

**POL**

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**CONCLUSION PAPER**

*RAN POL meeting – Local training programmes in P/CVE  
24-25 November 2021, Online*

# Local Training Programmes in P/CVE

## Key outcomes

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The prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE) landscape is changing strongly. The playing field of radicalisation and violent extremism is more shattered, diversified, and plays a role on meso, macro and micro levels, which makes it harder to grasp. To understand these new developments and challenges, local training programmes are needed, tailored to the local radicalisation context and the specific local multi-agency cooperation in P/CVE.

On 24 and 25 November, police experts in education and police trainers gathered online to share and discuss their experiences and insights on local training programmes. More specifically, the focus was on local training programmes that empower local actors to be effective in preventing and countering radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism.

The key outcomes were:

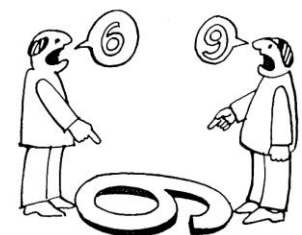
- Based on the presentations and discussions, there seems to be agreement on basic fundamentals for local training programmes: training in mixed groups (building and boosting cooperation and trust in the local networks); a shift away from sending information / “knowledge” towards practicing (interactivity, exercises, practicing skills).
- Training in the existing local networks should be aimed at searching for and finding the common sense of urgency for P/CVE and a shared language. Multi-agency working is grounded in understanding and respecting the other actors and using a common language by first-line practitioners.
- There was huge support for the Hexagon tool from the Canadian Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence. The participants suggested an event in 2022 for multiple working groups to discuss this approach and develop a European version that is adaptable to local contexts and translated into Member States’ languages. This European version should also have a train-the-trainer component.

This paper summarises the discussion at the online Police and law enforcement Working Group (RAN POL) meeting held on 24 and 25 November. It starts by presenting the highlights of the discussion on different local training programmes in P/CVE from the last 2 years onwards and on practical materials and exercises to use during the trainings. After discussing the key elements from the presentations, the paper also contains recommendations for developers and deliverers of the local training programmes. Finally, it concludes by describing practices of interest, and also makes recommendations and provides suggestions for follow-up and further reading.

## Highlights of the discussion

The meeting hosted different countries to present key local training programmes in P/CVE. These countries were Poland, France with two examples, the Netherlands with two examples and Belgium (see Annexes). While there were a lot of common areas, differences were also observed.

- Recently, many more new local training programmes in P/CVE are being developed compared to 5 years ago. The trainings focus on practicing skills with a mixed group of local partners.
  - There is also an increase in providers of local trainings. But this “radicalisation industry” does not always guarantee quality.
- One key element in the meeting was the question of ownership and responsibilities of the different agencies involved in local training. The discussion focused on the way in which the police is involved in delivering the local training programmes.
  - In the Dutch example, the safety and care houses organise the local trainings for a mixed group of first-line practitioners. This is a joint responsibility, in which the police is participating based on its long-standing expertise.
  - In the Belgian example, the integrated police (local and federal) developed the first training programmes and disseminated these later in a multi-agency context. Gradually, the programmes have been taken over by regional governments to assist their local partners. The “information officer”, which is a mandatory position in every police district, is often involved as they are the local reference and present on different platforms dealing with radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism.
- There are trainings based on andragogy in Poland, which forms a good basis for most training programmes. Andragogy focuses on adult learning. There are four principles of andragogy in the Polish example of local training programmes:
  1. Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
  2. Experiences (including mistakes) of adult learners provide the basis for the learning activities.
  3. Adult learning is problem-centred rather than content-oriented.
  4. Adults are more interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance to and impact on their job or personal life.
- Based on the presentations and group discussion, the best local training programmes are the ones that promote the participant’s self-efficacy. This is a training on empowering one’s already existing talent and boosting their skills. The presentations showed that these kind of trainings are more interesting to the training participants than just sending out information.
- Additionally to the point of not just sending out information, the local training programmes mentioned during this meeting are also focusing on local coalitions-building and trust-building between the local partners. “To

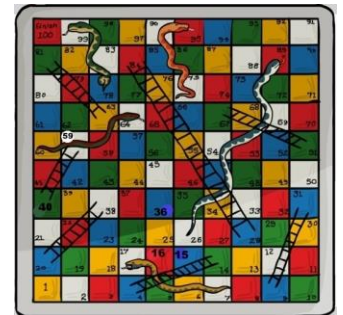


step into each other's shoes" results in a better understanding between the partners, which leads to trust-building and better cooperation.

- One of the French examples was a training with virtual reality glasses through which practitioners stepped into different scenes. For example, this helped a police officer to better understand the mental health context.

