

DeIC Conference 2023, Kolding

Jakob Bæk Kristensen, Postdoc, Roskilde Universitet

Large-scale network analysis of multi-platform content sharing on social media

Alterpublics

Alternative Media and Ideological Counterpublics

3 year project funded by the
Carlsberg Foundation

PI: Eva Mayerhöffer

A comparative study of
alternative news in four
European countries: **Germany,
Denmark, Sweden and Austria**



Alternative news media

What is it?

Alternative news media as “a proclaimed and/or (self-) perceived corrective, opposing the overall tendency of public discourse emanating from what is perceived as the dominant mainstream media in a given system.” (Holt et al. 2019)

Dark participation: Anti-system, anti-elite, anti-science, anti-democratic and anti-mainstream (Quandt, 2018; Kristensen et al., 2023)



aktuell

FOKUS



PI NEWS

Die ganze Wahrheit.

www.pi-news.net



WWW.NORDFRONT.SE

**DEN
KORTE
AVIS** KLAR
SKARP
SERIØS

WOCHENBLICK

alter
publics

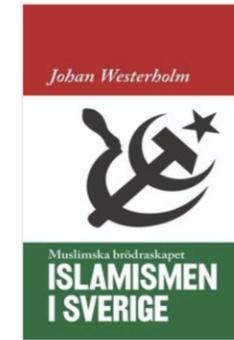
From Alternative News to Alternative information environment – URL Sharing

bokus

Sök bland 10 miljoner böcker

Böcker | Nyheter | Topplistor | Bokus Play | JUL | Erbjudanden | Inspiration | Barn & tonår | Student

Jul på Bokus! Hitta julklappar till hela familjen >>



Islamismen i Sverige : Muslimska Brödraskapet

av Johan Westerholm

★★★★★ (8 röster) | Läs 1 recension

HÄFTAD Svenska, 2020-10-05

61 kr

Köp

Spara som favorit

Skickas inom 3-6 vardagar.

Gratis frakt inom Sverige över 199 kr för privatpersoner.

🌲 Kan levereras innan julafton!



Makthavarna du aldrig valde | Dokumentär om den globala finanseliten



Palaestra Media

31.2K subscribers

Subscribe

6.4K

<https://katerinamagasin.se/extra-sa-islamiseras-sverige-genom-matjihad-halalmarkt-mat-smygs-in-till-konsumen>

<https://friatider.se/okand-burundisk-serievaldtaktsman-slog-till-igen>

Swedtraders (Twitter)

<https://uvel.se/2019/06/30/ideellt-thunberg>

Kjell L (Twitter)

<https://newsvoice.se/2020/01/typfall-5-alternativa-medier-sekretess>

<https://bokus.com/bok/9789198488845/islamismen-i-sverige-muslimska-brodraskapet>

<https://rights.no/2020/02/det-er-var-tur-til-a-kolonisere-dere-sier-kon>

Sverige först och främst (Facebook Group)

Det räcker nu!! Jag vill ha omval, NU !! (Facebook Group)

Sverigebilden (Facebook Page)

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=NNV2tEgPb9I>

Granskning SVT och SR (Facebook Group)

Jukka Järvinen (Vkontakte)

<https://newsweek.com/hezbollah-cocaine-smuggle-united-states-obama-751928>

<https://fffi.se/2019/08/24/iranska-regimen-utnyttjar-afghaner-i-destruktiva-aktiviteter-video>

Vi som står upp för Sverigedemokraterna (Facebook Group)

Stoppa Islamiseringen Av Sverige (Facebook Group)

ProjektSanning (Facebook Group)

<https://aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/GGz7k9/mannen-som-hatar-polisen-ar-domd-for-mord>

<https://document.no/2021/04/01/svensk-skribent-tar-nadelost-oppgjo>

STOPPA MAKTMISSBRUKET (Facebook Group)

Katerina Janouch - journalistik

Nyhetsgruppen (Facebook Group)

Vkontakte)

<https://newsvoice.se/2020/01/typfall-5-alternativa-medier-sekretess>

<https://bokus.com/bok/9789198488845/islamismen-i-sverige-muslimska-brodraskapet>

<https://rights.no/2020/02/det-er-var-tur-til-a-kolonisere-dere-sier>

Sverige först och främst (Facebook Group)

Jag vill ha omval, NU !! (Facebook Group)

Sverigebilden (Facebook Page)

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=NNV2tEgPb9I>

Granskning SVT och SR (Facebook Group)

Katerina Janouch (Facebook Page)

Mammor (och pappor samt alla andra med barn) (Facebook Page)

