



Powering solutions
to extremism, hate
and disinformation

Information, manipulation & democracy

16 October 2025, PPN Conference

Ciarán O'Connor

Running Order

1

Mis-, Dis- & Malinformation

2

Online Platforms

3

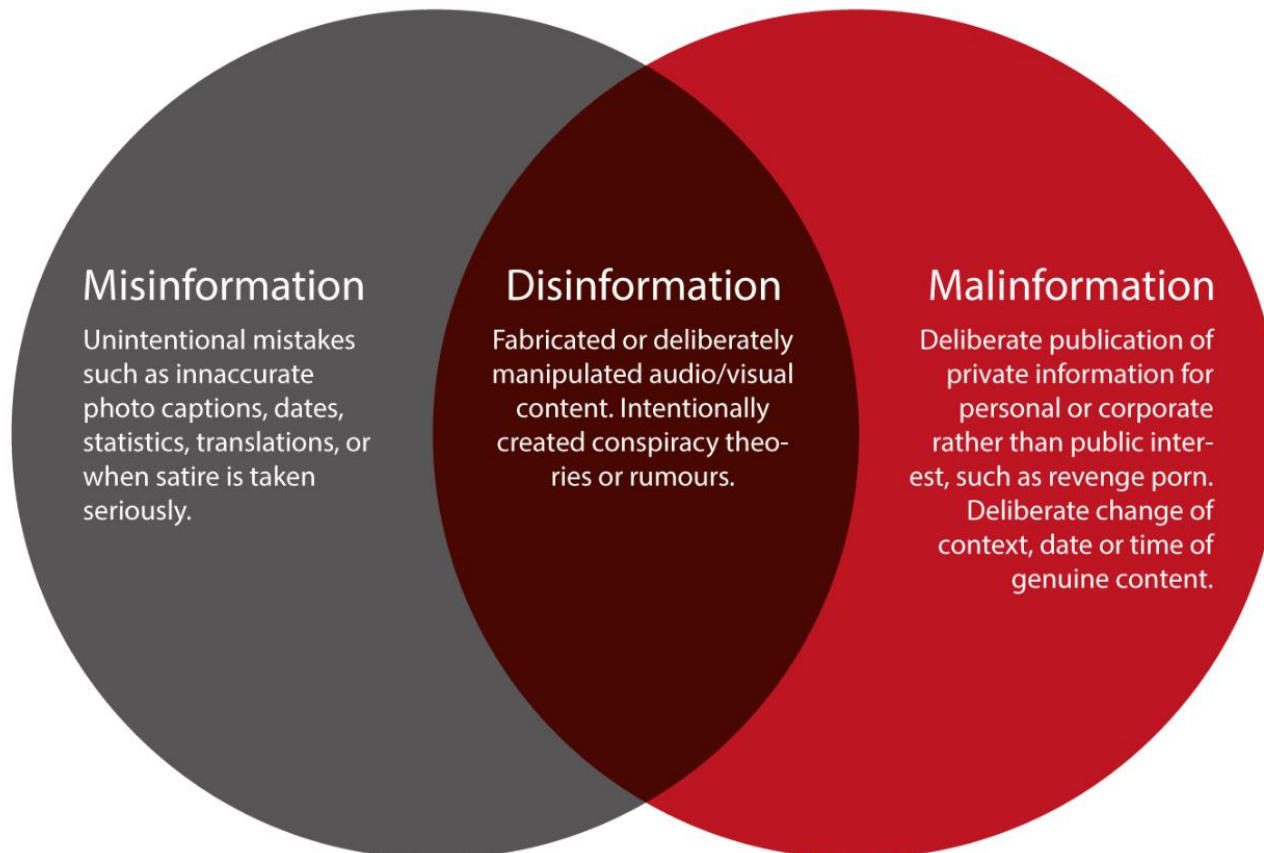
Themes



TYPES OF INFORMATION DISORDER

FALSENESS

INTENT TO HARM



Misinformation



- Strong emotional response
- Aim is to go viral online, attract attention and engagement
- Exploiting echo chambers and algorithms
- Especially effective around elections and events of significant public interest
- Scale makes it difficult to debunk, platforms negligible

Disinformation

- used to target others and create false narratives
- based on rumours, stereotypes or exploits people's' biases and prejudices
- extremely popular on social media & online platforms
- used opportunistically
- organised and coordinated

This is George Nkencho. A Nigerian immigrant living in Dublin 15 Ireland.

