RAN Handbook on CVE/PVE training programmes
Guidance for trainers and policy makers
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Summary

Well-trained practitioners are invaluable in any effort to prevent and counter radicalisation. The subject of training was therefore high on the agenda at several Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) meetings in 2017. These culminated in the Thematic event '*Training practitioners to prevent and counter violent extremism*' in Brussels on 16 November. This practical handbook on countering/preventing violent extremism (CVE/PVE) training programmes draws on the knowledge and expertise shared at these various events, as well as within the RAN network at large. Published by RAN, the handbook provides guidance and practical advice for trainers and policy-makers.

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Introduction

Training professionals has always been integral to approaches designed to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. Professionals are invaluable in CVE/PVE, but they need to be ready to play their key role. In the light of increased violent extremism across Europe, many (local) governments have decided to increase their investment in educating and training policy-makers and practitioners. But while many are now receiving training, to what extent do these programmes have the intended impact? While some are being (partially) evaluated, most are not. Based on trainers' experience of what works and what doesn't, it might be possible to define effective practices. But results are not always clear-cut and transferable to other training settings.

Member States are eager to make sure that training programmes realise the intended results. Moreover, Member States are challenged to evaluate (better) and ensure impact of training programmes provided.

At training course level, elements from different programmes can be combined and translated into tailor-made training sessions. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Training must be targeted: as time and resources are limited, and as CVE/PVE covers a broad range of fields. To design targeted training programmes, it should be clear from the start what people should learn: what is needed for the job or task? What do professionals know already? On which existing knowledge can be built on)? And what skills are present? On top of that, the impact of a training programme depends on the way it is delivered. So, what is the most effective method of delivery?

This RAN Handbook serves to guide professional on CVE/PVE training programmes at both strategic and practical levels. It has the following structure:
1. Delivering training programmes;
2. Practical guidance for trainers;
3. Practical guidance to put training into practice.

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1. Delivering training programmes

RAN has defined elements likely to make the delivery of training effective. On the one hand, the content should be balanced, the training contextualised, and the trainer credible. Moreover, the training should be practical. It could be helpful to deliver the training in a mixed group so as to strengthen the multi-agency cooperation that is needed to deal with the multi-causal and multifaceted phenomenon that is radicalisation. On the other hand, learning lists of signals by heart does not work since simply 'ticking the boxes' on a checklist might lead to unwarranted accusations or missing signals. Moreover, theory should be linked to practice: you should on the one hand connect theory to practice, and on the other hand explain why you are acting as you are.

Generally speaking, training programmes benefit from interactive delivery, which increases involvement and provides a more engaging experience. To deliver training programmes in an interactive way[1], the following are essential:

- Develop a rapport with your audience: know the people in the room. Develop a relationship with them. Tailor your trainers and content, and share your experiences as a trainer to forge a connection with your audience.
- Resilience: strengthen the trainees. Use question-led training, opinion exploration, source analysis, and practice having difficult conversations so that the trainees become stronger.
- Confidence. use reflection activities, consistently use thinking activities and praise.

Delivering training programmes on CVE and PVE

The sections above apply to delivering training programmes in general. Delivering PVE/CVE training is however different from, for example, delivering training on using a new database at work. Some specific elements and sensitivities should be considered, and are described below:

1. Complexity. Radicalisation as a process is influenced by many factors and can be expressed in many ways. Therefore, training programmes cannot 'just' provide for list of 'clear signals to spot radicalisation' alongside background information, and then expect professionals to be ready to deal with the topic. Professionals need to be able to grasp the complexity and the uncertainty inherent in radicalisation.
2. Sensitivity. Radicalisation is a sensitive topic for many reasons. Practitioners might be frightened by the topic or offended because their religion/ideology is being misused. These sensitivities are reflected in the discussions that are inevitably part of training programmes on radicalisation. Some trainees will start challenge definitions and terminology used. Others will elaborate on whether they should play a role (or not). It is up to the trainer to find a good balance of giving sufficient attention to this question however not to end up in an infinitive debate. Practitioners may struggle to define their role, as they might be scared of 'spying' on people or stigmatising them. They may have questions as to if and when they can share concerns, and the consequences of doing so.
3. Personal biases. A neutral stance is impossible. Working as a professional is possible: be aware of your own preferences, know how not to reveal them very publicly, and avoid falling into the trap of feeling intimidated.

