Targeted study on the assessment of the Radicalisation Awareness Network
(RAN practitioners and policy support)

Final Report
Annexes

Authored by
EY: Katarina Bartz, Ilia Gaglio, Luca Marcolin, Paola Parisi

4 July 2023

Table of Contents

List of tables

List of Figures

1 Annex 1: Policymakers

Key findings:

➕ **RAN activities and products have effectively contributed to supporting policymakers** in the prevention of radicalisation in the EU

👥 Policymakers pointed to the RAN's contribution towards the **establishment of a multi-stakeholder approach to radicalisation at the national level,** with improvement in cooperation among policymakers and all other stakeholders

🔍 **Research is highly integrated into RAN activities and products,** though room for improvement exists in dissemination

⚙️ Policymakers face **challenges in the adoption and implementation of RAN Collection practices and approaches,** though some have successfully done so

🧑‍💼 **Tailored support remained under-utilised** by policymakers as they are unclear on the services' purpose, added value or potential

1.1 Relevance of RAN activities and products

Overall, **RAN activities and products have effectively contributed to supporting policymakers in the prevention of radicalisation in the EU**.[1] RAN activities include workshops, study visits, PBCs and training, while RAN products include overview research papers, event conclusion papers, manuals and specialised expert opinions. Overall, policymakers consulted during the study claimed that **RAN activities fill their need to exchange and disseminate knowledge and experiences on radicalisation**, thus helping them to be conscious of both important issues related to radicalisation in the EU and good practices adopted across the Member States to prevent it.[2] As policymakers working on radicalisation at the national level can sometimes feel isolated in their roles without a professional network for support, the RAN provides them with a community to share experiences and open their perspectives beyond their day-to-day tasks and immediate national needs.[3]

At the same time, **RAN activities and products have had a positive impact on supporting the daily work of policymakers dealing with the prevention of radicalisation at a national level**.[4] In this sense, consulted policymakers agreed that participation in RAN events, for instance, contributes to improving their skills, knowledge and capabilities in preventing radicalisation in their countries.[5] For example, the experience gained by some Member States[6] on foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) was disseminated during some RAN events and included in the RAN Manual "Responses to returnees: Foreign terrorist fighters and their families",[7] and this helped other Member States build expertise and encouraged them to act on the issue.[8]

Some consulted policymakers confirmed that **RAN provided insights to complement and update preventive anti-radicalisation strategies and plans**.[9] In particular, the outputs and key messages from RAN events are shared and disseminated during relevant national meetings, further contributing towards a common understanding among Member States' policymakers of radicalisation and related prevention mechanisms.[10] For example, an interviewee pointed out

---

[1] Survey targeted at policymakers Q8.1 (closed), 29 of 33,
[2] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): two of eight, Q8.3 (open): four of ten.
[3] Targeted interviews with two policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): two of eight, Q8.3 (open): four of ten.
[4] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.9 (closed), 16 of 18.
[5] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.10 (closed), 15 of 16,
[6] Targeted interview with three policymakers.
[7] RAN (2017), RAN MANUAL – Responses to returnees: Foreign terrorist fighters and their families. Available at: link.
[8] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[9] Targeted interviews with two policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): two of eight.
[10] Targeted interview with two policymakers.

that the material exchanged during a RAN conference on national policies against radicalisation was used in his Member State to further develop the national prevention policy and network.[11] Similarly, another interviewee indicated that the material produced and exchanged during a RAN event on the online dimension of radicalisation was disseminated among members of the national working group on radicalisation.[12]

In particular, **PBCs are considered the most valuable type of RAN PS activity,**[13] enabling stakeholders' engagement and coordination on issues of particular relevance to them. The PBCs **lead to real improvements in the Member States' approaches**, thus having a tangible impact.[14] For example, a policymaker interviewed during the study reported that, during a PBC on home-schooling, they were inspired by the Finnish approach of keeping track of pupils and adopted an analogous practice into the national law. Another policymaker explained that the exchange of experiences during a PBC on prison radicalisation laid the foundation for the establishment of a national agreement between the State agency in charge of the prevention of radicalisation and the prison services operating under the Ministry of the Interior in his/ her country. The agreement envisaged the implementation of a training programme aimed at the so-called 'task forces' operating in prisons (i.e. groups of psychologists, teachers and prison officers involved in the identification of radicalisation of inmates), as well as the creation of an e-learning platform aimed at supporting all employees and officers working within the prison service.

Yet, consulted policymakers pointed to some **issues affecting the overall relevance of RAN activities**. Firstly, considering the geographical scope of the Network that includes all the Member States, policymakers raised the issue that many **RAN activities relate to challenges faced by some countries only,** thus limiting the relevance and interest in those activities.[15] Also, some policymakers expressed **a lack of onboarding support to newcomers** for orientation, leaving members without a clear understanding of the Network's organisation, functioning and support offered. Relatedly, some policymakers cited a lack of training targeting specific groups (education professionals, civil society organisations, health professionals, etc.).

Moreover, **policymakers complained that the high number of meetings and invitations targeted to policymakers,** organised almost weekly, **risks oversaturating participants**.[16] In this regard, some policymakers pointed out that receiving too many invitations creates an overload for participants, who do not have enough time to follow all the events.[17] This issue is particularly relevant to **Member States where there are only a few professionals working** in the field of prevention of radicalisation.[18] Besides constraints in terms of time availability, the excessive frequency of RAN PS events sometimes **results in overlapping activities**. More specifically, stakeholders complained that various events focus on the same topics, leading to information overload and fragmented discussions among a limited number of participants[19].

Still regarding the frequency of RAN PS events, however, **some of the consulted policymakers have divergent opinions and consider their number to be adequate**.[20] Interestingly, one policymaker positively emphasised the increase in the number of RAN activities over the years claiming that more events allow more participants to attend the meetings, bringing more knowledge to policymakers in the Member States.

