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The significance of Internet Propaganda in Radicalisation Processes

Abstract

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This presentation deals with the role of Internet propaganda and counter messages within the context of radicalisation processes. Furthermore, I will discuss the potential of counter messages, such as the launching of counter narratives.

On the whole, researchers assume that media-generated effects can develop a certain impact potential only in combination with other beneficial factors. As a first step, the presentation will therefore explain what factors can promote the effect that Internet propaganda may lead to a positive evaluation of propagandist material. I will illustrate this by presenting example results from the externally funded project named "Propaganda 2.0" (Rieger, Frischlich & Bente, 2013) which was supported by the German Ministry of the Interior.

Subsequently, the role of counter narratives will be discussed. Audio-visual messages also circulating on the Internet that take a stance against extremism or emphasise alternative narratives are frequently mentioned when it comes to possibilities for prevention of radicalisation processes. This presentation will delineate first results from an externally funded project supported by the Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt). This project has explored the presentation and impact of counter narratives.

The last part of this presentation deals with the use of propaganda and counter narratives in connection with preventive measures. To this end, I will outline the content of an EU project which will receive funding as of March 2016. The project will explore the use of counter narratives at schools; its objective is to examine counter narratives with regard to media competence and to develop a school programme.