CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE
ACTIVITIES OF THE RAN CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

1. CONTEXT

In 2011, the European Commission established the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), an EU-wide umbrella network connecting key organisations and networks of local actors involved in preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism, including first-line practitioners and field experts, such as social and health workers, teachers, civil society organisations, including victims' groups, as well as policy makers, local authorities, law enforcement, prosecutors, security officials, counter terrorism specialists, think tanks, institutes and academics. By the end of 2015, the RAN is a network of about 2000 stakeholders from all Member States, in the course of 2016 this figure increased to over 3000.

Building on the experience of the RAN, the Commission adopted on 15 January 2014 a Communication on "Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response" (COM [2013] 941 final) ("the PREVENT Communication"), where it identified 10 areas where Member States and the EU could reinforce their actions to prevent radicalisation and recruitment. In June 2014, the Council adopted a revised EU Strategy on preventing radicalisation and recruitment ("revised EU Strategy on Radicalisation"), which recognises the importance to involve or draw on the experience of the RAN.

To implement several of the proposed measures and actions in the PREVENT Communication, and to build on the experiences and expertise acquired by the RAN, the Commission announced the establishment of an EU Knowledge Hub. It is in this spirit that the decision was taken to set up the RAN Centre of Excellence with a view to pooling, deepening and disseminating expertise in preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism.

In April 2015, the Commission adopted the European Agenda on Security stressing again the particular importance of prevent work as part of a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism and tackling the root causes of radicalisation and violent extremism. The agenda signals, for example, that education, youth participation, interfaith and inter-cultural dialogue, as well as employment and social inclusion, have a key role to play in preventing radicalisation by promoting common European values, fostering social inclusion, enhancing mutual understanding and tolerance, and also points to the necessity of empowering local actors, who are the people in direct contact with those most at risk of radicalisation. In its Communication on radicalisation of June 2016 (COM(2016) 230 final) the Commission set out in more detail how it supports Member States in the different policy areas.

This comprehensive approach needs to take into account both the guiding principles of the EU strategy on counter terrorism and radicalisation and other EU policies and support initiatives in different fields such as civic education, measures against racism and hate speech etc. The recently created Internal Security Fund will be used, among other purposes, to support the development of 'exit strategies' for radicalised persons with the help of best practices exchanged in the RAN. Furthermore, the Commission funds under ISF the SSCAT and the successor project "European Strategic Communications Network" which brings together expertise and knowledge in developing and implementing strategic communications and campaigns to address radicalisation. In addition, Europol's Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU),
established in July 2015, is to act as an EU centre of expertise, helping Member States to identify and remove violent extremist content online, in cooperation with industry partners.

The Charter of principles lays down the key guiding principles for the work of the RAN Centre, including in particular the activities of the RAN, recalling the respect of fundamental rights and the rule of law, setting out purpose and overall objectives of the RAN (Center) as well as stipulating governance rules, including objectives, activities, structure and composition of the various bodies and in particular the Steering Committee.

2. OVERALL PURPOSE

The fundamental purpose of the RAN is for first line practitioners to exchange experiences and expertise concerning the phenomenon of radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and presentations with a view to identifying tools and practices that support the different stakeholders in the Member States in their efforts to prevent radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism.

Activities within the RAN are based on a number of core principles:

1) Prevention is key: it is crucial to invest in interventions that are aimed at removing the breeding ground for radicalisation to prevent these processes or stop them as early as possible.

2) Involving and training first line practitioners is key: these practitioners will be the first professional point of contact for individuals at risk. To be able to have a preventative approach, they need to be aware of signals of radicalisation, know how to seek support to address these signals whilst maintaining in a positive relationship with the individual.

3) Multi-agency approach is key: To be able to prevent radicalisation and to safeguard individuals at risk, multi-agency cooperation is necessary to provide a consistent and reliable network. In this network, expertise and information can be shared, cases can be discussed and there can be agreement and shared ownership on the best course of action. These networks should be combinations between law enforcement, professional care organisations as well as NGO’s and community representatives.

