

# EX POST PAPER

## Joint meeting RAN POL & RAN LOCAL

### Who is in charge?

#### Introduction

*“We use the same language, have the same vision and are more similar than I expected. One hour after the meeting had started, I did not know who was from police and who from a local government anymore”.* A quote that exactly describes the atmosphere of the RAN POL & LOCAL Joint meeting that took place in Berlin on 20-21 October. Police officers and local authorities gathered to discuss the key role they play in the prevention of radicalisation. Although they are in this topic together, it is not always clear who is in charge, and what the differences are in the responsibilities and goals that they have. At the meeting the question was raised whether police or local authorities should be in charge, or should this be decided on a case to case basis? What are the benefits if something is police lead, or local authority lead? These, and other issues, will be addressed in this ex post paper.

## Qualities and challenges

Police and local authorities have different qualities they use in the prevention of radicalisation. Police are, on the one hand, good at protecting communities, ensuring security, assessing risks and data collection. Local authorities are, on the other hand, good at cooperating with different stakeholders, providing services like social services, schools and child protection and also services aimed at deradicalisation and reintegration, working with (vulnerable) people at individual level in long-term relationships and gathering 'soft' information. In some countries, local authorities could provide for resources like budget, training and interventions, in other countries it is the police that has more resources available linked to the prevention of radicalisation. Although these qualities are helpful in the prevention of radicalisation, local authorities and police also face different challenges. Police might face a challenge in cooperating with other stakeholders due to their strict information sharing protocols, while local authorities are influenced by the political agenda which, in the current situation, might lead to more (resources for and focus on) repression instead of prevention. In general, a lack of trust in sharing and handling each other's information remains a challenge in cooperation between police and local authorities.

## Who is in charge?

Although every case is different and decisions should be taken on a case to case basis, some responsibilities are more logically assigned to police and some to local authorities. In general, police should provide for public safety and stop all criminal acts and recruitment, which could fuel radicalisation. Local authorities are in charge of safeguarding and including other actors like schools, NGO's, social workers, health workers and sports clubs.

Police and local authorities could both be responsible, or even better, make a joint effort to:

- Show leadership. Especially if there is a tense situation, this could be done by a crisis unit consisting of the police and mayor / local authority.
- Minimise and lower risks. By risk management (local authorities), which brings or keep the risk as low as possible, or risk assessment (police);
- Have or set up a media strategy with local and reliable voices. It is important that police, local authorities and other professionals involved communicate both offline and online with the same frame, use the same message and say the same thing, especially in times of crisis;
- Keep on investing in a good relationship with the community through dialogue and by community police officers.

It seems that there are parallel processes, and both police and local authorities can play different and the same roles. Therefore it should be clarified who takes the first step. Is it the authority who gets the information, that should inform others and activate partners? Is it the one who picks up the phone? Who takes the next steps? Are these steps clear in your country? Is this process figured out? First of all, a protocol, process or system is needed in this. Police and local authorities should start by discussing these questions. As described below, other factors can contribute to the cooperation as well.

## How could police and local authorities ideally cooperate?

Besides clarifying roles in a protocol, process or system, other factors can contribute to a better cooperation between police and local authorities. A shared goal, strategy and opinion on what to achieve, and how to deal with the phenomenon of radicalisation will definitely improve cooperation. A training in a multi-agency setting will improve cooperation as well, and will make it easier for partners to liaise with each other. Key actors therefore need to be identified, and if this has not happened yet, be involved. Another factor that could improve cooperation is to combine the national, regional and local level. In some countries the cooperation could be captured in a structure like a law, in other countries this might already work without additional laws. Generally speaking, budget is needed. If (new) budget is not available, police and local authorities could join forces and apply for funding or budget from the national level, or start a cooperation with existing resources.

### First steps

The first steps to take for police and local authorities is to, if this does not happen yet, start talking to each other on a regular basis. Knowing each other is of importance to create a trust based relationship and understanding which is essential for effective cooperation. While investing in the relationship, the next step is to define a shared vision, the reasoning why to cooperate together but also the where to invest in (and where not). This could be captured in a local strategy or action plan<sup>1</sup>. It would also be good to assess why information sharing is of importance and to define which kind of information needs to be shared in what ways. Two reasons could be: by sharing information you know what each partner / department does, this minimises the amount of crisis between them and creates a more calm and effective work environment. On top of that, it creates effective actions that are coordinated. After taking these first steps the road is cleared to establish working relations and coordinate who will be responsible for doing what in which situation.

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<sup>1</sup> The [RAN Policy paper on 'Developing a local prevent framework and guiding principles'](#) is interesting to read as a follow-up.

## Attachment – Helpful document on Preparation for tensions in society and radicalisation

When it comes to local capacity building and being prepared the two-pager with Ten Points guidance<sup>2</sup> by the Dutch National coordinator NCTV, can be helpful in other countries as well. It's written for local governments. The following summary is made by the RAN CoE.

### When there are no signals of radicalisation yet (be prepared)

1. Appoint a contact person or coordinator, for questions and signals
2. Build a network with Muslim communities and key persons
3. Invest in expertise and training for practitioners
4. Draft a local action plan and strategy, involving local partners from safety and social domain (include education, social work)
5. Build a network for dealing with future signals, incorporating police, youth and social work, schools, housing agencies)
6. Make arrangement with all actors on information sharing, both content and procedures
7. Keep city council informed, paying attention to potential tensions between informing the council, privacy and safety

### And if there are signals of radicalisation

8. Establish a multi-agency case management for eminent cases of radicalisation
9. Work in individual cases with tailored combination of hard and soft measures, coercive & repressive and care
10. Don't overlook the direct environment, for instance brothers and sisters.

Most of these ten points for Dutch municipalities are up to a certain extent transferable to other countries. In other countries it could also be the local municipalities who are in charge of taking these preventative steps, but it could also be the local police or other local authorities.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.nctv.nl/binaries/10punten-plan-def-aug-2015\\_tcm31-32613.pdf](https://www.nctv.nl/binaries/10punten-plan-def-aug-2015_tcm31-32613.pdf)