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Original
The Eurabia Conspiracy Theory: Twitter's Political Influencers, Narratives, and Information Sources / Monaci, S., Morreale, D., Persico, S.. - In: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION. - ISSN 2183-2439. - 11:4(2023). [10.17645/mac.v11i4.7247]

Availability:
This version is available at: 11583/2982224 since: 2023-09-17T08:29:04Z

Publisher:
Cogitatio Press

Published
DOI:10.17645/mac.v11i4.7247

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19 November 2026

cogitatio

Media and Communication (ISSN: 2183–2439)
2023, Volume 11, Issue 4, Pages X–X
https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i4.7247

Article

The Eurabia Conspiracy Theory: Twitter's Political Influencers, Narratives, and Information Sources

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Submitted: 30 May 2023 | Accepted: 14 July 2023 | Published: in press

Abstract
In recent years, conspiracy theories on social media have emerged as a significant issue capable of undermining social perceptions of European integration. Narratives such as the Eurabia doctrine, which would imply an ethnic replacement of the indigenous European population with migrants (Bergmann, 2018), have been a significant resonance. Thanks to computational analysis, we have collected data from Twitter over three years (2020, 2021, and 2022) during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this period, we collected over 50,000 tweets strictly related to the Eurabia doctrine topic in different European languages. Analysing the collected data, we identified the most relevant voices spreading conspiracy theories online, the emerging narratives related to the Eurabia doctrine, and the primary sources used by the most active or mentioned subjects in spreading disinformation.

Keywords
conspiracy theories; Eurabia doctrine; population replacement conspiracy; social media; Twitter

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Mediatized Discourses on Europeanization: Information, Disinformation, and Polarization" edited by Ana Pérez Escoda (Antonio de Nebrija University) and Tetyana Lokot (Dublin City University).

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1. Introduction: The Pandemic of Conspiracy Theories

The circulation of conspiracy theories has grown online during the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as its impact on public opinion related to political issues such as EU integration (Dow et al., 2021; Erokhin et al., 2022). According to multiple studies, social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit have had a fundamental role both in spreading fake news and enhancing its visibility (Allington et al., 2021; Shahsavari et al., 2020). On 4 May 2020, for example, the 26-minute video titled "Plandemic" posted on YouTube, claiming that Covid-19 was a laboratory product conceived to guarantee an enormous income to pharmaceutical giants from the vaccine, received 2.6 million likes in a few hours (Frenkel et al., 2020). Despite the multiplicity and diversity of conspiracy theories present online, the conspiracists' arguments are structured on recurring rhetoric. At the base of the conspiracy theories, there is a progressive polarisation between the conspiracists—those who identify the cause of a phenomenon in the conspiracy—and the *trickster*: the real conspirators often identified in the techno-scientific, economic, political elites (Neville-Shepard, 2018). In the analysis of conspiratorial texts, it is necessary to identify, together with the speeches, also those who elaborate them. These issues stage a typical dramaturgy (Wexler & Havers, 2002) which includes at least four figures in its cast: the conspiracy theorists; the accused power elite (including public institutions, official agencies, and debunkers); the witnesses and experts the conspiracy theorists rely on; and the audience formed by the public of the wider society. As a result, the phenomenon of conspiracy is very broad and often ignores a single theory, presenting itself as a narrative format that targets different theories or subjects, and that can achieve an extraordinary echo.

The processes of formation and circulation of conspiracy theories have exponentially grown thanks to the internet. In fact, online communication emphasises the intertextuality of conspiratorial language that is the property of each speech to refer to other discourses from heterogeneous sources—politics, religion, economics, science and so on—with which it is eclectically assembled by web users (Panchenko, 2016).

Moreover, social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube represent the ideal meeting environment for supporters of conspiracy theories: Individuals, who in the pre-internet era were isolated, gained the means to connect with others who share their interests and can create aggregation to strengthen in-group bonds. However, there are differences, for example, in the Facebook groups dedicated to conspiracy theories: There are those who prefer to isolate themselves from external interference and those who instead have the specific goal of co-opting other individuals. Within Facebook, this distinction is identified in the privacy management methods used by groups: Some of them create private groups, accessible only by those who receive authorisation by an administrator. In this context, private groups become what have so far been defined as echo chambers. According to Axel Bruns (2017, p. 3), an echo chamber comes into being when a group of participants choose to preferentially connect, to the exclusion of outsiders. However, public groups aimed at proselytising represent the largest category: They collect a higher number of subscriptions and are the virtual arena in which the debate between supporters and detractors of the conspiracies takes place. These pages and groups are also used to spread propaganda mainly through the publication of audiovisual material. In relation to political conspiracy theories, such as the Eurabia doctrine, different scholars (Chen et al., 2023; Min, 2021) highlight that groups and social networks tend to be open and inclusive also with the aim of co-opting individuals in sharing their political narratives.

1.1. The Eurabia Doctrine

Conspiracy theories reached the core of EU political institutional debate entering the European Parliament, when radical right populists raised the issue of EU Islamisation and the threat of population substitution, with references to "the great replacement theory" or the Eurabia doctrine (Bergmann, 2018). The conspiracy theory claims that white Europeans are to be replaced by immigrants from non-European countries through the actions of politicians and power elites (Bergmann, 2021). The theory reached the wider audience concerning anti-immigration political positions and it has been reinforced by waves of refugees from the Middle East and Africa in recent decades. The term gained notoriety when it was used as a book title by Bat Ye'or, an Egyptian-born author who coined the expression *Eurabia*.

The narrative focusing on the alleged threat posed by radical Islam to Western societies appeared in the 1970s and 1980s in response to events of international resonance, including the Iranian revolution and the protests following the Fatwa against Salman Rushdie after the publication of the *Satanic Verses*. The "clash of civilisations" thesis was first proposed by Lewis (1990) and popularised by Huntington (1993). Huntington believes that the great conflicts after the fall of Soviet communism would have been linked not so much to political ideologies, as to values, culture, and religion. In this context, Islamic civilisation was identified as one of the most serious dangers for the survival of the West. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, those ideas have spread with greater force.