In addition, the topics covered by **RAN products, such as post-event conclusion papers, research papers and flashes, have generally been relevant to policymakers' information needs.**[21] The post-event follow-up papers are particularly relevant as they provide a comprehensive synthesis of information that can be readily shared among policymakers in different Member States.[22]

---

[11] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[12] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[13] Targeted interviews with five policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): one of eight, Q8.3 (open): one of ten.
[14] Targeted interviews with three policymakers.
[15] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.11 (open): two of 13.
[16] Targeted interviews with 11 policymakers.
[17] Targeted interviews with nine policymakers.
[18] Targeted interviews with three policymakers.
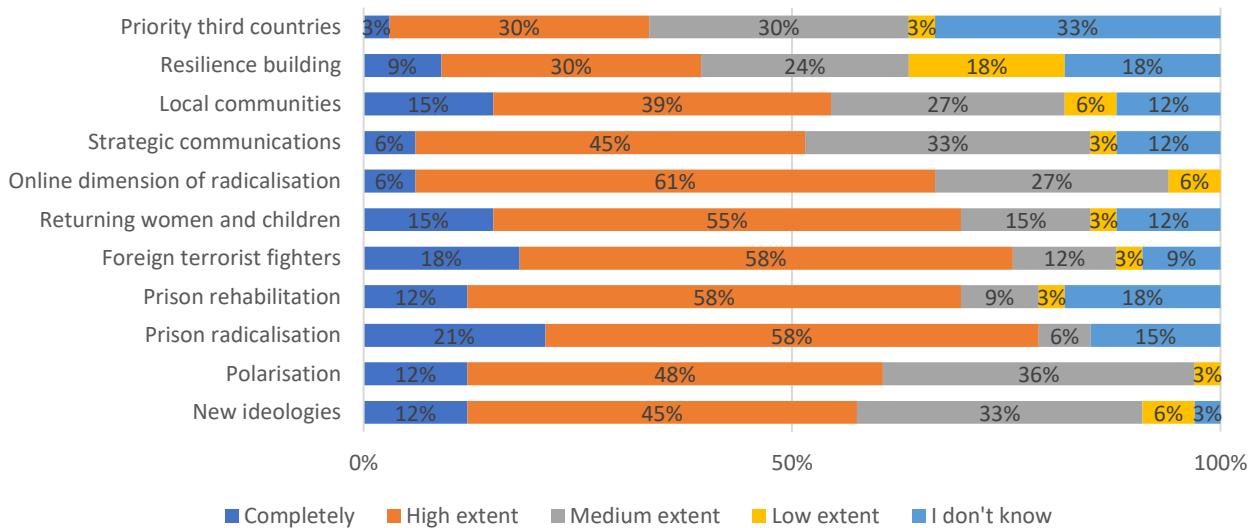[19] Targeted interviews with four policymakers.
[20] Targeted interviews with six policymakers.
[21] Targeted interviews with eight policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.1 (closed), 31 of 33.
[22] Targeted interview with one policymaker.

Policymakers have found that **RAN's products provide relevant information and analysis, particularly on prison radicalisation**[23] and foreign terrorist fighters.[24] Other relevant topics that are considered well-covered by RAN products include prison rehabilitation, returning women and children, online dimension of radicalisation, polarisation and new ideologies, as well as local communities and strategic communications. With specific regard to the online dimension of radicalisation, the majority of policymakers agreed that such topic is well addressed,[25] though its constant evolution renders it important for continuous investigation.

Figure 1 - Q4.3 To what extent do you think that the following topics have been adequately addressed by RAN products?

	Completely	High extent	Medium extent	Low extent	I don't know
Priority third countries	3%	30%	30%	3%	33%
Resilience building	9%	30%	24%	18%	18%
Local communities	15%	39%	27%	6%	12%
Strategic communications	6%	45%	33%	3%	12%
Online dimension of radicalisation	6%	61%	27%	6%	
Returning women and children	15%	55%	15%	3%	12%
Foreign terrorist fighters	18%	58%	12%	3%	9%
Prison rehabilitation	12%	58%	9%	3%	18%
Prison radicalisation	21%	58%	6%		15%
Polarisation	12%	48%	36%	3%	
New ideologies	12%	45%	33%	6%	3%

Source: EY elaboration of survey results

Besides overall relevance, **some room for improvement persists**. As regards the scope of RAN products, consultations conducted during the study raised the need to provide more material on resilience building[26] and priority third countries.[27] Some policymakers expressed the need to give more attention to deradicalisation and exit strategies,[28] emerging forms of radicalisation,[29] radicalisation in third countries (including Eastern Member States),[30] hate speech[31] and anti-government extremism.[32] Furthermore, the research papers are criticised as too long and too theoretical to be useful for policymakers who are often short on time.[33]

1.2 RAN multi-stakeholder approach

Overall, consulted **policymakers pointed to the RAN's contribution towards the establishment of a multi-stakeholder approach** to radicalisation at the national level.[34] For instance, a policymaker interviewed during the study highlighted that RAN played a key role towards the setting up of an agreement between the Government Agency in charge of preventing and combatting violent extremism and the Prison Services in the Member State. Another interviewee indicated that the RAN multi-stakeholder approach inspired the Department for the Prevention of Radicalisation in his Member State to sign an agreement with a national University,

---

[23] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.3 (closed), 26 of 33.
[24] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.3 (closed), 25 of 33.
[25] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.3 (closed), 22 of 33.
[26] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.3 (closed), 13 of 33.
[27] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.3 (closed), 11 of 33.
[28] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.2 (open): three of 17; Q4.4 (open): two of 16.
[29] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.4 (open): one of 16.
[30] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.2 (open): one of 17; Q4.4 (open): one of 16.
[31] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.4 (open): one of 16.
[32] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.4 (open): one of 16.
[33] Targeted interviews with four policymakers.
[34] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): one of eight.

providing training and awareness-raising activities to the Centre for Mental Health and Addiction, using materials from the RAN HEALTH WG.

