

# Prevention of youth radicalisation online through alternative narratives

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## Radicalisation as a process – where demand meets supply



PUSH FACTORS

- **Individual / psychological** (identity seeking, anger, discrimination, revenge, thrill, belonging)
- **Socio-economic** (perceived deprivation)
- **Social** (family and peer relations, social isolation)
- **Political** (grievances, civic apathy)
- **Violence** (exposure, experience), **criminal history**

- Engagement with **extremist ideology, narratives** (online and offline)
- Direct contact with **radicalising agents** (recruiters, influencers)
- Extremist group **affiliation or membership**



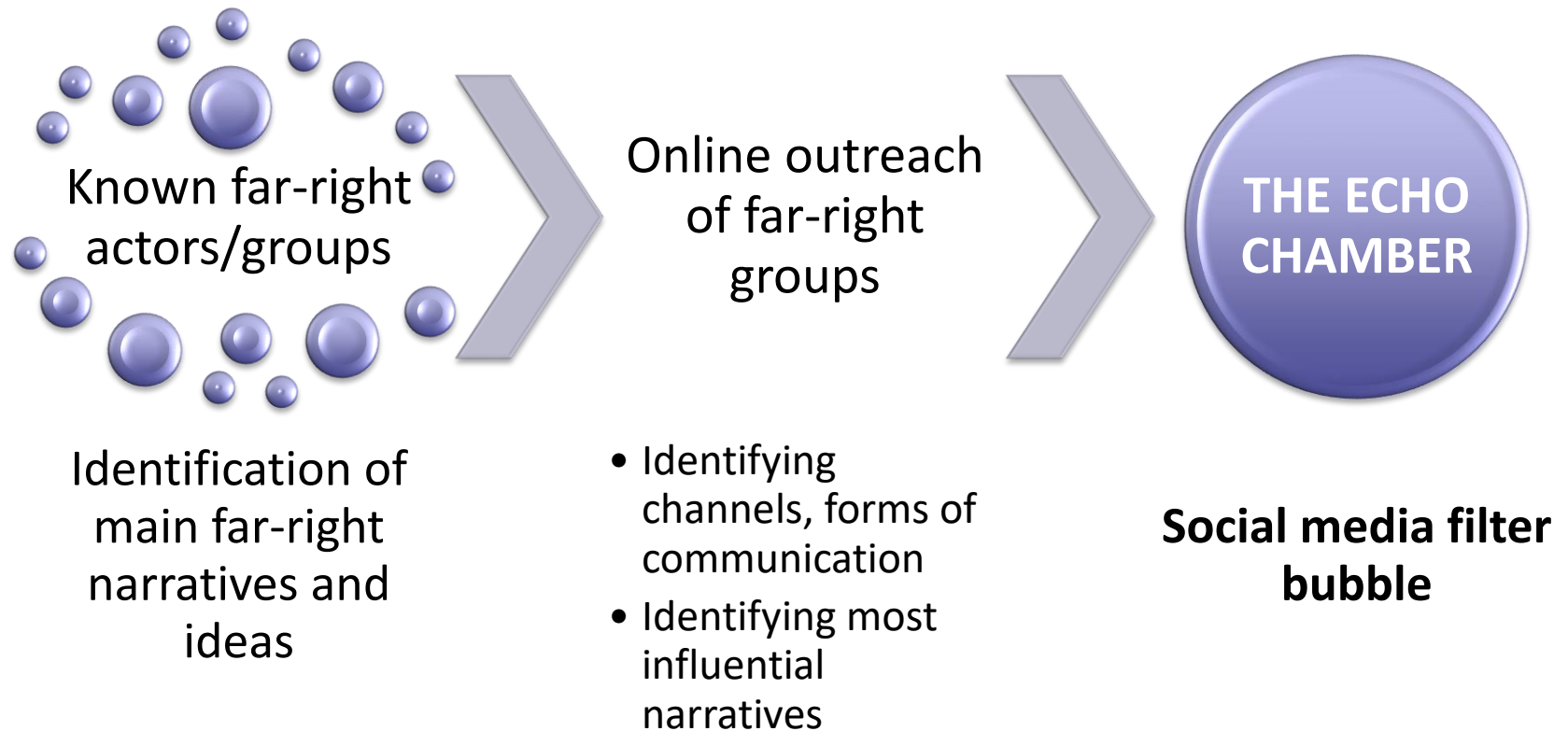
PULL FACTORS

## Where to start with prevention

Fixing not only the person, but also the setting (addressing push and pull factors simultaneously):

- **Focus on the online space** as an enabling environment
- **Focus on far-right narratives** – severely underestimated, increasingly part of the mainstream, strongly polarizing, amplified by toxic media environment
- **Focus on youth:** perpetrators of hate crime mostly young people 18-23, but recruitment starts earlier
- **Emphasis on broader prevention** through an online campaign and school engagement, replicable to all types of extremist risks