Since arriving in Ireland as an refugee in his teens, He amassed 32 Criminal Convictions mostly for violent offenses including Robbery, Assault and Domestic Abuse.



On the 30th of December while out on bail for attacking his girlfriend with a hammer, Nkencho attacked a Spar store manager with a large knife

Malinformation

- 'Doxxing' of personal/private information
- Targeted hacks of sensitive data
- Twisting of data to fit an extreme narrative or conspiracy theory
- Harassment towards others based on protected attributes
- Hate speech



Mis-, Dis- and Malinformation as a Tool

7 TYPES OF MIS- & DISINFORMATION



Satire or parody

No intention to
cause harm but
has potential
to fool.



Misleading content

Misleading use
of information to
frame an issue
or individual.



Imposter content

When genuine
sources are
impersonated.



Fabricated content

New content that
is 100% false,
made to deceive
and do harm.



False connection

When headlines,
visuals or captions
don't support the
content.



False context

When genuine
content is shared
with false contextual
information.



Manipulated content

When genuine
information or imagery
is manipulated to
deceive.

Susceptibility

Oldest and youngest
are more susceptible to
“fake news”: 41% of
consumers ages 18-34
and 44% ages 65+ admit
to falling for it.



*Old and young US adults most susceptible to fake news,
YouGov, June 13, 2018

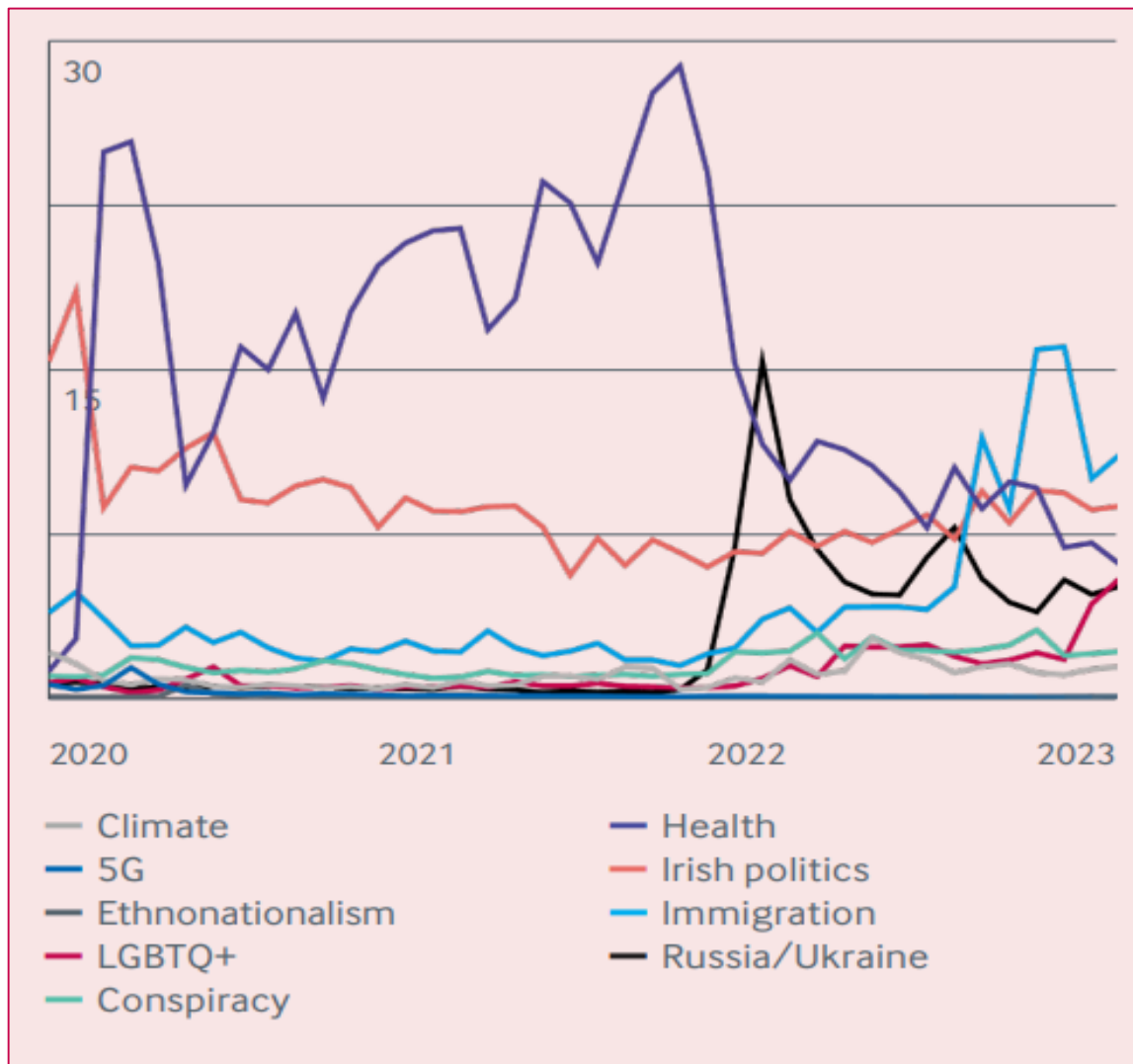
#DidYouKnow

News
Literacy
Project
.....

- We all are 🙄
- False information / conspiracy theories can **FEEL** right; confirmation bias
- Platforms and apps are designed for rapid sharing of information, not slow deliberation; engagement over accuracy
- Offers simplistic solutions, someone to blame
- Especially so if shared by someone we trust (friends/family/media) or within echo chambers online

Themes

Themes



- Source: [Uisce Faoi Thalamh, ISD, p4](#)

Immigration

- Targeting of 1) asylum seekers, 2) refugees, 3) migrants
- Claims of criminality & violence, preferential treatment, 'othering' mindset
- Social media is central; virality & platform incentives; sensationalist clips & content
- Conspiracy theories: Replacement, 'plantation'
- Calls to action, protests



Immigration

Narratives:

- #IrelandIsFull
- #IrelandBelongsToTheIrish
- 'Military aged males'
- 'Plantation centres'; invasion
- Remigration

If you think it's only asylum seekers we have to worry about I congratulate you for getting this far.

But you still have a lot to learn.

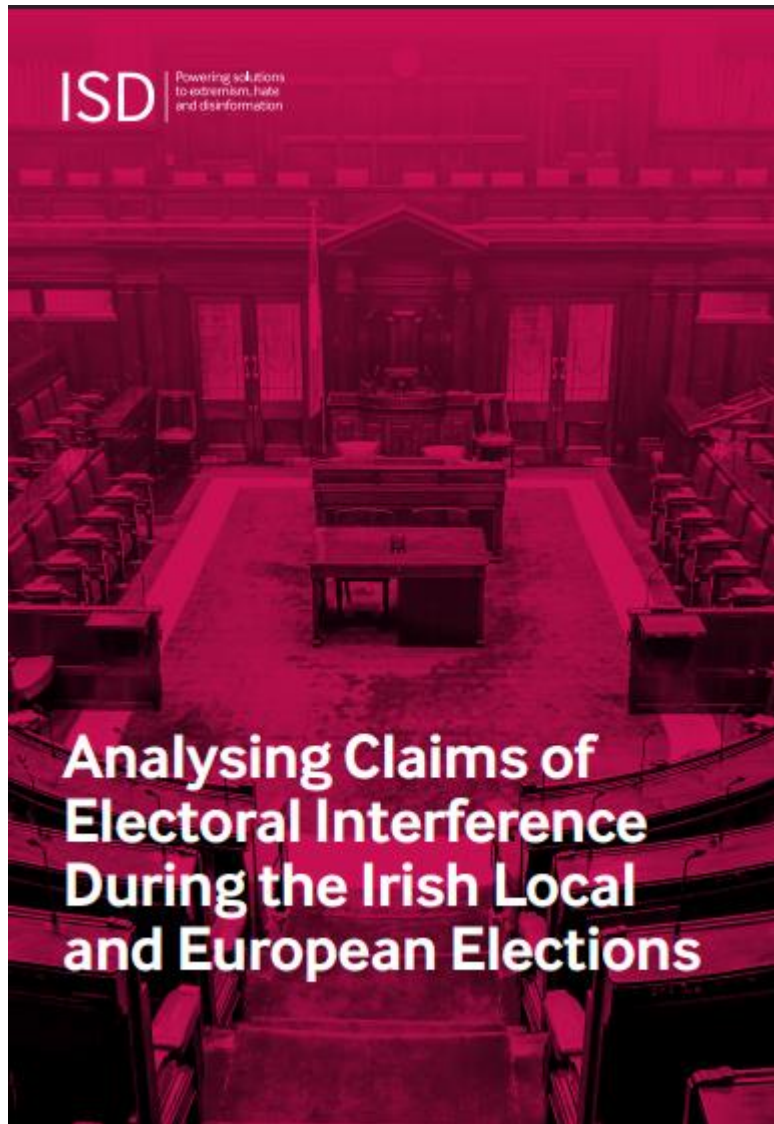
More Indians entered Ireland legally last year than the total number asylum seekers.

