

New Zealand *Extremism*

Quarterly report 1st October 2021 - 31st December 2021

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In the past quarter:

(comparisons to previous quarter)

- 383 non-anonymous New Zealand extremist accounts, channels, and groups (hereafter collectively 'accounts') were active online (▲35) (4chan contains mostly anonymous posts, which are excluded from account-oriented analyses).
- Overall, New Zealand extremists posted 598,310 times in total (▲117,138):
 - 30,163 posts on Facebook (▲5,958);
 - 650 posts on Instagram (▼358);
 - 233,970 messages on Telegram (▲103,348);
 - 237,787 tweets on Twitter (▼1,292);
 - 89,530 posts on 4chan (▲9,190);
 - 246 videos on YouTube (▼54);
 - 5,964 posts on other Websites (▲346).
- Overall, New Zealand extremist accounts had 1,150,464 followers/members/subscribers in total:
 - 690,265 on Facebook;
 - 26,750 on Instagram;
 - 198,557 on Telegram;
 - 176,067 on Twitter;
 - 58,825 on YouTube.
- These posts, together, attracted likes and up-votes 1,939,602 times (▲672,903).
- They drew 494,354 (▲164,841) comments and replies.
- They were spread by way of sharing, reposting, retweeting, reblogging, or otherwise amplifying, a total of 465,500 times (▲176,995).
- 13,153 (▲6,897) of these posts were aggressive or a call to action.
- And 10,223 (▲1,359) posts sent by extremists outside of New Zealand were about New Zealand in some way.

Extremism working definitions:

• Far-right extremists:

• Constitute a constellation of groups presenting themselves as protecting New Zealand's cultural, racial and religious identity from perceived existential threats, ranging from anti-Muslim groups to ethnonationalists and white supremacists.

• Far-left extremists:

• Desire the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist liberal democracies and their replacement with communist or anarchist systems of government.

• Islamist extremists:

• Are dedicated to using violence or activism to systematically change society and in the long term create an exclusionary and totalitarian Islamic state.

• Conspiracy theorists:

• Believe that a (b)(6) operating in secret is trying to control social or political processes. Here, we focus on conspiracy theories with the potential for real-world harm, and the potential to create fertile ground for extremist ideologies.

For information regarding methods and definitions, see the final page of this report.