Although the majority of **consulted policymakers confirmed that all categories of RAN participants (i.e. policymakers, practitioners and researchers) are adequately involved in RAN activities**,[35] some claimed that there is **a need for more collaboration and dialogue** among stakeholders.[36] In particular, some policymakers expressed the need for greater and/or better-quality collaboration both with researchers[37] and practitioners.[38]

Overall, consulted policymakers agreed that **the separation between policymakers and practitioners is considered artificial and rigid**. The two strands of RAN end up working in silos,[39] limiting the need for stakeholder interaction. In this regard, separating the work of policymakers from practitioners at the EU level does not reflect the operational day-to-day work on the ground and leaves participants without adequate communication.[40] Indeed, at the national level, policymakers and practitioners often work together in the prevention of radicalisation and policymakers may work in social services, local or State agencies, etc.[41] Thus, having a Network composed of two separate branches prevents policymakers and practitioners from being informed of and having access to each other's work.[42] Also, it prevents practitioners from bringing issues of particular relevance on the ground to the attention of policymakers so that they can be discussed during decision-making processes.[43]

1.3 Added value of RAN

Stakeholders perceived that **RAN's added value is in its wide geographic, multidisciplinary scope and collaborative approach**.[44] RAN is the only service provider with an extensive overview of the matter in the Member States,[45] as it is unique in creating cross-disciplinary connections and networking opportunities at the international level, which has led to more opportunities for collaboration between policymakers and practitioners across different Member States[46]

Although some stakeholders agreed that RAN activities and products have only limitedly contributed to the **adoption of new anti-radicalisation policies**,[47] they still provided some interesting examples of policy developments adopted thanks to the RAN.

---

[35] Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.1 (closed), 30 of 31.
[36] Survey targeted at policymakers Q3.2 (closed), 23 of 33.
[37] Survey targeted at policymakers Q3.2 (closed): 12 of 33.
[38] Survey targeted at policymakers Q3.2 (closed), 16 of 33.
[39] Targeted interviews with five policymakers.
[40] Targeted interviews with one policymaker.
[41] Targeted interviews with three policymakers.
[42] Targeted interviews with one policymaker.
[43] Targeted interviews with one policymaker.
[44] Survey targeted at policymakers Q8.2 (closed), 26 of 33,
[45] Survey targeted at policymakers Q8.3 (open): two of ten.
[46] Survey targeted at policymakers Q8.3 (open): two of ten.
[47] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.12 (closed), 17 of 33.

Box 1 – Examples of institutional and policy developments adopted thanks to the RAN

Organisational set-ups:

- Inclusion of new lines of action in the National Action Plans (NAP) against radicalisation;[48]
- Setting up Monitoring Committees supporting national policies related to combating radicalisation and violent extremism[49]
- Implementation of new training courses[50]
- Development of information-sharing agreements[51]

Prison-related policies:

- Establishment of risk assessment tools in prison[52]
- Setting up rehabilitation programmes addressed to minors[53]
- Adoption of agreements between prison institutions[54]
- Design of new deradicalisation and exit-programmes[55]

Source: EY

Moreover, **policymakers considered it very useful to learn from the practices implemented by other Member States and use them as inspiration**. For instance, understanding how other countries responded to the post-COVID-19 issues (e.g. new anti-vaccination and anti-government movements), as almost all countries faced these similar threats during the crisis.[56]

In addition, one policymaker indicated that the material collected during the participation in RAN Practitioners' meetings, including the WGs, was used to deliver internal training to local authorities in his Member State.

1.4 Integration of research within RAN activities and products

Overall, the study found that **research is highly integrated into RAN activities**.[57] Research is considered of great importance for both evidence-based policies and practices since it is essential to identify new threats and guide policy choices accordingly.[58] Moreover, **RAN research contributed to supporting national initiatives against radicalisation**, by informing the design of training programmes and awareness-raising initiatives among stakeholders, including school and prison personnel.[59]

However, **some consulted policymakers pointed to a possibility for even further integration of research into RAN**. For example, RAN research could better support RAN events, both in terms of design and follow-up.[60] More specifically, one interviewee suggested that research products, which are relevant to the topics of the RAN events, could be circulated among participants prior to the event so as to proactively guide the discussion. Two interviewees relayed the opinion that RAN PS papers often result in generic summaries rather than detailed research documents. More regular contact with the Advisory Board of researchers would be appreciated to address these concerns.[61]

1.5 Outreach of RAN activities and products

Overall, **consulted policymakers consider that their Member States are adequately involved in RAN activities,**[62] with policymakers attending on average one to ten events per

---

[48] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.13 (open): one of six.
[49] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): one of eight.
[50] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.13 (open): one of six.
[51] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.13 (open): one of six.
[52] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[53] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.10 (open): one of eight.
[54] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.13 (open): one of six.
[55] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.13 (open): one of six.
[56] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[57] Survey targeted at policymakers Q6.1 (closed), 26 of 33.
[58] Targeted interviews with four policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q6.2 (closed), 11 of 33.
[59] Survey targeted at policymakers Q6.3 (open): three of five.
[60] Targeted interviews with four policymakers.
[61] Targeted interviews with three policymakers.
[62] Targeted interviews with nine policymakers.

year.[63] Many policymakers were **firstly involved in - and then invited to - RAN activities** directly by the Network.[64] Only a few policymakers reported receiving invitations from the NPPM member[65] or from the contact point of RAN in their country.[66]

Box 2 – Dissemination of invitations to RAN PS events at the Member State level

> Invitations for RAN PS events are first sent by the Network to the NPPM members, who are often also the Network's national contact points. In turn, the NPPM members send the invitations either directly to policymakers and practitioners who they believe could attend or to other ministries, agencies and bodies that further disseminate them to other possible participants.[67] Some Member States have specific contact points within the relevant institutions, to which they disseminate the invitations and who in turn are in charge of disseminating them further internally.[68] In general, possible participants are selected on a case-by-case basis, depending on the subject matter of the specific event.[69] Invitations are mainly sent via e-mail,[70] with only one Member State (PL) having a dedicated internal portal used to disseminate notices of RAN PS events.