Bat Ye'or, in her 2005 book *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, argues that a process of Islamisation is underway in the West, encouraged by a European foreign policy favourable to Arab countries. According to Bat Ye'or, the turning point is represented by the energy crisis of the 1970s, which forced European policymakers to make concessions to the oil-producing Arab countries (Ye'or, 2005). The Italian journalist and writer Oriana Fallaci had a significant influence on the dissemination and popularisation of the Eurabia theory, with her widely translated book *The Force of Reason* (Fallaci, 2006).

As highlighted by recent studies, a strong driving force behind theories related to the danger of European Islamisation is represented by US thinkers and think tanks linked to the US far right mainly addressed to an internal public. They tend to show how the loss of traditional values, progressive policies about migration, and the extension of welfare are leading Europe to collapse (Pilbeam, 2011; Wodak, 2015). The recurring narratives in the US far right have favoured the consolidation of several core narratives: demography is used as a weapon for ethnic replacement, multiculturalism is an ideology used to weaken Europe against Islam, and the social democratic left is responsible for ethnic substitution through immigration and the extension of welfare to immigrants.

Anti-immigration conspiracy theories are particularly popular on social media. Recent studies highlighted the relationship between the affordances of social media sites and the online propagation of population replacement conspiracy theories. According to Ekman (2022), conspiracy theory contents follow *spreadability* logic (Jenkins et al., 2013), including controversial, sensationalist, and shocking content. Recent studies analyse, for example, the role of memes in spreading theories related to the Great Replacement. According to Hernandez Aguilar (2023), memes live in symbiosis with mainstream media endorsing population replacement conspiracy theories. They synthesise and make the content accessible, making extreme the meaning of mainstream media, "adding racial details to original sources" and inciting violence (Hernandez Aguilar, 2023). Memes also play a relevant role in allowing explicit content not to be blocked by the filtering strategies of social media algorithms. Thanks to memetic campaigns, content creators have been able to distribute

their content on Twitter, avoiding the content moderation policies of mainstream platforms. The meme campaigns about the demographic war narrative are part of this process. According to this narrative, the goal of population substitution is also pursued through the predatory behaviour of male Muslims towards European women. Memetic campaigns in fact, explicitly represent, through pseudo-pornographic contents, the predatory behaviour of Islamic men toward European women, with the goal of arousing strong emotional reactions (Evolvi, 2019) and reinforcing Islamophobic feelings (Fadil, 2023; Leidig, 2021).

In consideration of the broad scenario involving the spreadability tactics and processes related to anti-immigration conspiracy theories on social media, our article will focus on the Eurabia doctrine and its key narratives. Our objective is to gain insights into the driving forces, narratives, and sources that contribute to information dissemination within European linguistic communities, particularly on a topic that has become a significant part of the institutional political discourse.

This article addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: Which are the most relevant voices in the process of spreading the Eurabia Doctrine online?

RQ2: What are the emerging narratives?

RQ3: What are the sources used by the subjects most active or mentioned in the process of spreading narratives on the Eurabia Doctrine?

2. Methodology

To answer our research questions, we will rely on a mixed methodological approach that will put together a quantitative computational analysis and a qualitative phase of content exploration. Both phases will focus on different languages with an attempt to highlight the European dimension of the debate on Twitter. The languages chosen are those spoken in predominantly European states by at least five million native speakers. Twitter has been the subject of extensive research regarding how social media have shaped society, politics, and public opinion (Jungherr, 2016). An important aspect is that even if studies have demonstrated that users are not representative of the general population (McGregor, 2019) and are highly influenced by political players (Weeks et al., 2017), academics and journalists rely on Twitter as a source of public opinion. The reason is that it has been recently demonstrated that ideas and issues represented on Twitter still provide insight into what everyday citizens think (van Klingeren et al., 2021). We collected three years of data from Twitter (2020–2022) using Twitter API v.2 with Academic Research access. We used 4CAT (Peeters & Hagen, 2022) to collect and store data, and Twitter Capture and Analysis Toolset (Borra & Rieder, 2014), for analysis purposes. In this period, we collected more than 50,000 tweets related to the topic of the Eurabia doctrine, applying the following query: Eurabia OR Eurabie OR Eurábie OR Eurábia OR Eurabien OR Eurabija OR Ευραβία OR Евpабија OR Евpабия OR Єврабія.

The quantitative analysis relied on digital methods (Rogers, 2019) for their ability to manage natively digital data on web platforms like social media and to represent collective phenomena, social changes, and cultural expressions. The theory in the field has moved towards *critical metrics* (Rogers, 2018) in contrast with the typical vanity metrics of social network sites. Critical metrics are used to define dominant voices and relevant narratives and can describe the position of each user by mapping the relationships between different entities. The concept of dominant voices conceptually identifies the most influential voices on a specific social issue. Accordingly, mention affordance is used to operationalise the "perceived influence" of a user in a particular debate and will be used to answer our RQ1. To answer RQ2 and identify relevant narratives debated in communities, we will rely on hashtags to perform topic modelling. In addition, critical metrics can describe a user's position on a topic based on relationships between entities of different natures, such as users and URLs/domains. Identifying the main sources of information used by dominant voices will lead us to answer our RQ3. We based the social network analysis on three specific entities—users, hashtags, and URLs domains—and we focused on the main languages (English, Spanish, Dutch, French, and Italian). These languages were identified through 4CAT, which applies an algorithm to guess the language of the tweet. At first, we analysed user dynamics by implementing mention analysis and highlighting the different communities with their dominant voices. Secondly, we filtered our dataset for each of the five main languages performing a co-hashtag analysis to map linguistic narratives. Finally, we focused on the relationship between users and information sources by performing a user–domain analysis. Those steps aim to map the different linguistic communities and their narratives, identifying the primary information sources shared inside and between communities.

We proceeded to generate the graph files with Twitter Capture and Analysis Toolset, which we later processed using Gephi (Bastian et al., 2009), an open-source tool for network analysis.