4) Tailor-made interventions, adapted to local circumstances, are key: each individual at risk is different which calls for a case-by-case approach. It is important to understand the individuals’ background, grievances, motivations, fears, frustrations etc. to be able to develop a suitable intervention. Besides internal factors, external factors such as the individual’s social environment and other local circumstances need to be taken into account to provide effective support.

Moreover, there are a few more principles which define the RAN vision on radicalisation. First of all, it is important to draw a line between ideas, even if extreme, and violent actions resulting from extreme ideas. Ideas as such are not an issue for RAN; violent extremism triggered by radicalisation is. In addition, it is important to focus on the capacity to make a well informed discernment also between different types of violence. Hate crimes, vandalism and hooliganism, as well as violent actions not following from radicalisation are not included in the scope of the RAN.

The RAN Center, building on the efforts and success of the RAN, shall contribute to supporting and further developing the EU Prevent policy objectives as reflected in the
PREVENT Communication as well as the revised EU Strategy on Radicalisation\(^1\) as further developed in the 2016 Communication on radicalisation and particularly:

i) to foster structured dialogue, exchange of expertise and experience and the development of best practices within the RAN,

ii) to make available to policymakers and other stakeholders in Member States the large body of expertise and best practice within the EU and beyond and

iii) to deepen cooperation between policymakers, academia, private partners, and international forums.

3. **Objectives**

To attain the purpose above, the RAN CoE shall, in particular:

(a) Facilitate and enhance the exchange of experiences and cooperation between the relevant stakeholders (inside and outside the EU), in particular through the RAN;

(b) Support the EU and the relevant stakeholders in Member States (under certain conditions also stakeholders from third countries) in their prevent efforts through different support services, practical tools and policy contributions; and

(c) Consolidate, disseminate and share expertise, best practices and targeted research in the field of preventing radicalisation.

4. **Governance Rules**

The activities of the RAN CoE build upon the network of RAN members/participants coming together in particular in RAN working groups as well as the RAN Plenary (for more details, see sections 5, 6 and 7 below).

Work within the RAN will in particular be steered by working group leaders in close interaction with the RAN CoE, the Steering Committee (see for more details, section 8 below) and ultimately the Commission.

Other non-RAN related activities (e.g. regarding research related activities, the development of targeted support services/deployment of RAN expertise) will receive particular support from the RAN CoE following strategic guidance from the Steering Committee and ultimately validated by the Commission. For that purpose, the RAN CoE relies on a pool of experts assisting the RAN CoE members in their tasks. In order to ensure that these activities on the one hand build on practitioners experience and on the other hand provide practitioners with the necessary input, close involvement of WG Leaders is foreseen.

The RAN CoE and the activities undertaken by the RAN are financed by the Commission. Any decision leading to expenses paid by the Commission has to be endorsed by DG HOME; this is done through the Annual Activity plan as well as through ad hoc authorisations. Results of the RAN and deliverables of the RAN CoE are owned by the Commission, and it is therefore the Commission which decides on their use and further dissemination.

This RAN Charter and the RAN Rules of Procedure govern all issues related to the RAN and the RAN CoE, as well as their relationship with the European Commission.

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5. **RAN Members and Participants**

As a 'network of networks,' RAN members are key stakeholder groups involved in countering violent radicalisation, with a particular focus on first-line practitioners, field experts, social care and health workers, teachers, community leaders, civil society organisations, including victims' groups, local authorities, law enforcement as well as prison and probation officers. RAN members shall demonstrate their expertise in the field of countering violent radicalisation. They shall demonstrate networking capacity and function as effective multipliers of RAN activities in their respective countries and areas of activity.

RAN members are organised in working groups who have a sectorial or thematic focus and who meet regularly. They also meet at RAN Plenary meetings. Beyond its members, RAN is open to, and shall benefit from contributions from a wider range of participants active in the relevant areas whenever working group leaders or the Steering Committee consider it beneficial. In this sense, while the RAN is primarily meant for the exchange between first line practitioners, policy makers or researchers may participate in regular RAN activities. Their involvement is in addition to be promoted as regards other RAN (Center) events such as cross cutting workshops or conferences.

RAN members and participants are to adhere to EU fundamental rights and respect the RAN Charter and the Rules of Procedure.