Source: EY

Invitations to RAN activities are generally received with sufficient notice, which allows policymakers to easily disseminate them among national stakeholders.[71] Nevertheless, **some consulted policymakers underlined that they would appreciate receiving information on the date of the events further in advance**. This is both to better plan for their attendance and to present upcoming RAN events during regular internal meetings (i.e. monthly inter-ministerial meetings).[72] In turn, further notice would allow to increase policymakers' engagement and participation in RAN, while complying with bureaucratic procedures necessary to request the participation of policymakers from certain ministries, which are sometimes lengthy and complex.[73] Moreover, some consulted policymakers pointed to the **limited information included in the RAN invitations**, which is not always sufficient for identifying suitable participants in the Member States.[74]

The main **reasons why policymakers are sometimes not able to attend activities** are:

- **Time constraints** and scheduling conflicts,[75] especially in cases where the number of national policymakers dealing with the prevention of radicalisation is limited and participation in RAN events is an additional task to their daily duties.[76] Despite their popularity, in-person events are perceived to be much more time-consuming than virtual participation, as participants come from all Member States and transport connections may not always be efficient. Hence, an event lasting a few hours could take up to days of travel time;[77]

- **Language barriers.** The fact that the meetings are held in English sometimes act as a deterrent to participation since policymakers are not always proficient in English, thus they may not be able to understand and explain their work. Similarly, the fact that most RAN products are in English makes them less usable by national policymakers.[78]

- **Lack of prioritisation of prevention of radicalisation in the national policy agenda.** In Member States where the threat of terrorism is not considered pressing (e.g. countries that have never experienced a terrorist attack on their territory), prevention of radicalisation is not a top priority in the internal policy agenda, thus policymakers find RAN activities less/not relevant to their needs.[79]

---

[63] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.3 (closed), 31 of 33.
[64] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.1 (closed), 14 of 31.
[65] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.2 (closed), five of 31.
[66] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.2 (closed), four of 31.
[67] Targeted interviews with 13 policymakers.
[68] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[69] Targeted interviews with 13 policymakers.
[70] Targeted interviews with 13 policymakers.
[71] Targeted interviews with 11 policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.7 (closed), 23 of 31.
[72] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[73] Targeted interviews with three policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.7 (closed), six of 31.
[74] Targeted interviews with four policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.8 (open): three of 24.
[75] Targeted interview with five policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.8 (open): 14 of 24.
[76] Targeted interview with five policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.8 (open): four of 24.
[77] Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.8 (open): two of 24.
[78] Targeted interview with six policymakers.
[79] Targeted interview with two policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q2.8 (open): three of 24.

Given such constraints, **the outreach of RAN products is overall perceived as limited**.[80] For instance, some consulted stakeholders pointed out that follow-up products are rarely disseminated outside the group of stakeholders that attended a specific event, as those who did not participate can find them difficult to understand.[81] In this respect, it is worth noting that dissemination of RAN products at the national level mainly occurs through informal channels, such as word-of-mouth among colleagues, e-mails or the sharing of notes.[82] Only a few policymakers reported using official channels, such as government-run channels, either managed by the Ministry of Interior or the Department of Justice.[83]

Moreover, **limitations affecting the use and effectiveness of the RAN PS wiki were mentioned as a key factor hindering the outreach of RAN products**.[84] Overall, the RAN PS wiki proved overly cumbersome and difficult to navigate, especially because it does not allow users to efficiently search for specific content.[85] Indeed, papers are presented as a single list on the website (i.e. not clustered by topics), and there is no search function to find a specific publication or filter through results. One policymaker also pointed out that the absence of notifications when new material is uploaded to the website results in a considerable expenditure of resources to constantly monitor the site.[86] Furthermore, some policymakers highlighted the difficulty in logging onto the website due to a complex procedure requiring multiple credentials.[87] Relatedly, other policymakers pointed out that having two separate websites for RAN PS and RAN Practitioners makes navigation and searches for materials even more cumbersome and confusing.[88]

1.6 Implementation of the RAN Collection

Adoption of practices contained in RAN's Collection of approaches and practices is a challenge for policymakers.[89] Some consulted policymakers highlighted that **national good practices are difficult to replicate** as success highly depends on the specific features of the national implementation contexts. Hence, what works in one Member State may not work in the others.[90]

Moreover, some consulted policymakers pointed to a **general lack of awareness of RAN's Collection of approaches and practices**, which has further contributed to the limited adoption of the practices promoted therein.[91] In this respect, policymakers underlined the **need to improve the dissemination and uptake of good practices** in order to boost common approaches towards the prevention of radicalisation in the EU as well as to learn from successful practices without "reinventing the wheel". Consulted policymakers confirmed that RAN good practices are disseminated through both formal channels, such as during training sessions or via the Ministry of Interior, and via informal channels, including word-of-mouth, discussions with colleagues and e-mails.[92] Stakeholders also pointed out that the exchange of inspirational practices takes place more effectively in connection with meetings, e.g. in the context of PBCs,[93] as it is easier to further investigate experiences of interest in a dynamic context.[94]

Furthermore, the RAN Collection of approaches and practices is generally considered to be too long of a document and impractical to consult.[95]

Despite agreed difficulties, consultations with policymakers raised some **examples of good practices in the RAN Collection, which have been replicated across the Member States**.