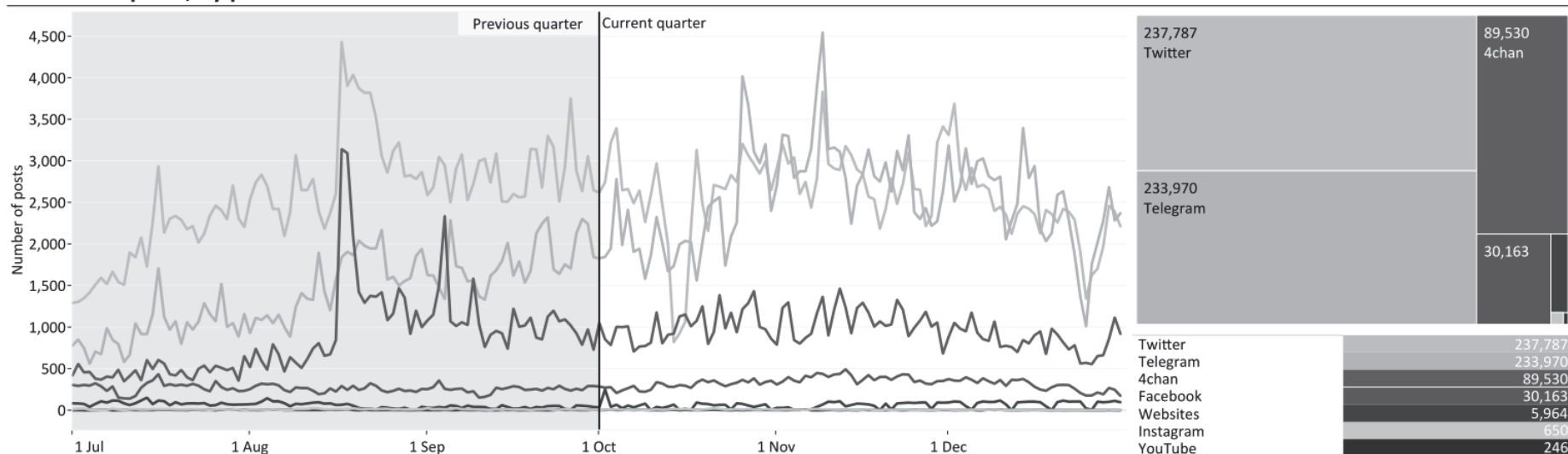
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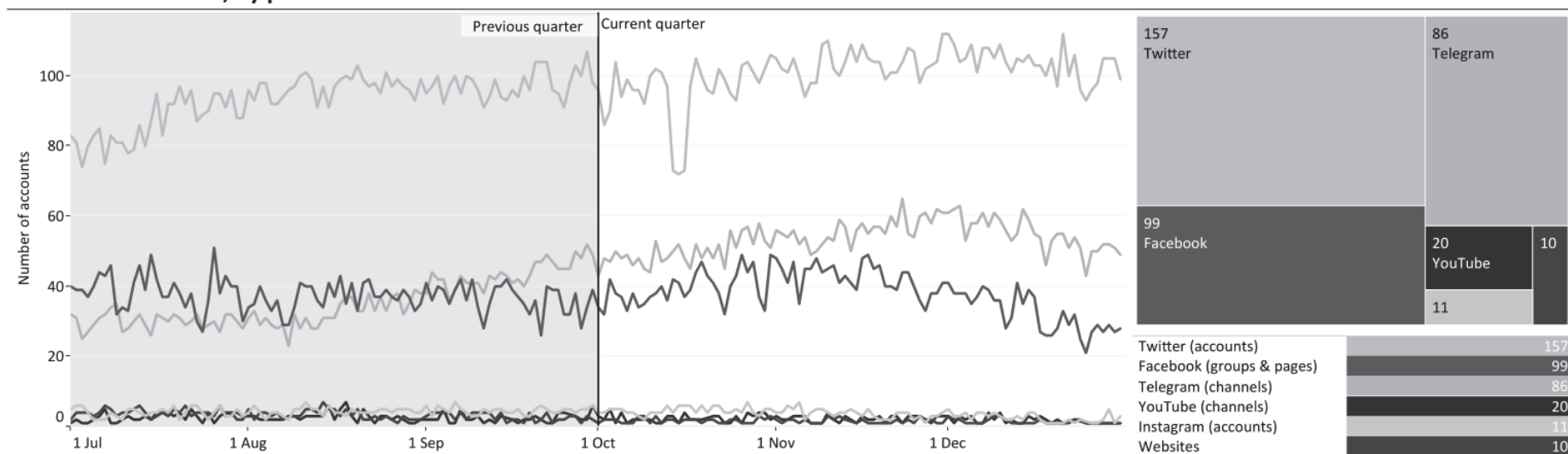
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Number of posts, by platform



