RAN Collection practice template

Name of the practice Please note that by practice we mean an activity/method/tool that has been used or is in use by professionals and/or community members.	**U-Turn**
Description (max. 300 words) Short description of the aim and working method of the practice. Please note that in this description, it must be clear that <u>there is an explicit connection to preventing and/or countering radicalisation and/or violent extremism</u>. This means that in the aims and/or the activities/methods/tools of the practice, there is a link to preventing and countering radicalisation and/or violent extremism. Practices without this link cannot be included in the RAN Collection.	This practice focuses on reaching out to members of online groups that spread conspiracy theories and/or anti-democracy propaganda (these groups include known members of extremist groups trying to recruit). The specific target group are members who contribute to the group by sharing content that suggests an affinity for conspiracy theories and/or authoritarian methods. However, their ideology remains vague and is not fully developed. The aim is to identify underlying personal problems of the targeted group members and build a relationship that offers support but also challenges their views. The four goals are listed below. 1. **Understanding** conspiracy theories (how they work, why they are attractive, how they affect believers and society alike, and how their contradictions can be shown). 2. **Empowerment** through support (addressing underlying mental health issues, as well as the integration in social groups beyond the online sphere, and support in dealing with ambiguity and insecurity). 3. **Media literacy** by identifying trustworthy sources (who is an expert, understanding conflicts of interest). 4. **Secure and easily accessible** online communication by using a new secure communication platform and receiving training in online PVE work.

Peer reviewed	No
Key themes Please <u>choose</u> 2 key themes most corresponding with the practice.	Violent right-wing extremism Internet and radicalisation
Target audience Please <u>choose</u> a minimum of one target audience most corresponding with the practice.	Youth / Pupils / Students Online Community
Geographical scope Please indicate where the practice has been/is implemented (countries, regions, cities).	City of Dortmund – Germany
Start of the practice Please indicate when (year) the practice was developed and implemented to indicate the maturity of the practice. In case the practice is no longer active, please indicate when it ended.	Starting year: 2020
Deliverables Please indicate if the practice has led to concrete deliverables, such as (links to) handbooks, training modules, videos.	A handout/handbook for parents and educators regarding online radicalisation, how to recognise radicalisation processes, how to intervene and possible support networks is in the works.
Evidence and evaluation Short description on <u>performance measures</u> of the practice, including 1. <u>qualitative views and quantitative (statistical) data</u> e.g. measure of the success of your project or intervention. 2. <u>evaluation and feedback</u>, including surveys and/or anecdotal evidence e.g. have you done either an internal or external evaluation, have you	1. Academics from the Ruhr-University in Bochum will evaluate the entire scope of online interventions and online consultation in 2022 (if Covid-19 restrictions permit). So far (as of September 2022), U-Turn has reached out to about 140 people online and is in an ongoing communication process with at least 4 others. The communication with these persons takes place at different levels. In four cases, the discussions focus on their views and offering counter narratives while trying to build a sustainable level of trust. In two cases, an intervention has taken place and the ongoing communication is more confrontational (after establishing a level of trust that has proven to be sustainable).

European Commission

encouraged any feedback from your target group?

3. <u>peer review</u> which feedback did the practice receive in the RAN working group and/or study visit where the practice was discussed.

Please elaborate on the outcomes of your monitoring and evaluation efforts.

2. The following aspects have proven challenging: a) Transforming the supportive relationship with the targeted members of online groups into a more challenging form of communication that includes interventions. b) When a practitioner was identified within the online group by leading members and agitators of the group, these leaders usually started a counter-intervention (banning the practitioner, spreading propaganda that denounced the practitioner as a government agent and/or part of a government conspiracy). c) In some cases, the persons the practitioners were communicating with were unwilling to leave the secure constraints of the online world. This limited the options regarding support and change through intervention. d) A number of people the practitioners communicated with expressed concerns regarding the communication through social media and messaging services and felt that these channels of communication were not secure enough.

The target group (young people in radical online communities) have been mostly responsive to methods that focus on dealing with their personal grievances and problems. Therefore, in most cases the first step regarding an intervention was monitoring the grievances individuals were articulating in the group and contacting them by asking them for the reasons they stated certain things. Their response becomes the starting point for the following process of establishing trust (positive relationship) and countering radical narratives (interventions).

Sustainability and transferability
(maximum of 200 words)

Short description on the sustainability and transferability of the practice, including e.g. information on the costs of the practice. <u>Please elaborate on which elements are transferrable and how.</u>

The practice is transferable provided that the following four elements are in place:

1) Existing online communities that spread radical views (conspiracy theories) and include members from extremist groups actively recruiting.

2) People in these groups can be identified regarding their "real world" availability through proximity to the practitioners.

3) Long-term communication and intervention is guaranteed – time is available to offer support and to intervene (ideally by the same person that originally reached out to the targeted group member).

4) The only cost factors are the professional practitioners, acquiring and establishing a secure online communication tool and practitioner training regarding online PVE work.

Presented and discussed in RAN meeting

Name: Online P/CVE approach for local authorities, How to manage it?

Radicalisation Awareness Network

RAN
Practitioners

Please note that to be included in the Collection, the practice is preferably nominated through one of the RAN meetings. Add name of the RAN Working Group/event, date, place and subject of meeting.	Date: 28/05/2021 Place: Online Subject: Online P/CVE approaches
Linked to other EU initiatives or EU funding (maximum of 100 words) Please indicate how your project was funded, if your practice is linked to other EU initiatives or projects, AND explicitly note if it is (co-) funded by the EU, and if so, by which funds? Such as Erasmus +, Internal Security Funds (ISF), European Social Fund (ESF), Horizon 2020, etc.	U-Turn receives funding from the Federal Government of Germany and the City of Dortmund. The project is not financially supported by the EU.
Organisation (enter maximum of 100 words and select organisation type) Please briefly describe the organisation behind the practice including the legal status e.g. NGO, governmental, limited company, charity etc.	U-Turn is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that receives funding from the German Federal Government and the Municipality of Dortmund. The project is part of the work against extremism and in support of victims of violent right-wing extremism, antisemitism and racism undertaken by BackUp-ComeBack e.V. Type of Organisation: NGO
Country of origin Country in which the practice is based.	EU or EEA country: Germany
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