---

[80] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.7 (closed), 15 of 18.
[81] Targeted interview with three policymakers.
[82] Targeted interviews with eight policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.8 (open): six of 11.
[83] Survey targeted at policymakers Q4.8 (open): three of 11.
[84] Targeted interviews with five policymakers.
[85] Targeted interviews with five policymakers.
[86] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[87] Targeted interviews with four policymakers.
[88] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[89] Survey targeted at policymakers Q7.2 (closed), 13 of 16.
[90] Targeted interviews with three policymakers; Survey targeted at policymakers Q7.5 (open): five of eight.
[91] Survey targeted at policymakers Q7.1 (closed), Survey targeted at practitioners Q6, 24 of 31.
[92] Survey targeted at policymakers Q7.3 (open): three of seven.
[93] Targeted interviews with one policymaker.
[94] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[95] Targeted interviews with three policymakers.

For instance, the Aarhus model,[96] which has been identified as a RAN good practice for the prevention of radicalisation through cooperation between civil society and the public sector, has been mentioned as a source of inspiration for the adoption of such a model across the Member States. Moreover, in one Member State, policymakers concerned with the implementation of the national approach on prisoners and probation were contacted by colleagues from another Member State in order to receive guidance on how such a model could be adopted in their own country.[97]

1.7 Tailored support provided to the Member States[98]

During the 2016-2020 European Strategic Communications Network (ESCN) programme, prior to consulting services on strategic communication being engulfed into RAN PS, tailored services were more popular and recipients were very satisfied.[99] Consulting services sought from the ESCN included developing strategic communication activities on counter-narratives[100] or advice on the structure and activities of a newly formed office for the prevention of terrorism.[101]

Since RAN PS took over responsibility for all tailored support services in 2021, **tailored support has not been widely requested**.[102]

According to the consulted policymakers, the main reason behind the low request for RAN support is a **general perception that the RAN's tailored support services would not meet the needs of national policymakers**.[103] Moreover, policymakers lack a clear idea of what exactly tailored support entails, including what is offered by such services, who provides them (e.g. their field of expertise) and how the consulting is done (e.g. is the consulting done remotely or do experts come to the country, how long does the consulting inquiry last, etc.).[104] Another reason for the low engagement with tailored support is that similar benefits are perceived to result also from other RAN activities. Participation in PBCs, for example, allows policymakers to develop sufficient specific knowledge and tailored approaches without spending extra on requesting ad-hoc consulting.[105]

One policymaker articulated concerns that the tailored support would involve representatives from other Member States, risking that some confidential information could filter through the services to their own countries. Transparency when selecting experts for consulting services would address this concern.[106]

Despite being limited, **the most frequent requests for RAN consulting services concern support towards the development of national multi-agent cooperation networks, national risk assessments and monitoring procedures, as well as support for preparing to host a PBC**.[107]

To conclude, a policymaker interviewed during the study pointed out that providing relevant tailored support requires a deep knowledge of the local dimension, and there is scepticism that an extra-national organisation would have the appropriate level of insight. Particularly in federal States, such as Germany, prevention is a competence of the regional level, so the federal government itself already provides a kind of 'external' and comprehensive view, and there is the belief that this task could hardly be fulfilled by a structure unfamiliar with the intimacies of the regional structures.[108]

---

[96] See at: link.
[97] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[98] Please note that this section covers only policymakers, as RAN tailored support services are offered through RAN PS.
[99] Targeted interviews with ten policymakers.
[100] Targeted interviews with two policymakers.
[101] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[102] Survey targeted at policymakers Q5.1 (closed): ten of 16.
[103] Survey targeted at policymakers Q5.3 (closed), 12 of 16.
[104] Targeted interview with one policymaker; Survey targeted at policymakers Q5.7 (open): four of 16.
[105] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[106] Targeted interview with one policymaker.
[107] Targeted interview with one policymaker; Survey targeted at policymakers Q5.6 (open): two of four.
[108] Targeted interview with one policymaker.

2 Annex 2: Practitioners

Key findings:

- The **cross-border and cross-disciplinary dimension of RAN fills the need of practitioners** seeking a platform to collaborate and exchange information and ideas

- **RAN products present practitioners with new practices that are effective in** integrating existing anti-radicalisation strategies and informing new strategic directions

- **The division between RAN and RAN PS** has allowed for stakeholder groups to communicate within the privacy of their own peers, but it **has** simultaneously **limited dialogue and collaboration between stakeholder groups**

- **RAN activities and products are well supported by research activities**, but there is **room for improvement in presenting the RAN research findings as actionable material** and guidance for practitioners

2.1 Relevance of RAN activities and products

Overall, consulted practitioners consider that RAN has made a positive contribution to the prevention of radicalisation in the EU.[109] In particular, practitioners consider the RAN activities relevant to their need to further enhance the dialogue between different actors concerned with the prevention of radicalisation across the Member States.[110] RAN is especially valued because **it promotes the exchange of ideas and experiences among professionals with different backgrounds**.[111] In this regard, consulted practitioners pointed out that the need to connect with fellow practitioners in different countries and from other disciplines is adequately met during the WP meetings and the study visits, supporting the exchange of information and practices. For instance, practitioners particularly appreciate the sharing of practical knowledge,[112] guidelines and good practices,[113] and updated information regarding emerging issues in the field of radicalisation.[114] Some emphasised that it is particularly important to know the context in which other countries implement their practices, in order to have a clearer picture of what they might apply in their own contexts of origin.[115]

