PLENARY

CONCLUSION PAPER
RAN Plenary
13-14 October 2022, Brussels

RAN Practitioners Plenary 2022: Reflection and looking ahead

Introduction

The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) practitioners attended their first in-person plenary after 2 years of virtual meetings due to COVID-19. As with previous plenaries, this RAN Practitioners Plenary connected and empowered first-line practitioners across the European Union (EU) and beyond. Participants were eager to meet in person to reflect on the past 2 years and look ahead to future work in the fast-paced preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) landscape.

RAN Practitioners discussed the changing field of P/CVE in various contexts: the fragmentation of ideologies; the rise of new (extremist) movements alongside old ones; hostilities against (local) authorities; the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine; and the spread of conspiracy narratives via social media. At this year's RAN Practitioners Plenary, participants also discussed current and future challenges for their work and the ever-growing demand for continued engagement and further development of the network. These changes also **resonate** in the suggested topics and issues for **2023** that were voiced during the plenary.

This conclusion paper covers the main outcomes of the plenary, describing the themes that participants highlighted as a priority for RAN Practitioners in 2023 and beyond.

Opening remarks by Monique Pariat, Director-General, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

- Ms Pariat opened by noting that much has changed since the network was launched 11 years ago. In the past few years, the pandemic hindered in-person meetings, making it more difficult to develop trust and personal relationships in P/CVE work. Yet all succeeded in working and collaborating digitally.

- Looking at more recent events, Ms Pariat spoke about the following new dimensions of P/CVE work.

  o There are growing worries about the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, the rising levels of inflation and the energy prices. People are concerned about job security and financial prospects.

  o As a result, individuals may become isolated, spending a great deal of time online and withdrawing from family, friends and their wider communities.

  o These individuals could very well lose trust in their governments and public authorities – and even in democracy.

  o The internet provides fewer filters and safeguards than real life. As a consequence, hate speech is thriving online, causing further polarisation in European societies.

- Ms Pariat continued by addressing the significant role of first-line practitioners. Being in daily contact with all communities including marginalised and vulnerable groups, first-line practitioners are best placed to reach out and help these groups. Practitioners can remind such groups that our democracies, albeit imperfect, protect everyone.

- Speaking on the need to preserve democracy in the European Union, Ms Pariat underlined that we all need to work hard on promoting European values, to raise awareness of what is at stake if we allow radicalisation to thrive. This is a challenging task, but the European Commission will support first-line practitioners in this mission every step of the way.

- Ms Pariat concluded by calling on plenary participants to share their ideas, insights and challenges in P/CVE work. She stressed that only by working together can we prevent and counter extremism.

Presentation of the Strategic Orientations 2022-2023 by Yolanda Gallego-Casilda Grau, Head of Unit, Prevention of Radicalisation, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

Ms Gallego-Casilda Grau made a brief presentation on the Strategic Orientations 2022-2023 (i.e. the EU Strategic Orientations on a coordinated EU approach to prevention of radicalisation for 2022-2023), which offered insights on the P/CVE priorities at European level. Also linked to the counter-terrorism agenda of the EU, these priorities provide guidance for RAN Practitioners work.

Ms Gallego-Casilda Grau highlighted the following four thematic areas from the Strategic Orientations 2022-2023.

1. **Ideologies and polarisation.** We continue to explore jihadism and violent right-wing extremism, but we also need to investigate newer and fragmented ideologies causing polarisation, e.g. anti-establishment movements. This phenomenon manifested during the pandemic but developed further during the Russian

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war of aggression in Ukraine. We should also focus on weak signals of radicalisation/extremism, because of the high threat of lone actors.

2. **Online dimension and strategic communications.** The link between offline and online violence is clear but must be better clarified and understood. We are seeing younger radicalised individuals and perpetrators. Videogaming and its platforms are used to recruit these young people. The pandemic highlighted the importance of countering harmful online narratives.

   We need to adapt to these changes. The EU has issued legislation to help meet the goal of decreasing terrorist content and reducing propaganda online. Together with different social media platforms, we will continue to work in the EU Internet Forum to eliminate harmful content online.

3. **Prisons, radicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration, and foreign terrorist fighters.** Attention must remain focused on FTFs' and individuals' deradicalisation after release. Key areas include the individuals' reintegration process, the appropriate training of prison staff, sufficient support for individuals, and the provision of follow-up after their release. The gender dimension is also of importance here, for instance in the case of returnees and child returnees.