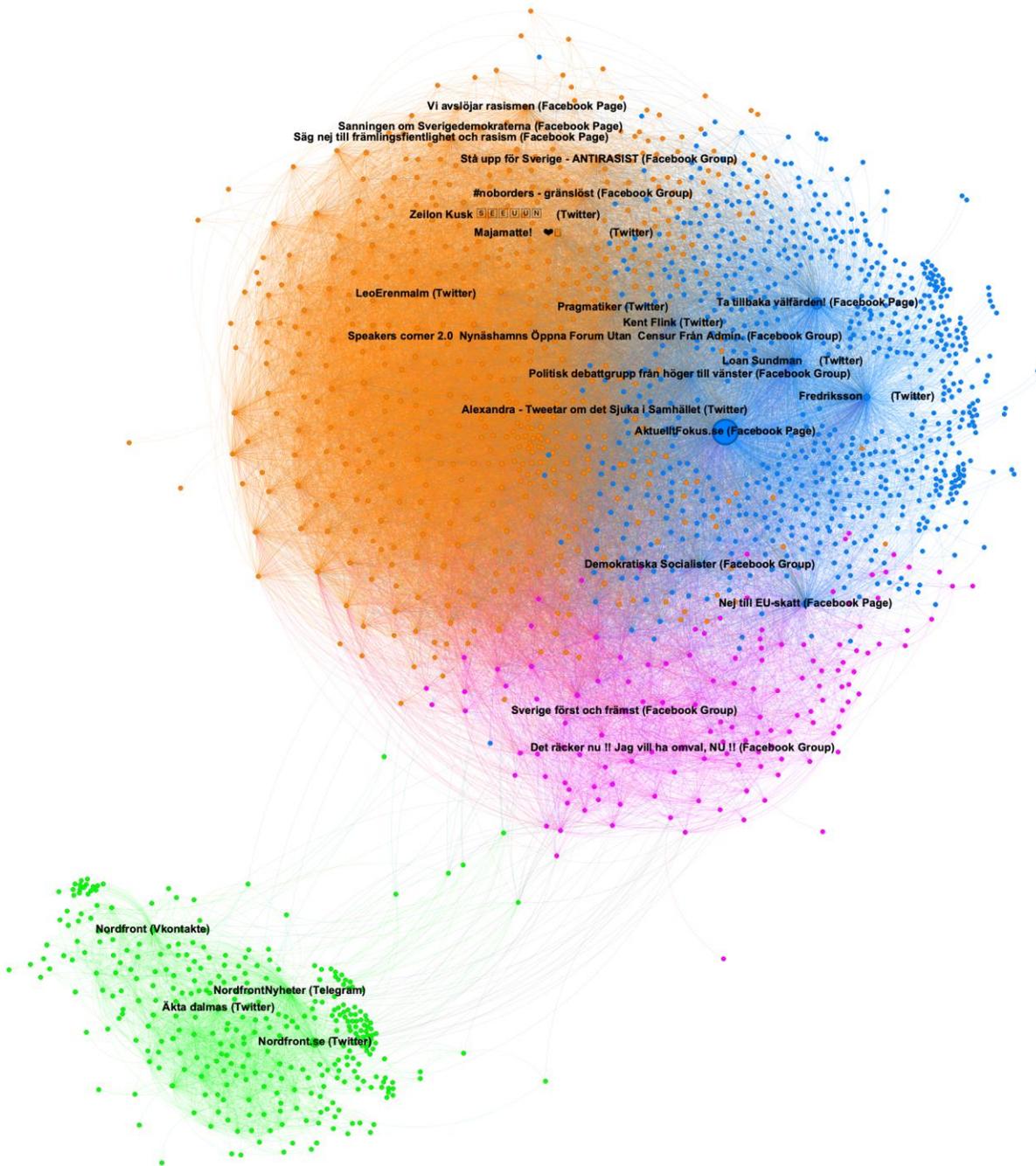
Vår Åsikt På Riktigt (Facebook Page)

Stå Upp För Katerina Janouch (Facebook Group)

Katerina Janouch (Gab)

Katerina Janouch (Facebook Page)

uvel
publics



Step 1

Seed list actors +
First degree of
separation

Node Color = Cluster
detection (Louvain)

Node size = Yeo-johnson
regression transformation of
engagement metrics
(Engagement) -> Min-max
normalization
(normEngagement) ->