Sure they came legally, but are we just going to take infinite numbers of legal immigrants?

Are we going to allow ourselves to become a minority in our own country?

You might think your Indian colleague is sound and sure he loves the hurling. But you're competing with him for scarce resources and he has no ties to this land. This is your home, not his.

[#IrelandBelongsToTheIrish](#)



Key Findings

Between 26 May and 12 June 2024, ISD documented 162 posts across X, Telegram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok claiming election interference surrounding Irish local and European elections.

- The total number of views these claims received online was 3,799,962. At the time of writing, 74% of claims remain online – an indication that despite having policies in place to safeguard election integrity, platforms have so far failed to properly engage on these issues in an Irish context.
- The primary theme of these claims involved allegations of “foreign interference”, based mainly on non-citizens’ legal rights to participate in local elections. These often merged with conspiracy theories around “voter harvesting” by political parties and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- Conspiracy theories alleging that the Minister for Justice had sent citizenships via email and promised passports to asylum seekers in exchange for votes emerged, based on an edited clip originally posted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Elections

Telegram



[Redacted]



I feel sick folks. Just went to vote about 10.am and outside the polling station a group of single male "asylum" seekers directing others in to vote, with the help of an "Irish" minder. I even asked this guy if he knew about Ireland, could he name any signatories of the proclamation, and he hadn't a clue, just wanted to find his booth. Gerrymandering of the highest order. If people don't vote they'll only have themselves to blame. 10:38

There's a record level of foreign interference in this year's elections and all occurring in plain sight with the approval and encouragement of government.

join

t.me/

[Redacted]

2.9K Jun 7 at 11:13

Every foreign vote dilutes an Irish vote.

Foreigners will be banned from voting and running in Irish elections.

Ireland is ours.

Colonisers out!

2:01 PM · Jun 6, 2024 · 8,460 Views

Citizenship emailed to you 

CITIZENSHIP GRANTED



see if there was another way that we could grant citizenship without having to host these ceremonies. And I'm really pleased to say that, from today, we are putting in place a new temporary system



Anti-LGBTQ+



O' Groomer needs to RESIGN now
Get him OUT.!!!

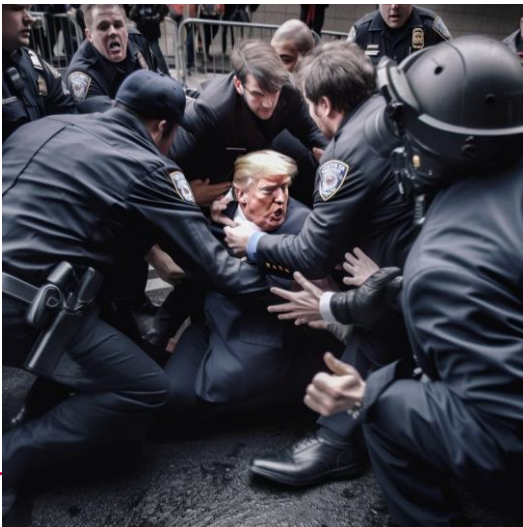
[#ResignRodericOGorman](#)

Ireland for the IRISH.....

