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Data Briefing – November 2024 to February 2025
Online Domestic Extremism in Canada

This briefing paper details analysis of Canadian domestic extremists' online activity between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025. It explores the platforms they are active on, the topics which galvanize them, and the ways in which they target communities in Canada. It is part of a multi-year study which will provide ongoing insight into Canadian domestic extremist activity through the ongoing delivery of analytical briefs.

ISD used its definition of domestic extremism (see Annex) to decide if accounts and channels should be included. This definition states that extremism can be pursued through violent or non-violent means. It thereby complements efforts addressing political violence and terrorism by considering the broader risks to democracy, rights, and social cohesion posed by non-violent extremism. This broader focus also aims to highlight the continuum of ideologies and activities that inspire violence and illuminate different pathways to radicalization.

This if the first briefing for which the research team used Natural Language Processing to classify violent speech such as threats of, incitement to and glorification of violence. A full breakdown of the methodology employed can be found in the technical Annex.

Key Findings
Account Analysis

- ISD has so far identified 545 domestic extremist social media accounts and channels in Canada across 8 platforms. Where permitted by API's, we gathered data from 269 accounts and channels in Canada which published 413,288 posts between November 2024 and February 2025. This included 128 accounts and channels on X, 91 on Telegram, 26 on Facebook, 14 on YouTube, and 10 on Instagram.

- ISD identified 86 ethnonationalists (126,805 posts), 82 white supremacists (129,125 posts), 45 anti-Muslim extremists (64,257 posts), 28 anti-government extremists (86,654 posts), 27 Neo-Nazis (27,013 posts), 23 Christian Nationalists (13,734 posts), 18 extreme right accelerationists (20,594 posts) and 10 male supremacists (3,749 posts).

- Anti-Muslim extremists and ethnonationalists had by far the highest levels of engagement, while ethnonationalists and white supremacists had most accounts and most posts, with very similar numbers in these two categories.

- This quarter, extremist activity rose following Justin Trudeau's announcement of his resignation on 6 January, and on 3 February, when Trump agreed to a 30-day delay for the tariffs against Canada. White supremacist discussion spiked in reaction to Trump's comments about turning Canada into the 51st state of the US.

Key Narratives

- Analysis of key topics among Canadian domestic extremists showed that they discuss both domestic and international issues. Common topics included

misogynistic and manosphere themes, conspiracy theories around sovereign citizens ideology and vaccines, largely pro-Russian discussions of the Ukraine-Russia war, Trump's 51st state rhetoric and tariffs, and discontent with government actors (especially with Trudeau, Freeland and Carney).

Hate Speech

- Of the 413,288 posts made by the domestic extremist accounts and channels between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025, 9,512 (2.3% of the total) were classified as containing hate speech (approach and definition outlined in the Annex). This is a 34% decrease in the volume of hateful posts from the last reporting period.

- Of these hateful posts, 2,478 (26.1%) were targeted at migrants, 2,127 (22.4%) at Jewish people, 2,117 (22.3%) at the LGBTQ community, 1,446 (15.2%) at Asian Canadians, 1,139 (12.0%) at Muslims, 671 (7.1%) at Black Canadians, 225 (2.4%) at Indigenous communities and 72 (0.8%) at Arab Canadians.

Violent Speech (new)

- Of the 413,288 posts made by the domestic extremist accounts and channels, 1,500 (0.4%) were classified as containing violent speech, such as threatening language, incitement or glorification of violence.

- Violent speech peaked on 7 January (36 posts), coinciding with Trudeau's resignation and Trump's 51st state rhetoric, with posts calling for Trump to militarily invade Canada and politicians to be hanged for high treason.

- ISD encountered some strategic discussions around the upsides and downsides of violent accelerationist tactics compared to broader political activism aimed at influencing political discourse.

Note on Account Categorisation

ISD analysts categorised all accounts and channels included into the following sub-categories: White supremacist, Ethnonationalist, Christian Nationalist, Anti-Muslim Extremists, Male Supremacism, Anti-Government Extremism. For white supremacists, ISD additionally coded for two sub-categories, Neo-Nazi and extreme right accelerationists (i.e. all Neo-Nazis are coded as white supremacists though not vice versa). Accounts and channels could also be ethnonationalist and Christian Nationalist, as these categories sometimes but not always overlap. Otherwise, accounts and channels have been assigned to one sub-category.

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Contents

1   Account Analysis

Overall, ISD has so far identified 545 domestic extremist social media accounts and channels in Canada. This includes 168 on X, 140 on Facebook, 123 on Telegram, 31 on TikTok, 27 on YouTube, 22 on Gab, 22 on Instagram and 12 on Rumble.

This list will be regularly expanded over the next four years through an account discovery exercise, (detailed in the Annex below).

Of these, 269 were active during the period of data collection. This includes 128 on X (formerly known as Twitter), 91 on Telegram, 26 on Facebook, 14 on YouTube, and 10 on Instagram. Using the API's provided by these platforms, ISD collected 413,288 posts from 269 Canadian domestic extremist accounts and channels between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025. This included 252,297 posts on X, 146,064 on Telegram, 11,590 on Facebook, 2,349 on Instagram, and 988 on YouTube.

Figure 1: Active domestic extremist accounts per sub-ideology

Sub-Ideology	Accounts
Accelerationists	18
Anti-Government Extremists	28
Anti-Muslim Extremists	45
Christian Nationalists	23
Ethnonationalists	86
Male Supremacists	10
Neo-Nazis	27
White Supremacists	82

Figure 2: Domestic extremist posts per sub-ideology

Sub-Ideology	Posts
Accelerationists	20,594
Anti-Government Extremists	86,654
Anti-Muslim Extremists	64,257
Christian Nationalists	13,734
Ethnonationalists	126,805
Male Supremacists	3,749
Neo-Nazis	27,013
White Supremacists	129,125

Sub-Ideology	Posts	Active accounts	Total engagement
Accelerationists	20,594	18	265,770
Anti-Government Extremists	86,654	28	1,894,595
Anti-Muslim Extremists	64,257	45	23,209,805
Christian Nationalists	13,734	23	701,607
Ethnonationalists	126,805	86	21,261,234
Male Supremacists	3,749	10	2,264,470
Neo-Nazis	27,013	27	1,003,673
White Supremacists	129,125	82	4,734,373

Of these channels ISD analysts identified 86 as ethnonationalists (126,805 posts), 82 as white supremacists (129,125 posts), 45 as anti-Muslim extremists (64,257 posts), 28 as anti-government extremists (86,654 posts), 27 as Neo-Nazis (27,013 posts), 23 as Christian Nationalists (13,734 posts), 18 as extreme right accelerationists (20,594 posts) and 10 as male supremacists (3,749 posts).

Anti-Muslim extremists and ethnonationalists had by far the highest levels of engagement, while ethnonationalists and white supremacists had most accounts and most posts, with very similar numbers in these two categories. There is a significant gap in terms of total engagement between white supremacists on the one hand and anti-Muslim extremists (5 times higher engagement than white supremacists) as well as ethnonationalists (4.5 times higher engagement than white supremacists) on the other side. Notably, anti-Muslim extremists achieved this total engagement with around half the accounts and posts of ethnonationalists, suggesting a much more engaged followership. Anti-government were relatively active in terms of posting, but did not achieve high levels of engagement.

