

This is an update on the activities of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). You receive this e-mail, along with more than 4 000 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 last RAN Update

RAN LOCAL: how to find the right training match

The focus of the RAN LOCAL meeting on 7-8 December in Berlin was how local coordinators select training for their partners in countering and preventing violent extremism (CVE/PVE). Training is central to any CVE/PVE strategy. Some 24 experienced local coordinators joined discussions on how to select the right training (goal, target audience) and the elements that make training good. The insights and tips & tricks shared are available in the ex post paper on this meeting.

Regional workshop, Lebanon

Multi-agency cooperation, online recruitment by extremists, the development of counter and alternative narratives, radicalisation in prisons, and the role of civil society in the prevention of radicalisation were all on the agenda at a Beirut workshop on preventing and countering violent extremism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region on 17-18 January. Organised in the context of the European Commission's technical assistance and information exchange instrument (TAIEX), the event brought together experts from the RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN working groups on local approaches, communication and narratives, and prison and probation, with national and regional policy-makers and NGO representatives.

RAN EXIT: leaving left-wing extremism behind

The first RAN Working Group meeting of the year took place in Athens and brought together a small group of exit practitioners interested in left-wing extremism. After an overview of the left-wing extremism situation in Greece and Norway, practitioners discussed similarities and differences between this form of extremism with others. The discussion touched upon issues

such as harm caused, level of cohesion between different groups, attraction to left-wing extremism and its scapegoats. The debate was enriched by first-hand accounts from former left-wing extremists, who explained the drivers for leaving extremist groups. The group was also introduced to practices used to support an exit from left-wing extremist groups, as well as real-life (anonymous) cases that demonstrated the challenges involved. The presentations were followed by open discussion on if and why left-wing extremism should be considered concerning, and how to reach out to left-wing extremists, and then engage and work with them.

The lessons learned during RAN working group meetings are shared in ex post papers. Papers are published on the [RAN website](#), usually around a month after the meeting date.

Coming up

RAN C&N: a psychological/neuroscience perspective on how extremist propaganda works, and how to counter it

Why do people listen on some occasions and not on others? And what decides whether or not they are convinced by an argument? These underlying aspects of communication will be tackled at the RAN C&N meeting in Vienna on 7-8 February. The objective is to find out what psychology and neuroscience can tell us about how people (and extremists) make up their minds, in particular in relation to sacred values, morals and identity. With help from social psychologists, marketing specialists and experienced practitioners, we want to learn how 'motivated reasoning', 'active information avoidance', 'confirmation bias' and 'backfire effect', in combination with values/morals and identity, are relevant for *effective* alternative and counter narratives in the P/CVE field. The outcomes of this meeting will be shared in an ex post paper intended to support practitioners in communicating more effectively in the P/CVE context.

RAN EDU: free speech, extremism, prevention of radicalisation in higher education

Universities are not immune to the threat to fundamental values posed by extremism. In fact, higher education faces by specific challenges as students come from all over the world. RAN EDU will have a meeting on radicalisation within higher education institutions across the EU (e.g. universities and colleges) in Manchester on 8-9 February.

Generally, the care infrastructure is less developed in colleges and universities than in primary and secondary education. Furthermore, institutes – and especially universities – are places for free thinking and free speech. But what is the best way to deal with extreme and extremist voices polarising and perhaps even recruiting within these institutions? What should be done with 'militant student associations' for example? How can higher/tertiary education boost democratic resilience within these institutions, build resilience and safeguard students against recruitment? For this meeting we would like to encourage student organisations, higher education management, teachers and specialists in this particular field to join.

RAN Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be an opportunity to discuss the interim report of High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R), as well as recent policy developments. RAN will also present its 2018 calendar of activities, including the six policy & practice events planned for 2018.