6. **Working Groups**

The purpose of the Working Group (WG) meetings is to focus on particular topics, map and select the relevant participating experts (ensuring the widest possible coverage in terms of Member States and professional background) stimulate an exchange of experiences, expertise and practices and further the development and evaluation of approaches and lessons learnt transferable to other contexts. These are the backbone of the RAN activities.

Working groups (WG) consist of RAN members and other participants, whose activities are related or relevant to countering violent radicalisation.

The working groups shall demonstrate their EU-wide character by involving members of multiple Member States and by aiming, through their discussions and results, to develop methods and approaches which can be transferred to other Member States.

Each working group shall have a 'Working Group leader' who steers the discussions and ensures that contributions from participants respect EU principles and fundamental rights. Working Group leaders liaise with the Commission and the RAN CoE in the Steering Committee, and therefore have a key role in determining, implementing and reviewing the activities of the RAN and the RAN CoE.

With the establishment of the RAN Center of Excellence new working groups will be set up and new mission statements be adopted following discussions within the RAN Plenary and the Steering Committee.

The RAN Rules of Procedure contain provisions on the working arrangements of the working groups, including creation and dissolution, membership and appointment of leaders, working languages and holding meetings.
7. RAN Plenary

The main purpose of RAN Plenary meetings is to allow RAN members and participants to discuss the main achievements, challenges and scope for further action or need for changes in the RAN work.

It offers the occasion to meet beyond the normal composition of working groups and discuss not only topics relevant for their respective working groups but also, and quite importantly, cross cutting issues.

For the RAN CoE it is the occasion to inform the RAN community about their other tasks which have a direct or indirect bearing on their work.

More specifically, the RAN Plenary shall be given the opportunity to give its views on the evaluation of existing working arrangements and possible suggestions for organisational/structural changes, improvements or additional actions affecting RAN related activities as outlined in the annual progress report. Recommendations issued by the RAN Plenary shall, where possible and appropriate, be taken into account when finalising the annual activity plan.

8. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) shall be made up of the Commission (chairing), representatives of the RAN CoE (including the managing Director as well as the different account managers for the different WGs and the Quality manager), the active working group leaders, and other members nominated by the Commission.

Its role and main tasks are to steer the work of the RAN CoE and in particular to:

a) Provide strategic orientations, set priorities for the work of the RAN (Centre) and steer discussions in relation to a number of activities of the RAN (Centre), including inter alia the annual activity plans, major events (e.g. HLC), the deployment of RAN expertise; focus of research related activities and proposals for working relationships with other/international bodies, and networks and third countries;

b) Validate peer evaluations and the inclusion of new practices into the RAN Collection;

c) Give its opinion on working arrangements, such as the new Charter and new Rules of Procedure as well as proposals for amendments where appropriate;

d) Ensure the proper functioning of the RAN in accordance with its Charter and Rules of Procedure and the delivery of work and activities in accordance with the annual activity plans.

e) Approve designation of RAN working group leaders (appointed at a later stage by the Commission)

Any proposals of actions submitted by WG leaders, if they are costs-related, should be validated by DG HOME.

The RAN Rules of Procedure contain provisions on the composition, chairing, and meetings of the Steering Committee, as well as on decision-making and voting arrangements.

9. Relation between RAN CoE and the Commission

In addition to the general agreement on activities as laid down in the Annual Activity Plan, a number of activities or the use and dissemination of a number deliverables of the RAN CoE
may require prior ad hoc authorisation by the Commission. These include for instance support 
measures for Member States and third countries, issue and policy papers, participation in 
external events, outreach products and working arrangements with other networks, think tanks 
or international organisations and research-related activities.

Proposals for such activities are subject to guidance provided by the Steering Committee and 
the final deliverables subject to quality control and management procedures.

10. TASKS OF THE RAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (RAN CoE)

The RAN CoE shall have the following tasks:

Task 1 - Prepare activity plans and progress reports implementing and reporting on the 
RAN Center’s activities

In order to implement the Tasks 2 – 9 below, the RAN CoE proposes concrete activities and 
actions and reports on their delivery in activity plans and progress reports, respectively, 
allowing the Steering Committee and the Commission to monitor compliance with the tasks 
and to appraise the achievements as well as the effective use of the available resources in 
pursuit of the declared objectives.

