



2017-2019 Joint Activity Plan (JAP) for the  
**Civil Society Empowerment Programme (CSEP)**  
- 2017 version -



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# 1 Introduction and Objectives

## 1.1 CSEP

As foreseen under the European Agenda on Security, the Commission created the EU Internet Forum in December 2015 to serve as a platform to address terrorists' use of the internet and social media. The EU Internet Forum's objectives focus on reducing accessibility to terrorist material online as well as empowering civil society partners to challenge effectively the terrorist narrative online. In its Communication on delivering on the European Agenda on Security<sup>1</sup>, the Commission announced for the first time the creation of the Civil Society Empowerment Programme (CSEP), which was re-affirmed in the Communication on the prevention of radicalisation<sup>2</sup>: *"Furthermore, an EU-wide Civil Society Empowerment Programme, to be coordinated by the RAN Centre of Excellence (RAN CoE) together with industry and civil society partners across Member States, will provide training, technical support and analyses of the effectiveness of counter narrative campaigns."*

The CSEP aims at harnessing the positive power and the tremendous reach the Internet has, so as to provide alternatives to the presence of violent extremist and terrorist oratory online. Civil society is in need of massive support to produce and distribute effectively, moderate voices, alternative narratives and thereby building resilience. With the CSEP, support will be provided by providing training, funding campaigns, sharing of knowledge and expertise for the development of impactful campaigns as well as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the CSEP.

To implement the CSEP, three phases have been identified:

- First phase (2017): support lead by the RAN CoE, covering training aspects, maintaining and growing a vibrant network of relevant stakeholders and fostering partnerships. Activities under this first phase focus on building capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with partners to deliver campaigns.
- Second phase (2018-2019): a planned call for proposals in the course of 2017, inviting consortia of CSOs with private partners to submit proposals for the implementation of effective campaigns. Campaigns are expected to start in early 2018.
- Third phase ( after campaigns have rolled out): evaluation of the effectiveness of the campaigns and the overall programme.

## 1.2 Joint Activity Plan

The Commission has deployed the RAN CoE to lead in setting up and supporting a network of CSOs and other stakeholders to participate in the CSEP. The European Strategic Communication Network (ESCN) will be a strategic partner in developing and implementing this programme. Internet companies confirmed support of the CSEP during the 2<sup>nd</sup> EU Internet Forum and are invited to join this effort.

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/legislative-documents/docs/20160420/communication\\_eas\\_progress\\_since\\_april\\_2015\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/legislative-documents/docs/20160420/communication_eas_progress_since_april_2015_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2016/communication-preventing-radicalisation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2016/communication-preventing-radicalisation_en.pdf)

This Joint Activity Plan (JAP) summarizes the main activities of the programme in 2017 and describes specific contributions of Facebook, Twitter and Google. This JAP details the specific contributions of all partners. The adoption of the JAP is scheduled for 31 January 2017, during a first of three meetings of all partners to coordinate its contributions to the CSEP. For now, the 2017 contributions are detailed, and possible cooperation in 2018-2019 is mentioned tentatively. In late 2017, a 2018 update of this JAP could be produced, to detail the specific contributions of all partners in the forthcoming year.

## 2 Deliverables for 2017 – RAN CoE contribution

### 2.1 Governance/Steering and Coordination Group

To steer and review the work, a Support and Coordination Group (SCG) will be set up and will meet three times in Brussels. Via this Support and Coordination Group, the contributions of the different partners, such as internet companies and the ESCN, will be managed. The Commission chairs the meetings and validates the decisions:

- On 31 January 2017, a Joint Activity Plan will be adopted, and working arrangements will be made.
- On 2 June 2017, the development and start of the training programme will be reviewed, as well as a kick-off event.
- On 8 November, the delivery of the trainings will be reviewed and the call for proposals to fund CSOs deliver campaigns will be discussed

### 2.2 Creating and maintaining a network

A network of Civil Society Organisations (CSO), will be created, as well as of internet companies, communication, marketing and creative agencies and radicalisation experts.

The RAN CoE will reach out to relevant CSOs from within the RAN but will also promote others to join. The key criterion for a CSO to become a member of the CSEP network, is that it is positioned to be and/or empower credible voices in alternative and counter narratives and/or to be active in the online sphere. In some cases, CSO's have good outreach efforts online without deliberately focussing on CVE messaging (e.g. those focused on humanitarian aid). These CSO's may also be eligible for the training sessions. Furthermore, they need to have a track record of efforts in delivering counter and/or alternative narratives, for instance in school classes, neighbourhoods and elsewhere. Running an on-line campaign is not a prerequisite to be selected. These and other key criteria for a CSO to become a member of the CSEP network will be clearly defined at an early stage.