Number of accounts, by platform



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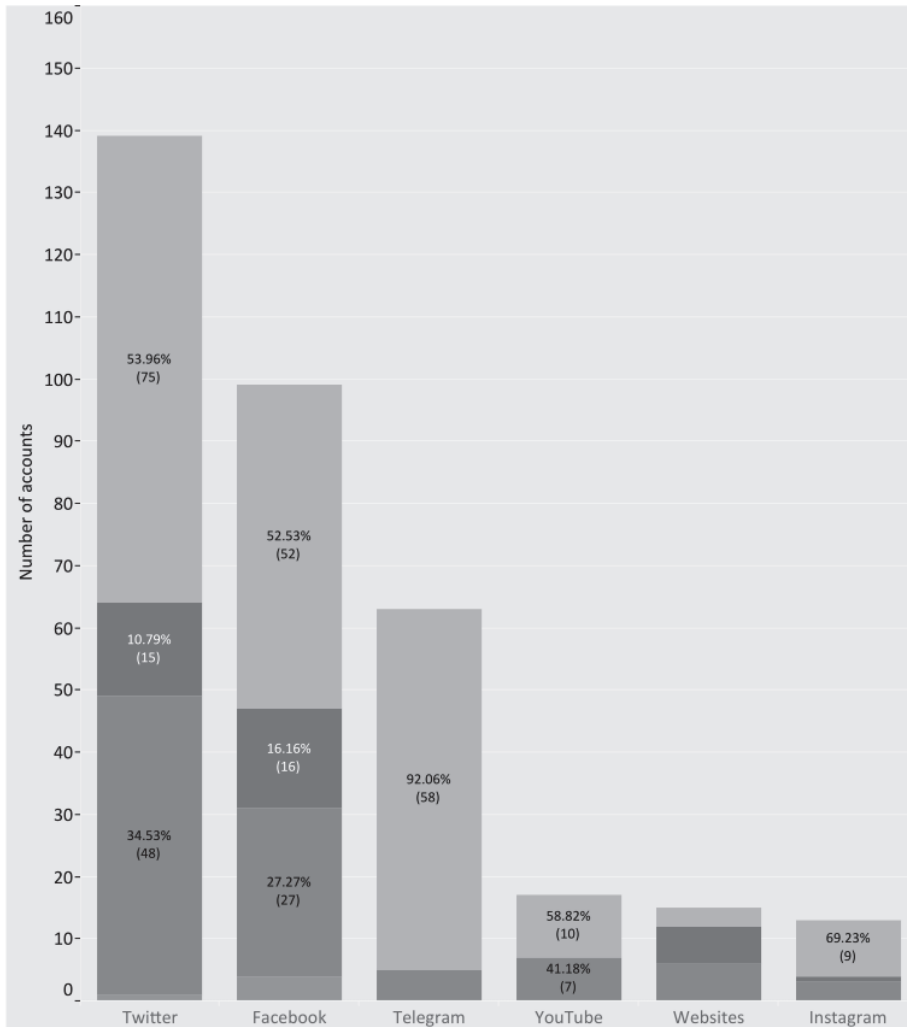
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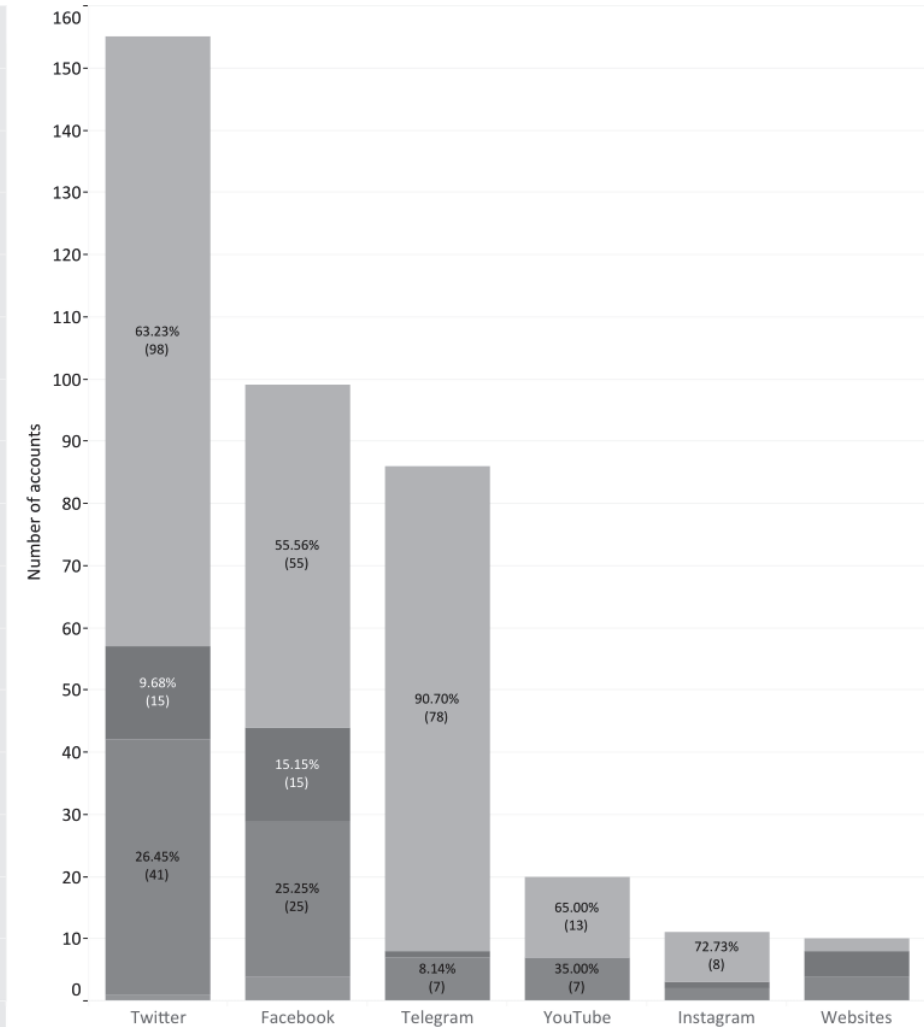
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Number of extremist accounts per ideology, by platform

