

# Violent misanthropy

**Violent misanthropy** is a generic term for an extremist use of violence based on a general hatred towards people. Violent misanthropist networks often consist of young people in loose groups on digital platforms.

**Both in Sweden and** internationally, there have been a number of cases that can be linked to violent misanthropy.

They concern young individuals who commit seem-

ingly unprovoked acts of violence that are filmed and spread online.

**Some of the most** prominent networks are classified as terrorist organisations in other countries. The National Center for Terrorist Assessment (NCT) has analysed this phenomenon from a Swedish perspective and assesses that, currently, violent misanthropy does not affect the overall terrorist threat level in Sweden.

## Violence and ideology

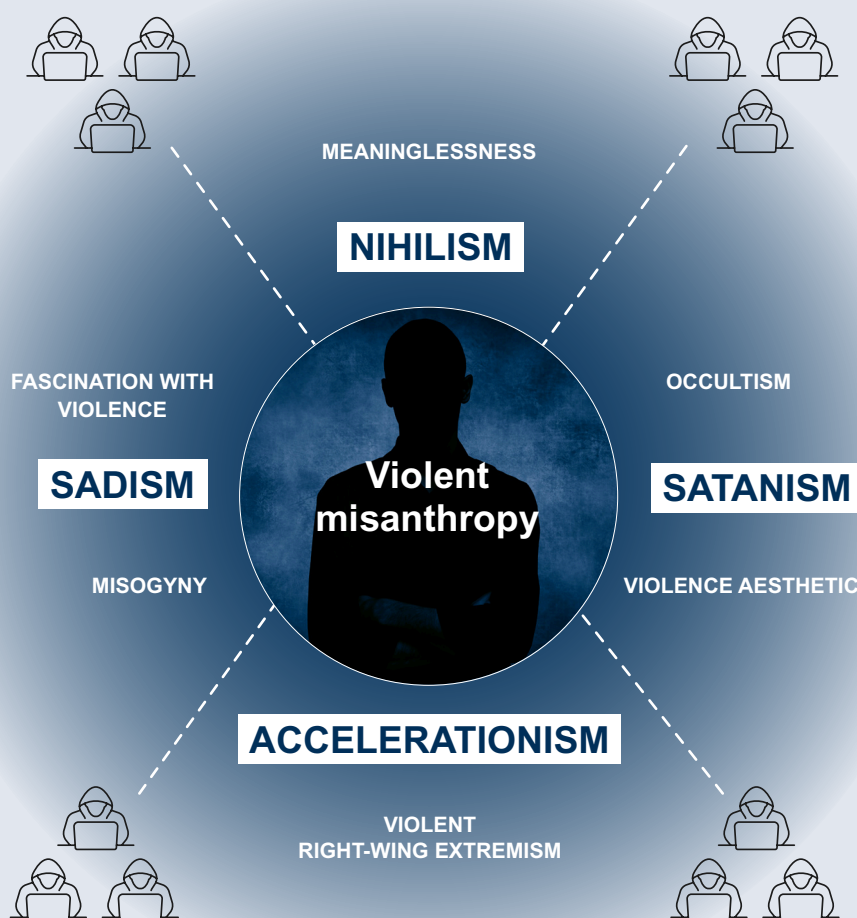
**Law-enforcement authorities** in Sweden have, for some time now, warned that there is an increasing number of young individuals becoming radicalised online within violent environments.

Violent misanthropy lacks a uniform ideology, and the driving forces behind the use of violence varies widely between individuals.

In certain cases, violence as such may be the driving force while other individuals may commit acts of violence after having been pressured to do so.

**Although the phenomenon** lacks a uniform ideology, there are, in several cases, more or less apparent elements of sadism, nihilism, satanism, and accelerationism.

In violent misanthropy, hatred and violence are directed towards society and people in general, as opposed to other violent extremism where hatred is directed towards specific groups of people or parts of society.



### NIHILISM

A view implying that all life lacks value.

### SADISM

Satisfaction gained from hurting others.

### SATANISM

Symbolic protest against societal norms, often including occult elements.

### ACCELERATIONISM

The idea that society is facing an inevitable collapse that can be accelerated by using violence.

