "Question", the third heading they write "Aha" and the fourth heading they write "Action".
- Then ask the participants to spend 10-15 minutes to reflect on today's training and write down the answers to the following questions under the four headings:
  - 1. Fact: What is something new that I learnt today?
  - 2. Question: Do I still have any questions about today's topic/training?
  - 3. Aha: Did I have any 'Aha' moment(s) or new ideas from today's training?
  - 4. Action: What actions can I implement in my work life after today's training?
- After filling in all the questions the participants form pairs and exchange their answers and talk about their experience. After 10 minutes the trainer will ask the participants to find a new partner and share their answers with them as well.
- The participants can add anything they feel they missed that their partners have shared with them to their paper.
- To finish the exercise ask if some participants want to share what they wrote down or heard from a partner they exchanged information with.

## Appendix

Warm-up: Introducing Eurabia

Warm\_up\_quotes

**"The creation of  
Eurabia is one of  
the greatest  
betrayals in the  
history of  
Western  
civilization."**

Peder Jensen alias Fjordman, quoted in Anders Behring Breivik's manifesto "2083: A European Declaration of Independence" (2011)

[Posters developed by the TEACH team for the project purpose]

**"In just thirty years (1973-2003), the Euro-Arab dialogue has successfully caused the mutation of Europe's civilisation, giving birth to a hybrid culture: Eurabia."**

- Bat Ye'or, "Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis"  
(2005), p. 102



**"Much of the information in this compendium has been deliberately withheld from the people of Europe by our governments and the politically correct mainstream media (MSM). Over 90% of EU and national parliamentarians and over 95% of journalists are supporters of European multiculturalism and therefore supporters of the ongoing Islamic colonization of Europe; however, they DO NOT HAVE the permission of the European peoples to implement these doctrines."**

Anders Behring Breivik in this manifest "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence".  
(2011)

# Eurabia

In short, the conspiracy theory claims that Europe is being enslaved by the Arab world, that Muslims are moving to Europe to demographically take over the continent as part of a "jihad" (holy war), and that this has been going on systematically since the oil crisis of 1973.

The Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD) that took place around the oil crisis to find a common solution contributed to improved diplomatic ties and increased trade between Europe and the Middle East.

However, the EAD has gotten a completely different meaning for the Eurabia conspiracy theorists. They claim that Europe during the oil crisis was blackmailed by and capitulated to the "Arabs". In exchange for continued access to Arab oil and Arab banks, they secretly agreed to establish the EAD as Europe's new, invisible government - the spider in a gigantic web of manipulation, Jew-hatred, and "jihad".

## Bat Ye'or

Is the self-proclaimed historian Gisèle Littman who writes under the pseudonym Bat Ye'or. She wrote the book *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* in 2005 where she introduced the conspiracy theory *Eurabia*.

The book's narrative can be compared to the historical anti-Semitic forgery of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, but directed at Muslims instead of Jews. In *Eurabia*, Bat Ye'or conjures up a sinister, all-encompassing conspiracy between Arab rulers and European bureaucrats, a secret elite ruling together and whose hidden purpose is to secure Muslim domination of Europe.

# Anders Behring Breivik

Is a Norwegian terrorist who in 2011 carried out first an attack in Oslo and then an attack on the island Utöya where young social democrats gathered at a summer camp. He killed 77 people in the attacks and injured over 300 people.

Breivik was heavily influenced by the Eurabia conspiracy theory and the Counter-Jihad movement which are both supported by Fjorman and Bat Ye'or.

Breivik's attack was not targeted towards his perceived external enemy, the Muslims, but the internal one: the left, the European establishment, the "Cultural Marxists", who he believed had opened the gates to the Islamic colonization of Europe.

Exercise 1: Eurabia in a Scandinavian context

[exercise\\_1\\_discussion\\_stations](#)

# STATION 1

## Spread

**WHAT DO YOU THINK FEEDS  
CONSPIRACY THINKING IN  
SCANDINAVIA, ESPECIALLY  
FOCUSING ON THE EURABIA  
CONSPIRACY THEORY**

Can any of the following examples have an effect, why or why not?

