



Funded by the  
European Union



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Addressing Online Extremism in the Middle-Aged: SMIDGE Project Turns One**

*Brussels, 28 March 2024*

The SMIDGE (Social Media Narratives: Addressing Extremism in Middle-Age) project, aimed at countering online extremist narratives among middle-aged individuals, proudly announces significant milestones achieved in its first year of operation.

Recognizing the significance of online extremism and its impact on society, SMIDGE will provide counter-narratives and educational resources that promote reflexivity and critical thinking. The project will also produce policy recommendations and guidelines, offering evidence-based tools and training to journalists and security professionals, who hold a pivotal role in addressing fake news and disinformation.

The SMIDGE Project is groundbreaking in its focus on middle-aged individuals regarding online extremism. This demographic, aged 45-65, holds both susceptibilities to extremist narratives and influence as decision-makers. Despite being under-researched, their engagement with extremist content can profoundly impact political discourse, democratic processes and institutions.

The project aims to address the pressing challenges posed by the proliferation of extremist narratives and misinformation on social media platforms. Through horizon scanning, thematic reviews and mapping exercises, SMIDGE has meticulously analysed the current landscape of online extremism and conspiracy theories. Notably, the project has produced a comprehensive database outlining the characteristics of existing extremist content, paving the way for targeted interventions.

SMIDGE has embarked on cutting-edge initiatives such as social network analysis and text analysis of user comments. These efforts aim to uncover the underlying dynamics driving the spread of extremist ideologies and identify effective strategies for countering them.

In addition to its research endeavours, SMIDGE has begun its bi-monthly [podcast series](#), publishing two episodes to date. The podcast series provides a platform for in-depth discussions on key issues related to online extremism, featuring insights from experts and stakeholders.





Funded by the  
European Union



The project, funded by the European Union's Horizon Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 101095290, commenced in March 2023 and will run until February 2026.

The SMIDGE consortium consists of eight partners, including renowned academic institutions such as the University of Copenhagen, De Montfort University (UK), UCLan Cyprus and the University of Milan. Additionally, the consortium includes the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, FASresearch (Austria), FVM Foundation (Italy) and Inclusive Europe (Belgium).

As the SMIDGE Project enters its second year, it remains dedicated to making significant contributions to tackling online extremism and promoting a safer digital environment for middle-aged individuals.

For more information about the SMIDGE project and our press kit, please visit [www.smidgeproject.eu](http://www.smidgeproject.eu) and follow @SmidgeProject on [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Youtube](#).

Media Contact: Busra Ozturk, Project Manager, Inclusive Europe, [info@smidgeproject.eu](mailto:info@smidgeproject.eu)

