EX-POST PAPER

Joining Forces: Dissemination, Implementation and Evaluation

The first meeting of RAN POL in 2019 was dedicated to a conversation with the RAN POL Points of Contact. Despite the large amount of work that RAN POL has carried out, and the significant steps that have been made, there is always room for improvement. In 2019, RAN POL, with the help of the Points of Contact, strives to make an even bigger impact with the intention that even more police and law enforcement officers can benefit from the lessons and insights of the RAN POL working group.

Dissemination is a key word in this ex post paper. How do Member States currently disseminate RAN POL lessons and recommendations, and what are examples of where successful dissemination has led to implementation of good practices? What ways can be employed to achieve even more widespread dissemination?

Another important topic is evaluation: how can we learn and improve through more and better evaluation?

This ex post paper is primarily intended for the RAN POL Points of Contact and stakeholders like EUROPOL and CEPOL.

Product of the RAN Centre of Excellence and the RAN POL working group.
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Introduction

The Radicalisation Awareness Network's Police and Law Enforcement (RAN POL) Working Group is deemed an integral part of RAN. It is undeniable that the Points of Contact (PoCs) have played an important role in disseminating information and identifying the appropriate participants for meetings and events (see also Annex 1). In turn, during the last RAN POL meeting, the PoCs were unanimous in stating how important the RAN POL working group has been for them throughout the years. The events offer a way for police and law enforcement experts to discuss certain ethical and methodical issues that are specific to their sector, and to do so using jargon understood by few outside the sector.

On top of that, the RAN POL working groups stimulate not just multilateral exchange but more in-depth bilateral exchange as well. At the same time, PoCs highlight the appreciation and growing importance of multi-agency meetings, which allow police experts to see first-hand that there are experts in other fields who can also contribute to the topic of radicalisation. More multi-agency meetings will allow more cross-sectoral exchange. Not only does this reiterate the message that RAN wants to spread, namely that a multi-agency approach is essential for countering radicalisation and violent extremism, it also provides reassurance to different departments and sectors expected to cooperate and coordinate on a more regular basis.

There is little doubt that successful dissemination and implementation of lessons learned and good practices lie at the heart of RAN's success. In this ex post paper, we will therefore discuss the challenges that lie in the way of effective dissemination, in addition to the solutions that can be proposed to overcome these challenges. Moreover, we will look at examples of effective dissemination, which have led to more widespread implementation of lessons learned. Finally, we devote some time to discussing the importance of evaluation, a crucial part of the equation. After all, without evaluating practices, how do we know which practices can be labelled as ”good”?

Coordination and dissemination: RAN POL and RAN National

The responsibility to disseminate information lies with each Member State (MS) and must be addressed nationally. However, the extent to which individual MS currently disseminate RAN POL documents and materials varies from country to country. This variation is due to a number of factors and challenges, the biggest of which are: language, or more specifically, the fact that all documents are written in English (as of 2019, translated to French and German); the extent to which there is a mechanism in place for first receiving feedback after RAN POL meetings and subsequently sharing the acquired information within the sector; and, last but not least, the extent to which the topics discussed mirror the priority concerns of the MS, since not all topics are equally important to all MS.

Despite these challenges, most MS do, at least to some extent, disseminate RAN POL documents. This is, however, often limited to RAN POL documents. Generally speaking, there is an appetite to share the RAN POL documents with other sectors, and for police to receive relevant documents from other working groups. To further strengthen multi-agency cooperation, greater coordination is required between the RAN POL PoC

and the national RAN PoC – if there is any. The next section addresses the practices already in place for effective dissemination and implementation of lessons learned, followed by a discussion of how the RAN Centre of Excellence (CoE) can encourage and facilitate greater dissemination.

Examples of dissemination and implementation

Many PoCs indicate that they brief participants before they attend a RAN meeting and debrief them upon return. Participants are often asked to write a summary, which is then disseminated locally. This is in line with the method stipulated in the "Ex Post Paper RAN POL Points of Contacts"[1] and illustrated in Annex 1 and 2. Ex post papers should be disseminated locally, something that appears to happen to a limited extent.[2] In Germany, for example, practical manuals are disseminated to local levels, and it is then up to them to further disseminate to their units. The extent to which this is done remains fairly unclear. The fact that all RAN documents are written and published in English doesn't make dissemination easier. That is why in some countries the PoC writes a one-pager in their own language, to introduce the English version. In 2019, the ex post will be translated to German and French.