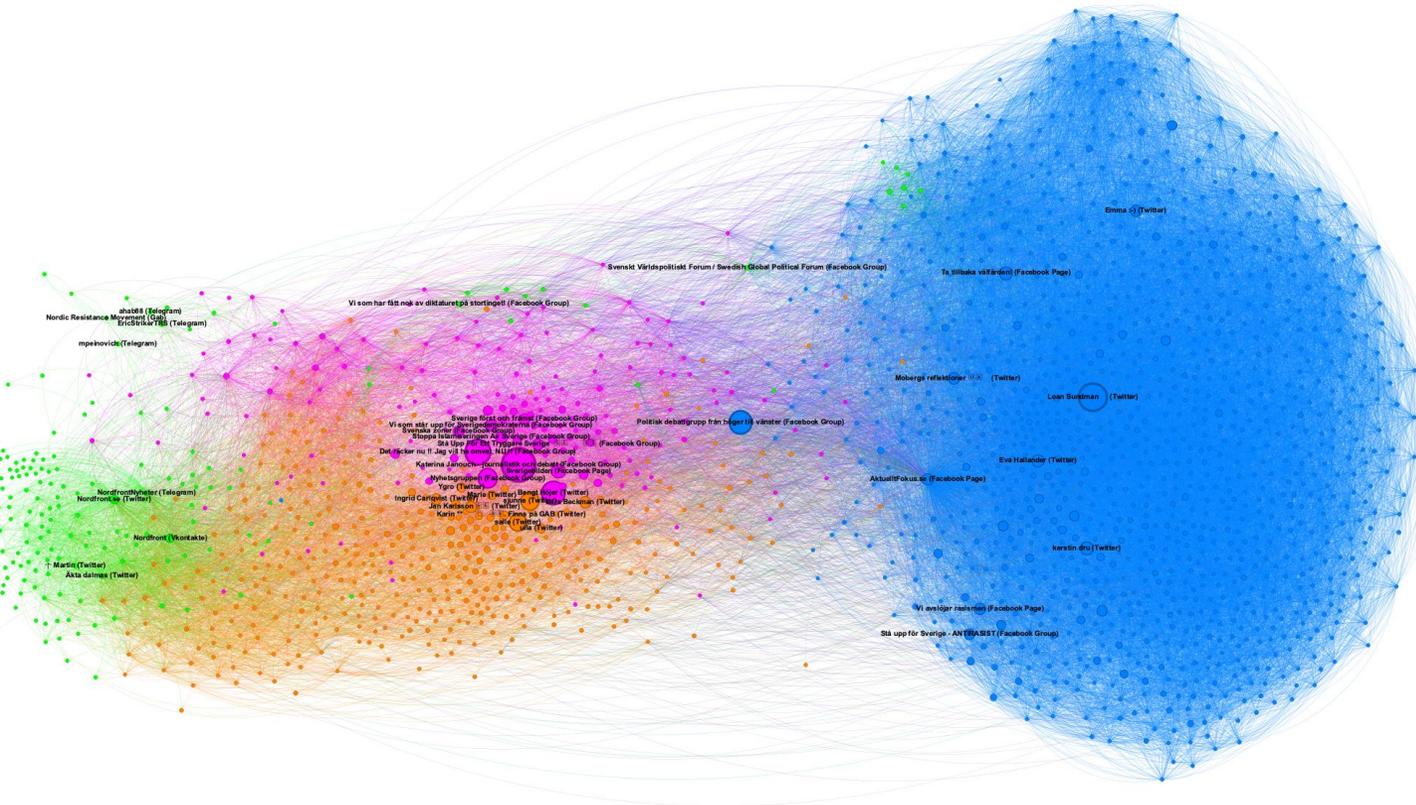
normEngagement * Pagerank

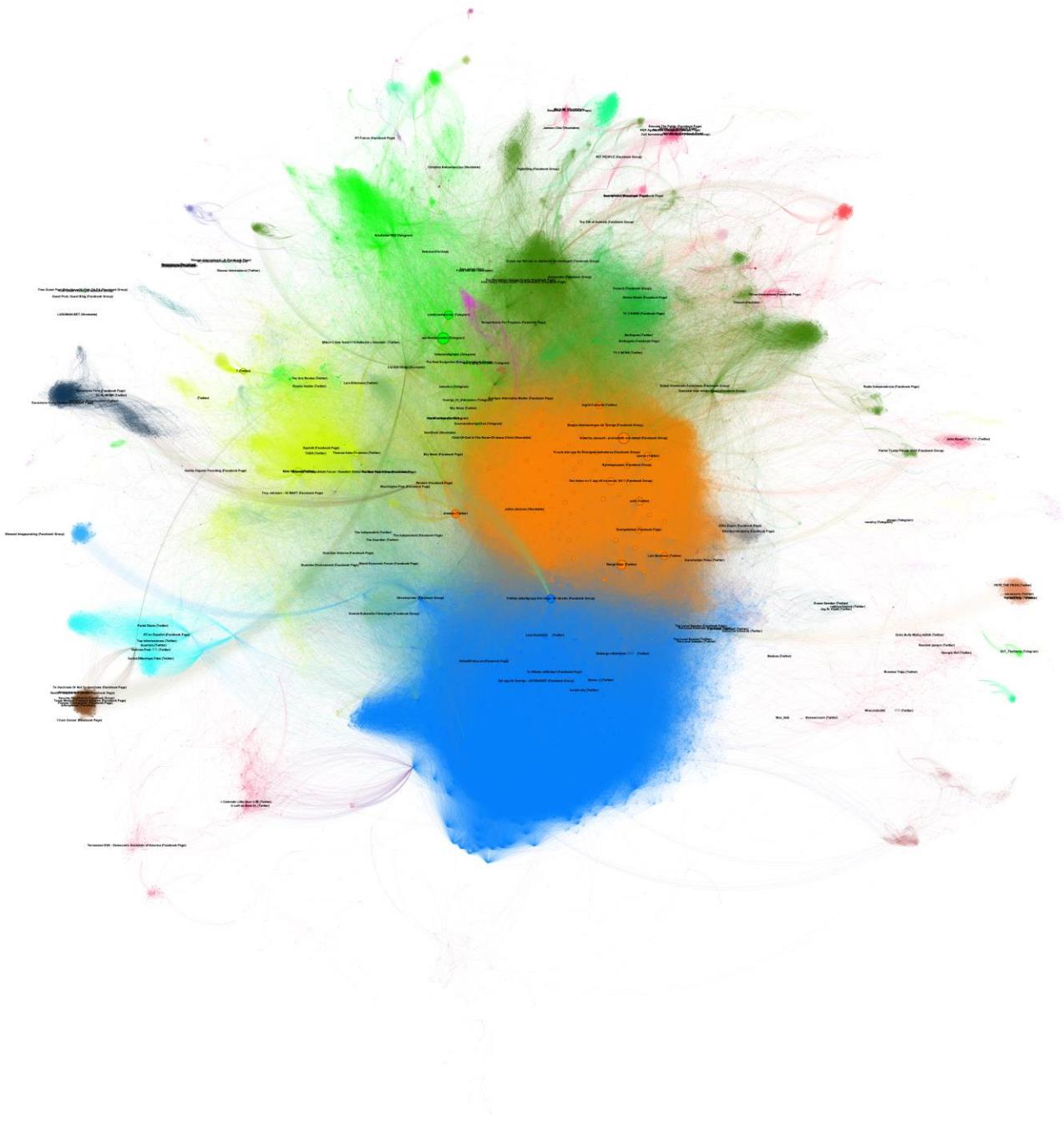
Step 2

Seed list actors +
First degree of
separation + Uris

Node Color = Cluster
detection (Louvain)

