NEWSLETTER

Issue 87, September 2021

RAN
Practitioners Update
September 2021

10 YEARS OF RAN

Contents

The terrorist and extremist threat is constantly evolving and changing, with terrorists and violent extremists adapting to new technologies and global events. As Europe continues to move out of the COVID-19 pandemic, these threats have emerged from the shadows, becoming increasingly weaponised and accelerated by the pandemic, and must be understood and addressed through P/CVE activity, both inside and outside of RAN Practitioners.

In this month's RAN Practitioners Update, we turn attention to some of these emerging threats, such as the violent incel movement, an increasing digital proficiency within lone actors, and an accelerationism in the violent right-wing extremist (VRWE) space. The Update features a Spotlight magazine containing articles and interviews from practitioners and Working Group leads highlighting the prevalence and development of such threats. The Update also looks at how practitioners can best look to monitor and evaluate their work in tackling these emerging threats. This includes a new animation film, a RAN paper on monitoring and evaluation, as well as a resources section that highlights how practitioners can leverage the evaluation of their P/CVE work in an increasingly digital environment. Finally, the Update shares details on the reopening of the Remembrance Day Design Competition.

EMERGING THREATS

Spotlight

The latest edition of the RAN Practitioners Spotlight magazine features a series of articles, case studies and interviews with practitioners and Working Group leads analysing a selection of identified emerging threats in P/CVE activity. These include: emerging Violent Right-Wing Extremist (VRWE) narratives; terrorists' exploitation of online gaming platforms; the violent incel movement; and the work of lone actors in digital environments. It also contains an article giving tips to practitioners on how best to evaluate and monitor their P/CVE work in a constantly evolving world.

Read the Spotlight publication in full here … ▸

Article – 'A New Paradigm of Terrorist and Extremist Influence' – Will Baldet

The latest edition of the RAN Practitioners Spotlight magazine features a new article from Policy and Practitioner Fellow at the Analysis of the Radical Right (CARR), Will Baldet. The article provides a holistic, contextual overview of the emerging terrorist and extremist threats of the last 20 years, linking to the pre-sent day and those that have emerged in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The article goes on to speak directly to P/CVE practitioners, particularly referring to hyper-local approaches to preventative work in the wake of new threats.

You can read the article here in full here... ▶

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Film

This new animated film aims to support practitioners in improving their ability to monitor and evaluate their activity and work in the P/CVE space. The film draws on a RAN paper produced in 2018 by the RAN LOCAL Working Group that provides a seven-step evaluation guide for local authorities.
You can view the film here... ▶

Ex Post Paper – 'Guideline Evaluation of P/CVE Programmes and Interventions'

The extent to which P/CVE programmes and interventions have been evaluated in EU Member States differs enormously. This step-by-step guide provides practical recommendations for the evaluation process, which involves three phases (preparing for evaluation, conducting evaluation and outcomes of evaluation). A checklist is provided to help evaluators fulfil a high-standard qualitative evaluation process.
You can view the film here... ▶

Resources

There are a number of resources available for practitioners which provide guidance on how to monitor and evaluate their work. Many of these can be found on the RAN website, which include a seven step evaluation guide for local authorities, an introduction to quality management, and some insights on evaluation of counter and alternative narrative campaigns, deradicalisation efforts and the impact of victims' testimonies. An article also provides ideas for practitioners on how evaluation can be used to promote successful P/CVE activities.
You can read the article here in full here... ▶

EUROPEAN REMEMBRANCE DAY DESIGN COMPETITION

Young people from across the European Union are invited to enter the 2021 Remembrance Day Design Competition.

Students from all around the EU have the opportunity to showcase their talents in a De-sign Competition for the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism. The winning design will be used to promote the next Remembrance Day on 11 March 2022.

The purpose of the competition is to open up a conversation about terrorism, and its impact on individuals and communities, in the classroom. To achieve this, RAN is reaching out to schools and teachers with information about the competition, Remembrance Day and the RAN Victims/survivors of Terrorism Working Group.

