

December 2017

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

### **Dealing with fake news, conspiracies and propaganda in the classroom: media literacy in the digital era**

A group of 39 RAN participants attended the RAN EDU meeting in Budapest on 29-30 November, half of them teachers, principals and members of teachers' associations. Other participants included researchers, academics, media literacy trainers and project managers, non-governmental organisation representatives and a student newspaper editor. This diverse group of people from different backgrounds was ideal for exploring possible synergies, best practises and collaboration opportunities between teachers and media literacy organisations already working on the prevention of radicalisation/extremism in education settings.

### **RAN YF&C: The role of youth work in the prevention of radicalisation**

If no safe space is provided for young people to discuss taboos and controversial topics, they will look for answers elsewhere, participants at a recent RAN YF&C meeting agreed. This creates an opening for on- and offline recruitment by extremists.

Inspiring practices and methodologies for PVE in online youth work, detached youth work and training were presented at the meeting, and participants discussed how current initiatives by the European Commission's DG Education and Culture and SALTO could help youth workers in the prevention of radicalisation.

RAN YF&C will produce a paper and practical tool to help youth workers become aware of their own bias, and to find ways to discuss taboos and controversial topics.

The meeting took place on 6-7 December in Vienna.

### **Risk assessment: lone actors**

The RAN H&SC working group meeting built on a 2016 H&SC meeting held in Zagreb on this topic. Despite the delays caused by snowfall, the meeting was attended by 32 health and social care professionals including a (clinical) psychologist, psychiatrist, academics, social care workers, police (psychologists), criminologist and security and intelligence agencies. With this diverse multidisciplinary group, those present sought to identify relevant methodologies, such as risk assessment tools. Several case studies were also presented. Participants showed a healthy, critical attitude towards risk assessment tools and their (positive) use in identifying lone actors. Lone actor terrorism is not a new phenomenon and is generally a product of its time. Discussions highlighted how risk assessment tools might need to be a continuous 'work in progress' and would certainly benefit from a multidisciplinary approach. Nonetheless, participants made clear that there is no need to keep reinventing the wheel. Practitioners may simply look at what is already out there and trust their gut feeling in assessments.

The ex post paper – to be published on the RAN website – will offer concrete recommendations and practices derived from the meeting, which took place in Mechelen (Belgium) on 12 and 13 December.

### **RAN P&P: the extreme right and radicalisation**

The prison and probation services from many EU Member States were represented at the RAN P&P meeting in Prague on 12-13 December. Taking the RAN manuals on returnees and polarisation as guides, experiences and practices were shared. A tough 'game' in which participants were asked to assess the extent of extremism for a prisoner approaching his or her release date and to design a plan to deal with the release served to underline the complexities of such situations.

The meeting also looked at the state of play in dealing with right-wing extremism in prison and probation settings in light of the movement's growth and the increasing number of ways in which the phenomenon can be found in society. The Czech Republic, Germany and Sweden presented their approaches, and the meeting concluded that regular tools are already sufficient as there is a surplus supply of tools targeting extremism in general, as well as some addressing right-wing extremism in particular.

**Ex-post papers on all RAN Working Group meetings are published on the RAN website shortly after meetings.**

## **Coming up**

### **RAN engagement**

A TAIEX regional workshop on preventing and countering violent extremism will take place in Beirut (Lebanon) on 17-18 January. In cooperation with the European External Action Service Counter-Terrorism - coordinator to Lebanon, a RAN delegation of practitioner experts will provide input on topics such as the importance of preventing radicalisation, and key actors, radicalisation in prisons, (online) counter and alternative narratives and multi-agency cooperation on local/regional level.

### **Exit work for left-wing extremism?**

Exit workers, experts on left-wing extremism and former left-wing radicals will meet in Athens on 29 and 30 January. Although currently less prevalent than religiously and right-wing inspired extremism, left-wing extremism is showing an upward swing. To date there has been very little attention or support for those wanting to leave left-wing groups. The RAN

EXIT working group will look at current patterns with regard to entering and leaving left-wing environments, assessing the similarities with other forms of extremism, as well as the differences. From there it will be explored to what extent exit work can be valuable for left wing extremists, now and in the future.

## New publications

### UNESCO releases new research on youth and violent extremism in social media

UNESCO has released the results of the study 'Youth and violent extremism on social media'. It provides a global overview of research (2012-2016) into the assumed roles played by social media in violent radicalisation processes.

Reviewing more than 550 published studies from scientific and 'grey literature' covering titles in English, French, Arabic and Chinese languages, the research finds that violent extremists are very much spread out across the Internet, and that there is a growing body of knowledge about how terrorists use cyberspace.

Read the [study](#).

## Policy and legislation developments

From next year, the RAN Updates will also provide overviews of policy and legislation developments, the latest research, evidence-based findings, trends across workstreams, and forthcoming CVE/PVE conferences.

Don't hesitate to contact us, should you have anything that you would like to share!

## RAN Calendar

January 2018	February 2018
<p>TAIEX regional workshop <i>Importance of the prevention of radicalisation and key actors, radicalisation in prisons, (online) counter and alternative narratives and multi-agency cooperation on local/regional level</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 17-18 January, Beirut, (Lebanon)</p> <p>RAN EXIT <i>Left-wing Extremism</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 29-30 January, Athens (Greece)</p>	<p>RAN C&amp;N <i>A psychological/neuroscience perspective</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 7-8 February, Vienna (Austria)</p> <p>RAN EDU <i>Further and Higher Education</i> <u>Date and location:</u> 8-9 February, Manchester (UK)</p> <p>RAN Steering Committee <u>Date and location:</u> 23 February, Brussels (Belgium)</p> <p>LOCAL - YF&amp;C <i>Joint Working Group event</i></p>

	Date and location: 22-24 February, Prague (Czech Republic)
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## Contact details

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