We built three different graphs:

1. The social graph by mentions describes connections among users by looking at the network of mentions between them (considering pure mentions, replies and retweets). This analysis will answer our RQ1 by showing dominant voices and their connections, potentially highlighting flows of information inside and between communities.
2. The co-hashtag graph describes connections among hashtags by correlating them when used in

the same tweet. The hashtags are a peculiarity of the platform: they can be used to perform a sort of topic modelling that will answer our RQ2 about main narratives.

3. The user-URLs graph, which describes the relationship between users and URL domains, identifies the main sources of information users rely on, answering our RQ3.

3. Analysis and Results

Concerning the focus on users, the mentioned analysis allowed us to identify communities and dominant voices in the debate about the Eurabia doctrine. To highlight the dominant voices of our dataset, we dimensioned labels proportionally to the number of mentions received, and we filtered by frequency of mentions, keeping only the most substantial ties between users who have been mentioned by others at least 10 times. We applied the OpenOrd algorithm using standard parameters to create the final layout, and with the modularity calculation, we coloured nodes by modularity to recognise the user communities. In Figure 1 we can appreciate the output of the steps described.

Figure 1 shows different communities that, with an explorative analysis of the dominant voices, can be easily categorised by language. A peculiarity is the absence of a significant Anglophone cluster: This is maybe related to the fact that English is used in this context as a transversal language for communication among the different communities. Other linguistic communities (Spanish, Dutch, French, and Italian) can be easily recognised as representative of the other most used languages of our dataset. The five main languages are quantified in Figure 2.

The second step of the analysis was to map subtopics and detect primary and secondary subjects using hashtags as references. For each of the five main languages, we performed a co-hashtag analysis, which highlighted the relations between hashtags allowing us to perform a sort of topic modelling for each linguistic community.

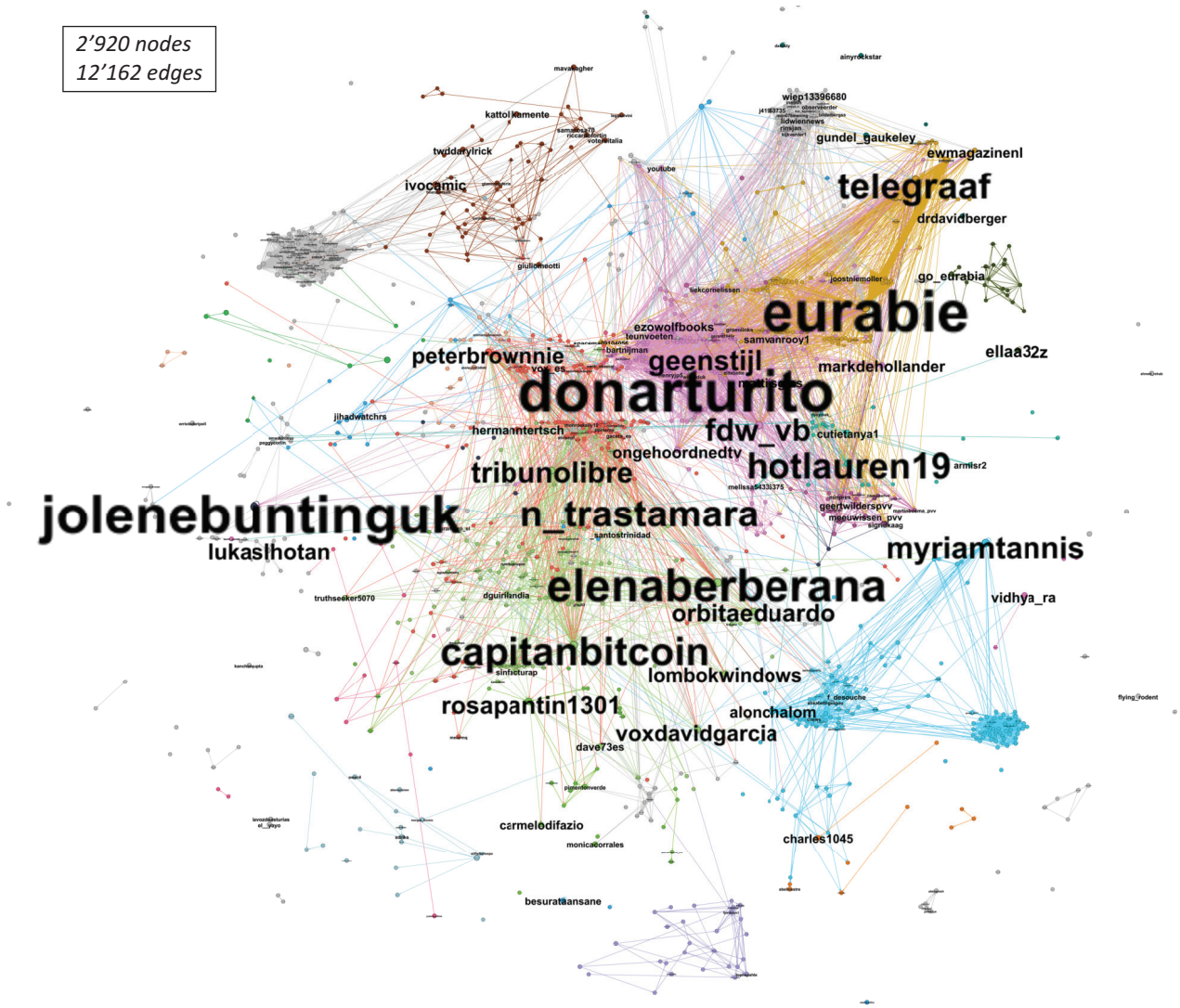


Figure 1. Mention analysis that highlights different communities and dominant voices.