About Remembrance Day

Organised by the RAN Victims/survivors of Terrorism Working Group, the Remembrance Day takes place every year on 11 March, the day of the 2004 Madrid attacks.

The overall objective of this Remembrance Day is to pay tribute to all European victims/survivors of terrorism, of recent and older attacks, regardless of the extremist ideology that inspired the attack.

Aim of the competition

The aim of the design competition is threefold.

- The first goal is practical: the Remembrance Day should have a recognisable identity.

- Secondly, the competition should open up a conversation about (victims and survivors of) terrorism and through this raise awareness amongst students and teachers of participating schools.

- The third goal coincides with the main aim of all RAN activities, which is to prevent radicalisation.

Want to participate?

All designs must be submitted by email no later than 30 November 2021.

The winning logo will be officially announced on 11 March 2022 (European Day of Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism). The winner will be contacted by RAN.

Please note that the competition is only open to group submissions (such as schools or classes). Proposals of participating groups should indicate a responsible point of contact (teacher or tutor).

For more information please check the RAN website here

UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, RAN Practitioners will continue to deliver all meetings in the coming months online. For more information on planned meetings please go to the [RAN website](#). A number of other meetings, to those listed below, planned for the upcoming months of 2021 are published on the websiteor will be published in due time.

2021

Civil Society Empowerment Programme (CSEP): sharing outcomes and lessons learned webinars (3/5)
RAN CSEP Projects | 15 September 2021

Preparation Meeting – Remembrance Day 2022
17 September 2021

How to best use local crime prevention approaches for P/CVE
RAN LOCAL WG Meeting | 20-21 September 2021

Mental health practices and interventions in P/CVE
RAN MH WG Meeting | 22-23 September 2021

Fireside Chat – Islamist Extremism
23 September 2021

Supporting families in fostering resilience against (Covid-19) related conspiracy narratives
RAN FC&S WG Meeting (multi-meeting with input from RAN C&N and Y&E) | 28-29 September 2021

Working with communities and religious figures
RAN Y&E WG Meeting | 05-06 October 2021

RAN High Level Conference 2021 – 10 Years of RAN
12 October 2021

RAN Plenary 2021
13 October 2021

PUBLICATIONS

Extremists' use of gaming (adjacent) platforms – Insights regarding primary and secondary prevention measures

This new paper discusses how traditional gaming (adjacent) platforms have contributed to extremist activities. Non-gaming platforms must be considered in ad-dition to classic platforms focused on gaming. The paper also explores how ex-tremist individuals and organisations make strategic and organic use of the plat-forms. The paper goes on to focus on opportunities for primary and secondary prevention on gaming (adjacent) platforms. As there is little experience of P/CVE measures on these platforms, the paper provides considerations and recom-mendations that should be taken into account when designing and implementing prevention efforts in these environments. [Read more here...](#) ▶

Reporting about violent extremism and P/CVE challenges for journalists – Recommendations for Practitioners

This new paper looks at how reporting about extremism and terrorism poses major challenges for journalists on different levels. The paper addresses some of the most relevant challenges by introducing key insights and recommendations on how to follow a "do no harm" approach when informing the public, and particularly when reporting about violence. The role of civil society organisations working on P/CVE will also be highlighted. [Read more here...](#) ▶

Between extremism and freedom of expression: Dealing with non-violent right-wing extremist actors

This new paper asks the question: How can youth, family and community workers intervene in radicalisation processes without infringing on personal freedoms? The paper focuses on right-wing extremism (RWE) and freedom of expression. It provides advice from first-line practitioners on how to deal with and respond to extremists publicly expressing their ideologies in a non-violent, but still potentially harmful, way. It also delves into the matter of how practitioners can protect themselves against potential backlash and threats of violence from extremist organisations or movements. Read more here... ▶

