



What are the barriers to increased cooperation?

As stakeholders see cooperation as increasingly important to address radicalisation, an analysis by CHAMPIONS project has revealed what barriers to such cooperation they encounter.

What factors prevent cooperation on counter-radicalisation ? This important question was addressed by the CHAMPIONS project, as it aims to create its own network of first line practitioners to jointly develop effective detection and response solutions to counter polarisation, build resilience and protect vulnerable groups in their local communities. Based on the results of surveys and interviews conducted for the project, it identified five main barriers hindering greater cooperation.

Main Barriers

Firstly, a lack of support by influential actors. Here the surveys and interviews conducted by the Project highlighted, how fears to lose reputation have prevented cooperation on the topic of right wing extremism, by for instance schools. However, also reluctance to new approaches or knowledge by leaders was identified as barrier. As such, existing hierarchies can prevent free dialogue, while the resulting power imbalance can lead to a lack of real agency over the discussed topics by the network.

Secondly, lack of time and capacities is seen as preventing participation in networks. This can also affect the implementation of the developed ideas. Hence, the need for resources and time has prevented stakeholders, with existing responsibilities, to commit to greater cooperation.

Thirdly, lack of financial resources especially in the long term have hindered the ongoing efficiency and existence of established networks. On the other hand, the absence of possibilities to gain funding for these socially important tasks has undermined bottom-up efforts to establish such networks.

Fourthly, a lack importance of the topic was identified through the surveys with relevant shareholders. As such, the topic of de-radicalisation competes with other topics perceived to be more relevant, like housing shortages.

Fifthly, lack of desire for cooperation between institutions. The surveyed, interviews and analysis conducted revealed a strong focus of potential partners on “their own” objectives. Hence cooperation is also prevented by a lack of interest, as some fail to see



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the benefits arising of it. As the organisations focus on their own goals, objectives which could be advanced by cooperation are often ignored.

Hence, the barriers preventing greater cooperation are diverse in nature and wide in scope. Therefore, for an easier classification they can be divided into external barriers, like lack of funding, importance and support as well as personal barriers, like lack of desire, time and capacities. Moreover, some of the identified barriers stand in relation to each other, reinforcing the problematic. As such, personal barriers like lack of capacities are increased by external problems, like a lack of funding.

Hence, the CHAMPIONS study highlights the need for a holistic approach taking the individual barriers, their external or personal dimension and relationships between each other into account, in order to encourage greater cooperation.