4. **Local dimension, communities and resilience building.** Working with communities and building community resilience is an overall priority when taking steps to prevent violent extremism. Local factors play a significant role in early prevention approaches. Therefore, we should always have a tailored approach to work with communities and neighbourhoods.

Inspirational speech by Karina Urbanavičiūtė: Disinformation as the threat of the 21ˢᵗ century – how can we recognise and counter it?

Ms Urbanavičiūtė, project and communications manager on disinformation analysis and media literacy projects at Debunk.org (based in Lithuania), gave an inspirational speech on recognising and countering disinformation. At Debunk, Ms Urbanavičiūtė and the team analyse disinformation in Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro and Poland. They monitor election campaigns, organise community training and hold media literacy campaigns. As a consequence of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, disinformation linked to this war is spreading even faster. Debunk identified social media bots and trolls responsible for the spread of disinformation, so-called bot farms. They discovered bubbles of the same administration accounts (admins) behind content/pages. The content might not seem harmful at first, but linking the groups shows that the reach of the "bubbles of admins" is extensive and influential. According to Ms Urbanavičiūtė, there are two possible types of response to online disinformation.

1. **The first type is the personal response.** Readers can identify misleading/harmful content by reviewing its sources, checking:

   o   if it is sponsored content or links to advertisements;

   o   if there are more sources to support the information;

   o   what information other sources have published on this content, via anonymous searching in Google.

   Also, readers can check images via an image search to learn if they have already been used elsewhere, check if articles are credited with an author and then learn about the author, google the engagement of the article, identify whether the comments are "authored" by trolls and bots, and consider who writes the comments, check any sources an article cites, look beyond the headlines and evaluate the content per se, and examine how facts are presented in the overall article.

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Once readers have evaluated the article, they can research the account behind it to ensure it is not a fake profile. To spot a fake account, readers can research the profile picture activity, name, creation date, language, information and engagement.

2. **The second type is the civic response.** There are two ways of countering disinformation by creating a civic response. The first is to report the account or content by submitting it as false information. The second way is to create a counter-narrative. This can be done in multiple ways: by developing projects to counter harmful narratives, or by publishing personal responses like counter articles or memes.

Overarching topics

This section reflects the outcomes of the RAN Practitioners Plenary's first breakout session. Based on the outcomes of the survey held before the plenary, the most important overarching topics were discussed during this session. In the breakout sessions, participants formulated recommendations for relevant working groups and other RAN activities. Various ideas were suggested. The nine overarching topics are outlined below, including a selection of the ideas derived from the discussion.

Topic 1: Disinformation in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine (or the information war)

- A RAN Youth and Education Working Group (Y&E) meeting on the next steps in media literacy and critical thinking, reviewing the term "critical thinking" and looking at "healthy scepticism". How to get young people to look "behind their own perspective"?
- A RAN Communication and Narratives Working Group (C&N) meeting: "What is the tipping point from 'critical thinking' to extremist disinformation? At what point does it lead to victims (including online victims)?"
- A RAN Victims and Survivors of Terrorism Working Group (VoT) meeting on how to reach out to the victims of conspiracy narratives.
- A mental health meeting on how manipulation by disinformation is being carried out, and what the working principles from the micro to the macro level are.
- A small-scale expert meeting on how to incorporate victims and formers of conspiracy narratives in developing counter-narratives or alternative narratives.
- Papers or webinars on current topics/hot issues to help teachers and practitioners in responding to disinformation, and on making existing information visible, especially as regards conspiracies related to the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine.

Topic 2: The rise of (online) right-wing extremism, specifically accelerationism

- A RAN YOUNG meeting to evaluate online interventions for young people: are the interventions fitting, or are they too boring or embarrassing/awkward?
- A RAN Police and Law Enforcement Working Group (POL) meeting from a security and prevention perspective, on detecting online accelerationist information and on community police dealing with vulnerable youth to acquire this information.
- A RAN Families, Communities & Social Care Working Group (FC&S) meeting on how families and communities can become aware of online accelerationist content, by informing them on the phenomenon and the related risks.
- A RAN VoT meeting on credible messages to counter accelerationist messages by discussing the consequences for victims.
- A RAN C&N meeting on online accelerationist narratives and the digital spaces used for these narratives.
- A RAN Y&E meeting on relevant and appealing interventions for young people on accelerationism.