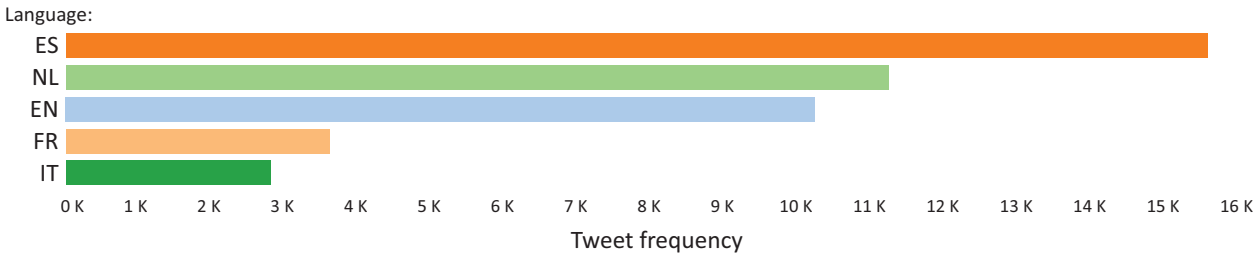


Figure 2. Histogram showing the five most represented languages in our dataset.

To perform the co-hashtag analysis, we shaped a graph that describes the connection between the hashtags when they were used in the same tweet. Applying the Fruchterman-Reingold algorithm with standard parameters, we performed a clusterisation that grouped the hashtags to discern different narratives and the modularity calculation allowed us to identify the different clusters that we can see in Figure 3.

The figures show the different narratives for each language. Some narratives are common across languages

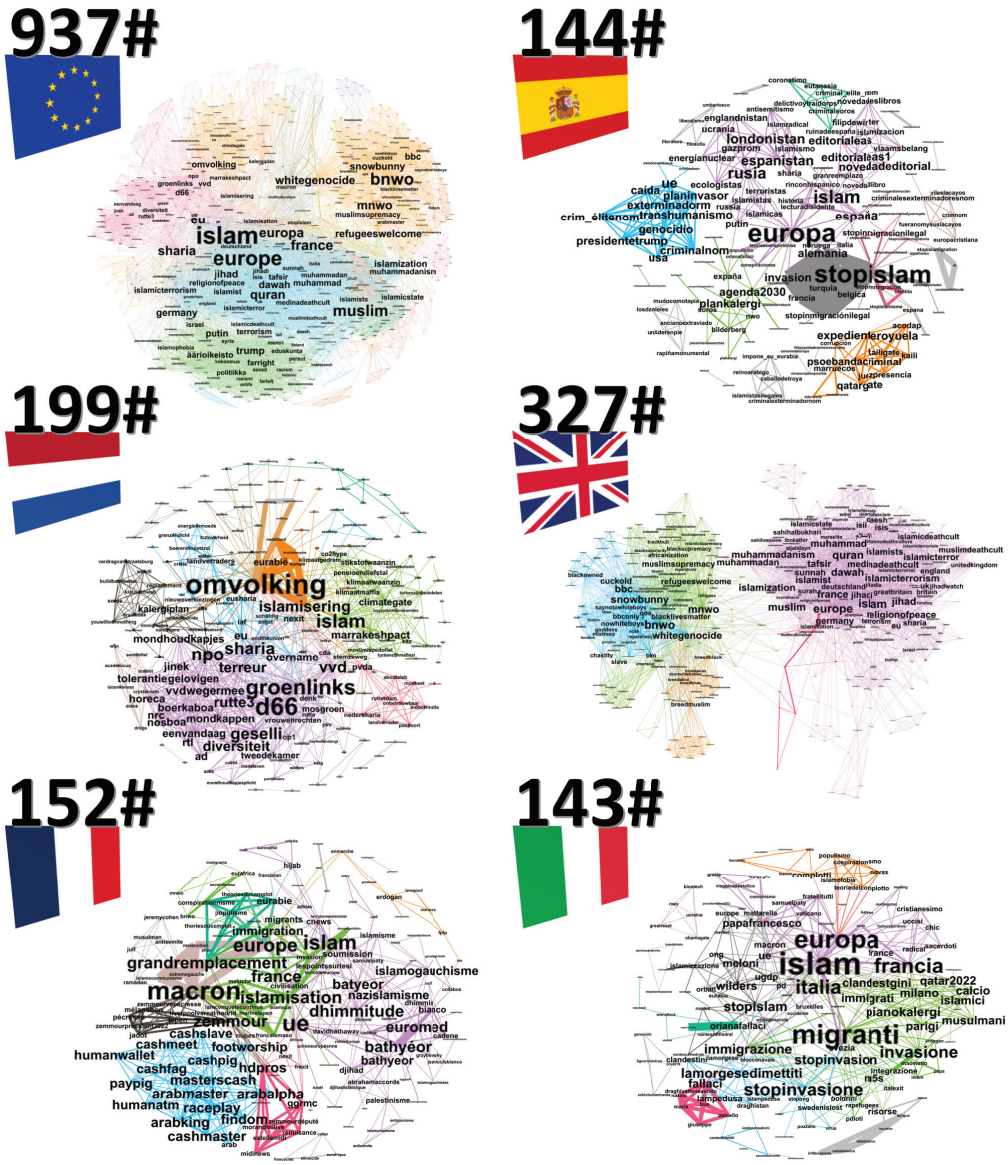


Figure 3. Co-hashtag analysis highlights the main narratives conveyed through hashtags. Notes: The top-left image represents the whole dataset, while the others focus on each of the languages considered; the number followed by the # indicates the number of hashtags in each graph.

and contain anti-immigration messages while others are language-specific and relate to news events. A particular feature of the English graph is the presence of two main clusters, one containing generic debate and the other containing instead supremacist, sexually explicit, and politically incorrect messages.

Finally, to detect primary and secondary sources of information, we performed a user–domain network analysis, which allowed us to highlight the relationship between sites shared on the platform and the users. In this case, we performed the analysis at first considering the entire dataset and later considering each of the different main languages identified earlier. Analysing a bipartite figure means having two distinct entities in the same figure that we differentiated using the label's colour. We dimensioned the domain's labels by frequency of use and exploited users' homophily (Halberstam & Knight, 2016; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954) as characteristic of social networks to detect communities that revolve around particular sources of information.

We applied the OpenOrd algorithm with standard parameters for the all-encompassing graph to show the complexity of the information ecosystem. For the single-language ones, we opted for the Fruchterman-Reingold algorithm giving more emphasis to the users connected to the main information sources. As previously, modularity calculation allowed us to visually highlight the main clusters shown in the top-left image (Figure 4), followed by linguistic-related graphs.

