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The far-right movement in Great Britain, 2009-2019

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Acknowledgement of collaborative work within the thesis

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is their own, except where work that has formed part of jointly authored publications has been included. The contribution of the candidate and the other authors to this work has been explicitly indicated below. The candidate confirms that appropriate credit has been given within the thesis where reference has been made to the work of others.

In publication “Far-Right Mobilisations in Great Britain: 2009-2019,” I, the candidate, did the analysis of the protest event data and wrote the manuscript, while William Allchorn reviewed and provided comments on the manuscript. In addition, William was responsible for creating an online interactive map that shows the protest actions of the far-right movement in Great Britain. The dataset I analysed is being hosted by the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (CARR).

Abstract

Over the last 11 years, Great Britain has experienced increased levels of far-right activism. Typical examples are the rise of the English Defence League, the formation of various splinter (e.g. North West Infidels) and confrontational (e.g. Britain First) groups, the proscription of terrorist actors (e.g. National Action) but also the emergence of street groups, such as the (Democratic) Football Lads Alliance, which at times have attracted large numbers of people to their demonstrations. The British far-right movement has experienced periods of expansion and decline, and a segment of British society appears to have espoused its rhetoric and ideas. The present PhD thesis aims therefore to analyse the variation in the levels of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain in the period 2009-2019 and to shed light on the most important factors, including the activities of counter-movements, that help explain far-right mobilisation over time. To this end, the analysis is based on a new protest event dataset that maps far-right protests in Great Britain, which I collected specifically for analysis in this thesis, and is mainly based on the content analysis of local and national newspapers. Protest events examined here range from public assemblies and organised marches to more extreme forms of hate crime and terrorist incidents. While the majority of previous research on the topic focuses on the description of single case studies, the present thesis employs a time series analysis design in order to present a more inclusive and systematic account of the far-right movement, taking into account the political actions of more than 100 groups between 2009-2019. This period is particularly relevant for this analysis and was chosen because it marks the rise of far-right mobilisation in Britain, a country that has been traditionally seen as having a very marginal far-right political sector.

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List of Abbreviations

BNP	British National Party
EDL	English Defence League
DFLA	True Democratic Football Lads Alliance
FLA	Football Lads Alliance
PEA	Protest Event Analysis

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 The contentious politics of the British far-right

The far-right, and the politics of the far-right more generally, have constituted a persistent concern – and even a threat to liberal democracies – over the last 30 years in Western Europe, including increasingly also in Great Britain. The worldview of the adherents of the far-right is comprised of assumptions that lead to “an inherent need for sameness, oneness, and group authority, resulting in intolerance towards diversity and individual autonomy” (Ravndal & Bjørge, 2018, p. 6). As a result, academics along with policy-makers and practitioners have attempted to explain the factors that have contributed to the far-right’s emergence and success. Although several theories from sociology and political science that focus on different levels of analysis have been developed and tested, they often come to contrasting conclusions (Amengay & Stockemer, 2019). We should keep in mind throughout this thesis that fine grained research with regard to the far-right is challenging and not always possible due to the lack of sufficient data (Goodwin, 2012). We should also note that past literature, especially before 2017, is mainly concerned with far-right parties and their strategies to attract voters, leaving unanswered questions that relate to the extra-institutional manifestations of the far-right. The latter has gained more attention in research studies that focus on terrorism and violence, approaching the far-right as the product of “socioeconomic or political pathologies (e.g. breakdown theories, relative deprivation)” (Caiani, 2017, p. 1). However, recent calls by academics (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018) to use more holistic approaches that take into account the intricate nature of the far-right increase

our chances to provide a fuller picture of the conditions that generate support for the ideas of this political actor.

Before explaining what this thesis has to offer to the current literature, in these early paragraphs we should explain why the study of the far-right poses several challenges to researchers. Not only is it difficult to understand the causes and consequences of the actions of far-right groups and solo activists, but it is often also unclear whether the actions or narratives that we observe in our everyday life are emanating from the far-right ideology or from other sets of ideas that although they may look similar, it would be misleading to label them as far-right, e.g. Islamophobia. The below excerpt from Marqusee's (2010, para. 8) opinion article explains clearly what we mean here:

I wish I could believe that the BNP, or even the BNP plus UKIP vote, represented the extent of the “racist vote” in Britain. The reality is that racist ideas, myths, assumptions, stereotypes and “explanations” are widespread and deep rooted in British society. The far right are part of a nexus which includes the racism of the state (in immigration, policing, criminal justice), the media and educational institutions; it's a racism that has elite, middle and working class variants. One of the weaknesses of the left approach has been to fix on the latter – on working class racism – as if it existed separately from the others. Perhaps that's why we sometimes sidestep the question of UKIP, whose election campaign relied heavily on anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim messages; its xenophobia is no less noxious than the BNP's, though it is deemed more respectable, a fact not unrelated to its different – middle class, Tory-voting – constituency.

Moreover, we should mention here that the far-right is an evolving entity which makes its study more complex. In brief, the ideological evolution and transformations of the far-right can be sub-divided into

different periods. For von Beyme (1988), the first phase of far-right mobilisation was hegemonised by variants of the post-war fascism. The second emerged during the 1970s (Caiani et al., 2012) and can be seen as an answer to “new waves of social deprivation” (von Beyme, 1988, p. 10). On the other hand, the causes of the third phase, which began in the 1980s, are seen to be more closely linked to unemployment and xenophobia. Camus and Lebourg (2017) identify four waves instead. The first wave lasted between 1945 and 1955 and involved groups that were close in terms of their ideology to the totalitarian regimes of the previous political era. The second took place in the mid 1950s and its main characteristic was being linked to movements that encompassed “the radicalized middle class” (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, p. 44). The third wave was described as the national populist wave of the period 1980–2001. The last wave began in 2001, largely reflecting the oft-cited “clash of civilisations” thesis (Camus & Lebourg, 2017), which argues that conflicts are to happen between civilisations defined as “the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species” (Huntington, 1993, p. 24).

In this thesis, we approach the far-right as a social movement (see also Caiani et al., 2012), i.e. as a political actor that uses the protest arena to express claims and make its voice heard. We are primarily interested in the extra-institutional protest actions of the far-right in Great Britain in the period 2009–2019. We do not limit our focus only to social movements that try to attract a large number of people to their demonstrations, we also include groups of the sub-cultural milieu, solo actors that may not be part of organised groups (e.g. Minkenberg, 2013a), and even political parties that channel their grievances through street protests. In other words, we study the contentious politics of all actors that emerge in the latter arena. Our knowledge about contentious politics has been influenced to a great extent by the

insights of prominent scholars in the field of social movement studies, and to be more precise, the work of McAdam et al. (2004, p. 5) who understands the concept as

episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants.

A small difference in our approach is that we also research the activities of solo-actors. In the methodology chapter we explain the logic in more detail, but for now it suffices to say that this is related to the shortcomings of retrieving information from text sources, such as newspapers, and the fact that it is not always clear who, i.e. group or individual, has initiated a protest event.

In order to study the extra-institutional manifestations of the far-right we focus on Great Britain; a country that has experienced increased levels of far-right activism in the last 11 years, and the aim is to shed light on the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations. The British case, as we also elucidate in the next chapters, for years was considered to be within the academic community the exception compared to other countries that were observing a resurgence of far-right politics in Europe; Husbands (2011) names it as “British exceptionalism.” However, in 2009 the country experienced the formation of a new group, the English Defence League (EDL). The latter group managed in a short period of time to make the news due to the provocative nature of its public demonstrations and the levels of violence that characterised its early mobilisations (Copsey, 2010). The following years would see the split of the EDL, the emergence of splinter groups, terrorist attacks and the murder of politicians, a climate of fear within local communities due to increased instances of hate crimes, the decision of the British government to proscribe groups as terrorist organisations, and massive mobilisations, among others. In

other words, the attention that the far-right has attracted in the country but also the developments that happened in the far-right movement make it an interesting case, given that our analysis, which is a time series analysis of protest events through the use of quantitative methods, will be to study both the successes and the failures of the movement.

It is also interesting to note here that for years the evolution and development of the British far-right was viewed through the prism of reciprocal mobilisation, i.e. the idea that political movements interact with their opponents, and as a result the strategic choices and future prospects of movement actors depend, along with a set of other factors such as the political and social environment, on the actions of counter-movements (Macklin, 2020). In the British context, this symbiosis has mainly been described in the past as a process of cumulative extremism between supporters of the far-right and Islamists. This terminology has even appeared in the government's counter-terrorism strategy (Busher & Macklin, 2014). It seems therefore important to further investigate the far-right in Great Britain in order to understand the main drivers of mobilisation. As we explain in the following paragraphs, we will examine the relationship of the British far-right with its opponents through a new research design that relies on quantitative analysis on the one hand and pays more attention to the anti-far-right movement (i.e. political groups and individuals that react to the actions of the far-right) on the other hand and not exclusively on Islamists.

Having clarified why the far-right in Great Britain presents a unique opportunity to make sense of the development of the far-right in the current juncture, we move on to explain next the contributions of this thesis and the main research question that will guide the logic and steps in the chapters of this thesis. This project aims to offer contributions to the following areas, i.e. how to conceptualise the far-

right and how to make sense of its defining characteristics, how to understand the effect of counter-protests and how to measure mobilisations. Another area is the creation and dissemination of the new protest event dataset.

1.2 The main research question and the contribution of the thesis

The aim of the present thesis is to provide a convincing answer to the following question, which constitutes the basis of our research: what are the most important factors that help explain the mobilisation of the British far-right in the period 2009-2019? We are looking for answers that show how and why the British far-right has experienced periods of success but also periods where far-right activists failed to advance their claims. This means, in other words, that the dependent variable of this project refers to the levels of far-right mobilisation in the period 2009-2019. As explained before, Great Britain during the last 11 years has to offer many examples of far-right protest events. This research question allows us therefore to examine different aspects of the object of our analysis and provide comprehensive answers, so that the reader is able to better understand this phenomenon and how it has evolved. Given the current political climate, where the mainstreaming of far-right ideas is being discussed extensively (Feischmidt & Hervik, 2015), the present study aspires to investigate this political phenomenon and situate it within a research area, i.e. social movement studies, that has only recently started to pay more attention to the behaviour of far-right actors (e.g. see Caiani et al., 2012).

Our theory is based on the premise that a combination of socio-economic and socio-cultural grievances create demand for the far-right, while a number of contextual opportunities, i.e. political competition between main political parties along with media framing, further determine the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisation. In order to see how the protest activities of opposition groups affect the decision of

far-right activists to take to the streets, we also theorise that the interactions of the far-right with counter-movements will affect the former in a negative way when there is a strong opposition. This means that in occasions where the far-right feels defeated, i.e. when its protest actions are outnumbered by its opponents, its members and supporters will be less inclined to participate in future campaigns.

Moreover, it is expected that the methods and findings of this thesis will contribute to the current bibliography in the following ways: first, as we also explain in section 1.3, our research pays particular attention to different concept formation approaches, their internal structure, and logic. This in turn helps us create an updated version of Mudde's (2007) conceptual framework for classifying political groups and individuals who are influenced ideologically by the far-right. This is an important task, given that many studies do not explain clearly how their object of research is being defined. Having in mind that our research is longitudinal in scope, and it is likely to include actors that are characterised by different degrees of radicalism, we need to know how and why an extreme group which advances the idea of using violence as a means to achieve goals can be grouped together, in the same political family, with a peaceful group, for example. We show that the label far-right and most importantly the attributes of the concept, i.e. nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007), is a mature political science concept that allows for addressing in a convincing manner potential doubts about the methods and logic employed in the thesis.

The second major contribution of the thesis is the inclusion of the presence of counter-movements in our explanations of far-right mobilisation. The idea of movement and counter-movement interactions is not new (e.g. see Zald & Useem, 1983); the latter has a long history in the field of social movement studies, and it has been suggested that political groups are the nodes of a network that consists of many

organizations that exert influence on each other (Oliver & Myers, 2003). However, what is missing is a quantitative analysis of this interaction, especially when the variable of interest is the mobilisation of the far-right. Except for that, studies that analyse these interactions for the British far-right, they often assume that the opposite pole consists of radical Islamists (Carter, 2020). Here, we look at interactions between the far-right and the anti-far-right movement (e.g. anti-fascists and community groups). However, we should note that the operationalisation of this relationship in quantitative terms is difficult, given that there is a dearth of previous research; this is the reason why we attempt here with our research to contribute to this academic debate through the presentation of our approach. To this end, we additionally use a new statistical method and a programming tool, i.e. the R package `tscout`, that implements it (the latter takes into account the fact that we are analysing time series count data).

Related to the above, the third contribution concerns the way we have operationalised the dynamics of far-right mobilisation and equally counter-mobilisation. While most quantitative studies that look at the same (or similar) dependent and independent variables as this thesis assume that the significance of each protest – regardless of size – is the same, we have decided to take a different path, explaining that this may not represent reality accurately. For instance, on 1 September 2012, the EDL organised a protest in Walthamstow, North East London. Although hundreds of its members took part in the demonstration, thousands of anti-far-right activists took to the streets and showed to the EDL that its mobilisations will not remain unopposed (Childs & Langston, 2012). This event was the main initiating factor that drove the logic of the thesis to assign different weights to protest events based on the number of participants for each event. Although we could have also weighed variables based on the levels of violence or radicalism (e.g. see Biggs, 2016), we decided to proceed only with the first step

and in the future if this approach is accepted by the academic community, we can also expand the weighting system to include all relevant factors.

The fourth contribution is the dataset on the British far-right that we have produced for this thesis and constitutes the backbone of our research project, since without an adequate number of protest data it would have been impossible to examine far-right mobilisations over time through a quantitative time series design. The dataset at its current stage of development, since this is an ongoing project, has mapped more than 2000 far-right events for the last 11 years. We should also add here that a part of the dataset, that looks mainly at demonstrative and confrontational events, has recently been hosted by the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (Dafnos, 2020), which is a network of academics and practitioners that lead the current debate on far-right politics on a global level. Our decision to make it public is evidence of the main principle upon which this research is structured, and this is transparency.

Having discussed the main contributions of the thesis, we now proceed with a brief introduction to the content of each chapter in the outline that follows.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The thesis is divided into five parts; 1) it starts from the conceptualisation of the main object of analysis, i.e. the far-right, moving 2) to theory formation, and then 3) continues with explaining in detail methodological choices. 4) The next part introduces the British far-right to the reader through an examination of the history of the most important far-right groups in Great Britain, while 5) the last part, Chapters 6 and 7, presents the findings of the new dataset and also the results of the regression analysis

that shows which factors appear to have a statistically significant impact on the levels of far-right mobilisation. Below, we explain in more detail the content of each chapter.

Chapter 2. The conceptualisation of the far-right: a synthetic review of the current literature

Chapter 2 is mainly based on the work of two prominent scholars in the field of social sciences, i.e. Giovanni Sartori and Cas Mudde. The chapter intends to explain in a convincing manner how the far-right can be conceptualised. The metaphor of the “ladder of abstraction” is used here to describe the exact relationship between the constituent parts of the far-right concept. We discuss the idiosyncrasies of the far-right, the factors in other words that have impeded an agreement on what the far-right is and what it represents. We also argue that there should be a solid basis upon which one can build on ideas about concepts; we are interested in identifying criteria for classifying groups into broader political families, concluding that ideology is the best candidate for this task. After an explanation of the ideological traits of the far-right, with the use of the ladder of abstraction (Sartori, 1970) we show the differences between the radical and the extreme right, in turn discussing also where populism is positioned. The latter is deliberately mentioned here due to the increased attention that media and academics have placed on this political phenomenon particularly in the contemporary political context. The concept of populism at times appears to stretch beyond the limits that previous research has set for the extension of its ideological features; knowing therefore its relationship with the far-right can add more clarity and less dialectical battles with regard to its causes and consequences.

Chapter 3. Demand-side and supply-side theories, and the role of reciprocal mobilisation

Chapter 3 discusses all the relevant theoretical arguments that have been suggested in the literature and can help us understand the conditions that cause support for the far-right. Crudely speaking, these are

divided into demand-side explanations and supply-side explanations (Rydgren, 2007). The former look at the factors that create grievances and make the far-right appealing to different audiences, while supply-side explanations focus on the broader environment that shapes the decisions and future direction of far-right activists. However, they also look at the behavioural aspect of the far-right and how it can contribute to its success and failure. We also provide a detailed discussion about the role of opposition groups, the anti-far-right movement in our case, and how they affect the far-right. We agree with Alimi et al. (2015) here who argue that social groups do not radicalise in a vacuum but affect and are affected by the wider socio-political environment. Unlike other academics, however, who study this relationship through the “cumulative extremism” prism, defined by Eatwell (2006, p. 205) as “the way in which one form of extremism can feed off and magnify others,” we argue that for the aims of this thesis we should take into consideration overall levels of mobilisation and not only interactions that lead to violence (an idea which is implied in the previous concept). Besides, this is the main reason why we have used the term “reciprocal mobilisation.” The last section of Chapter 3 develops the main theoretical argument of the thesis, which is examined thoroughly in Chapter 7. The aim is to explain why we have decided to focus on the following factors (or variables), i.e. the past instances of far-right mobilisation (i.e. the autoregressive term of the dependent variable), counter-mobilisations, migration, unemployment rates, political competition between left-wing and right-wing parties, and the media representation of Muslims and Islam, as the most relevant factors for the explanation of far-right mobilisations.

Having said that, in Chapter 3 we clarify our hypotheses which state that

1. The activities of opposition groups will lead to lower levels of far-right mobilisation

2. Higher migration is expected to increase the levels of far-right mobilisation
3. Higher unemployment rates within the white population will lead to further support for the far-right movement
4. Strong competition between the main political parties will increase support for the far-right movement
5. Media attention to the Muslim question through negative frames will boost support for the far-right

Chapter 4. The methodology of data collection: PEA

Chapter 4 sheds light on the methodological choices and decisions we have followed in this research. In brief, the chapter aims to show how we have collected protest event data from news media texts such as newspaper articles and reports. It presents the Protest Event Analysis (PEA) method, which has been used extensively in the past by scholars who developed similar research questions. The chapter also discusses the main characteristics of PEA, e.g. what is a protest event or which action forms should be included in the dataset? How to demarcate protest events from each other? It continues with a detailed review of the criticisms that have been associated with the use of newspaper articles as the main source of information and explains how the thesis addressed the shortcomings. After a presentation of new developments that exist in social movement studies and concern automated and semi-automated ways of transforming written text into protest data, we introduce our strategy as well as the sources we have selected for the data collection. We also include the codebook in this chapter, so that the reader has a

more complete picture of the steps we followed in this thesis in order to generate new protest event data.

Chapter 5. The origins and ideologies of the British far-right

Chapter 5 is based on the assumption that the reader is not familiar with the British far-right. Since the next two analysis chapters describe on the one hand the political situation in Great Britain over the last 11 years and on the other hand the main factors in the statistical analysis that have contributed either positively or negatively to the mobilisation of the far-right, we included this chapter to present the most important far-right groups that have emerged in the country. The analysis is based on the following criteria: the historical continuity of groups in time, their protest size, the innovation and disruption of the tactics they have used, the degree of violence of some of their actions, the media attention they have attracted, and also their transnational links.

Chapter 6. The ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations in Great Britain, 2009-2019

Chapter 6 analyses the findings of the new dataset on the British far-right; it explains in other words the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisation in the period under examination. It provides graphs and tables to show in a clear way the patterns that have developed, while at the same time many examples have also been included in order to deviate from a simple reproduction of numbers, shedding light on the sequence of events as they have been unfolded on the British streets. We look at several characteristics of far-right protests, e.g. through the presentation of graphs that are based on the size of protest or through the investigation of the multiple forms of protest action. We are interested in figuring the main social movement organisations that have organised and initiated protest events in Great Britain and also the reasons that have motivated and mobilised far-right activists and sympathisers. The chapter places

emphasis on the actions of counter-demonstrators and shows what this means for the far-right, while statistics that refer to the number of arrests when far-right demonstrations meet opposition are also included. The last paragraphs touch upon another important issue, i.e. far-right violence and terrorism. Our aim is to discuss how violence has evolved over the last years in Great Britain, providing details about violent cases that made the news in Great Britain in the period of analysis.

Chapter 7. Regression analysis: time series counts

Chapter 7 constitutes the second analysis chapters. It uses statistical models, i.e. the R package `tscount`, to assess whether the theory advanced before has any implications for the far-right movement in Great Britain. This chapter presents the ways we have transformed theory into hypotheses and measures, elucidating the exact steps and line of reasoning for each decision. After the presentation of regression results, a discussion follows that focuses on the main lessons we can draw from this PhD research, and more specifically whether the inclusion of counter-mobilisations in time series models alter what we already know about the effect of other significant variables, such as migration and unemployment. We also explain the limitations of our research and potential ways it can improve in the future.

Chapter 8. Conclusion and suggestions for future research

Chapter 8 summarises the main findings of our research and provides a brief overview of its structure, i.e. the content of each chapter. It emphasises again the underpinning logic of this project, while it also includes a section on its limitations and how they can be addressed. The discussion concludes with some recommendations for future research, hoping that this thesis on the far-right movement in Great Britain has contributed to the current literature.

Chapter 2. The conceptualisation of the far-right: a synthetic review of the current literature

2.1 Introduction

Recent decades have been productive in discussing and pointing out the core ideology of the far-right. As will be shown in the next sections, the re-emergence of the far-right, i.e. of a political actor that was deemed unable to defy oblivion the years following the end of World War II sparked the interest of academics (Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015). The consequence of this new development resulted in the identification of numerous ideological features that attempted to delineate as accurately as possible the true nature of the far-right. As a matter of fact, in a comprehensive review of the most relevant studies Mudde (1996, p. 229) counted 58 of which “only five features are mentioned, in one form or another, by at least half of the authors: nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy and the strong state,” whereas Druwe and Mantino (1996 as cited in Ignazi, 2003), who carried out a similar investigation in their research on 11 German studies, found 42 traits. While the authors relied exclusively on German sources, and as a result their findings may not be representative of the totality of the research material that was published at the time, one needs to keep in mind that the sample is likely to be less biased than assumed because it was primarily German and French studies that dominated the – not so rich – far-right bibliography in the period that lasted roughly between 1945-1980 (Mudde, 2016).

Moreover, in a more recent review, Fagerholm (2018) looked into research material that is based on the following criteria: 1. focuses specifically on the third phase (or wave) of far-right mobilisation, 2. deals

with European political parties, 3. is comparative in scope, and lastly 4. includes detailed references to the ideological orientation of the parties. Here, the author concluded that the far-right is defined on the basis of nine characteristics. Beginning with the most central ones, these are as follows: nativism, populism, authoritarianism, traditional ethics, welfare chauvinism, anti-systemness, anti-leftism, Euroskepticism, and globophobia. It is deduced then that the definitional possibilities are many, and that the challenge for scholars is to reduce the number of logically distinct conceptions that can be generated, so that they avoid serious classificatory problems (e.g. see Daly, 2003).

The field of far-right studies, as any broad field in the social sciences, has yet to reach a consensus on issues pertaining to definitions and terminology (Caiani, 2017). This is far from surprising given that the far-right is a combination of heterogeneous groups (Ramalingam, 2012) with different backgrounds and historical origins, which continues to evolve and change (Feldman & Jackson, 2014). However, we should not neglect the fact that much progress has been made over the years with academics and practitioners to adopt common directions on how to interpret some of its most fundamental dimensions, such as nationalism and authoritarianism, leading as a result to less confusion (Carter, 2018). It is not an exaggeration therefore to contend that the far-right is now a mature concept. This is a welcome development, as it is widely accepted that succinct concepts are requisite when conducting scientific inquiries; for instance, for Maggetti et al. (2013, p. 7), these are the “fundamental organizing step in social research” that achieve in condensing the abstract nature of social phenomena into malleable entities. The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide an analytic and synthetic overview of the most influential conceptualisations that have inspired far-right scholars (e.g. see Castelli Gattinara & Pirro,

2018; Froio, 2018). In other words, it aspires to create an easy-to-understand language with the reader, so that the present thesis is built on a solid basis.

To achieve this goal, we need to be clear about the factors that determine the limits of the chapter. Here, we elucidate the most important ones, but when it is deemed necessary we further elaborate in the subsequent sections. The first two factors are concerned with the geographical coverage and time-frame of the studies we take into account for the literature review, which – to a large degree if not exclusively – focus on the Western European experience of far-right mobilisation and refer to the third phase of far-right development. This is not a random decision; rather, it is a strategic decision inspired by Pappa's (2016) approach to the definition of populism, where he looked at the modern and democratic instances of this political phenomenon after the end of World War II. Hence, this decision allows us to view the far-right from a similar angle, ensuring that there remains a high level of consistency among the studies we analyse for the examination of the far-right. Moreover, the chapter draws insights mainly from studies that take political parties as the main unit of their analysis and not the less organised, non-partisan milieu of the far-right. Although this may sound too restrictive and biased, Carter (2018) reassures us that the findings of these studies can equally apply to other types of political groups, such as social movements but also to networks and looser groups that do not have established forms of organisation.

The chapter is divided into four parts. As we show, the role of the first part is dual; on the one hand, to explain the importance of developing good concepts and on the other hand to prepare the ground for the deconstruction of the far-right into its constituent elements, so that the reader can acquire a better sense of the research object being examined. The ideas of Sartori (1970) are discussed here at length.

The second part shows why it has been difficult to define the far-right and asks whether there are any idiosyncratic reasons that hinder its conceptual clarity and precision. The third part turns its attention to these criteria that can help us construct an appropriate definition with the discussion to revolve around ideology. At the same time, however, the section shows that it is not always feasible to discern whether the authors speak about the ideological platform of groups when they analyse the far-right, and this is the reason why it relaxes the assumption of purely ideologically-driven definitions. Instead, it takes a more flexible stance, allowing any academic position (e.g. ideology or frames) that views the far-right as a set of ideas, the so-called “ideational approach.” Next, the chapter analyses these characteristics of the far-right that set it apart and implicitly answers questions that have puzzled students of the far-right over the years. More precisely, which are the common denominators that hold together groups and individuals of this political family? Which are the types of the far-right? Furthermore, it provides brief recommendations on how to improve the conception of the far-right, indicating that fuzzy set theory can be a useful addition to the existing literature of concept formation. Theoretical examples follow to underline the applicability of this approach.

On a final note, we should emphasise at this point that this chapter is the backbone of the present thesis. If it was absent, the chapters that deal with theories, hypotheses, data collection, and the analysis of far-right mobilisation would only be loosely connected, entailing poor production of knowledge. Besides, this is the reason why we have decided to provide a detailed review of the logic of concept structures instead of simply listing the common elements that the far-right has been associated with in the exciting literature. Without a rudimentary understanding of the relationship between different variants of the far-right, we would not be able to make a complete sense of the findings of this PhD research. As we will

see, for example, in the methodological chapter that explains the limitations of newspapers as sources of data collection, the approach described above gives us flexibility to handle and classify empirical cases that cannot fit easily into particular far-right sub-types due to missing information. Thus, to know that a political group or individual meets the requirements of the minimal definition of the far-right is often enough for the purposes of this study.