Task 1.1: prepare annual activity plans (n+1) (AAP).

Task 1.2: prepare annual progress reports (APR).

Task 1.3: prepare quarterly progress reports (QPR).

The preparation of the plans and reports shall be done in close cooperating with the Steering 
Committee and to be submitted to the Commission for approval.

The plans and reports above shall include also information on the costs of the envisaged 
activities i.e. cost of travel, accommodation, facilities (e.g. renting meeting rooms, 
interpretation), documents (e.g. type and number of documents to be produced and translated 
if necessary), lunches, promotion events, etc.

In addition, the APRs shall include a critical evaluation of existing working arrangements and 
possible suggestions for organisational/structural changes, improvements or additional actions 
to be incorporated into the n+1 AAP.

Finally, the QPRs must also include cumulative statistical and financial information on annual 
activities as well as the forecast of the activities planned. Bills and receipts for the relevant 
costs/activities will be joined as Annexes to the quarterly progress reports. Descriptive 
information and evaluations can be limited to the relevant reporting period.

Task 2 - Provide the RAN with support for its substantive activities and the development 
of best practices

The RAN CoE will create the conditions for RAN to fulfil its objectives by carrying out the 
following:

Task 2.1: produce papers (2 to 5 pages) to frame discussions, reflect findings and 
conclusions, and propose follow up actions to RAN activities. These papers should go beyond 
concrete discussions at a particular RAN event by e.g. drawing lessons also come conclusions 
or experiences in other Working Groups or events.

Task 2.2: prepare on average 6 'RAN Up-dates' annually (4-5 pages), summarising RAN 
activities.

2 One page is understood as containing 2.250 characters (without spaces)
Task 2.3: manage the RAN Collection, by updating information and reviewing experiences with existing practices and approaches.

Task 2.3.1: around 2 – 4 times per year, assess and propose new content for the RAN Collection, on the basis of information and submissions from the WG leaders. Proposals should be presented to the SC and contain information including the name of the practice and the country, details on the organisation (including ownership and financing), its address and contact person and website reference. Further information needs to be provided to identify the approach under which the practice should be mentioned as well as the target audience. Where the practice in question led to concrete deliverables (such as handbooks, training modules, videos, etc.) these should be referenced as well. The presentation of the new practice and the proposal for the inclusion into the RAN Collection shall also contain a brief explanation of the relevance of the proposed practices for tackling radicalisation, the link to a given approach, the track record of the practices, information about transferability of the specific practices and information about the conclusions of the peer review (i.e. discussion within a given working group).

Task 2.3.2: at least once per year, evaluate and, where appropriate, update the lessons learnt and revise the approaches (including the appropriateness of the current distinction between eight approaches), taking into account the experience within the RAN as well as other relevant research in measuring the effectiveness of counter radicalisation measures.

Task 3 - Provide administrative, logistic and technical support to the RAN activities

RAN activities comprise, in particular, annual RAN Plenary meetings where all RAN members and other participants meet and discuss the main achievements, challenges ahead and scope for further action or need for changes in the RAN work, and also Working Group meetings and study visits, which focus on particular topics.

Task 3.1: keep an updated calendar of forthcoming RAN activities.

Task 3.2: organise meeting room facilities, technical equipment, including interpretation where necessary and justified, catering, travel and accommodation of participants for RAN meetings and events. When available, the Commission facilitates access to meeting room facilities and technical equipment.

Task 3.3: prepare, in coordination with the WG Leaders, agendas, speeches, presentations, working papers, minutes and conclusions for RAN meetings and events.

Task 3.4: coordinate and support the RAN working groups, in particular through regular contacts with WG Leaders, and ensure coherence of all activities of the RAN.

Task 4 - Provide Member States (and - when justified - third countries) with RAN expertise, counselling and training.

The RAN CoE's and RAN practitioners' expertise shall be made available to Member States (and key priority third countries) at their request, through concrete operational support such as counselling and training services and tools. Support may be provided to single or multiple countries at once and may take different forms, e.g. analysing the needs of a particular Member State in terms of expert advice, advice about how to implement specific practices or recommendations, or in the form of support in how to design strategies in a particular area or how to set up prevent networks and structures.