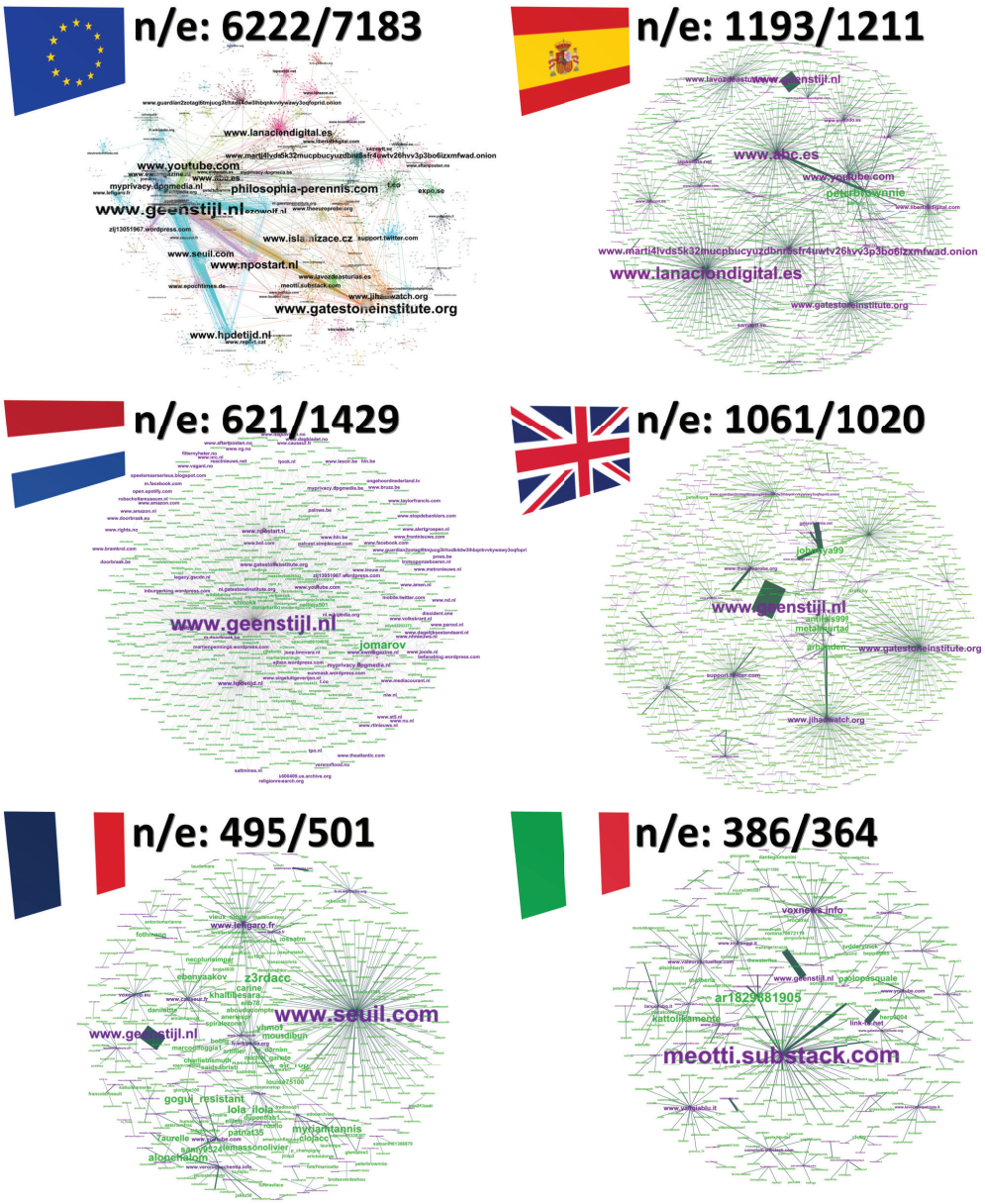


Figure 4. User–domain analysis highlights the primary information sources shared by users. Notes: The top-left image represents the whole dataset, while the others focus on each of the main languages; n/e indicates the number of nodes/edges of the graph.

These figures show the information ecosystem of each linguistic community. Primary evidence shows that each language community has its peculiar partisan sources. However, we can notice several pervasive sources, such as the Dutch blog Geenstijl, recurring in all five communities, and the alt-right American Gatestone Institute, appearing in all the communities except the French one.

Social network analysis allowed us to identify the voices of influencers, extreme topics and content, and hyper-partisan and polarised information sources. To finally grasp more nuanced aspects of the Eurabia doctrine debate and answer our research questions more precisely, we undertook a qualitative analysis phase. We analysed the content by classifying the most shared sources of information and correlating them, when possible, with the dominant voices. To gain more insights from each narrative, we qualitatively investigated users' profiles and interpreted the tweets in light of the literature review.

4. Discussion of the Results

4.1. Which Are the Most Relevant Voices in This Process?

Each linguistic cluster is characterised by few connections with the other ones and by the presence of some dominant voices (journalists belonging to print media or television) who re-launch recurring messages and narratives in political discourse, attributable to right and extreme right parties, and by activists who are spreading content from blogs and hyper-partisan newspapers. As explained in Section 2, dominant voices (Rogers, 2018) refer to the most mentioned profiles in a specific cluster as well as the profiles whose messages are more retweeted. Consequently, they can be considered influential regarding an issue debated on social media. Concerning the topic of Eurabia doctrine on Twitter, traditional opinion leaders' profiles (parliamentarians or party leaders) were not as prominent, in fact, as multiple individuals (journalists or activists) who variously discuss such theories. In other terms, linguistic communities appear cohesive around a limited number of *social influencers*. McCorquodale (2020) suggested that social influencers do share information from traditional media or opinion leaders, but their online information-sharing activities reflect mostly their views and perspectives. Influencers have more direct engagement with their audiences than traditional opinion leaders, and their social media activities can lead their audiences away from traditional media toward social platforms.