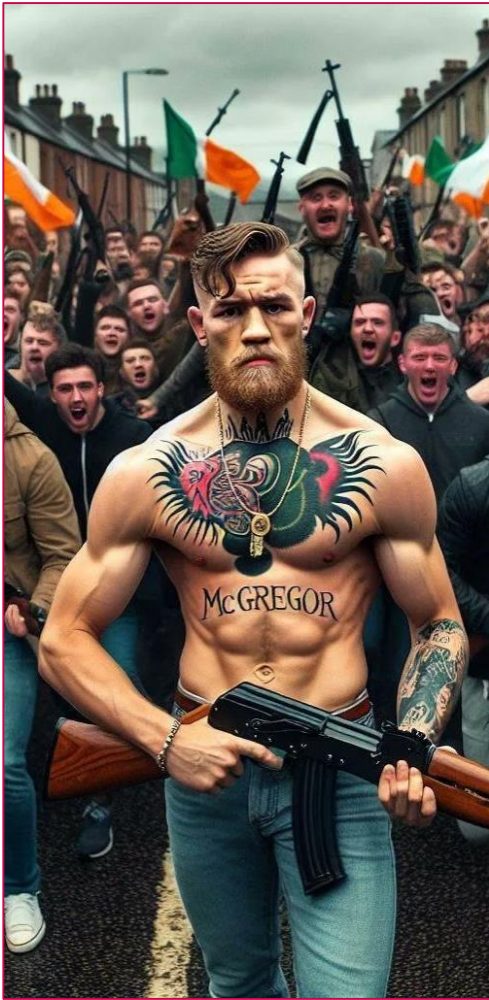
3:22 PM · Mar 9, 2024 · **1,816** Views

- Targeting of LGBTQ+ individuals, communities & those who support them
- Accusations of immorality, indecency, indoctrination
- ‘Protecting the children’; ‘groomer’; ‘satanic panic’
- Libraries, schools & curriculums
- The goal: Adversarial encounters, controversy, virality

Artificial Intelligence

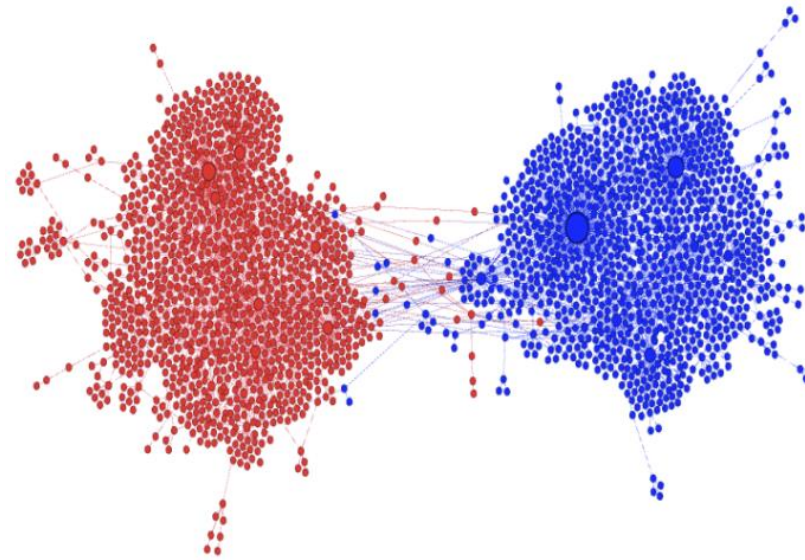
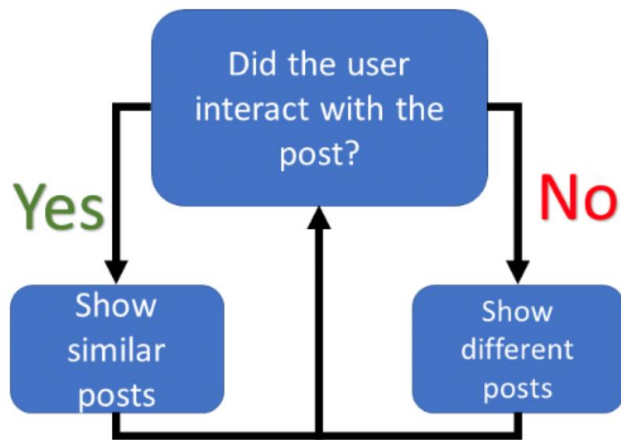