2.2 Defining means understanding: the need for well-articulated concepts

Concepts are an essential building block of the research process. Metaphorically, they can be viewed as a medium that allows researchers to give substance and meaning to their theoretical ideas and empirical observations. Although the word “concept” lacks a unified form in the literature as many scholars have defined it in a different way (Adcock, 2005), the position of this thesis reflects the work of Sartori (1984), i.e. that the function of a concept is to draw the line between the main object of analysis and other related political phenomena. In doing so, researchers are likely to avoid pitfalls that are usually created when concepts are conflated. We acknowledge that this is not as simple as it sounds however. Conceptual confusion may persist even if clear definitions are provided, leading to the so-called “cat-dog categories.” The latter is a metaphor used by Sartori (1991) for these empirical cases that fail to be assigned into single categories (e.g. see also van Kessel, 2014). Following the ideas of Gerring (1999, pp. 357–358), concepts consist of three parts, and more specifically: “(a) the events or phenomena to be defined (the extension, denotation, or definiendum), (b) the properties or attributes that define them (the intension, connotation, definiens, or definition), and (c) a label covering both a and b (the term).”

This is also in line with Cohen and Nagel (Cohen & Nagel, 1934, pp. 231–232), who put forward that

logically, definitions aim to lay bare the principal features or structure of a concept, partly in order to make it definite, to delimit it from other concepts, and partly in order to make possible a systematic exploration of the subject matter with which it deals.

Another aspect of concepts that increases their heuristic validity is the ability they have to transcend the strict boundaries of the individual case. In Sartori's (1970) theorisation which is primarily comparative, concepts need to travel across different contexts, both temporally and spatially. The author reached this conclusion after he observed that politics had expanded and become more complicated. To further enhance his line of reasoning, he wrote that while the number of political units (i.e. the States) were 80 in 1946, "it is no wild guess that we may shortly arrive at 150. Still more important, the lengthening spectrum of political systems includes a variety of primitive, diffuse polities at very different stages of differentiation and consolidation" (Sartori, 1970, p. 56). Today, there are almost 200 States, but this is not the only, or even the most important, reason why the world of politics composes a perplexed system of overlapping dynamics; varying types of organisations and forms of participation, new technologies and communication tools, political actions with far-reaching consequences are all dynamic factors that have either emerged or evolved during the decades, contributing to the transformation of what we name now "modern political environment." Provided that this thesis aims to investigate the mobilisation of far-right groups and individuals for an extended period of time, 2009-2019, it is imperative for the main object of concern to be constructed in such a way that is able to address multiple ideological camps that despite their differences can be considered instances of the same genus (e.g. see Maggetti et al., 2013).

At the same time, we should not fall into conceptual fallacies, assuming that it is always possible to unequivocally determine the defining features of concepts. Although Goertz (2006), i.e. an influential

scholar on concept formation who is an advocate of the realist approach to concept formation, there might be cases that deviate from this pattern. A constructivist view, for instance, is better for the deconstruction of multidimensional and abstract concepts, such as attitudes or personality traits (Podsakoff et al., 2016). Besides, we should not neglect the fact that many concepts are entangled in multilevel societal relationships, are abstract, and as a result cannot easily apply them to empirical phenomena (Quaranta, 2013). If the discussion seems contradictory here, we should remind ourselves that social sciences cannot imitate accurately the natural sciences, and as Read and Marsh (2002, p. 233) argue “in the practical world of political research, the distinctions which are deemed so integral in theory can become blurred or sidelined. So, in practice, most positivists will not stick rigidly to their epistemological position.” In other words, if concepts are not constructed carefully, their entrenched fluidity is likely to confine their ability to become useful and analytical tools.

The above reasons explain why the logic of concept structures cannot and should not be driven by unmethodical decisions but should constitute instead a priority. Given that students of political science immerse in dialectical battles with the aim to order their reality, as Weber (1949) would probably repeat today, and that language depends on the environment that produces it, concepts can be assigned new meanings and labels. Two examples from the far-right literature are indicative of these points. The first touches upon fascism, a concept that had also remained highly contested for a long period of time. According to Griffin (2000), for several decades definitional shifts were common practice amongst the academic community because there was no agreement on what fascism is; a basic understanding of the concept was elusive due to the influence that various schools of thought (e.g. structuralism) had exerted on the delineation of its true character (Eatwell, 2011). The second example refers to the tendency of

some influential scholars, such as Norris (2005), Mudde (2007), Kitschelt (2007), Rydgren (2018), to adopt the radical right as the proper appellation of this political phenomenon, despite the fact that the usage of the term “radical” has undergone multiple transformations over the years, and even shifting between opposing ideologies. On the one hand, for instance, it was related to left-wing revolutionary groups (Rush, 1963) and, more precisely, with proponents of the French revolution (Mudde, 2007). On the other hand, the radical right was used in the American context of the late 1940s and early 1950s to denote extreme versions of some conservative groups, such as the Birch Society (Ignazi, 2003) and McCarthyism (Bar-On, 2018). As we will also see in the following sections, the “radical right” label is concerned with particular types of the far-right family and has been deployed either as a stand-alone or a supplementary term with other adjectives, e.g. radical right populism (Zaslove, 2004).

Having clarified their role, we should elucidate at this point how concepts come into existence. In other words, what is the underlying structure that binds the attributes of concepts, and what combination of attributes produces the final outcome, i.e. the constitution of the concept? As one could rightly guess, there is an array of several strategies available to be employed for the construction of a concept. Here, we follow Goertz¹ (2006); the attributes can be visualised as lying on a continuum between two poles. The first pole describes the classical (or classificatory) view of concept formation that uses necessary and sufficient conditions to discern whether the cases under examination are actual members of the same concept (Belohlavek, Klir, Lewis, & Way, 2009). However, before we continue with the opposite pole, we should clarify what necessary and sufficient conditions mean.

1 Another interesting discussion on this topic, i.e. on the formation of concepts, is also discussed in the work of Collier et al. (2008).

A necessary condition means that when the outcome is present, the condition must be present, whereas a sufficient condition shows the reverse relationship that if the condition is present, the outcome must be present too. Ragin 2000 explains the differences with the next illustrative examples: we assume that the introduction of a new technology to a production site is necessary and sufficient for a strike to occur. This statement can be represented with a logical statement as: $\text{technology} \rightarrow \text{strikes}$. In another scenario, technology is necessary but not sufficient because the strike is being provoked by the combination of two factors, the introduction of new technology and stagnant wages in times of high inflation. Using the arrow symbol again $\text{technology} * \text{wages} \rightarrow \text{strikes}$. From this, it becomes clear that technology becomes sufficient only when the factor wages is inserted to the analysis (the * symbol is used to denote the logical AND or the conjunction of two factors). However, it could also be the case that the new technology is sufficient but not necessary. We describe this relationship using the + symbol or the logical OR as: $\text{technology} + \text{wages} \rightarrow \text{strikes}$. In this case, it is either technology or wages that bring about the outcome. Finally, technology can be neither necessary nor sufficient because more factors contribute to the realisation of the outcome, e.g. reduction in overtime hours and workers' resistance to outsourcing portions of an existing production process. In simpler terms, this multi-factor relationship can take the following form: $\text{technology} * \text{wages} + \text{overtime} * \text{sourcing} \rightarrow \text{strikes}$ (this example can be found in Ragin, 2000, p. 94).

Having said that, at the opposite pole, we find the principles of the family resemblance structure, which were proposed by Wittgenstein (1953) and are anchored in the idea that the instances of a certain concept may not share common elements. It differs from the classical model because it does not possess any necessary conditions, only sufficient. However, other hybrid methods are also possible to

be implemented if they are not devoid of logical grounds. Quaranta (2013), for example, presents the mixed method which is inspired by the radial category (see Collier & Mahon, 1993) and is a variation of the previous two; in essence, it categorises concepts by allowing the concurrence of necessary and sufficient conditions.

Concerning the study of the far-right, the classical approach that was described above appears to be the most approach suitable (Carter, 2018), as it provides us with the theoretical leverage and flexibility in order to position under the same general term political groups and individuals who belong to this ideological family. Eatwell (1996) has used it, for instance, to define the minimum criteria of the fascist ideology while Mudde (2007) to define the ideological base of the populist radical right. In our study, we have decided to take this approach a step further and expand the object of analysis and cover all the variants of the far-right. In doing so, we challenge those who state that recent manifestations of fascism cannot be lumped together with radical groups that have no roots in the fascist tradition and accept, at least in the public space, the democratic procedures. Most importantly, with this approach we manage to overcome a classification issue that emerges in the next chapters and relates to the use of newspapers as sources of data collection. In short, it suffices to say now that it is not always possible to assess from newspaper articles whether or not it is extreme or moderate groups that initiate a protest event. Besides, as Copey (2018) argues, in the activist culture it is rather common for people who come from different ideological strands to form relationships and socialise, making their ideological differences vague. It seems vital therefore to familiarise ourselves with some fundamental assumptions that have informed the classical concept structure approach. These assumptions are four: 1. concepts are built on a set of individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, 2. the attributes of a concept are dichotomous

and 3. equally important, 4. there are clear boundaries between concepts (Taylor, 1995 as cited in Adcock, 2005). Nevertheless, one may logically wonder at this point if the classical view merely sets the principles for developing concepts, how, then, can we differentiate between the different types of far-right groups? How do we justify convincingly that they belong to the same ideological family?

The answer is given in the work of Sartori (1970) and his insights on the ladder of abstraction.² The latter constitutes a hierarchical and taxonomic system that, in essence, orders the elements of concepts into superordinate and subordinate categories. We ought to mention here that Sartori (1970) utilised the following terms, i.e. high level, medium level, and low level of abstraction to describe the ladder metaphor. We prefer instead the terms coined by Collier and Mahon (1993), i.e. superordinate and subordinate categories, because our examples in this thesis rely on their explanation of the ladder of abstraction. The meaning does not change; this is simply done for practical reasons in order to avoid confusion when visualising the dimensions of the far-right in the subsequent sections of the chapter. To be more specific about the idea of the ladder of abstraction, at the top of the ladder what stands is the superordinate category that has the lowest intension and subsequently the highest extension. Further reduction of its features at this level – and this is important – implies that the concept enters a phase of deterioration, it transforms into another entity. In the theorisation of Collier and Levitsky (1997), this means that the absence of a defining feature creates occurrences of the concept that do not fully qualify as its members, known as the diminished subtypes. On the other hand, the advantage of this conceptual “sleight of hand”³ is that increases differentiation, in terms of which cases can be included in the analysis, without falling into conceptual stretching. Sartori (1970) developed this system of abstraction

2 Collier and his colleagues use instead the term “ladder of generality” (e.g. see Collier & Levitsky, 1997; Collier & Mahon, 1993).

to circumvent the fuzziness that conceptual straining creates when researchers tend to compare objects that do not sit well together: what happens in this case is that the attributes of the concept are stretched (the intension remains unaltered), so that they include more empirical events (the extension increases). Nevertheless, if we abide to the Sartorian approach, the synchronic relationship between intension and extension rests on the notion that the empirical coverage of concepts increases (or decreases) as the number of features decreases (or increases). The reverse relationship clears the conceptual muddle and allows comparisons between objects. It is by moving down the ladder that differentiation is achieved, while by moving up conceptual stretching is avoided. Besides, we should keep asking ourselves that objects are “comparable with respect to which properties or characteristics, and incomparable (i.e. too dissimilar) with respect to which other properties or characteristics?” (Sartori, 1991, p. 246).

The following example on authoritarianism found in Collier and Mahon (1993, p. 850) better explains the above patterns. First, we assume that authoritarianism is the superordinate category. Since it is not our intention to examine whether the terms and definitions used in this example are indicative of the literature on authoritarianism, we can also assume that the concept consists only of two attributes: 1. “Limited pluralism” and 2. “Distinctive mentalities, not guiding ideology.” The latter is the minimum number of criteria that can determine the dimensions of the overarching concept, and as has already been highlighted, if one of these two attributes was not present, authoritarianism would lose part of its identity. Now, the inclusion of an additional attribute, e.g. 3. “Substantial mobilization of working class and/or middle class,” results in a specific type of authoritarianism, the populist authoritarianism. This step decreases the extension of authoritarianism by narrowing down the set of possible empirical cases,

3 We borrow this – admittedly unusual in political science – phrase from Aslanidis’ (2016) work and his critique on treating populism as an ideology.

while at the same time it augments its intension by adding one more feature. Diverging from this scenario, another attribute, e.g. 4. “Alliance of military, technocrats, and transnational capital against previously mobilized popular classes,” yields a new subcategory, the bureaucratic authoritarianism. We therefore observe that the definitional possibilities can be endless,⁴ since the combination of different traits leads to various manifestations of the primary concept.

In section 2.5, the ladder of abstraction will help us to clarify the boundaries that exist between groups leaning to far-right ideologies. This is an important step towards sketching a more complete picture of what is at stake in this thesis. If the challenge for researchers is to detect the unique features that are common among extreme and radical right organisations, we need more clarity on how to differentiate them from other political families. However, before we proceed to this specific part of the discussion and in order for the distinctions to be better understood, we contextualise the far-right and engage further with its particularities over the years in the next section.

2.3 The idiosyncrasies of the far-right as an object of analysis

To define means above all to comprehend the object of analysis. Concerning the far-right, this is not as straightforward as in other political families, and there are several factors that have contributed to this deadlock. Zaslove (2009, p. 309) stresses that “unlike traditional political parties, such as Communist, Socialist or Christian Democratic parties, radical, extreme and populist parties do not adhere to a single foundational doctrine, political philosopher or intellectual tradition.” In fact, Mudde (2007) picks out terms as different as extreme right, radical right, far-right, right-wing populism, ethno-nationalism,

4 More accurately, definitional possibilities depend on the theory as well as previous research. Otherwise, we may end up selecting arbitrarily items with the purpose of solely meeting the requirements of our individual project.

etc., with the list to contain more than 20 terms. Polysemy, however, can create communication noise and ultimately “obscure the pattern of findings in the literature, result in the development of multiple or conflicting measures of the concept, and impede theoretical progress” (Podsakoff et al., 2016, p. 172). The connotation of some terms may even vary in different languages and geographical regions and, if seen over time, it may reflect the specificities and sensitivities of each historical period (Griffin, 2000), adding as a result more parameters to the conceptual puzzle.

At this point, one could point to a paradox that has existed in the field of far-right politics that while the above discrepancies are real, they have not prevented academics from including the majority of the most successful parties into their analysis. However, van Spanje (2011, p. 296) asserts that conceptual fuzziness “increases the chances of neglecting other parties where good reasons exist to take them into account, and of including parties that do not meet the relevant criteria.” Furthermore, the discussion on whether splinter parties belong to this family has raised controversies (Kitschelt, 2007), with the latter being the case in European post-communist countries (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017) too. Consequently, it is not irrational to assume that conceptual muddling can grow bigger if the focus of the studies deviates from an exclusive preoccupation with political parties, taking into account less organised forms of mobilisation as this thesis does.

To be clear, concept inflation is not produced in a vacuum. The ideological and tactical transformations of the far-right since 1945 and the end of World War II had an impact on the classification question. The transformations of the far-right blurred the lines of what represents its core values, and they also mirrored its efforts to disassociate itself from an abhorrent and bloody page in history that could not be acceptable by majorities in a post-world war due to the stigma it carried (van der Valk & Wagenaar,

2010). Except for that, even today political actors who move within the boundaries of this ideological space and intend to increase their popularity often deploy a double and deceiving language in order to align their public profile with the established democratic norms (Feldman & Jackson, 2014). In line with this, Golder (2016) confirms this observation, writing that political parties are inclined to conceal their extremist beliefs when they speak to external audiences, so that they can avoid the negative side of (potential) legal consequences. This appears to be a strategic decision; in doing so, the far-right is further able to unmask its true, extremist intentions to the internal activists. Generally, whereas the far-right wants to appear and present itself externally to be the vanguard of liberties and human rights its agenda is intrinsically anti-liberal (Jackson & Feldman, 2011). With regard to tactical choices, the latter is evident in the activities of some extreme political groups. For example, Golden Dawn, a neo-Nazi group, that penetrated the Greek political system since 2010, organised provocative activities that only intended to protect the interests of the Greeks, targeting and discriminating against those portrayed as the “Other” (Dinas et al., 2016).

By looking more closely now at the transformation of the far-right, this helps us to understand why this political phenomenon does not fit easily into conceptual models. Rydgren (2005) explains that the introduction of a new (or revamped) master frame by the French party Front National (renamed to Rassemblement National in June 2018) signified the renewal phase of the far-right in Western Europe. The main elements of this new master frame were a mix of ethno-pluralism and anti-political establishment populism and were considered to have largely contributed to the success of the party in the 1984 European Parliament elections. This is seen as a critical moment that brought to the forefront of the political landscape an important innovation (Rydgren, 2005), which allowed the far-right to

break the chains with the past and render its modern facets distinct from its fascist mutations. Before we proceed to discussing the details of this master frame, however, we should mention that this section delves only into the notion of ethno-pluralism as the purpose is to elaborate more on the idiosyncratic factors that obfuscated the conception of the identity of the far-right. The analysis of the second element, i.e. anti-political establishment populism, fits better in the discussion on the ideological traits of the far-right.

Ethno-pluralism was the intellectual child of the New Right, i.e. a diverse group of think tanks and intellectuals that sprung up in countries such as France (Nouvelle Droite), Italy (Nuova Destra), and Germany (Neue Rechte) (Minkenberg, 2000) and envisioned to subjugate the sphere of meta-politics (Salzborn, 2016). The New Right was inspired by the ideas of the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci on cultural hegemony, establishing the so-called “right-wing Gramscianism” (Griffin, 2000, p. 170) with the purpose of retrieving the lost intellectual battle from the left; or as Betz and Johnson (2004, p. 314) put it, this new actor had the desire to “break the ‘cultural hegemony’ allegedly exercised by the ‘68 generation.” What is important from this discussion is that GRECE (which stands for Groupe de Recherches et d’Études pour la Civilisation Européenne) and the Club de l’Horloge, two of the most prominent think tanks of the French New Right, had an impact on the acts of Front National (Camus & Lebourg, 2017), influencing indirectly a whole political sector at the European level. If one wonders why ethno-pluralism subsumed such a big role on how the far-right was perceived, we should explain the doctrine that stands behind it. Ethno-pluralism denotes a new way of thinking about the relationship between races that “advances the idea of cultural differentialism” (Spektorowski, 2003, p. 116). It is destigmatised as it is not framed along the lines of biological racism, which is hierarchical (Song, 2014)

and devalues the very existence of people. Ethno-pluralism assumes that all ethnicities are equal but should stay apart, segregated (Minkenberg, 2000) because the mixing of cultures results in their decline and ultimately demise (Guibernau, 2010). Froio (2018) agrees that these ideas were distributed and “normalised” by the Front National in the 1970s and adds that they can also be found in the work of Schmitt on identitarian democracy (Froio, 2018). Although the notion of ethno-pluralism might give the impression that it espouses pluralistic views, Prowe (1994, p. 310) argues – and it is worth citing his words – that

the political breakthrough of the present extremist right in Western Europe has been so critically dependent on the rapid flow and incomplete integration of large numbers of generally non-European immigrants that rightist extremism without racism is just as unimaginable today as fascism was without anti-Marxism in the 1920s and 1930s.

At the same time, we should not neglect another crucial fact that the conceptual debate on what the far-right is perpetuates and will probably continue to do so due to its complex composition of multilevel concepts. This has several implications, since the far-right as an umbrella term transcends the sum of its parts. More specifically, if the elements of the far-right are to be viewed through the lens of different research traditions, the central concept takes on a new meaning. Pappas (2016, para. 42) is thus correct to say that “some cases, to be sure, will be mixed bags, and therefore their inclusion in analysis, or exclusion from it, will be assumed by how one defines” the basic attributes of a concept. Nativism, for instance, which is realised as the product of nationalism and xenophobia, lies at the core of the broader far-right family according to the contemporary dominant narrative (Mudde, 2007). Nevertheless, this is not the only interpretation of the term. Guia (2016) points out that if we simply equate nativism with a

negative stance against immigration, we are led to the awkward conclusion that even those who are sceptics of immigration might be dubbed nativists. Related to this, another example is populism, which is a concept that has attracted increased academic attention over the contemporary years and is considered an ideological component of the populist radical right (Mudde, 2007). The question, taking into account the fact that the existing literature does not define populism only as an ideology but also as a discourse, charismatic leadership, and political strategy (Aslanidis, 2016), is how to maintain consistency among the secondary dimensions of the primary concept if one of the dimensions, populism in this case, is approached in different ways. It seems as a viable solution that the key to overcome conceptual obstacles is to extract these particular insights from each research tradition that will advance the debate, by demanding mutual understandings (Bonikowski, 2017).

Another idiosyncratic factor is associated with the left-right dichotomy and whether it is relevant to the conceptualisation of the far-right. Ignazi (2003) devotes a whole chapter of his classic book “Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe,” arguing that the dichotomy is still useful because it reduces political complexity, offering a taxonomic platform that helps us to situate the orientations of political groups. The author draws this inference despite the fact that he acknowledges, firstly, the multidimensionality of the political space and, secondly, the drastic changes that have altered its composition since the late 1960s, e.g. through the new meanings that have been attached to the cultural cleavage or the initiation of mobilisation dynamics by new challengers such as the Green parties, the new social movements, and the populist radical right (Hutter, 2014a). Ignazi (2003, p. 6) elaborates further on this argument, stating that the above transformation “simply introduces different elements for the identification of the two terms, and it detaches the reference to the Left and Right from its traditional social interpreters.”

However, the description of the location of these relationships on the spatial continuum is confined to the vagueness of narration, and as a result it is difficult for the reader to understand how these two dimensions combine and enable analytic comparisons between different political formations. Regarding the classification of far-right organisations, Van Spanje (2011, p. 297) admits “that a party can, quite confusingly, be ‘left wing’ and ‘right wing’ at the same time.”

To further expand on the previous points, if we visualise mathematically each dimension as an axis that takes values between 0 and 1, the addition of new elements leads to 2^k configurations,⁵ where k stands for the number of different conditions inserted into the analysis (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). More specifically, if k equals three, it yields eight combinations, k equals to four results in 16 combinations etc. Another question still needs to be answered. Are all political families being identified by the exact same ideological features? If this is not the case, how do we compare them based on their spatial position? We can therefore safely deduce that a clear strategy is needed when dealing with complex concepts. Simplified analogies are attractive but should not be preferred at the expense of conceptual precision. The reduction of dimensions inevitably leads to the loss of variation that could otherwise let us pinpoint the ideology of the object under study. It is likely that this simplification will flatten out the important nuances and ignore their actual differences. Kvist (2007), for example, who is aware of the deficiencies of one-dimensional spaces, explains in his study on the welfare state that the unilinear representations cannot reveal efficiently the depth of diverse concepts. Similarly, Cole (2005, p. 205) leaves little room for disagreement when the discussion comes to this topic. The author considers both

5 These combinations of attributes would be represented as rows in a truth table (Kvist, 2007). Alternatively, some authors (e.g. Ragin, 2000; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012) find the idea of a property space equally useful for the same task (see Lazarsfeld, 1937 for more information on property spaces).

the left and the right as “part of a broader continuum – that is, there is simply not one ‘right’ and one ‘left,’ but a variety of ‘rights’ and ‘lefts’ that are distinguishable by how much they differ on key components.”

Having clarified the insufficiency of the left-right dichotomy, we should additionally mention here that not all dimensions are of significance to the definition of the far-right. Kitschelt (2007) contends that the economic factor has no role to play in the definition of the far-right ideology, while Camus and Lebourg (2017, p. 42) state that for the far-right “the economic system is never anything but a means placed in the service of a worldview and present needs.” Socio-cultural issues on the other hand do matter. We realise that if we had relied on the unilinear left-right dichotomy, we would not have been able to omit the economic-distributive dimension, since many traditional political groups are identified along this criterion. Still more importantly, there is another reason why the left-right distinction may induce unnecessary conceptual bias. If one thinks of the far-right family as an exclusionary faction of nationalism (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018) combined with authoritarianism, the question now is: what is the opposite of the far-right? A concept should not determine only its positive pole, i.e. what the defining attributes are. It should also direct to what is not (Sartori, 1984). Goertz (2006) suggests that the operationalisation of the negative pole be done with the negation of the defining attributes. Starting from this basis, a left-right divide would imply that the opposite of the far-right is the far-left, but it is far from certain that the negation of the two ideological traits, i.e. exclusionary nationalism and authoritarianism, results in far-left ideologies only. It would make more sense to include in the negative pole all political doctrines that do not espouse the aforementioned ideologies. From this discussion, we infer that the ontology of the far-right cannot be represented by a simplified left-right axis that locates it

at the right end of the political spectrum; the far-right stands on its own, as an independent and fully dynamic field (Camus & Lebourg, 2017).

This section presented in detail idiosyncratic factors that have impeded a unanimous agreement on the conception of the far-right. However, it is not clear so far how we can reach a satisfactory definition. We still lack the skills to judge whether factors such as the name and the rhetoric of a political group are adequate and even proper criteria to characterise this family. In order to find a convincing answer, we present a number of criteria that have this role in the current literature. We list the limitations of the and suggest alternative ways. Finally, equipped with adequate knowledge and confident that ideology provides a solid theoretical basis, we discuss and visualise the defining components of the far-right.

2.4 Taxonomic approaches: criteria for group selection into the far-right family

The aim of this section is to determine the type of the far-right identity. More specifically, based on what criteria do we allocate political actors into this political family? Is the identity of the far-right a collection of ideas or behavioural characteristics? To this end, we follow the discussion developed in Mair and Mudde (1998) and enrich it with relevant examples from the far-right literature. In a recent and comprehensive review on the far-right, Golder (2016) also points to these classification approaches and it deems pertinent to provide more details here. Mair and Mudde (1998) describe four, not nested but often overlapping as they say, ways of implementing party taxonomies that rely on the: 1. origins of the political party (the sociological approach), 2. transnational federations, 3. policy and/or ideology, or 4. party name.