If necessary and justified, background materials needed to provide support may be translated.
Task 4.1: provide the following annually:

- on average 5 training programmes of approximately 2 days length for about 25 participants;
- on average 5 workshops of approximately 2 days length for about 25 participants;
- on average 10 counselling services to individual Member States.

The RAN CoE shall propose tailored activities of this type in the AAP, on the basis of expressions of interest by Member States, and shall provide logistical and substance support. The RAN CoE shall also develop the activities and other tools in coordination with WG Leaders and avoiding any existing duplication.

Task 4.2: offer, upon request of the Commission, expertise and counselling to key priority third countries, amounting to approximately 40 working days per year.

Task 4.3: establish and update a list of "radicalisation experts" from which experts can be selected for specific tasks and any subcontracting services. The list shall be submitted to the Commission for approval, particularly before subcontracting services.

**Task 5 - Consolidate know how and expertise to the benefit of prevent work and policy**

Prepare issues papers, policy briefings, working papers, oral presentations, etc. on selected topics. Such papers and presentations shall consist of:

- An average of 4 policy/working papers (10 – 20 pages) per year to be delivered within 3 months;
- An average of 15 issue papers (5-10 pages) per year to be delivered on short notice (within 2 weeks).

The RAN CoE will submit proposals in cooperation with the WG leaders, for the consideration by the SC and approval by the Commission. A decision will be made as to the dissemination of each paper.

**Task 6 - Research-related activities**

The RAN CoE does not have as its main objective to carry out primary research.

With the objective of enhancing expertise, the RAN CoE is called to feed topical research into the activities of the RAN and the EU prevent policy, steer further targeted research activities, identifying possible synergies between different research projects and strands, or – conversely – identify knowledge gaps. Research should not be an aim in itself but should be carried out with the purpose of serving the needs of the RAN as well as those of the Commission.

Task 6.1: collect information on current research, thinking and trends relevant for prevent work. For that purpose, the RAN CoE shall draw up (an annually update) a report of around 50 pages, compiling inter alia the relevant research organisations, research projects and main findings and their relevance for the different aspects of prevent policy. A decision will be made as to the dissemination of this report.

Task 6.2: upon request on the basis of the report in task 6.1, the RAN CoE shall provide the Commission with gap analyses and submit suggestions for targeted additional research. For that purpose, the RAN CoE shall draw up (an annually update around June) a report identifying themes and subjects which require further research. The report should aim to feed into the discussion and development of research programmes such as Horizon 2020. A decision will be made as to the dissemination of this report.
Task 6.3: Organise one workshop or seminar per year between academics, practitioners and policy makers (around 100 participants over two days) to discuss research results and their possible use for prevent work of the RAN and to determine research needs and future research projects taking into account the relevance for the activities of the RAN and the EU’s Prevent policy. It should in particular strive to incorporate findings of EU funded projects. The RAN CoE shall provide logistical and substance support for this event.

Task 7 - Establish links and working relationships with relevant expert groups and networks, centres of excellence in Europe and beyond

With the triple aim of reinforcing the activities of the RAN, supporting the EU’s prevent policy (including both its internal and external aspects) as well as consolidating expertise, the RAN CoE may be asked to establish links/working relationships with international organisations and entities, with which the EU cooperates in the field of preventing radicalisation, as well as other centres of excellence, networks or forums of experts. Such links and relationships shall enhance synergies and avoid duplication. The effective establishment of such links and working relationships is subject to prior authorisation by the Commission.

Task 7.1: map relevant bodies and gather information about their activities (such as conferences, research projects etc.), and submit proposals on bodies with which links and working relationships could be mutually beneficial. The proposals should be consulted with WG Leaders and discussed within the SC. The mapping exercise and proposals shall be presented in a concept paper (about 20 pages) to be distributed to the SC.

Task 7.2: maintain contact and exchange information with the approved bodies.

Task 7.3: participate, upon written authorisation by the Commission, in at most 3 events organised by these bodies, with the objective of informing about RAN activities and the RAN experience. The RAN CoE will prepare attendance of meetings, arranging for travel and accommodation, prepare speeches and presentations and prepare reports on the meetings.

