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SMIDGE

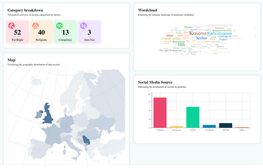
Social Media Narratives : Addressing Extremism in Middle Age

Horizon Europe
Project No 101095290

Smidge Newsletter

April 2025

We are pleased to share the latest updates on the SMIDGE Project, which tackles online extremist narratives targeting middle-aged individuals across Europe.



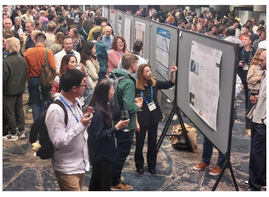
Milestones

The SMIDGE Project proudly introduces its new database platform, an essential tool for researchers and policymakers dedicated to tackling online extremism.

The database provides an in-depth look at extremist narratives circulating on major social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter. It categorises video content promoting far-right, religious, anti-vax, and conspiracy narratives—ranging from militant messaging to misinformation. Users can access data essential for evidence-based policy development and enhanced understanding of digital extremism trends.

Additionally, researchers can report extremist content, further expanding this valuable resource for real-time insights.

We are in the process of developing alternative counter-narrative materials, including MOOC content, a documentary, and micro-content (memes, images, GIFs, and videos) designed to engage middle-aged audiences, foster critical thinking, and mitigate the spread of extremist ideologies.



Recent Activities: Events and Engagements

In an article published by The Guardian titled "Fears for UK boomer radicalisation on Facebook after Meta drops factcheckers", the Smidge Project was recognised as a pioneering initiative addressing the pressing issue of extremism among middle-aged social media users.

Dr. Sara Wilford from De Montfort University recently spoke with Nikkei, one of Japan's most prominent newspapers, about the SMIDGE Project. Following the interview, Nikkei published an article detailing the discussion.

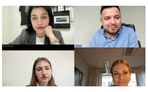
Our partner institution, KCSS, hosted other two significant webinars on Gaming Platforms and Radicalisation and Disinformation, Radicalisation and Extremism.

In the past six months, we released three podcast episodes addressing topics such as critical thinking, security, radicalization and the role of information in shaping conflicts and fact-checking.

Furthermore, we continue to present our aims and findings at various academic platforms. Professor Kalypso Iordanou from UCLan Cyprus presented the results of the Smidge project at two major international conferences: the Psychonomic Society's 65th Annual Meeting (November 21–24) and the Society of Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM) Annual Conference (November 22–25).

Recently KCSS published three blog articles: 'Charting the Rise of Far-Right Extremism: How the SMIDGE Project Informs Policy and Practice', 'Countering Conspiracies: How SMIDGE Database Can Help Curb Dangerous Narratives' and 'Facts over Fear'.

We look forward to continuing our work and appreciate your ongoing support and engagement.



Webinars

KCSS hosted two webinars: one focused on Gaming Platforms and Radicalisation and another addressing Disinformation, Radicalisation and Extremism.

Learn More

SmidgeCast #06

In this episode, Kalypso Iordanou, Professor of Psychology at UCLan Cyprus explores critical thinking skills to address misinformation and extremism.

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SmidgeCast #07

In this episode of the Smidgecast, Dan Ilazi, Head of Research at the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), explores security, radicalization and the role of information in shaping conflicts.

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SmidgeCast #08

Professor Giovanni Ziccardi from the University of Milan, discusses the role of fact-checking in the digital era and tackles how to tackle deepfakes and AI-generated disinformation.

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Blog Articles

In our latest blog articles, we explored how fear-driven narratives distort climate change, how conspiracy theories take root online, and how SMIDGE tools can help tackle these challenges.

Learn More

SMIDGE Digital Platform

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Learn More

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