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[1] The elements we presented by Carys Evans (Connect Futures) at the RAN thematic event in Brussels on 16 November, the presentation was named: Interactive Trainings - Some Observations

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Delivering training programmes in a multi-agency setting

Preventing radicalisation benefits from multi-agency cooperation, and multi-agency training programmes are therefore an excellent opportunity to lay the foundations for this. Having different professions in the room does however have implications. The trainer can be challenged by diverse perspectives, (possible) prejudices and a lack of trust between professionals.

Recommendations for training programmes in a multi-agency setting:

- Focus on what professionals have in common instead of on their differences: find the shared goal and keep that in mind. Also focus on a common language.
- Practitioners need to get to know each other, their responsibilities and each other's professional language and skills. Multi-agency training should start with this.
- Incorporate all perspectives, they all need to be addressed so that everyone can see the totality.
- Train multi-agency groups several times (like every six months) instead of once. Putting them in a room together helps to strengthen the network by reinforcing the quality of relations between agencies, individuals and communities — once the individuals get back to their day job, they might not have the time or the opportunity to work on this aspect. Repeating the training also provides an opportunity for participants to update each other on new developments in the field or the community. The impact of the training can be measured by reflecting on what professionals have learned and to what extent they have internalised knowledge or skills.
- Learn from each other by sharing experiences and cases. This will help professionals to be more openminded towards counterparts with a different background. Moreover, professionals like to share these experiences from the ground, and doing so may generate solutions to the problems they face.

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2. Practical guidance for trainers

This chapter provides practical guidance for trainers on CVE and PVE programmes. Challenges for trainers, as well as tips and tricks for tackling these, are described in the table below.

Challenge	Tips & tricks

You would like participants to be more involved in the training. What should you do?	• Try the following methods:
	   o Work in small groups, break-outs or pairs. People are usually more open to sharing in smaller groups.
	   o Create an environment conducive to greater involvement by using ice-breakers, be open as a trainer, know the audience.
	   o Set ground rules so that it's clear how learning takes place for all, be clear on what is (un)acceptable.
	   o Let people write down their needs, fears and expectations on post-its and stick them on the wall.
	   o Make it personal. Share your own experiences.
	   o Keep communicating about the structure of the programme.
	   o Let trainees create mind-maps. Mapping exercises also reveal what trainees know and do not know.
	   o Demystify the phenomenon of extremism: without downsizing the possible impact it too much, working on radicalisation to a large extent involves using your regular skills and expertise.

How to you make sure that the training is an experience for the participants, rather than a lecture?	• Provide information on the prevention of radicalisation beforehand. You can then focus on skills and reflection during the training. • Use a simulation situation like role playing.
You need to set up a new training programme in your country. How do you build training from scratch? What are the dos and don'ts?	• Make a good needs assessment: what is a must-have and what is nice to have? • Build on existing evaluated or promising programmes designed for similar purposes or elements/parts of them. • Set positive goals that are also regarded positively by the target group. • Involve professional partners to make them co-owners. If the target group and/or their loved ones could become partners, this is even better. • Be realistic: what is feasible if you have limited resources? Who should really be trained? What can we expect from them?

You are unsure as to whether professionals should be trained in a mixed group, or not. What works best?	• It depends on the goal of your training:
	   o Do you want to increase multi-agency cooperation and trust between partners? If so, it might be wise to train in a multi-agency setting.
	   o Do you want professionals to understand their own role in preventing radicalisation? Then training in a group with persons with the same professional background is recommended.

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Your boss asks you to incorporate new technologies into the training programme. What are your options? And what works?	The options are: • (Serious) gaming. • E-learning, for example for knowledge transfer. E-learning can also be used in advance of the training, so that trainees have a basic level of knowledge before starting the training. E-learning is cost effective, flexible and accessible.

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3. Practical guidance to put training into practice

This chapter provides practical guidance on putting training into practice. The challenges for professionals and policy-makers at implementation and strategic level are defined, and practical advice on tackling these challenges is provided.