Task 8 - Provide communication, media and organisational assistance to the Commission

Task 8.1: Organisation of the meetings of the 'Steering Committee' (SC), which should take place 2 – 4 times per year in Brussels, lasting one day, and with a about 25 participants.

Task 8.2: Organisation of High Level Conferences (HLC), which brings together practitioners and Ministers or high ranking Government officials to ensure feedback by practitioners to the policy level (e.g. in terms of experiences and lessons learnt, highlighting needs for intervention and support) as well as feedback by the policy level to practitioners (e.g. in terms of political priorities and available (support) mechanisms). HLCs take place at most once per year in Brussels, lasting one day, with about 200 participants. The RAN CoE provides logistical and substantive support. Liaison with a third party to coordinate a complete solution in terms of logistics should start in due time before the event (approx. 5 months before the date of the event).

Task 8.3: Organisation of up to 2 cross cutting/thematic events, lasting one day and with around 100 participants. Proposals shall be consulted with the SC and ideally have been included in the AAP.

Task 8.4: produce a concept paper (max. 5 pages) on the development of communication and outreach products, such as video clips, interviews, and other multimedia products.
Task 8.5: establish and regularly update a calendar of the RAN CoE’s events complementing the calendar of events for RAN activities; for publication on the website.

Task 9 - Support to the EU website dedicated to the activities of the RAN Center and the RAN Center’s e-community

The RAN CoE’s website is hosted and managed by the Commission on DG HOME’s Europa Portal. It contains, at the very least, the following elements:

- A RAN collection of good practices (the ‘RAN Collection’), available in English, French and German and containing individual practices as well as lessons learnt, aims and methodology and approaches. The individual practices should be searchable, at least by theme/approach, location and institution/organisation. Searchable content shall include contact details.

- A Calendar of events, focusing on activities and events organised by the RAN but also covering other events of direct relevance such as European and international conferences, seminars, workshops, particularly where working relationships have been established.

- Archive/Mediatheque with downloadable content related to or the result of the activities of the RAN CoE, including pertinent policy documents and strategies (at local, national, European and international level), papers (in particular those related to conceptual and research activities of the RAN CoE as detailed under TASK 5 and 6), presentations, articles, speeches, etc. and, where available and appropriate, training material and other audio-visual content.

- A News section/press corner with the RAN Updates as well as other relevant material such as press articles focussing on those involving the RAN or RAN members or participants or those directly relevant for the activities of the RAN CoE.

- "RAN CoE Vademecum" compiling all relevant documents governing the activities of the RAN CoE, available in English, French and German.

The collaborative platform RAN CoE's e-community (on SINAPSE) provides a space where RAN members can engage.

Task 9.1: produce a concept pager (5 – 10 pages) with proposals on the further development of the content and presentation of the website so as to adequately reflect all activities/tasks of the RAN CoE. Proposals should include further tools necessary to support and publicise the activities of the RAN CoE (in particular, search tools for data bases and audio-visual content for the mediatheque and the press corner, but may also include the presence on social media). The proposals should be submitted in coordination with the WG Leaders, for discussion in the SC and final approval by the Commission.

Task 9.2: elaborate and regularly up-date content to be up-loaded by the Commission on the website.

Task 9.3: maintain the RAN CoE’s e-community, by managing both content and user membership. For that purpose, the RAN CoE will submit proposals on the content to be shared, membership and user rules, etc., and on possible improvements of the structure to organize the content and ways to animate the e-community. The proposals should be submitted in coordination with the WG Leaders, for discussion in the SC and final approval by the Commission.
9. **RESPECT OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES**

RAN members and participants shall act independently in the public interest, with integrity and discretion. RAN members and participants, but in particular Working Group Leaders, shall refrain from involving themselves or being involved in any activity that could result in a conflict of interests or is likely to provoke the perception of an existing conflict of interests by the general public.

A key guiding principle for the work of the RAN CoE, its members and participants in the pursuit of the objectives and tasks laid out in this Charter is the respect of fundamental rights and the rule of law.

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