Node size =
 $\text{normEngagement} * \text{Pagerank}$



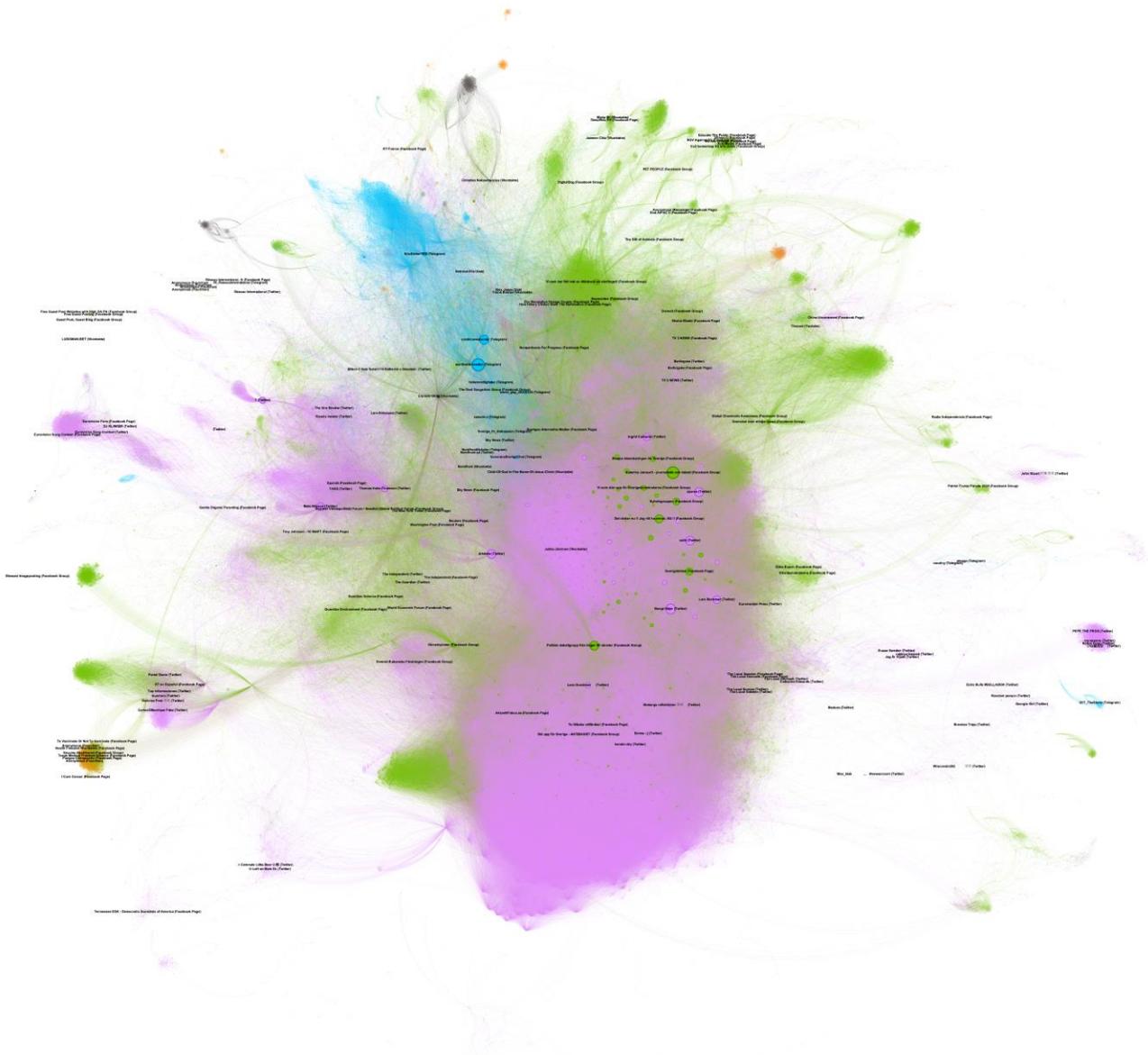


Step 3

Seed list actors +
First degree of
separation + Second
degree of separation

Node Color = Cluster
detection (Louvain)

Node size =
 $\text{normEngagement} * \text{Pagerank}$



Step 3

Seed list actors +
First degree of
separation + Second
degree of separation

twitter	(59,24 %)
facebook	(30,19 %)
telegram	(7,05 %)
vkontakte	(1,42 %)
fourchan	(1,08 %)
gab	(0,69 %)
reddit	(0,12 %)
instagram	(0,11 %)
youtube	(0,1 %)