Also, some practitioners noted that **RAN offered them robust resources and materials** that can be used at the national level to reinforce the importance of issues otherwise not prioritised.[116] RAN activities and products have proved to have a **positive impact in supporting the work of practitioners at the national level**,[117] especially as they provide a robust reference for addressing specific issues at the national level.[118] Most survey respondents stated that they have been exposed to new ideas, practices and/or trends during RAN activities and have found the provided material useful.[119] Some practitioners use RAN materials for educational or training purposes as a part of their duties,[120] while others use RAN materials as an inspiration to pursue particular new lines of inquiry and research.[121]

Other consulted practitioners also confirmed the **importance of RAN in supporting the development of a cross-border community and network**.[122] In particular, the cross-border

---

[109] Targeted interviews with three practitioners; Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.1 (closed), 73% (160 of 220).
[110] Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.3 (open): three of 113.
[111] Targeted interviews with five practitioners and two WG leaders; Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): 46 of 113.
[112] Targeted interviews with one practitioner; Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): twelve of 113.
[113] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): four of 113.
[114] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): nine of 133.
[115] Targeted interviews with one practitioner and two WG leaders; Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.5 (open): 29 of 132.
[116] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): ten of 113.
[117] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.5 (open): 124 of 132.
[118] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.5 (open): 44 of 132.
[119] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.8 (open): 200 of 201.
[120] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.5 (open): ten of 132, Q4.11 (open): one of 132.
[121] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.5 (open): five of 132.
[122] Targeted interviews with two WG leaders; Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): 41 of 113, Q4.5 (open): 10 of 132.

dimension of RAN can help mitigate national biases[123] and foster a common understanding of radicalisation in the EU.[124]

Concerning the format of RAN activities, **in-person events are found to facilitate collaboration between stakeholders more easily than online events**.[125] Also, practitioners agreed that **the number of annual WG activities is appropriate**.[126] In fact, as participation is generally an added task on top of their daily work, it would be difficult to reconcile an increase in the number of activities.[127]

Figure 2 below provides an overview of key **success factors** mentioned by practitioners as **enabling the effectiveness of RAN activities**.

Figure 2 – Q2.9 To what extent do you think that the following factors have been crucial in ensuring the success of RAN activities you have participated in?
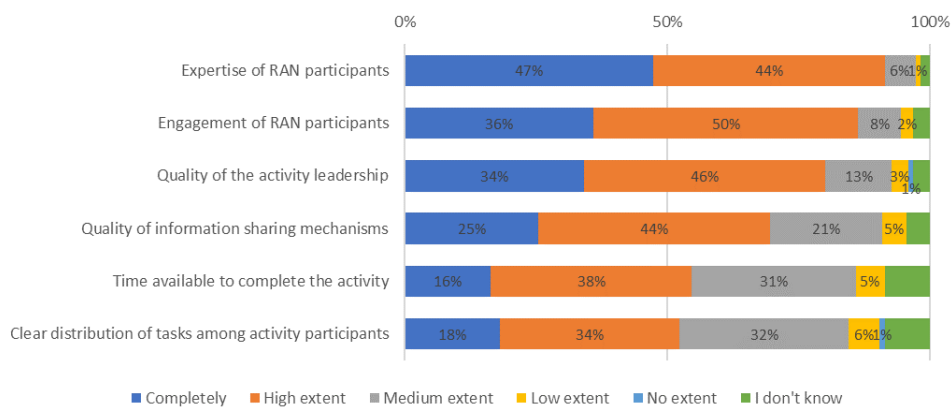
Source: EY elaboration of survey results

Moreover, practitioners agreed that **RAN products have met their information needs**.[128] More precisely, RAN Practitioners' materials are very relevant because they are sources of information that are difficult to obtain from academic research, for example, due to security issues or privacy protection reasons.[129] In particular, practitioners consider that RAN products provide relevant information and analysis on the online dimension of radicalisation,[130] polarisation[131] and foreign terrorist fighters.[132] Additional relevant topics are prison radicalisation,[133] local communities,[134] new ideologies,[135] prison rehabilitation,[136] returning women and children,[137] strategic communications[138] and resilience building.[139] Long-form papers, focused on specific topics, are deemed useful for deeper dives for participants with particular interests.[140] Also, follow-up conclusion papers produced after WG meetings are considered appropriate in length, style, and language used.[141]

Room for improvement was identified in terms of the scope of the Network's products. Some consulted practitioners pointed to some topics that should be better prioritised by RAN

---

[123] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): one of 113.
[124] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.3 (open): one of 113.
[125] Targeted interview with one practitioner; Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.3 (open): six of 133.
[126] Targeted interview with five WG leaders.
[127] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[128] Targeted interview with one practitioner; Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.1 (closed), 90% (199 of 220).
[129] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[130] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 67% (147 of 220).
[131] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 66% (145 of 220).
[132] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 61% (134 of 220).
[133] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 55% (121 of 220).
[134] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 54% (119 of 220).
[135] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 51% (112 of 220).
[136] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 49% (107 of 220).
[137] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 49% (107 of 220).
[138] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 43% (95 of 220).
[139] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 39% (87 of 220).
[140] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[141] Targeted interviews with three WG leaders.

products. For instance, RAN should give more attention to the topic of priority third countries[142] as well as to youth.[143] One practitioner expressed the need for manuals for teachers on dealing with radicalisation risk in high schools. Other topics that should be more thoroughly addressed by RAN are new and emerging threats,[144] mental health,[145] right[146] and left-wing extremism,[147] integration[148] and exit programmes.[149]

2.2 RAN multi-stakeholder approach

Practitioners confirmed that all stakeholder categories (i.e. policymakers, practitioners and researchers) are adequately involved in RAN activities.[150] **However,** practitioners stated that **the current division between policymakers and practitioners has created siloes**, both in terms of networking and knowledge exchange.[151] In this regard, practitioners pointed to the need for increased collaboration and dialogue between stakeholder groups.[152] In particular, most practitioners are not completely satisfied with their bilateral collaboration with policymakers.[153]