Looking at each one separately, the first approach classifies political parties on the basis of their historical origins and examines whether they emanate from similar historical conditions or whether their mobilisation is driven by a similar set of interests. Although this approach “sets contemporary party distinctions within the broader patterns of European political development” (Mair & Mudde, 1998, p. 215), it fails to account for changes that occur over time and impact the internal organisation, electorate, or identity of parties. An example from Scandinavia and the analysis of the Danish Progress Party by Rydgren (2004) sheds light on the taxonomic challenges that emerge when political parties deviate from their initial ideological positions. The author writes that this political group had no affinity to far-right ideas when it was created in the 1970s; it was a populist protest party, building its fame on anti-tax and neo-liberal economic policies. However, it started to change and adapt to a discriminatory language that was directed against immigrants. Except for that, the antithetical views that existed between the different ideological platforms within the party led to its split and the formation of a new radical right-wing populist party, i.e. the Danish People’s Party. What does this short story tell us about the classification of both parties? It implies that if we had utilised the criterion of historical origins alone and not in combination with other parameters, we would have omitted these vital changes and most likely would have failed to classify the groups correctly. In a similar vein, Fennema (1997) speaks of some parties that emerged from neo-fascists, e.g. the Dutch Centrumpartij, the French Front National, and the Belgian Vlaams Blok, and also other parties that did not have roots in an extremist world-view; the Austrian Freedom Party, for instance, that was “developed from the Verband der Unabhangigen (Association of Independents) founded in 1949 by two liberal journalists who wanted to stay clear of the socialist and catholic ‘Lager’” (Fennema, 1997, p. 474).

The second approach refers to the international alliances of groups as the main criterion for taxonomy. The process of identifying clusters of political groups is more straightforward in this case because the parties themselves decide where they want to belong. On the negative side, Mair and Mudde (1998) mention a number of reasons: first, not all parties are members of international alliances; second, they may select more than one alliance; third, they may select alliances that operate at different levels (e.g. at the European or regional level); fourth, they may select different and not like-minded alliances. For instance, McDonnell and Werner (2018) show that the latter transpired after the European Parliament elections in 2014. Four radical right groups, i.e. the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Sweden Democrats (SD), the Danish People's Party (DPP), and the Finns Party (FP) instead of joining the like-minded bloc Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) chose a different path. More precisely, UKIP and SD opted for the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) group while DPP and FP for the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group. Pupovac (2015, p. 33) adds that the transnational federations of far-right groups are "short-lived and small in terms of the number of members."

Talking about the third taxonomic approach, Mair and Mudde (1998) suggest that political groups can also split into like-minded families based on the type of policies and/or ideology they espouse. These two are flexible criteria and involve a variety of different data sources that can be deployed for their identification, such as formal policy statements or expert judgments (Mair & Mudde, 1998). However, Mudde (2000) elucidates elsewhere that between the two above criteria ideology appears to be a better candidate. Mainly concerned with the limitations of policies as a taxonomic criterion in comparative designs, he concludes that the latter makes the assumption that the same set of policies would have the

same meaning in different contexts and different countries (Mudde, 2000). Ideology on the other hand seems to overcome this obstacle, as it is less abstract or volatile and can extend beyond the individual context. It represents,⁶ according to Wodak and Meyer, “a coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values” that “must have power over cognition, must be capable of guiding an individual’s evaluations, must provide guidance through action, and must be logically coherent” (2016 as cited in Guia, 2016, p. 12). More importantly, Mair and Mudde (1998) put forward that ideology represents the identity of political parties, while policies simply show what they do.

In the context of far-right politics, ideology is one of the main classification criteria that has been used in the current scholarship (Giugni et al., 2005; Golder, 2016). However, the criterion of ideology does not come without limitations, especially if its based on the reading of party literature. Mudde (2007) has an extended discussion on this matter, but here it suffices to include three of the limitations that he notes: firstly, political parties are not monolithic actors, they consist of smaller factions with their own worldview, and as a result it might be challenging for researchers to identify a homogeneous ideology; secondly, in some occasions it is hard to tell the difference between rhetoric and ideology; thirdly, if parties do decide to change the characteristics of their ideological base, it might not be possible to detect the transition to this new phase as this is, in essence, a transformation period that takes time and evolves gradually, while at the same there might be periods that the ideology will not a clear identity and character; it will be in a hybrid form (Mudde, 2007). It is not unrealistic to expect then that similar

6 Although the concept of ideology is multifaceted, the aforementioned view appears to be in line with the minimal definition provided by Gerring (1997, p. 980), who finds that “ideology, at the very least, refers to a set of idea-elements that are bound together, that belong to one another in a non-random fashion.”

difficulties will exist if one studies the extra-institutional and broader sub-cultural milieu of the far-right.

The final approach depends on the name of the party. This seems to be the least useful, however, as simply judging from the group's name one cannot tell whether the party is the carrier of extreme beliefs or whether these beliefs have remained stable over time. Related to this, Mair and Mudde (1998) note that the name is likely to hide the true identity of the party. Taking an example from the British political scene, how can we know, if we rely on the name, that the BNP is a party with a fascist past, or how can the name reflect any transition periods it may have had? Copsey (2007), for example, who discusses the transformation process of the BNP and the efforts of its leader Nick Griffin to present a new political identity for his party, makes us understand that with this criterion much of the variation that explains the developments of the party has been lost. Other examples from Europe lead to the same conclusion, but here we discuss two that we believe stand out. The first refers to the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD); a party that included the word Democracy in its name, while it had former Nazi members in its rankings and held anti-democratic views (Karapin, 1998). The second could not have been other than the Italian Social Movement (MSI). Although the name does not reveal its true identity, MSI was a neo-fascist party that influenced similar parties in Europe during the 1970s (Ignazi, 1995). From the above, we can infer that this criterion should only be used in combination with other criteria, if any at all. Overall, Ennser (2012) concludes that it is really challenging for this party family to find a common name that will address all groups and individuals that are part of it.

This section makes clear that the classification of political groups should be done on the basis of their ideological leanings, despite the limitations mentioned above. Ideology is a good and reliable indicator

of identity and helps us to find the similarities among like-minded groups. However, we must remain realistic and admit that not all authors explain clearly how they define and measure ideology, what sources they use, or how they combine findings in their analysis. However, since this is not the purpose of the present thesis to disentangle these kinds of uncertainties, we have no other option but to relax the assumption of a pure ideological criterion, adopting what Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2018) in their study on populism describe as ideational approach. The latter denotes in general a set of ideas that can be channelled into society either through ideology, frames, narratives, or programmes, among others. It is also important to mention that an ideational understanding of the far-right does not differ radically from Ignazi's (2003, p. 30) conceptualisation of identity, who stresses that "identity is given by either a combination of sophisticated theorizing and recall of thinkers and cultural traditions at a high level of ideological construction, or by a set of less structured myths, symbols, beliefs, attitudes, issues, and policies." Hence, the rest of the thesis will use and interpret the terms ideology and ideological in a looser sense.

As one might have observed, the discussion so far has been restricted to the examination of party politics, indicating to some extent that other types of political groups are being excluded. However, this is a weak assumption and cannot be substantiated by the current evidence. Minkenberg (2000, 2013a), for example, treats the far-right as a collective actor, highlighting three organisational types that can be inspired by its ideological mix: 1. political parties, 2. social movements, 3. smaller groups and socio-cultural milieus. Goodwin (2012) makes a similar classification in his research on right-wing extremist violence. The only difference here is that Goodwin (2012) also takes into consideration individuals, the so-called "lone-wolves," making his perspective more inclusive. Bar-On (2018) expands the unit of

analysis even further, listing actors such as radio stations, think tanks, intellectuals, and Internet sites. For this thesis, Bar-On's approach seems to be particularly helpful because the focus is on the far-right as a complex political actor. As Carter (2018, p. 162) contends "although nearly all the definitions originate from studies that focus exclusively on political parties, they can equally be applied to social movements, or to looser groups or networks of activists."

Having clarified this, we can now move to the next section and discuss the main ideological features of far-right groups and individuals. Two questions are of particular interest here: first, which are the common ideological denominators of this political family, and second, which are the most dominant in terms of success and visibility types of far-right groups? Although it is often difficult to discern the dividing line between the variants of the far-right, the next section builds on the ideas introduced in previous sections, aiming to contribute to the conceptual clarification of the phenomenon.

2.5 The ideological components of the far-right

Previously, we introduced the ladder of abstraction as a metaphor that shows the inverse relationship between intension and extension. However, we have not discussed yet how many ideological features should be included in the overarching concept (i.e. the superordinate category) and its by-products (i.e. the subordinate categories). If we follow the Sartorian (1984) approach that is driven by a comparative logic, minimal definitions that include "those attributes that are shared by all cases of the category" (Mahoney, 2004, p. 95) and form its ideological foundation are the answer to this arithmetic dilemma. On the contrary, the analysis of individual case studies reveals more ideological characteristics, the secondary properties (Collier & Gerring 2009 as cited in Pappas, 2016) that describe, but do not define,

the phenomenon and are contingent on the environmental circumstances that shape their form. Looking at the BNP, for instance, previous research on its discourse has identified the following context-specific traits: “ethnic nationalism, anti-international capitalism, reliance on (anti-Semitic) conspiracy theories, its pronounced racism, anti-Marxism, anti-egalitarianism, and finally its targeting of specific social groups within society” (Stavrakakis et al., 2017, p. 433).

We now have the task to select in a meaningful way the defining properties of the far-right family. Since it is against the principles of good research conduct to start from scratch, we rely on recent reviews by leading scholars on the far-right, who have managed to single out a manageable number of ideological features that accurately dissect the far-right and disclose its identity. We refer in particular to the studies of Golder (2016) and Carter (2018) entitled “Far Right Parties in Europe” and “Right-Wing Extremism/Radicalism: Reconstructing the Concept.” More importantly, we should mention that the work of Mudde (2007) has been the main source of inspiration for this chapter, and more generally for the structure of this thesis.

Having said that, the ideological traits of the far-right, i.e. the superordinate category, are: nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism. The three features are necessary individually and sufficient as a whole. However, as we descend the ladder of abstraction in order to increase conceptual differentiation and incorporate more empirical cases, additional features become the ontology of the subordinate categories. In this section, we are primarily interested in the notions of radicalism versus extremism and populism. The idea as has already been mentioned before is to leave out idiosyncratic attributes that are not shared by all members of the class and to focus only on the common core denominators.

2.5.1 Nationalism and xenophobia

Nationalism is the first feature that we examine here, and the reason is simple. For many academics, nationalism is the most important feature of the far-right ideology. As one would logically expect, the concept has its own tradition in social sciences and is not easy to define. The meaning it has acquired in the field of far-right politics is of “a political doctrine that strives for the congruence of the cultural and the political unit” (Mudde, 2007, p. 16). A similar conception of nationalism has also been advanced by Gellner (1983), who nonetheless prefers the term “principle” to “ideology.” What is worthy of attention here is that the nation and the state are to be viewed as a single monocultural entity (Bar-On, 2018). Nationalism is constructed either along civic or ethnic lines (Golder, 2016). Civic nationalism gives priority to “voluntaristic features such as common institutions, territory, the economy and the law,” while on the other hand ethnic nationalism to “deterministic criteria such as language, creed, race and community of birth” (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013, p. 109). However, we should keep in mind that this Weberian interpretation of nationalism is not truly possible and in reality its manifestation encompasses both civic and ethnic characteristics. At the same time it can play an important role in the formation of the community identity (Zimmer, 2003). Carter (2018, pp. 171–172) adds another dimension when referring to this ideological feature, contending that there are far-right groups that are interested only in the “sub-state units of identity (such as Flanders or Padania) or on pan-state ones (e.g. the German Volk).” Therefore, the way the nation is imagined should not be restricted to the current borders of the state (Mudde, 2007).

However, nationalism alone does not suffice to adequately define the ideological ground of the far-right family. In order to highlight the exclusionary aspect of nationalism that is instilled in far-right ideology,

Mudde (2007) coins the term “nativism,” i.e. the combination of nationalism and xenophobia, as a proper trait that can distinguish between moderate and radical forms of nationalism. This widely used understanding of nationalism has been framed as “an ideology, which holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (“the nation”) and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state” (Mudde, 2007, p. 19). There is similar terminology in the current literature, which is: ethnonationalism (Rydgren, 2018), ultra-nationalism (Minkenberg, 2013b), ethnocentric nationalism (Copsey, 2007), holistic nationalism (Eatwell, 2000) etc. Despite the slight differences they may have, they agree that the far-right treats the “Other” as something alien to the native people that needs to be “essentialised, opposed, and demonised” (Froio, 2018, p. 698). Decades of academic research on the far-right has shown that the negative sentiments expressed against immigrants or foreigners constitute one of the most cited feature of the ideology of the far-right (Carter, 2018). If viewed through this prism, the ideology of the far-right is expressed through racist arguments, and as mentioned before, racism does not have to be related to biological differences or race superiority; the new, implicit type of racism places particular emphasis on the so-called “right to difference” (Bar-On, 2018).

Looking now at more academic sources, we can comprehend the analytic depth of the above points. For Minkenberg (2013a, p. 11), the ideology of the far-right revolves “around the myth of a homogenous nation – a romantic and populist ultra-nationalism hostile to liberal, pluralistic democracy, with its underlying principles of individualism and universalism.” In a similar fashion, Inglehart and Norris (2016, p. 7) argue that xenophobic nationalism “assumes that the ‘people’ are a uniform whole, and that states should exclude people from other countries and cultures.” This does not mean that all nativists

are admirers of the ideologies that influenced the totalitarian regimes of the previous century. It simply points to a paradox that the phrase “democratic racism” is not contradictory (Eatwell, 2000), showing in this way that the far-right family is broad and includes groups as well as sympathisers that have revolutionary and reformist elements. However, we should not neglect a crucial fact that “beyond the diversity of the far-right movements, there is a persistent desire on their part to build an “organic,” holistic society, where inequalities are a function of a hierarchy considered to be legitimate” (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, p. 42). It is in this spirit therefore, i.e. inequality, that the far-right has been named as right-wing, an idea that is also in line with what Caiani et al. (2012) assert in their book “Mobilizing on the extreme right: Germany, Italy, and the United States” (but also see Bobbio, 1996).

2.5.2 Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is the ideological element that draws attention to issues pertinent to law and order and traditional values (Rydgren, 2007). As Inglehart and Norris (2016, p. 7) stress, authoritarianism is challenged by liberal ideas because it stands against the necessity of “horizontal checks and balances in the institutions of representative democracy.” Authoritarianism in the tradition of far-right politics dictates how relationships should be organised and developed at the societal level. In essence, it can be said that it embodies a plea for “a dense and inclusive set of obligatory rules” and has as a result significant effect on “the balance between compliance with a higher group authority versus members’ rights to choose their own lifestyles, express individual preferences, and make them heard in the formation of collective decisions” (Kitschelt, 2007, p. 1179). Moreover, according to Carter (2018), authoritarianism is the expression of three basic properties, the synthesis of which, as one could rightly guess here, varies from case to case: conventionalism, submission, and aggression. Of course, this

explanation is not new as it is borrowed from Altemeyer's (1981) influential study on the authoritarian personality. However, Carter (2018) adjusts and discusses authoritarianism as a dimension that consists of ideological characteristics. Conventionalism refers to policies that speak of the necessity to maintain inherited norms and morality and is expressed through an antithesis to themes like gay rights, the role of patriarchy in given family structures etc. (Carter, 2018). To a certain extent, however, this echoes Minkenberg's (2000, p. 174) position that the far-right resists modernisation because it involves "a growing autonomy of the individual (status mobility and role flexibility) and an ongoing functional differentiation of the society (segmentation and growing autonomy of societal subsystems)." The second property, i.e. submission, covers the aspect of authoritarianism that places particular emphasis on the need for hierarchical order and "compliance, and the duty to respect, defer to, and show pride in the authorities and the state" (Carter, 2018, p. 169). The last component is aggression and relates to the belief that those who disrupt the assumptions upon which traditions and society are built should be disciplined through strict punishment. Finally, Mudde (2007, p. 23), whose work has also been influenced by Altemeyer's (1981) approach, defines authoritarianism as an ideology that strives for "a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely."

2.5.3 A short note on the ideological elements of the superordinate category: the far-right

At this point, we should clarify the reasons why we think that the minimal definition comprises three features: nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism, and not only nativism (i.e. nationalism and xenophobia) or ethnic nationalism as has been suggested in the influential studies of Mudde (2007) and

Bar-On (2018) respectively. In the most recent review of the ideological traits of the far-right that was available at the time of writing this chapter, Carter (2018, p. 174) notes that “authoritarianism, anti-democracy, and an exclusionary and/or a holistic kind of nationalism” are the predominant referents of this family of political groups and individuals. In her analysis, the idea of nationalism is not necessarily xenophobic; it can sometimes be holistic, meaning that the far-right may only demand obedience to the nation as if people had no individual rights to exercise. Therefore, in this conception of nationalism its xenophobic character is absent, and the author presents the Italian Social Movement as an indicative example of this type. However, this seems controversial because we discussed previously that MSI was a neo-fascist, i.e. part of this political tendency “committed to reviving the nation through revolutionary rebirth” (Copsey, 2007, p. 65). In our opinion, Rydgren (2007, p. 246) offers the most illustrative explanation of the exclusionary nature of (neo-) fascism when he compares the latter with the modern far-right, stating that “the new radical right’s longing for ethnic purity, homogeneity, and organic order places them in the same tradition as fascism.” Based on this view, it is difficult to identify modern fascists as holistic and not xenophobic. Alternatively, taking the exact opposite route, we can ask: if xenophobia was not a main ideological component, how would we classify political groups whose nationalism is closer to the civic variant of nationalism (e.g. see the history of the Swiss SVP in Halikiopoulou et al., 2013) and by definition are inclusionary (Golder, 2016)? To further enhance this line of reasoning, even Caiani et al. (2012, p. 5) put forth that the ideology of the far-right also consists of “xenophobia, ethno-nationalism (rooted in a myth of an ancient past), sociocultural authoritarianism (law and order, abortion) as well as, more recently, anti-system populism.” We will see later that the

latter feature does not define the whole family but the populist radical right, which is the subordinate category of the superordinate category radical right.

2.5.4. Does the criterion of anti-democracy define the far-right? Radicalism versus extremism

Regarding the remaining ideological attribute, i.e. anti-democracy, Carter (2018) employs a broader definition that appears to be at odds with the extant literature. She defines anti-democracy both as “an opposition to the rules and institutions of the democratic system (i.e. its procedures) on the one hand, and a rejection of the fundamental values and principles of democracy on the other (i.e. its substance)” (Carter, 2018, p. 170). In other words, anti-democratic groups are those which reject either one or both of these two dimensions of the concept. However, being aware of the ultimate purpose of her review, which is to discover the core, minimal ideology of the far-right family only (in our study this corresponds to the superordinate category), this approach does not seem to be problematic. Besides, this is the reason why she chooses the term “right-wing extremism/radicalism” to label the object of her analysis. If the goal nevertheless was to tell the difference between the variants of the far-right, it would be awkward to lump together groups that reject democracy per se with groups that oppose (some of) its functions. This realisation has led academics to the distinction between radical and extreme far-right organisations (e.g. see Griffin, 2000).

Having identified the conceptual boundaries of nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism, we need to turn our focus now to the ideological elements that differentiate the far-right. Following the ladder of abstraction again, we add an additional attribute to the core ideology of the far-right with the aim to

decrease its extension. This attribute is radicalism versus extremism in Golder's (2016) terminology and correctly implies that we should not approach radicalism as a moderate form of extremism. In the context of far-right politics, the two concepts have acquired very specific meaning, which mainly refers to their stance against democracy. Radicalism opposes liberal democracies and calls for reforms, but it does not aspire to abolish them; extremism on the other hand does (Rydgren, 2018). Following Carter's (2018) theorisation, radicalism (i.e. the radical right) opposes the values of democracy, while extremism (i.e. the extreme right) is hostile to democratic procedures. This is the reason why scholars such as Copsy (2007, p. 65) argue that the radical "offers a more moderate (yet still illiberal) form of ethnocentric nationalism." In Europe, the radical right is against liberal democracy (Golder, 2016) because this is the system that has prevailed and shaped politics during the last decades. According to Bötticher (2017, p. 75), who reviewed the broader literature on radicalism and extremism, "extremist movements cannot be integrated into liberal-democratic societies due to their intolerance towards ideologies other than their own. Democracies can live with radicals but not with uncompromising, aggressive extremist militants." This has important implications. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate how the two sub-types of the far-right materialise when we add radicalism and/or extremism. Finally, one may think at this point of two empirical cases, i.e. the Greek Golden Dawn and the Hungarian Jobbik, that whereas scholarship has classified them as extreme far-right, they should be part of the radical right, given that they participate in elections. The answer lies in the previous section, where we highlighted the importance of the ideational approach; taxonomies should be determined by ideas and not tactics.

2.5.5 Populism

Now that we have generated the two main subordinate categories of the far-right, we are in a position to achieve further differentiation by adding more attributes. It is redundant to say again that this decision should be driven by theory. In this section, we present populism, and there are two reasons that justify this decision. First, populism is an ideological attribute that has drawn a lot of public and academic attention lately and has dominated public discourse. Even the Cambridge Dictionary announced it word of the year for 2017. Still more importantly, populism defines to a great extent the radical right of our era, without meaning, of course, that other types of the radical right or extreme right are not being active. Mudde's (2007) term "populist radical right," for example, is paradigmatic of this tendency that has been observed in Western Europe. Hence, it seems relevant to shed light on its internal composition and to explain the most prevalent form it has taken nowadays.

We should clarify from the beginning of this paragraph that populism is not solely associated with the far-right. There is a vast literature that looks at its development and influence inside left-wing politics, and more specifically how it might come into effect, or what divisions it creates (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). In its purest form, populism has been understood as a thin-centred "ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde, 2004, p. 543). However, unlike full-blown ideologies, it does not provide answers to every problem encountered in society, and this explains as a result its "thinness" (van Kessel, 2014); it always needs to be attached to host ideologies (Stanley, 2008), which on the other hand do not have to be necessarily thick. This is evident in the present study, for instance,

since populism depends on another thin ideology, nationalism (Freeden, 2017). In order for political phenomena to be instances of populism, the three components, 1. the pure people, 2. the corrupt elite, and 3. people's general will mentioned above need to be present simultaneously (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013); an idea that takes us back to the classical approach to concept formation that uses necessary and sufficient conditions. Finally, what is important to highlight at this point is that the definition of the people in the far-right fantasy is restrictive and is constructed on the basis of ethnic, racial, or religious characteristics (Bonikowski, 2017). This explains the reasons why ethnic minorities or social groups more generally that do not fit into the imagined, as Anderson (1983) would claim, and profile are being forced to the margins. It seems therefore that within the far-right family of groups and individuals, it is the “Us versus Them” distinctions that contribute to the understanding of social reality.

2.5.6 The ladder of abstraction is not one: how to visualise the dimensions of the far-right

So far, the present chapter has revolved around the assumption that the far-right is the label of a superordinate category that stands at the top of the ladder of abstraction and primarily consists of three ideological features, i.e. nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism. Unlike scholars such as Mudde (2007), Ravndal (2018), and Castelli Gattinara and Pirro (2018) who prefer the composite term nativism, we split the latter into its two primary components, and more specifically nationalism and xenophobia. The reason is simple. We feel that composite terms tend to mask the various combinations that the two concepts can produce. Loss of variation may lead to less precision. For example, it could be the case that the xenophobic aspect of a political group is more intense than its authoritarian and/or

nationalist aspect. Granted, the latter does not make much sense if each attribute is defined as a crisp set. A brief explanation is needed here. According to Ragin (2000), crisp sets can take only two values, 0 and 1. Since the empirical cases can be either full members of a set or not members at all, it is not reasonable to compare crisp sets, they all have the same value and equal weighting. Goertz (2006, p. 47) stresses that “almost by definition dichotomous variables cannot be weighted (an argument against them); hence the use of dichotomous variables directly leads to unweighted dimensions.” Before we proceed to the visualisation of the ladder of abstraction of the far-right as a concept, so that the reader can follow our line of reasoning, we should also explain here what the alternative is, so that we can comprehend the meaning of this paragraph. To this end, we present fuzzy sets.

Fuzzy sets can take almost any value that lies between the range 0 and 1, but again as is often the case in the social sciences, the decision of researchers should be informed by valid theoretical reasons. The preferred gradation systems usually comprise three values, five values, or nine values.

Table 1 below is an example of a nine-value system developed and explained by Ragin in his classic book “Fuzzy Set Social Science” (2000, p. 156):

Table 1: Fuzzy set, nine-value system

Values in fuzzy logic	Description
1	Fully in
0.9	Almost fully in
0.8	Mostly in
0.6	More in than out

0.5	Crossover point: neither in nor out
0.4	More out than in
0.2	Mostly out
0.1	Almost fully out
0	Fully out

In the 1960's, Zadeh introduced the principles of fuzzy set theory and fuzzy logic; a revolutionary way of thinking that was initially “developed for practical use in engineering” (Abdullah et al., 2004, p. 45) and provided “a mathematical representation of classes of objects that do not have precisely defined criteria of membership” (Belohlavek et al., 2009, p. 25). Ragin (2000) on the other hand was the first scholar to apply fuzzy logic to social sciences studies. The radicalness of fuzzy sets relates to the fact that both quantitative and qualitative differentiations are being taken into account. The two extreme qualitative states (or anchors), “fully in” and “fully out,” occupy the two ends of the fuzzy set, while the crossover point is the third qualitative anchor. The latter has an important role to play as it denotes the transition to a new qualitative state. To be more precise, moving from 0.4 to 0.6 is not the same as the passage from 0.2 to 0.4. If the score is above the crossover point, cases are more in than out of the set, whereas scores between 0 and (less than) 0.5 indicate non-membership (Ragin, 2000). Still more importantly, a fuzzy logic retains “the capability of establishing difference-in-kind between cases (qualitative difference) and add to this the ability to establish difference-in-degree (quantitative difference) between qualitatively identical cases” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 27). Calibration,

which is the process of assigning values to empirical events, shows therefore how concepts can be more accurate if one deviates from the principles of classical logic. In essence, fuzzy logic is an advanced measurement tool that improves the limited perspective of classical logic.

Having said that, we are now in a better position to understand the idea of comparing the dimensions of a concept. The only requirement is that each dimension cannot have a score lower than the crossover point because this would indicate non-membership. Consequently, to say that xenophobia is more intense, we mean that it can receive a higher score than nationalism and authoritarianism. To say that nationalism is the most important feature, we mean that it can be weighted if we have theoretical and ontological reasons to believe that it is more necessary than the other two features of the far-right definition. Since this interpretation is not at odds with current approaches, we choose the more analytic – but still minimal – definition. Furthermore, the inclusion of an additional criterion, i.e. xenophobia, in the intension of the far-right concept allows us to be more flexible in terms of conceptual innovation. More precisely, in their analysis on logical remainders, Schneider and Wagemann (2012) speak of cases that while theoretically are logically possible to happen cannot be observed in real life because they have not existed. The argument is that social, political, or cultural processes impact the course of history and lead to certain combinations of conditions, which in turn may correspond to empirical cases. If some cases have not happened yet, but are logically possible, we may expect them to materialise in the future. Based on this line of reasoning, the inclusion of xenophobia in the minimal definition gives us the opportunity to create additional combinations of ideological elements that correspond to present but most importantly future cases. As a result of this strategy, we may avoid unnecessary conceptual confusion, which is created when we compare cases at different periods of

time. Finally, if the definition is viewed in this way, we can even discuss whether it is reasonable to have a diminished subtype as theorised by Collier and Levitsky (1997). According to the authors, if one or more of the defining attributes of the overarching concept lose significance, they automatically stop being part of its intension (with crisp sets their value is 0, while with fuzzy sets their value is less than 0.5). Here, we do not argue that this is the case with the far-right; we simply present a conceptual innovation that can be achieved if xenophobia is treated as a necessary trait of the far-right definition.