Previous quarter



Current quarter



■ Conspiracy ■ Far Left ■ Far Right ■ Islamist

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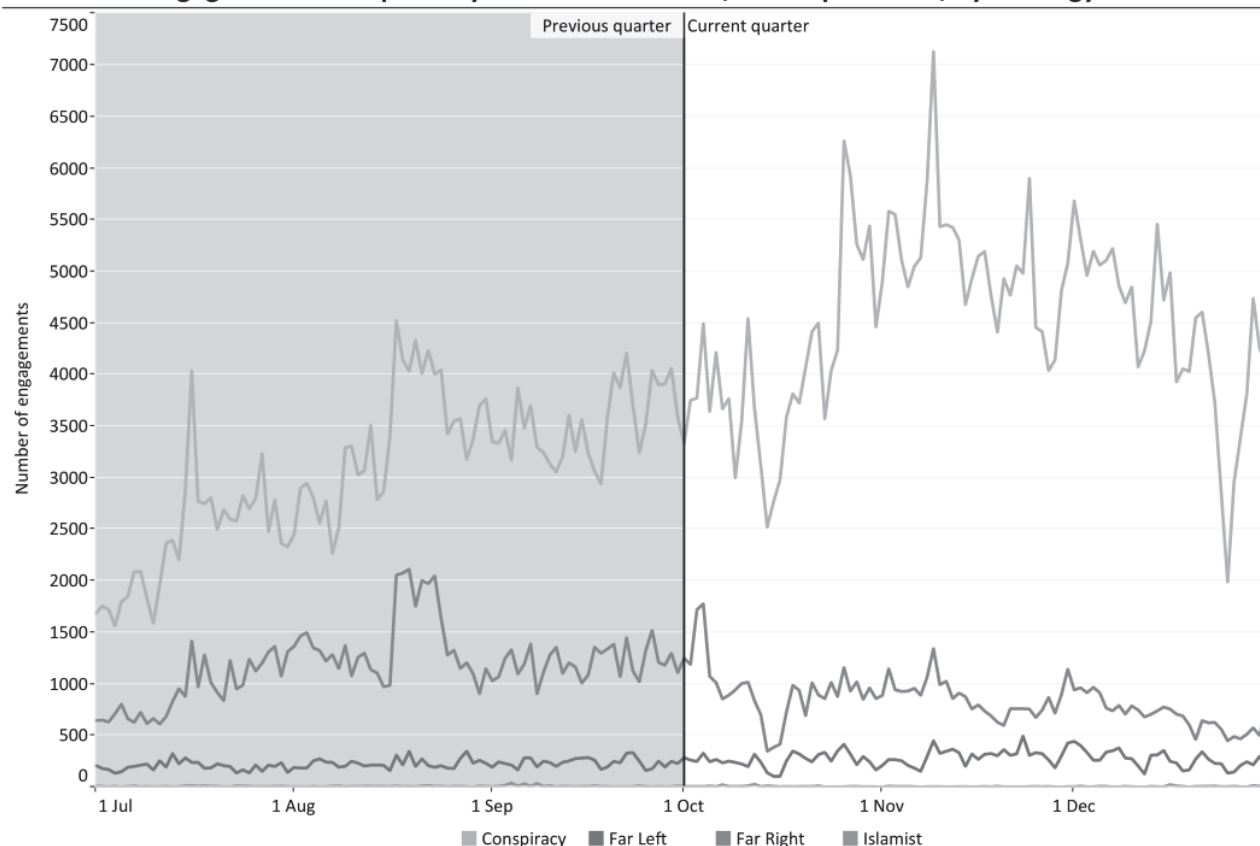
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Number of engagements with posts by extremist accounts, across platforms, by ideology