Given the particular features of the topics related to the Eurabia debate and the presence of specific dominant voices, it is possible to identify several Political Social Media Influencers (PSMIs) in each linguistic cluster analysed through digital methods. Bause (2021) defines PSMIs as users who become well-known on social media and, as self-created personal brands, regularly distribute self-produced political content with which they reach and potentially influence a dispersed audience. PSMIs and political opinion leaders share similar characteristics: both are extroverted, self-confident, and communicative individuals who occupy central positions within larger social (online) networks. They talk about political topics with people in their social networks who perceive them as credible communicators. This gives both political opinion leaders and PSMIs potential for political influence. Nevertheless, the role of PSMIs is much more preconditioned than that of opinion leaders. PSMIs are, in principle, public communicators who are dependent on social media platforms and their logics and algorithms. In the quest for visibility and attention, they must build an authentic personal brand capable of reaching an audience that systematically consumes their content. They are also heavily committed to engaging with their online followers to reinforce their social networks.

Based on the qualitative research conducted by scraping the text of profiles' tweets between the years 2020 and 2022, several significant pieces of evidence were identified. Following the division into linguistic communities described in Section 3, in the Spanish cluster we observe in particular the role of three PSMIs: Elena Berberana (@ElenaBerberana with 1,502 mentions), Noelia de Trastámara (@N_Trastamara with 984 mentions), and Capitan Bitcoin (@CapitanBitcoin with 1,089 mentions). The profile with the most followers is Captain Bitcoin with over 180,000, followed by Elena Berberana with 80,000, and finally Noelia de Trastámara with 35,000. The first case refers to a Valencian writer based in London and the author of a text criticising the hegemony of European leftists guilty of manipulating culture and the economic system and mortifying Spanish sovereignty in the name of opportunistic multiculturalism. Elena Berberana is a self-styled journalist, also linked to alternative news sites, who expresses populist positions linked to the new right-wingers in Spain and Latin America and repeatedly invokes conspiracy theories linked to the figure of tycoon George Soros and his alleged mission to "Arabize" Europe. Finally, Noelia de Trastámara writes in her feed that she has recovered her profile after two years of censorship from Twitter linked to her no-vax and denialist activism concerning Covid-19. Concerning the Eurabia theme, the three profiles particularly emerge between 2020 and 2021 commenting on some news events (attacks by immigrants towards European citizens) and referring to Oriana Fallaci's famous theses.

Among the linguistic communities, however, it is the Dutch one that merges the most influential profiles: notably Arthur van Amerongen (@DonArturito with 3,355 mentions) and Eurabië (@Eurabie with 3,078 mentions). The former is also a very active journalist on the Dutch blog Geenstijl, a news outlet known for political incorrectness and in which the profile writes repeatedly on the topic of Eurabia. The second profile, decidedly less followed, is nevertheless clearly aligned with a position

described as "against the conquest and population of the free West. Pro-Israel and against the EU."

The Italian cluster is very limited, and the only noteworthy profile is that of journalist Giulio Meotti (@giuliomeotti with 102 mentions) who has been writing for the newspaper *Il Foglio* since 2003. He is also the author of several books including *The New Barbarians: Is it Forbidden to Think (and Speak) in the West?* and *The Sweet Conquest: Europe Surrenders to Islam* from 2023. The profile is particularly interesting as it is linked to the Gatestone Institute, a US-based conservative think-tank with decidedly anti-immigration positions, also highly critical of European inclusion policies.

The English cluster shows the dominant profile of Jolene Bunting (@jolenebuntinguk with 2,392 mentions), a former councilwoman in Belfast who was suspended from political office for her ultra-nationalist and anti-European positions. Her feed is also explicitly critical of Ireland's migration policies and Europe in general.

On the other hand, a separate discussion deserves the dominant Hotlauren19 profile with 896 mentions, across the linguistic community, which instrumentally uses pornographic images and videos to highlight the "migration invasion" as a predatory attack by Arab males on European women. This particular narrative, which will be explored further in the next sections of the article, is hardly traceable to a "political" discourse or a "political" figure but clearly pursues political goals through a communicative strategy that leverages, as outlined in the introduction, the affective, emotional, and sensationalistic nature of *love Jihad* communication.

4.2. The Emerging Narratives on the Eurabia Theory

For each linguistic community, the most retweeted posts were quantitatively identified; secondly, a qualitative analysis of their content was carried out to identify the most exposed and visible sub-narratives of the Eurabia doctrine. The content analysis was carried out manually, by reading the most shared posts from our dataset and identifying several common topics which made it possible to define the emerging sub-narratives. We found that these sub-narratives are transversal among the different linguistic clusters. The analysis of the 30 most retweeted posts revealed the following sub-narratives.

Several retweeted posts are based on theories of ethnic replacement, sometimes celebrating anniversaries and episodes concerning influential personalities. In this category, which we could call "Eurabia doctrine exists," we included posts offering support for political actions to contrast "Islamic expansionism." Ten posts, namely 33% of the 30 most retweeted posts, fall under this category.

Six posts openly promote and disseminate the Eurabia doctrine. The most retweeted post (1,074 retweets and 1,914 likes) is from Noelia de Trastámara, who wrote on the 17th of August 2020:

> I am going to say this straight because people do not seem to find out. Islam has a clear agenda for Europe; Eurabia. It consists in increasing its population and taking advantage of our laws to reach institutions and abolish what we call democracy and implant the Saharia.