Topic 3: Radicalising climate protest: the thin line between activism and extremism

- A joint meeting between RAN YOUNG and RAN Y&E on supporting a single-issue movement before activism becomes extremism.

- A joint meeting between RAN C&N and RAN Local Authorities Working Group (LOCAL) on focusing public communication more on anticipation to be less reactive, while also discussing the notion of trust in institutions.
- A joint meeting between RAN POL and RAN Y&E to discuss the thin line between activism and extremism. Exploring whether the threshold is violence (physical vs property).
- A paper on the (possible) interaction between the climate activists and groups/movements that potentially promote harmful ideology.
- A paper to explore existing vulnerabilities per Member State in terms of the climate movement.

Topic 4: The reciprocal radicalisation of the violent left (with the rise of the extreme right), also exploring old and new generations of left-wing extremism

- A joint RAN FC&S and RAN Y&E meeting on how to prevent young people from becoming radicalised into left-wing extremism, without criminalising them. The young people are often linked to left-wing beliefs through their parents.
- A RAN C&N meeting, potentially with some representation from the social media industry, to examine how algorithms push the left-wing extremist agenda, by analysing left-wing discourses.
- A small-scale meeting to explore the not-yet violent extremism related to the left-wing movement (woke, climate, anarchy, and new- and old-generation left wing)
- A study visit or webinar with Europol to discuss the characteristics of left-wing extremism, as they have extensively researched and analysed this area.
- A paper that researches a new definition and picture of the left-wing scene, by also examining the influences/forces/finances behind the left movement.
- A cross-cutting meeting to discuss the dynamics rendering young people vulnerable to either right- or left-wing extremist influences, and how to prevent the tipping point.

Topic 5: Returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and returning women and children, the imminent release of violent extremist offenders (VETOs) from prison; and rehabilitation and reintegration into society of these groups

- A joint meeting with RAN Y&E, RAN Rehabilitation Working Group (RAN REHABILITATION), RAN Mental Health Working Group (RAN HEALTH) and RAN Prisons Working Group (RAN PRISONS) on addressing (multiple) trauma in returned children, including dealing with child soldiers; and risk and needs assessment tools.
- A joint meeting with RAN PRISONS, RAN REHABILITATION and RAN HEALTH on gender-sensitive approaches to trauma in men and boys.
- A joint meeting (RAN POL, RAN PRISONS and RAN REHABILITATION) on the four Ps (prison, probation, police and prosecution) to identify (and improve) the gaps in cooperation in the management and reintegration of VETOs.
- An overview paper on risk and needs assessment tools for trauma in returned children, based on multi-professional inputs (including how to deal with child soldiers in detention), followed by a study visit (to France) or small-scale exploratory workshop on different tools.

Topic 6: Broadening the understanding of the links between mental health, trauma and radicalisation

- A RAN Y&E meeting on how schools with limited resources can deal with the rise in mental health disorders and the risk of radicalisation.
- A RAN REHABILITATION meeting on how practitioners can make trauma therapy more accessible, in order to begin deradicalisation/disengagement.
- A RAN VoT meeting on prevention of secondary traumatisation arising from P/CVE efforts.
- A training session for correction officers on dealing with signs of trauma and mental health disorders.
- A cross-cutting meeting on early intervention and detection of mental health disorders for primary prevention of radicalisation.

- RAN YOUNG representation during meetings to provide other practitioners their perspective on mental health disorders in young people (during and after the pandemic), and on reaching young people with mental health disorders in the early stages (early prevention).
- A joint paper with guidelines for supporting and providing care for practitioners/caregivers (input from all RAN working groups).

Topic 7: The rising number of terrorist attacks by lone actors radicalised in online communities, and their interrelation with extremist anti-feminists in the manosphere (i.e. incels); also addressing misogyny as a common denominator in various types of extremist group, and the proliferation of groups with extremist tendencies, such as certain sections of the incel communities and other (online) misogynist ones

- A joint RAN LOCAL, RAN Y&E and RAN FC&S meeting on identifying the warning signs in individuals that accords with lone actors.
- A RAN POL meeting on how to detect online radicalisation via text and image analysis.
- A RAN C&N meeting to explore the online platforms related to lone actors with misogynistic beliefs and actions.
- A meeting or webinar where various practitioners working in an online context present their projects and approaches.
- An exchange between researchers specialising in online trends and communities, and practitioners bringing their experience and observations to the table.

