Domestic Violent Extremist Mobilization in Vermont

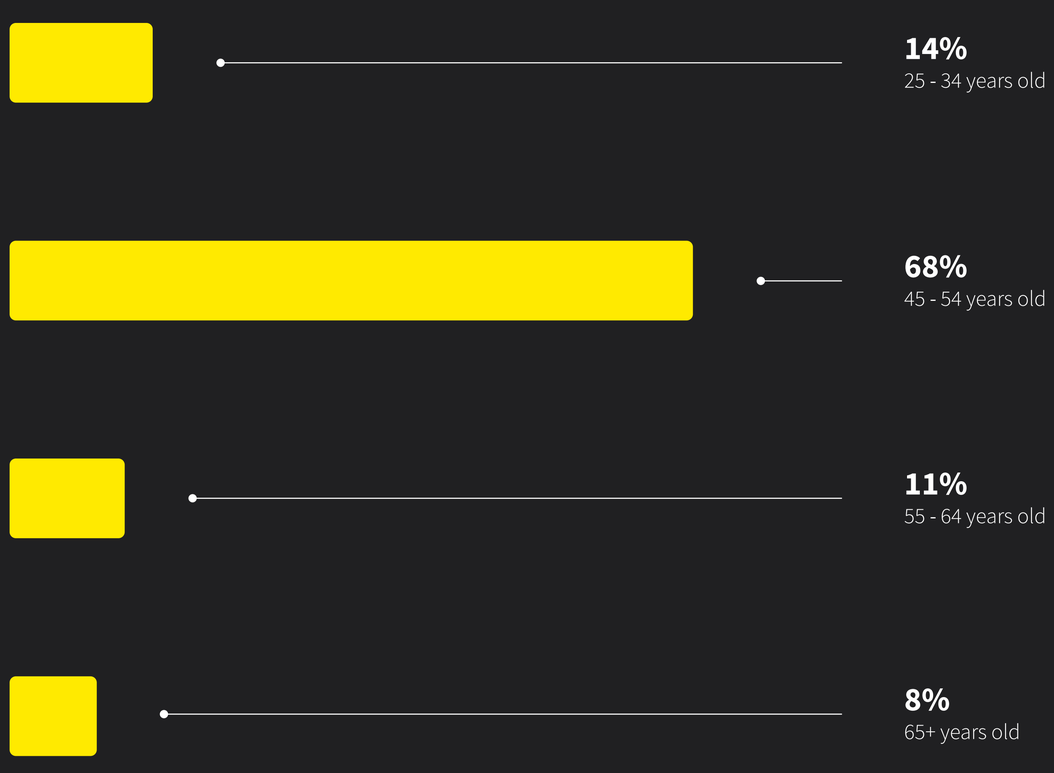
moonshot

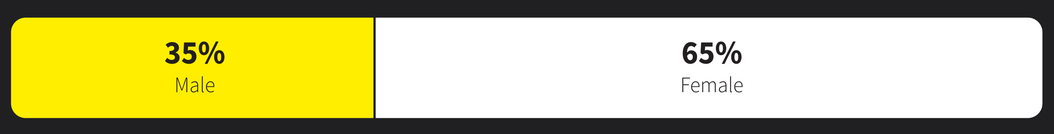
Moonshot is a global social enterprise working to end online harms, applying evidence, ethics, and human rights. We design new methodologies and technologies to respond effectively to harms that threaten public safety, including violent extremism, gender-based violence, disinformation, and serious organized crime.

Since 2015 Moonshot has tracked searches for, and engagement with, Domestic Violent Extremism across the United States. From September 2020 Moonshot stepped up a tailored elections crisis response team to develop an early warning system, and intervention network, to mitigate potential escalation of tensions within the US.

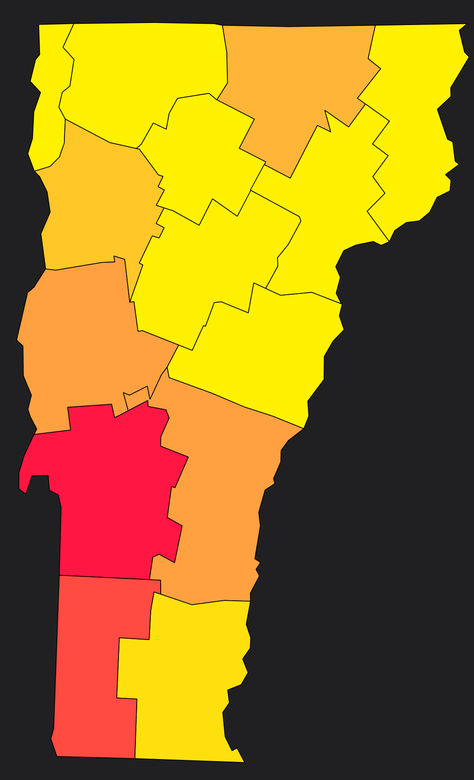
This infographic specifically covers data collected on Google Search between from September 2020 until March 2021 related to Domestic Violent Extremist mobilizations to targeted violence, political violence, conspiracy theories, and armed groups. No personally identifiable information was collected as part of this research, which solely uses aggregated metadata.

Who is searching?

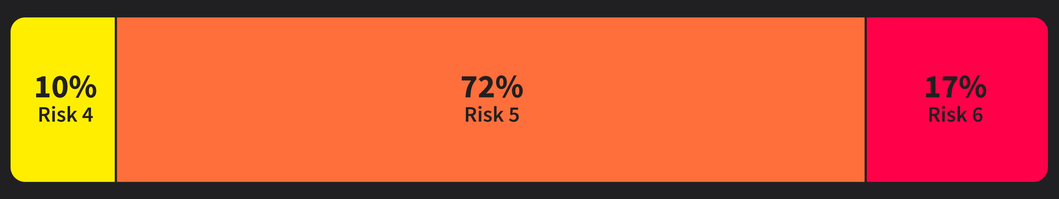




Where are the risks?



Tracked indicators are coded using a six-level risk matrix ranging from curiosity towards extremism (level one) to desire to cause harm and join groups (level six). For Vermont the data shows the following distribution of searches by risk level starting with level three (sympathy with groups) to exclude searches without violent intent:



Moonshot's analysis revealed that users in Vermont had a strong interest in political conspiracies and armed groups. Searches related to QAnon and the stolen election indicate that users have an appetite for disinformation, especially when it relates to polarized political attitudes and anti-establishmentarianism. While it is difficult to determine direct pathways from online searches to offline action, Vermonters' interest in joining Three Percenters indicates a propensity for offline mobilization. The most frequent keywords for these Domestic Violent Extremism themes are:

qanon plan to save the world	#1	#6	How to join Three percenters
wwg1wga worldwide	#2	#7	Hutaree Website
Join Three percenters	#3	#8	Join 3 percenters
Sharpiegate	#4	#9	kill all democrats
stolen election	#5	#10	Oath Keepers Facebook

Number of searches by risk level per day