The meeting hosted an exchange market between participants. The participants prepared practical materials to share with the group for free. In that way, the participants could learn from one another's free material and use it in their trainings.

- These materials helped to make the local training programmes as practical as possible. A selection of the materials are:
  - The Radicards are a very easy exercise to use for each training participant, because it is a card game. These kinds of exercises offer a learning experience that is not knowledge-centred.
  - "6 – 9, or you don't know what you don't know" is an example shared by the RAN Train-the-trainer programme. It is a tabletop exercise where teams work on the same case but are unaware that they have unique information that others do not have.
  - The use of the snakes and ladders board <sup>(1)</sup> to illustrate the dynamic processes of radicalisation, as well as incidents and interventions that can make an individual more or less radicalised.
  - Working with scenarios with real-life actors to work on verbal and non-verbal communication skills and knowledge on radicalisation.



## Recommendations

The presentations and the material exchange market activity initiated the discussion on the basic fundamentals for local training programmes in P/CVE. A distinction can be made between the development of the training and its delivery. Developing a training focuses on the (learning) goals of local training programmes in P/CVE:

- Trainings should have a "theory of change", meaning to **incorporate in your training what change you want to achieve with the development of the new training**. Think of what change your training programme will bring about and what you want to achieve in relation to the existing curricula of local trainings.
  - Think and learn about the participants' roles, qualities and limitations in order to decide what you want to change in their daily work.
  - By looking at the participants' needs, define the learning goals.
- It is important to **incorporate new trends in P/CVE**, the needs of practitioners, and developments in tools used in your existing and new training programmes.
- Trainings should **adapt to the local situation**, because not all areas face the same issues. Design the trainings according to the local context and by looking at the competences of practitioners in this local multi-agency context.

<sup>(1)</sup> "Snakes and ladders" as a model for the dynamic process of radicalisation was introduced by David Sloggett.

The second key point in recommendations is focused on delivering the training:

- The training should be in **mixed groups**. Different locally involved practitioners working with vulnerable (young) people should be involved in local trainings. Establish and build a local ring of facilitators from law enforcement agencies and local communities as well as practitioners, researchers and local authorities, and especially from municipalities.
  - Focus the training on respecting the differences between actors, in combination with looking for a shared sense of urgency and goal. Participants need to find (not be told) a shared language. The local training programme should focus on strengthening the used, shared language in P/CVE between local partners.
  - Additionally, also look at the behaviour of the people you train. What are the competences and regulations of the people you train? Train them "role awareness".
  - The training should build and strengthen the local network. This means also involving the local communities. It is a training that will have results on the street level.
  - "To know one, is to love one": focus your training programme on trust-building between local partners by encouraging them to learn about one another's roles. Understanding their role in the multi-agency cooperation will lead to trust-building, which in turn will lead to better cooperation. Most frictions are related to trust; therefore, trust is crucial.
- Your local training programmes have to **promote the participant's self-efficacy**. This is a training that empowers one's already existing talent and boosts their skills instead of sending knowledge and information to the group.
- Pick exercises for your training in which **the learner/participant is key and actively contributing**, instead of the training being content- and sender-driven.
- Pay attention to the process of **attendees' selection** for trainings. This means avoiding a "tick the box" format/mentality. Some organisations send in a local practitioner just to tick the box of training attended instead of really wanting to develop particular skills.
- Your training should have the options of different forms of delivery. COVID-19 pushed most trainings online. This can stay by designing hybrid trainings.

The last recommendations focused on evaluation and follow-up:

- **Quality assurance/assessment** for trainings and tools are needed. There are many trainings coming up, but the question is if they are really useful in the local context.
  - The range of quality assessment tools also give local partners the opportunity to pick and find their own toolbox.
  - Therefore, there should be a collection of practices on local training programmes in P/CVE beyond the scope of RAN.
- Trainings should have **follow-ups** to evaluate the learning competences together with participants to assess and even improve the training.
- The developers should also invest in more trainers. The **train-the-trainer component** is important when developing local training programmes.

## Relevant practices

1. [Hexagon, Canada](#). Hexagon is a training tool that aims to improve understanding of situations of radicalisation leading to violence within a training framework and therefore to help social workers, community workers, healthcare professionals, police officers, teachers, researchers and more local partners.
2. [One-on-One, the Netherlands](#). The intervention One-on-One is a mentoring project based on the experiences from [Aarhus, Denmark](#). Mentors are recruited within the community and trained in the background of violent radicalisation and in the so-called life skills methodology that is developed at Aarhus University. The basic idea is that everybody wants “a good enough life” and through this programme the mentees will be helped to become more resilient. So, there is not an exclusive focus on the ideology. Participating is on a voluntary basis and they always look for a good mentor–mentee match. The target group is (young) men and women who are in the first stages of radicalisation.
3. [CoPPRa, Belgium](#). Community police officers work in the field, understand their local communities and maintain good links with them. The CoPPRa trainings help the community police officers to improve their understanding of radicalisation and vulnerability in order to be aware of the warning signals, know how to respond to them and prevent radicalisation in general.
4. [The role of local cooperation in preventing radicalisation, Poland](#). The Polish Platform for Homeland Security developed and delivers trainings for local actors to build their local networks, including local communities. The training is not only based on sending information but also working on local coalition- and trust-building.