White supremacists and Neo-Nazi accounts and channels are almost exclusively, and accelerationists and anti-government extremists are predominantly active on Telegram and X. Telegram is particularly central for white supremacists and Neo-Nazis. X is the most important platform across ideological sub-communities, with most sub-ideologies having strong presences on X. The two sub-ideological groups with most engagement, anti-Muslim extremists and ethnonationalists, were mostly represented on X as well, though the former also had notable presence on Facebook.

Overall, domestic extremists posted mostly between 4-6k times daily. Slight peaks could be identified following Justin Trudeau's announcement of his resignation on 6 January, and on 3 February, when Trump agreed to a 30-day delay for the tariffs against Canada.

White supremacist discussion in particular spiked in reaction to Trump's comments about turning Canada into the 51st state of the US.

Anti-Muslim extremists' discussion spiked on 17 December, following reporting about a youth in Ottawa

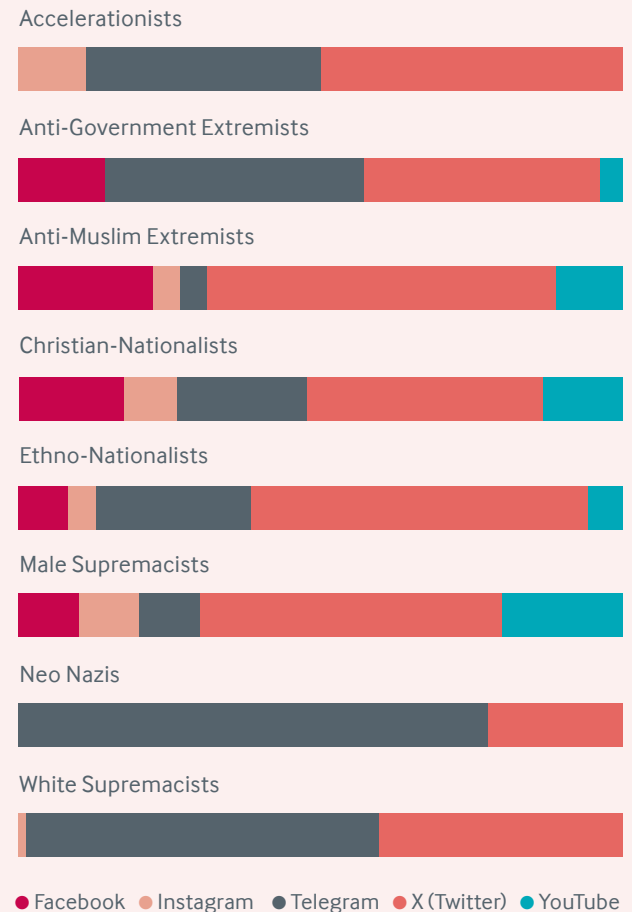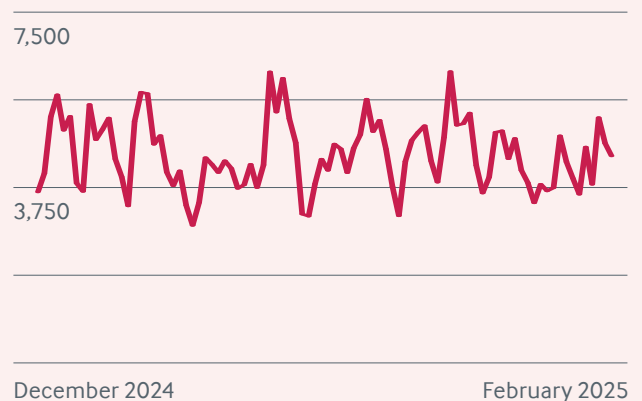Figure 3: Number of accounts across platforms, divided by sub-ideology

Accelerationists

Anti-Government Extremists

Anti-Muslim Extremists

Christian-Nationalists

Ethno-Nationalists

Male Supremacists

Neo Nazis

White Supremacists

● Facebook ● Instagram ● Telegram ● X (Twitter) ● YouTube

Figure 4: Canadian domestic extremist discussions, volume over time

7,500

3,750

December 2024   February 2025

in Ottawa charged with terrorism offences over an alleged antisemitic plot in Ottawa. Though there were age-related reporting restrictions limiting available information, anti-Muslim extremists blamed Islam and Muslims for the incident. Some of the most-liked content during a spike of ethnonationalist posts on 27 February referenced the discussion about whether former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is English, triggered by a discussion on the Triggernometry podcast during which host Konstantin Kisin argued Sunak could not be English as he is a "brown Hindu."

Hate speech

To better understand the ways domestic extremists target different communities we used Natural Language Processing to classify hate speech in the messages gathered targeting Jewish people, migrants, Muslims, Asian Canadians, Black people, First Nations communities, Arab Canadians and LGBTQ communities.[1] A full breakdown of the methodology employed can be found in the technical Annex.

Of the 413,288 posts made by the domestic extremist accounts and channels, 9,512 (2.3% of the total) were classified as containing hate speech. This is a 34% decrease in the volume of hateful posts from the last reporting period, though it is much higher than the share of hateful posts during our initial reporting period between 1 January and 30 August 2024.

Of these hateful posts, 2,478 (26.1%) were targeted at migrants, 2,127 (22.4%) at Jewish people, 2,117 (22.3%) at the LGBTQ community, 1,446 (15.2%) at Asian Canadians, 1,139 (12.0%) at Muslims, 671 (7.1%) at Black Canadians, 225 (2.4%) at Indigenous communities and 72 (0.8%) at Arab Canadians.

Anti-migrant hate remined the most common type of hate speech. Between reporting periods, ISD noted a decrease in the proportion of antisemitic content, which dropped from the 35.1% during the first reporting period to 22.4% during this quarter. In contrast, posts containing anti-migrant hate speech increased from second to the most prevalent. Anti-LGBTQ activity slightly increased and remained the third most prevalent form of hate speech identified (2,117 posts). There was again a significant increase in hate targeting Muslim Canadians during this last reporting period. The relative share of

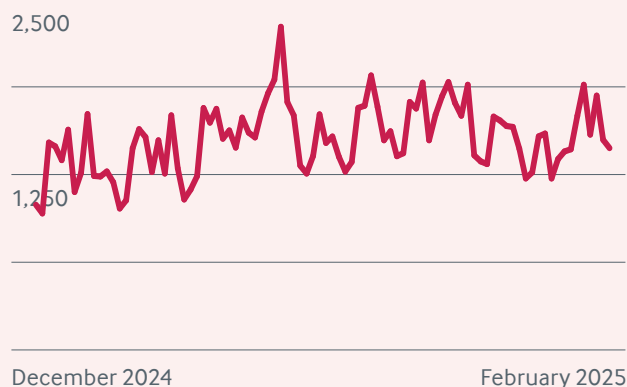Figure 5: White Supremacist discussions, volume over time

2,500

1,250

December 2024   February 2025

Figure 6: Number and percentage of hateful posts in the first three data briefings on Canadian extremists

Reporting Period	Total Posts	Hateful Posts	% Hateful
1 January – 30 August	1,022,427	13,055	1.4%
1 September – 30 November	282,288	9,894	3.5%
1 November – 28 February 2025	413,288	9,512	2.3%

Figure 7: Hate Speech by domestic extremists, broken down by different target groups

Anti-Migrant	2,478
Antisemitic	2,127
Anti-LGBTQ	2,117
Anti-Asian	1,446
Anti-Muslim	1,139
Anti-Black	671
Anti-Indigenous	225
Anti-Arab	72

anti-Asian hate has been similar throughout all three reporting periods.

