

January 2016

This is an update on the activities of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). You receive this e-mail, as do some 1 800 other people, if you have participated in a RAN working group activity, or if you have registered your interest in the network. If you do not want to receive such e-mails, please let us know. Feel free to distribute this RAN Update to colleagues and invite them to subscribe.

RAN activities since the last RAN Update

RAN EXIT on exit strategies and mental health issues

The extent to which the knowledge and skills used by those in the mental health sector (psychologists and psychotherapists) to deal with individuals with mental health problems could be used in exit work was one of the main topics at the RAN EXIT meeting in Vienna on 8 December. Mental health problems can both be a driver (risk factor) as well as a consequence of exposure to violent extremism; however it is important to note that mental health issues are not present in all radicalisation processes. When it comes to the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism, it is key to identify those who are vulnerable to mental health issues, and explore what can be done to safeguard them or build resilience. Further exchange of knowledge between the mental health sector and exit work is necessary.

RAN C&N: productive brainstorming for a CVE campaign

Counter- and alternative narratives can be used as preventative tools to offer individuals multiple/different perspectives on societal challenges. The EU Internet Forum - launched in December - highlighted that just as terrorists are increasingly using the internet to radicalise and recruit, so online CT efforts must be enhanced, not least in order to plant seeds of doubt. Online efforts should however go hand-in-hand with offline initiatives, such as educating schoolchildren about the consequences of violent extremism. On the other hand, what is already being done offline can reach a wider audience and potentially have a greater impact when they have strong online components. This point was raised in the first RAN Communication and Narratives (C&N) working group meeting on 10-11 December 2015. Alongside presentations by Facebook, Google and Exit Germany on inspiring campaigns such as [Donate the hate](#), this meeting focused on designing an outline for a campaign that would draw attention to the prevention of violent extremism. The overarching theme or key message of this campaign should function as an umbrella for all kinds of local initiatives and campaigns around alternative narratives and counter speech. This “brand” should help visualise these local initiatives. Ideally, each RAN partner should be able to contribute in a way that fits their local context but is still connected to this main, overarching campaign: make 1 000 flowers bloom.

RAN study visit: German approach to combating right-wing violent extremism

On 16-17 December 2015, RAN organised a study trip to Germany (DE) in collaboration with Cultures Interactive. The objective was to increase understanding of the refugee crisis and its consequences in terms of societal polarisation and extremism. Secondly, it aimed to present best practices and approaches for combating group-focused enmity and

right-wing extremism in Germany. The programme ranged from a presentation of the federal programme 'Democracy live!' to visits to several regional and local projects. Participants agreed that the German approach provided helpful insight into how to use NGOs to combat and prevent extremism. Some of the strengths of the German approach, like the emphasis on long-term and sustainable projects, do however require financial support that might prove difficult to secure in some EU Member States.

RAN Train-the-trainer workshop delivered in Greece

On 22-23 December 2015, a RAN train-the-trainer session was held in Athens (EL). The training was hosted by Kemea and mostly attended by employees of the police, border police, immigration services and prisons. Kemea is planning to build a trainers pool for these professions and wants to reach out to local authorities. Given the fact that Greece's main challenge with religiously inspired extremism is mainly linked to Greece as a transit country for both foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and refugees, the training was adjusted accordingly. The session also touched upon right-wing extremism.

Upcoming RAN activities

RAN C&N campaign team will meet in London

One of the goals for RAN C&N in 2016 is to develop an overarching EU-wide social media campaign that functions as an umbrella for all kinds of local initiatives that provide alternative or counter narratives. On 8-9 February 2016, a RAN C&N meeting will be completely dedicated to establishing this campaign. The 'campaign team', a small group of 15 RAN C&N participants, will build on the ideas and brainstorming results from the first meeting, in December 2015. The team will now take decisions on theme, message, target group and credible voices. An action plan outlining who is doing what and how RAN C&N will reach out to the RAN network to link local initiatives to the overarching campaign on alternative/counter narrative will be one of the outcomes.

Kick-off meeting RAN LOCAL: challenges in creating local networks

On 22-23 February 2016, the first meeting of the new RAN LOCAL working group takes place. The WG's focus is on enhancing local capacities to deal with radicalisation through multi-agency structures. Participants in this working group are all involved in coordinating the prevention of radicalisation at a local or regional level. This meeting is not only a kick-off event in which the future plans, objectives and outcomes of this new working group will be discussed, but also an opportunity for the WG to look into the challenges of creating local networks. Best practices on establishing a local network on the prevention of radicalisation will be shared: what do you need? who best coordinates these networks? what is the role of the local authorities?