Implementation level	
Challenge	**Solution**
How do you select the right/qualified trainer?	• The general profile of a 'good' trainer is someone[2]: 　　o Charismatic, exuding empathy and with strong analytical skills. Someone you are happy to listen to. 　　o An experienced practitioner who speaks the same language as the training participants. The person should be as close to the field as possible. 　　o Able to handle complicated issues?
How do you assure quality for the delivery of CVE/PVE training programmes?	• Choose a trainer is trained on the topic. • Work with trainers who have sufficient pedagogical skills. • Checking training material before the training is delivered with experts. • Informally ask trainees and other trainers for feedback. • Use a short evaluation at the end of the training involving a few questions. • Formally use an external company to evaluate your training and trainers.
How do you keep your trainers up to date?	• Use supervision: create a support group that meets on a regular basis. • Tell trainers what worked at previous training sessions, focus on practical examples' • Learn from bad experiences as well: what should be avoided in the future? • Set up a common platform to share material like modules, videos, slides' • Discuss the state of play of radicalisation/violent extremism, terrorism, its resonance in society and how to respond. • Regularly attend other courses on the topic of radicalisation. • Share practices and highlight methods that are easy to adapt.
Strategic level	

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[2] The first two bullets points from this profile were presented by Cristina Ivan (National Institute for Intelligence Studies in Romania) at the RAN thematic event in Brussels on 16 November. Her presentation was entitled, 'Train the trainer: What do trainers need on top of participants to become trainers? How to keep your trainers up-to-date?'

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Challenge	Solution
How do you translate policy goals into training programmes?	• Translate policy into tangible deliverables/objectives. • Think about the professional skills and knowledge needed to meet these objectives.
How can you assess what the impact of the training effort will be? How do you evaluate/carry out peer review?	• If you work on prevention, it is difficult to evaluate. What is the next phase? How can it be made sustainable? • Build evaluation methods into the design of the course. • Gather and archive statistics for internal evaluation and academic research. • Peer review could be helpful, if the reviewers receive a clear set of rules on what should be reviewed and how. • As a lot of the work is done in a multi-agency setting, involve all partners. • Evaluate at end-user/participant level: 'How did you gain from the training programme?' as well as at organisation level: 'Did the training programmes help you to reach your objectives?' • Although no two situations will be identical, working with material from successful training elsewhere — or previous training on a similar topic — increases the chances of success. Content will need to be adapted for each individual challenge addressed in the training.
How do you make sure you reach all relevant practitioners?	Define which professionals should be trained, and at what level: 1. Basic training for *all* practitioners 2. Advanced training for *some* practitioners 3. In-depth expert training for a *few* practitioners Generally speaking: • Make it possible for people to receive training. Make time for it; don't let funding be a barrier. • Involve experienced practitioners and those who are responsible for multi-agency settings in decisions on who should be trained. • Make a clear-cut choice between the parts of the training programme that are compulsory, and those that can be followed on a voluntary basis.
How do you embed training programmes in national strategies?	• Link the training activities to the goals of the national strategy. • Ensure sufficient funding. • Make those responsible for the strategy also responsible for the training. • Have quality mechanisms in place when it comes to type and quality of training.

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	• Link laws and procedures to the training. For example, what is considered as preparation for an attack? What are the legal margins, and what procedures should be followed? • Update people if the strategy changes.
How do you make sure that knowledge and skills acquired endure over time?	• Be sure that people know what to do in practice after they are trained. • Make PVE/CVE training part of general training and personal development programmes for professionals — these are often compulsory for accreditation. • Keep a register of those who have been trained. • Plan follow up activities to refresh memories, train new people in relevant functions, and keep professionals up to date. • Ask organisations to report on their training efforts. • Have sufficient funding to create a critical mass of trained individuals. • Consider implementing 'train the trainer' mechanisms to ensure sustainable dissemination.

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4. Further reading

RAN has produced (parts of) a wide range of products on the topic of training programmes, namely:

RAN Collection[3]
This compilation of inspiring practices includes a chapter on training programmes.

RAN Manual: Responses to returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families
Training needs for professionals are defined at both basic and in-depth level s in the RAN manual '**Responses to returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families**'. The following recommendations are outlined for training to work with child returnees:
1) Ensure sufficient training for practitioners dealing with child returnees. These modules can be part of existing awareness or expertise training on preventing and countering radicalisation. At least two levels of training are available:
    a) Basic awareness training for practitioners in (direct) contact with child returnees (e.g. school teachers, social workers, members of leisure organisations). This basic training could cover, as a minimum requirement:
        i) information about the situation in Syria/Iraq to which these children have been exposed;
        ii) basic trauma awareness and response exercises for when a child returnee shows particular behaviour;
        iii) information on how to report signs of concern and where to request additional support.
    b) In-depth training and shared learning sessions for practitioners directly and closely involved in cases of child returnees (e.g. child protection services, family support professionals, local police officers, psychologists). This in-depth training could include lessons on foster care and reintegration into schools.