## Exploring far-right narratives in the online space



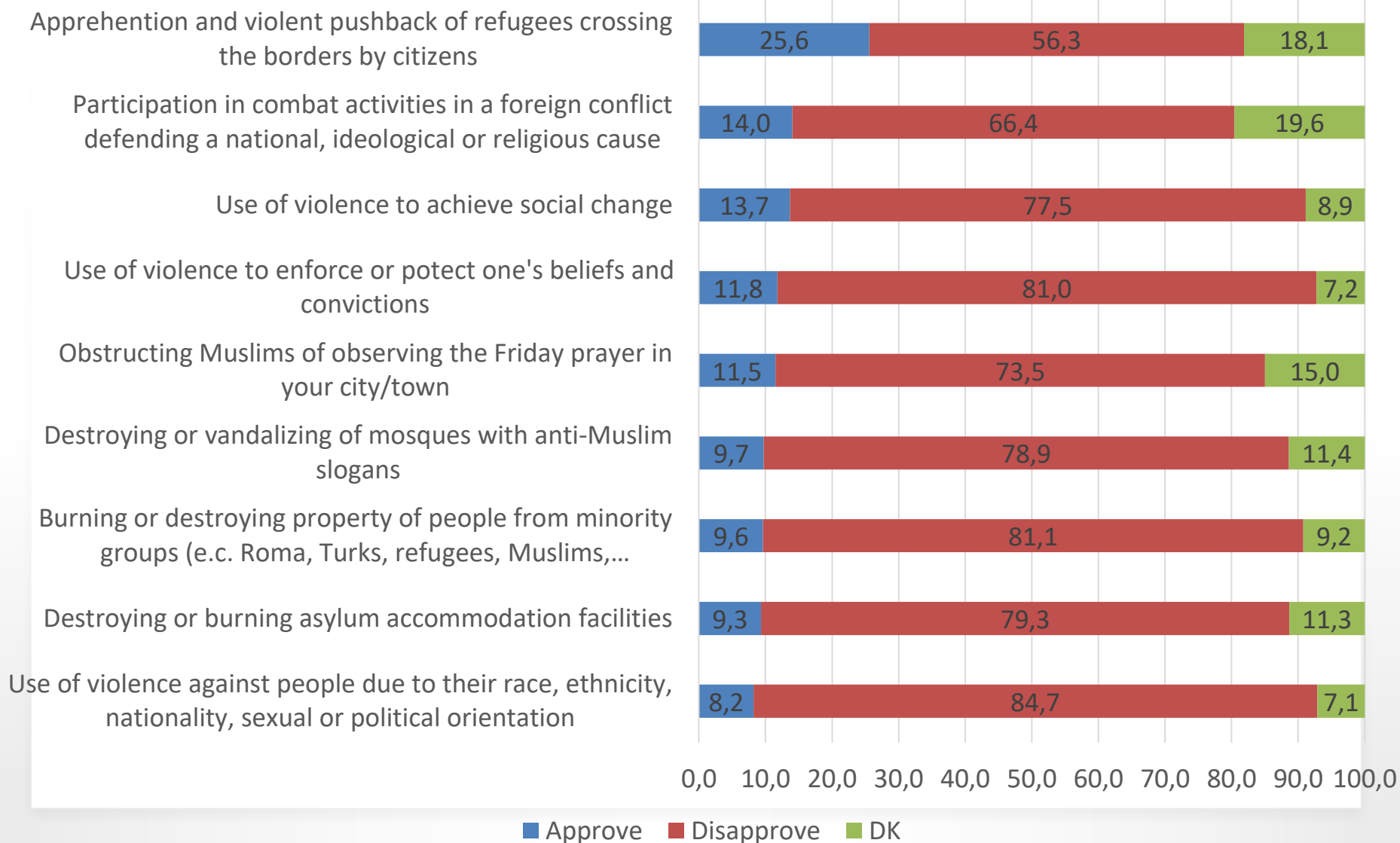
## Exploring far-right narratives in the online space

- Increasingly part of the mainstream, flow into the general discourse, normalization of hate speech and demonizing of “others”
- Closely linked to fake news, conspirative stories
- Not openly violent, disguised under patriotism, protection of traditional/family values
- Playing on common and everyday emotions, needs, frustrations, fears
- Rarely offering clear solutions, highly polarizing and disabling critical discourses on potential solutions