Three of the most retweeted posts are about celebratory narratives regarding anniversaries of influential personalities concerning the theories of ethnic replacement. In particular, messages about Oriana Fallaci, an Italian journalist who promoted the Eurabia theory, were posted on the occasion of the anniversaries of the birth and death of the journalist. The most retweeted ones say:

> Today we remember the great Oriana Fallaci, who was among the first to warn in the 1990s of the danger of a new Muslim invasion of Europe, predicting that the USA would become Eurabia if we Europeans did nothing to prevent it. (355 retweets, posted on the 29th of June 2020)

> Writer Oriana Fallaci almost destroyed her career and her life for saying we were going to become "Eurabia." She went from being a respected "anti-fascist" intellectual to being considered an icon of the far right. She died of cancer, alone, before a trial in Italy for "Islamophobia." (735 retweets, posted on the 15th of September 2021)

Among the most visible posts is a message from the French linguistic community, supporting a political and social action to contrast "Islamic expansionism":

> Bat Yeor, author of the pamphlet Eurabia (where contemporary European elites are said to renounce their Judeo-Christian roots and consign their people to a new *dhimmitude*) is a signatory regarding an article about 76 personalities affirming their solidarity with the Israeli people and call for a fight against Islamism in all its forms, in Israel as in France. (54 retweets, 99 likes)

A sub-narrative we could call "security threat in European cities: European immigration policies are to blame," emerges from posts including news reports on episodes of violence and attacks perpetrated by immigrants, or posts on speeches of political leaders on the security of European cities invaded by Islamic immigrants. They attack progressive European policies, open to immigration and in favour of extending welfare to immigrants. Fourteen among the top 30 posts fall under this category. Seven are news stories and political speeches on the security and Islamisation of European cities.

In the Spanish cluster, we found the most retweeted message (1,149 retweets and 2,340 likes) posted on the 6th of September, 2021 by Elena Berberana, who says:

> I hope that the girl brutally attacked by ten Moroccans, including several unaccompanied minors MENAs, recovers. Apparently, her face requires plastic surgery. Left-wing feminism is silent in the face of the violence and aggression in this new Eurabia that Fallaci predicted after 9/11.

On the 17th of October, 2020, a post by Jolene Bunting reached 764 retweets. Her message is clear: "EUROPE HAS FALLEN: Thousands of ILLEGAL immigrants and their white Liberal apologists march through #Paris demanding citizenship for illegals. This march comes just 24 hours after a Professor was decapitated by an Islamist terrorist in Paris. #Eurabia #Islamisation." In the Spanish cluster, another post is among the most retweeted. Its author is Rosa Maria Pantin (@rosapantin1301), who says: "Paris, policewoman stabbed to death by a subject to the cry of 'Allahu akbar' this was immediately shot down by the police, well nothing, the success of multiculturalism and integration in full swing in Eurabia" (364 retweets and 484 likes).

Seven of the top 30 posts are critical of progressive European policies. They are considered wrong because they are open to immigration and do not preserve European cultural traditions from being cancelled by multiculturalism. Among the top retweeted posts, we found a tweet by the French profile @MyriamTannis who, on the 20th of May, 2022, wrote: "Who will judge who will wear them in France? Eurabia, Hitler's second career" (637 retweets and 555 likes). The post includes the link to an article on the mayor of Grenoble, who authorised the use of the burkini. The second most retweeted post comes from the Dutch cluster, where the dominant voice, Arthur Van Amerongen, @DonArturito, on the 13th of September, 2022, wrote: "Quite curious that all the Dutch media reacted in shock and bewilderment to the election results in Sweden. Have followed the news from Sweden in recent years?" The post (366 retweets and 1,303 likes) refers to the fact that progressive forces in Sweden, a symbol of integration and welfare, suffered a significant defeat in the national elections of September 2022.

A third sub-narrative, which we called "demographic war," is related to the Love Jihad trope, according to which the population substitution is pursued through sexually predatory behaviours of immigrants and sexual support provided by converted European women. The total number of retweets for the posts included in this cluster is 1,326. The posts supporting this sub-narrative include pictures and memes that explicitly represent the predatory behaviour of Islamic males and encourage European women to engage in supporting *Love Jihad*. This provocative content aims to arouse strong emotional reactions in a strategy to spread Islamophobia (Fadil, 2023). According to Hernandez Aguilar (2023) and Fadil (2023), the diffusion of memetic campaigns on mainstream social networks is oriented towards synthesising complex content and providing more extreme and emotionally activating readings to mainstream content: "mostly pornographic images of white women were used for mourning a loss, the replacement of populations….To create despair, a sense of urgency, a call to regain what is ours" (Hernandez Aguilar, 2023). The explicit contents detected in our cluster can be interpreted as triggers that aim to arouse strong emotional reactions and incite verbal violence. The most retweeted posts of the cluster come from accounts with explicit nicknames such as Refugees Welcome, FemSis, or MuslimMajority. The most retweeted ones (five posts over the 30 most retweeted posts of our dataset) include messages such as: "A tiny preview of a Muslim supremacy video I'm working on. Yay or nay? #mwo #muslimsupremacy #eurabia,'' followed by a pornographic video (299 retweets, 1,027 likes); "Islamic Europe. Submit now. #eurabia #refugeeswelcome #muslimworldorder #whiteinferiority," followed by a pornographic video (290 retweets, 955 like); "Europe in 2050 will be Eurabia," followed by a meme on the cultural invasion of Europe (282 retweets); "in #Eurabia, this will be a common sight: Alpha refugees publicly using wh*te girls. The best part? The girls will love it," followed by a pornographic video (187 retweets, 847 like); "their best weapon to conquer Europe is between their legs, #eurabia #islam #frankistan," followed by explicit pictures (67 retweets, 317 likes).

Only one post opposing the spread of Islamophobia is to be found among the top retweeted posts. It is a post by Vidhya Ramalingam, founder, and CEO of Moonshot, a US tech company. On the 14th of May, 2022, Vidhya posted the following message (retweeted 232 times):

> In 2011, after a white supremacist killed 77 people in Norway, I remember walking into E.U. government offices, trying to educate our leaders on the ideology that motivated the perpetrator—specifically the notion of "Eurabia," a supposed plot to destroy white civilisation.