	Report 3		Report 2		Report 1	
	%	Figure	%	Figure	%	Figure
Anti-Migrant	2,478	26.1%	2,934	29.7%	4,382	33.6%
Antisemitic	2,127	22.4%	2,843	28.7%	4,577	35.1%
Anti-LGBTQ	2,117	22.3%	2,149	21.7%	N/A	N/A
Anti-Asian	1,446	15.2%	1,353	13.7%	1,957	15.0%
Anti-Muslim	1,139	12.0%	2,656	20.3%	421	4.3%
Anti-Black	872	8.8%	1,279	9.8%	671	7.1%
Anti-First Nations	1,252	9.6%	225	2.4%	232	2.3%
Anti-Arab	218	1.7%	72	0.8%	172	1.7%

Between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025 there were two main spikes in hate speech content. These spikes in online hateful content often align with and respond to real-world events.

The day with the greatest volume of hate speech was 30 January, with 202 posts identified, followed by 27 December (185 posts). 76 of the posts on 30 January were targeting Jewish people, mostly in reaction to an Executive Order signed by US president Trump around "Combatting Antisemitism in the United States", which sought to enable more deportations of pro-Palestine student protestors. Canadian domestic extremists argued this was evidence for Jewish control of the US government, and that Trump was forced to prove his loyalty.

On 27 December, the most common type of hate speech was anti-Asian (71 posts), targeting Indians in particular. This rise seemed to have been triggered by the H-1B visa controversy involving Elon Musk and Steve Bannon, and often targeted Vivek Ramaswamy and other highly qualified Indian immigrants as undesirable, unpleasant and manipulative. Other popular content on this day denied the existence of "transgender kids."

Of the 9,512 hateful messages identified by ISD, 5,558 were posted on X, 4,588 on Telegram, 76 on Facebook, 33 on Instagram, and 5 on YouTube. X hosted most of the

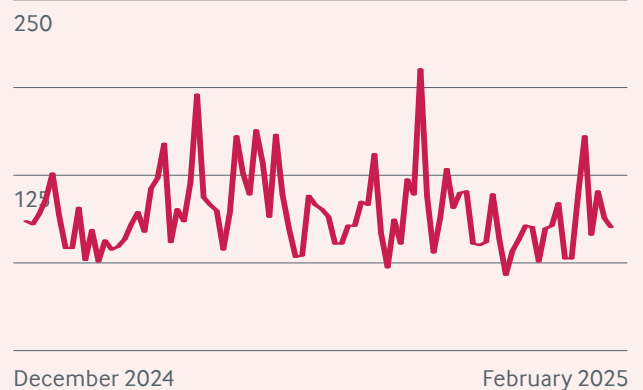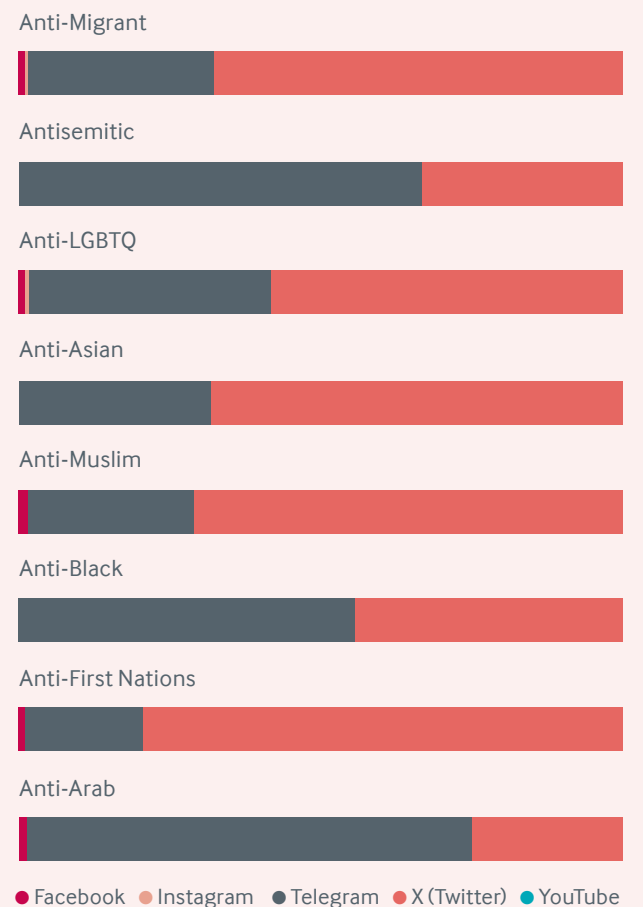Figure 8: Hate speech by Canadian domestic extremists, volume over time

Figure 9: Hate speech by Canadian domestic extremists targeting different groups, divided by platforms
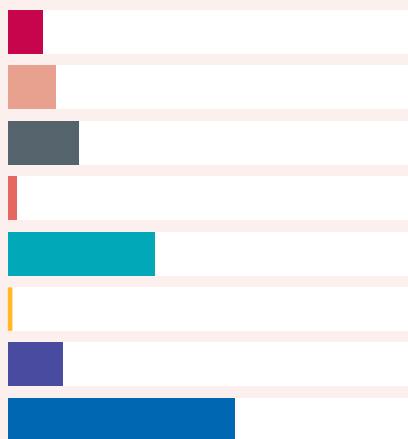
● Facebook ● Instagram ● Telegram ● X (Twitter) ● YouTube
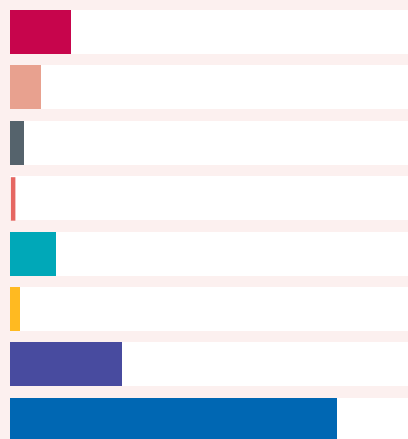
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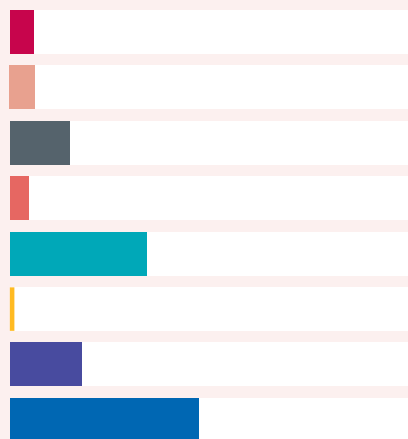Figure 10: Hate speech by Canadian domestic extremists targeting different groups, divided by sub-ideologies
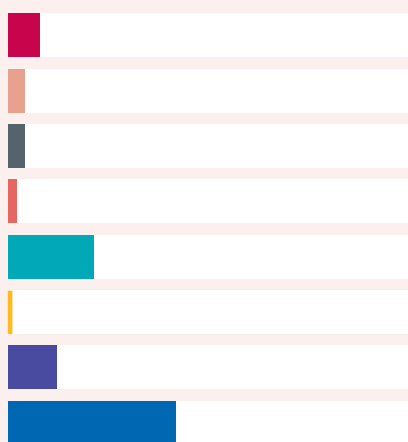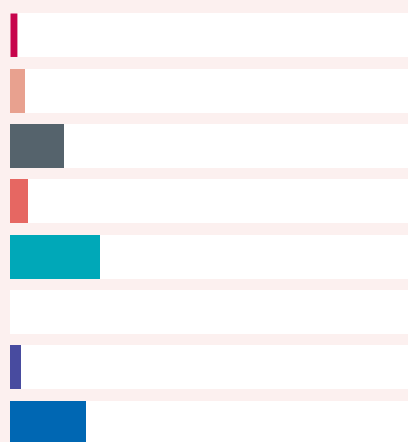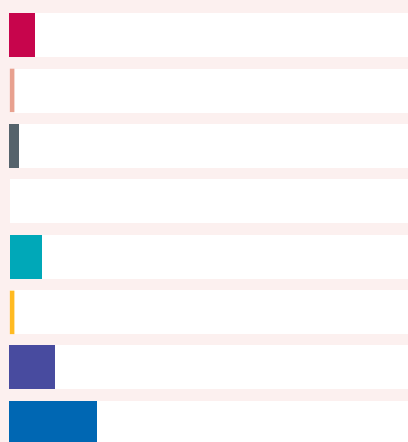