Number of engagements with posts by extremist accounts, by platform

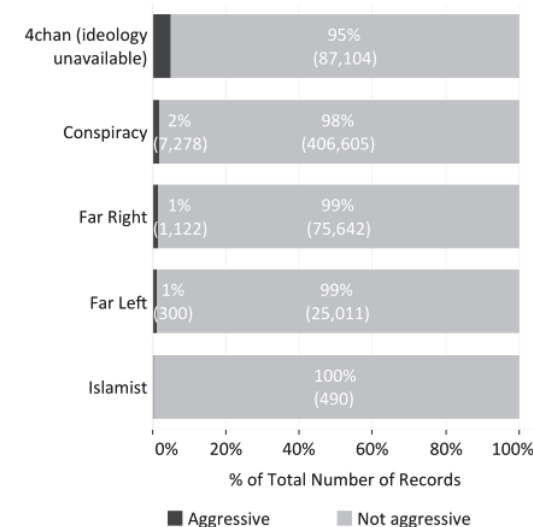
Source Platform	Comments & replies	Likes	Reactions	Reposts	Views
4chan					
Facebook	481,495	915,097	1,399,276	327,893	
Instagram	10,097	0	0	0	
Telegram					1,698,612,624
Twitter		1,016,198		137,607	
Websites					
YouTube	2,762	8,307	8,354		89,297
Grand Total	494,354	1,939,602	1,407,630	465,500	1,698,701,921

The table on the left displays engagement metrics available from each platform via their respective APIs.

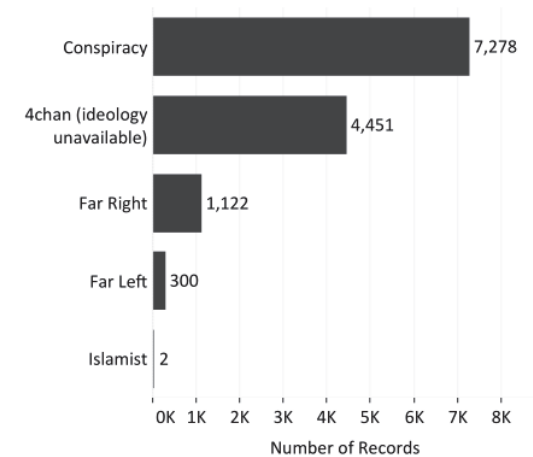
Platforms do not always make the same metrics available; hence, where a metric is unavailable for a platform, the cell in this table is blank.