In Finland, RAN papers about practices and recommendations are translated to Finnish to encourage dissemination. Finland also has a national network of prevention with a contact point in each police prevention department who meet regularly and share information. However, and as echoed by other member states, it still remains a challenge to ensure that the information is subsequently shared within the departments as well.

Denmark has a mechanism in place for receiving feedback after RAN POL meetings that works well. However, its success could partly be due to the fact that POL is only a small sector in Denmark with a small group of people working in the field of radicalisation and violent extremism. This makes it easier to share relevant information.

In the UK, the centrally-positioned PoC distributes the RAN POL documents to their network of regional coordinators. The Norwegian empowerment conversations presented in RAN POL have been incorporated in the UK approach. This example illustrates how the sharing of information at RAN POL level can feed into local approaches and initiatives.

Core RAN messages are also reflected in a number of training courses available for police. Although we cannot speak of a European core curriculum available for all police in the EU, there has been a shift in the availability of training courses that focus on radicalisation signals to training courses that focus on prevention and multi-agency cooperation.[3] In that sense, the growing insights of RAN POL have been mirrored by the

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-pol/docs/ran_pol_points_contact_dusseldorf_29_03_2017_en.pdf
[2] This is also a result of inconsistent sharing of ex post papers with PoCs. See section 3 on what RAN CoE aims to contribute to counter this issue.
[3] For more information on core components of police training programmes, see "RAN POL's guide on training programmes for police officers in Europe", http://counter-radicalisation.gr/images/public-pdf/RAN_POL_Guide_on_training_programmes_for_police_officers_-_final.pdf

Community Policing and Prevention of Radicalisation (CoPPRa) training programme, a project that aims to increase knowledge about prevention through training. First-line police officers are trained in recognising warning signs and responding to them in the appropriate manner with the aim of preventing radicalisation. Numerous Member States have already benefited from the CoPPRa project.

RAN also offers Train the Trainer programmes for first-line practitioners to ensure that they are well equipped to identify and respond to signals of radicalisation. The training courses are not intended for police specifically, but aim to target cross-sectoral groups. In some Member States, the RAN training course was given primarily to police experts, while elsewhere the organising police had successfully invited non-police partners to attend training as well. In doing so, the training course successfully raised awareness of the importance of adopting a multi-agency approach, and additionally served to further expand the police network. In Austria, for example, the RAN training course was the start of a training programme that served police, education and youth workers. The RAN Train the Trainer programme has also been adopted and further spread by, for example, the Association of European Police Coaches (AEPC).

Suggestions for better dissemination and implementation of good practices

Identified need	Suggested solution
More cross-sectoral exchange between the different RAN working groups to allow POL practitioners to benefit even more from RAN.	Organise a mini-RAN within each country. In other words, organise a network of national RAN representatives who come together to exchange information at a local level.
More multilateral and bilateral exchange between different Member States facing similar issues.	PoCs write a one-page briefing about new projects, methodologies and challenges faced in their own country and share these briefings with each other in the RAN POL PoC network. RAN CoE can help facilitate the sharing of documents.

What can RAN Centre of Excellence contribute?

RAN CoE will take the following steps to facilitate better dissemination at a European level:

- RAN CoE will more pro-actively share documents with the PoC.
- RAN CoE will more actively consider the audience for whom they are writing and attempt to adapt their documents accordingly. This will be done for all RAN POL documents, as well as for other RAN documents that may be relevant for police and law enforcement, and which are published on the RAN website.[4]

[4] RAN website on the European Commission website: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en

- RAN CoE will approach the PoC with a format to present the state of play, challenges and promising projects in their Member State. The completed documents will be shared with the PoCs who also filled in the document and returned it to the RAN CoE.
- RAN CoE will make a list of stakeholder organisations that will receive the RAN POL 'Flash' when a RAN POL or other relevant RAN document is published. This will include organisations like EUROPOL, CEPOL, the AEPC and other international police organisations.