Anti-Migrant
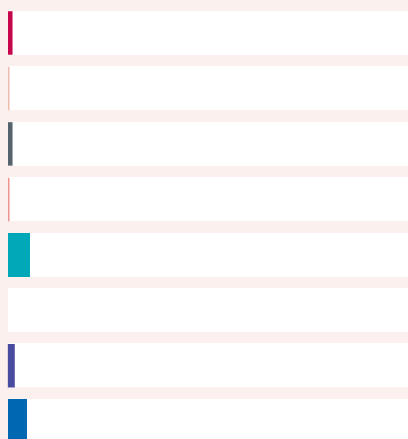
Antisemitic

Anti-LGBTQ

Anti-Asian

Anti-Muslim

Anti-Black

Anti-First Nations

Anti-Arab

- Accelerationist
- Anti-government extremist
- Anti-Muslim extremist
- Christian-Nationalist
- Ethno-Nationalist
- Male Supremacist
- Neo-Nazi
- White Supremacist

hateful content directed at migrants, LGBTQ communities, Asians, Muslims and First Nations communities. By contrast, the majority of hate directed against Jewish people, Blacks and Arabs was on Telegram.

White supremacists, Neo-Nazis and ethnonationalists were the most prolific in terms of promoting hate speech. While white supremacists published the most hateful posts across prevalent categories such as anti-migrant, antisemitic and anti-LGBTQ hate. Ethnonationalists were most prominent within the anti-Muslim hate data.

Violent Speech

To better understand the ways domestic extremists target different communities we used Natural Language Processing to classify violent speech such as threats of, incitement to and glorification of violence. A full breakdown of the methodology employed can be found in the technical Annex.

Of the 413,288 posts made by the domestic extremist accounts and channels between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025, 1,500 (0.4%) were classified as containing violent speech.

Violent speech peaked on 7 January (36 posts), coinciding with Trudeau's resignation and Trump's 51st state rhetoric. Posts on the called for Trump to militarily invade Canada and "Rip Canada out from underneath these Traitors." Furthermore, ISD identified calls to hang politicians for high treason, and other alleged offences. For example, one post targeted Mary Simon, the governor general of Canada and the first Indigenous person to hold the office: "She's a disgusting Traitor of the highest accord. We need Capital Punishment back immediately. Maybe the threat of a rope might make them behave…."

Another common theme in violent posts centred around rumour the declassification of the Epstein-files, with comments asking for Epstein's clients to be hanged or burned alive.

Lastly, ISD encountered some strategic discussions around the upsides and downsides of violent accelerationist tactics compared to broader political activism that was aimed at influencing political discourse.

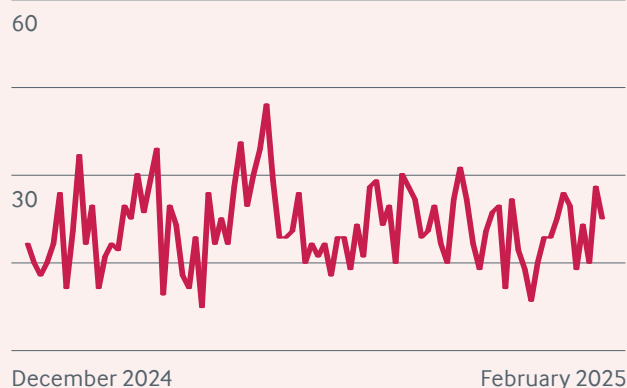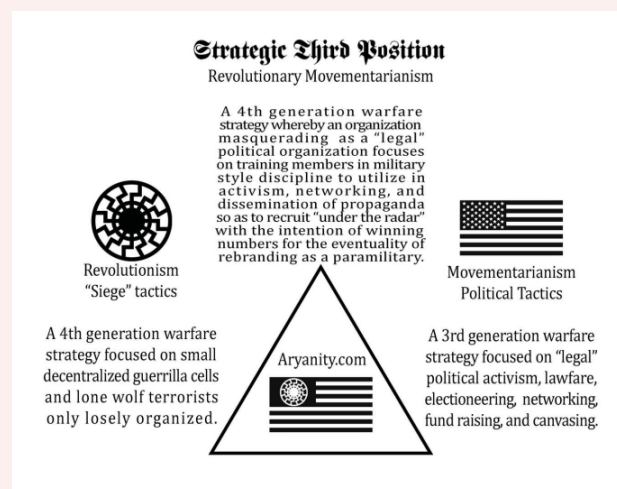Figure 11: Violent speech by Canadian domestic extremists, volume over time

60

30

December 2024   February 2025

Figure 12: Graphic outlining "Revolutionary Movementarianism" concept

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One channel outlined his frustration with "Siege" tactics, inspired by the Siege newsletter by the American Neo-Nazi James Mason, who advocates for lone-wolf attacks or small terrorist cells, but also criticised legal political activism efforts at influencing public opinion. Instead, it was suggested that this binary should be overcome through a fusion of these approaches called "Revolutionary Movementarianism" that would both seek to influence public discourse and reach broad audiences, while secretly building up paramilitary structures. This will still involve avoiding any illegal activity or open calls for violence to evade state suppression. The goal is to accumulate enough trained personnel and infrastructure so the organisation can transition into a paramilitary force, if necessary, without tipping off authorities beforehand.