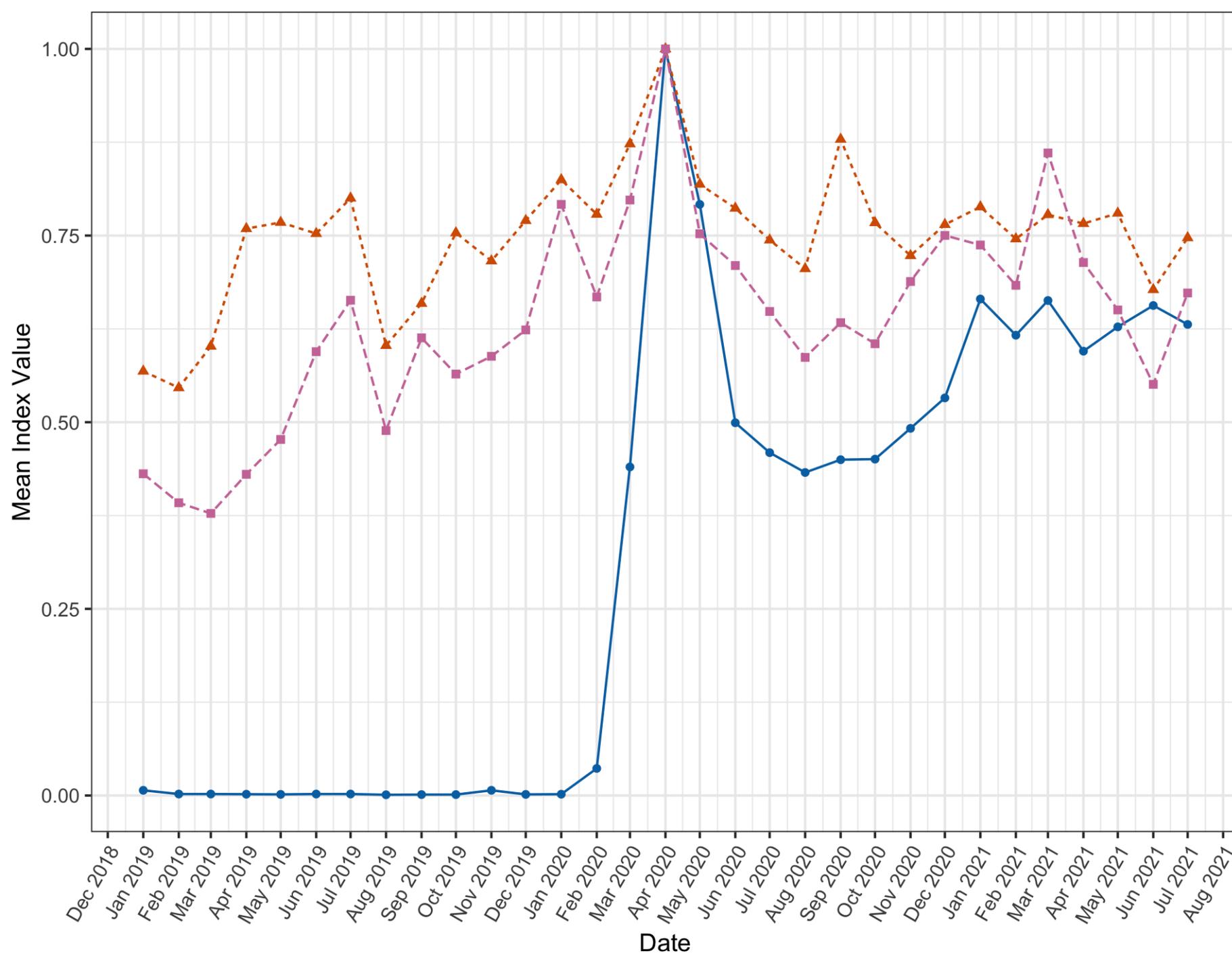
Data Collected

919.566.085 posts from various social media platforms

Youtube	: 16.155.425,	
Reddit	: 691.926,	
Gab	: 19.987.949,	
4chan	: 4.950.273,	
Vkontakte	: 17.261.365,	
Telegram	: 489.793.594,	
Twitter	: 150.092.375,	
Facebook	: 197.789.108,	
Instagram	: 2.243.484	

Did COVID-19 Blur Partisan Boundaries? A Comparison of Partisan Affinity and Source Heterophily in Online Alternative News-Sharing Networks Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Kristensen, Henriksen & Mayerhöffer, 2023, Social Media and Society