RAN CoE can support national dissemination and awareness-raising in different ways:

- If the POL PoC wants to organise a meeting in their own country to facilitate the exchange between RAN POL participants and other working groups, the RAN CoE can forward the invitation to the participants from that specific country. Because of data protection rules, email addresses of participants are not shared with others.
- If a MS wants support in the 'national RAN event', the RAN CoE can also be asked to send an expert to deliver a speech or run a workshop. This will enable contextualisation of RAN lessons, thereby allowing individual MS to benefit from RAN even when the topics discussed at the working groups do not reflect the primary concerns of the MS in question.
- When a small group of MS would like to organise a strategic workshop or, for instance, a regional conference, then the MS can apply for support from RAN.

Why does evaluation matter?

We have tried to indicate the importance of disseminating RAN lessons and implementing the good practices identified during RAN POL or multi-agency meetings. But how do we determine whether a practice can be categorised as 'good' or 'bad'? The short answer is: by evaluating. Only by evaluating a project can one determine its effectiveness and impact; whether to label the practice as 'good' or 'bad'. Evaluation, however, continues to be a fairly problematic and challenging concept, something that is reflected in various PoCs acknowledging an inconsistent propensity to evaluate programmes.

In practice, programmes appear to be reviewed on a regular basis, but reviewing is not the same as evaluating. When it comes to evaluating, various challenges are raised, all of which - to an extent, help shape a certain attitude toward evaluating. One of the biggest problems identified is that evaluation requires resources - money and time - both of which are often considered to be in scarce supply already. A practical solution could be that if projects are funded, 10-20% should be dedicated to evaluation and dissemination of the lessons. A second issue is related to identifying the evaluator: should this be someone from within the police or an external evaluation expert? Someone from within the police may not have the right amount of experience, but the cost involved will be lower and they will probably be authorised to view sensitive information related to national security. A final concern is that there is insufficient knowledge of what it is that should be evaluated in the first place. Tied to this issue is the question of how conclusive the results of an evaluation can actually be. All of these factors help create a situation in which the importance of evaluation can be momentarily forgotten, or side-lined.

Yet there is little doubt that the police should evaluate their programmes. One of the biggest reasons for this is precisely because of limited police resources. Evaluation allows the police to determine the cost effectiveness of a particular programme and to regulate funds and police working hours to ensure that they are being spent on the right projects and approaches. It is not enough to just 'do something'. We must also

be able to know the effects of "that something we did" in order to determine whether we will continue to do so.

RAN has carried out a number of activities on evaluation. This resulted in a document for the Member States workshops on evaluation, "Guideline evaluation of PCVE programmes and interventions".[5]

RAN POL activities in 2019

Below you will find an overview of the activities RAN POL is organising in 2019. The RAN POL PoC will be approached in due time with a Call for Support. RAN POL is open to suggestions for invitees and experts who can contribute to the working groups by sharing new and relevant information about local projects and initiatives.

With an eye on the priorities of the MS, RAN POL will organise the following events:

- **4-5 April, Narratives and strategies of FRE and Islamist extremists (Stockholm, SE)**

Multi-agency meeting RAN POL – C&N
The aim of the event is to combine expertise and experience from police, analysts and counter and alternative narrative experts to be able to draft a useful list of currently used narratives of right wing violent extremist and Islamist organisations.

- **8-9 May, Released prisoners (Marseille, FR)**

During this meeting, we will look at the role of the police in the reintegration and risk management of released violent extremist offenders and returnee fighters. This meeting will focus on police risk assessment tools and local implementation of the lessons learned.

- **4 July, Narratives and strategies of FRE and Islamist extremists (Amsterdam, NL)**

Policy & Practice event
This event is an opportunity to look into the most used narratives and strategies by far right violent extremist and terrorist groups and discuss which elements and grievances should be addressed on what level and how.
Target audience: National policy planners of the Policy Planners Network, RAN POL and RAN C&N participants, representatives of EUROPOL, academics and experts.

