

RAN Update 17

November, 2014

This is an update on the activities of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). You have participated in a RAN working group activity, or you have registered your interest in the network. Therefore you receive this e-mail, as do some 1300 other people. If you do not want to receive such e-mails, please let us know. Feel free to distribute this RAN Update and suggest others to subscribe.

Halfway through the RAN's third year

Thus far 25 of the 52 foreseen activities in the third year of the RAN (March 2014 to March 2015) took place. The main objective of the network is to benefit first-line practitioners, with working group meetings, SC gatherings, and a yearly RAN Plenary and High Level Conference. Besides these core RAN activities, this year RAN also offered support to Member States, making the network and its knowledge more beneficial for national governments as well. All these activities added up to 52 meetings this year. With 10 meetings, October was the busiest month yet. The last quarter of the RAN year (January 2015 to March 2015) will also have plenty activities, of which already 11 meetings planned and another 9 foreseen. Read more about the RAN Working Groups meetings and our recent assistance to Member States in this Update.

Working Group activities since the last RAN Update

Tailor-made meeting for South Eastern Europe by RAN POL

- On 15 and 16 October 2014 the Police working group (RAN POL) organised the last of their tailor-made regional meetings. In Zagreb RAN POL focused on the national and regional situations regarding radicalisation in South Eastern Europe. Representatives from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia indicated that they wanted and needed to learn more about police awareness training, multi-agency approaches, and how to engage and cooperate with the educational system. To meet their expressed needs, police experts from Denmark and the Netherlands were invited to give a presentation on experiences with awareness training programmes and multi-agency approaches in their countries. In addition to the above-mentioned needs, the Member States are dealing with several challenges. In most of the countries in the region these challenges mainly concern lone actors and the extreme right wing, which is often integrated in hooliganism. Therefore, the Never Again Association and two police experts in this field from Slovakia and Slovenia presented their findings in the European football stadiums and the different approaches to prevent radicalisation in the stadiums. It was noted that prevention of radicalisation is, especially compared to two years ago, getting more integrated in the national policy of the different South Eastern European countries.

Successful RAN HEALTH tour through three EU regions

- In order to provide more local support to Member States and increase the ability to network more closely with other participants in the RAN Health meetings, the working group organised three regional meetings. On 21 October a regional meeting for the Baltic, Nordic and Western European countries was organised. Practitioners from Ireland, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands

and Lithuania attended the meeting. On 22 October a meeting for Central-Eastern European countries was held in Vienna. Participating Member States were Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovenia. On 23 October a meeting for Southern European countries took place in Lisbon. Representatives from France, Portugal, and Spain were present. The meetings intended and succeeded to discuss and collect the situation, actions and needs of practitioners in the different regions. The needs of Health practitioners vary from an instrument for risk assessments targeting radicalisation, to more knowledge exchange among each other, e.g. on sharing concerns in a multi-agency structure. It was also indicated that the awareness regarding the role of the health sector concerning radicalisation and foreign fighters has increased over the years. The health sector is increasingly involved by other sectors and organisations dealing with radicalisation, e.g. by the police.

RAN offers for MSs

Deployment of RAN expertise to Member States

- The RAN deploys its expertise to Member States having expressed an interest, e.g. on a specific question or topic for which they request the RAN assistance. So far Sweden, Slovakia and the Netherlands successfully applied. The RAN expertise offered to Sweden, consisting of the co-organisation of a conference on foreign fighters in Stockholm on 28 August, was described in Update 16. As the RAN can support five Member States with such expertise, there is still the possibility for two national authorities to apply, **preferably before the end of 2014**. You can indicate your interest by emailing to ran@radaradvies.nl.

Slovakia's National Strategy on Counter Extremism satisfactorily reviewed

From mid-August until the beginning of October 2014, the RAN supported the reviewing of the draft National Strategy on Countering Extremism 2015-2019 of Slovakia. The objective was to have an external perspective on the strategy and to take into account the lessons learned by the RAN to strengthen the strategy's scope, objectives and tasks. RAN experts from Spain, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom and the RAN Secretariat met with Slovak policy makers from the Ministry of Interior and the Police Presidium on 3 October in Bratislava. The support efforts resulted in a review document of which many elements have been adopted in the updated National Strategy. Strong elements of the Slovak strategy are definitions on radicalisation and (violent) extremism and a concrete list of tasks and responsibilities for involved departments and other stakeholders.

The Netherlands will be supported by RAN experts to implement a messaging channel to empower formal and informal key figures and expand their level of knowledge and expertise. A pilot city will be selected soon, to test such implementation, which should result in providing affected communities and practitioners with factual government information on issues related to countering violent extremism.

Three successful RAN exit-workshops

- As a part of the RAN offer to Member States, the RAN Secretariat organised three exit-workshops for a total of twelve Member States. The aim of the workshops was to inform, inspire and empower attendees to develop and enhance exit programmes as part of a national strategy countering violent extremism in their countries. The workshops discussed the added value of exit-programmes from a government and societal perspective. Representatives of Member States participated in the workshops

that took place on 6, 8 and 9 October in Vienna. RAN experts Harald Weilnböck, Yousiff Meah, Andreas Peham and the RAN Secretariat shared their expertise.