Topic 8: Existing anti-establishment and anti-government sentiments that surfaced and manifested in the COVID-19 pandemic and now in the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; these sentiments are fuelled by several elements: a) conspiracy narratives related to both the pandemic and the current war, b) the current (Ukrainian) refugee situation, and c) inflation and the food and energy crisis

- A RAN LOCAL meeting on the elements or agents in the local context that uphold anti-establishment sentiments. Who are the agents of chaos in our community? How can we identify those that create chaos?
- A RAN C&N meeting on the tools to address anti-authorities extremism online, and how to address it without criminalising individuals.
- A RAN YOUNG and/or RAN Y&E meeting to ascertain whether young people perceive anti-establishment and anti-government sentiments as a problem, and how they can help tackle this.
- A study visit to a city that experienced violent protests during the pandemic, where practitioners can learn how this was tackled by local authorities.
- An overview paper addressing protest, extremism and interventions and related terminology, definitions and target audience.

Topic 9: The growing importance of online radicalisation and P/CVE efforts

- A RAN POL meeting on how police can prevent and report online radicalisation.
- A joint RAN VoT and RAN C&N meeting on victims' (online) experiences, discussing protection and empowerment of victims/survivors of terrorism.
- A RAN Y&E meeting on online youth/street work and related ethical challenges.
- A RAN YOUNG exchange between young people and practitioners from all working groups on the topic of online aspects of P/CVE.
- A joint RAN HEALTH and RAN FC&S meeting on online aspects of P/CVE, to learn from adjacent fields, e.g. psychiatry/drug abuse.
- A train-the-trainer session on P/CVE work online.
- A workshop to make best practices in online P/CVE work transferable to different Member States.

Focus of RAN working groups in 2023

This section reflects the outcomes of the discussions in the second breakout session of the plenary. It lists the proposed themes for the 2023 agenda from working group participants. Discussions on these topics were based on the outcomes of the first breakout session (overarching topics) and on survey results.

RAN Communication and Narratives Working Group (RAN C&N)

"Bringing practitioners' voices to strategic communication: how to respond to disinformation in public communications, from the perspective of frontline practitioners"
This meeting will explore how the (online) 'street'-knowledge of first-line practitioners can be used to improve public communications in situations of misinformation (for instance, around the current Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, anti-government/anti-authority sentiments and accelerationist narratives).

"Preventive campaigning using biographical experiences of both victims and survivors of terrorism as well as formers"
This meeting will focus on how emotionally charged content based on experiences from formers and survivors in P/CVE campaigns and interventions can be an effective way to offer viable alternative narratives. Participants will look at the current state of play and discuss potential guidelines that can be applied in this context.

"Are we ready for the future of online extremism and P/CVE? Looking into (potential) effects of the EU Digital Services Act and its possible interplay with future technological developments"
This meeting will explore the (expected) effect of the Digital Services Act on current online P/CVE work and examine whether the act will also be applicable to (potential) future online developments (e.g. the metaverse).

RAN Families, Communities & Social Care Working Group (RAN FC&S)

"How to empower parents to make their children more emotionally resilient against extremist influences"
This meeting will focus on how to empower parents and how they can make their children more emotionally resilient. In a challenging society with high expectations, it is important that parents feel empowered when raising their adolescent children. At the 2022 RAN Practitioners Plenary, the importance of "emotional resilience" was discussed, and insights from the plenary will be incorporated into the meeting. What do you do as a parent when your child expresses extreme ideas? How do you respond to questions? How do you respond when your child experiences injustice? How do you contribute to the positive identity development of your child?

"Preparing receiving communities for their involvement in the rehabilitation process"
This meeting will address the topic of how informal actors such as families and communities can be supportive actors in the rehabilitation process. Lessons from previous RAN meetings underline the importance of having knowledge about the city's "social map" so as to identify which communities the (ex-)offender had ties to, and therefore which communities (or important representatives of these communities) to involve in the rehabilitation process. However, most meetings have concentrated on involvement of the family network, while there is still limited knowledge and experience on how to better involve communities in the rehabilitation process. That is why the focus of this meeting is on community involvement.