RAN LOCAL-YF&C: engaging with communities

Local authority representatives and community leaders from all over Europe will meet in Prague on 22-23 February to discuss cooperation between these groups in building resilience against recruitment and radicalisation. Communities can play a very important role in this challenge, especially if they are supported by local authorities. However, setting up such a form of collaboration requires some effort. During this joint meeting, RAN LOCAL and RAN YF&C will build on the outcomes of previous meetings on this topic, by discussing inspiring practices and introducing a step-by-step approach towards building strong and effective cooperation.

RAN YOUNG: how to hold difficult conversations

First-line practitioners must regularly hold difficult conversations with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation. But what are difficult topics? According to whom? Why are these topics sensitive and how should we address them? RAN YOUNG will discuss these questions during their first meeting of the year in Stockholm on 1-2 March.

New publications

The following ex-post papers were recently published on the RAN website:

- [Drop-outs and going back to school](#)
- [Local Action Plan Academy](#)
- [RAN Handbook on CVE/PVE training programmes](#)
- [RAN EDU's Guide to training programmes](#)
- [Risk assessment of lone actors](#)
- [Strengthening community resilience to polarisation and radicalisation](#)
- [The role of youth work in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism](#)
- [The role of religion in exit programmes and religious counselling in prison and probation settings](#)

Policy developments

Six policy and practice events will take place in 2018:

- Common PCVE challenges in the Western Balkans and the EU, 4 April, Sofia (Bulgaria) - In collaboration with Bulgarian Presidency
- Involving young people in counter and alternative narratives - , 25 April, Madrid (Spain)
- Resilience of children (aged below 12) against radicalisation, 4 July, venue TBC
- Working with local communities in CVE, 28 September, Berlin (Germany)
- Leaving terrorism behind, October or November, Vienna (Austria)
- Police, prisons and probation - Optimising Triple P (Police – Prison – Probation), 23 November, Warsaw (Poland)

The target audience for each one-day event is a combination of policy-makers and practitioners relevant to the topic.

The events shall contribute to a better mutual understanding, the identification of approaches and practices that could be implemented at national level, as well as insights into how such approaches and practices can be adapted to the relevant national, regional or local context.

An ex post paper will reflect the discussions and shall offer guiding principles as well as – where appropriate – proposals for concrete follow-up actions at Member State level.

Call for proposals

The European Commission has launched a call for projects on preventing and countering radicalisation leading to violent extremism and addressing one of the following priorities:

1. Increasing awareness, protecting, strengthening the resilience of individuals and in particular vulnerable groups (such as children, youth, etc...) to polarisation.
2. Developing targeted exit programmes enabling radicalised individuals to deradicalise and disengage and rehabilitate based on an integrated multi-agency approach.

Applications should be sent by 15 March 2018.

More information [here](#).

RAN Calendar

February 2018	March 2018
<p>RAN C&N A psychological/neuroscience perspective on how extremist propaganda works and how to counter it <u>Date and location:</u> 7-8 February Vienna (Austria)</p> <p>RAN EDU free speech, extremism, prevention of radicalisation in higher education <u>Date and location:</u> 8-9 February, Manchester (UK)</p> <p>Steering Committee <u>Date and location:</u> 20 February, Brussels (Belgium)</p> <p>LOCAL - YF&C Engaging with communities</p>	<p>RAN POL The role of the police online <u>Date and location:</u> 1-2 March, Oslo (Norway)</p> <p>RAN YOUNG How to hold difficult conversations? <u>Date and location:</u> 1-2 March, Stockholm (Sweden)</p> <p>European Remembrance Day for Victims of terrorism <u>Date and location:</u> 9 March, Brussels (Belgium)</p>

Date and location: 22-23 February, Prague (Czech Republic)	
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The full calendar for 2018 is available online

If you are interested in attending a forthcoming RAN meeting, please contact the appropriate RAN CoE staff member. Check the RAN website for a [full list of contacts by working group](#).

Contact details

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

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Would you like more frequent updates on RAN's activities? Get access to all public RAN papers as they are released, other RAN news and thought-provoking articles on the radicalisation process by following RAN on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [YouTube](#).

Website: ec.europa.eu/ran