Key Narratives

The following section outlines the findings of ISD's qualitative analysis of key narratives among Canadian domestic extremists between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025 identified through LLM assisted automated topic modelling (outlined in detail in the Annex).
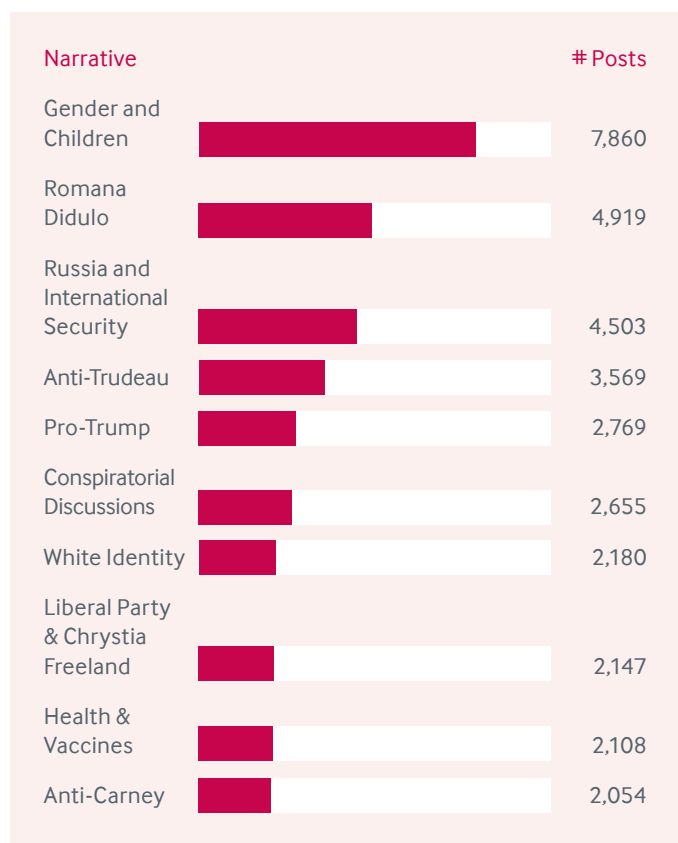
This analysis demonstrates that Canadian domestic extremists discuss both domestic and international issues, with a strong emphasis on perceived injustices, conspiratorial narratives, discontent with government actions and criticism of so-called "woke" politics.

Gender and Children
These discussions centered around different issue areas within the themes of gender and children. Specific discussions reflect a misogynistic world view, along with posts sexualising, objectifying and body shaming women. Male dominance, red-pill[2] and manosphere-type themes were commonplace, alongside vitriol targeted towards specific women and trans identities. The public education system was also discussed and seen to "indoctrinate" the youth, with home schooling promoted as an alternative.

Romana Didulo
These posts are centered around the followers of Romana Didulo, a conspiracy theorist who has declared herself the "Queen of Canada". Discussions praise for Didulo, often linked to spiritual or metaphysical themes. A distrust in government, political systems and the media is a common theme, as well as conspiratorial ideas and sovereign citizen ideologies.

Narrative	# Posts
Gender and Children	7,860
Romana Didulo	4,919
Russia and International Security	4,503
Anti-Trudeau	3,569
Pro-Trump	2,769
Conspiratorial Discussions	2,655
White Identity	2,180
Liberal Party & Chrystia Freeland	2,147
Health & Vaccines	2,108
Anti-Carney	2,054

Russian and International Security
This cluster of posts reflects attitudes towards Russia, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the role of NATO and the US. The discussions include conspiracy theories and disinformation regarding Russia, Ukraine and President Zelensky, as well as antisemitic slurs about Jews in Ukraine. Posts also discuss the shifting role of NATO and the US's role in EU security.

Anti-Trudeau
These posts reflect negative attitudes towards Justin Trudeau, particularly after his resignation as Prime Minister. Many posts celebrated his decision, while calling for an election and the resignation of the entire Liberal Party. Posts largely see Trudeau as a weak leader while criticising his so-called "woke" policies.

Pro-Trump
Posts discussed Donald Trump's presidency, which included admiration for him and his commitment to 'America First' values. Conspiracy theories and unsubstantiated claims about Trump were commonplace, as was criticism of left-wing politics.

Conspiratorial Discussions

Posts discussed various conspiratorial theories and unsubstantiated claims. Events discussed included the 2018 Humboldt bus crash and Toronto van attack. The CIA mind control program MK-Ultra[3] was mentioned frequently, as were QAnon[4] and spiritual enlightenment.

White Identity

Discussions largely revolved around white identity, racial tensions and perceived anti-white racism. A recurring narrative was that white people are being erased and displaced by demographic changes. "Woke" politics and Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies were widely criticised and mocked.

Liberal Party

Discussions centred around the Liberal Party with many posts accusing the party of being corrupt and traitorous. Contempt for "woke" politics was discussed, as are claims that the media and public institutions have been "corrupted" by such policies.

Health & Vaccines

Discussions centered around criticisms of vaccines and claims that they cause widespread harm which is being covered up by Big Pharma, public health officials and the media. Robert F. Kennedy Jr was frequently mentioned as an individual seeking justice for vaccine victims.

Mark Carney

Within these discussions, Prime Minister Mark Carney was portrayed as an unelected, untrustworthy figure. His ties to the World Economic Forum are discussed within a conspiratorial lens, describing him as a "globalist" threatening Canada's national sovereignty.

Popular media sources

Investigating the broader media ecosystem domestic extremists operate in helps illustrate outlets which are referenced in the context of a polarising, hateful or extremist agenda.

As with the previous quarterly reports, the most popular media outlets linked to by domestic extremist communities in Canada consisted of a mixture of established media outlets along with alternative, online media, some of which are known for spreading

Figure 13: Top ten most linked-to news outlets by Canadian domestic extremists (ranking in the previous quarterly briefing is shown in the Prev field)

Pos	Prev	Platform	References
1	1	Rebel News	13,245
2	2	Life Site News	3,341
3	3	True North	1,483
4	New	The Kingdom of Canada	1,056
5	4	CBC	607
6	10	MSN News	590
7	6	CTV News	569
8	New	Wikipedia	476
9	5	National Post	467
10	7	Global News	398

mis- and/or disinformation or promoting hateful, racist or xenophobic views.

Rebel News, Life Site News and True North continued to be the top three sources linked to among Canadian domestic extremists.

Rebel News, the right-wing news outlet founded by Ezra Levant, was the most widely linked-to media outlet by Canadian domestic extremists. LifeSiteNews, the Canadian-founded anti-abortion website run by the socially conservative lobbyist group Campaign Life Coalition, was the second most popular media outlet. In third place was True North, a Canadian conservative online media outlet founded in 2018 through the think tank, the True North Centre for Public Policy.

Established Canadian news outlets such as CBC, National Post, CTV News and Global News were again in the top ten media outlets linked to by Canadian domestic extremists, though all of them moved down the list compared to the previous quarterly report. As noted previously, these sources are often shared to highlight perceived biases in mainstream media reporting, but also to provide evidence for claims made by domestic extremists.

Notably, the website for Roman Didulo (also known as the "Queen of Canada" among her followers, who

promotes QAnon conspiracy theories and sovereign citizen ideology, was the fourth most linked to source between 1 November 2025 and 28 February 2025. The website was exclusively linked to by anti-government extremists, suggesting little interest or resonance beyond her core followership. Didulo's website was not in the top ten list previously.

Lastly, Wikipedia was the eight-most linked to online source, with most links coming from White Supremacists (304 of 476 links).

This analysis highlights how prominent alternative media and conspiracy outlets are within the online domestic extremism ecosystem. At the same time, domestic extremists often reference more reputable sources as well.

Geographic Overview

Identifying the places extremists mention online helps identify potential targets, recruitment areas and local grievances. This can therefore support efforts to prevent extremist mobilisation and aid more effective and targeted security and policy responses.