To conclude, it is worth mentioning what emerged during an interview with a WG leader, i.e. the fact that RAN PS products remain classified prevents practitioners from accessing specific knowledge. The interviewee pointed to the need for practitioners to have their voices heard by policymakers, a function that RAN once succeeded in, though the current structure prevents that.[154]

2.3 Added value of RAN

Practitioners widely perceived that **RAN has an added value compared to other mechanisms available towards the prevention of radicalisation.**[155] In disciplines where international professional organisations are active in the field of prevention of radicalisation, such as EuroPris,[156] RAN was reported as unique in providing an interdisciplinary perspective of the wider anti-radicalisation ecosystem.[157] In Member States where there is a national-level interdisciplinary network for the prevention of radicalisation, the RAN provides an opportunity to compare national experiences and connect with international peers.[158]

Furthermore, **RAN products have both been effectively integrated into existing anti-radicalisation practices**[159] and contributed to the **adoption of new practices**.[160] Examples of good practices include the adoption and improvement of multi-agency cooperation at the national level[161] and the implementation and enhancement of prevention practices in schools.[162] For instance, a consulted practitioner referred to the adoption of a cultural programme aimed at organising on-ground arts and cultural activities with young people to prevent marginalisation and radicalisation. Furthermore, following participation in RAN activities, some Member States launched their first national training programme on radicalisation[163] or expanded the scope of existing training to incorporate new topics and materials of interest.[164] Additionally, some

---

[142] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.3 (closed), 18% (40 of 220).
[143] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): eight of 121.
[144] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): six of 121.
[145] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): five of 121.
[146] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): three of 121.
[147] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): two of 121.
[148] Targeted interview with one practitioner; Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): three of 121.
[149] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.4 (open): two of 121.
[150] Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.1 (closed), 70% (153 of 220).
[151] Targeted interview with four WG leaders.
[152] Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.2 (closed), 50% (109 of 220).
[153] Survey targeted at policymakers Q3.2 (closed), 16 of 33.
[154] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[155] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.2 (closed), 69% (153 of 220).
[156] See at: link.
[157] Targeted interview with one practitioner.
[158] Targeted interview with one practitioner.
[159] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.9 (closed), 67% (147 of 220).
[160] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.10 (closed), 64% (140 of 220).
[161] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): five of 106.
[162] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): four of 106.
[163] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): one of 106.
[164] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): one of 106.

adopted new tools to assess radicalisation among probationers and prisoners, [165] new methods for online policing, [166] as well as included new standard operating procedures into national anti-radicalisation strategies.[167]

2.4 Integration of research within RAN activities and products

The majority of **consulted practitioners found research to be highly integrated into RAN activities**.[168] In particular, as the network has grown and developed over the years, practitioners agree that research has been increasingly considered in RAN activities and products.[169] In addition, collaboration and dialogue between researchers and practitioners are highly valued, reflecting the sentiment of strong researchers' integration into the RAN.[170]

Research is considered particularly important as it contributes to evidence-based practices.[171] Indeed, RAN-related research has been integrated into national-level practices regarding many topics, such as risk assessment methods, gender-specific approaches to radicalisation and polarisation, factual data to support rehabilitation programmes in prisons as well as general training integration.[172] For instance, in one Member State, research findings shared during one RAN WG workshop were used to improve the risk assessment of individuals during their probationary period following incarceration.[173]

It is interesting to mention that a practitioner raised concern over RAN's research practices: he sometimes felt that the recommendations were over-reliant on research and ignored the experiences of practitioners in the field. The practitioner emphasised RAN's origins as a platform for practitioners to voice their opinions, as they otherwise sometimes felt shut out by policymakers and researchers.[174]

2.5 Outreach of RAN activities and products

The level of **awareness of RAN Practitioners' activities varies across Member States and among different stakeholder groups**.[175] The transition to online activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to enhancing member participation and awareness, though room for improvement persists.[176]

The **number of participants in WG activities**, which is usually between 20 and 40, **is considered appropriate**, as it ensures the optimal functioning of the meeting, allowing all stakeholders to be involved and heard and encouraging exchanges among participants.[177]

Most of the consulted practitioners usually attend one to three events per year.[178] Most practitioners **joined RAN Practitioners for the first time** at the invitation of another RAN participant,[179] or by answering a call received directly from the Network.[180] Similarly, **invitations** to RAN activities **are usually received directly from the Network**.[181] Most practitioners found that invitations are received with sufficient notice[182] and that they contain enough information on the events.[183] On the other hand, some would like to receive information on the date of the

---

[165] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): one of 106.
[166] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): one of 106.
[167] Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.11 (open): one of 106.
[168] Targeted interview with four practitioners; Survey targeted at practitioners Q5.1 (closed), 57% (126 of 220).
[169] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[170] Survey targeted at practitioners Q3.2 (closed), 64% (141 of 220).
[171] Survey targeted at practitioners Q5.2 (closed), 42% (92 of 220).
[172] Survey targeted at practitioners Q5.3 (open): seven of 51.
[173] Targeted interview with one practitioner.
[174] Targeted interview with one WG leader.
[175] Targeted interviews with three WG leaders.
[176] Targeted interviews with three WG leaders.
[177] Targeted interviews with six WG leaders.
[178] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.4 (closed), 62% (136 of 220).
[179] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.1 (closed), 40% (88 of 220).
[180] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.1 (closed), 30% (66 of 220).
[181] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.3 (closed), 90% (197 of 220).
[182] Targeted interviews with four practitioners; Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.6 (closed), 78% (172 of 220).
[183] Targeted interviews with two practitioners.

events further in advance[184] as well as to receive further details regarding the concerned event.[185]

Time constraints and conflicting schedules, including professional duties from their other roles outside of RAN[186] **represent the main reason why respondents sometimes do not participate in RAN activities**. **Another reason is the lack of relevance of the topic**, as not all of the topics covered are relevant to all Member States or professional backgrounds.[187] Moreover, some stakeholders reported **language barriers**. Indeed, the fact that most products are in English limits the possibility of disseminating them widely nationwide.[188]

Participants disseminate the knowledge gained through the RAN with relevant stakeholders in their Member States who are not members of the Network. Dissemination occurs through formal channels, including reports, workshops, and seminars,[189] and informally, including through e-mails, word-of-mouth (i.e. vocal feedback during discussions with colleagues) and social media posts.