Lone actors as a challenge for P/CVE

This new paper provides an overview of past research on so-called 'lone actors' and discusses more recent lone-actor profiling and their psychology, as well as the challenge of identifying them. The increase in lone-actor terrorist attacks in Europe is concerning: lone actors' relative isolation compared to group actors, as well as the near-spontaneous character of their attacks, have made it harder for law enforcement to detect and disrupt their plans. The latest Europol terrorist threat assessment highlights that in 2020 all completed jihadist attacks in the EU were committed by individuals acting alone, while most foiled plots by jihadists involved multiple suspects. Read more here... ▶

Memorials for victims of terrorism and their possible value for P/CVE – Different approaches within the EU

This new paper focuses on the ways in which memorials for victims of terrorism (VoT) have been used in the context of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), outlining the most common approaches in different MSs and giving recommendations directed at first-line practitioners working in areas that could encompass memorials in their work (e.g. educators, local authorities, community workers, exit workers, probation workers, social workers) and policymakers at local, national and European levels looking to learn more from ongoing experiences amongst EU MSs and abroad, and to reflect on their own plans and frameworks. Read more here... ▶

Conspiracy narratives and right-wing extremism – Insights and recommendations for P/CVE

A new paper highlights the proliferation of conspiracy narratives and their link to violent right-wing extremism. It highlights the archetypal narratives of conspiracy ideologies, providing 'black and white' world views and how they foster societal divisions between in-groups and out-groups by exacerbating intolerance against 'the other' and delegitimising different voices as being part of the conspiracy. The paper provides recommendations for practitioners in tackling the conspiratorial labyrinth of conspiracy narratives. Read more here... ▶

The role of sports in violent right-wing extremist radicalisation and P/CVE

This new paper tackles the ability of sport, depending on the social and individual context at hand, to be a negative influence in violent right-wing extremist radicalisation. The paper discusses the entry points that sport provides for recruitment strategies by extremist actors, particularly mobilised in the development and formation of violent hooligan groups for many decades across Europe. However, the paper also stresses the benefits of sport for preventing and countering violent extremism through three general trends: solely sport-focused interventions, the creation of partnerships with sports clubs to work on youth resilience, and the incorporation of sports elements into larger P/CVE programmes. Read more here... ▶

The gamification of violent extremism and lessons for P/CVE

A new paper that discusses the 'gamification' of violent extremism, most notably since the live streamed terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand which sparked a number of 'copycat' cases in Pittsburgh, El Paso and Halle. This 'gamification' involved the live streaming of attacks on Facebook or Twitch, mirroring the stylistic features of first-person shooter games. As game elements seem to become increasingly prominent in contemporary extremist milieus, those involved in the implementation of prevention and countermeasures need to be aware of this trend, understand its mechanisms and implications, and ultimately, consider potential applications of gamification components in P/CVE efforts. Read more here... ▶

Violent incels and challenges for P/CVE

A new paper based on a RAN small-scale expert meeting held in February 2021, addressing the highly diverse and emerging phenomenon of incels. In recent years and in much of the wider discourse the focus has been placed on the violent sub-forms of this phenomenon and, sometimes, on its potential interlinkages with extremist ideologies and related scenes. This conclusion paper sets out to further increase understanding and discussion of the controversial topic of involuntary celibates, or incels. The paper addresses their potential links to violence, as well as the need for practitioners to engage with this topic in the context of P/CVE. Read more here... ▶

CONTACT

RAN Practitioners is implemented by RadarEurope, which is a subsidiary of the RadarGroup:
Phone: +31 (0)20 – 468 06 08 (office)
E-Mail: ran@radareurope.nl

Would you like more frequent updates on RAN's activities? Gain access to all public RAN papers as they are published, other RAN news and thought-provoking articles on the radicalisation process by following RAN on

YouTube / Facebook / Twitter / LinkedIn