## Threat to society

**The threat to society** posed by violent misanthropy mainly consists of the attempt to normalise the use of violence and of calls to commit acts of violence. As to the ideologies that have an influence on the networks, the accelerationist elements are assessed to pose the greatest threat to society.

**Acts of violence** with links to violent misanthropy, so far committed in Sweden, have been impulsive and relatively unorganised. In our assessment, future

acts of violence linked to this phenomenon will highly likely follow a similar pattern.

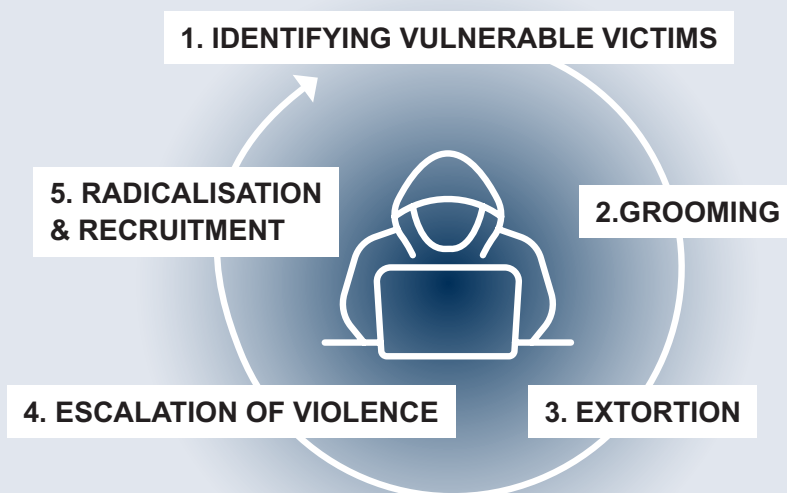
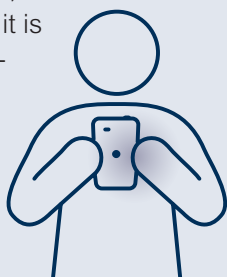
**In our current assessment**, violent misanthropy does not affect the overall threat level in Sweden. However, violent misanthropist networks deliberately contribute to lowering the threshold for using violence, especially among young individuals. In many cases, users also commit other crimes, such as spreading material showing abuse, cyber crime and extortion.

## Recruitment and radicalisation of children and young people

**Digital networks serve** as an important platform for the radicalisation and recruitment of new followers into violent misanthropist networks. These networks actively seek out vulnerable children and young people.

**The recruitment and** radicalisation process is often initiated in social media or on digital gaming platforms and then moved to more anonymous forums. The process usually includes elements of manipulation, extortion, sharing of material showing gross violence and encouragement to engage in self-destructive behaviour or to hurt others.

**Sharing material showing** gross violence, such as sexual abuse, animal cruelty, and acts of violence against people, is a central part. On the one hand, it is used as a tool to normalise violence and lower the threshold for the use of violence, on the other hand, it allows individual people to boost their status in the group.



### RADICALISATION AND RECRUITMENT IN VIOLENT MISANTHROPY

#### 1 Identifying vulnerable victims:

Contact is established via social media or other digital forums, often using a romantic pretence and manipulation ("grooming").

#### 2 Grooming:

At the same time, the perpetrator gathers information on the victim and their weaknesses.

#### 3 Extortion:

The victim is blackmailed and coerced into, for instance, self-destructive behaviour and committing acts of violence that are documented and spread in the group.

#### 4 Escalation of violence:

The violence gradually escalates and is directed towards other people.

#### 5 Radicalisation and recruitment:

In certain cases, the perpetrator has the goal to turn the victim into a recruiter.



The **National Center for Terrorist Threat Assessment (NCT)** produces strategic assessments of the terrorist threat in and against Sweden. The NCT is a joint working group staffed by personnel from the National Defence Radio Establishment, the Military Intelligence and Security Service, and the Swedish Security Service.

Every year, the NCT presents its annual assessment of the strategic terrorist threat in and against Sweden. The NCT also prepares continual assessments on circumstances that affect, or may affect, the terrorist threat in the long term, for the purpose of enhancing the knowledge and thereby the overall capability to counter the development of terrorist threats at an early stage.