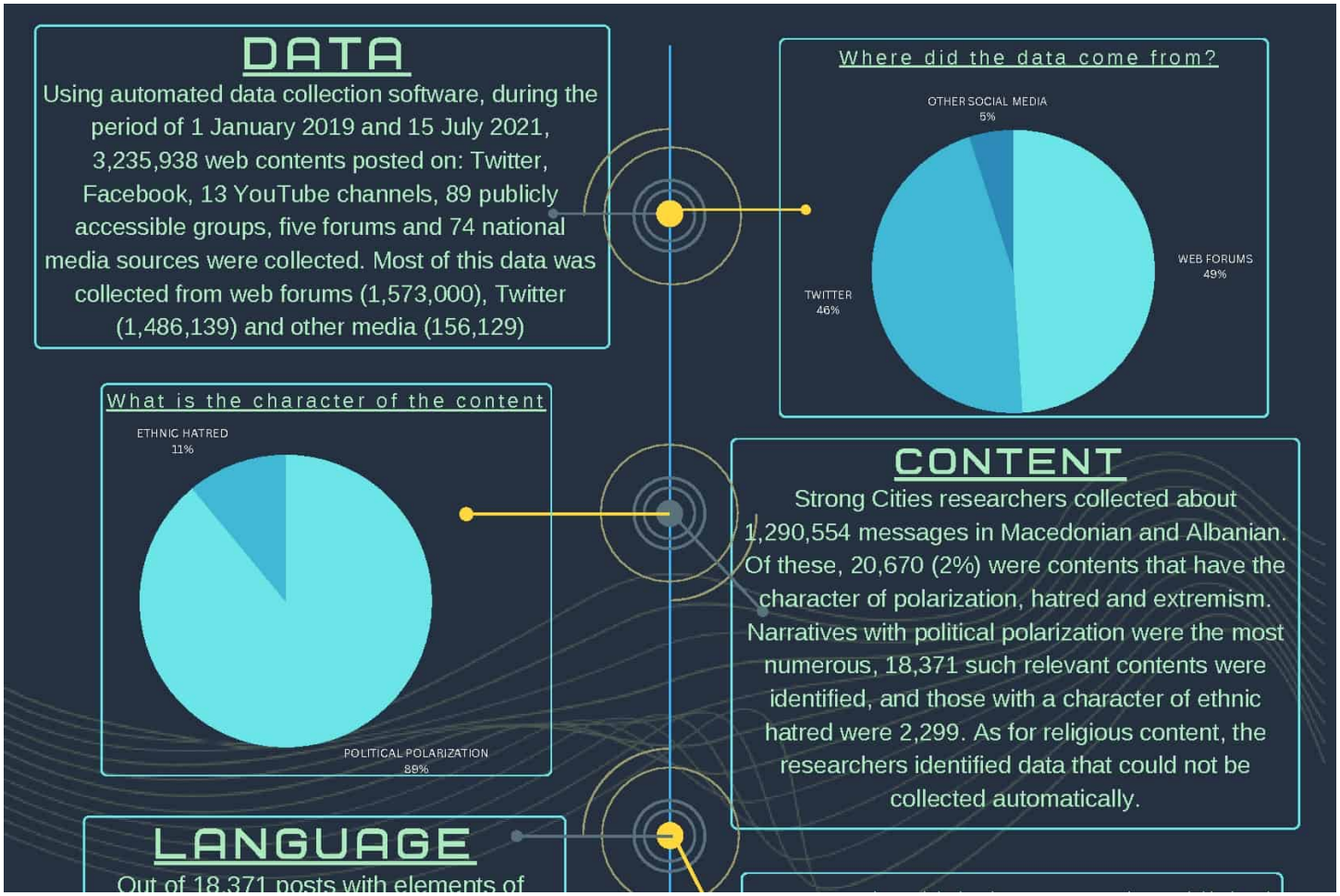
The Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC) prepared an infographic on Online Extremism in RSM using the data published in the research Online Extremism in North Macedonia: Politics, Ethnicities and Religion
by
Strong Cities Network
researchers.



The research shows that extremism as a phenomenon in the virtual sphere exists both among ethnic Macedonians and among ethnic Albanians. Of the contents that have the character of polarization, hatred and extremism, the most numerous are the narratives with political polarization. A greater percentage of the messages are in the Macedonian language (73%). The largest number of these messages are published on Twitter (55%), followed by Facebook and Web forums. About a quarter of the identified contents have elements of ethnic hatred.

