

*This is an update on the activities of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). You receive this e-mail, along with some 3 500 other people, because you have participated in a RAN activity, or 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](#).*

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## RAN activities since the last RAN Update

### **RAN Steering Committee**

Kasper Fisker (Denmark) was appointed as the new co-chair of RAN LOCAL at the 16 May meeting, and now leads this working group together with Jessika Soors. Angel Vicente Lopez Muriel committed himself to co-chairing RAN P&P until at least the end of the year, removing the immediate need to select a successor. The working group leaders presented updated the European Commission on the second prevent policy-makers network meeting, the ongoing European Court of Auditors Audit on the effectiveness of the Commission's contribution to helping Member States address radicalisation, and a German-French proposal to create an EU Centre on Radicalisation. In response to the proposal, working group leaders underlined the value of practitioner exchange in a network of working groups steered - to a large degree - by peers. The working group leaders also provided input for the drafting of the returnee manual and the inclusion of new best practices in the RAN Collection.

### **RAN study visit: local approach in Helsinki**

The study visit on local approaches was a combined effort between the RAN CoE and the City of Helsinki. It comprised presentations at City hall, the Navigator Centre, the police department and several NGOs involved in preventing and countering radicalisation at a local level.

The city of Helsinki has adopted a holistic approach, in which radicalisation is mostly tackled through general prevention programmes, rather than a specific CVE approach. This is based on the lessons the municipality has learned from prevention measures targeting school shootings. The city argues that prematurely marking signals as radicalisation can have a stigmatising and counter-productive effect. Although participants agreed with this reasoning, they were generally of the opinion that such a holistic approach can only exist in an environment in which active recruitment

and a history of terrorist attacks is absent. The ex post paper on the study visit will be published on the RAN website.

### **Thematic event: Responses to returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families**

Concerns over EU citizens returning from Daesh-held territories and other terrorist-controlled areas have been present for some time now. Proper responses have however neither been defined, nor put in place. The diversity of the returnee group complicates a coherent response: some are radicalised fighters with combat experience, others might be disillusioned teens who were once recruited but are now fleeing Daesh-held territories. Among those returning are children, some born abroad. The thematic conference on 19 June brought together over 150 practitioners, policy-makers and academics. The draft version of the returnee manual was presented and discussed. It included a checklist for EU Member States. A final version of the manual will be available online this summer.

### **Joint event RAN EXIT-C&N: working with formers**

Former extremists are often seen as credible messengers in counter or alternative narratives. They also make valuable contributions to exit work. In Bordeaux on 26-27 June, the RAN C&N and RAN Exit working groups discussed the challenges and opportunities of working with formers. The meeting was attended by formers, exit workers and online campaigners. Some of the conclusions were:

- Simply renouncing violence is not enough, and it takes time before a former extremist should contribute to exit work or P/CVE communications, even though he or she might want to get involved quickly.
- Like any other professional working in this field, when formers want to become exit workers, they need to have completed an education, such as social work or psychology.
- Formers can play different roles in this field, either publicly or behind the scenes.
- As exit workers need violent extremists to be aware of their programmes, the online space can also open access to new clients.

The ex post paper on the event, to be published on the RAN website, will take the form of a handbook on the dos and don'ts of involving a former as a credible messenger in communication, and as a coach for exit work. Also on the agenda for the RAN CoE is exploring how to support a matchmaking network of formers to whom practitioners in the field of Exit and / or C&N can reach out for cooperation and advice.

### ***RAN EXIT: learning from cults***

In many ways, there is a correlation between radicalisation and cults, with religion or ideology being secondary to isolated or vulnerable people's need to find a sense of belonging. The 27-28 June meeting was organised so that RAN could take full advantage of the experience and knowledge within this adjacent field. The meeting was co-organised with the International Cult Studies Association (ICSA). The event proved that both fields can benefit greatly from one another, both from theory and practice:

- The techniques used by cults and extremist groups for recruitment and retaining are very similar.
- The lessons learned on resocialising second-generation cult members could be useful when dealing with children born in the so called caliphate.
- A wealth of methodologies and theoretical research concerning resocialisation, family support and counselling.

Lessons learned on each sub-theme will be described in the ex post paper, alongside topics for future collaboration.

