Mapping the “manosphere”

Nordic research project in 2020
1. Motivation for initiating projects
2. Introduction to the ”manosphere”
3. Project outline
Why?

• Continuation of the The Nordic Council of Ministers’ focus on hate-speech, sexism and harassment online

• Response to online backlash against gender equality

• Cases of misogynist terrorism
What is the manosphere?

Internet fora communities (on 4chan, reddit and more) where men meet in opposition to feminism and gender equality.

Common sentiments
• Anti-feminism
• Gender-essentialism

Characteristics
• Framing gender equality as a zero sum game
• Perpetuating gender stereotypes
• Legitimizing violence against women
• Sexist hate speech
• Trolling (false flag operations)
Communities

A variety of communities including:

- **Men’s Rights Activists (MRA’s)**
  - Gender equality as a zero sum game – with (white) men as the losers

- **Incels (involuntary celibats)**
  - Sex as a right – celibacy as oppression (reverse rape)

- **Men going there own way (MGTOWs)**
  - Isolation as the only solution
What we already know

Findings by US researchers on Reddit’s manosphere

• Misogynist rhetoric has been increasing in frequency and violence, especially since 2016.

• Change from focusing on issues like male mental health or a perceived bias against men in family law to feelings of deprivation (like being “kissless” or “involuntarily celibate”) or oppression.

• Misogynist language and violent language tend to occur together and that posters expressing violent misogyny often authored posts expressing violent racism or homophobia as well.
Goals of the research

• Map tendencies of counter-reactions to gender equality in online fora with a Nordic focus – including links between extreme communities and mainstream online culture.

• Provide recommendations for prevention of radicalization and anti-gender equality sentiments.
Project outline

1. A study of internet arenas in which young men come together to oppose gender equality leading to radicalization, mobilization of hate speech, sexual harassment, political extremism and violence.

2. A conference/seminar for relevant youth professionals and decision makers to discuss the results of the study and the suggestions for future activities.

3. Initiatives/activities to address the issue, including for example raising awareness amongst professionals in order to prevent radicalization of marginalized youth.
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Questions, reactions, perspectives?