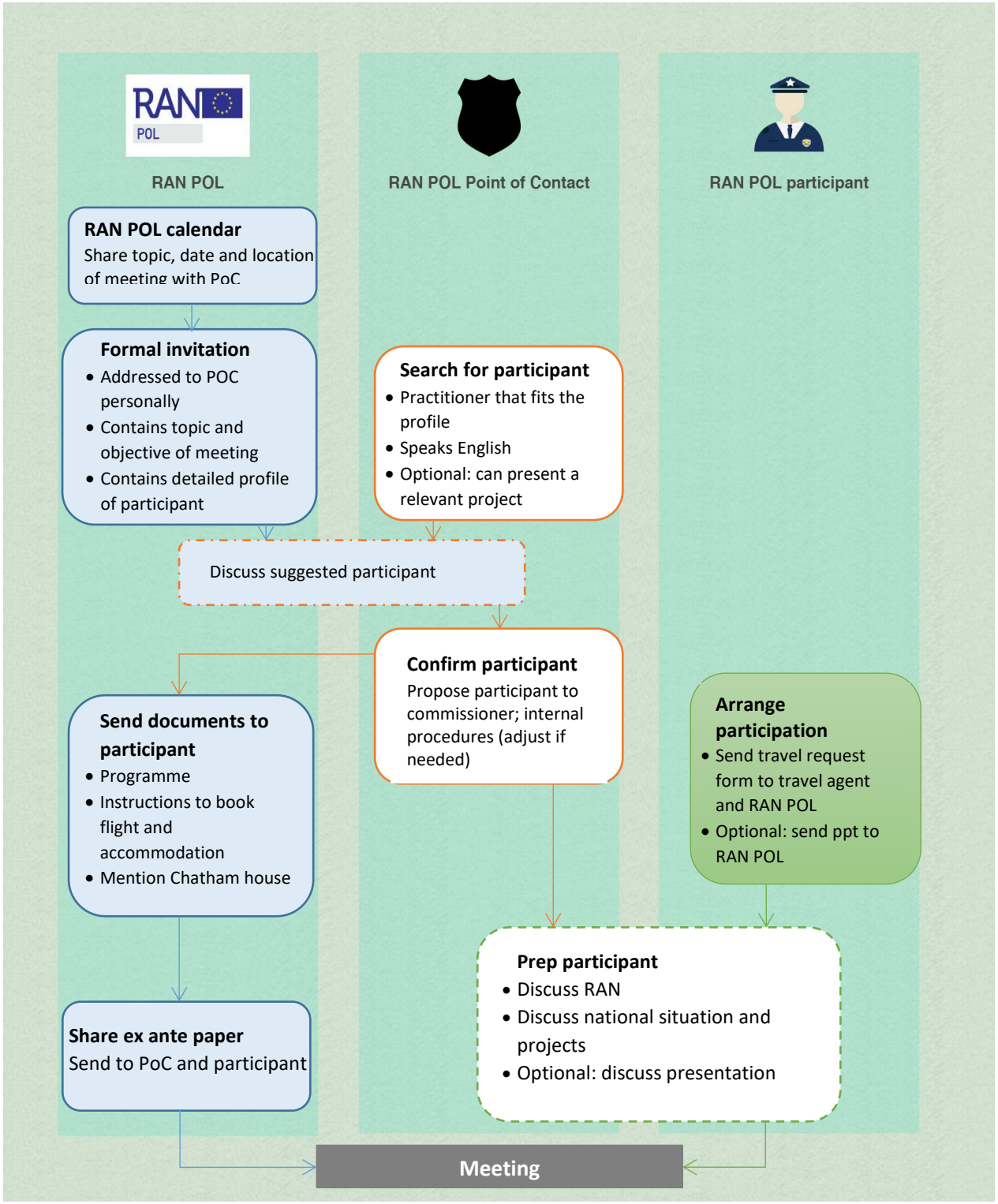
- **28-29 November, Information sharing (Athens, GR)**