Box 3 – Examples of dissemination of knowledge gained through RAN

- A practitioner interviewed during the study reported that each RAN activity where his Member State partakes is followed up by a meeting between the director of the national radicalisation network and national practitioners concerned with the prevention of radicalisation in his country. During such meetings, the practitioners who participated in the RAN activity disseminate the knowledge gained during the event (e.g. an overview of training attended, literature and good practices discussed, etc.) with their colleagues who are not members of the Network.[190]
- In another Member State, attendees prepare reports about RAN meetings attended and circulate them among colleagues working in the field of prevention of radicalisation that were not able to attend.[191]
- In yet another Member State, the written material from the RAN events and trainings are disseminated via email to the internal Network for prevention of extremism and radicalisation, thus allowing for the dissemination of knowledge to colleagues who were not able to attend.[192]

Source: EY

Consulted practitioners provided some suggestions concerning how to **enhance involvement and participation in RAN activities as well as** to **improve the outreach of RAN products** (see Box below).

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that most practitioners highlighted that the **RAN Practitioners website needs significant improvement** to satisfy users' needs. In particular, practitioners express the need for a filtered search option on the Commission's website, and the ability to find specific papers or publications via online search engines (i.e. searching the name of a paper on Google will not display results as it is blocked by the EU domain).[193]

2.6 Implementation of the RAN Collection

Knowledge of the RAN Collection of approaches and practices is fairly widespread among practitioners.[194] Dissemination of RAN good practices takes place during in-person activities, such as practitioners' training,[195] meetings,[196] events[197] and informal discussions with

---

[184] Targeted interviews with one practitioner; Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.6 (closed), 18% (39 of 220); Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.7 (open): 16 of 147.
[185] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.7 (open): 4 of 147.
[186] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.7 (open): 125 of 147.
[187] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.7 (open): 28 of 147.
[188] Targeted interviews with four practitioners.
[189] Survey targeted at practitioners Q2.7 (open): 63 of 200.
[190] Targeted interview with one practitioner.
[191] Targeted interview with one practitioners.
[192] Targeted interview with one practitioner.
[193] Targeted interview with five WG leaders; Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.8 (open): four of 107; Survey targeted at practitioners Q4.13 (open): seven of 81.
[194] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.1 (closed), 49% (107 of 220)
[195] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.3 (open): 12 of 73.
[196] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.3 (open): nine of 73.
[197] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.3 (open): eight of 73.

colleagues.[198] Occasionally, good practices from the Collection are referenced when drafting written documents, such as papers, articles and reports.[199]

Consulted practitioners appreciate the Collection practices as a resource to connect and consult with other practitioners and organisations.[200] The specificity of the good practices (methods, country, context) is helpful and allows practitioners to obtain knowledge from countries with similar challenges or similar societies, as they otherwise often do not have adequate time to research the practices and understand their transferability.[201] For instance, the establishment of the French Assistance to the Prevention of Radicalisation and family support units (the so-called CPRAF model) was inspired by the Danish Arhus model.[202] Multi-stakeholder approaches have also resulted from the implementation of practices adopted from the RAN Collection, specifically the establishment of regular communications between different actors, as well as the development of standard operating procedures. Other RAN good practices mentioned during consultations as inspiring national practices concern exit programmes, returnee-related programmes, safety house programmes, and reintegration programmes.[203] Finally, RAN good practices related to prison and probation systems were also valued by practitioners,[204] such as guidelines for countering radicalisation in prisons.

Yet, the transfer of practices in the RAN Collection to country/local contexts and operationalising them is a challenge,[205] due to differences in legal systems,[206] as well as structural differences in governance[207] or differences in culture and mindsets.[208] Moreover, the RAN Collection of good approaches and practices is not optimised for accessibility,[209] particularly regarding the limited searchability via search engines (i.e. Google), language barriers and cluttering with outdated information.[210] To illustrate this, a WG leader interviewed during the study pointed out that national practitioners took one year to develop a digital tool for determining pathways of support for individuals who are at risk of radicalisation in their Member State – and only after did they learn that such a tool already existed at the EU level. Despite being actively involved in RAN, and this tool having been identified as a good practice, the country had never found any information on it.[211]

---

[198] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.3 (open): eight of 73.
[199] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.3 (open): eight of 73.
[200] Targeted interview with one WG leader; Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.2 (open): 45 of 82.
[201] Targeted interview with one practitioner and one WG leader.
[202] The Danish Aarhus model is a tax-funded government practice which entails a multi-agency intervention in the form of a collaboration between a municipality (Aarhus municipality) and the local Police (East Jutland Police). It also involves the University of Aarhus, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Danish Intelligence and Security Service as external partners. More information can be found at link.
[203] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.2 (open): nine of 37.
[204] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.2 (open): four of 37.
[205] Survey targeted at practitioners Q7.2, "high extent": 2 of 16, "medium extent": 7 of 16, "low extent": 6 of 16.
[206] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.4 (open): eight of 84.
[207] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.4 (open): four of 84.
[208] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.4 (open): five of 84.
[209] Survey targeted at practitioners Q6.4 (open): 25 of 85.
[210] Targeted interviews with two WG leaders.
[211] Targeted interview with one WG leader.