- Politics
- Preconceived opinions
- Fear
- Societal change

[Posters developed by the TEACH team for the project purpose]

# STATION 2

## Consequences

**WHAT OTHER CONSEQUENCES  
DO YOU THINK CAN COME  
FROM BELIEVING IN THE  
EURABIA CONSPIRACY  
THEORY?**

- Individual consequences (how can it affect people and their view of the themselves, the world and others?)
- Societal consequences (how can it affect society, politics, trust etc.)



## STATION 3

### Prevention

**WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO  
PREVENT THE SPREAD OF  
CONSPIRACY THEORIES IN  
SWEDEN?**

- On a personal/individual level
- On a societal level

## **Exercise 2: How to talk to a firm believer**

### **Exercise\_2\_scenario\_1**

#### **Scenario 1**

You are in the classroom talking about islam with your students. The conversation revolves around Islam and the historical connection between Islamic countries and Europe when a student in the class room says:

“Europe is no longer Europe, it is Eurabia, a colony of Islam”

You ask the student what she/he meant with that and what Eurabia is. The students goes on and says:

“The Euro-Arab dialog has fooled us all and the Islamic invasion is no longer only physical, but also a mental and cultural invasion.”

**Your assignment as a group is to think of, discuss and write down ideas and ways to respond to this student following the recommendations given in the previous PPT-presentation.**

**Your group should focus on the first recommendation about maintaining an effective conversation.**

1. Go through the points below (from the PPT-presentation) and discuss and write down examples and questions of how you could try to understand what conspiracy theory the student is talking about and what they believe exactly. What questions would you ask, what tone, body language do you think is most effective?
2. Move on to the second point about being respectful, honest, open and polite, how do you do that in the best way possible? Do you think it is easy to stay calm if people express racist conspiracy theories, write down some things to think about in this scenario?
3. Think about ways you could potentially find common ground with the student, is there anything small or big, relevant or irrelevant, you think could be a possible way of finding common ground?
4. Brainstorm some ideas of what might be the “real” concern behind this conspiracy theory and try to find things in this genuine concern that you could validate.



**Understand what they are thinking and why**



**Be respectful, honest, open and polite**



**Find common ground**



**Validate their genuine concerns**

## **Exercise 2: How to talk to a firm believer**

### **Exercise\_2\_scenario\_2**

#### **Scenario 2**

You are in a classroom teaching about the EU, its functions and collaboration with countries outside the union when one of the students in the class says:

"It doesn't matter, it is all corrupt anyways, the Euro-Arab dialogue has all the power and soon we won't have a Europe any longer".

She/he goes on to explain that:

"90% of the EU and national parliamentarians and over 95% of journalists are supporters of multiculturalism and therefore support the ongoing Islamic colonization of Europe. European taxpayers don't understand that they are funding the Dialogue's many organisations, working through their own national parliaments, the European Parliament, the European Commission, academia, the press, the media and politicians – they are all in it together."

**Your assignment as a group is to think of, discuss and write down ideas and ways to respond to this student following the recommendations given in the previous PPT-presentation.**

**Your group should focus on the second recommendation about supplying useful information (see points below from the PPT).**

1. Is there any information in the statement made by the student that is incorrect? How could you respond to these errors?
2. Is there an alternative explanation to what the student is saying? Try to formulate one in the group (you can do some additional research online if you need to).
3. How could you talk to the student about the sources she/he is using? What questions would you ask and how can you point out if the sources she/he is using might not be trustworthy?
4. How realistic is it that this conspiracy is true? In the group come up with ways to
5. offer perspectives to the statement the student is making.



**Point out specific mistakes in their information**



**Show/point out mistakes their sources have made**



**Show them things they have missed about the topic**



**Show them other information that helps them gain perspective**



**Use visual information**



**Identifying errors**



**Explanations**



**Exposing the source**



**Perspectives**

# TARGETING EXTREMISM AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES



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