To assess which places within and outside of Canada domestic extremists reference most, ISD collected all mentions of countries (excluding Canada) as well as provinces and cities within Canada between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025.

The top three provinces mentioned were Ontario (8,388), Alberta (6,633), and Quebec (4,179). Popular posts mentioning Alberta and Quebec focused on questions around joining the US, with Trump and pro-US voices "eyeing" Alberta, while Quebec was mostly deemed unlikely to be joining the US even if other Canadian provinces did.

The top two most mentioned cities by Canadian domestic extremists were Ottawa with 1,918 and Toronto with 1,911 mentions. Posts mentioning both Brampton (328) contained anti-Indian and anti-Sikh narratives, for example claiming that the city "had been conquered without a shot fired." Popular posts about Edmonton (423) alleged that city mayor Amarjeet Sohi was a terrorist and accused him of corruption and nepotism.

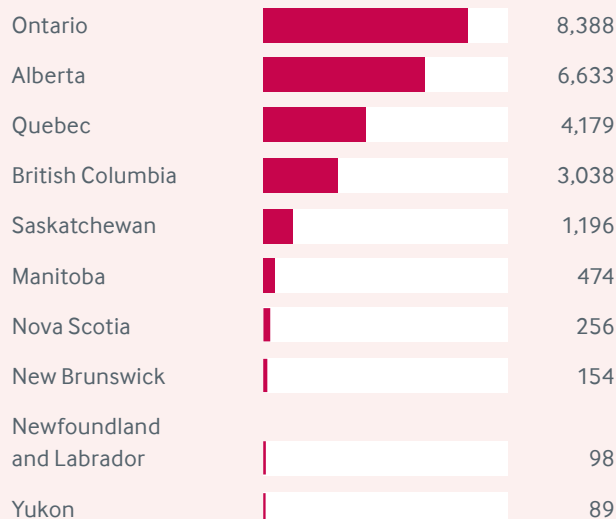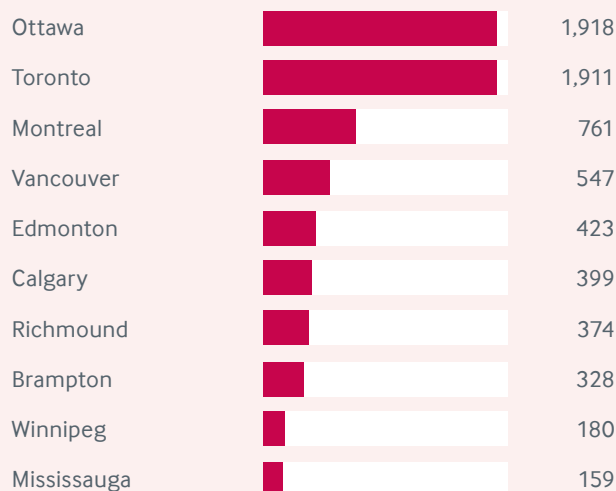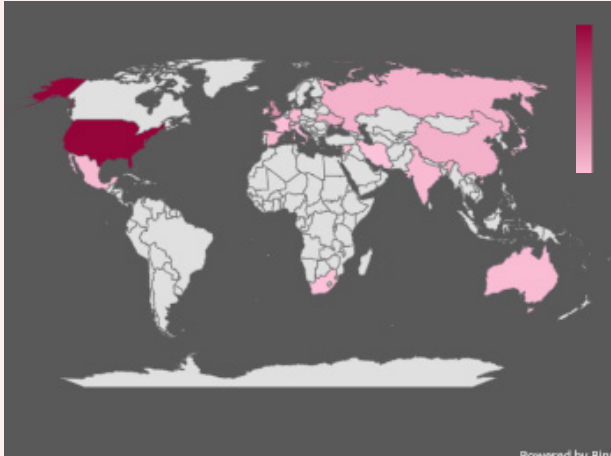Figure 14: Provinces most frequently mentioned by Canadian domestic extremists

Province	Mentions
Ontario	8,388
Alberta	6,633
Quebec	4,179
British Columbia	3,038
Saskatchewan	1,196
Manitoba	474
Nova Scotia	256
New Brunswick	154
Newfoundland and Labrador	98
Yukon	89

Figure 15: Canadian cities most frequently mentioned by Canadian domestic extremists

City	Mentions
Ottawa	1,918
Toronto	1,911
Montreal	761
Vancouver	547
Edmonton	423
Calgary	399
Richmound	374
Brampton	328
Winnipeg	180
Mississauga	159

Figure 16: Countries most frequently mentioned by Canadian domestic extremists

Country	Mentions	Country	Mentions
United States	28,121	Australia	1,527
United Kingdom	7,505	Palestine	1,428
Ukraine	3,384	France	1,137
Israel	3,092	Italy	1,022
China	3,067	Syria	933
Russia	2,888	Switzerland	854
Spain	2,127	Ireland	602
India	1,817	South Africa	574
Mexico	1,741	Iran	510
Germany	1,651	Japan	479

Language-Based Communities

This section summarises the findings of a cross-platform natural language processing approach to map the location of accounts and channels within a network (outlined in detail in the Annex). In simple terms, if accounts and channels use similar language, they are grouped together. This allows the identification of communities based on common interests, even if they would not have been assigned the same ideological sub-category or use the same platform. Rather than being shaped by analysts' expertise and expectations, this approach is driven purely by the output of domestic extremists online and may therefore produce counter-intuitive findings or patterns that may have otherwise been overlooked. It thereby serves as complementary approach to ISD's account and platform focussed analysis.

ISD subject matter reviewed the clusters identified through this approach. Based on our interpretation, these are the characteristics of the 10 clusters identified.

1. **Gender Traditionalists (Green Cluster):** Small Cluster of 11 Christian Nationalist and male supremacist accounts and channels focussed on social issues, especially anti-LGBTQ narratives, gender and children.

2. **Catholic Reactionaries (Purple Cluster)**: Small Cluster of 7 mainly Catholic Christian Nationalist accounts and channels focussed on religion and scripture as well as opposition to abortion rights, vaccines and Muslims.

3. **Antisemitic White Supremacists (Turquoise Cluster)**: Medium-sized cluster of 28 predominantly white supremacist accounts and channels focussed primarily on antisemitic conspiracy theories, white identity, deportations of migrants (especially Indians) as well as opposition to crime and gender diversity.

4. **Geopolitical White Supremacists (Grey Cluster)**: Small cluster of 6 mostly white supremacist accounts and channels focussed on race, anti-Muslim hate, with stronger focus on geopolitics including support for Russia and the deposed Assad regime.

5. **Anti-Liberal Canadian Nationalists (Brown-Green Cluster):** Large cluster of 32 mixed accounts and channels, the biggest group of which are ethnonationalists, focussed on Canadian nationalism and politics, with anti-liberal and anti-left stances as well as anti-trans people.

6. **The Kingdom of Conspiracy (Orange Cluster):** Medium-sized cluster of 27 accounts and channels, often white supremacists or anti-government extremists that are pro-Trump and focus on US politics, do not believe in climate change or vaccines and promote conspiracy theories (frequent discussions of Queen Romana).

7. **Anti-Immigration and Local Politics (Purple Cluster):** Small and mixed cluster of 9 accounts and channels focussed on (local) Canadian politics and anti-immigration narratives, support Israel and vehemently oppose the Liberal party.