The RAN exit-workshops focussed on both disengagement programs, dissuading extremists from using violence, and de-radicalisation programs, leading to the renouncing of both violence and underlying ideology. As Member States face different challenges, the one-day workshops focused on different forms of radicalisation leading to violent extremism. On 6 October Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain and Belgium participated in the workshop that focused on right-wing violent extremism. On 8 October Estonia, Finland, Denmark and Spain participated in the workshop with a focus on jihadist violent extremism and foreign fighters. Due to high demand, on Belgium, France, Cyprus, Portugal and the Netherlands attended a second workshop on jihadist violent extremism and foreign fighters the following day. Participants were mostly representatives of national policy making level, intelligence services, and police and prison services.

Prior to the workshops representatives of the Member States were asked to provide information on their state of play when it comes to violent extremism and their policies and measures regarding this subject. Furthermore, the RAN Secretariat had an interview with the representatives of each MS to see which specific topics and challenges were at play and what the expectations of the workshops were. Most of these questions and challenges turned out to be rather practical (What does it cost? How can we implement it?). One of the objectives of the workshops was to connect people and let them share their knowledge. The results and the takeaways from the workshops varied among the Member States, which was dependent of the level of (perceived) urgency, experiences with earlier and other forms of violent extremism, the quality of the infrastructure and the resources of the different Member States.

RAN Train-the-Trainer

- Together with leading European specialists in the field of radicalisation awareness trainings, the RAN Secretariat developed a Train-the-Trainer workshop. The Commission budgeted 5 of these workshops, for which the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain quickly registered. In addition to the five Member States which were offered the training by the Commission, a non-EU member Norway arranged and covered costs of the training to be delivered in their country too. Between October 2014 and March 2015 these countries will receive the RAN Train-the-Trainer workshop. The workshop aims to raise the practitioners' awareness of radicalisation and demonstrates what different practitioners can do to share information and recognise, prevent and counter radicalisation. The workshop is designed to enable participants to feel comfortable to deliver a workshop themselves.

First RAN Train-the-Trainer workshop

On 29-30 October the RAN Train-the-Trainer was delivered for the first time. In the Netherlands a mixed group of trainers from youth probation, family support, community police, the police academy and education participated in a workshop on awareness and actions that took place on the first day. This full day programme framed the leading principles in prevention of radicalisation. On the second day the participants designed their own workshop and training, fitting their needs and capabilities.

After the successful first edition, the RAN Train-the-Trainer team went to Norway to deliver the training on 18-19 November. In Oslo, the RAN Secretariat was assisted by

Peter Walmsley, a RAN member with a solid training experience. Participants included staff of the five regional health and trauma centres that play an important role in the multi-agency approach on a local level. Also, police and security services participated, resulting in an enhanced cooperation between the health sector and police.

Both the Netherlands and Norway received a tailor-made the Train-the-Trainer workshop by translating their national action plans to the local context. The training was also used to empower practitioners in their role of contributing to the urgent issue of foreign fighters.

National networks of prevent practitioners

- The RAN Secretariat can offer limited support in setting up a national network in 6 Member States. Support from the RAN Secretariat will be provided after a request by the national authorities.

Up-coming Activities

RAN VVT seeks cooperation with media

- A RAN VVT meeting on 25 and 26 November in Berlin will deal with the media and how to enable victims to deliver their testimony. The meeting will also discuss how to motivate the media to focus more on victims or victim organisations instead of perpetrators. Therefore, journalists will be invited to participate.

Agreement on DERAD declaration in December

- The RAN Derad working group has been building a network of de-radicalisation practitioners throughout Europe. Currently, there are very few appointed de-radicalisation workers in the different Member States. However, there are many practitioners with the right skills of a de-radicalisation worker and the working group aims to engage them. In a plenary meeting on 3 and 4 December in Warsaw RAN Derad will focus on the elaboration of the declaration of principles and good practices regarding derad-work.

RAN Steering Committee: looking back on 2014, looking forward to 2015

- The Steering Committee will come together on 3 December to discuss the state of play of the RAN activities in year 3 and the upcoming plans for RAN in 2015. Besides an update on the activities, the SC will exchange ideas to further develop RAN communication and discuss the update of the Collection of promising practices. Furthermore, a discussion on the effectiveness and impact of counter-radicalisation initiatives and approaches is on the agenda, taking into account recently published research papers.

RAN P&P organises meeting on prison(ers) society

- The plenary meeting of RAN P&P will take place in Rome on 11 and 12 December. The meeting will be focused on 'internal' influences (prisoners' society, prison order, staff relations) and 'external' influences (probation officers, imams, independent experts) on the radicalisation process of individuals in the system. The objective of the meeting is to get more insight into the influences that individuals in prison have to deal with and how these factors play a fuelling or preventive role in radicalisation processes. Special attention will also be given to the challenges regarding foreign fighters in the prison system.

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