"Evaluation of family support efforts: What is the state of play regarding evaluating family support efforts for families of radicalised individuals?"
This meeting will focus on the challenging task of conducting process and/or impact evaluations of family support. Evaluating these programmes can be challenging due to the lack of a scientific framework of indicators, not only because these family support programmes are relatively new, but also because there are so many variables in the family context that may influence the effectiveness of the family support.

RAN Local Authorities Working Group (RAN LOCAL)

"How to prevent and mitigate anti-government extremism at the local level: restoring 'normality' and rebuilding trust and networks at the local level"

This meeting will focus on how local and regional coordinators can mitigate anti-government sentiment and make anti-government extremism part of the local PCVE agenda, as well as how to apply the "do no harm" principle (not criminalising protesters, not stigmatising the community, etc.) in P/CVE.

"The future and position of local P/CVE strategy and approaches"

Geopolitical developments and social transformation are changing the extremist landscape. P/CVE is no longer concerned only with dealing with Islamist or far-right extremism. Recent social and economic developments have proven that violence can arise from different groups like anti-government groups, conspiracists or climate activists. Given these developments, perhaps the time has come to rethink what P/CVE local strategy is about. For instance, who has ownership of the local P/CVE agenda? Is it security, social cohesion and/or democracy? These and other questions will be addressed at this meeting.

"How can arts, the city's civic pride, and culture contribute to boosting local resilience and democracy against extremism, hate crime and other threats to democracy?"

This meeting will focus on the question of how local authorities can benefit from arts and civic culture when it comes to preventing and countering political violence, radicalisation and polarisation to defend democracy in an open society. Art communicates information and creates social statements. It allows individuals to discuss political agendas and respond to social events and political developments through a visual medium. A strong civic culture and shared values are the basis for a resilient and peaceful democratic community where individuals share and defend their (local) identity and autonomy.

RAN Mental Health Working Group (RAN HEALTH)

"Psychosis and looking at the implications for P/CVE"

This meeting will examine the role of psychosis in the context of terrorist attacks (by lone actors) and the associated challenges, and will look at the skills needed to regulate the state of both the individual and the practitioner. Practitioners from different professional backgrounds can benefit from mental health expertise on this topic.

"Gender-sensitive approach focusing on trauma in men and boys"

This meeting will focus on how to deal with traumatised individuals as a mental health practitioner working in P/CVE, rather than on the link between trauma and radicalisation. Trauma needs to be dealt with before starting the deradicalisation/disengagement process. It is vital to bear in mind the scientific definition of "trauma" is PTSD. Trauma can significantly impact a person's life when they lack the tools to cope with it. Moreover, their social or cultural environment can strengthen or weaken the link between trauma and radicalisation, violence or violent extremism. Especially for men and boys, the social concept of masculinity (not talking about feelings) can be detrimental for dealing with trauma, impacting their emotion regulation and potentially causing them to resort to violence or violent extremism to deal with their emotions. Hence the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to dealing with trauma for mental health practitioners.

"The issue of cooperation between mental health practitioners and security forces (joint meeting with RAN POL)"

This meeting will consider collaboration in light of the increasing challenges relating to mental health disorders and P/CVE. Existing multi-agency collaborations across Europe are often not attuned to this complexity. This creates challenges for those working in psychiatric settings (namely psychiatrists with medical confidentiality obligations) and security forces (police) in need of information in their risk assessment work, both in primary prevention settings (early detection multiagency settings) and in secondary and tertiary prevention (e.g. returnees in jail). This meeting will lay the groundwork for a follow-up cross-cutting event with RAN Policy Support provisionally titled "A shared responsibility: Mental health disorders and violent incidents using terrorist modi operandi".

RAN Police and Law Enforcement Working Group (RAN POL)

"Online safari for police officers on right-wing extremism and accelerationism: how can the police be prepared online and offline?"

This meeting will focus on staying up to date on ideology and extremism and on related practical tools for police. Police officers need to have the latest information on extremist ideologies, the effects of these ideologies (online and offline), and police measures (online and offline).

"Zeitgeist: How to prepare for future scenarios, and are our police measures enough?"

This meeting will focus on preparing police officers for the future landscape of extremism through scenario-planning and considering future police responses. A group of police officers will imagine the landscape of extremism in 2028. What will extremism look like? What will this mean for police capacity? What is needed to build this police capacity?

"How can police deal with heated debates and disruptive protests without adding oil to the extremist fire?"