8. **Anti-Woke Influencers (Bordeaux Cluster)**: Medium-sized cluster of 29 accounts and channels with significant reach, mainly anti-Muslim extremists and ethnonationalists focussed on Canadian politics, anti-woke and anti-Liberal narratives.

9. **Online Culture Warriors (Red Cluster):** Small cluster of 7 accounts and channels, mainly anti-Muslim extremists focussed. Thematically very similar to Cluster 8, only with a heavier focus on debates about online-phenomena.

10. **Anti-Minority Identitarians (Red Cluster):** Very large mixed cluster of 73 accounts and channels, most commonly white supremacist, ethnonationalist and Neo-Nazi talking about a broad variety of themes, the most prominent of which are anti-Trudeau narratives, crime, white Canadian identity, opposition to Jews and Muslims, as well as debates about race and IQ.

Methodological Annex

Definitional Framework and Thresholds for Inclusion
Often, extremism has been narrowly framed around security threats related to terrorism and violent extremism. By contrast, ISD has sought to conceptualise extremism as an ideology centred around social identity that promotes supremacy of an in-group, justifies discrimination of out-groups and therefore runs counter to the very idea of universal human rights. This definition

complements efforts focused on political violence and terrorism, and considers the broader risks to democracy, rights and social cohesion presented by the non-violent promotion of extremist ideologies. At the same time, the definition draws a key distinction between radical critiques of the status quo that do not promote supremacist or authoritarian societies and extremist ideologies which do.

- **ISD's Definition of Extremism is** the advocacy of political and social change in line with a system of belief that claims the superiority and dominance of one identity-based 'in-group' over an 'out-group.' Extremism advances a dehumanising 'othering' mind-set incompatible with pluralism and universal human rights and can be pursued through violent or non-violent means.

These quarterly data briefings focus specifically on domestic extremism. ISD has developed a definition of **domestic extremism** that is rooted in our definition of extremism and informed by complementary work led by Professor Barbara Perry and right-wing extremism expert Cas Mudde.

> Domestic extremism is a belief system that is characterised by its reference to racial, ethnic, cultural supremacy which advocates a system of belief in inequality based on an alleged difference and the perceived threat posed by out-groups. This extremism is often framed in terms of white power and commonly exhibits nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy, misogyny, hate against minority communities, and strong state advocacy.

This definition is necessarily broad and captures a range of extremist subcultures and harmful activity, which is reflective of the diversity of groups and trends within domestic extremism. It should be noted that our definition is not limited to illegal content and behaviour but overlaps and intersects with several existing legal categories. Our definition of extremism encapsulates a spectrum of activity and related frameworks which are relevant to different stakeholders. This is intentional, as it is hoped that our analysis will demonstrate the continuum of ideologies and activity which inspires different types of harm, and evidence pathways to radicalization and violence.

Legal but harmful	Criminal	National security
Conspiracy theories	Hate crime	IMVE
Mis/ disinformation	Illegal hate speech	PMVE
Hate speech below criminal threshold	Online abuse	RMVE
	Harassment	
	Property destruction	
	Incitement to violence	

Account Discovery

These quarterly data briefings draw on analysis across the digital ecosystem occupied by domestic extremists, including quantitative insights from Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X and Telegram, as well as qualitative insights from platforms that do not offer API access.

ISD originally identified a list of seed accounts and channels belonging to Canadian domestic extremists for the first data briefing covering the period from January to August 2024. These were identified through a three-step process:

- ISD drew on existing lists of domestic extremists from previous projects analysing right-wing extremism in Canada, as well as an extensive review of existing research and reporting on extremist mobilisation in Canada.

- With its technology partner CASM, ISD conducted an automated account discovery analysis to identify accounts and channels that were recommended by or engaged with known Canadian right-wing extremists.

- ISD analysts then reviewed these accounts and channels against our definitional thresholds for domestic extremism.

ISD and CASM are now replicating this exercise on a quarterly basis to identify newly emerging accounts and channels missed or non-existent during the initial set-up phase.

Categorisation of accounts and channels

ISD drew on its definition of domestic extremism to guide its' decisions about if a group, individual or community should be classified as domestic extremist. Decisions were made based on if an account or channel analysed:

a. Is clearly based in Canada

and

b. Explicitly self-identify as right-wing extremists (or as "domestic extremists") or

c. Can be clearly characterised as such based on existing literature and previous research or

d. Can be clearly characterised as such based on a review of a sample of content they have produced.

In the latter case, ISD ensured that the group, individual or community has posted 5 or more pieces of content that clearly promote features such as nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy or strong state advocacy. ISD analysts recorded a rationale in the coding document with relevant screenshots.

Also included were accounts associated with movements with transnational adherents known to have an impact on Canada (e.g. Terrorgram).

To account for the ideological heterogeneity within domestic extremism, ISD additionally identified ideological sub-categories. ISD analysts have therefore categorised the following sub-categories:

- **White supremacist:** White supremacists believe in the superiority of whites over people of colour and advocate that white people should be politically and socially dominant over people of colour. This can extend to a belief in the need for violence against, or even the genocide of, people of colour.

  Sub-Categories of white supremacists[5]:

  - **Neo-Nazi:** A movement promoting National Socialist ideology and symbols.

  - **Extreme Right Accelerationist:** 'Accelerationism' is a term used by white supremacists and other

extremist groups to refer to "their desire to hasten the collapse of society as we know it". Generally, acceleration is used in the context of white genocide conspiracy theories, which believes white people are under threat and are being systematically targeted through e.g. immigration and other means. A collapse of modern societal structures and political systems is seen as the only means through which to stop these perceived injustices against white people. Indeed, many accelerationist groups desire this collapse and call for replacing modern society.

- **Ethnonationalist:** Ethnonationalism is a form of nationalism where the nation is defined in terms of ethnicity. Central to ethnonationalism is the belief that nations are tied together by a shared heritage and culture that is based on ethnicity. Ethnonationalists are often marked by implicit rather than explicit racism, and rarely promote overt supremacism.

- **Christian Nationalist:** According to US academic Cynthia Miller-Idriss, Christian Nationalism is based on the proposition that your country 'is and should remain a Christian nation and that Christianity should be prioritized by the state.' Christian Nationalists therefore explicitly reject the separation between the Church and the state.

- **Anti-Muslim Extremists:** The anti-Muslim movement is a loose network of groups and individuals who share the fear that Western cultures are threatened by an 'Islamic takeover'. Anti-Muslim groups are marked by their opposition to Islam as an ideology, and Muslims as a people.

- **Male Supremacism:** The manosphere is a loose collection of movements marked by their overt and extreme misogyny. Movements include 'incels', Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW) and men's rights activists (MRAs).

- **Anti-Government Extremism:** Sovereigntists are marked by their and militia groups rejection of court and state authority. Joining these groups together is the rejection of the authority of the federal state, and commonly adherence to a range of conspiracy theories. In some instances, sovereigntists may mobilise as militia.

Hate speech

As with extremism, there are a wide range of definitions of hate or hate crime offered by legislators, advocacy and community groups or social media companies. Usually, hate speech is differentiated from offensive speech, based on the understanding that in democracies offensive speech must be permitted. However, speech that threatens individual's rights or may cause violence against certain groups can be regulated and prevented—often through the frame of illegal hate speech.

