



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

European Commission boosts efforts to counter violent extremism

Brussels, 9 September 2011 – Today Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs, launches the Radicalisation Awareness Network which aims to counter violent extremism. The initiative will support Member States' efforts to prevent violent radicalisation and the recruitment of individuals to terrorist activities. The network will connect key actors involved in countering radicalisation across the EU such as social workers, religious leaders, youth leaders, policemen, researchers and others who work on the ground in vulnerable communities.

"The EU needs to do more to counter the threat of growing violent extremism. This is why we are today launching the Radicalisation Awareness Network to support Member States in their efforts to enhance awareness about radicalisation and ways of countering extremists' ideology and propaganda. As experience has shown, terrorism cannot be linked to one faith or political persuasion, nor any particular region. Our efforts in the fight against violent extremism must therefore take into account the different patterns of radicalisation. It is also important to acknowledge that ideological inspiration and reference points for radicalisation can also be found within the political ideas of populist movements in the EU," said Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs.

The inauguration of the network will take place in Brussels, followed by a first working session. The meeting brings together the first members of the network and representatives of the Member States, Norway and the EU Institutions. The inaugural meeting will allow participants to discuss how to make the RAN operational and to exchange their views on the priorities of the network.

The purpose of the network is to identify good practices and promote the exchange of information and experience in different fields of violent radicalisation such as, for example, the use of Internet and social media for extremist propaganda and use by terrorists of information and communications technologies. The network will work towards countering radicalisation before it leads to violent extremism.

The network will be supported by an online forum and EU-wide conferences to pool experiences and knowledge in order to enhance awareness about radicalisation and communication techniques. It will encourage credible role models and opinion leaders to voice positive messages offering alternatives to violent, extremist propaganda. The network will also contribute to policy processes at national and European level and support the European Commission and the Member States in their work and provide them with adequate instruments for preventing terrorism.

Background

On 22 November 2010 the Commission adopted an "EU Internal Security Strategy in Action" ([IP/10/1535](#) and [MEMO/10/598](#)). The prevention of radicalisation, which can lead to acts of terrorism, was identified as a priority and the setting up of an EU Radicalisation Awareness Network ('RAN') was announced.

Further actions were also foreseen, such as the organisation of a ministerial conference in 2012 on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment leading to terrorism.

The Commission plays a key role in the coordination and the facilitation of the work of all actors involved in the network. The Commission will provide the means necessary to set up the RAN platform and its Secretariat as well as the functioning of the network. Over 20€ million will be dedicated to the project over 4 years in the form of direct support to the Member States and the financing of various projects.

As a 'network of networks' the RAN will include groups, associations and platforms with concrete and practical involvement in preventing radicalisation issues. Their work will be organised in clusters of, inter alia, policy makers, law enforcement and security officials, prosecutors, local authorities, academics, field experts and civil society organisations, including victims groups.

For more information

Homepage of Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/malmstrom/welcome/default_en.htm

Homepage DG Home Affairs:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/index_en.htm

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