Now, the two figures below (see also Dafnos, 2019) visualise all the relationships that have been extensively described in this chapter. The far-right, which is the superordinate category, stands at the top of the ladder of abstraction. Adding radicalism, we move one level down, reaching the radical right category. At the same level (and this is the reason why we claimed that the ladder of abstraction is not one. At the second level, there are more than one variations of the concept. This expands further at lower levels when we add more ideological elements) there is the extreme right, but this category differs because it rejects democracy. Further down, conceptual differentiation is achieved by adding one more attribute, populism in this example, generating the so-called “populist radical right.” It can be said that this constitutes the subordinate category of the subordinate category radical right, or in the words of Sartori (1970, p. 59) “the class provides the “similarity element” of comparability, while the “differences” enter as the species of a genus, or the sub-species of a species – and so forth, depending on how fine the analysis needs to be.” However, as we have already highlighted, our framework can append if the research question requires it and theory discusses the presence of additional attributes. If we were interested in fascist groups, for instance, we would have to add at the very least the myth of palingenesis (Griffin, 1991) to the ideological components of the extreme right. Griffin’s (1991)

influential work on this subject has shown that fascism “calls for a national rebirth and the revolutionary overthrow of the liberal democratic order, which is seen as decadent, corrupt, and against the common man” (Golder, 2016, p. 481). It goes without saying that if we were also interested in the sub-cultural milieu and groupuscules like the “autonomous Nationalists, white resistance movements, the counter-jihadists, the ultra-patriot identity movements and defence leagues” (Fekete, 2014, p. 30), neo-Nazis, or the recently emerged alt-right, and we were totally convinced that the categories we have already produced are either too broad or limited to capture the characteristics, we could follow again one of the paths of the ladder of abstraction in order to construct more insightful sub-categories, at least from a comparative perspective.

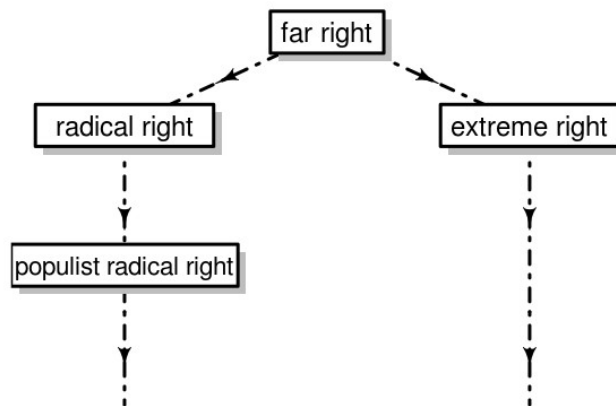


Figure 1: The ladder of abstraction for the far-right

Superordinate category	Classical category: far right	
	Category	Components
far right		N X A
Subordinate categories	radical right	N X A R
	populist radical right	N X A R P
	extreme right	N X A E

Note: Differentiating characteristics of subordinate categories are in addition to those of the superordinate category.

N = Nationalism R = Radicalism
X = Xenophobia P = Populism
A = Authoritarianism E = Extremism

Figure 2: Subordinate categories of the far-right, figure adapted from Collier and Mahon (1993, p. 850)

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the definition of the far-right. Beyond that, however, the chapter offered a more complete way on how to conceptualise political phenomena, so that there is transparency with regard to the main logic being employed in this thesis. The analysis was based on a comprehensive review of the current literature on concept formation, but also on the various forms the ideology of the far-right takes. Particular emphasis was paid to the work of Mudde (2007), who was one of the first academics to provide – over a decade ago – a more developed reasoning concerning the constituent parts of the far-right ideology. It was made clear that the defining characteristics of the far-right are nationalism and xenophobia, and authoritarianism. However, it was also mentioned that if there is new evidence with regard to the composition of the far-right, our approach is flexible enough to accommodate alterations.

For instance, if there are academics who claim that racism or another feature should also be included in the above set of ideological traits, racism could in theory be added to the subordinate categories, creating a new branch that helps researchers organise better their research.

Equally important was Sartori's (1970) work on the ladder of abstraction. By creating superordinate and subordinate categories, we were able to gain a better understanding of the differences between the different ideological camps of the far-right, i.e. the radical right and extreme right. Although there might be studies that will compare the differences between the two (e.g. see Golder, 2003), in some other occasions it would make more sense to look at all these groups and individuals under the same prism. The latter applies to the aims and purpose of this thesis, since we are studying the levels of mobilisation of far-right groups and individuals, or what we frame as the "far-right movement" in Great Britain. By providing the minimum definition of the far-right in this chapter, we have managed to explain clearly what the common characteristics of the various far-right actors are. This approach, as we show in Chapter 4, help us to make reasonable assumptions and code cases (e.g. violent attacks against persons) that otherwise would have been omitted due to the fact that some of the characteristics of protest may be absent. Also, in Chapters 6 and 7 we analyse the evolution of far-right protest but also the factors that lead to its development and decline; if we had not discussed the constituent parts of the far-right in the present chapter, the reader would not have been able to comprehend, for instance, the reasons why the protest actions of neo-Nazis are analysed together with the actions of less extreme nationalists.

The next chapter therefore turns to the analysis of relevant theories drawn both from sociology and political science that could help us understand the factors that cause and impede the protest actions of

the far-right. This is important because Chapter 3 will form the theoretical basis of the analysis chapters that follow. If we are more familiar with previous research on the far-right, our expectation is that we will also gain informed knowledge about the British far-right in the period 2009-2019.

Chapter 3. Demand-side and supply-side theories, and the role of reciprocal mobilisation

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the present chapter is to discuss and shed light on the most important conditions that facilitate the mobilisation of far-right groups and activists in Great Britain, including violent incidents. Written in 1998 but still relevant nowadays, as if history has the ability to repeat itself, Betz (1998, p. 6) comes to the following conclusion that “the dramatic gains of radical right-wing populist parties and movements is one of the most significant political developments of the past few years.” Therefore, this chapter draws on the findings of several theories rooted in the related fields of sociology and political science (Caiani, 2017), providing valuable insights and answers that are pertinent to the research questions of this thesis. Nevertheless, as it would be counter-productive to include all theories that have been proposed in a literature review chapter, we are cautious enough to follow the advice of Olivers and Myers (2003), who put forward that social scientists ought to design their research project in such a way that conclusions are not imprecise. The risk is that “if you draw the boundaries too narrowly, you can mis-specify the problem” (Oliver & Myers, 2003, p. 4). To overcome these obstacles and potential causes of bias, the preferred solution is to demonstrate transparently the process of theory building out of which the hypotheses of this project emerge in the next chapters. Thus, similarly to Eatwell (1996), we argue that it is one thing to define and classify the object of analysis (this is the thematic focus of the second chapter), and it is another thing to describe what leads to its emergence and evolution. It is

necessary then for social scientists to feel comfortable to discern the differences between these two tasks.

Having said that, the aim of the chapter is to create a pool of pertinent theories that can help explain the success and failure of the far-right, which is viewed again as a extra-institutional expression of politics in this study, and more specifically the mechanisms that foster the mobilisations of far-right groups and solo-actors. In other words, the chapter paves the way for the culmination of one of the backbones of this study, i.e. a theory that attempts to address the following question: what are the factors that cause the mobilisation of the far-right movement in Great Britain in the period 2009-2019? As one would expect at this point, the discussion of the most relevant theories follows a presentation of the theoretical argument of the thesis that will be investigated quantitatively through time series analysis in Chapter 7.

Nonetheless, it is not always easy to provide a clear and coherent narrative of why the far-right has managed to become relevant in contemporary politics; it has repeatedly proven to be a demanding puzzle due to varying reasons. First, there was until recently the tendency among far-right scholars to approach this collective actor as a political party (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018), looking as a result predominantly into its electoral fortunes while leaving aside its concurrent development in the protest arena (Hutter, 2014a). Therefore, it should not be surprising to mention at this point that the interaction between the two arenas, in terms of how political contestation unfolds and evolves, poses another under-researched topic that demands further attention (Hutter & Borbáth, 2018). Second, Blee and Creasap (2010) touch upon another important aspect with respect to this issue; more specifically, the authors state that the support for the far-right was traditionally viewed through the prism of breakdown theories, as a crisis behaviour and irrational reaction to existing grievances that usually stem from

macro-causes and put the well-being of contemporary society in peril. This was restrictive though, since it consistently failed to provide a more comprehensive picture of why and how the far-right becomes relevant and successful. Besides, this is the reason why social movement scholars have since the mid-1960s been discussing the shortcomings of grievance-based explanations as an explanatory model and also the need to adopt a set of theories (McAdam et al., 2009) that complete and not compete each other (e.g. see the discussion in Bara, 2014, who is in favour of a violent ethnic conflict model that combines both grievances and opportunities).

Third, another dimension of this problem that should not be neglected is associated with the process of the operationalisation of variables across different studies. Social phenomena are measured in various ways, which means that the same dependent and/or independent variables are investigated at different levels of analysis (Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015), yielding sometimes antithetical results. To show, for example, how the research design may affect empirical analysis, we should turn our focus to the usual suspect of this discipline, which is the presence of immigrants in a certain locale. Immigration has been interpreted as one of the most fundamental ingredients of the relative success of the far-right in Western Europe and has been operationalised, among others, as attitudes documented through survey data at the micro-level (Rydgren, 2008), or at the macro-level as “indicators of structural social problems” (Caiani et al., 2012, p. 7). Lastly, to make matters even worse, various explanations in quantitative research that have attempted to reveal the reasons why demand for far-right organisations persists, rely on theories that although they take dissimilar paths in how they connect their internal components, lead to the exact same expectations. To be more precise, anti-immigrant sentiments may be viewed, for instance, through the lens of a general xenophobia or through the ethnic competition thesis (e.g. Arzheimer, 2018;

Zhirkov, 2014). However, in both cases, the hypothesis is developed along similar lines: people who hold anti-immigrant views are more likely to support far-right groups. Hence, these four issues clarify in short why we should organise our thoughts better and more methodically in this chapter, so that previous knowledge advances and not impedes theoretical progress in the field.

As an introductory remark, we should also note that there are debates about whether the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations can be explained with reference to some population characteristics such as hostility against immigration or economic deprivation (Guibernau, 2010), the internal organisation and activities of far-right groups themselves (Caiani & della Porta, 2018), and/or the flaws of the broader political structure (Bustikova, 2014; Golder, 2016). Reasonably, the question that needs to be answered is: are these approaches alone, or even in permutations, adequate enough to provide consistent results to the research puzzle mentioned before? In order to develop a theoretical account that is in a better position to unravel the various trajectories of far-right mobilisations, in this chapter we put forward that the admittedly intricate relationship that exists between the far-right and oppositional groups needs to be taken into consideration too. This is important, especially if the universe of far-right activists is to be understood as a node in a network that comprises many organisations that exert influence on each other and have both intended and unintended consequences (Paul et al., 1997). We show as a matter of fact that the concept of reciprocal mobilisation, which is often dubbed under different labels in the existing literature such as cumulative extremism, tit-for-tat radicalisation, or connectivity between extremisms (Busher & Macklin, 2014), contributes to the realisation of this goal because it is an under-researched topic that has the analytic power to uncover the explanatory dynamics related to the rise and fall of the far-right.

Finally, we should make clear that there is not a single, independent strand in the existing literature that looks specifically at the unique conditions in which social movements and/or sub-cultural milieus characterised by a nativist understanding of social reality thrive or wither away. Inevitably, the ensuing discussion on the theoretical statements that predict far-right mobilisation involves arguments that have also been used for the analysis of political parties and violence. McLaren's (1999, p. 168) words still sound relevant: "although research specifically focusing on right-wing violence is quite limited, many have studied right-wing extremism, especially support for extremist parties of the right, and this particular area of research should be useful for informing hypotheses about rightist violence." On the other hand, there are academics who have raised objections regarding this stance, i.e. the tendency to borrow theories that originally have been developed for other types of political phenomena. Goodwin (2012, p. 46), for instance, who talks about the paucity of information on the behaviour of perpetrators of right-wing extremist violence asserts that "this introduces obvious problems, not least the risk of using theories that have been developed to explain one type of political mobilisation to make inferences about another." Although we agree with the previous view to some extent, practical reasons, i.e. the fact that there is a limited number of studies that draw inferences based solely on social movement research, we follow the common practice in far-right studies and borrow insights from multiple studies on the far-right.

More specifically, this chapter is primarily informed by the comprehensive literature reviews of Muis and Immerzeel (2017) and Caiani (2017), who attempt to summarise possible explanations that are of interest to the research goals of this thesis. Two groups of explanatory factors have been offered so far in the current literature: the so-called "demand-side" and "supply-side" theories, with the latter being

further split into internal and external supply-side (de Lange, 2007). Although there are academics like Arzheimer (2018) who question the clarity of this schema, arguing that some of the relevant factors for the explanation of far-right success do not fit easily into this conceptual representation, such as the impact of the wider institutional system or what social movement theorists name “Political Opportunity Structures” (Meyer, 2004), in this chapter we have decided to adopt the above terminology, i.e. demand-side and supply-side theories.

The alternative would be to use the more intuitive labels micro (for the demand-side), meso (for the internal supply-side), and macro (for the external supply-side) level variables. However, this is deemed confusing, and the following two examples prove this claim. Firstly, variables, such as social alienation and political satisfaction, which are part of the demand-side can be measured both at the micro and macro-level, and secondly, variables that reflect the activities of social movements, a meso-level factor by definition (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018), can be examined, as is often the case, at the macro-level too (e.g. see Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016). It is clear from the above that the contextual variables can be unnecessarily conflated with the macro-level of analysis (e.g. immigration being measured at the national level), and this is the reason why the demand-side and supply-side terminology is preferred in this study.

The chapter is organised as follows: the first section describes the most influential theories that are part of the demand-side of politics and are responsible for the creation of a favourable environment that determines the performance and development of far-right activism (Ivarsflaten & Gudbrandsen, 2014). The second section looks at two other approaches that may impact the fortunes of far-right groups: the internal and external supply-side (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017). The latter refers on the one hand to these

opportunities and constraints that characterise the broader political environment and on the other to the presence of socio-political groups that are exogenous to the far-right. The internal supply-side is mainly concerned with the behaviour of far-right actors. Next, the chapter delves into the origins and internal functions of reciprocal mobilisation, which constitutes a fundamental concept of this thesis, since we examine the impact of opposition groups on the activities of the far-right in Chapter 7. Besides, we should not neglect that the contribution of this thesis rests to a large degree on the innovative application of reciprocal mobilisation as a concept to studies where the far-right occupies a protagonist position. In this section, we also provide definitions for concepts that have raised controversies in academic circles such as radicalisation. We conclude the chapter with the presentation of the theoretical argument that this thesis is based on. We explain in detail the logic and the main components of our theoretical proposition for this thesis.

3.2 The demand-side of politics

The determinants of support for the far-right that belong to the demand-side of politics lay particular emphasis on the factors that have mainly changed the individual characteristics of West European voters, according to Rydgren (2007), such as their interests, preferences, and attitudes. If we extrapolate these observations to the non-partisan sector, it is not unreasonable to theorise the demand-side as the dimension that unveils the factors that force the public to take part in the campaigns of far-right groups; in other words, what creates “a social and cultural “reservoir” to be exploited” (Giugni et al., 2005, p. 146). More generally, approaches that revolve around the social psychological mechanisms tend to be equated with strains and grievances that are produced in society due to the negative consequences of economic, social, and/or historical transformations (Georgiadou et al., 2018) that could be connected to

ethnic conflicts; however, other structural pathologies are also possible (Mudde, 2010). They show in essence how micro-behaviours are defined by the dynamics that might stem from the meso (e.g. school and family) and the macro-level (e.g. crises and modernisation) (Eatwell, 2003; Mudde, 2007), and make the far-right appealing to “normal” people or devoted members, who in turn are willing to sacrifice the easiness of their personal life, to stand by its side, and to support its cause. It is interesting to add here that both Eatwell (2003) and Mudde (2007) agree that the meso-level refers on the one hand to local organisations (e.g. schools, family, and party) and on the other hand to their role as hubs of knowledge production and dissemination; this means in other words that individuals can socialise to the norms of the group through these institutions. Similarly, Schmid (2013, p. 4), who reviews the literature in the field of terrorism studies, reaches a conclusion that stands close to the previously mentioned interpretation. In particular, the author writes that causes for radicalisation at the meso-level involve the broader radical milieu, “which serves as a rallying point,” and more narrowly refers to “an underground organisation which offers those willing to join the thrills of adventure and the comfort of comradeship within a brotherhood.” This is an important clarification because there are studies that conflate meso-level explanations with the meso-level as a geographical unit, e.g. regions, cities, neighbourhoods (Mudde, 2007).

However, we should not give the false impression in the previous paragraph that this is solely an idiom of far-right studies. Following insights provided by previous research on the dynamics of collective action over the years, van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009) contend, for example, that collective behaviour theory, mass society theory as well as relative deprivation, i.e. the most popular and classical socio-psychological approaches in the field of social movements, are underpinned by a similar logic; it

shows how some type of macro-conditions produce grievances, which in turn lead to action (Grasso & Giugni, 2016). Despite the fact that it is now commonly accepted that grievance-based explanations are insufficient to explain episodes of contentious politics (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) – which are defined here as these “interactions in which actors make claims bearing on other actors’ interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p. 7) – the social psychological paradigm that lay emphasis on broken expectations and aggression should not be dismissed altogether. Besides, the general cultural turn in social sciences, which has been largely shaped by the constructivist school of thought (McAdam et al., 2009), discusses the decisive role that framing, emotions, identity, and culture play in protest activism (Aslanidis, 2015).

Before moving on, we need to mention that in social movement studies breakdown and strain theories have their own special position. In terms of contribution to knowledge production, the work of Kornhauser (1959), Smelser (1962), and Gurr (1970) is of paramount importance and paradigmatic of this tradition. However, we have decided to abstain from an exhaustive review of each theory, since this would direct the reader away from the principal purpose of this chapter, which is to recount all these theories that far-right scholars have used to explain the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations. As has already been highlighted, the theories are being examined through the lens of far-right scholarship.

From the above, it is safe to assume that the relationship between grievances – or incentives in the terminology of Bara (2014) – and protest is neither irrational nor linear. In the next paragraphs, where we elaborate on the most dominant interpretations of the demand-side, we must keep in mind that these variants carry their own heuristic value, set boundaries that shape our expectations, and can evolve into

a full-blown theory only when combined with the supply-side of far-right politics. In this section of the third chapter, following a deductive logic, we describe how individual consciousness has been affected by broader societal transformations instigated by modernisation, placing in particular emphasis on two outcomes that emanate from it, and more specifically the role of economic insecurities and cultural backlash. Modernisation, in whatever flavour it takes, encompasses a variety of characteristics that lead to economic grievances, cultural grievances, and also disenchantment with politics. Along with the line of reasoning of Betz (1998, p. 8), “[t]he success of the radical populist right thus reflects to a large extent the psychological strain associated with uncertainties produced by large-scale socioeconomic and sociocultural changes.” We do acknowledge, however, that this is a construction by social scientists in order to study the effect of each aspect of modernisation independently; in reality, it is hard to discern their interrelated boundaries.

3.2.1 Modernisation: the main initiating force of grievances and strains

Grievances that have been induced by long-term macro developments, or “by structurally determined pathologies” (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013, p. 110), are related to the processes of modernisation and can be seen as a classic explanation of far-right success. Modernisation, which according to a leading far-right scholar is viewed and interpreted as a social change of “increasing functional differentiation and personal autonomy” (Minkenberg, 2013a, p. 11), is responsible for the rapid and fundamental restructuring of modern societies and the creation of losers and winners (Betz, 1994). It comes as no surprise to say that various forms of the modernisation theory have been developed under different names such as “globalisation, risk society, post-Fordist economy, post-industrial society” (Mudde, 2010, p. 1172) or “value change, late capitalism, the third modernity” (Minkenberg, 2000, p. 177).

These variants of the theory, however, do not highlight the same dimensions and processes. The most indicative example is found in the study of Hutter (2014a), who claims that globalisation should be “regarded as the central social process behind the right-populist round” (Hutter, 2014a, p. 10) since the 1990s, while other authors like Bornschier (2010) assume that globalisation despite its contribution to the determination of the structure of political cleavages is not the most decisive factor. Overall – and this is vital to bear in mind – despite their differences as we see below, they all base their rationale on a similar and rather convincing story pattern that involves the following chain of events: some objective macro-causes pave the way for the creation of some type of subjective grievances (Koopmans, 1996), which make the far-right appealing to those who have been unable to adjust to the requirements of the new status quo and have been left behind as a consequence of this process (Mudde, 2010). The far-right, faithful to its myths of being the true voice of the people, becomes successful by portraying itself as the agent that strives to reverse the detrimental effects of modernisation (Betz, 1998) and to avert the erosion of national culture. Nonetheless, even the inexperienced reader would notice that the main shortcoming of this group of explanations is the unthoughtful leap it takes from conditions that transpire at the macro-level to behaviour that unfolds at the individual level (Caiani et al., 2012). Related to that, Prowe (1994, p. 296) noted that

nationalist resentments from the war and intermittent economic crises led to an atmosphere of class struggle and clashes among ethnic and political groups, which ultimately exploded in mass unemployment, fear and street violence in the Great Depression, providing an expanded arena of fear and hatred, in which the fascist gospel of authoritarian law and order, power and narrow national supremacy found wide appeal.

Nevertheless, grievances alone do not automatically translate into claims making (McAdam, 1982). Apart from that, Giugni et al. (2005) clarify that whereas social movement scholars show a tendency to disregard grievances from their analysis, in the particular field of ethnic relations, racism, and the far-right, which is in line with the topic of this thesis, they remain relevant.

For Rydgren (2007) explanations that rely on the experiences of the modernisation process encompass elements from both the social breakdown theory and the relative deprivation theory. In brief, one can compare the former with the mass society theory, which was developed to explain the general fascist era and predicts that the individuals who live in settings where the most prevailing characteristics are marginalisation, the “breakdown of traditional social structures” (Caiani, 2017, p. 5), and the lack of strong ties within the community (Zhirkov, 2014) are likely to turn to the far-right in order to overcome their troubles and discontent (Rydgren, 2007). On the other hand, relative deprivation theory looks at the micro-level, and more specifically at the incentives of individuals, putting forward that feelings of disenchantment and frustration are the result of comparisons that people make with their own situation in the past (or future) and/or with out-groups; “relative deprivation theory in particular emphasises the gap between expectations and experienced reality,” according to Grasso and Giugni (2016, p. 665). These comparisons can be made on the basis of economic criteria or personal status criteria (Lipset, 1959). Arzheimer (2011, p. 3) adds that “this mental state inspires a longing for strong leadership and rigid ideologies that are provided by the Extreme Right.” However, a problem we encounter with this approach is that it is often difficult to tell unequivocally who the losers and who the winners of the above processes are (Golder, 2016). For instance, according to Hutter’s (2014a) integration-demarcation argument, which considers globalisation as central for the rise of the far-right since the

1990's, social groups that would have been observed in opposite camps by other theoretical arguments, such as the silent counter-revolution theory, are being put on the same side of conflict; more precisely, the losers “include entrepreneurs and qualified employees in traditionally sheltered sectors, unqualified employees, and citizens who strongly identify with their national communities” (Hutter, 2014a, p. 13).

Concerning the silent counter-revolution argument, it has been put forth by Ignazi (1992). It is linked to the drastic transformations of the socio-political space in Western Europe – for example, Pirro (2019) talks about the role of 1968 – and has been advanced along the following lines: in the late 1960s and early 1970s, new social agents of which mainly stand out the New Social Movements and the Green parties (Bornschieer, 2010; Pirro, 2019) became the main interpreters of a series of far-reaching changes (Kitschelt, 1994), a “silent revolution” in the words of Inglehart (1977), in Europe that shifted the values of society from a focus on materialism to post-materialism “and the New Left politics it has inspired” (2010, para. 30). The latter resulted in a series of new demands and issue divides (Hutter & Borbáth, 2018), such as “self-affirmation, individualized lifestyles, democratic participation, equality, and informal interpersonal relationships” (Ignazi, 2003, p. 201). However, the re-orientation of politics led to a backlash, a silent counter-revolution, with the far-right emerging and despite the efforts of neo-conservatists to exploit this critical moment before it (Ignazi, 2003; Pirro, 2019). Based on this interpretation of historical events, the far-right became a political actor who could shape the political agenda. Since the socio-economic cleavage was partly replaced by the socio-cultural cleavage as the main interpretative tool of social reality, topics such as immigration increased in salience (Rydgren, 2005). Hence, the immigration issue entered the debate because “the inflow of people from other cultural backgrounds endangers the cultural homogeneity that thinkers of the New Right, as well as

exponents of right-wing populist parties deem necessary to preserve” (Bornschieer, 2010, p. 423). In this view therefore the far-right constituted “a material reaction to the challenges posed by modernisation” (Pirro, 2019, p. 3).

This brief introduction to modernisation theories shows that they consist of diffuse and broad changes that need to take a more crystallised form if they are to be used in this project, which is quantitative in nature. This is the reason why we turn to the description of two oft-cited explanations in the literature that address different aspects of macro-processes: the 1. ethnic competition and 2. economic insecurity arguments. These are not unique, but here we have selected the most suitable explanations for this study; following the work of Ravndal (2018, p. 849), more specifically, “immigration, modernisation and socioeconomic hardship have been proposed as being conducive to extreme right mobilisation and violence.”

3.2.2 The ethnic group conflict theory

The ethnic group conflict theory, despite the fact that it cannot be fully separated from the implications of the long-term transformations described above, focuses on the immigration issue (Rydgren, 2007), which has repeatedly been presented as one of the most important predictors of far-right success (Amengay & Stockemer, 2019). An extreme version of this view even assumes that immigration constitutes “the single most important cause of the radical right electoral break-through” (Zhirkov, 2014, p. 287). Although it might sound self-evident in this intellectual tradition that the proponents of anti-immigrant positions (see Chapter 2 for the ideological orientations of far-right activists) would be able to garner support, especially if we take into account the diversification of the Western European population in terms of its ethnic, cultural, and religious composition that has occurred over the last

decades (Ivarsflaten & Gudbrandsen, 2014), we should resist the temptation to believe the idea that anti-immigrant attitudes automatically lead to far-right support (Golder, 2016), as if there are not any intermediate steps that affect and shape the behaviour of individuals.