Number of aggressive posts, by ideology

Number of aggressive posts as a share of total posts, by ideology



Number of aggressive posts, by ideology



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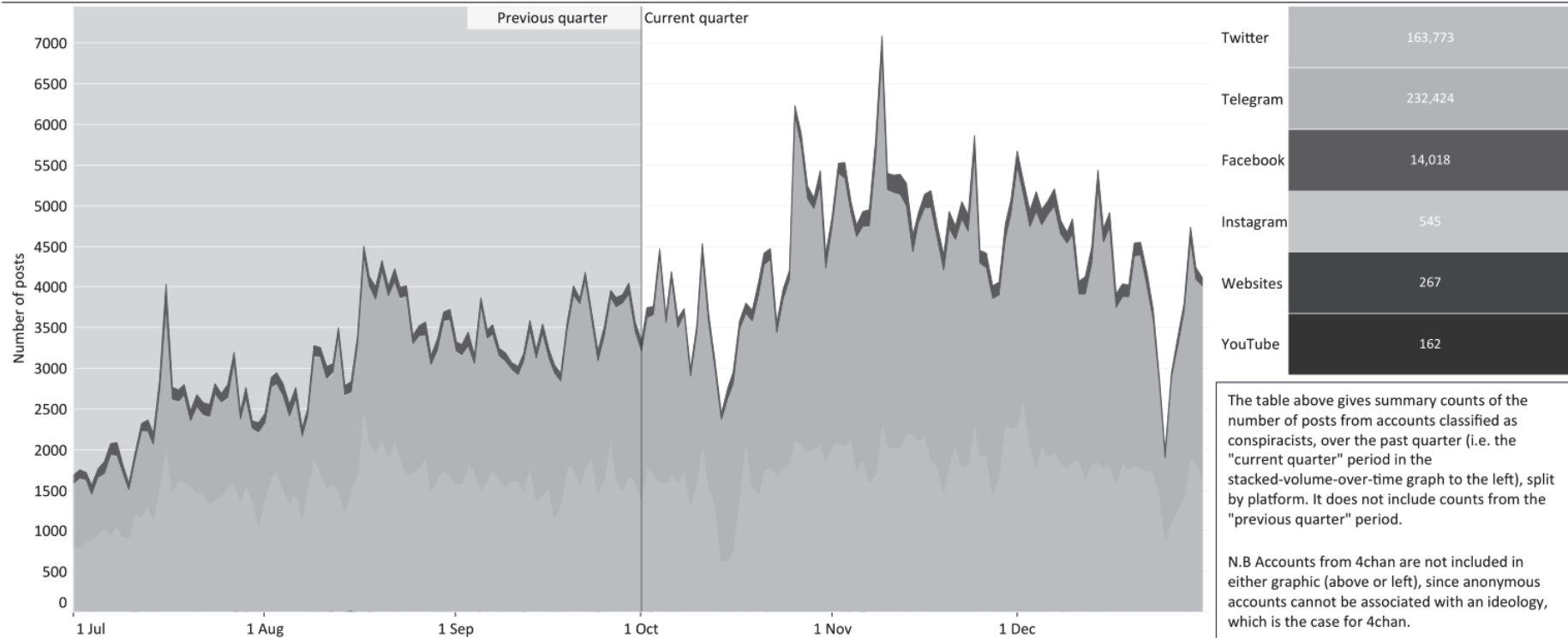
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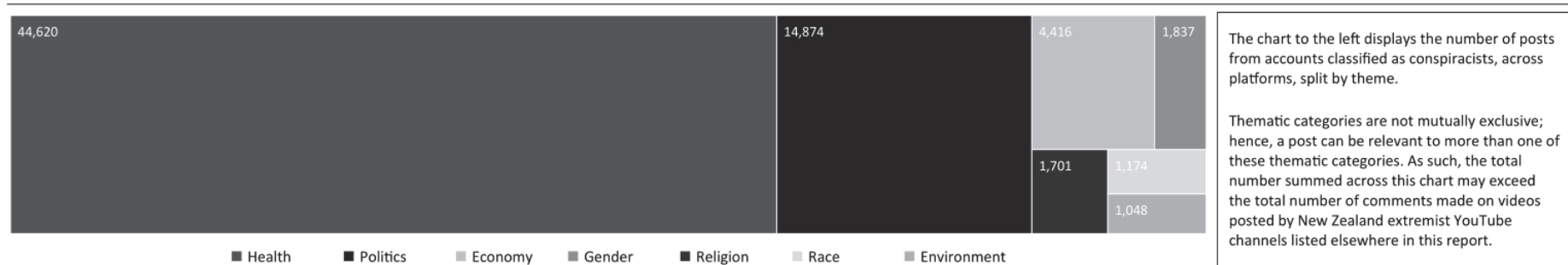
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Number of posts from extremist accounts classified as conspiracists, by platform



Number of posts from extremist accounts classified as conspiracists, by theme



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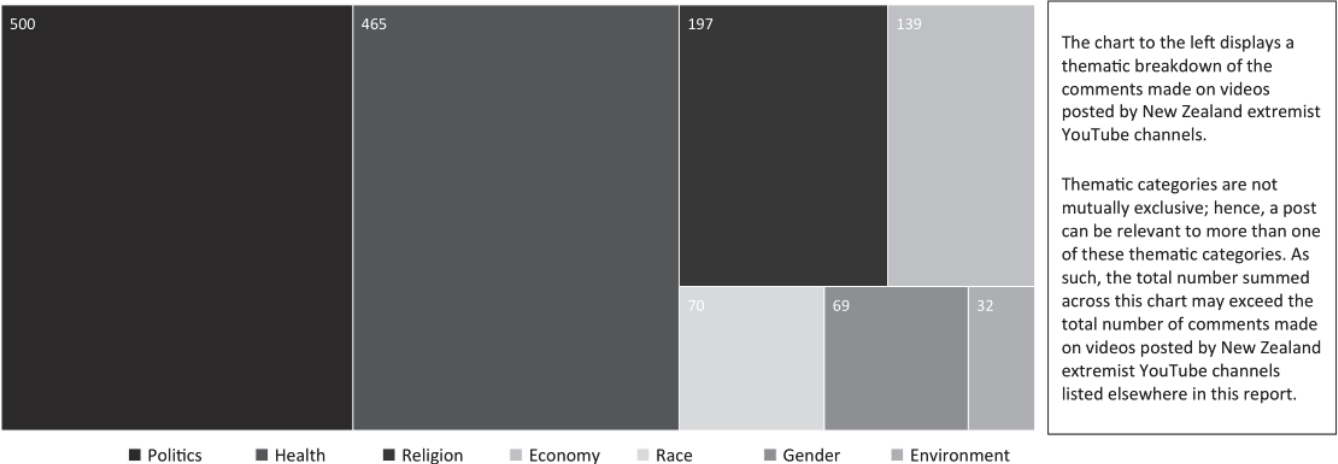
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YouTube snapshot