RAN EDU (Education Working Group)**:** Guide on training programmes**: Effective and confident teachers and other school staff**
RAN EDU participants contributed to a guide on training programmes for the educational sector. The guide introduces a framework to discuss different training programme options and defines three types of training programmes for the sector: A) Those offering fundamental training for empowered and resilient teachers. B) Those safeguarding and creating safe and democratic schools. C) Those helping staff to develop the skills needed to face current challenges.

RAN POL (Police and Law Enforcement Working Group) Guide on training programmes for police officers in Europe
RAN POL participants developed a guide covering core competences requiring training, existing training programmes, and recommendations for police officers. One of the recommendations was that training should match the practitioners' role and contribution in the multi-agency framework in which they are expected to work. Police officers should for example not only signal, but also share information, define responses and execute these.

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Training programmes

A diverse range of training programmes and methods was presented at the RAN Thematic event '*Training practitioners to prevent and counter violent extremism*'. They are summarised in the boxes below.

LIVE training — OSCE
The Leaders against Intolerance and Violent Extremism (LIVE) training and coaching programme is intended to promote local, safe and diverse responses to violent extremism and terrorist radicalisation. Participants identify the need for an initiative and then plan it, receiving coaching as they do so. The OSCE develops training programmes in partnership with RAN, Connect Futures and other organisations for: youth leaders (developed and piloted in 2017), women leaders (2018) and religious and traditional leaders (group to be defined more closely, 2018/2019). Selected participants have direct access to/influence in communities, possess a strong commitment to human rights, are motivated to act and if possible already have some experience in community mobilisation or service delivery. The main components of the training programme include: transmitting a nuanced understanding of radicalisation, illustrating many possible roles for civil society through case studies (both successful and failed attempts) and skill development. The methods used are based on the principles of learning by doing, interaction, recognising expertise and potential among participants and encouraging diversity and trust building. Lessons from the youth leader pilot include: piloting is worthwhile, adapting of course's content and build-up and evaluation tools should be limited, so as not to overburden trainers and trainees.

Training prison and police forces by Training aid and Derad — presented by Sergio Bianchi (Agenfor)
This comprehensive training programme has nine modules. All modules have both general and specific objectives, and a lot of material is available, such as a video and related exercises. The training material is available in several different languages and could be relevant for prison staff, judges and NGOs, among others.

Focus on Radicalisation in Education, Training and Research in the Norwegian Correctional Service — presented by Dr David Hansen (University College of Norwegian Correctional Service/KRUS)
KRUS offers research, education/training and dissemination, as well as on-demand training, advice and guidance. It offers various training courses on radicalisation and violent extremism, at different levels:
- Basic training for serving staff on topics like radicalisation in prison, the Norwegian context, definitions and terms, and forms of violent extremism and terrorism. This course lasts 8-10 hours.
- Basic/advanced training for correctional officers as part of their basic training programme. Cultural awareness, communication skills and radicalisation in prison are all covered. The training lasts about 20 hours and takes place over 2 years.
- In-depth expert training for experienced staff (still in planning phase). A course in radicalisation and extremism for the Correctional Service, the pilot will start in the spring of 2018.

A handbook was also produced, the aim being to equip Correctional Service staff with basic knowledge of the radicalisation and violent extremism phenomena. The handbook is divided into two parts: knowledge of phenomena and tips for managing radicalisation.

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Tolerance project — presented by Ermin Skoric (Segerstedt institute)
The Tolerance project started in 1998. This proactive approach for schools is designed to prevent the recruitment of young people to extremist organisations, and to combat intolerance and racism. It is mainly practised with pupils aged 14-15, because this is the age at which individuals develop their morals. It is based on a socio-psychological understanding of and socio-pedagogical approach to youth. The youngsters selected (about 25) form a mixed group, representing different social, ethnic and educational backgrounds, and coming from different schools in the municipality. They leave their 'in-group' to join this mixed 'out-group', so that they challenge themselves. Moreover, these interactions mean that ideas will be spread within the broader community. To be effective, it is important that young people are helped to understand themselves and the world in which they live, and be understood in the way they wish to be understood.