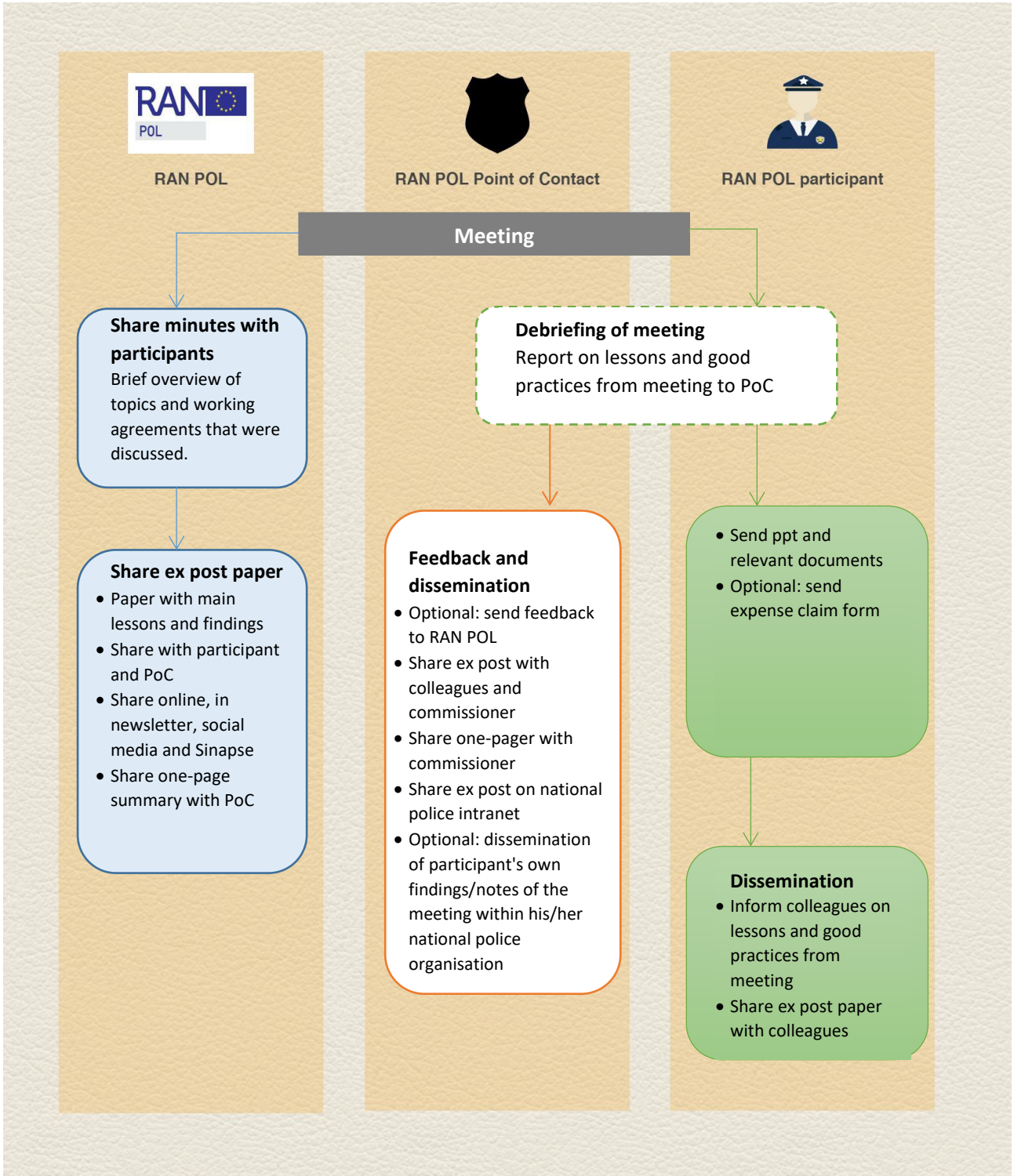
This meeting will focus on how police officers can work optimally in light of recent legal developments.
Target audience: Police experts involved in multi-agency settings on a local level and experts from intelligence agencies.

[5] Guideline evaluation of PCVE programmes and interventions, to be found on https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ms_workshops_guidelines_evaluation_of_pcve_programmes_and_interventions_july_2018_en.pdf

Annex 1 Selecting RAN POL participants

To best identify and select suitable participants, RAN POL and the PoCs follow the agreed working process shown below.



Annex 2 Disseminating RAN POL lessons learned

The exchange between experts in RAN POL meetings generates valuable knowledge. However, this information should not be limited to meeting participants. It is key to disseminate these findings throughout the EU: this process involves RAN POL, the Points of Contact, and the participants.