Keeping the aforementioned observation in mind, which is important because it functions as a reminder that the theories presented here are not adequate to explain far-right mobilisation in isolation, the ethnic group conflict theory posits that the native population will turn against and compete both migrants and ethnic minorities; we should point out that it was Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2018) who brought up this issue, asserting that in the absence of clear patterns of mass immigration in Europe, if we are to study in a robust way the relationship between the native population and the number of non-natives, we should also include ethnic minorities, i.e. this part of the population that might have never experienced a transition to a new environment. This on the other hand deepens our understanding of how the far-right perceives reality, and it is indicative of how it draws boundaries between the in-group and out-group. In the existing literature, the ethnic group conflict theory has been understood in different ways. In a recent review, Arzheimer (2018) provides a comprehensive summary, creating a list that includes four rather broad categories, namely: 1. realistic group conflict and ethnic competition, 2. status politics and symbolic racism, 3. social identity, and 4. scapegoating. Although they all share the element of antagonism between natives and non-natives, the author elucidates that the centre of their interest is not the same.

Briefly, the first category is concerned with materialist conflicts and the fear that resources, such as welfare state benefits, social housing, and jobs, will deplete due to an increasing number of foreigners (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004; Zhirkov, 2014). In the view of the second category, immigrants pose a

cultural threat, or an ethnic threat, that will undermine the values and norms of the majority population (Arzheimer, 2018; Ivarsflaten & Gudbrandsen, 2014); what is at stake is the preservation of community and national identity (Oesch, 2008). On the other hand, social identity, the third category, accentuates the innate tendency of individuals to identify positively with members of their group and discriminate against members of the out-group even if there are no apparent cultural or economic reasons to behave in such way (Arzheimer, 2018). Related to this, Golder (2016, p. 485) adds that “an inherent desire for self-esteem causes people to perceive their ingroup as superior to outgroups” to the extent that they are perceived as inferior. Lastly, scapegoating simply states that natives channel their anger and frustration towards immigrants (Karapin, 1998) because they are an easy and convenient target, and not because they bear any responsibility for the personal deadlock and predicament of the native group (Arzheimer, 2018).

In this thesis, given that it is difficult to examine the above theories independently due to the absence of available data that would allow us to delve into the details of each theory and also due to the focus of the research question of this thesis on other aspects of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain, we align with the perspective of Goodwin (2012), but also with Rydgren and Ruth (2013), who understand ethnic group conflict broadly, as the amalgamation of three – either real or perceived – interrelated mechanisms. More specifically, the authors speak of economic (e.g. unemployment and benefits of welfare state), cultural (e.g. national identity), and security (e.g. criminality) threats that determine conflict lines. This holistic approach takes into account the multidimensionality of the ethnic group conflict theory and, most importantly, allows us to formulate hypotheses that refer to the number and presence of migrants in certain locations.

Therefore, the description of the above mechanisms lead us to the hypothesis that far-right mobilisation will increase during time periods that migration levels also increase in Great Britain. In particular, if the native population starts to feel threatened by the increasing presence of migrants, its members will be inclined to participate in far-right protest actions in order to protect themselves from out-group threats. In the words of Boutcher et al. (2017, p. 691), these theories “suggest that increases in the minority population generate real or perceived competition between whites and minorities.” In Chapter 7, we will assess the impact of migration on far-right mobilisation.

3.2.3 The economic grievances or insecurity theory

This strand of the current literature pays closer attention to the impact that the wider socio-economic transformations had on Western European societies in the post-war period (Caiani, 2017). Once again, the negative consequences of modernisation are viewed as being the driving force that fuels deprivation as well as the deterioration of economic conditions “the years following the recession of 1966/7, which appeared to betray the high-flying promises of the reform governments” (Prowe, 1994, p. 298). Betz (1994) has developed one of the most influential theories regarding the role of the economic dimension in determining the political behaviour of people, which emphasises the transition from industrial to post-industrial societies. This version of modernisation puts forward that the far-right attempts to take advantage of an altered status quo, by promising the return to traditional values. This sounds appealing to these people who live in contexts that have imposed and established new social norms, lifestyles, forms of production, and expectations, and have divided as a result society into two main camps: the winners and losers of modernisation, or the “left behinds” in the words of Ford and Goodwin (2010). To this end, Georgiadou et al. (2018, p. 105) analyse in more detail the composition of economic

concerns, showing that “economic insecurity is related to several “adverse events” (job loss, family breakdown, illness), among which unemployment has a key position.” In other words, the new status quo represents a new form of reality that is embedded in a climate characterised with uncertainty, broken identities, and fragmentation (i.e. anomie), and pessimism (Betz, 1994; Rydgren, 2007).

One could argue at this point that the above paragraph is reminiscent of the sociological approaches offered by Lipset and Bell and aimed to explain the reasons why fascist movements rose (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). The narrative bears many similarities. The accelerated rhythms of modernity bring about sweeping changes that marginalise segments of society. In their influential study, Koopmans et al. (2005), explain, for instance, how they understand the unfolding of these developments, by discussing two variants of grievance-based explanations: 1. the collective behaviour theory, and 2. the relative deprivation theory. Both explanations are components of the broader modernisation theory. The authors suggest that worsening economic conditions will have an impact on people’s life and perceptions. More specifically, “economic downturns impact increasingly on lower-skilled workers, who then suffer disproportionately from unemployment, bad housing, marginalization, and isolation” (Koopmans et al., 2005, p. 183). Related to that, McVeigh (1999) argues that economic along with political grievances also need to be accounted for if the aim of the research is to draw a more comprehensive picture of the reasons why Ku Klux Klan gained in popularity in the 1920s in the USA. Doing so in this case, what is highlighted is the contribution of economic variables to the explanation of political phenomena that are pertinent to the purpose of this thesis. Moreover, Goodwin (2012) adds an illustrative example that correlates violence in Russia with socio-economic marginalisation and deprivation, which urges young

men to engage in delinquent behaviour with the aim to fulfil their far-right aspirations or urges (also see the research of McLaren, 1999).

Since we mentioned before that unemployment has a key position in this strand of literature, we can expect therefore that support for the protest actions of the far-right will tend to increase in cases we observe higher unemployment rates within the white population. Similarly to Boutcher et al. (2017), we are more interested here in developments within the white population because the politics of the far-right in Western Europe, including also in Great Britain, have mainly been associated with this part of society. Although there are several variables that can measure the state of the economy and whether it is improving or declining, we have decided to include in our hypotheses the rates of unemployment, since this indicator has extensively been used in the past in theories and hypotheses that attempt to predict far-right success and failure.

Before we conclude this sub-section, however, the following question should also be addressed: is it reasonable to expect economic factors to have an independent effect on the success of far-right groups, and more generally on their patterns of mobilisation? To answer this question, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2018) leans towards a negative answer, as empirical research fails to prove the claim convincingly. Nevertheless, instead of ignoring altogether this theoretical paradigm, they recommend more research be conducted on the exact paths of causality of the above variables. This is also evident in Inglehart and Norris (2017, p. 447), who write that the “cultural backlash largely explains why specific people vote for xenophobic parties – but declining economic and physical security helps explain why these parties are much stronger today than they were 30 years ago.” In doing so, they

describe the multiple paths this relationship can take and also a probable combination of conditions that cuts through the relationship between economy and far-right support.

3.3 The supply-side of politics

As has already been explained in the beginning of this chapter, in order to reach a more satisfying explanation of why there might be an audience that is receptive to the far-right rhetoric and practices, we should also look into the supply-side of politics. This way, we will improve our understanding with regard to the main reasons that encourage support for the politics of the far-right. There is a large body of social scientists who convincingly show that demand-side approaches are insufficient to explain the volatility of far-right performance over time and space (Bara, 2014; Ivarsflaten & Gudbrandsen, 2014). What is needed therefore is a supplementary model that looks at the features of the broader political and institutional system that influence the genesis and growth of protest movements (Della Porta & Diani, 2006); a model that places more emphasis on the behaviour of the far-right and examines why certain circumstances come to be perceived as a social problem that needs to be addressed with action either on the streets or through institutional channels (Art, 2006; Koopmans, 1996). The supply-side of politics is the missing piece of a puzzle fraught with complex interactions that determines the fortunes of the far-right to a great extent. To put it more clearly, the supply-side translates the “demand into practical party politics” (Mudde, 2007, p. 202). According to Muis and Immerzeel (2017), supply-side approaches delineate both the opportunities and constraints that the political and institutional context offer, and they are further divided into internal, such as leadership and organisation, and external, such as political opportunity structures (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013). Below the intention is again to present the most important supply-side theories that appear to have affected far-right mobilisation. It will soon

be realised that with this approach the focus diverts from why protest occurs to how it occurs (Meyer, 2004).

3.3.1 External supply-side approaches

1. Political Opportunity Structures

Another term that has been deployed in the current literature is “Structure of Political Opportunities and Threats,” which is probably a more straightforward way to show that the political leverage and power of collective actors is shaped by both opportunities and threats that have been generated by the institutional environment (Alimi & Hirsch-Hoefler, 2012). However, since most studies prefer the term “Political Opportunity Structures,” we will use the latter throughout this section. Having said that, the Political Opportunity Structures perspective is one of the most influential in social movement studies that have been developed to assist research with respect to the exogenous to the social movement factors that affect both the patterns and intensity of its mobilisation patterns (Strijbis, 2015). If viewed chronologically – although we should admit that the boundaries of the sequence of events are fluid – this perspective emerged as a corrective response to the shortcomings of Resource Mobilisation Theory, which was mainly concerned with the internal organisational dynamics of collective actors as enabling factors of mobilisation (McAdam et al., 2009). Resource Mobilisation Theory demolished the basic principles and assumptions of previous theorisations of collective action, and more specifically the assumptions of breakdown theories which came out of the Nazi experience (Meyer, 2004) and based their explanations on the irrationality of the crowd and political disconnection, assigning to the agency the role and significance it deserved (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). However, it neglected the symbiotic relationship of activists with their institutional environment, and this is the reason why the idea of

opportunity structures aimed to fill this knowledge gap. At the same time, the introduction of the latter concept in the studies of protest movements generated several interpretations that “add new tasks and mechanisms to the concept” (Meyer & Minkoff, 2004, p. 1458) but also critiques that underscored the lack of clear concepts in this tradition as well as the existence of structural biases that “tend to wash the meaning and fluidity out of strategy, agency, and culture so that they will look more like structures” (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 29).

In the particular field of our concern in this thesis, often the definition of opportunity structures (Minkenberg, 2013b; Mudde, 2007; Rydgren, 2005) follows Tarrow’s (2011, p. 163) work, which sees opportunities as “consistent – but not necessarily formal or permanent – dimensions of the political environment or of change in that environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting expectations for success or failure.” These dimensions refer, among others, to the degree of openness or lack of the political system, the presence of elite allies but also the potential divisions that may erupt between them as well as the power that states have to repress protest (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004; McAdam, 1996). As in the previous section with grievances however, we should abstain from a deterministic understanding of the impact that opportunity structures have on the emergence and development of collective action (Andrews, 2001), as this would overemphasize their influence in explanatory models of far-right success and failure.

Finally, before we proceed to the delineation of the most relevant Political Opportunity Structures for this study, we should add another detail here. Della Porta and Diani (2006) note that not all dimensions of the opportunity structures exhibit the same levels of stability and endurance; some of them are more volatile. If one wonders what the implications of this observation are, Rydgren (2005, p. 418) writes

that contingent (or volatile) opportunity structures are better suited for “explaining variation over time within specific political systems,” while stable opportunity structures are more likely to help explain variation across different geographical locations. This is also in line with what Caiani et al. (2012) contend about the role of stable opportunities and constraints, and more specifically about the number of institutional openings that are available for political participation in political settings where the far-right occupies a central position. The authors put forth that this type of opportunities lacks the analytic depth to understand “the small and stigmatized extreme right” (Caiani et al., 2012, p. 36). Since this thesis follows a time series analysis approach of protest events in Great Britain, it seems that more situational opportunity structures are particularly useful. After this short, but necessary clarification, the most pertinent opportunity structures that we are interested in are: a) the availability of political allies in power, b) the role of repressive environments, and c) the dynamics of competition between the main political parties.

a) The availability of political allies in power

The first opportunity structures that we examine here is the presence of political allies in positions of power; this is identified in the literature as a factor that affects the prospects for mobilisation of far-right activists. For example, political allies can be either established right-wing political parties – which is a more likely scenario – or far-right parties – a less likely scenario – (e.g. see Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016; Braun & Koopmans, 2010; Braun, 2011). If we follow the underlying logic of this argument, the relationship between allies in office and the intensity of protest action is inverse as the former “will be less inclined to support extrainstitutional action, and there is less need for social movements to resort to extrainstitutional pressure when political friends are in power” (Koopmans &

Olzak, 2004, p. 211). Other studies that look more specifically at the direction of the relationship between far-right violence and the strength of institutional allies also expect a negative association (Minkenberg, 2013b).

We realise that the inclusion of conservative right-wing parties in the discussion of this sub-section may raise objections, since it implies that there exists a close relationship between two political actors that in reality do not share the same ideological basis. Therefore, we ought to elaborate more on the following question: why would far-right groups abstain from protest activities when the conservative right is electorally successful? The theoretical discussion in Hutter's book (2014a) is helpful in this regard and offers some hints. The author contends that the more salient and controversial a social issue becomes in the institutional arena, the less "favorable are the conditions for protest mobilization" (Hutter, 2014a, p. 38). In this interpretation, the conservative right creates a favorable climate for the far-right and themes that have been associated with its agenda find greater resonance in politics (Braun & Koopmans, 2010), giving the impression that the voice of its members is being heard. As a result of that, far-right groups gain indirectly institutional access, a development that decreases their need to seek alternative channels to channel their demands.

It would be an omission, however, not to mention that the above relationship appears to hold for the far-right specifically. In their recent study on the dynamics of protest and electoral politics in Western Europe, Hutter and Borbáth (2018) suggest that the above relationship is determined to a great extent by the ideological underpinnings of the political actors involved. This means, that whereas for the far-right (or "populist radical right" in their words) mobilisation is not the first option when their issues of concern become salient, for the left this relationship reverses; in other words, the politicisation of their

issues in the electoral arena leads to higher levels of mobilisation in the protest arena too (Hutter & Borbáth, 2018). In this way, the authors show that the logic of protest may differ, and this is the reason why this factor should be taken into account when analysing the protest activities of social movement actors with different ideological backgrounds.

b) Repressive environments

Talking about the effects of repression on the activities of far-right parties, Art (2006) argues that, under certain circumstances the fate of the far-right might be compromised. A typical example here is whether a “cordon sanitaire” is imposed before or after the far-right has managed to achieve electoral success. We should clarify briefly what cordon sanitaire means. A “cordon sanitaire” could be produced by other political parties in cases, for instance, where they decided to exclude far-right parties from participation in coalition governments; in general, however, there is not a conclusive answer in the current research as to whether collaboration between the so-called “mainstream parties” and far-right parties has an impact on the electoral performance of the latter (van der Brug & Fennema, 2003). Additionally, media could also follow similar tactics by denying, for example, to make public the claims of representatives of the far-right (Rydgren, 2004).

Having said that, repression constitutes another opportunity structures that seems to be important in episodes of contention where far-right actors advance their claims (Caiani et al., 2012). This finds application in protest movements too. Although repression is often assumed to take the form of state repression, this is not necessarily the case (Linden & Klandermans, 2006). For example, repression may take the following forms: soft repression on the one hand is expressed as “ridicule, stigma, and silence” (Ferree, 2005 as cited in Linden & Klandermans, 2006, p. 213) while hard repression could be

also produced – apart from the state – from the media, counter-movements, or the civil society more generally (Linden & Klandermans, 2006). Moreover, and as we see in the two examples that follow, the operationalisation of repression may differ across studies, which in turn determines its classification as a stable or volatile opportunity structure. More specifically, Caiani et al. (2012, p. 36) define this variable as a legal constraint and more specifically “repression of the use of fascist and racist symbols and practices,” whereas Ravndal (2018) treats it as the aggregate score of various elements, such as the reactions of the governments to incidents of hate and racism and their policies of ostracism against far-right parties.

Generally, although there have been instances where the decision of authorities to ban political protest has proven to be effective dampening the chances for mobilisation (Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016), we should keep in mind that repression is a tactic with ambivalent results. Minkenberg (2013b) adds, for example, that the suppression of some far-right events, such demonstrations, campaigns, and music festivals may backlash, creating as a result a pool of potential far-right followers and sympathisers who wish to turn against the authorities. Besides, some of the lessons that we draw from the literature on social movements show that while repression is likely to reduce the actual number of protest events and the willingness of people to participate, the radical flanks of a protest movement may see violence as the only viable option (Beck, 2008). It largely depends then on how, when, and in what context repression transpires. Equally important, does society approve and legitimise the enforcement of repressive measures against the far-right (Linden & Klandermans, 2006)?

c) The dynamics of competition between the main political parties

One of the assumptions that Koopmans and Olzak (2004) make in their study on far-right violence in Germany during the 1990s is that electoral competition influences the choices of political activists and facilitates the spread of contention, since it opens an opportunity for challengers to mobilise and make claims. In simpler words, this dimension of Political Opportunity Structures involves the dynamics of competition and conflict that unfold between political parties that are seen as the main antagonists of the institutional arena. One may wonder then, how does it convince protesters to take to the streets and engage in contention? According to Giugni et al. (2005), this specific supply-side opportunity plays a pivotal role and raises awareness about existing vulnerabilities that may exist in the political process. The authors develop a compelling argument, suggesting that “the structure of political alignments and the dynamics of party competition” (Giugni et al., 2005, p. 148) not only shapes the boundaries of the political space that is available to far-right groups (also see the work of Muis and Immerzeel (2017), who assert that the ideological convergence of mainstream parties increases the chances of the far-right to enter the electoral terrain), but also determines the extra-parliamentary behaviour of movements and sub-cultural groups. Similar to this view, Tarrow (2011) in an attempt to delineate the potential opportunity structures that encourage contention points to divisions between political entrepreneurs, with McAdam et al. (2004) to speak of a symbiotic relationship that cuts through elite conflict and protest action.

Based on this discussion, we can hypothesise therefore that in cases we observe strong competition between the main political parties, support for the far-right will increase and as a result far-right mobilisation will develop further. In Great Britain, this process can take place during time periods there

is strong competition between the Conservative Party and the Labour Party, since the latter two political parties are the main antagonists in the political arena.

2. The cultural context and Discursive Opportunity Structures

Conflicts orchestrated by protest movements and group of the sub-cultural milieus, which constitute the less organised forms of extra-institutional politics, cannot be studied meticulously if they are stripped of their cultural references and influences of the past (Caiani et al., 2012). As is well known in the current bibliography, the cultural context constantly informs, but is also being informed by, the norms, values, and traditions that prevail in society (Minkenberg, 2003). It is no wonder therefore why some social environments appear to be conducive to the diffusion and adoption of ideas that have been communicated through a restrictive and exclusionary far-right lens. The political culture affects in turn the Discursive Opportunity Structures, which are as defined “as the aspects of the public discourse that determine a message’s chances of diffusion in the public sphere” (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004, p. 202). The discursive opportunities affect, in other words, the chances of success or failure of the movement (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). Bröer and Duyvendak (2009), who reflect on the aforementioned definition, write that discursive opportunities help explain why some particular frames gain salience in the public dialogue, that is mainly regulated and controlled by the media, and not others. This is an aspect of the universe of contentious politics therefore that cannot be neglected, despite the criticism it has attracted. The latter assumes that the intension of the term “opportunity structures” has been expanded beyond its limits, causing its conceptual inflation (Tarrow, 2011). Furthermore, discursive opportunities not only reflect which themes, that have been prioritised by political actors as important,

indicate what is acceptable and legitimate by the public, they may also determine the success rate of social movements (Della Porta & Diani, 2006).

A few examples at this point would help the above discussion. Koopmans et al. (2005) show how strict and loose interpretations of national configurations of citizenship result in favourable conditions for the far-right. The empirical application of their theoretical argument provides evidence, for example, that the far-right is more likely to succeed in more conservative, in terms of socio-cultural values, countries. Related to the latter, Ravndal (2018) constructs a conceptual framework that takes into consideration the impact of authoritarian legacies as a precondition for the creation of discursive opportunities in 18 Western European countries. In Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, what seems to be relevant is the legacy of the Communist regime that brings in essence political meaning to actions (Caiani, 2017). Therefore, if we accept that discursive opportunities allow some ideas to better resonate with popular opinion, Golder's (2003) explanation on why there are some far-right parties (i.e. neo-fascists) that have not managed to escape marginalisation starts to become more coherent. Finally, the relationship among political culture, discursive opportunities, and dissemination of far-right claims into the structures of society takes us back to the previous chapter, where we talked about the attempts of far-right intellectuals to establish their cultural hegemony first, with the aim to win the political battle in a subsequent step. In other words, this reminds us that far-right ideas do not exist in a vacuum, but also that the far-right can find different ways to spread its messages in contemporary societies.

Looking at the British case, in Chapter 6 we present graphs to show that far-right activists have mainly focused their attention on issues related to Islam and the Muslim community during the last 11 years. Thus, it would not be surprising to expect an increase in far-right mobilisations when media actors –

even inadvertently – associate Islam with negative frames. If and when the latter happens, it is likely that it justifies the decision of far-right groups and individuals to express their claims through the protest arena. In short, we expect the far-right to react when the community group they have mostly targeted appears in negative news articles.

3.3.2 Internal supply-side approaches

The question now is whether or not the aforementioned approaches are sufficient to provide a complete explanation of the relevance of far-right politics nowadays. Those who are familiar with the theoretical assumptions of social movement literature would probably answer negatively. The reason is that there is another important aspect of mobilisation that has not been presented yet. This looks at the far-right not as a passive recipient of external influences and transformations, but as an active actor that (partly) holds its destiny in its hands, and despite the fact that it is not labelled the same way shares many elements with Resource Mobilisation Theory that was introduced earlier (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). The internal supply-side of far-right politics, as is often dubbed in the current literature, is preoccupied with the internal processes of far-right challengers (2017), and looks, among others, at the organisational structures of political groups, their ideological mix and framing strategies, and the role of inspirational leaders (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013).

Although the internal supply-side will not be examined empirically in this thesis, and more specifically in the regression models presented in Chapter 7, since in quantitative – and even qualitative – designs the researcher cannot control for and study the impact of all possible factors that have been identified in the literature; boundaries need to be drawn around a research problem (Oliver & Myers, 2003). Hence, we briefly introduce two oft-cited aspects of the internal supply-side, so that the reader can understand

how this approach differs to the approaches introduced earlier. On the one hand, it is the organisational structure and tactics of political groups, and on the other hand their framing strategies. The former is concerned with how the far-right functions and is organised internally, pointing to its capacity to seize moments of opportunity and exploit the vulnerabilities of the system. In both the party and the social movement field, this side of far-right success (and failure) has been highlighted (Caiani et al., 2012). For example, in social movement theory the notion of “mobilising structures” has been devised to highlight what was mentioned in the previous sentence that “although it is individuals who decide whether to take up collective action, it is in their face-to-face groups, their social networks, and the connective structures between them that collective action is most often activated and sustained” (Tarrow, 2011, p. 30). Even for political parties, their chances to persist and grow increase when the organisational basis, structure, and tactics are built on a solid basis (Art, 2018). Besides, we should not neglect the fact that political groups constitute constellations of individuals with different needs and priorities, which means that the strategic choices of far-right entrepreneurs have consequences that could jeopardise the very existence of the group (Rydgren, 2007).

The main conclusion we draw so far is that the far-right is able to create opportunities for itself. This is also evident in the second dimension of the internal supply-side, i.e. the collective frames that far-right challengers employ in order to make sense of their surrounding reality and to influence its constituents and also potential supporters base. Although we do recognise that there exist differences between the terms “frames” and “discourse” – e.g. it has been suggested that the discourse is “part and parcel of the framing process” (Gamson, 1992, p. 624) – and even “narratives” (e.g. see Polletta, 1998), we will avoid to compare them here; besides, many far-right scholars, especially those who conduct research on

the developments of political parties, have often used these terms interchangeably. Having said that, it has been argued that in order for opportunities and grievances to bring about mobilisation need to be perceived as such; more accurately, opportunities and grievances need to “be filtered through a process of “cognitive liberation”” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 18; McAdam, 1982). As Grasso and Giugni (2016, p. 666) further explain “grievances matter to the extent that they are socially constructed and subjectively perceived.” In addition, one of the most authoritative – and accurate – definitions views frames as “an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment” (Snow & Benford, 1992, p. 137). However, it is also important to note that the produced schema constitutes “also the outcome of negotiating shared meaning” (Gamson, 1992, p. 111).

Regarding the object our concern, in the previous chapter, we described the transition of the far-right to a new phase, where racism ceased being understood on the basis of biological criteria; rather, the new understanding was built around cultural criteria (Rydgren, 2005). This transformation and the adoption of new rhetorical vehicles was crucial. In general, we expect from the preceding discussion that the mobilisation efforts of social movement actors will have more chances to end successfully if messages resonate with the approved cultural frames of contemporary societies (Berbrier, 1998), as the discursive opportunities are stronger in this scenario. In social movement studies, especially after the so-called “cultural turn” (McAdam et al., 2009), frame analysis has been advanced as a powerful tool to dissect how collective actors come 1) to diagnose social problems, naming also those who are responsible for it, 2) to suggest solutions, and 3) to provide incentives for mobilisation (Snow & Benford, 1988). In

short, frames can be seen as platforms of meaning production through which political actors construct and share their worldview with bystanders and antagonists.

3.4 Reciprocal mobilisation: why movements' symbiosis matters

The final part of this literature review chapter on the most relevant theoretical paradigms that have been developed so far to explain the uneven mobilisation trajectories of far-right groups ends with a detailed discussion of what we name in this thesis “reciprocal mobilisation” (in the next paragraphs we explain clearly why we have decided to use this term). The latter can be found under different names in the existing literature, of which stand out the terms cumulative extremism (Eatwell, 2006), competitive escalation (Della Porta, 2014), cumulative radicalisation (Bartlett & Birdwell, 2013), reciprocal radicalisation (Knott et al., 2018) as well as tit-for-tat radicalisation (Jackson & Feldman, 2011). Despite differences in terminology and conceptualisation, what these approaches have in common is the focus they place on how the interactions between opposing groups unfold, impacting as a result the emergence and development of social movements (Koopmans, 2004). Despite the fact that the deeds and rhetoric of protest groups generate different types of oppositions, e.g. with political opponents, institutions, and authorities (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996), here we are primarily interested in a particular type of conflict that involves far-right groups and anti-far-right groups. The latter can be associated with dedicated anti-fascist organisations and it can also involve ethnic relations and migration groups. Except for that, in Great Britain, in the time period we are examining, i.e. 2009-2019, we have also observed broader sections of British society to react to the protest activities and narratives of the far-right, even of the “mainstream” conservative right when they appear to adopt the

frames of far-right groups; community groups therefore constitute another group of people who oppose the far-right and as a result we are also interested in how their relationship with the far-right evolves.