CSOs can either be first line practitioners, such as teachers and youth workers, or community efforts, such as neighbourhood projects or interfaith programs as well as NGOs. Overall, the CSO members of the network should reflect the specificities of tackling radicalisation and violent extremism in the different countries and regions – e.g. some CSOs will focus on countering Daesh propaganda, whereas others may address the rise in far right extremism. The network will also comprise credible voices, such as youngsters, bloggers, school projects such as teacher-student campaign initiatives, as these may become ideal project partners to run effective CVE campaigns.

Member States will furthermore provide input on CSOs of relevance in their countries.

## 2.3 Kick-off event

On 15-16 March, the RAN CoE will organise a kick-off event to establish the CSEP network bringing together the relevant network members, kick-start campaign ideas, learn about effective campaigning, facilitate the creation of partnerships and exchange first experiences and practices. Some 100 participants are expected, mainly CSOs which seem well placed to deliver alternative and counter narrative campaigns. Travels, hotel accommodation, meeting venue and interpretation into EN, DE and FR are foreseen. The event will take place either in Vienna or Brussels.

Internet companies and experts on communications, campaigning training and radicalisation<sup>3</sup> will be facilitated to deliver presentations, break-out sessions and show best practices. Also, a market place will be organised, facilitating CSOs to establish consortia which combine varying resources to deliver campaigns. For instance, small scale, grass-root organisations might bond with larger organisations possessing project management skills.

The event will be organised to foster a maximum of interaction and hands-on work to launch campaign ideas. Depending on a MS mapping exercise of exiting opportunities for civil society actors, some MS may be invited to present these at the event.

## 2.4 Trainings

In order to train CSOs who are well positioned to deliver alternative and counter narrative campaigns the RAN CoE will develop, deliver, review and enhance no less than 28 trainings, reaching out to stakeholders in all MSs. We will take into account that the training material itself should have a strong digital and online character to amplify the awareness effects of the training.

The main objective of the training session is to enhance the knowledge and skills of CSO-workers and volunteers who (want to) develop online counter and alternative narrative campaigns, based on their existing knowledge, skills and messages around preventing radicalisation and violent extremism. After the training session, participants understand the key principles of how to construct a convincing and credible online narrative/campaign, and how to use multiple online platforms effectively. In general the training should help increase the online volume of counter- and alternative narrative campaigns coming from CSO's.

To develop and review the trainings, we will organise three working sessions in Amsterdam Schiphol airport of a full day each:

- On 16 February 2017, an outline will be discussed and enhanced. A draft outline will be produced and shared in preparation of the first session. Working arrangements will be made on who contributes to the development

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<sup>3</sup> with a communications angle

- of specific parts of the training material shortly after this first session, or even during it, resulting in a rich and final outline shortly after the first session.
- Prior to the second session on 23 March 2017, drafts of all training materials will be produced and shared. Specific parts will be tested by piloting those parts during the session. After the session, all training materials will be finalised.
  - During the delivery of the trainings, a third working session will be organised on 1 June 2017 to learn lessons from the initial trainings, and adjust training material as much as needed. Prior to this session, a draft overview of lessons learned and possible enhancements will be shared. After the session, the enhancements which were agreed upon will be delivered, and a new version of all training materials will be produced.

The training will provide skills to work on multiple platforms, as terrorist sympathisers and recruiters do so too. For instance, tweets promote a YouTube video on Daesh, which is legitimised on Facebook and in a column on WordPress. The alternative and counter narratives opposing this, should use multiple platforms as well.

Also, the training sessions will provide insights how the phenomenon of radicalisation to violent extremism and terrorism manifests itself online. Even more than with the use of platforms, adaption to local circumstances is essential. Far right extremism, for instance, has sadly developed into violence in some countries, but not in all. Foreign terrorist fighters originate more from some Member States than from others, which might be dealing with this more as transit countries. Participating CSO's are expected to be experienced in the area of CVE or related areas and therefore the training will not go in depth into the general prevention of radicalisation but rather focus on the online dimension. MS will be consulted to understand, and to some extent tailor to, the local context in which training sessions are delivered.

Each training will be delivered to some 15 participants. Trainings will be one day sessions, running between April and October 2017 (tbc). Training material will be translated into the national language, and provided to participants. The training itself will be delivered in English. Travel and hotel accommodation, if any, should be arranged by participants themselves, and will not be reimbursed. A training venue and lunch will be arranged. We foresee to reach via the trainings CSOs in all Member States.

## 2.5 Dissemination

The RAN CoE will produce six editions of an email newsletter and share it with all members of the CSEP network. It will include:

- Objectives of the programme, call to action
- A calendar of forthcoming activities, mainly being trainings, inviting appropriate CSOs to register interest to attend.
- A summary of delivered activities.
- The delivered training materials in all languages with hyperlinks.
- Inspiring practices with contacts links for

The first newsletter, foreseen in January, will invite all RAN participants to choose to be a member or supporter of the CSEP.

