



CHAMPIONS

Cooperative Harmonised
Action Model
to Stop Polarisation
in Our Nations

Activity Brief #10

Awareness raising events

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Introduction

In the fourth quarter of the project CHAMPIONs local partners implemented a series of awareness raising events in a last effort to transfer important knowledge and skills to First-Line Practitioners and to convey some of the key lessons learned from the project.

The events took place in the spirit of the CHAMPIONs' mission to involve and inform local stakeholders and to implement activities that directly benefit the communities that are facing challenges regarding polarization or radicalization. The events that were implemented in Germany, Romania, Hungary and Poland therefore reflected the specialized expertise of the CHAMPIONs partners as well as the specific needs and the local context in each country.

The detailed description of the awareness raising events can be found in the Deliverables 5.11 (Collected Minutes of Awareness-raising events) and 5.12 (Collated report on decisions for final exploitation of project's deliverables by Workshop participants). This activity brief provides a short overview of the activities implemented on the local level.

Local events

Awareness raising events were implemented in Germany, Romania and Hungary in May and June 2021. An additional event is planned in Poland for the last week of June.

Awareness raising event in Berlin/Neukölln (May/June 2021)

In Germany, **Cultures Interactive** prepared an open exhibition on the topic of hate speech, which included workshops for young people. The event was co-organized with external partners.

The event in Germany was inspired by the needs of practitioners in the field of youth work. As pointed out by the organizers: "Whether Instagram, TikTok or YouTube - young people's social lives are increasingly taking place in the digital space. At the same time, hate speech on the internet is widespread. Those affected are often overwhelmed and feel left alone when they are confronted with discriminatory and inhumane statements."

The idea for this event arose from concretely formulated needs of practitioners of youth and social work from Neukölln in the context of the CHAMPIONs-Roundtables. The practitioners named hate speech as the central challenge for young people and people who work with young people. There was a need for interactive event formats that address young people but also encourage civil society as a whole to become human rights-oriented social media users and to provide them with concrete tips and assistance.

The awareness-raising events had two central goals: First, to get into conversation with young people in Neukölln on the topic of hate speech and to talk about their experiences and wishes using youth-cultural forms of expression. The aim was to support them in their everyday dealings so that they can confidently and actively represent human rights-affirming positions

online. Second, to expand knowledge and strengthen digital civil society in Neukölln by providing tips and assistance on hate on the net.

Cultures Interactive designed an interactive, youth-cultural exhibition in order to get in touch with young people at 3 different public places in Neukölln. For this purpose, two roundtable participants designed the exhibition with regard to its pedagogical and artistic feasibility, taking into account current trends. Information on the legal situation, offers of help, and examples of how to deal with hate speech were staged in a manner appropriate to the target group and prepared as exhibition material (March-May 2021).

The interactive exhibition took place at locations in Neukölln that young people frequently visit (Tempelhofer Feld, Bat-Yam Platz und Körnerpark). The locations were selected after consultations with youth clubs in Berlin-Neukölln. Accompanying the exhibitions, there was an open offer for young people to talk about their experiences with hate speech with the help of artistic methods and to try out strategies for action. As a result, graffiti, rap texts, comics or short stories were created, which expanded the exhibition piece by piece.

Information panels addressed the following questions: "What is Hate Speech?"; "How can I legally defend myself against Hate Speech?" and "Where are there support possibilities?" In parallel, the exhibition was shown and accompanied on social media channels, making it accessible to even more young people.

Virtual and physical awareness raising events in Cluj (May/June 2021)

In Romania, **PATRIR** implemented two types of awareness raising activities: an inclusive education forum was held online on the 18th and 19th of May 2021. Furthermore, an open exhibition on the stake of collaboration for public trust was implemented in June 2021 in the city of Cluj.

The Cluj Forum

Cluj Forum 2021 was an online consultation and debate event co-organized by the partners of the local Cluj roundtables. It brought together over 15 of PATRIR's local FLPs involved in prevention focusing on youth work, inclusive education and mental health. In Cluj, PATRIR's initial interactions with FLPs singled out the need to work with youth, as a vulnerable category, as a category often excluded but also one whose effective social involvement represents the best way forward against polarization.

The event lined up panels of relevant speakers chosen in collaboration with local partners. Dedicated workshops took place in the morning, afternoon and evening (attended by 20 to 40 registered participants), in addition to consultations with professionals. Overall, 200 people participated in the Cluj Forum over the course of 2 days.

On the 18th of May the representative of the Botnar Foundation covered the topic of collaboration for youth work, pointing out the importance of raising trust in these processes, in a country where the deep distrust with authorities is one of the most cited reasons leading to polarization.