RAN EDU looks into training modules to empower teachers

Teachers play a key role in the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism. Empowerment and support are needed so that they may have difficult conversations in their classrooms and deal with the issue of radicalisation. On 24-25 February in Göteborg (SE), participants will hear about several training approaches designed to empower teachers. Participants will also visit the Swedish Toleranzprojekt, a project that has now been running for 22 years and in which educators play a key role.

Multi-agency cooperation will be the focus of RAN P&P's next meeting in Sweden

On 24-25 February 2016, RAN P&P will gather a select group of practitioners from different countries in Europe to discuss the issue of multi-agency cooperation. What does a multi-agency structure look like from the perspective of prison and probation?

How can it contribute to efforts to deal with radicalised offenders? What are the challenges to developing partnerships? Particular focus will be given to the Swedish approach.

Noteworthy information

Against Violent Extremism (AVE) network releases Counter Narrative “how-to” videos as part of upcoming toolkit

The AVE network is developing a [Counter-Narrative Toolkit](#) that provides activists and content creators with a step-by-step guide to counter extremist messages online. The toolkit guides users through three key steps: how to plan a campaign, how to create content, and how to promote a campaign. The toolkit is created with the support of Google Ideas and Facebook, and encourages effective counter-narrative campaigning for individuals and organisations working in countering violent extremism (CVE). In anticipation of the website’s launch, AVE released three counter-narrative ‘how-to’ videos to coincide with the toolkit: [What is a Counter-Narrative?](#), [Creativity in Counter-Narratives](#), and [Counter-Narratives and Social Media](#).

Dissemination of RAN lessons at non-RAN events

RAN expert Harald Weilnböck was invited to present RAN at the Dialogue Workshop ‘Radical Groups: Security Threats in the Euro-Mediterranean in Cairo on 5 November 2015. The event was organised by the Al Ahram Center for Strategic Studies within the framework of EuroMeSCo’s activities. The workshop presented and discussed the research results on current trends and the reasons for radical groups’ popularity in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

RAN YF&C co-chair Kelly Simcock recommended several RAN lessons during the Cities Against Extremism conference in Aarhus on 18 November 2015. One of the recommendations was to engage communities, including young people; attention should be paid to issues that matter to them, such as foreign policy discourse.

Hamp Harmsen, co-chair of RAN H&SC, presented RAN at the CESI High-level event on 15 December in Paris. He promoted the prevention of radicalisation through training for first-line practitioners and exchange of best practices.

Extra support available for Member States

National authorities can apply for customised RAN support in their Member State

Since mid 2014, no less than 19 RAN support deliveries, such as trainings, workshops and counselling, were enjoyed by Member States. The Commission have budgeted an additional 20 deliveries of such support in 2016. Already three Member States have prepared or submitted their applications. The RAN CoE can deliver support without Member State funding on a specific question or topic on receipt of a request for advice and assistance. Member States interested in such support should e-mail ran@radareurope.nl, and are advised to do so swiftly, allowing for proper planning. More information can be found in this [leaflet](#).

RAN Calendar

February 2016

March 2016

<p>RAN C&N <i>Meeting with campaign team</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 8-9 February, London (UK)</p>	<p>RAN SC <i>Steering Committee meeting</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 29 March, Brussels (BE)</p>
<p>RAN LOCAL <i>Kick-off meeting with focus on local networks</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 22-23 February, Rotterdam (NL)</p>	<p>RAN RVT <i>European Day on Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 11 March, Brussels (BE)</p>
<p>RAN P&P <u>Date and location:</u> 24-25 February, Stockholm (SE)</p>	<p>RAN EXIT <i>Develop consent in a methodological minimum and framework of EXIT interventions</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 15-16 March, (TBC)</p>
<p>RAN EDU <i>Empowering educators and support teachers</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 24-25 February, Goteborg (SE)</p>	

Often, many more people register their interest in an event than can be accommodated. So that expectations are realistic, please note that the Working Group leaders decide who will be invited to attend RAN WG meetings. When selecting participants (depending on the meeting topic), division of Member States, type of expertise, contributions in meetings, etc. will be taken into consideration. Additionally, please note that only one person per organisation can be invited.

Contact details

The RAN Centre of Excellence is implemented by RadarEurope, which is a subsidiary of the RadarGroup:

RAN Centre of Excellence
 Veemarkt 83
 NL - 1019 DB Amsterdam
 The Netherlands
 +31 (0)20 463 50 50 (office)
RAN@radaradvies.nl

Follow the RAN on Twitter via [@RANEurope](https://twitter.com/RANEurope)

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/index_en.htm