AI, Ireland and Elections

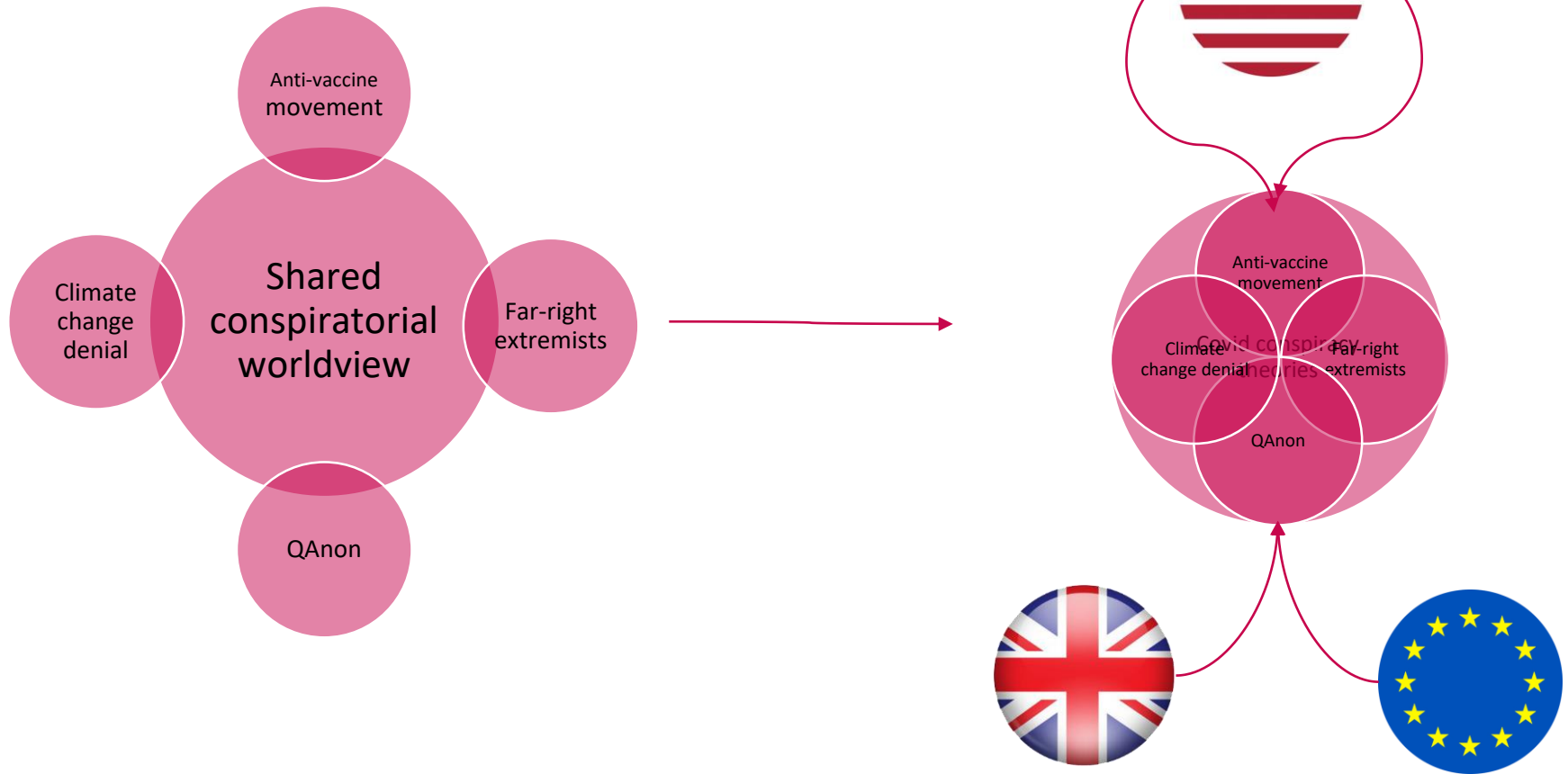


Online Platforms