The current RAN accounts on Facebook, Twitter and possibly YouTube will be used to share CSEP messages. The RAN CoE will share CSEP messages on platforms mentioned using dedicated hashtags and other visual tools to distinguish CSEP activities from RAN activities. Three social media campaigns will be delivered:

- The first campaign will be attract CSOs to join. CSEP will be explained, including the benefits of the training as well as the announced funding. The commitment of the Internet industry and ESCN will be mentioned. The contributions to which they committed themselves in the JAP, will be highlighted. We do this in close cooperation, and expect them to contribute to this campaign as well. Also, the kick-off event will be flagged in this campaign. We should explore how to do this carefully, making sure that we do not promote registrations from organisations not qualifying to participate in the CSEP. This first campaign will take place in early 2017 (probably February 2017).
- A second campaign in mid 2017 will be launched on the trainings. This campaign will start only after some trainings have been delivered, enabling us to report on positive results. The campaign will call upon CSOs qualifying to register to participate in coming trainings. This campaign should take place May/June.
- A third and final campaign will flag the publication call for proposals, which is expected to be published late 2017. In the campaign, we will highlight preconditions for application, main goal of the call and any specific conditions. This campaign will most likely take place in the fall.

The CSEP will be introduced through three short clips. The format will be three interviews with people involved in the network (e.g. a CSO, an expert in this field, a RAN CoE staff member). These clips will be developed in the preparation of the kick-off event and used in the first and second social media campaign. The clips will explain the criteria for CSOs to participate in the event and the trainings, as well as clarify the overall goal of the CSEP. By doing so, a large target group can be presented digestible content.

We will also produce a video on the lessons shared in the trainings, to reach beyond those who participated. The video might be deployed in an e-learning kit in a later phase.

### 3 Cooperation with Facebook, Twitter, Google and other internet and industry partners

As the main aim of the CSEP is to empower CSO's to increase substantially the volume of their counter- and alternative narratives online, the internet industry is a key partner in this endeavours. Industry's knowledge, expertise with effective online practice and their capacity for support is a fundamental part of making the Civil Society Empowerment Programme a success. As part of the EU Internet Forum, the European Commission and RAN CoE have built partnerships with leading internet and social media companies to cooperate on the mutual challenge of extremist propaganda online. CSEP will be one of the programmes in which this cooperation will get clear visibility. The CSEP provides companies furthermore with a unique opportunity to reach civil society actors and users across all EU Member States in a coordinated way. This chapter provides an outline of the cooperation and contributions of industry partners. Industry partners contribute to this programme in kind and will not receive EC funding.

#### 3.1 Governance/Support and Coordination group

The key industry partners in the CSEP are Facebook, Twitter and Google. Representatives of these four organisations will have a seat in the Support and Coordination Group of the CSEP and will help shape and steer the programme.

From the counter and alternative narrative campaign perspective, it is also important to include other, sometimes smaller, partners such as Snapchat, Reddit and Tumblr, whose online platforms are widely used by CSO's target groups. In addition, also marketing and communication organisations are important partners to include for their knowledge on online campaigning. This cooperation will be developed during the programme, however these organisations will not have a seat in the SCG. Facebook, Twitter and Google will help the RAN CoE core team to get in touch with other (smaller) industry partners.

Microsoft is one of the key partners in the EU Internet Forum. With regards to the CSEP, they will also be involved, although not being part of the SCG. Their contributions to CSEP will be:

- Sharing lessons in the fall of 2017 from their counter- and alternative narrative pilot on the Bing search engine;
- Looking into opportunities for involving expertise from the gaming industry (in the area of audience engagement and story-telling);
- Helping to create awareness of the CSEP programme through sharing news on Microsoft communication channels and towards specifically the European CSO network.

## 3.2 CSEP network

The industry partners will automatically be part of the CSEP network and receive the CSEP newsletter. To enlarge the network and to reach CSO's who have been trained before, Facebook, Twitter and Google will reach out to relevant CSO's to alert them of the CSEP.

## 3.3 Kick-off event

As part of the SCG, Facebook, Twitter and Google will help shape the programme of the kick-off event. Representatives of these companies and also additional industry partners will be present at the event and should deliver part of the programme (e.g. to highlight their efforts and opportunities in this area, to share best online practice, provide experts and facilitators for different working sessions, etc.).

## 3.4 Training development

A core activity in CSEP for 2017 is to deliver 28 trainings to CSO's from all MS. Facebook, Twitter and Google will contribute to these trainings in the following ways:

Training preparation:

- A representative with training experience participates and contributes to the 3 working sessions to design and evaluate the 1-day training programme.
- During the working sessions, specific parts of the training will be designed for each of the four industry partners, such as key lessons on using specific platforms, metrics/evaluation, case studies, success stories, etc. Contribution from the companies is essential to develop a comprehensive guide.
- Draft working materials to be used during the training are submitted, discussed and finalised in cooperation with RAN CoE. Companies' materials should also be added, such as information manuals, NGO handbooks, FAQs, guidelines for specific usage of particular platforms, etc.