This meeting will develop critical thinking about the position of the police in the public debate and will seek further knowledge on police responses that are not harmful. It will consider how to deal with disruptive protests (as police) in such a way as not to stimulate or encourage radicalisation and extremism. This meeting will explore the sometimes-thin lines separating non-violent protest, disruption, polarisation and extremism.

RAN Prisons Working Group (RAN PRISONS)

"The role of prison leadership/management (and policy/administration) to ensure minimum standards of the prison environment and P/CVE work"

This meeting will explore how P/CVE-related practices and tools are adopted in the prison environment. Although many such good practices and tools exist and have been identified within RAN (e.g. reinforcing the concept of dynamic security, and ensuring multi-skillset trainings for prison staff), their actual take-up in daily practice as well as their sustainability depend largely on the organisational support provided by prison management and policy. As public expectations for the penitentiary system to rehabilitate VETOs are higher than ever, it is important to explore their role.

"Information exchange and cooperation between prison stakeholders and with external actors (with focus on the 4 Ps – police, prosecution, prison and probation) in the management and reintegration of VETOs – practical tools"

This will be a joint RAN POL and RAN REHABILITATION meeting. Multi-agency cooperation in the management and rehabilitation of VETOs has become a buzzword in P/CVE, including along the prison-exit continuum. However, there are many gaps and challenges in the information exchange and practical cooperation between different stakeholders inside prisons but also with actors on the outside, especially relating to risk assessment, management and treatment of VETOs. Practitioners need concrete tools and guidelines on how to set up such information exchanges and what they should take into account, so they are aware of the common pitfalls but also of transferable working methods and practices.

"CSOs and state-run DDR programmes in the prison environment"

This will be a joint meeting with RAN REHABILITATION. Many Member States have started to explore cooperation between different actors such as prison and probation services, police and other municipal authorities including social and health workers. There is a growing acknowledgement that civil society organisations (CSOs) can play a critical role in programmes focused on VETOs' rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Governments are making increasing use of the expertise, skills and knowledge provided by CSOs, both in and out of prison. However, this cooperation requires a willingness to cooperate and communicate, and the need to establish a trusted working relationship, standard operating procedures and set-ups for information exchange.

RAN Rehabilitation Working Group (RAN REHABILITATION)

"The time aspect of rehabilitation"

This meeting will explore how to best structure rehabilitation programmes that have a limited time frame, e.g. those run during probation. What can be achieved within the specific time span? What feasible expectations can participants, those commissioning the intervention and the involved practitioners have? When is a rehabilitation intervention ready, and should the client be able to go on independently? How can this be evaluated?

"Mentorship in the rehabilitation process"

This meeting will be based on the premise that while the rehabilitation process is individual and depends to a large degree on the will to change, this will to change can be stimulated through mentoring by exit or probation workers or others involved in this specific role. The former group provides guidance working from a professional background, and the latter group can contribute as peers and/or role models. Mentors can also represent continuity in the transition phases of the rehabilitation process (e.g. from prison to custody).

"Preparing receiving communities for their involvement in the rehabilitation process (joint event with RAN FC&S)"

This joint meeting has already been listed under RAN FC&S; please see above.

RAN Victims and Survivors of Terrorism Working Group (RAN VoT)

"Victims and culture – artistic approaches to commemoration and healing, with a PVE aim"

This meeting will provide practitioners with examples of how art can be used in healing, commemoration and/or preventing violent extremism (PVE) efforts, and how to incorporate artistic approaches in their work. Art has great potential for empowering victims/survivors, and artistic expression can help process traumatic experiences, as it is often easier to communicate through cultural tools. Moreover, art facilitates dialogue and can play a role in social cohesion, which is an important element of PVE efforts. This meeting seeks to produce an overview of how different cultural approaches involving or aimed at victims/survivors of terrorism can support victims/survivors in healing, what role these approaches can play in commemoration and how they can contribute to PVE.

"Prevention of secondary traumatisation arising from P/CVE efforts"

This meeting aims to give practitioners insight into how to involve victims/survivors in their P/CVE efforts in a safe manner. Involving victims/survivors in P/CVE is inextricably linked to a focus on their well-being, as there is a high risk of retraumatising an already vulnerable group of people. It is paramount to ensure that victims/survivors contributing to P/CVE efforts are provided with a safe environment. How can victims/survivors engage in initiatives that potentially endanger their well-being? How can practitioners wishing to engage victims/survivors in their P/CVE efforts put in place conditions that eliminate the risk of secondary traumatisation?