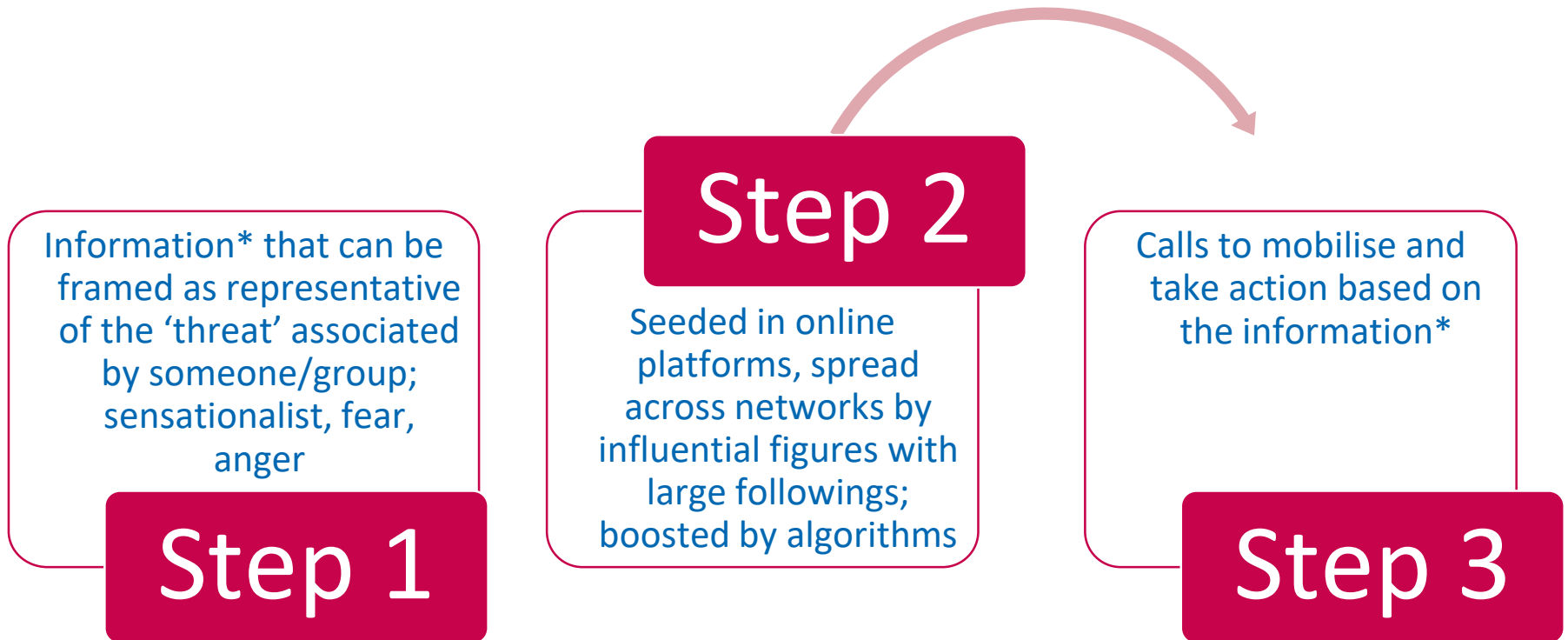
Echo chambers and algorithms



The 'Covid Effect'