Training implementation

- Industry contribution to the trainings should also cover contribution to host the trainings in their offices around Europe.
- Industry to include a local trainer or expert to be present at the trainings (also in view of adjusting training materials)

The parts of the training which are focussed on substance, such as root causes of violent extremism and prevent strategies for radicalisation. A part of the training will deal with the need of both online and offline efforts to prevent and counter radicalisation. Industry is invited to contribute to these parts of the training sessions as appropriate (e.g. via their own research or experts, if they so wish).

Once the trainings are developed, they will be delivered by CoE and subcontractors, experts from the companies may want to join. However, we do expect companies to support review of the trainings, by participating in a selection of them, reviewing the delivery with us, and contributing to adjustments in training materials if needed. This

will be done in the third working session. Such adjustments of training material should also allow for an update on new features and changes in the companies' platforms. Such adjustments should also take into account any changes in terrorists' behaviour online.

### 3.5 Dissemination

To share and promote information around CSEP, three online campaigns are foreseen throughout 2017. Facebook, Twitter and Google contribute to effective dissemination through:

- Forwarding information to their European CSO networks (e.g. CSO's who have received training before)
- Sharing information on their own CSO platforms (e.g. the Twitter non-profit account, blogs etc.)
- Provide support through advertising

When the names of industry partners are used in formal communication, this will be checked with them on forehand.

### 3.6 Beyond 2017

In the second and third phase of the CSEP, contributions from industry partners will focus more on the CSO's developing campaigns. Industry is expected to contribute in the implementation of the campaigns by the CSOs:

- free advertising credits;
- support in terms of metrics, evaluation for individual campaigns;
- staff to support the running of campaigns (give advice, train);
- production spaces for campaigns, etc.

The contributions will be specified in the JAP 2018 and JAP 2019.

## 4 Cooperation with European Strategic Communications Network (ESCN)

The European Strategic Communications Network project, supported by the European Commission, brings together expertise and knowledge in developing and implementing strategic campaigns to address radicalisation. Given their extensive support to Member States on building capacity in the area of strategic communications, they are in a position to provide strategic support to the CSEP in a number of areas. .

The support of the Advisory Team of the ESCN will include the following:

- An ESCN Team member(s) will take part in the Support and Coordination group meetings.
- Representatives from the ESCN contribute to the kick-off event in the preparation for this workshop at a strategic as well as operational level. The ESCN Advisory Team member(s) might be amongst the involved experts to facilitate the kick-off workshop and/or present, etc.
- Representatives from the ESCN are invited to provide contributions to the development (and possibly provision) of trainings.
- The expertise of the representatives of the ESCN may be foreseen in the preparation of the dissemination activities (social media campaigns, newsletters, videos).
- Furthermore, the ESCN is invited to share information on the CSEP and potential participants for the CSEP network.

Should experts who work for the ESCN be subcontracted for contributions in their professional capacity, they will not represent ESCN but their own organisation or work as independent experts.

## Overview of roles and tasks

	<b>RAN Centre of Excellence</b>	<b>Companies</b>	<b>ESCN</b>
<b>Support and Coordination Group</b>	Member	Member	Member
<b>Creating and maintaining network</b>	Network owner, develop network via RAN network and related stakeholders	Contribute to growing the network: share contacts + ideas (e.g. CSOs they have cooperated with in the past, other (smaller) companies, experts of relevance)	Contribute to growing the network: Share contacts + ideas based on MS engagement experience
<b>Kick-off event</b>	Lead; -Organisation and Logistics - development programme, - connecting to knowledge and expertise within RAN network	Contribute to success of event: - provide experts to present, facilitate sessions and workshops - showcase companies' practices as part of stand - extend invitation to other companies	Strategic and operational support via experts
<b>Training material development</b>	Lead; -Organisation and Logistics - Development training programme - connecting to knowledge and expertise within RAN network	- Provide experts to each 3 working sessions - Provide input to develop material - Provide back-ground/lessons learned of relevance - Support updates of training materials	Expertise for the development of materials.
<b>Trainings</b>	Lead; -Organisation and Logistics - delivering training sessions	- Support to logistics and organisation (e.g. hosting trainings in company premises across MS) - Provide experts to attend training and co-facilitate/evaluate	
<b>Dissemination activities</b>	Lead; - developing newsletters - developing video's - delivering social media campaigns	- Share relevant information to their networks - post on their pages/blogs - support via advertising	Support in sharing relevant information to their network.