At the same time, our main task in this section is to avoid simplistic representations of this symbiosis because it can lead to fallacies and erroneous understandings of collective action. We argue that a social movement perspective offers a strong theoretical background and an array of tools that allows us to unpack the dimensions of this concept in a more comprehensive way. We therefore abstain from the use of metaphors such as both groups are “two sides of the same coin” or “the vicious circle” of opposing groups because we argue that they narrow our focus and are likely to give a false impression that one protest movement cannot exist without the presence of the other. In the next paragraphs, we elaborate further on these remarks.

Firstly, if our aim is to analyse rigorously the development of contentious actions, either verbal or non-verbal, we should remember that several factors determine the effectiveness and outcome of protests. Indicative of this observation is the diagram (see Figure 3 below) that Favre designed in his attempt to illustrate the ecosystem of demonstrative events (as cited in Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p. 99), but it can also be thought of as a schematic representation of contention in general. It is evident from the diagram that apart from the main political actors who initiate the event, i.e. the demonstrators in this case, opponents stand at the opposite side whereas bystanders, the media, and authorities, among others, also enter the picture. Most importantly, and regardless of how active or passive each actor is, they have a role to play that affects the course of present and future action. In their article, Braun and Koopmans (2014, p. 652) argue, for instance, that “bystander responses play a crucial role in how political opportunities become

manifest.” A lesson we can draw from the diagram is that it shows the need for more inclusive studies that do not neglect the social settings of a protest event.

A second example that more convincingly negates the meaning of – and even the need for – the above metaphors refers to the enemies of the British far-right since the era of the British Union of Fascists, a political party that was created by Oswald Mosley during the 1930s (Jackson, 2018). Although ethnic minorities and Muslims in particular have constituted the predominant target of far-right groups over the last decade in Great Britain (Macklin & Busher, 2015), a finding that is also supported by the data we have collected and present in Chapter 6, this was not always the case. More specifically, Jackson (2018) provides historical examples of the main opponents of the far-right, and the list includes far-left groups, Communists, anti-fascists, and Jews, among others. In the Introduction of this thesis, we also saw that von Beyme (1988) divided the success of the far-right in three periods, where the extreme and/or moderate version of Islam was not the main issue that would instigate far-right mobilisation. Although we do recognise that movement and counter-movement interactions are an understudied topic in social movement studies, and especially within studies that use quantitative data, we suggest that this type of research that takes the interactions as the main object of analysis should be more attentive to the multi-organisational nature of political contention. Having presented these important caveats, our next step is to explain the meaning of the concept.

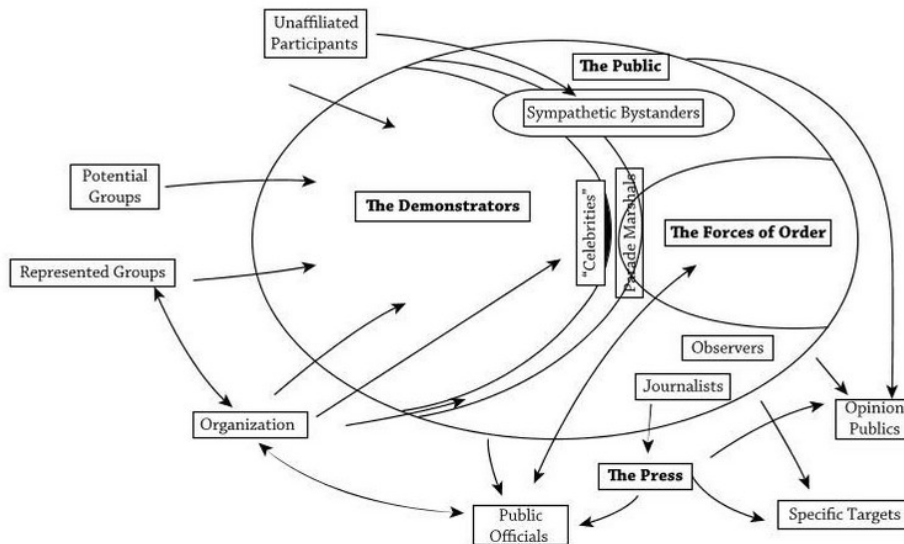


Figure 3: Favre's representation of actors in a demonstration (1990, p. 19 as cited in Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p. 99)

We start the analysis on the interactions between opposing groups with the following observation made by Zald and Useem (1983, p. 1) that “movements of any visibility and impact create the conditions for the mobilization of countermovements.” The authors state that the activities of protest movements alter the conditions and expectations of the existing groups in a given locale, generating and leading to grievances and potentially counter-mobilisation. Although the contribution of Zald and Useem (1983) to the advancement of social movement theory is undisputed, their theorisation has limitations, since it assumes that counter-movements depend on the initiator movements and cannot exist independently as a result. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996), in their seminal work on the relationships between movements and counter-movements whose influence reverberates even today, take a different stance highlighting

the shortcomings of previous research and offering an improved version of the ways social movements engage in these interactions. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996) understand counter-movements primarily as “networks of individuals and organizations that share many of the same objects of concern as the social movements they oppose” (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996, p. 1632). They also perceive – and this is an important point – antagonistic groups as independent political actors who have their own composition, aspirations and strategic planning, and also the ability to control their own fate and to increase their chances of achieving victories. This is in line with the general premise of this thesis that protest movements are not monolithic entities. Thus, if we neglect that social movements constitute a conglomerate of various networks, groups, and individuals, we simplify their very existence and as a result our capacity to understand their dynamics. Relatedly, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler (2012) write that the unity and coherence of social movements should not be taken for granted; although there might be opportunities in the broader institutional context, fragmentation is still a likely outcome. Based on the insights and theorisations of Meyer and Staggenborg (1996), while in the early stages of a conflict it is justifiable to speak of counter-movements, i.e. political groups that react to the formation of a original movement, over time it is not easy to separate how each movement influences each other and also their environment, and this is the reason why in these cases it is better to speak of “opposing movements.”

As has already been argued, interactions between opposing movement are important, and we believe that the concept of reciprocal mobilisation should additionally be viewed through the prism of the so-called “constriction of possibilities” (Royce, 1993), given that “no social event or process is a unilateral product of one party’s actions, even the most entrenched institutional leadership” (Paul et al., 1997, p. 46). It goes without saying that this idea also applies directly to the social movement sector. Oliver and

Myers (2003) emphasise, for instance, that collective actors learn from each other constantly, adapt to reformed environments, and respond to tactical innovations and rhetorical challenges. It is interesting to see therefore that the current readings of this antagonism between political groups re-affirm what we suggested previously when talking about reciprocal mobilisation, and more specifically that “the parties involved in a conflict were understood to draw on a common pool of resources” (Knott et al., 2018, p. 4).

Looking at the theory on reciprocal mobilisation, it predicts that the success of a protest movement or the proliferation of its activities can result in counter-mobilisation because the members of opposition who feel threatened will decide to mobilise in order to protect their interests (Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016). A number of scholars have attempted to explore these theoretical statements. Andrews (2002) looks at the conditions under which private segregationist academies were formed in Mississippi during the period 1969-1971 and finds that interactions between white and black populations along with state intervention were the primary causes of the final outcome. On the other hand, Inclán (2012) models protest events that took place from 1994 to 2003 in Mexico with regard to the Zapatista issue. Again, in the analysis the author includes and measures the impact of variables such as political alliances and procedural concessions, allowing them to put movements’ dynamics in perspective.

So far, the reader is likely to have shaped a good idea about reciprocal mobilisation. However, we need to further discuss some aspects of the concept, so that we can provide a more complete picture of its dynamics. In their influential article on the interactions between opposing groups, Busher and Macklin (2014) investigate the dimensions of reciprocal mobilisation (which is framed “cumulative extremism” in their article), arguing convincingly that more precision is needed in order for the concept and its

various applications to be useful. Apart from the observations we have made so far in this section, they put forward the following: first, the concept should be clear about whether the analysis of reciprocal mobilisation refers to words (i.e. the battles of narratives) or deeds (i.e. the behaviours that could also involve physical violence) or even both. If this is not clarified, for example, one is likely to conflate the arenas that matter the most for this relationship to develop. The latter is also important from a policy perspective because dialectical confrontations do not have the same impact as street conflicts (Busher & Macklin, 2014). We should stress here, for example, that social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, due to the anonymity they offer to their subscribers lower the barriers of participation and as a result potential interactions between opposing activists may inflate our perceptions about the extent of their rivalry should be a real matter of concern. Bartlett and Birdwell (2013, p. 6) show that after the murder of Lee Rigby (see Chapter 6 for more details about this political event) “the EDL increased its Facebook ‘Likes’ by around 100,000,” while at the same time the street protests organised by the EDL failed to attract an equally large number of protesters that could accurately depict the on-line popularity of the group. In addition to that, Knott et al. (2018, p. 6) content that “the vast majority of online contributions are made by a small group of ‘super users’, often resulting in a difference between online and offline enemies.” Hence, we should be cautious when reading about interactions between groups when it is not clear what this relationship involves.

Furthermore, Busher and Macklin (2014) lay particular emphasis on the following question: what is the trajectories of movements’ encounters? There have been cases, they argue, that conflicts escalated to violence but was sporadic, while in other cases the violent nature of these episodes lasted longer (see also Macklin & Busher, 2015). However, there were also cases that violence did not emerge at all. This

is the main reason why in this thesis, we approach both the far-right and its oppositional groups from a social movement perspective, taking into account all the possible forms of the broader repertoire of contention (Caiani & Borri, 2013) and not only violence. We believe therefore that labels such as “cumulative extremism” or “reciprocal radicalisation” can be unnecessarily confusing as they imply that only violent incidents are the possible outcome of movement and counter-movement interactions.

To further elaborate on the above, radicalisation is often described by governments and academics alike as a complex process that contains in one form or another violence. In fact, a very influential definition views radicalisation as a “process through which a social movement organization (SMO) shifts from predominantly nonviolent tactics of contention to tactics that include violent means, as well as the subsequent process of contention maintaining and possibly intensifying the newly introduced violence” (Alimi et al., 2015, p. 11). Extremism on the other hand is a term that has been discussed in the second chapter when we explained the differences between extremism and radicalism. In this thesis, it has a very specific meaning and refers to political actors who reject certain aspects of democracy. In this line of reasoning, our analysis would be rather restrictive if the focus turned only on extremist groups. Besides, history has shown that political violence is the product of intensified protest and can be driven by the relational dynamics that develop during cycles of contention (Della Porta, 2014), suggesting, in other words, that political groups which are less prone to violent tactics cannot be excluded from the analysis. We are primarily interested in studying all forms of protest in the cycle of contention, which is for Tarrow (2011, p. 199)

a phase of heightened conflict across the social system, with rapid diffusion of collective action from more mobilized to less mobilized sectors, a rapid pace of innovation in the forms of

contention employed, the creation of new or transformed collective action frames, a combination of organized and unorganized participation, and sequences of intensified information flow and interaction between challengers and authorities.

Our decision therefore to adopt the term “reciprocal mobilisation” is based on the belief that the above concerns are satisfactorily addressed. The term points to the central idea of the concept, which is the interactions between antagonistic groups, while at the same time it does not make any premature assumptions about the evolution of the relationship. Although we know that the structure of the latter is either loose or tight (Zald & Useem, 1983) only empirical reality can show how movements respond to each other. For example, Bartlett and Birdwell (2013), discussing about the far-right and Islamists in the United Kingdom, contend that the groups do not depend on each other equally; rather, in order for the far-right to become relevant, it seems that it needs more its enemy. Busher and Macklin (2014) add therefore that this realisation is crucial because our expectations vary based on how movements are related. If they are loosely coupled, “their campaigns would be less likely to be organised in direct opposition to one another” (Busher & Macklin, 2014, p. 14), and vice versa. As a final point, in the last few paragraphs we described the reasons why reciprocal mobilisation is preferred as a term in this thesis; it is neutral and does not carry the inherent weaknesses – at least as identified in this section – of similar terms.

Having clarified so far the meaning of reciprocal mobilisation as a conceptual tool, a topic that needs further exploration here is the expected relationship of the mobilisation patterns between antagonistic groups. Previous studies (e.g. Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016) have found that this relationship is positive; an increase in movement events is positively related to the number of opposition events. However, this

approach looks at the number of total events. In the present thesis, we understand mobilisation patterns in a different way. Not only are we interested in the total number of protests, but more importantly we also take into consideration the size of protest. This makes sense because, as we show in Chapter 6, in many cases the far-right fails to organise large demonstrations. On the other hand, the opposition has often managed to outnumber far-right protest events. Relying on the theoretical insights of Meyer and Staggenborg (1996, p. 1647), the authors argue that

in the short run, a victory for one side will spur the other in a movement-counter-movement conflict. In the long run, neither side can maintain itself without victories; the side that fails to win any victories over many years will decline.

Therefore, we can assume that this relationship is negative, i.e. opposition will lead to lower levels of far-right mobilisation over time. If social movement actors come to the realisation that their efforts are fruitless, they will be less inclined in the future to participate in protest events (i.e. strong opposition will be perceived as a defeat). Our aim is to test this hypothesis, and more specifically whether or not the mobilisation of opposition groups has a demobilisation effect on the far-right. Although we will test this theoretical argument for the British far-right in Chapter 7, we put forward that the same set of mechanisms are likely to exist in other types of movements, and not necessarily the far-right. Besides, this is the reason why we explained previously that one of the contributions of this thesis is the way we measure and understand mobilisation.

3.5 The main theoretical argument of the thesis

Having discussed the most relevant theories that have been developed and tested in previous research, in this section we explain what the components of the main theoretical argument of this thesis are, and, most importantly, how we conclude that the latter can help us study the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. We have decided to take a pragmatic approach here. This means that the decisions for the construction of the theory are guided by the next three criteria: 1) previous research on far-right mobilisation and related phenomena, e.g. when the dependent variable is violence, 2) data availability, 3) length of time series. Below, we explain in more detail the three criteria.

1. Previous research on far-right mobilisation and related phenomena

Our research project, especially the quantitative part that aims to analyse the relationship between the dependent variable, i.e. levels of far-right protest activity, and the main independent variables derived from the theories presented in this chapter, is influenced by similar studies that have looked at either far-right protests more generally or far-right violence more specifically. These studies are four in total, namely, the work of 1) Koopmans and Olzak (2004) on “Discursive Opportunities and the Evolution of Right-Wing Violence in Germany,” 2) Braun and Koopmans (2014) on “Watch the Crowd: Bystander Responses, Trickle-Down Politics, and Xenophobic Mobilization,” 3) Boutcher et al. (2017) on “Strain, Ethnic Competition, and Power Devaluation: White Supremacist Protest in the U.S., 1948–1997,” and 4) Karpantschov and Mikkelsen (2017) on “The Rise and Transformation of the Radical Right Movement in Denmark, 1980–2015.” These four studies were selected because the dependent variable is either instances of violence (first two) or protest more generally (latter two). In addition to that, the

authors used quantitative methods and different types of regression models to analyse their data; their research design is similar to the design of this thesis in other words.

2. Length of time series and 3. Data availability

These are two critical factors that have affected the selection of the independent variables we include in the regression model. In essence, length of time series and data availability determine to a great extent the theories we can utilise to build our argument. Since they are interrelated we discuss them together in this sub-section. Our dataset maps protest events organised and carried out by far-right activists in the period 2009-2019. This means that our analysis can be conducted either on a monthly or on a quarterly basis. In the former case, we can aggregate the data over 132 months or over 44 quarters if we select the second option. From a statistics point of view, it would make more sense to analyse monthly data, since higher degrees of freedom would allow us to examine more independent variables, and as a result the implications of more theories; alternatively, we would also be able to include more measures of the same theory, e.g. both migration and the interaction between migration and unemployment for the ethnic group conflict theory. However, for the British case if we relied on monthly data we would not have information about the levels of migration. The authorities provide only reports on a quarterly basis and they do not contain references to the monthly changes of the migration population in the country. Alternatively, we could have relied on statistics about asylum seekers but this does not seem to be the most appropriate measure of the ethnic group conflict theory (see also Chapter 7). Braun and Koopmans (2014), who used data on the number of asylum seekers, for example, explain that asylum seekers were the majority in the migrant population of Germany in the 1990s. Consequently, we used quarterly data so that our research is in line with previous discussions on far-right mobilisation.

Taking into consideration the above limitations, we have to select theories that on the one hand relate to the findings of previous research and on the other hand will allow us to use quality data. Thus, our theoretical argument combines insights from the following theories: 1) the ethnic group conflict theory and 2) the economic grievances or insecurity theory will test the impact of the demand-side explanations, while the impact of the external supply-side explanations will be tested through the two theses on 3) the dynamics of competition between main political parties and 4) discursive opportunities. Our research should be viewed as an attempt to address some of the shortcomings observed in previous studies, such as the absence of the protest actions of counter-movements in explanations of the evolution of far-right mobilisation. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996, p. 1656) suggestions was that “quantitative analyses of event data coded from newspaper accounts can show patterns of mobilization and collective action in movement-counter-movement conflicts.”

In other words, our theory puts forward that the worsening of economic conditions along with the creation of potential tensions between the native and migrant populations, i.e. conflicts that could reflect economic, cultural, and security concerns as mentioned before lead to grievances that the far-right can exploit. In addition to that, if societies come to the realisation that the political environment – through elite conflicts and party competition – cannot accommodate the issues they prioritise they will turn to the far-right as an alternative option of influencing the political agenda. The media, as an actor that frame social reality should not be absent from theoretical approaches of far-right mobilisation, as they largely determine which political issues are important. The negative framing of specific categories of the population is expected therefore to contribute to the success and failure of the far-right, depending on which issues become salient and also on whether they speak the language of far-right

activists. Muslims have become the centre of attention in Great Britain over the last decade (see Chapter 6), and this is the reason why we predict that the negative coverage of events that involve Muslims and the religion of Islam will increase support for the far-right. At the same time, our theory predicts that strong opposition, i.e. through massive counter-mobilisations, will have a negative impact on the development of the far right, limiting the space they can exploit and disillusioning its current and future supporters; this is likely to happen if the far-right movement suffers constantly defeats and its members assume that they cannot achieve their political goals (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996).

In other words, the above discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

1. The activities of opposition groups will lead to lower levels of far-right mobilisation
2. Higher migration is expected to increase the levels of far-right mobilisation
3. Higher unemployment rates within the white population will lead to further support for the far-right movement
4. Strong competition between the main political parties will increase support for the far-right movement
5. Media attention to the Muslim question through negative frames will boost support for the far-right

In Chapter 7, we explain in more detail the measures we use to test these theories, but our logic is driven by the idea that since one of the main contributions of our research project involves the analysis of the impact of counter-protests on far-right mobilisation, we should not experiment with news ways of measuring theories that look at the “usual suspects,” such as economic and cultural grievances. Our

research design would lead to outcomes that would not be easy to compare with previous studies that use completely different variables. Therefore, and given the length of the time series, i.e. 44, we used only one measure for each theory, i.e. measures that have been analysed extensively in the past, and more specifically data on the number of counter-demonstrations, migration, white unemployment rates, political competition between the Conservative and the Labour Party, and finally media representation of Muslims and Islam. Relying on the aforementioned theoretical arguments, our overall aim is to contribute to the current literature by reassessing the impact of some factors that have been studied in the past when combining them with another factor, i.e. anti-far-right mobilisations.

3.6 Conclusion

The third chapter of this thesis looked at the most important theories that have been used in the existing literature by academics who study the far-right in its various organisational forms, i.e. from political parties to social movements and solo-actors. The main aim of the chapter was to provide the theoretical background of our research on the far-right movement in Great Britain. It also discussed the main theoretical argument of the thesis based on limitations, i.e. data availability, length of time series, previous research. Consequently, with this knowledge, in Chapter 7, we will be able to turn theories into hypotheses and test our arguments through an innovative quantitative analysis, which is based on the R package `tscount` that takes into account the fact that our dependent variable is a time series of event counts.

The focus was split between two main theoretical camps; i.e. the demand-side explanations and supply-side explanations. We argued that the former set of explanations analyse how grievances create demand for the politics of the far-right, while supply-side explanations focus on opportunity structures as well

as on the internal dynamics of organisations (Golder, 2016). Particular emphasis was also placed on the concept of reciprocal mobilisation, which takes into account the interactions between opposing groups. This is important because in the Introduction we contended that one of the contributions of this thesis is its consideration of the effects of opposition on the mobilisation patterns of the British far-right. In the last analysis chapter, we explain how we have operationalised this variable; a challenging task given that there is not an extended list of previous studies that look at this types of analysis.

Now, we turn to the next chapter whose aim is to provide details about the methodological logic and choices of the thesis. Since our research is inspired by developments in the field of social movement studies, we draw insights from previous research on Protest Event Analysis (PEA), a methodological tool that has allowed us to advance our knowledge with regard to the evolution of collection behaviour. In this chapter, after we also explain in a transparent way what steps we followed in order to generate a new dataset on the far-right in Great Britain in the period 2009-2019.

Chapter 4. The methodology of data collection: PEA

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the chapter is to present in detail the methodology of data collection that has been employed in this thesis. Similar to other scholars and practitioners in the field of social movement studies (Caiani et al., 2012; Hutter, 2014a; Kriesi et al., 1995; Pirro et al., 2019), we have relied on the PEA method to collect protest event data in a systematic and consistent way over time, and more specifically for the period 2009-2019 in Great Britain. Despite its limitations, and its main criticisms that will be discussed later in this chapter, PEA has long established itself as a key method of social movement research because it allows the collection and analysis of several characteristics of protest events (Bagguley, 2010). This is particularly important in the study of the far-right, since there is a need to move beyond approaches that take into consideration predominantly the institutional presence of the far-right; instead, what is needed is a more holistic approach that also include studies that focus on the extra-institutional activities of far-right groups (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018).

In the present thesis, we are interested in these protest activities that are the product of “purposive strategic action,” are “political in nature” (Koopmans, 2002, p. 5), and attempt as a result to affect the decisions and policies of governments (Bailey, 2014). In other words, we are interested here in physical actions, and not verbal actions, that aim to influence political and social change processes through the expression of claims, e.g. shared grievances (Hanna, 2017). Following Hutter (2014b), the main unit of our analysis is the protest event. However, since it is difficult to define the latter in a non-fuzzy way, we have decided to espouse the suggestions of other scholars in the field (e.g. see Kriesi et al., 1995) and

create a detailed codebook that contains a list of protest actions as well as actions that have not been included in the dataset. In doing so, our chances to achieve coding consistency and validity for protest events in the period under consideration increase (Lorenzini et al., 2016). This chapter also pays particular attention to another important aspect of PEA, which is the careful selection of primary and secondary sources for the data collection. Although most comparative, large-scale projects usually rely on a very limited number of newspapers, we have used national and local newspapers in this project along with independent reports and articles or blog-posts from the websites of some prominent anti-racist groups in Great Britain, such as Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism, and Anti-Fascist Network. The reports made available by the Institute of Race Relations have also been utilised, especially for protest actions that are more violent or confrontational; their reportage spans the whole period of our analysis, ensuring that the majority of relevant protest events will be included in the final dataset.

The chapter proceeds as follows: the first part discusses the main characteristics of PEA and compares it with another rather popular method in social movement studies, the Political Claims Analysis (PCA) method which expands the unit of analysis and focuses on both verbal and physical actions. The second part looks at some of the criticisms related to PEA and the use of newspaper data, while in the third part we attempt to answer whether it is possible or not to exclusively rely on automated methods to retrieve information from newspapers and written texts more generally. Next, we present our methodology and the logic that has driven throughout the thesis our decisions with regard to the data collection process; this step involves the presentation and explanation of our sampling strategy and selection of sources. We are particularly concerned with this issue and this is the reason why we address the limitations of

the PEA methods as convincingly as possible. In this section, we also present the reasons why Northern Ireland has been excluded from our analysis, since it constitutes a unique case due to the conflicts that shaped its past. The inclusion of Northern Ireland would require further assumptions with regard to the data collection process, and as a result we decided to adopt the approach of other studies which also do not take into account protest actions in Northern Ireland when explaining the British movement sector. The last section of this chapter involves the presentation of the codebook that has been used for the construction of the new dataset. Although we recognise that coding errors and misconceptions may be present, we prefer our methods to be transparent and open to examination, so that a better and improved version of the dataset can become available in the future.

4.2 The main characteristics of PEA

PEA is a method of quantitative content analysis that allows social movement researchers to collect information on several characteristics of their main unit of analysis, which is the protest event, and not social movement organisations (Hutter, 2014b). In principle, there are no limitations with regard to the number of relevant variables one could possibly include in the project. For instance, the “Dynamics of Collective Action in the United States” codebook contains more than 30 variables of interest. However, it is questionable whether media reports provide such rich information for the majority of events on a consistent basis over time, taking also into account the fact that “editorial demands” may vary (Swank, 2000, p. 31) and determine the quality of available information. Another issue that emerges in this case is that the time required for the coding of each protest event increases significantly while reducing the ability of coders to act in accordance with the coding criteria set in the codebook. These are the main reasons that we have followed a minimalist design and coded only seven basic variables (e.g. see also

Hutter & Borbáth, 2018): 1) date, 2) location, 3) name of social movement organisation, 4) action form, 5) reasons of mobilisation, 6) size of protest, and 7) total number of arrests. In addition, Koopmans and Statham (- 1999, p. 204) point out that PEA, along with another method in social movement studies, i.e. Political Discourse Analysis, “share a common focus by taking a dimension of collective mobilization in the public domain as a key variable for explaining political change.” Event analysis, when it first took its form in the 1960s, led to a major breakthrough in the field of collective action for two reasons as Olzak (1989) notes. On the one hand, several social science methods became available to researchers, who were presented now with an opportunity to study social movements from different angles, while on the other hand “the substantive findings informed theoretical debates about social upheavals” (Olzak, 1989, p. 121). Related to that, Koopmans and Statham (1999) further explain that PEA has been used to test hypotheses drawn from the political process approach.

The above discussion leads to the following question: what is the definition of a protest event? Hutter (2014b), in his review on past and current applications and developments of PEA, states that there is no agreement in the academic community about the exact conceptualisation of protest events. This is due to conceptual differences with regard to 1) the number of participants and 2) forms of action that are being taken into consideration in different research projects (Hutter, 2014b). Lorenzini et al. (2016), who are primarily interested in how to automate parts of the data collection process, further suggest that rather than relying on broad and vague definitions, one is better off if they use a set of more homogeneous action forms. In their project, for instance, they have focused on the following action forms: “Petitions, Strikes, Demonstrations, Blockades and occupations, and Political violence” (Lorenzini et al., 2016, p. 7). Their decision is inspired by the work of Kriesi et al. (1995) on new social

movements in Western Europe. In this, the authors deliberately abstain from definitions and criteria that are less likely to ensure coding consistency in longitudinal and comparative contexts and instead create a catalogue of specific action forms and goals. This thesis, as will be shown in the next sections, adopts the logic of Kriesi et al. (1995), provided that the events we have identified in the newspaper articles and reports express political claims and not individual grievances. Our main aim – and at the same time concern – is to code the protest actions of far-right groups and individuals as consistently as possible, so that we can draw a representative sample of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain.