The third RAN VoT meeting (Q3/Q4) will focus on **preparation for Remembrance Day 2024,** and on ensuring that the Remembrance Day represents the needs of all victims/survivors and victim organisations throughout Europe.

RAN Youth and Education Working Group (RAN Y&E)

"Gender-specific resilience building: young men's needs in a changing world"

This meeting will support practitioners struggling with an increasing misogyny and a growing interest in extremist narratives online among young men. This behaviour must be understood as a defence mechanism against a world which these young men perceive as turning against them. It is a vulnerable position intentionally exploited by extremists. Practitioners need skills to build resilience in these young men and to gain insight into the origins of their frustration. Mental health aspects will be taken into account across the whole issue.

"Tools for resilience-building and personal engagement post-lockdown"

This will be an opportunity for showcasing and exchanging tools on several topics such as critical thinking, conflict resolution, multi-perspectivity and democratic literacy, in the aftermath of the many lockdowns young people

experienced. In the 2022 RAN Practitioners Plenary, the need was stressed for emotional resilience and proper personal engagement, which will therefore also be included in this meeting.

"Exploring the new far left and reciprocal radicalisation"

This meeting will examine the impact of the "woke" movement, which features increasingly as a topic of concern in public debate. A large part of the youngest generation is questioning inequalities of the status quo, as seen in issues of gender, race and LGBTQIA+, for instance. This has also caused a large backlash from the far right. The sensitivity of these topics and the accompanying polarisation are hard to grasp for many professionals. The rise of the far right is also causing a revival of anti-fascism. Through the growing climate movement, and anarchist and other mixed-ideology anti-government movements, this meeting will look at how the new far left is manifesting among young people, and with what consequences.

RAN YOUNG Platform

"RAN YOUNG kick-off and peer-to-peer exchange"

This will include various inspiring sessions to kick off both the networking component of the platform and knowledge exchange on P/CVE. Topics include the introduction of the RAN working groups and the platform, and Q&A sessions with youth participation experts/alumni and YOUNG Platform participants. Furthermore, the participants themselves have a significant part to play by showcasing their P/CVE experience.

"RAN YOUNG/RAN Practitioners cross-fertilisation: Young people's vision on current overarching P/CVE challenges"

This meeting will feature several RAN practitioners who will elaborate on a P/CVE-related theme (they will be hosted virtually on a screen to RAN YOUNG participants). RAN YOUNG members will expand their knowledge on the topic at hand and will exchange views on how to best tackle the issue from their own experiences and perspectives. The setup of this meeting is a unique opportunity offering a safe haven while at the same time providing value on RAN network themes.

"RAN YOUNG review panel – the youth perspective on specific P/CVE plans, projects and practices"

This meeting will provide the opportunity for practitioners from the RAN working groups to present a specific plan, project or practice related to P/CVE to RAN YOUNG members, on which they welcome the young people's perspectives. In order for such exchanges to thrive, it remains crucial to empower and train RAN YOUNG members so they can provide valuable and action-orientated feedback to practitioners, which they can implement in their daily work activities.

Closing remarks by Olivier Onidi, Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

Mr Onidi thanked the practitioners present at the RAN Plenary. He noted that the RAN Plenary is the cornerstone of efforts to understand radicalisation and prevent it. Mr Onidi continued to point out the significance of the plenary in light of the changing context, as follows.

- Following the COVID pandemic lockdown years, which made for a very troubled context, there is now the challenge of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which calls people and society to action. This is the time for Europe to move from the age of innocence to the age of assertiveness. For this, RAN Practitioners is needed.

- In this light, it is important to come together once a year with cross-sectoral expertise covering diverse elements to stand up to all forms of violent extremism.

- The (near) future holds trials and developments and we will be confronted by challenges from numerous clients across different fields. RAN is widely known beyond the borders of the EU.

- The European Commission is developing a knowledge hub and improving its capacity for aggregating and disseminating knowledge, building on existing RAN work and experience and considering the challenges that lie ahead.

- We want to show that Europe is becoming more assertive, and we want to help practitioners address the challenges they confront daily. RAN Practitioners can also point to very specific ways to counter disinformation. There should be space for more qualitative information about disinformation and what it means.

- We take the challenges very seriously. A primary area where we want to invest much more is the preventive arm. We should involve strategic communications in our work. There is space to demonstrate our capacity to act.