Result: Surge in Partisan Source Heterophily at the Height of the Crisis

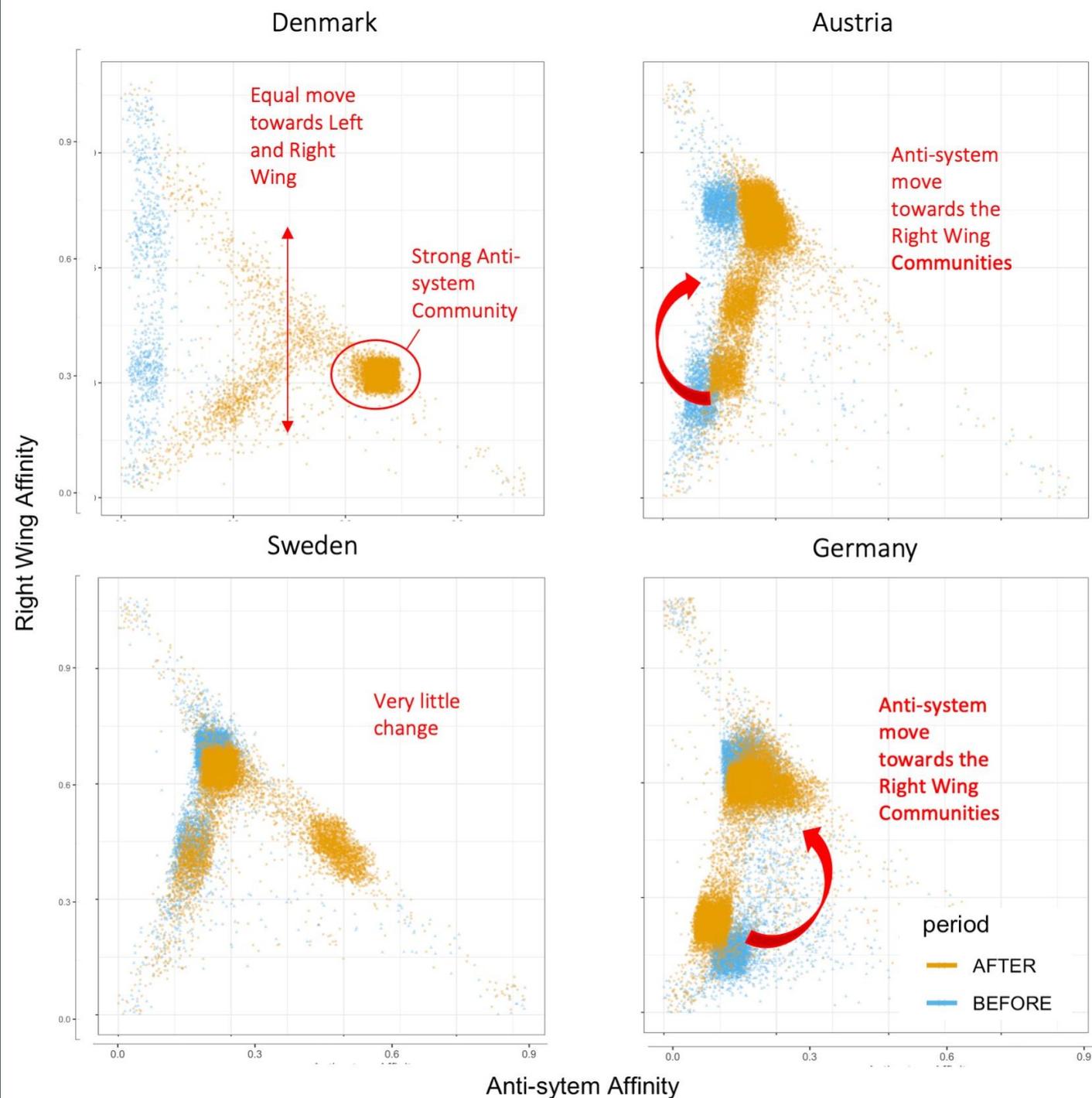
In times of immediate crisis, information becomes less politicised.

Before and After the Outbreak of Covid-19

Movement of Partisan Communities

Austria and Germany see a merging between **right wing** and **anti-system** communities

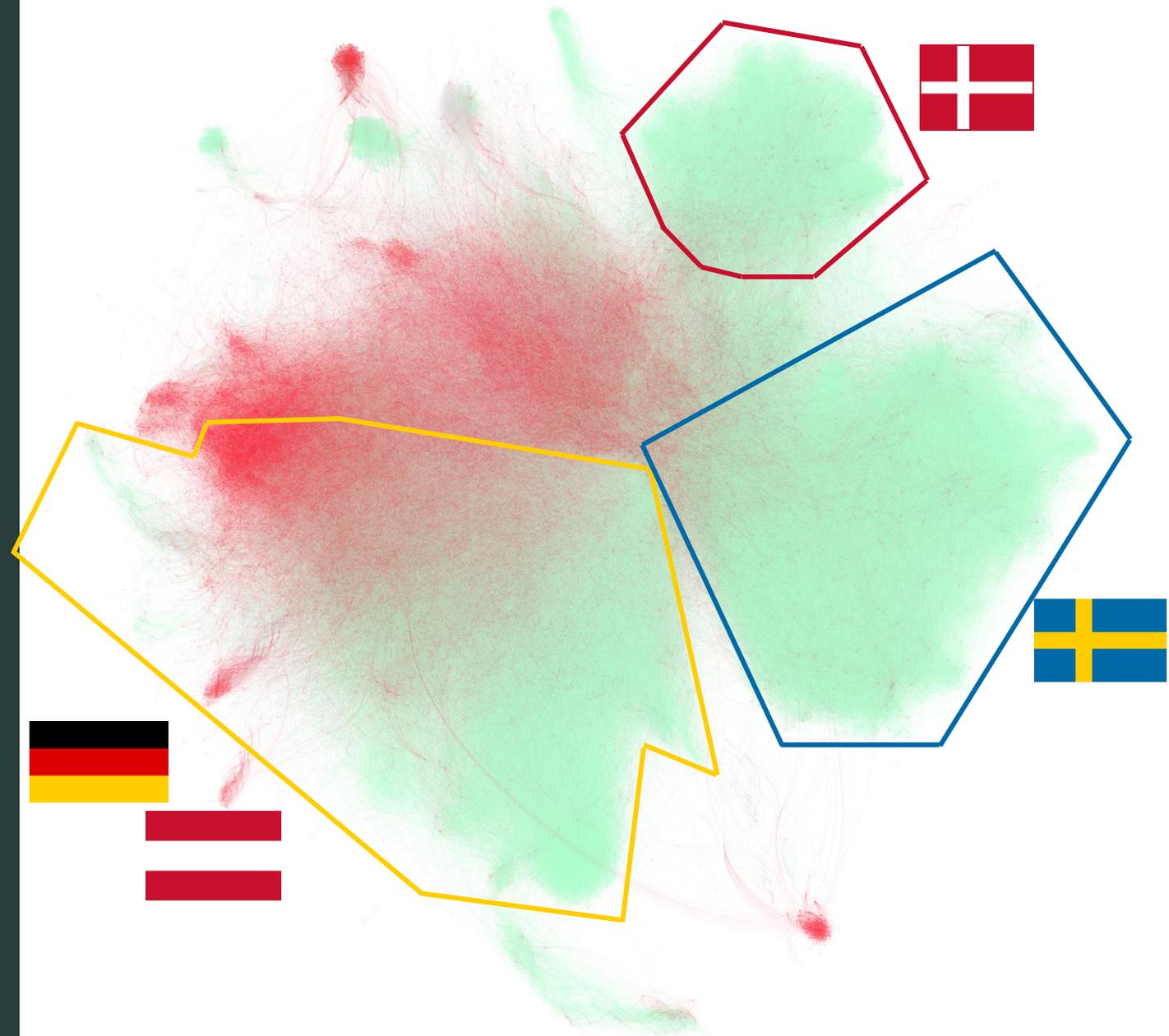
Denmark sees an **increase in anti-system** communities with an equally distributed connection to left and right wing communities