Another issue that needs to be discussed here, as it poses challenges during the data collection process, is how to demarcate protest events from each other. Biggs (2016) notes that in some cases researchers code as one event protest actions that take place in different locations but on the same day. An example he provides to better illustrate this point is from the project: “Dynamics of Collective Action in the United States.” In this project, the authors have counted as one event 21 collective actions that occur in 21 different cities on the “National Free Sharon Kowalski Day.” Biggs (2016) continues wondering therefore why not count 21 events? Kriesi et al. (1995) once again discuss extensively the above coding challenges and put forward that researchers should differentiate protest events from each other based on the following two criteria: 1) timing and 2) locality. In other words, and in order to be more specific, if a group of protesters demonstrates in two different cities on the same day, researchers should count two protest events. Based on the same logic, if a protest group organises a demonstration in the same city but on different days, they should count again two protest events. We should mention, however, that Kriesi et al. (1995) emphasise that there were some exceptions due to the complexity of the nature of protest events, e.g. how they unfold, how many actions and actors involve etc., and we should also note

the complexity that is further added from the way journalists describe protests. For example, while in some cases there are detailed descriptions of the sequence of events on the day of protest, in some other cases the only information that becomes available is the name of the group or the motives behind the protest. Even worse, there are newspaper articles that only briefly mention a protest event that could be of use for the researcher, but this happened a few times only in our research. An indicative example is the following one retrieved from LeedsLive. Here, the available information is limited; however, this is another protest event that helps us understand the activities of a far-right group:

A man has been arrested for a racially aggravated assault at Leeds Crown Court. It follows reports of a disturbance when EDL (English Defence League) protestors entered the court building this morning with interest in an ongoing court case. One witness took to twitter describing 'unpleasant scenes and disruption'. Police were called at 9.20am to reports of an assault. There has since been an increased police presence inside and outside of court (Millington, 2018).

For the construction of the new dataset on the protest activities of the British far-right – as one would assume – we faced similar challenges. For example, according to the news media Asian Image ('What Has Been the Point of KFC Protest?', 2011), in February and March 2011, some EDL members were protesting outside a KFC store in Blackburn against the selling of Halal meat for 28 consecutive days. Since we know the name of the social movement organisation, the dates and location but also the issue around which the far-right mobilised, we decided to code 28 different protest events. This means that we demarcate protest events based on what Lorenzini et al. (2016, p. 8) suggest that “a change in any of the event variables – action form, location, date, actors, or issues – signifies a new event.” However, a

difference in our approach is that we do not code violent events separately because, at least from our experience, it is not always easy to identify which group initiated violence and how violence broke out. Having said that, Koopmans and Statham (1999) argue that the PEA method has limitations that can be addressed if we expand the unit of analysis and include apart from protests the discursive dimension of political contention, so that we can gain a more representative and inclusive picture of the behaviour of social movements. To be more specific, the two authors explain that PEA focuses primarily on protests and as a result it neglects the decision of some social movement actors to communicate their ideas and express claims through other channels, e.g. through press releases and public statements. Their second criticism relates to the fact that PEA does not provide information on important covariates that help researchers understand the multi-organisational field in which social movements emerge, evolve, and decline (Koopmans & Statham, 1999). For instance, they contend that if data on covariates, that may relate, for example, to Political Opportunity Structures arguments, were available with PEA, one would be able to assess the impact of structures on mobilisation levels and degree of political conflict. On the other hand, academics, such as Hutter (2014b, p. 346), expresses scepticism about these approaches that expand the unit of analysis, as they “have not yet completely succeeded in carving out the relation between different protests or among protest events and other claims.” Even the authors who suggested the expanded version of PEA (i.e. Koopmans & Statham, 1999), warn the students of collective action that there are limitations to the use of the Political Claims Analysis method if the aim of the project is to code events for the whole movement sector, or if the aim is to delve into the frames and discourses of protest movements. In other words, and as has been made clear throughout this thesis, decisions and justifications will ultimately thus depend on the research question and aims of the research project.

4.3 Newspaper data and PEA criticisms

In order to conduct the PEA method, newspapers are often the preferred source of information (e.g. see Bailey, 2014; Galariotis et al., 2017; Ishchenko, 2016). Although newspapers have been continuously used for years, Koopmans (1998, p. 91) points out interestingly enough that “this popularity is mainly the result of a negative choice,” as other potential sources of information for protest events, such as police archives, do not provide as much information as newspapers about the variables of interest. Not only that, with regard to police data, Oliver and Myers (1999) found that most of the police records, at least in the regions they looked at, used to be collected in a non-systematic way and there was observed an inconsistency in the amount of information the police made available. It is not surprising therefore that some researchers claim that news media will continue to be the main sources of data collection until better sources become available (Strawn, 2010). However, there are a number of limitations and biases associated with the use of newspaper data that we will discuss in the following paragraphs. This is an important aspect of PEA to consider because if biases are not handled properly during the research process, it is likely that the ensuing dataset will be incomplete and most importantly not representative of the actions of social movement actors (Swank, 2000).

To begin with, three are the main news media related biases that have been discussed extensively in the extant literature, namely 1) selection bias, 2) description bias, and 3) researcher bias (Earl et al., 2004; Mügge, 2012). Selection bias refers to the tendency of newspapers to pay attention to and report certain types of protest events while ignoring others that do not meet the criteria newspapers set; for example, due to “competition over newspaper space, reporting norms, and editorial concerns” (Earl et al., 2004, p. 69). As a result, it is not possible for researchers to identify and collect all protest event data that may

be relevant to the research questions of their projects (Oliver & Myers, 1999). Moreover, Fillieule and Jiménez (2004) estimate that the proportion of protest events that are being reported varies between 2 and 10 per cent, whereas the decision to include a protest event in the news depends on four factors: “the size of the event, the degree of novelty of modes of action employed, the occurrence of violence, and geographical location” (Fillieule & Jiménez, 2004, p. 261). Earl et al. (2004, p. 69) contribute to this discussion contenting that the newsworthiness of a protest event is determined by three additional factors, and more specifically, “the presence of counterdemonstrators or police, sponsorship by social movement organizations (SMOs), or the use of sound equipment.” They also write that in cases where the main reason of mobilisation, i.e. the issues of the protest event, reflects more general concerns in society, the press is more likely to include it in its coverage.

On the other hand, description bias is concerned with the extent to which the dimensions and features of protest events are being described accurately in the news media (Bagguley, 2010). The latter refers either to missing information with regard to some variables of interest or to the inaccurate coverage and reporting of a protest event (Ishchenko, 2016). For example, Mügge (2012), who took an ethnographic approach to assess the validity of the “Mobilisation on Ethnic Relations, Citizenship and Immigration” (MERCİ) dataset, found that in several cases newspapers had failed to report protest events correctly. However, we should mention that the effect of description bias on the results of the MERCİ project was not significant. Earl et al. (2004, p. 72) further points out that description bias may include three other types of bias: “(a) omission of information, (b) misrepresentation of information, and (c) framing of the event by the media.” It is safe to assume then that projects that intend to collect information for several variables are more likely to suffer from description bias.

The third bias, i.e. researcher bias, happens because it depends on the level of knowledge of the object of study that coders may have (Mügge, 2012). Limited knowledge will probably result in coding errors and less systemic recording of the repertoire of action of protest groups. Granted, coding inaccuracies may also occur due to the inherent difficulty, when working with news media data, to translate text into codes and depict reality as accurately as possible. For example, during the data collection process of the present thesis, there were many individual cases, especially when we had to make decisions about instances of violence and vandalism, which posed challenges and were often difficult to catalogue in terms of which codes best described the variables of interest. Another example from this thesis is that when protest groups organised a demonstrative event, it was not easy to tell what the main reason of mobilisation was because protesters made many and different claims simultaneously for a demonstration. We should also note here that another issue that arises with coding, which is more pragmatic this time, is what Schrodts and Yonamine (2013, p. 12) eloquently describe as a “mind-numbingly boring” process. Reading and coding newspaper articles for several hours per day for many months will lead to inconsistencies even if the same person does the coding. Hutter and Borbáth (2018) present the levels of inter-coder agreement for their project. The authors find that the average Cohen’s Kappa statistics was 0.57 for actors, 0.53 for issues, and 0.45 for the protest size, while the standard deviation was 0.13, 0.45, and 0.06 respectively. Although the aforementioned numbers are deemed to be satisfactory, they show that collecting protest event data can be a challenging task.

Finally, another criticism of the PEA method relates to the coding schemes that have been employed in different research projects. For example, it has been extensively discussed by Earl et al. (2004) how the early attempts of scholars to use indexes, e.g. provided by newspaper publishers for the identification

of relevant protest events, were criticised as not being successful in creating representative samples. As a result, in other projects instead of relying on indexes, researchers used newspapers in order to identify protest events. For instance, the work of Kriesi et al. (1995) is based on the analysis of a few selected newspapers for the countries they study, with the inclusion criteria being 1) continuity, 2) frequency, 3) quality, 4) national scope, 5) political colour, and 6) selectivity of the newspaper. The PRODAT project (see Rucht & Ohlemacher, 1992), which produced another authoritative dataset in the field of social movement studies for the Federal Republic of Germany, also followed the same approach. In addition, these two projects coded the Monday issues (for the PRODAT project, they also coded all remaining issues every four weeks), since the rationale is that sampling can also be applied to newspaper data, and not only in public opinion studies, if the resulting sample is big enough to allow researchers to perform rigorous statistical analysis. Considering data collection processes, this is a pragmatic decision, especially if the scope of the project is longitudinal and comparative in nature because it is not realistic to expect that all the issues of the newspaper can be read and coded.

We should also note at this point that it is open to debate and further research whether one or even a limited number of newspapers can produce reliable and accurate data. Nam (2006) argues, for instance, that protest event datasets will contain meaningful data if they rely on multiple news sources, especially if they include local newspapers too. The author presents the example of the “Protest and Coercion Data” project that relies on “approximately 500 newspapers, trade publications, and wire services available on Lexis-Nexis” (Nam, 2006, p. 283). In line with this latter view, Maney and Oliver (2001, p. 132) find that “no single media or police source captures all, or even a representative sample, of the events of interest. Each source has a distinct orientation in its coverage.” This means, in other words,

that if only one newspaper is used certain types of protest events might be more likely to be included in the sample while equally others might be excluded. These are concerns that have been recognised in the field of social movement studies. Hutter (2014b) suggests therefore that researchers should be explicit and clear about their methodological choices and name the strengths as well as the weaknesses of their research approach. Besides, valid conclusions about social and political phenomena can be drawn only if there is transparency about the steps that have been followed during the research process.

4.4 Automated and semi-automated ways to retrieve protest event data from news media texts

Before we discuss in more detail the sampling strategy we have used in this thesis, it is interesting to discuss here some more recent developments with regard to automated and semi-automated approaches that have been employed in the social sciences for the collection of political and protest event data. Given that the data collection process is so labour intensive, expensive, and subjective (King & Lowe, 2003; Schrodt & Yonamine, 2013), researchers have attempted to use various programming tools in order to automate the process and to mitigate these challenges. Schrodt and Van Brackle (2013, p. 26) rather convincingly state that it is a large advantage given “6 min of automated coding, or 500,000 labor-hours of manual coding, probably costing on the order of \$10-million when labor and administrative costs are taken into effect.” It seems that for large-scale projects – that involve many countries and span over long periods of time – human coding cannot be a viable and realistic option. We discuss three automated event extraction tools here, and more specifically 1) the Machine-Learning Protest Event Data System (MPEDS), 2) the Python Engine for Text Resolution And Related Coding

Hierarchy (PETRARCH), and 3) Giveme5W1H, while we also refer to another semi-automated approach that has been suggested by Lorenzini et al. (2016).

The first program, MPEDS, has been developed by Hanna (2017). Compared to other machine-assisted approaches in political science, such the popular Integrated Crisis Early Warning System (ICEWS), MPEDS has been designed to identify and collect data on protest events as has been defined in social movement studies. MPEDS is still in a development stage and aspires to collect rich information about protest events instead of broader political phenomena, which are the focus, for example, of systems that use the Conflict and Mediation Event Observations (CAMEO) ontology. The main variables of interest for this project are the following: location, social movement organisations, action form, issue, target, and size (Hanna, 2017). In a recent application, it was used by Oliver et al. (2019) for their project on black protests in the US in the period 1994-2020 as a means to identify relevant newspaper articles that contain protest events, since at its current development stage, researchers do not have the opportunity to take advantage of its full capabilities. However, when it reaches its final stage, it will be relatively easy for scholars to disentangle the different patterns of mobilisation and tactics of social movements. MPEDS has the potential to be a valuable tool in social movement studies and one reason for this is the clear structure of its design. It is packaged and distributed in two docker containers; the first container is for the geolocation program and the second is reserved for the coding of newspaper articles. Except for that, the program has been written in the – popular among social scientists – Python programming language, and only a few lines of codes and commands are needed to generate a complete protest event dataset.

Apart from MPEDS, however, another automated, pattern based this time, coding system that has been developed by researchers who are members and contributors of the Open Event Data Alliance consists of a set of programming tools, which include geolocation programs, dictionaries in different languages, and coders. PETRARCH is a natural language processing tool that has been designed to code social and political event data on the sentence level, and is considered to be the progeny of earlier systems that have been in use for almost 30 years (Hanna, 2017). The main logic and its behaviour differ from MPEDS, as it defines events in a completely different way that is not in accordance with definitions developed in social movement studies. The coding of events relies on predefined dictionaries that have been constructed separately for both action forms and political actors (Norris, 2016). PETRARCH is a flexible tool, however, and can be used either as a stand-alone program or alternatively as part of a pipeline that includes, among others, web scrapers and the Mongo database for the storage of political events. The goal of this endeavour is that human interaction should be only limited to the selection of appropriate news media sources, the ontology (i.e. frameworks that describe the relationships between variables), and also dictionaries that contain lists of organisations, verb actions, and issues, so that the programming tool can recognise which political events to code and which to ignore. However, whether protest events can be coded consistently is open to further examination. A weakness points to the fact that PETRARCH's dictionaries need to be updated on a regular basis. Makarov (2018), who tested this coding tool, notes, for instance, that if more patterns are included in the dictionaries, the resulting dataset improves significantly. This means that at their current development stage some programming tools may fail to provide accurate samples of the protest activities of the British far-right, which is the main focus of the present thesis.

A third automated tool that can potentially be used in the study of collective action is Giveme5W1H. Although it has not been created by social movement researchers, it intends to collect information from news media on the following important variables of political events, i.e. who, what, when, where, why, and how (Hamborg et al., 2019). One of the main advantages of the program, which also characterises the aforementioned tools, is that it is open-source and provides transparency in the decisions that one needs to make in every step of the coding process. Moreover, Giveme5w1H could be a useful addition to the current social science methods and could be used as a tool for making comparisons with the results of other methods. According to its creators (Hamborg et al., 2018), another application could be for frame analysis, for instance, in figuring how the press interprets and portrays the actions of social movement actors.

Finally, Lorenzini et al. (2016) take a semi-automated approach in a large project that collects protest event data for 30 countries in total and a period that spans over 10 years. In order to make text sources manageable, they combine automated methods with manual coding. They use LexisNexis as a platform for text retrieval, while different algorithms and classifiers are employed for the de-duplication of documents and the identification of newspaper articles that mention at least one protest event. One of the innovations they put forward, which has also informed the current thesis as we show later, is the sequence of protest-related keywords they used for their LexisNexis search. This is based on approximately 40 keywords, such as *demonstrat!* or *manifest!* or *marche!* or *marchi!* or *parade* or *rall!* or *picket!* (the exclamation mark is used in LexisNexis searches as a truncation to replace more than one letter at the end of the search term), and is an improvement compared to other searches, as it allows a higher number of protest actions to have the same likelihood of being included in the final selection

of documents. For example, Bailey (2014) relies only on three keywords, i.e. protest, demonstration and strike, that appear in the index term of newspaper stories. The author justifies this methodological decision, claiming that other experimental searches have shown that the aforementioned keywords are able to identify most actions that take place at the extra-institutional level.

4.5 Sampling strategy, selection of sources, and codebook

Having said that, we now turn our attention to the methodological choices of the present thesis and explain in more detail the steps we have followed from the identification of relevant newspaper articles to the generation of the new protest event dataset that maps the actions of the British far-right groups. The aim of this section is to address in a convincing and satisfactory way the biases mentioned above. However, it is not expected that the resulting dataset is flawless, as we recognise that there will always be ontological divides among researchers who wish to create protest event datasets, or as Tilly (2002, p. 252) contends “choices among alternative units of observation become assertions about what exists.” Our strategy therefore is to not deviate from a systematic recording of protest events over time.

The new protest event dataset on British far-right groups and individuals is based on the selection of multiple sources, including local and national newspapers, reports, or websites. Jenkins and Maher (2016) point out that if there is a sufficient number of diverse sources the quality of the final dataset is likely to improve its representativeness. However, it is not clear how many additional sources should be added. In some cases, the inclusion of another or a small number of newspapers may amplify the problem of selection bias. Jenkins and Maher (2016) cite the work of Myers and Caniglia (2004), who come to the following conclusion that “adding only one or two sources produces only marginal gains and may even make matters worse” (Myers & Caniglia, 2004, p. 536), whereas Koopmans and Rucht

(2002) assert that the inclusion of a second newspaper increases the time needed for data collection but without ensuring that a substantial number of additional protest events will be necessarily identified.

However, an example from studies on the British movement sector shows that a limited number of newspapers might not be adequate to provide a representative sample of far-right mobilisations. Bailey (2014), whose research on British protests spans a period of more than thirty years, uses two national, quality newspapers, i.e. the Guardian, a centre-left newspaper, and the Times, a centre-right newspaper, in order to address biases that might be related to the ideological leanings of the news providers and could result in selective reporting. Nevertheless, an examination of Bailey's (2014) publicly available dataset indicates that this logic is not useful for the research question of the current thesis because the number of far-right protests that has been documented is rather low. In 2010 and 2011, for instance, only around 10 protest events have been included in the dataset and despite the fact that these two years have been associated with the rise of the EDL, while in 2012 there are only two protest events.

Taking into consideration the above findings and recommendations, we have decided therefore to use the LexisNexis database for the identification of relevant documents from multiple sources because it is a popular electronic platform in the field of social movement studies, along with Factiva and Media Cloud, that allows researchers to search in more than one news media source the information needed. In terms of the sampling criteria that have been employed for the electronic searches, our approach has been inspired by two different methods that have appeared to be suitable for this thesis. The first method follows the work of Caiani and Parenti (2013), who use several keywords such as far-right, extreme right, neo-Nazi, Nazi, white supremacis*, skinhead* etc., aiming to find all articles that have made references to radical right and extreme right groups or individuals. However, this set of keywords

often results in newspaper articles that may not contain protest events that have occurred in the period under consideration. For instance, the term Nazis may identify historical articles or articles that refer to the actions of Nazis during the 1940s. Instead, we explicitly used the name of the majority of far-right groups that have entered the public debate in the period 2009-2019. More specifically, an indicative example of the first component of our search code is the following: “Casuals United” or “EDL” or “English Defence League” or “March for England” or “Scottish Defence League” or “SDL” or “Stop Islamification of Europe” or “Pegida” etc. In order to make sure that articles are more likely to include mentions of protest events, we combined the above code with keywords that have been used for the “Political Conflict in Europe in the Shadow of the Great Recession” (POLCON) project (e.g. see Lorenzini et al., 2016). The search string contains nouns that describe different protest action forms, such as initiative or referendum or petition! or signature! or campaign! or protest! or demonstrat! or manifest! or marche! etc. Combining these two methodological logics, we end up with the following search string:

“Casuals United” or “EDL” or “English Defence League” or “March for England” or “Pegida” or “SDL” or “Scottish Defence League” or “FLA” or “Football Lads Alliance” or “Infidels” or “Mothers Against Radical Islam And Sharia” or “Stop Islamification of Europe” or “Stop Islamisation of Europe” or “United People of Luton” or “WDL” or “Welsh Defence League” and (ablaze or affray or arson or assault or attack or blaze or blockade or blockage or bomb! or boycott! or demonstrat! or festival or (fire I/1 raising) or firebomb! or graffiti or hostage! or (human chain) or incendiar! or marche! or marchi! or occupation or parade or petition! or picket! or protest! or rall! or riot! or (road show) or sabot! or signature! or (street theatre) or

squat! or vigil) and length < 600 and not section ((archives) or (art and design) or (arts) or (arts and ents) or (australia news) or (books) or (bricks and mortar) or (business) or (celebrity news) or (column) or (columnists) or (comedy) or (comment) or (easter out and about) or (editorial) or (entertainment) or (environment) or (europe) or (features) or (film) or (football) or (gardening) or (global) or (globe mailbox) or (homes and property) or (housing network) or (international) or (ireland) or (leader) or (leading) or (let) or (lett) or (letters) or (media) or (motoring) or (music) or (nostalgia) or (opinion) or (playlist) or (review) or (road accidents) or (road record) or (science) or (sport) or (sports) or (sprt) or (stage) or (technology) or (television & radio) or (the guide) or (travel) or (tv mag) or (us elections) or (us news) or (us politics) or (world)) and not (BNP Paribas) (see Appendix C for a complete list of all groups)

At this point, we should clarify the components of the above code. As said before, the first component contains the names of far-right groups in quotation marks to make sure that LexisNexis will return only documents with the exact phrases specified. It is suggested by the official documentation of LexisNexis (*Search Connectors and Commands*, n.d.) to use quotations marks if search phrases include connector words, such as the connector words “and” and “or.” In our search string, more specifically, the names of some far-right groups consist of connector words, such as the “Blood and Honour” group or the “Pie and Mash Squad.” Moreover, since some newspaper articles prefer to write the acronyms and not the names of far-right groups, such as EDL or SDL instead of English Defence League or Scottish Defence League respectively, the use of quotation marks helps LexisNexis not to omit relevant documents. The second component starts after the connector “and” and includes in a parenthesis all the keywords that

describe different action forms. The use of exclamation marks at the end of some words means that all the variations of these words will be found.

The third component, length < 600, determines on the other hand the maximum length of newspaper articles. In our string code, we are interested in collecting articles that do not exceed the limit of 600 words. Since we do not restrict our search to a small number of newspapers, we expect that LexisNexis will return only documents that focus on facts and not on – the unnecessary for this project – comments made by journalists. Our assumption therefore is that newspaper articles of this length will provide all the necessary information that we need for the variables of interest. The fourth and final component excludes all these sections of a newspaper, e.g. sports, technology, or film, that are less likely to refer to a protest event. BNP Paribas has also been excluded for the same reasons. Except for that, LexisNexis also has another feature that reduces the total number of documents that might not be useful for some projects. One can narrow down the search by specifying in the Geography index which countries are of primary interest; in our case, these are England, Scotland, and Wales. Regarding Northern Ireland, the country has been excluded mainly due to the history (i.e. the ethnic conflict) and peculiarities of this case study; a factor that lies outside the focus of this thesis (see also Bailey, 2014). Another option with LexisNexis is to select the type of publication. LexisNexis collects documents from a variety of sources such as newspapers, blogs, web-based publications, magazines, business market reports etc. We have selected newspapers and web-based publications that results in the inclusion of national and local newspapers. In doing so, we do not omit valuable information that can be found in local sources, as Nam (2006) suggests.

There are also some additional points we need to raise here about the data identification process, which are worthy of attention because the reader is better informed about the methodological decisions of this thesis. In the above code, and more specifically, the sequence of keywords we have used for the LexisNexis search, we have omitted some terms that we could have potentially used (e.g. see Hanna, 2017; Lorenzini et al., 2016). To be more specific, the terms and also their variations that have been excluded are the following: assassinat!, campaign!, ceremony, initiative, killed, landmine, manifest!, mobiliz!, molotov, murdered, mutin!, news conference, press conference, referendum, (set and ablaze), shot, sit-in, and strike!. Most describe conventional events that we not interested in, such as news conference or press conference, while others describe violent events (e.g. murdered) that we believe can be identified with the keywords we have already included in our LexisNexis search. Regarding strikes, there is a debate in social movement research as to whether should be analysed along with other forms of protest. For example, in the online appendix of their paper on the dynamics between protest and electoral politics, Hutter and Borbáth (2018) suggest that it is probably a sound idea not to study industrial actions and protest forms such as demonstrations together. Moreover, if the selection of newspaper articles was based on (semi-) automated ways or involved more than one researcher, then it would be a better idea to write a long sequence of keywords to ensure that the final data have more chances to refer to protest events. Since this is not the case in this research, we decided to omit some keywords.

However, the new protest event dataset on the British far-right has also relied on documents provided by more authoritative sources. More specifically, the archives of several organisations have been used, such as Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism, Institute of Race Relations, Tell MAMA, or Anti-

Fascist Network. Since we did not expect newspapers to report confrontational actions, such as disruptions of political meetings or attacks against political opponents, and actions that involve physical violence against persons, on a systematic basis we decided to read and code chronologies that have been constructed by left-wing and anti-fascist groups. Although we agree with Jenkins and Maher (2016) that some authoritative sources may fail to update and maintain their website in a consistent manner, our expectation is that the inclusion of many and different type of sources will make the dataset less vulnerable to selection and description biases. For example, reports produced by scholars on specific groups, e.g. by Copsey (2010) on the EDL or by Allchorn and Feldman (2019) on the FLA and DFLA, have also been considered in order to minimise omission bias. Finally, in cases where we knew a protest event occurred on a certain date at a specific location but the link of the newspaper article was broken – this was the case especially for older newspaper articles – we conducted Google searches in order to find more information about the protest event and finally include it in the dataset.

Undoubtedly, the above data collection process was time-consuming; it lasted almost nine months and involved the reading of more than 10000 newspaper articles in addition to website articles and reports. Moreover, this was done by myself on my own as I did not have funds to employ additional researchers. In order to reduce the amount of time needed for the data collection, in the early stages of this research another R tool was utilised to process the LexisNexis files. LexisNexisTools is a program developed in the R programming language by Gruber (2020). This R package aims to help researchers handle in a more efficient way newspaper articles downloaded from LexisNexis. It offers several options, among which the option to identify and remove highly similar articles or to access meta-data and paragraphs. We were interested in the former function in particular, since the inclusion of multiple

sources often yielded many articles with information about the same protest or the same social movement actor, especially when violence broke out or a provocative protest occurred. Still, the final analysis involved thousands of articles. It is worth mentioning again that the main idea that drove the above methodological decisions, despite the amount of time that was invested, was to address selection and description biases. In other words, our expectation was that the inclusion of many sources would solve the selection problem on the one hand, since we would not have to rely only on the criteria set by each individual news provider, and on the other hand the description problem would also ameliorate because the retrieval of all information needed increase if the analysis is based on the narrations of multiple reporters. This does not mean that the dataset that we generated does not have missing information; however, it is expected that all the important events have been coded accurately.