Over the course of this project, ISD will track the weaponization of targeted hate (including illegal hate speech) as a tactic used by domestic extremists in Canada. Hate speech spread by non-extremists is beyond the scope of this project. ISD defines targeted hate is activity which seeks to dehumanise, demonize, harass, threaten, or incite violence against an individual or community based on religion, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, national origin or migrant status. Targeted hate may be considered a key tool for extremists to target members of an out-group, they consider inferior or intimidate political opponents. It should be noted that our definition does not exclusively cover illegal hate speech.

This definition is generally aligned with the definition in the Canadian Criminal Code, which argues that hate crime "needs to be expressed in a public way or place, targets a group of people that have a protected characteristic (race, religion, sexual orientation); uses extreme language to express hatred against that person/group because of their protected characteristic."

ISD used keywords to filter each message in the overall dataset of 413,288 posts gathered across platforms: a message that did not have any keywords and phrases relevant to potential target groups was marked as not hateful, the rationale being that hate speech needs a recognisable target. Target groups from the previous briefing were Jewish people, migrants, Muslims, Asian Canadians, Black people, First Nations communities and Arab Canadians. For this briefing, LGBTQ communities were added as a target group.

These messages were then run through a LLM prompt classifier, based on the group the keyword was from. The LLM prompts were tested on a manually labelled dataset for each target, along with variations to the prompt such as different wording and providing more guidance and examples. The labelled dataset itself was constructed with a label to identify if the message was hateful or not, and another label to state whether it was a 'boundary case', where it could be argued whether it fell into the hateful category. The evaluations took this into account and the results were evaluated both with and without the boundary cases, where the clear-cut messages were given priority to be correct over boundary cases. The two models that were used for this were GPT-4o and GPT-4o-mini.

Violent Speech Classifier

Violent speech encompasses any language that explicitly or implicitly endorses, incites, or glorifies physical harm or violence against individuals, groups, or entities, including infrastructure.

ISD and CASM trained a classifier to detect violent speech such as:

1. **Direct Threats**: Statements that explicitly threaten physical harm to a specific individual or group.

2. **Incitement to Violence**: Calls to action encouraging others to commit violence, even if not directed at a specific target.

3. **Threatening Language**: Statements that create a sense of imminent danger through referencing an individual's safety or violent tropes without directly threatening an individual or group

4. **Glorification of Violence**: Celebrating, endorsing, or praising violent actions or individuals who commit violence.

5. **Violent Rhetoric**: Language that normalizes, trivializes, or romanticizes violence as a means of resolving disputes or achieving goals.

6. **Hate Speech with a Call to Violence**: Language targeting a group based on race, religion, gender, etc., combined with a suggestion or call to violence.

7. **Attacks Against Infrastructure**: Language advocating for harm to infrastructure or property damage likely to result in harm to people or disrupt essential services, such as attacks on utilities, transportation systems, or similar infrastructure.

362 exact words/phrases were used to identify mentions of violence. These messages were then run through a LLM prompt classifier. The LLM prompts were tested on a manually labelled dataset for violent speech. The two models that were used for this were GPT-4o and GPT-4o-mini.

Topic Modelling

ISD collected 413,288 posts from 269 domestic extremist accounts and channels in Canada across X, Facebook, Telegram, YouTube and Instagram between 1 November 2024 and 28 February 2025.

The process of semantic mapping involves (1) computing numeric representations of messages that capture semantics of the text, (2) clustering message representations to identify groups of semantically similar messages, and (3) manually coding clusters into themes and subthemes. For computing numerical representations, we utilised "bge-m3". For clustering we used a widely adopted approach of applying UMAP to simplify numerical representations to a lower-dimensional space, suitable for applying HDBSCAN to identify clusters. We utilised the BERTopic package to encapsulate this process.

We applied the semantic mapping pipeline to all messages in the dataset. We perform standard preprocessing techniques to (1) remove all hashtags, user mentions, emojis, and URLs from the text of the messages and (2) remove any subsequently empty messages.

Semantic mapping resulted in 309 distinct clusters, with 53.8% (184,724) of the messages remaining unassigned to any cluster (assigned to an 'outlier' category). The outlier category acts as a bucket for messages that HDBSCAN doesn't consider similar enough to any of the identified dense clusters, and due to the noisy nature of social-media data is quite typical to be around half the dataset. This left us with 158,444 messages categorised into 309 clusters. These clusters were subsequently manually assessed by analysts based on a random sample of 10-20 related comments and qualitatively grouped into subthemes and themes. The 8 most popular themes are analysed in the key narratives section above.

Named Entity Recognition (NER)

We used a language model from SpaCy (en_core_web_lg) to automatically find references to people, locations, and organizations in the text. Since this approach does not attempt to canonicalise extracted entities, we additionally apply the Mordecai3 geoparsing tool to the text to identify and map **locations into countries, top-level Canadian administrative divisions (territories and provinces), and Canadian cities, where possible.**

Language-Based Account Clustering

The process of account clustering involves: (1) representing accounts by their contributions (messages) to relevant themes (identified by the Semantic Mapping process); and then (2) clustering account representations to identify groups of accounts with similar thematic profiles.

Account representations are computed as their distribution over relevant themes to which they've contributed. We do not include the commenters to YouTube videos as accounts; this results in a dataset of 413,288 messages from 269 accounts. We further exclude messages annotated to "irrelevant" themes, which results in a dataset of 88,852 messages from 257 accounts. We apply the same clustering process used during semantic mapping, identifying clusters of accounts using a combination of UMAP and HDBSCAN. This resulted in 10 clusters, with 10.9% (28) accounts remaining unassigned to any cluster (assigned to an 'outlier' category).

Endnotes

1   Please note that hate speech targeting other groups, including misogynistic speech will be added into future quarterly briefings.

2   Taking the red pill is a phrase that originated from the 1999 science fiction film, The Matrix, that refers to a person choosing to become aware of perceived unpleasant but necessary truths in the world, instead of taking the blue pill, which instead describes choosing to remain living in blissful ignorance about the world. The phrase has been adopted by far-right and misogynistic online communities in recent years. It is used to describe the process of how an uninitiated person becomes educated about the central belief system of a particular ideology.

3   MK-Ultra was a covert CIA program during the Cold War that conducted illegal experiments on human subjects, including the use of drugs like LSD and the study of mind control and interrogation techniques.

4   The conspiratorial movement known as QAnon began in late 2017 after anonymous posts began appearing on 4chan and 8chan, anonymous imageboard websites known for being a haven for conspiracy theories, trolling campaigns and extremist rhetoric. The user claimed to be a high-level government insider in the US Department of Energy and called themselves "Q". Over the space of 3 years, Q posted almost 5,000 "drops" containing nonsensical codes and "clues" that they claimed exposed hidden secrets about the US government and wider geopolitics. QAnon followers decoded these drops and QAnon grew to become the conspiracy theory of everything as it ingested conspiratorial narratives both old and new into its lore. The overarching belief among followers of QAnon is that Donald Trump's presidency was part of a secret decades-long plot to rid the world of a cabal of elites pulling the strings behind the scenes. This cabal, claimed Q, were all secretly involved in child trafficking and/or pedophilia and Trump was planning to bring them to justice, arrest them and execute them in a day of vengeance known as "The Storm".

5   While all accounts and channels coded as Neo-Nazi or accelerationist were also coded as white supremacist, not all white supremacists were also coded as Neo-Nazis or accelerationists.

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