### **RAN YF&C: strengthening community voices**

Investing in community engagement and community empowerment is key to preventing extremism and radicalisation when they are still at an early stage. On 29-30 June, the RAN YF&C meeting on strengthening community resilience took place in London. Over 30 practitioners and local policy-makers active in community engagement and resilience building participated, offering a variety of perspectives on how to empower community voices and build community resilience to polarisation and radicalisation. The meeting focused on the challenges to doing this, such as lack of a safe space, dealing with media and funding. Valuable lessons and methods were discussed for dealing with women / mothers, youth involvement, community engagement and dialogue, and cooperation between communities and authorities. These will be collected in the ex post paper on the meeting, to be published on the RAN website.

### **RAN HS&C: multi- or cross-cultural approaches to prevent polarisation and radicalisation**

On 4-5 July, the RAN Health and Social Care (H&SC) Working Group gathered in Dublin to address growing polarisation that can lead to violent extremism. A key issue on the table was the role of social and healthcare professionals in bridging this gap. The meeting focused on polarisation and 'how to' address it using multi- or cross-cultural approaches. Participants comprised social workers, those approaching individuals in the street, psychologists and community workers. All have a professional responsibility to speak out against radicalisation. Success depends on contact and relationship-building with local communities, cross-cultural awareness, and creating information flows between different agencies and professionals. The ex post paper on the meeting will be published on the RAN website.

### **RAN P&P study visit: managing extremism in prison and probation - England and Wales**

The visit to London was timely, coming one week after new separation centres were opened at Her Majesty's Prison Frankland. After a first day learning about how Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is organised, both generally and in relation to extremism,, the second day included a visit to Her Majesty's Prison Frankland, in London. Speakers presented the new separation centres, which were created following a recommendation in the 'Acheson review' (2016). Participants were able to take a short walk around the prison and were introduced to the Counter Terrorism Intelligence Offices working there. Their task is to closely monitor the situation in the prison in relation to extremism. An ex post paper on the visit will follow in due course and will be available on the RAN website.

### **How should we manage polarisation? RAN is working on practical manual**

Eighty practitioners from all over Europe gathered in Amsterdam on 6 July to discuss a concern common to all -growing polarisation. This polarisation is feeding radicalisation and leading to in hate crimes. Cutting through the expertise of different RAN working groups, police officers, teachers and other practitioners worked on a draft version of the Polarisation Management Manual. The manual provides strategic understanding, inspired by Bart Brandsma's model, topped with lots of practical suggestions from RAN practitioners. It covers, for example, how to invest in the non-polarised middle ground, and how to avoid helping the pushers of polarisation. The manual will be disseminated during the summer.

## **Other news**

## Organisations supporting victims or terrorism

RAN already works with many organisations around Europe that support victims of terrorism in different ways. As we are committed to keeping our network as up-to-date as possible, we would like to hear from other organisations active in this area. If you are aware of such groups or networks, please contact the Working Group for Remembrance of the Victims of Terrorism [ran@radareurope.nl](mailto:ran@radareurope.nl).

## New publications

RAN produces papers on a variety of topics every month, while institutions within our network also publish interesting work. When relevant, we highlight new publications. If you are interested in seeing your publication in this list, please contact the RAN team via [ran@radaradvies.nl](mailto:ran@radaradvies.nl).

RAN publications:

- [Gap analysis of radicalisation research](#)
- [The role of police officers in dealing with jihadist returnees](#)

## RAN Calendar

August 2017	September 2017
There will be no working group events in August.	<p>Steering Committee <i>Quarterly meeting</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 27 September, Brussels</p> <p>RAN YF&amp;C <i>Prep meeting for youth workers</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 28 September, Amsterdam</p> <p>RAN EDU <i>Working with 18+ youngsters</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 28-29 September, Paris</p> <p>RAN RVT <i>Workshop with organisations of victims of terrorism</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 12-13 September, Berlin</p>

Often, many more people register their interest in an event than can be accommodated. When selecting participants (depending on the meeting topic), division of Member States, type of expertise, contributions in meetings, etc. will be taken into consideration. Please note that only one person per organisation can be invited.

## Contact details

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Website: [ec.europa.eu/ran](http://ec.europa.eu/ran)