Representatives of the County School Inspectorate Cluj discussed good practices and key learnings in working with youth from disadvantaged areas. A representative of the Probation Services in Cluj discussed the risks leading to criminal behaviour and the importance of prevention work.

The presentations all highlighted the importance of prevention work with youth in education, and the key issue of addressing mental health to avoid extremist behaviour. The focus was explicitly on risk categories: children left alone due to work migration of parents, children from the Roma community, children from poor families who drop out of school.

Sessions in the afternoon focused on behavioural changes, education and awareness for 4 different target groups: youth, parents, teachers and FLPs. For youth, the Inocenti Foundation focused on emotional balance, ADIZMC on the prevention of cyberbullying. For parents, the Preventis Association focused on preventing and minimizing risks for youth in families struggling with alcohol consumption. The Simplon Association organized a workshop for parents on monitoring online activity of youth. For teachers, two workshops focused on the steps for prevention of extremism in schools.

On the 19th of May, the presentations in the morning focused on education, cyberbullying and its contribution to polarization and extremism (DigiLives), cultural education in disadvantaged Roma communities near Cluj and their impact for a fairer and more inclusive educational space (Cluj Cultural Center) and practices of inclusive education in a school in Floresti. The afternoon workshops picked up topics addressed on the first day: drug use and youth behaviour and preventing violent behaviour in families (CPECA Cluj, Preventis).

One stand-alone session during Cluj Forum was a policy roundtable where specialists and professionals joined forces to outline a short roadmap for changes in public policy for youth and prevention. This has been passed on the Cluj City Hall.

Cluj Partnerships Exhibition

The open exhibition in the central park in Cluj (June 1st-15th) presented the local initiatives that were implemented in Romania as part of the CHAMPIONS project. Beginning with the roundtables developed in Cluj, the exhibition covered all the events that the roundtable partners co-designed throughout the project. A general presentation of the issue of polarization and extremism internationally was complemented by posters on the approach taking in Cluj locally (with a focus on prevention among youth), and by presentations on several projects developed in schools such as community workshops and cultural events for the Roma community, which aim at preventing the exclusion of rural or vulnerable youth.

Virtual awareness raising events in Hungary (June 2021)

In Hungary, **PolCap** and **BCMAP** organized virtual panel discussions on the possibilities and practice of multiagency cooperation for public trust on the 10th of June 2021. Under the topic of “Local prevention and management of enhanced polarization and radicalization – Opportunities for cooperation” the consortium partners emphasized the importance of joint work of local governments and non-governmental organizations.

As stated in the invitation to the event: “The prejudices and resentments that several minority and vulnerable groups must face today reinforce polarizing and extremist tendencies within the society. Therefore, the local prevention and management of these social tensions and tendencies, and the cooperation of the different social actors are key to preserve social peace.”

The partners took the opportunity of presenting the CHAMPIONS project and its achievements in terms of encouraging the cooperation of local actors. Particular emphasis was given to presenting the online platform firstlinepractioners.com which will ensure that there is a virtual space where local practitioners can meet and work together.

During the roundtable discussion on opportunities for cooperation between NGOs and local governments for the benefit of vulnerable social groups, representatives of the Rosa Parks Foundation (Csenge Horváth), the Emberség Erejével Foundation (Anita Fúrós), the Office of Community Participation in Józsefváros (Hanna Sztripszky), the Menedék Association (Kata Bognár) and the Deputy Mayor of Zugló (Rebeka Szabó) were present. The CHAMPIONS project was presented by Bulcsú Hunyadi (PolCap) and Dávid Ferenczy-Nyúl (Budapest Centre).

Training event in Dąbrowa Górnicza (June 2021)

In Poland, the local organization **IBS** is planning to hold a special meeting with elements of training for a dozen management representatives of the institutions which are represented in Poland's first local group for the prevention and countering of radicalisation in Dąbrowa Górnicza, such as municipal departments and institutions dealing with culture, sport and leisure activities or the police. The objectives of the meeting will be to raise awareness of the issue of radicalisation and ways to address it and to facilitate multi-agency co-operation between these institutions at the managerial level. The meeting will be take place in the last week of June.

The training event is the result of the suggestions voiced by the members of the local group of FLPs, which asked for a dedicated event that can further their understanding of the issue of radicalization and the importance of preventing it. The meeting will also be another step on the path to the formal establishment of the local group in Dąbrowa Górnicza and further training workshops for the staff of these institutions, that will continue after the end of the CHAMPIONS project.



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