## Follow-up

The participants suggested many follow-up options for the RAN in general and/or Police working group.

- A RAN 2-day event on training programmes, introducing Hexagon and developing a European version in a “design workshop”. This is also a follow-up on the digital study visit to Canada.
- A RAN POL train-the-trainer programme in cooperation with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training.

## Further reading

These research projects, trainings and RAN events were mentioned during the meeting:

- Doosje, B., Moghaddam, F. M., Kruglanski, A. W., de Wolf, A., Mann, L., & Feddes, A. R. (2016). [Terrorism, radicalization and de-radicalization](#). *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 11, 79-84.
- van Eerten, J.-J., Doosje, B., Konijn, E., de Graaf, B., & de Goede, M. (2019). [Challenging extremist views on social media: Developing a counter-messaging response](#). Routledge.
- Gosselin, L. A. (2021, 15 April). [Hexagon: A pedagogical tool for analysing case studies for the prevention of radicalisation leading to violence](#). Strong Cities Network.

- The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law: [Multi-Actor P/CVE Interventions Workstream](#).
- Lenos, S., & Keltjens, M. (2016). [Preparing RAN POL's guide on training programmes for police officers in Europe](#). Radicalisation Awareness Network.
- Meines, M. (2017). [The right training programme – Preventing & countering radicalisation & violent extremism](#). Radicalisation Awareness Network.

## Annexes

This section briefly elaborates on the presentations on local training programmes in P/CVE. As stated before, the participating countries were Poland, Belgium, two trainings from France and two trainings from the Netherlands.

### *Polish example*

The example of a local training programme from Poland was presented on 'The role of local cooperation in preventing radicalisation: emergence mechanism and effective prevention of extremism' by RAN POL co-leader Marzena Kordaczuk-Was. Based on the four principles of andragogy, the main idea to increase competences of representatives of local institutions in understanding what the process of radicalisation is, what are the types/forms of radicalisation, how to recognise them with a practical training by using interactive presentations, training materials, work in groups and case studies. Via a joint training of three modules, the programme focuses on building local networks leading to coalitions. Networking and trust-building are more important elements than sharing knowledge.

### *French examples*

The first example is from Eric Poinot, who is a project leader at the city of Strasbourg. Eric has implemented the Canadian Hexagon tool to the local setting in Strasbourg. Hexagon is a pedagogical/educational tool to support the analysis of situations of radicalisation leading to violence, and it is designed for all local practitioners working in P/CVE. It looks like a board game. Therefore, it is a creative tool to achieve three goals: 1) understand radicalisation from a multidisciplinary perspective, 2) explore cases of radicalisation in a multi-agency team, and 3) develop individual intervention plans.

The second example is from Karim Stambouli, who develops innovative local training programmes with '[Challenges Academia](#)'. His [SNAPSHOT](#) project uses virtual reality glasses to make a practitioner "step into the shoes of" another practitioner, because the videos try to raise questions, encourage dialogue and detach the subject from the media context. It contains trainings on: secularism and values of the Republic, fighting against discrimination, and the prevention of radicalisation.

### *Dutch examples*

The first example is from Mieke Broeren, who develops and delivers local trainings with IN XTREMIS that focus on the mental health aspect of radicalisation for all practitioners. It focuses on finding common grounds between practitioners by talking about experiences and their (shared) language in P/CVE. Furthermore, they work together on their terminology by describing the phenomenon and by working on mutual cooperation.

The second example is from Arjan de Wolf, who also develops and delivers local training with DWTA. The goal is to create in-depth knowledge, build trust, recognise signals and learn how to interview vulnerable people. The training combines theory with practical exercises in a large group of mixed professions. The focus is also on behaviour that is necessary to share information.

### *Belgian example*

The RAN POL co-leader Luc Van Der Taelen and Belgian Police Superintendent Sertan İçten's example was on Belgian training programmes, which are mostly designed by the police. CoPPRa is one of these trainings, next to Polarisation Management and Human Rights training. The aims of the training programmes are to raise awareness, share information, build multi-agency networks and partnerships, work on prevention with protection and provide tools needed to engage with vulnerable individuals.