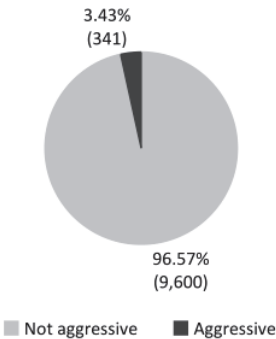
20 New Zealand extremist YouTube channels posted 246 videos in the past quarter. These videos attracted 9,695 comments from 4,437 users globally.

Themes identified in comments made on videos posted by New Zealand extremist YouTube channels



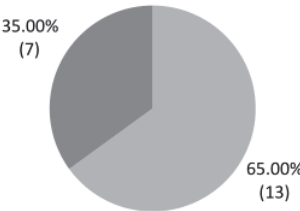
Aggression on YouTube

Number of Aggressive posts on YouTube (from New Zealand extremist channels, and comments on videos posted by them)

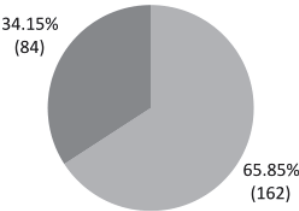


Ideological breakdown of New Zealand extremist YouTube channels, their videos, and comments made on those videos

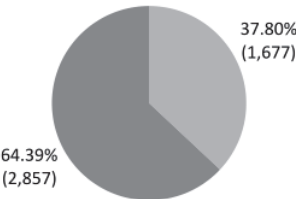
Number of New Zealand extremist YouTube channels, by ideology



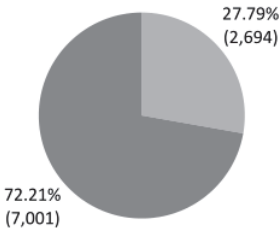
Number of videos posted by New Zealand extremist YouTube channels, by ideology



Number of accounts commenting on videos posted by New Zealand extremist YouTube channels, by ideology



Number of comments on videos posted by New Zealand extremist YouTube channels, by ideology



■ Conspiracy ■ Far Right

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Number of mentions of countries by New Zealand extremist accounts



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Number of mentions of New Zealand by extremists from other countries



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Posts mentioning New Zealand regions



Auckland	10,737
Wellington	3,327
Northland	1,632
Canterbury	1,592
Waikato	1,406
Bay of Plenty	1,119
Otago	822
Taranaki	461
Gisborne	452
Nelson	366
Hawke's Bay	263
Southland	258
Manawatu-Wanganui	159
Tasman	116
Marlborough	89
West Coast	62

Methodology

This quarterly data snapshot of the New Zealand online extremist ecosystem is based on a high-precision dataset of over 250 accounts, channels, and pages. These have been verified by expert analysts as being New Zealand-linked or based, as well as relevant to four predominant strands of New Zealand extremism identified through ethnographic research: far-right, far-left, Islamist extremist, as well as harmful forms of conspiracy theories.

ISD uses a 'social identity' definition of extremism as the basis for classification. We define extremism as 'the active pursuit and advocacy of systemic political and societal change to reflect an ideology that claims the supremacy of one 'in-group' over all 'outgroups' and propagates the dehumanisation of those out-groups.' The report presents aggregated analysis of the past quarter of New Zealand online extremist activity, comparing trends to the previous quarter. The analysis draws on public data from:

- Mainstream social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube;
- Alt-tech platforms like 4chan, and Telegram;
- Over a dozen standalone New Zealand websites and forums associated with extremism and conspiracy theories.

To aid analysis, the analytical architecture uses natural language processing classifiers developed to analyse overarching themes of extremist discussion: Gender, Politics, Economy, Religion, Race, Environment, and Health. A further classifier has also been built to detect aggressive or violent language use by extremists, alongside concrete calls to action against a perceived existential threat from an out-group.

Examples of relevant linguistic markers for aggression include calls by extremist New Zealanders to 'fight back', against 'traitors' in a coming 'civil war', with irrelevant results filtered out by a trained classifier.

The data presented in this report is aggregated and anonymised, and is intended for strategic analysis and not for the purposes of law enforcement or specific investigations.

All times are in UTC ((Wellington,) NZ-time -12 hours).