ONLINE EXTREMISM IN NORTH MACEDONIA: POLITICS, ETHNICITIES AND RELIGION

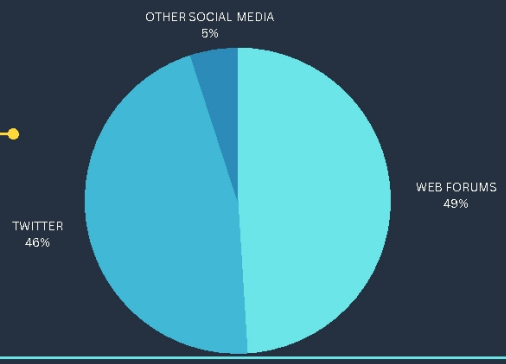
This infographic presents some of the findings from the report "Online extremism in North Macedonia - Politics, Ethnicities and Religion" published by Strong Cities Network in January 2022. The infographic is part of MCMS efforts to bring the phenomena of discrimination, (in)tolerance, extremism, terrorism, radicalism, resocialization, rehabilitation, reintegration, etc. closer to the public.

To collect the data, the researchers used 251 key terms, 114 in the Albanian language and 137 in the Macedonian language (Cyrillic and Latin letters) with which they filtered relevant information. Key terms were defined based on staff expertise, desktop research and a "surprising phrase detector". The findings were classified and structured into three sub-categories of hateful content: political/ideological, ethno-national and religious. Automated data collection and evaluation was performed with a special language processing tool Method 52 (Method52), designed by the Center for Analysis of Social Media.

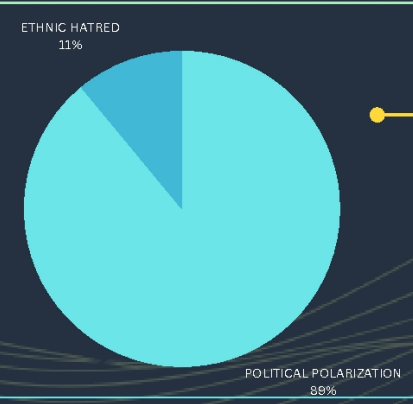
DATA

Using automated data collection software, during the period of 1 January 2019 and 15 July 2021, 3,235,938 web contents posted on: Twitter, Facebook, 13 YouTube channels, 89 publicly accessible groups, five forums and 74 national media sources were collected. Most of this data was collected from web forums (1,573,000), Twitter (1,486,139) and other media (156,129)

Where did the data come from?



What is the character of the content



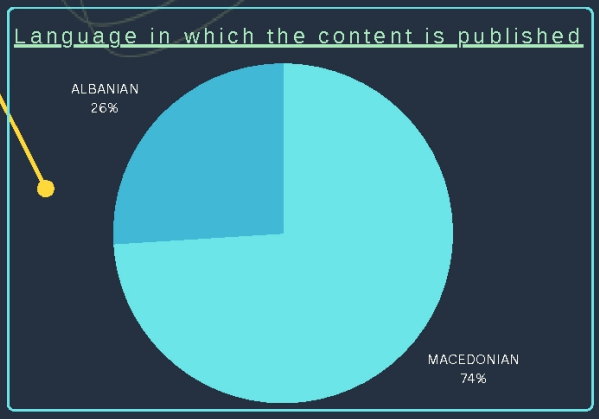
CONTENT

Strong Cities researchers collected about 1,290,554 messages in Macedonian and Albanian. Of these, 20,670 (2%) were contents that have the character of polarization, hatred and extremism. Narratives with political polarization were the most numerous, 18,371 such relevant contents were identified, and those with a character of ethnic hatred were 2,299. As for religious content, the researchers identified data that could not be collected automatically.

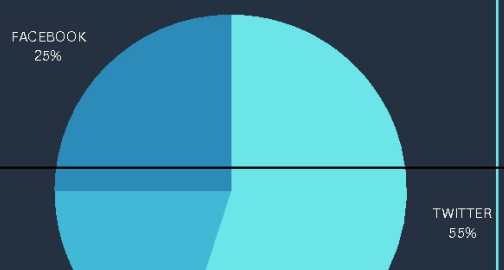
LANGUAGE

Out of 18,371 posts with elements of political polarization, 13,562 were written in the Macedonian language, and 4,809 in the Albanian language.

Language in which the content is published



Social media used for Macedonian language content



SOCIAL MEDIA/ POLARIZATION

Almost half of the contents with elements of political