RT/Sputnik

Dissemination of Russian-Backed Content in Alternative News Environments

Henriksen et al., Forthcoming,
International Press Politics (major
revisions)



RT/Sputnik

Platform	German Speaking	Swedish & Danish Speaking
facebook	4 (n=5,465)	2 (n=3,310)
gab	101 (n=47)	2 (n=11)
reddit	2 (n=91)	1 (n=69)
telegram	76 (n=2,631)	2 (n=13)
twitter	9 (n=13,828)	2 (n=12,407)
vkontakte	41 (n=1,521)	2 (n=75)
youtube	2 (n=219)	2 (n=24)

German Right wing on Telegram, Gab and Vkontakte

	Left Wing	Right Wing
Danish Speaking	1 (n=1,466)	2 (n=1,406)
German Speaking	2 (n=13,260)	25 (n=22,291)
Swedish Speaking	3 (n=2,940)	2 (n=8,718)

TOP 20 TOPICS*	DANISH			SWEDISH			GERMAN			ALL POSTS	
	n	Pct.	Cf.** Global	n	Pct.	Cf. Global	n	Pct.	Cf. Global	n	Pct.
1 COVID-19: POLITICS & VACCINES	405	15.5%	-	500	14.2%	-	110,283	46.1%	++	806,814	17.7%
2 RUSSIAN-UKRAINE WAR & CONFLICT	185	7.1%	+	680	19.3%	++	22,233	9.3%	+	222,569	4.9%
3 PROTESTS, RIOTS & CONFLICTS	166	6.3%	~	235	6.7%	~	20,386	8.5%	~	362,481	7.9%
4 WIKILEAKS & WESTERN HYPOCRISY	211	8.1%	~	250	7.1%	~	16,966	7.1%	~	388,017	8.5%
5 ENERGY POLITICS	56	2.1%	~	163	4.6%	+	6,603	2.8%	~	116,355	2.5%
6 IMMIGRATION & ISLAMOPHOBIA	67	2.6%	~	188	5.3%	+	6,023	2.5%	~	101,737	2.2%
7 MIDDLE EAST POLITICS	132	5.0%	~	75	2.1%	-	5,735	2.4%	-	303,836	6.7%
8 POLITICS & ELECTIONS, BROAD	42	1.6%	~	79	2.2%	~	5,762	2.4%	~	85,466	1.9%
9 GLOBAL TRADE & TECH COMPANIES	31	1.2%	~	17	0.5%	~	5,089	2.1%	~	86,245	1.9%
10 CHINESE POLITICS & CHINESE-RUSSO RELATIONS	28	1.1%	~	63	1.8%	~	3,647	1.5%	~	82,117	1.8%
11 WESTERN POLITICAL & MILITARY OPERATIONS ABROAD	186	7.1%	+	89	2.5%	~	3,468	1.4%	~	142,927	3.1%
12 CENSORSHIP	64	2.4%	~	39	1.1%	~	3,132	1.3%	~	76,455	1.7%
13 TERRORISM	106	4.0%	+	77	2.2%	~	2,930	1.2%	~	77,856	1.7%
14 AFGHANISTAN	76	2.9%	+	44	1.2%	~	2,827	1.2%	~	35,460	0.8%
15 RANDOM	66	2.5%	~	91	2.6%	-	2,590	1.1%	-	199,301	4.4%
16 SEXUAL ASSAULTS & ANTI-LGBTQ	16	0.6%	~	38	1.1%	~	2,783	1.2%	~	49,102	1.1%
17 CRIME AND LAW	24	0.9%	-	23	0.7%	-	2,597	1.1%	-	138,073	3.0%
18 US POLITICS & CONFLICTS	112	4.3%	~	134	3.8%	~	2,178	0.9%	~	119,074	2.6%
19 ACCIDENTS & NATURAL DISASTERS	34	1.3%	~	19	0.5%	~	1,399	0.6%	~	83,264	1.8%
20 VENEZUELA	104	4.0%	~	65	1.8%	-	1,283	0.5%	-	177,439	3.9%
REMAINING TOPICS	507	19.4%		655	18.6%		11,459	4.8%		912,383	20.0%
GRAND TOTAL	2,618	100.0%		3,524	100.0%		239,373	100.0%		4,566,971	100.0%

Curators of Digital Counterpublics: Mapping Alternative News Environments in Sweden and Denmark