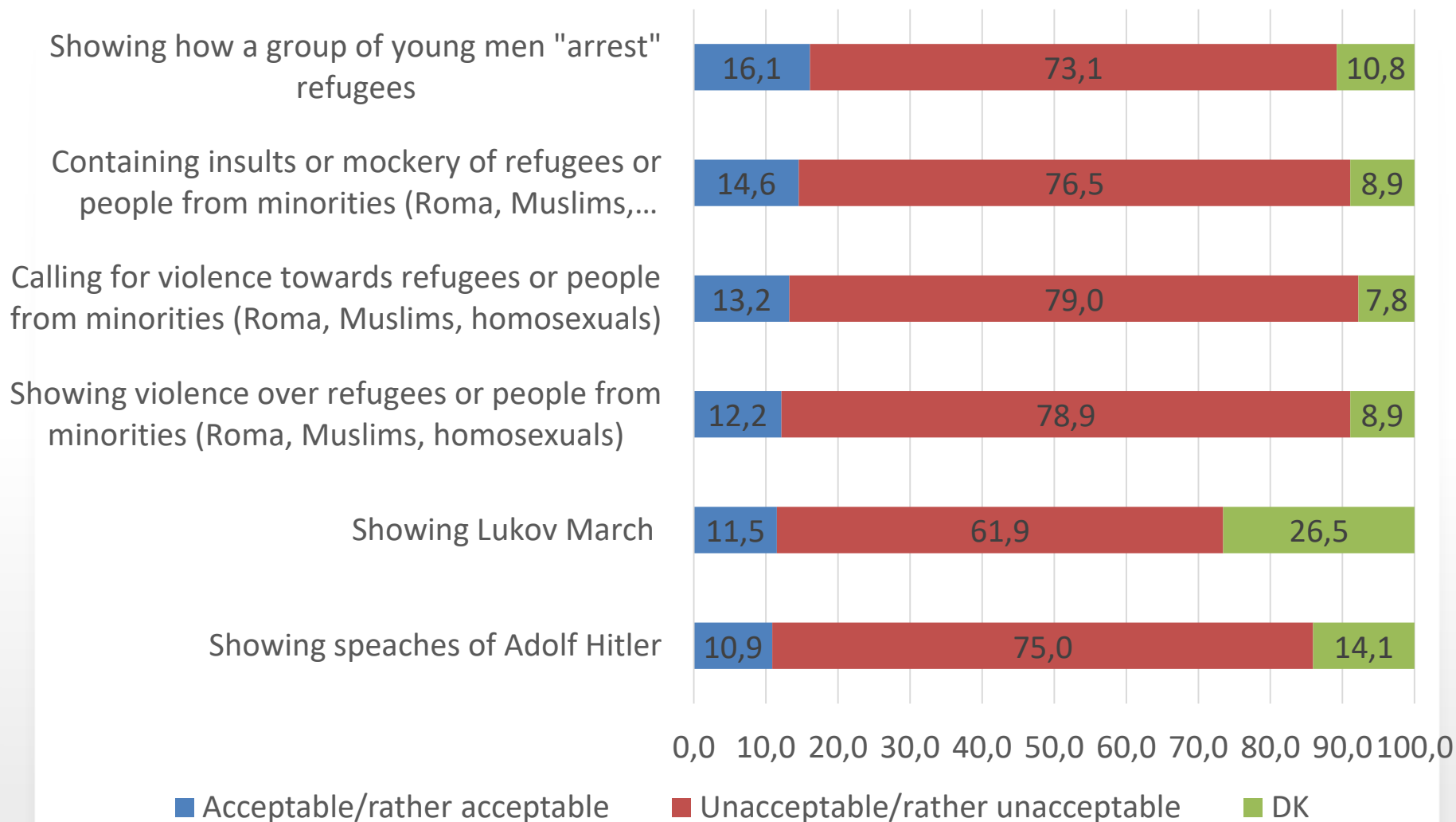
## Youth and the influence far-right narratives

- National representative survey (f2f), 1,000 participants age 14-19
- 80%+ of young people use social media daily
- 11-16% do not recognize radical or hateful online content as such, find it acceptable (including showing or urging for violence)
- 30+% have been exposed to such content on social media
- **Wide acceptance of far-right narratives** - demonizing “others” (Roma, refugees, Muslims, LGBT) as major threats and urging for (violent) action: 46% - 74% approval
- **Approval of far-right / political violence** ranges between 8%-25%

## Approval of political violence and hate crime



## Acceptance of hateful or violent online content





## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

### CHANGE THE CONVERSATION ONLINE

- → **Alternative narratives vs. counter-narratives**  
(addressing the same needs, frustrations and vulnerabilities that make polarizing messages attractive, instead of confronting these directly; focus on positive stories, protective factors, empowerment)

### CHANGE THE WAY YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGE WITH IT

- → **Building essential life skills and abilities** (e.g. critical thinking, emotional intelligence, conflict management, digital literacy, constructive civic engagement)

# Resilient **Youth** against Far-Right Messaging **Online** **YouthRightOn**



# Thank you

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