4.3. The Most Used Sources

The research highlighted a series of partisan blogs, portals, and information sites which represent the primary content sources concerning the theme of ethnic substitution (Table 1). There are some sites whose contents are often used across different clusters, like the Dutch Geenstijl.nl site, in which the blog *Safari Eurabia*, by Arthur van Amerongen, represents the most used source within the sample represented by our dataset (5,736 citations among the posts of all five of the most relevant linguistic clusters). GeenStijl is a news outlet with an ironic and sometimes aggressive tone. Among the most used sources are sites belonging to less-represented linguistic clusters in our dataset: The site https://www.islamizace.cz/in the Czech language (739 citations) or the blog https://philosophia-perennis.com in German (303 citations). Philosophia Perennis' website was founded by

David Berger, a German theologian, journalist and gay activist. He has been repeatedly prosecuted for his open criticism of Islam. The Eurosceptic UK blog https://www.theeuroprobe.org, used as a source 89 times, is also part of this group. These are sites based on editorial projects strongly critical of the alleged processes of Islamisation.

Among the blogs active in disseminating information on the Eurabia theory are those of dominant voices of the linguistic community, such as the Italian journalist Giulio Meotti, whose information blog and related newsletter are cited as a source 101 times.

Widespread dissemination also characterises online sites of international think tanks oriented towards the creation and distribution of contents that are highly critical of European immigration policies and which warn against presumed processes of ethnic substitution. The Gatestone Institute, whose website https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org is mentioned 416 times, is a US think tank founded in 2008 and active in publishing content on the danger of Islamisation. The Gatestone Institute is a common and transversal source used in four of the five main linguistic clusters of our dataset. The anti-jihadist website https://www.jihadwatch.org is linked as a source 152 times. It is a US blog directed by Robert Spenser, an expert on Islamic theology, law and history, author of several books and consultant for the FBI. A relevant source is the US far-right blog https://gatesofvienna.net, created in 2004 by Edward S. May. The blog hosts articles and posts written by anti-Muslim authors and is a prominent voice in the counter-jihad movement in the US and Europe. According to the Bridge Initiative of Georgetown University, https://bridge.georgetown.edu, Edward May is also a member of the board of directors of the International Free Press Society (IFPS), an American and Danish-based group. IFPS seeks to defend free speech from "forces within Islam [that] are conducting a jihad against the West." According to the anti-racism organisation HOPE not Hate, https://hopenothate.org.uk, IFPS's advisory board members include Bat Ye'Or and several US anti-Muslim actors such as Robert Spencer (author of the blog Jihad Watch).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Conspiracy theories related to the Eurabia doctrine prove detrimental to EU policies aimed at devising measures that can address migration phenomena that have become particularly divisive in public opinion. Nevertheless, such conspiracies seem to be strategically instrumentalised by political actors, who, although at the margins of institutional processes, amplify their relevance in the social media debate. In response to RQ1, our analysis showed how certain actors, PSMIs, are the main amplifiers of this content. PSMIs are often journalists or private citizens with hyper-partisan positions who can catalyse dissent at the national level and polarise the debate on issues such as an alleged national primacy or the risk of uncontrolled invasion by migrants. The characteristic theme of the Eurabia doctrine is thus reframed, also thanks to the role of PSMIs, both in the tones of anachronistic nationalism and also through a decidedly more trivial reading as in the case of the *Love Jihad* narrative.

In response to RQ2, an in-depth analysis of the thirty most retweeted posts allow us to identify the emerging sub-narratives about Eurabia. The first sub-narrative is related to the Eurabia doctrine: Posts trying to persuade readers about international plans for ethnic replacement or celebrating anniversaries of influential personalities concerning ethnic replacement theories. A second emerging topic is the security threat in European cities caused by European immigration policies. These posts attack European policies open to immigration and in favour of extending welfare to immigrants (often disseminated by non-European sites, particularly US sites). A third sub-narrative is about "demographic war and sexually predatory Muslims," according to which population substitution is also pursued through the predatory behaviour of Arab immigrants toward European women. Posts supporting this sub-narrative often include pictures and memes that explicitly represent, even through pornography, the predatory behaviour of the Islamic male to provoke strong emotional responses (Fadil, 2023).

In response to RQ3, our analysis highlighted some sites whose contents are often used across different clusters, such as the news outlet Geenstijl.nl (Netherlands). According to Pilbeam (2011), we found that US websites linked to the US far right, which address a domestic audience, contribute to disseminating the Eurabia doctrine. They aim to admonish decision-makers regarding the loss of traditional values that led Europe to an alleged

Table 1. Most used sources of information.

Source	URL	Citations
Geenstijl.nl—blog Safari Eurabia	https://www.geenstijl.nl	5,736
Islamizace	https://www.islamizace.cz	739
Gatestone Institute	https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org	416
Philosophia Perennis	https://philosophia-perennis.com	303
Jihad Watch	https://www.jihadwatch.org	152
Giulio Meotti's Newsletter	https://meotti.substack.com	101
The Euro Probe	https://www.theeuroprobe.org	89

Islamisation. For instance, in our dataset, the Gatestone Institute website is used as an information source in four of the five main linguistic clusters. The US website Jihadwatch is also widely spread. Another relevant source is the United States far-right and anti-Muslim blog Gates of Vienna, created by Edward S. May, a member of the board of directors of the IFPS, an American/Danish-based group aiming to defend free speech from "the jihad against the West."

Our exploratory research was conducted through a single-platform analysis, Twitter, which represents a digital space where people comment on news and participate in political debate. Notwithstanding this limitation, our research may have outlined a methodological approach that could be applied to other digital environments, thanks to a cross-platform approach. On the other hand, the advantage of using Twitter data in our case is the ability to analyse user relationships, messages and sources of information that spread the Eurabia doctrine conspiracy and gain personal insight into users, allowing us to gather additional details. From the mapping of user perspectives, some points seem to be in line with the literature on the topic. The fragmented nature of social media platforms can be appreciated in the insights captured, where highly polarised positions can be identified. This polarization cannot be quantified in our research, but qualitative analysis allowed us to gather positions from a wide range of perspectives.

Acknowledgments

The article is the result of a collaboratively designed and conducted research work. The writing of the sections is to be attributed as follows. Sara Monaci is the author of Sections 1, 4.1, and 5. Domenico Morreale is the author of Sections 1.1, 4.2, and 4.3, while Simone Persico is the author of Sections 2 and 3 and elaborated the figures and tables of the text using Gephi.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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