

Radicalisation Awareness Network



How to assess the risk posed by Violent
Extremist Offenders (VEOs)

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Objectives of RAN

1. To facilitate the **exchange among practitioners** themselves on the one hand and between them and **other stakeholders** on the other hand.
2. To deliver **support to both the EU and its Member States** (in certain circumstances, also to third countries).
3. Finally, to **disseminate the learning** gathered on the basis of the RAN activities to several audiences.

Raison d'être

Key elements of RAN - 'RAN DNA'

- **Prevention is key**
- Involving and training **first-line practitioners** is key
- **Multi-agency approach** is key: involve NGOs, communities at risk, victims, formers
- **Tailor-made** interventions, adapted to local circumstances, are key
- **Sharing** experiences, practices and challenges is key: Helping each other and learning together via sharing experiences and knowledge.



RAN P&P

- Focus on **sharing knowledge and best practice** on preventing and countering radicalisation in a prison and probation context (not the judicial context)
- **Focus practitioners:** prison staff and directors, probation staff and management
- **2-4 thematic meetings** each year –over 500 participants so far
- **Key areas 2018:**
 - Family engagement
 - Juvenile VEOs
 - Risk assessment
 - Prisoner society
 - Collaboration with police, Probation and judicial sector



RAN P&P – Key principles

- Promoting **positive staff-prisoner relationships** and **healthy prison climates** is a pre-condition for reducing risk of radicalisation and contributing to rehabilitation and reintegration.
- **Universal human rights** must be upheld at all times and under all circumstances.
- The safety of society is best ensured through promoting the **well-being and rehabilitation** of offenders.
- Offenders are **capable of positive change** and they need support to disengage from violent extremism.
- Terrorism crimes cover a range of activities. Individuals sentenced for terrorist acts **do not represent the same risks** to society.
- **Multi-agency cooperation** is crucial to prevent radicalisation and support desistance processes.

Definitions

Overall term used: **Violent extremist offenders**

This includes:

- People who have committed and have been charged with terrorist (related) acts;
- People who have committed and have been charged with violent extremist acts;
- People who have been charged for other crimes but who show clear signs of violent extremism;
- People who have been charged for other crimes but are vulnerable to radicalisation.

Risk assessment: why?

Risk assessment is the informed evaluation of the risk posed by someone.

There exists both general risk assessment tools and risk assessment tools specifically for VEOs.

Why is it important?

- Assess the needs of the offender;
- Appropriately inform decisions in relation to placement;
- Develop adequate programmes, tailored to the offender;
- Tailor individual support;
- Develop adequate reintegration support;
- Inform prison and probation staff who can adequately prepare to deal with the offender.

Risk assessment: what?

There are currently two methods to assess risk and needs:

- Information gathering, monitoring and analysis;
- Risk assessment tools based on Structured Professional Judgment (SPJ).

Currently, they are both used in Member States of the EU.



Risk assessment: what?

Intelligence gathering and reporting:

- Legal frameworks and human rights;
- Multi-levelled systems;
- Dynamic systems;
- Contextualised results:
 - Information from other sources;
 - Actuarial data;
 - Dynamic factors;
 - Clinical factors;
 - Information from partners.
- Partnership with intelligence agencies.



Risk assessment: what?

Risk assessment tools:

- General and specialised;
- Indicators for a range of factors;
- Final score;
- Structured Professional Judgement.



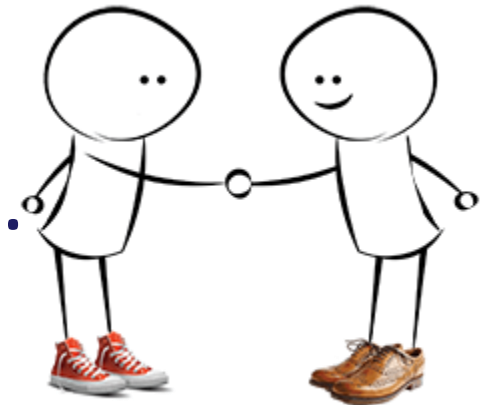
Risks:

- Lack of regular re-assessment;
- False positives;
- Predictive outcomes;
- Increased alienation;
- Detriment of safety, personal development and opportunities;

Risk assessment: be careful!

False positives can be triggered by:

- Subversive behaviour;
- Religious behaviour;
- Mentorship;
- Charismatic leadership;
- Misinterpretation of changes.



RAN P&P in the Netherlands: VERA II (Pressman, Duits, Rinne and Flockton)

A number of indicators collected in five categories:

VERA II
Beliefs and attitudes
Context and intent
History and capabilities
Commitment and motivation
Protective factors
<i>Judgement</i>

Based on a number of principles, including:

- Evidence based;
- Weighting of indicators;
- Transparency;
- Measurement of change.

Conclusions

- Risk assessment tools for VEO in infancy;
- No right answer on dilemma between monitoring/observation and use of risk assessment tools....
- ...as long as the chosen method is properly implemented (strengths and weaknesses).

Next appointment: Brussels, 9-10 July, *Challenges in the Implementation of Risk Assessment Tools*



Thank you for your attention!

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http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/index_en.htm