

# Existing networks or innovative changes? Chinese outposts in New York City.

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Jacob Sagers – A recent [crackdown](#) on a Chinese Police Outpost in New York City by the FBI marks a change in intelligence networks. The Chinese government denies these outposts being used for intelligence purposes, stating they are being staffed by volunteers to help citizens abroad. Others argue it's a network to maintain hold on Chinese expats and diaspora.

[Networks](#) are a combination of nodes that support its function. Networks tend to transcend national boundaries and can be a benefit or threat to countries. China uses these police outposts as nodes, or connections, in their intelligence network sending information back to Beijing. These outposts date back as early to last decade and are spread throughout multiple Western countries. However, multiple Chinese municipalities sponsor these outposts, such as Fuzhou, not just the national government. It is also reported that: "Western officials see the outposts as part of Beijing's larger drive to keep tabs on Chinese nationals abroad, including dissidents." It is not uncommon for police forces or intelligence agents to work in other countries. China's police force in Italy is an example; however, they generally declare themselves to foreign governments and work out of embassies. This new Chinese intelligence network poses problems to expats, Chinese citizens, and the effectiveness of foreign governments in enforcing their own laws. Humanitarian groups worry about human rights violations.

These outposts not only form networks, but they also contest the existence of [boundaries](#). Boundaries form part of state legitimacy and its government's jurisdiction in forming laws. Chinese police officers, working out of a largely civilian-staffed outpost, threaten United States sovereignty and reduce the relevance of boundaries. Furthermore, China may be expanding its spy efforts to project its growing power amid new competition with the West. It marks a vast change from previous Western dominance in intelligence networks throughout the world.