Information Disorder: Playbook



* Information could be true, false, speculative, decontextualised, rumour etc

Resources

Education

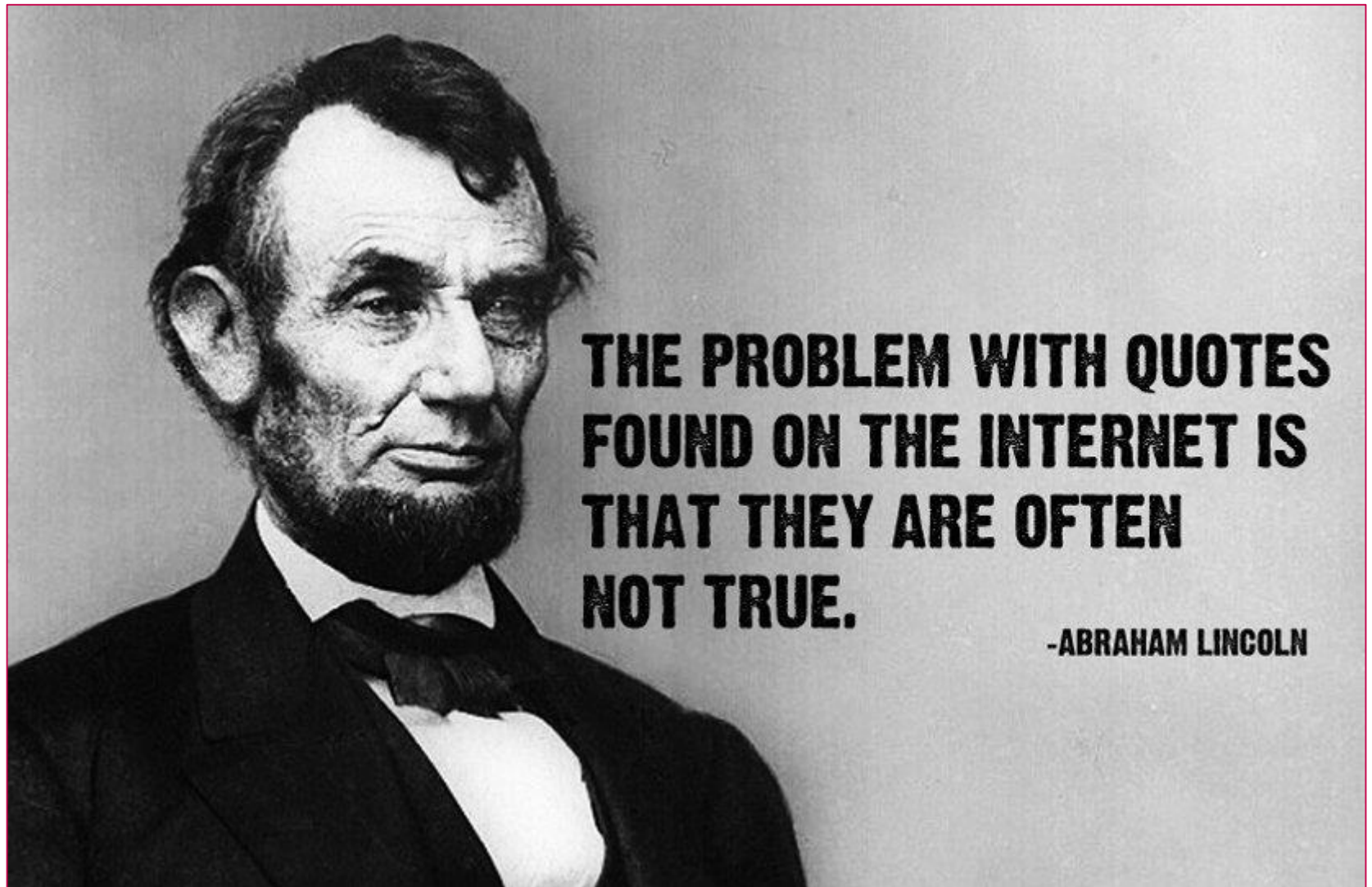
- Media literacy
- Digital citizenship
- Anti-hate/CVE education

Regulation

- Online Safety and Media Regulation Act
- Digital Services Act

Communication

- Strategic communications
- Community engagement/organising



Thank you!