Mayerhöffer et al., 2023, Nordicom Review

Posts containing alternative news content

	Intermediary	Alternative news outlet (SoMe)
facebook	34.82%	11.04%
fourchan	0.02%	
gab	0.14%	
reddit	0.25%	
telegram	1.84%	0.32%
twitter	44.60%	5.17%
vkontakte	1.34%	0.34%
youtube	0.05%	0.07%
Grand Total	<u>83.07%</u>	<u>16.93%</u>

Engagement with alternative news content

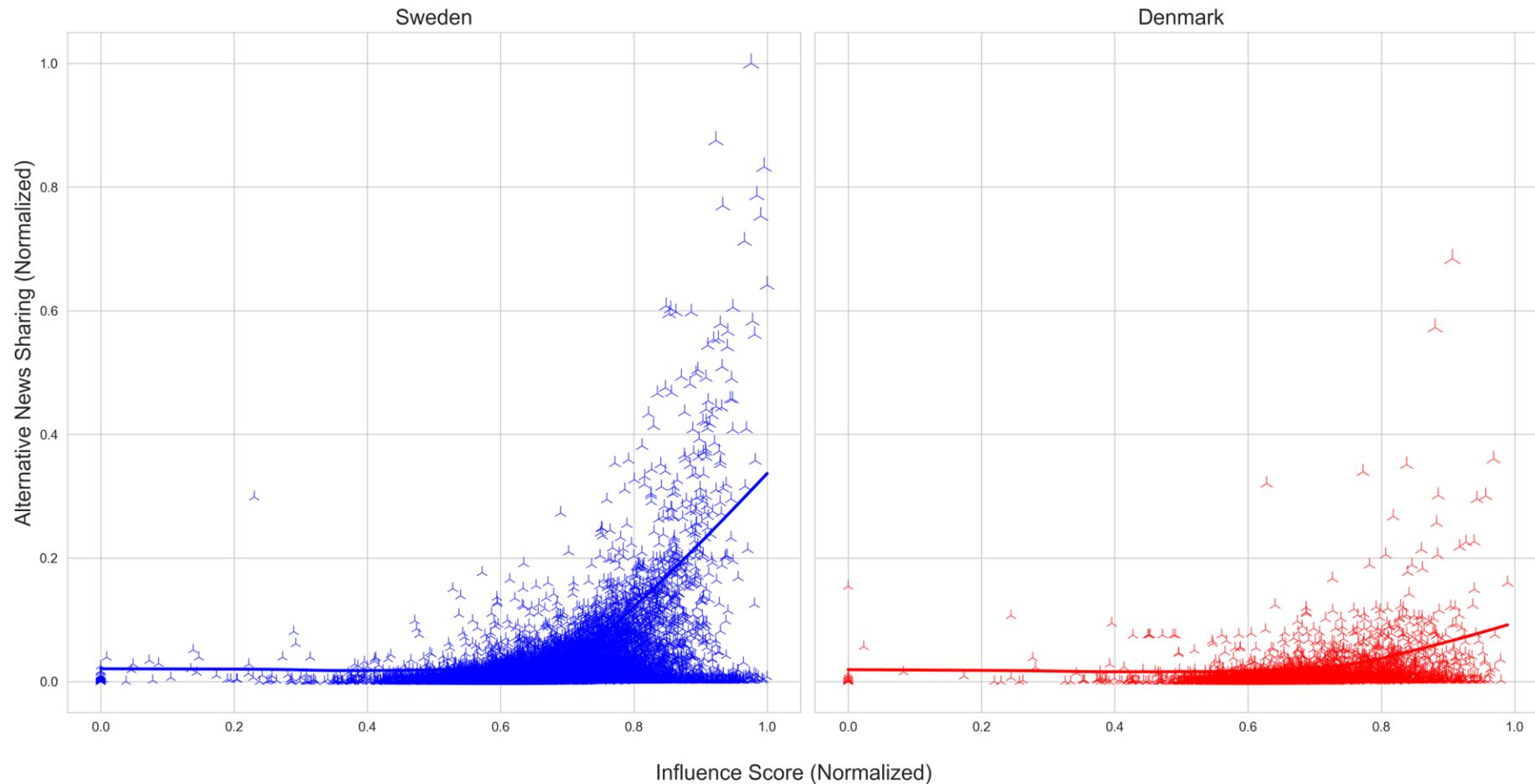
	Intermediary	Alternative news outlet (SoMe)
facebook	40.59%	0.60%
fourchan	0.51%	
gab	0.32%	
reddit	1.28%	
telegram	10.38%	0.01%
twitter	42.87%	0.40%
vkontakte	2.88%	0.03%
youtube	0.08%	0.05%
Grand Total	<u>98.91%</u>	<u>1.09%</u>

Audiences of alternative news are dependent on curators

Curators of Digital Counterpublics: Mapping Alternative News Environments in Sweden and Denmark

Mayerhöffer et al., 2023, Nordicom Review

Influence Score vs. Alternative News Sharing



In **Sweden** the sharing of alternative news content plays a **greater role** in fostering digital counterpublics compared to Denmark

Why do we need HPC resources?

Posts from social media platforms: 919 million

Unique URL-post combinations: 379 million

Social media actors with more than one post: 2.5 million

Network of mutual URL-sharing with all actors:

~6 billion edges

Why do we need HPC resources?

- Data Processing

Posts from social media platforms: 919 million

Unique URL-post combinations: 379 million

Social media actors with more than one post: 2.5 million

Network of mutual URL-sharing with all actors:

~6 billion edges