Finally, we should explain at this point why the present thesis focuses on Great Britain (i.e. England, Scotland, and Wales) and not on the United Kingdom. Our decision follows similar studies in the field of social movements that have excluded Northern Ireland from their analysis. This is a decision being made for good reasons however (e.g. see Bailey, 2014). The recent history of Northern Ireland and its conflict known as the “Troubles” shows that political conflicts in this territory have been structured upon sectarian lines (Carter, 2020), making Northern Ireland a unique case that may have its own logic when it comes to the analysis of the activities in the street arena. This does not mean that the British far-right has not appeared in Northern Ireland either in the form of demonstrations or violence. In 2017, for example, members of Britain First participated in a demonstration in Belfast, which also led to some confrontations (McDonald, 2017). However, it does mean that due to the historical context of Northern Ireland we would have to make additional assumptions, since the use of news media data may

not provide all the information one needs to make research choices. Thus, for the purposes of this research it was deemed necessary to reduce uncertainty and doubts with regard to the quality of our data collection entries.

4.5.1 Codebook for the analysis of far-right protest events in Great Britain

Defining a far-right protest event:

The far-right is defined as a set of three core ideological characteristics: nationalism and xenophobia (i.e. nativism), and authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007), while a protest event is defined in this codebook as “a public action by a non-governmental actor who expresses criticism or dissent and articulates a societal or political demand” (1998 as cited in Brockett, 2005, p. 173). Although in the latter definition the term “collective” action is also included and emphasised, in the present dataset we document both collective and individual acts of protest (Caiani & Parenti, 2013). This is a relevant choice, otherwise violent events such as the actions of neo-Nazi terrorist Pavlo Lapshyn, who was a solo-actor or “lone wolf” (Goodwin, 2013), would not have been coded. In addition to that, since we code instances of symbolic violence and vandalism, it would not have been possible to infer solely from newspapers or reports whether the actions have been instigated by groups or individuals.

Identifying protest events: what are the criteria for inclusion in the dataset?

- The protest event must be the product of strategic action and it must have occurred in the public sphere (e.g. not private meetings). We are interested in political activities that relate to broader social claims and/or issues (Hanna, 2017) that primarily seek “to influence political decision-making processes, either by focusing on the selection of governing personnel, the

activities/decisions of those personnel, the issues considered by those personnel or the values/preferences that inform the decision-making process” (Bailey, 2020, p. 73)

- The protest event has to be organised by far-right solo-actors or social movement organisations in Great Britain, i.e. in England, Scotland, or Wales regardless of their nationality. For example, an EDL demonstration in Amsterdam on 30 October 2010 is excluded, but a violent attack by Polish neo-Nazis against a music festival in Tottenham in June 2014 is included
- For instances of symbolic violence, if the same person is responsible for multiple incidents, we code as one protest event the most recent action
- Following the instructions of the Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence codebook, which is one of the most authoritative datasets that exist on far-right violence and terrorism today, we take the same approach with regard to these protest actions that cannot be differentiated in time or space. Accordingly: “almost every coding unit in the dataset represents a single event. A handful of coding units (incidents) do however include multiple attacks, either because they happened consecutively and were carried out by the same perpetrator, or because they form part of a chain of events in which each independent attack would be considered too small to be included in the dataset” (*Codebook: The Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) Dataset, 1990-2019*, 2020, p. 4)
- Protest events that are not well documented and we are missing as a result information that could assist us make decisions about the motives or background of the group or individual are not coded

Moreover, if there is a change in any of the following variables (in bold), a new protest event must be added to the dataset:

- **Date.** In cases that there are ongoing protest events, they are coded each day as a separate event. For example, EDL members in 2011 protested for 28 days outside a KFC in Blackburn; we code 28 protest events. However, there are not many cases that last more than one day
- **Location.** If social movement organisations decide to protest at different locations but on the same day, we consider them as separate events. For example, on 2 July 2011 the EDL protested in five different locations, and more specifically in Brierfield, Blackburn, Accrington, Clitheroe, and Huddersfield; we therefore code five protest events
- **SMO.** Only when it is clear in the newspaper article (or in the report) that two or more protest groups that belong to the same ideological family have organised a protest event separately on the same date and at the same location, we code more than one protest events. For example, this was the case with two demonstrations in Birmingham that were organised by the DFLA and FLA on 24 March 2018; they are coded separately as two protest events
- **Reason of mobilisation.** If it is clear that the main reason (i.e. target or issue) of mobilisation changes, a new protest event is added to the dataset. For example, on 14 December 2018 around 60 members of the Yellow Vests group descended on London to protest over Brexit (this is the first protest event), while later they also gathered outside the Law Courts to demand justice for the death of three white teenagers (this is the second protest event)

What follows now is a more detailed explanation of the variables of interest and coding rules:

List of variables and coding rules

Variable Date: Day/Month/Year. In some cases, it is not possible to know the exact date that a protest event happened. This is the reason why we are always interested in coding accurately the “Month” and “Year.” Also, we code future events that are about to happen within the next 10 days. Regarding terror plots, we code the date of arrest, and this is the reason why the case of Neil Lewington, for example, a neo-Nazi bomb-maker who was arrested in 2008, has been excluded from the dataset

Variable Location: Text variable. If we do not know the exact location, we code name of region. For instance, if we do not know in which London Borough a protest event occurred, we code “London” instead

Variable Longitude: Numerical variable, information drawn from: <https://www.mapcoordinates.net/en>

Variable Latitude: Numerical variable, information drawn from: <https://www.mapcoordinates.net/en>

Variable Country: Text variable, three values: England, Scotland, and Wales. However, there are some protest actions such as petitions and web-hacking, where there is no physical presence; we code “Great Britain”

Variable SMO_Type: Text variable, values: a) Far-right, b) Opposition, and c) Radical Islamists

Variable SMO_1: Text variable, we need the name or identity of the political actor that organised the protest event. In case of individual protest actions, we code the affiliation of solo-actors if it is known. As a general rule, we code up to three political actors. If we cannot identify the main political actor, we use the following generic categories for the far-right, depending on context: a) “Racists” and b) “neo-

Nazis.” For groups that counter far-right protests (i.e. for the Opposition), we use the generic category “Anti-fascists,” while for radical Islamists the generic category “Followers”

Variable SMO_2: Text variable, name of participating or supporting actor

Variable SMO_3: Text variable, name of participating or supporting actor

Variable Action_Type: Text variable, four values, i.e. a) Demonstrative, b) Confrontational, c) Light violence, and d) Heavy violence. In particular, Demonstrative actions are legal protest actions that aim to mobilise and attract large numbers of protesters, such as (non-violent) marches, static protests, counter-demonstrations, petitions or collection of signatures, etc. (Caiani & Parenti, 2013; Koopmans, 1993). Confrontational actions are non-violent actions that aim to disrupt institutional procedures (e.g. public meetings), political stunts, mosque invasions etc. The category “Light violence” on the other hand refers to symbolic violence and actions that lead to limited escalation of violence, while the category “Heavy violence” includes severe forms of violence, such as physical attacks against persons, terror plots or attacks, politically motivated murders, kidnappings, and violent demonstrations etc. (Koopmans, 1993; Kriesi et al., 1995)

Variable Action. Choose one of the following:

- Arson/(fire)bomb attack: against highly symbolic targets but also against individuals if the attack is likely to cause death
- Brawl: street fights between groups or individuals
- Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols
- Counter-demonstration

- Demonstration/protest: e.g. marches, static protests, flash demos, parades
- Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives
- Disruption/intimidation: e.g. disruption of political meetings, attacks against political opponents
- Milkshake protest
- Petition/collection of signatures: at least 3000 signatures, otherwise it is more difficult to find all petitions
- Physical violence against persons: protest action that inflict harm and result in hospitalisation (i.e. victims need to receive hospital treatment for days, not simply visits), coma, unconsciousness, or serious/disabling injuries (*Codebook: The Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) Dataset, 1990-2019, 2020*)
- Political stunt: symbolic or playful actions
- Politically motivated murder
- Suspicious packages/substances
- Symbolic violence: e.g. political graffiti, racist stickers
- Terror plot/attack: it must be inferred in the text that there is “intent to kill”
- Vandalism/criminal damage: only against highly symbolic targets (e.g. Islamic centres), since there might be multiple vandalism incidents against individual properties that are difficult to code on a consistent basis
- Vigil/protest: including commemoration events

- Web-hacking

However, there are some forms of protest actions that cannot be coded consistently over time, and as a result, they have not been included in the dataset. See below:

List of events that have not been included in the dataset:

- Individual grievances (if the main motive behind attack)
- Political rallies, i.e. protest events related to upcoming elections. For example, we do not code the political rallies organised by the EDL's ex-leader Tommy Robinson before the EU elections in May 2019
- Routine politics, e.g. campaigns, press conferences, conferences, speeches, public statements, open letters, etc.
- Conventional actions, such as leafleting (e.g. Unite Against Fascism and Hope Not Hate leafleting campaigns before elections), letters of objection or letters to politicians, "Days of Action," public meetings (they are less likely to express claims; instead, they are organised to plan upcoming protests), lawsuits etc.
- Food banks, charity activities, fundraising events, training camps, gigs, concerts, festivals (e.g. BNP festival in Denby in 2009), various events (e.g. Tommy Robinson's book-signing event in Manchester), etc.
- Internet campaigns, online threats through social media (e.g. an anti-Semitic campaign launched by Garron Helm, a National Action activist, against Labour MP Luciana Berger in 2014, or Paul

Hepplestall's online threats to murder Muslims through a video that became viral after the terrorist attacks in 2017), emails, etc. but also harassment, abuse, incidents of casual racism, etc.

- Vandalism or criminal damage that is unrelated to broader political and social issues
- Vandalism or criminal damage against individuals; only against highly symbolic targets
- Cases where there is encouragement of terrorism, dissemination of extremist/terrorist material, or if one is simply a member of a proscribed organisation, etc.
- Attacks against Jews, Roma community, homosexuals, and minorities more generally if it is not clear that perpetrators are motivated by far-right ideology. Why? In Great Britain, many attacks against Jews during the Gaza war were initiated by left-wing groups and individuals. In order to be consistent over time, we need to have more information about the motives of perpetrators. On the other hand, it is more safe to assume that far-right groups and individuals are more likely to target other minorities, such as Muslims and migrants, especially in the period 2009-2019
- Internal disputes and conflicts within and between groups that belong to the same (or similar) ideological family, e.g. radical right vs extreme right, even Muslims vs radical Islamists (e.g. in March 2016, Tanveer Ahmed killed shopkeeper Asad Shah because he thought that the victim had disrespected Prophet Muhammad

Variable Reason of mobilisation (target or issue): We code the main reason of mobilisation. Choose one of the following:

- <Not known>
- Against (Asian/Muslim) grooming gangs

- Against (plans for) Mosque/Islamic Centre or School
- Against Asians/Muslims
- Against Blacks/Jews/Sikhs
- Against British foreign policy/people/soldiers etc.
- Against Islamic extremism/Sharia law/Islamic preachers etc.
- Against UKIP or Brexit Party
- Against US politics/President
- Against immigrants/refugees
- Against media/social media or Freedom of speech
- Against political opponents
- Against pro-Palestinians/in solidarity with Israel
- Against racism and fascism & far-right
- Brexit/anti-EU protest
- Desecration of (Asian/Muslim) graves
- Desecration of Koran
- Far-right ideas: generic category
- Halal Meat or Ban the Burka protest

- In memory of Lee Rigby
- In solidarity with immigrants/refugees
- In solidarity with sympathisers/members/leaders
- Justice campaign: e.g. Justice for Charlene Downes, Justice 4 the 21
- Life under Sharia/being “proper Muslim”
- Ultra-patriotism: e.g. in support of British troops, anti-IRA protests, Remembrance Sunday parades etc.
- Pork attack against Asians/Muslims
- Pro US President
- Racist attack by whites
- Racist graffiti/stickers/posters in public area
- Other: e.g. electoral politics, conservatism, international politics
- White Pride

Variable Size: Numerical variable. If there is no reference to numbers/figures, we can use pictures instead to estimate the size of protests. If the article mentions: small/several = 2-20, dozens = 21-50, hundreds = 101-300, several hundreds = 501-700, thousands = 1001-2000, several thousands = 4001-5000. If more estimates are given, then the highest estimate is coded. Choose one of the following:

- 1-1: Individuals

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- 2-20: Several people, small or tiny demo
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-300
- 301-500
- 501-700
- 701-1000
- 1001-2000
- 2001-3000
- 3001-4000
- 4001-5000
- 5001-7000
- 7001-10000
- 10001-15000
- 15001-20000
- 20001-30000
- 30001-50000

- 50001-100000
- 100001-500000
- 500000 >

Variable Arrests. Numerical variable (mainly for demonstrative events). If more estimates are given in the newspaper article, the highest estimate is coded

Coding decisions: Examples

Having explained in detail the variables (as well as their values) that have been included in the new dataset on far-right mobilisations in Great Britain, we also provide here some examples that further clarify the differences between protest events that have been coded and events that have been excluded either due to lack of adequate information or due to the fact that they belong to the list of events we decided not to code. We ought to mention that we pay particular attention to cases that are ambiguous and can result in coding inconsistencies. In doing so, the reader will be able to better understand the nature of the data and – more importantly – their analysis that follows in subsequent chapters.

Example 1 (acceptable protest event):

“A black man was beaten unconscious in a racist assault after he asked two men in a children’s playground to keep the noise down. The brutal attack on the man in his 50s, who suffered a fractured eye socket and was taken to hospital, has sparked a police manhunt for the two suspects. Detectives in Newham are calling for witnesses and believe the incident was a “racially aggravated assault”. The victim was walking past the playground in Drew Road, Silvertown, at 11.20pm on Thursday when he noticed two young white men drinking and

making a lot of noise. He asked them to quieten down, as the playground is in a residential area where people were sleeping. One of the men hurled verbal abusive at him using what police called “racial language”, and began to push him and punched him in the face” Barnett (2020).

The above example has been coded as an instance of heavy violence (i.e. “Physical violence against persons”) while the individuals who carried out the attack as racists. The generic category “Racists” has been used, since the above excerpt, retrieved from Newham Recorder, does not specify whether or not the perpetrators were motivated by more extreme ideas. The racist attack is likely to have been inspired by individuals who espouse the ideas of the far-right and this is the main reason why we have decided to include this type of incidents in the dataset. In Chapter 2, we provided the minimum definition of the far-right, so that we can code as many relevant cases as possible in our study on the development of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. The flexibility of this approach is that it allows us to include several variants of the far-right phenomenon that may range from radical to more extreme forms without having to specify the idiosyncratic characteristics of each group or individual. In other words, the focus is on the common core denominators.

Example 2 (acceptable protest event):

“A man who filmed a pet dog giving Nazi salutes before putting the footage on YouTube has been fined £800. Mark Meechan, 30, recorded his girlfriend's pug, Buddha, responding to statements such as "Sieg Heil" by raising its paw. The clip was viewed more than three million times on YouTube. Meechan, of Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire, was sentenced at Airdrie Sheriff Court after being found guilty of committing a hate crime last month. He had denied any wrong-doing and insisted he made the video, which was posted in April 2016, to annoy his

girlfriend. But Sheriff Derek O'Carroll found him guilty of a charge under the Communications Act that he posted a video on social media and YouTube which was grossly offensive because it was "anti-Semitic and racist in nature" and was aggravated by religious prejudice ... There was a demonstration outside court by protesters claiming the case went against the principle of freedom of speech" ("Man fined for hate crime after filming pug's 'Nazi salutes'", 2018).

This example shows that in some cases it was not easy or possible to identify the political group that organised the protest event. The above example has been coded as a demonstrative event in solidarity with sympathisers/members/leaders. Since we do not know the name of the organisational sponsor, we have decided to code the "SMO" variable as "Racists." We should note, however, that the newspaper article provides enough information, and as a result we can safely assume that this demonstration constitutes a far-right event.

Example 3 (lack of information):

"Police are investigating several assaults following an allegation of a "racist" attack against a Middlesbrough taxi driver. Boro Taxis issued a post on Saturday stating a driver had been attacked by a group of customers as he travelled from Grove Hill to South Bank. But since then, police confirmed it had received "a number" of other reports of assaults in the same area around the same time. They reportedly all took place on the same night, with photos on social media showing a woman with injuries who was also allegedly a victim" (Duncan, 2019).

In this case, there is no adequate information that could help us decide whether the racist attack is likely to have been carried out by far-right supporters. As we made clear in Chapter 2, racism is not part

of the ideological core of the far-right, and it would be wrong to assume that only the adherents of this ideological family are racists. Therefore, the above example has been excluded from the dataset.

Example 4 (lack of information):

“A man suffered racial abuse and physical assault in an attack at a petrol station. Police are trying to trace a man in his 30s in connection to an assault at the Shell Petrol Station near the Dome roundabout in north Watford. The incident happened at around 8.20am on October 5. The victim sustained cuts to his lips and nose and a grazed knee after being racially abused. Police believe the two men had got into an argument. PC Darren Lomax said: “There were a number of people at the petrol station at the time of the incident and I would like to speak to anyone who saw what happened. “In particular I would like to speak to a man who was driving a black BMW 3 Series and a man driving a black Toyota Prius, as I believe you may have information that can help our investigation”” (‘Racial attack in north Watford left man with facial injuries’, 2018).

This is another example that does not provide details about the characteristics of the perpetrator or the victim. Although we know that there was racial abuse, it is not clear whether the hate incident was an instance of far-right violence. Equally important, individual grievances could have been the main motive of the attack, while the injuries do not appear to be “serious” or life-threatening. Due to the aforementioned ambiguities, the event has not been included in the dataset.

Example 5 (event that has been excluded):

Members of banned far right group National Action attended terrorist style training camps to learn judo, kickboxing and mixed martial arts street fighting, a court heard. Matthew Hankinson, 24, Christopher Lythgoe, 32, and other white supremacists were featured in propaganda videos learning punching techniques, judo and choke holds at camps in Derbyshire and the Brecon Beacons, the Old Bailey was told. The videos, seen by jurors, showed members sparring in boxing gloves, wrestling, jumping and rolling over cardboard boxes and throwing each other onto floor mats in judo style modes. Videos were allegedly posted on the National Action website in an attempt to recruit young people in preparation for a “violent race war which the group will play an active part in” (Mellor, 2018).

Although the existence of training camps shows that a political group is active, this event is not an instance of claims making and does not attempt to influence political decision-making processes. As a result, these events have been excluded. The codebook provides clear instructions, explaining which actions are protests and which are not.

Example 6 (event that has been excluded):

“A political rally was held in Wythenshawe where Tommy Robinson announced his intention to stand as a candidate in the upcoming European elections. The event took place on Thursday evening on a village green on Broadoak Road, Benchill, where a barbecue was also served. It's estimated that about 300 people turned up to hear controversial former EDL leader Robinson speak after 8pm. Robinson, real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, has registered to stand as an independent candidate representing the North West in the elections, to take place on May 23” (Bardsley, 2019).

Political rallies are also not coded. According to Hanna (2017, p. 35), these events are considered as “routine” politics (along with “speeches by elected officials or those seeking electoral office”), and this is the main reason why we have decided not to include them in the dataset. A protest, on the other hand, aims to advance the significance of some issues, urging authorities to take measures. Concerning the above example, although Tommy Robinson had organised many protest events in the past in Great Britain, his political rallies before the EU elections have not been taken into consideration.

Indicative list of sources that have been used for the identification of relevant protest event data:

For the creation of the new dataset on far-right mobilisations in Great Britain, we have used a variety of sources, which range from local newspapers to national newspapers as well as reports (e.g. the annual Hope Not Hate Reports), websites, existing datasets, chronologies produced by anti-fascists, and Google searches when there was missing information. Following this strategy, as explained in the previous paragraphs, we aimed to produce a protest event dataset that could represent accurately the movement sector in Great Britain with regard to the activities of far-right actors and their opponents. Below, we present the name of the sources that have appeared at least 50 times, i.e. the major sources being used in the dataset:

Islamophobia Watch	417
Unite Against Fascism	383
Institute of Race Relations	212
BBC	209
Guardian	189

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Independent	173
Hope Not Hate	133
MailOnline	133
Anti-Fascist Network	128
Manchester Evening News	109
Socialist Worker	98
Mirror	96
Birmingham Mail	79
Evening Standard	77
Daily Record and Sunday Mail	65
Liverpool Echo	64
Morning Star	56
Chronicle	55
Sun	51

Before we explain which sources appear to have contributed significantly to the creation of the new dataset, we ought to note at this point that due to time constraints we could not code systematically this type of information, since a small pilot study showed that this step would require more time. Given that there was only one researcher for this project, we decided to include only a small number of variables

in the dataset. Moreover, since this type of information is not related to the main research question and design of this thesis, we were confident that we would still be able to produce high-quality research.

Having said that, we can see from the above list that apart from national newspapers (e.g. the Guardian or the Independent), anti-fascist accounts (e.g. Unite Against Fascism or Hope Not Hate), and websites dedicated to exposing the actions of far-right groups (e.g. Islamophobia Watch, which is also the source that has appeared the most times), along with regional newspapers (e.g. Manchester Evening News and Birmingham Mail) have contributed to the final dataset. Since the dataset has documented different types of protest events, such as demonstrations and violent incidents, we made the assumption that the use of a limited number of national newspapers would fail to generate the expected results. The above list shows to some extent that event datasets can be more detailed and representative of the movement sector if they rely on multiple sources.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we discussed the methodological tools upon which this thesis is based. Continuing a long tradition in social movement research, we explained how the PEA method can help researchers build a consistent and inclusive chronology of protest events over time. The previous sections showed how we attempted to address some of the PEA limitations that previous scholars have highlighted in their research. For example, instead of relying on a single newspaper or limited number of newspapers we used LexisNexis to collect information from both national and local newspapers. Assuming that our research strategy might not be able to detect events that are less likely to be reported by journalists, e.g. confrontational and disruptive events against political opponents or ethnic minorities, we also made use of reports published by independent think tanks and material produced by anti-fascists.

Although the methods introduced in this chapter do not guarantee that all relevant protest events have been included in the dataset, our expectation is that our research assumptions and decisions have led to a representative sample and an accurate description of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. The latter can only be confirmed if projects focus on the same object of research. However, our methodology is transparent and gives the opportunity to other researchers to assess the quality of the data. Hopefully, improvements in the automated methods of collection data in the future will address the limitations of PEA in a more convincing way.

The collection of protest event data for Great Britain offers us the chance to investigate the repertoire of far-right action for the last 11 years. Not only will we describe the main forms and claims of the far-right in the next chapter, the final chapter will compare the correlation between our variables of interest and data that have been retrieved from official documents and statistics, so that we examine what causes or what contributed to the development of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain.

Chapter 5. The origins and ideologies of the British far-right

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the ideological characteristics and history of the most important far-right groups that have organised and engaged in protest activities in Great Britain, so that the reader can familiarise themselves with the key ideas and better understand the next two analysis chapters that delve into the ebb and flow of far-right activism in the period 2009-2019. Here, we present far-right groups that despite the fact that they have different ideological features, nonetheless constitute part of the same political family based on a nativist perception of social reality that excludes certain categories of people and ideas (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018). Great Britain has seen several far-right organisations that emerged in the period under examination. Since a detailed analysis of all protest groups is not possible due to the fragmentation of the far-right scene and the creation of numerous new actors especially after the massive EDL protests de-escalated (*State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016), we have selected to present the most important groups based on the following criteria: namely, their historical continuity in time, protest size, innovation and disruption, degree of violence, media attention, and transnational links.

The political groups that have been selected are: the BNP because it is the main representative of the historical continuation of far-right politics and ideas in Great Britain during the last 40 years (Copsey, 2007; Richards, 2013); the EDL because its appearance on the British street marked “a new chapter in the history of anti-minority activism” (Busher, 2015a, p. 5); Britain First is the third group that will be introduced due to its innovative ways to express demands through the use of confrontational political

interventions and its active presence on various social media platforms (Allen, 2014); next, we look at the origins of National Action, since is the first group that has been proscribed under UK Law and has publicly endorsed the use of violence (Macklin, 2018); Football Lads Alliance and its splinter group Democratic Football Lads Alliance are also examined here due to their mobilising capacity to convince tens of thousands of people to support their cause; these mobilisations resulted in the most populated marches Great Britain has experienced in decades and happened after the deadly attacks that took place in 2017 (Allchorn & Feldman, 2019); the last three protest groups are Pegida UK, Generation Identity UK, and Yellow Vests UK because of their transnational links and the fact that they did not originate in Great Britain; their emergence can be viewed instead as an attempt of the British far-right to mimic the symbols, frames, and practices of similar groups from other countries. This last point indeed reveals the transnational nature of the far-right and how modern technologies can assist in the expansion of its ideologies and tactics.

5.2 BNP

The BNP has been described as the most successful far-right political party in the history of British electoral politics (Ford & Goodwin, 2010). Although for years the far-right in Great Britain compared to its European counterparts was not successful in the electoral arena, with analysts talking of the so-called “British exceptionalism” when referring to the position of the British far-right, this perception started to change first in 2008 after the BNP won a London Assembly seat and later in May 2009 when the party secured two seats for the first time in the European Elections (Husbands, 2011). This was an intense period that instigated a series of large protests by anti-fascists and left-wing groups across the United Kingdom; hundreds of people gathered for several days in cities to express concerns and show

their opposition to the politics and issue positions of BNP. The reason why they protested was that this – undoubtedly important – victory for the far-right was viewed as an imminent threat to the foundations of liberal democracy (“We Must Not Allow BNP to Be Successful”, 2009). For anti-fascists, specifically, the victory was reminiscent of the successful mobilisations of Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists in the 1930’s and the actions of the neo-fascist National Front that escalated in the 1970’s (*UAF Reaction to Euro Results: We Must Confront the Fascist British National Party*, 2009).

The BNP came into existence in April 1982 by former National Front member and leading figure John Tyndall, but it took ten years to transform into a major political force within the British far-right and only after the split of the National Front (John et al., 2006). In his detailed overview of the history of BNP, Copsey (2008) writes that Tyndall was a prolific activist who had been known to far-right circles since the 1960’s; he was associated with fascist groups, such as Spearhead, the National Socialist Movement, and the Greater Britain Movement, and in later years with the National Front as well as the New National Front which was “the immediate precursor” of the BNP (Copsey, 2008, p. 23). Under Tyndall’s leadership, that lasted 17 years until 1999, the trajectory of the BNP was inspired by the ideas and principles of ethnic nationalism and was marked by the group’s decision to seek support and to attract publicity primarily through the streets and not elections (Goodwin, 2011). However, during the 1990’s, it was apparent to some BNP members that a change in their strategy and rhetoric was needed so that the party could follow the successful path of other European far-right parties, such as the Front National in France. The transition to a new phase, i.e. the modernisation phase of the BNP, as is widely known, officially started in 1999, after Nick Griffin became the new leader, and aimed to transform the party into a respectable political actor that did not have overt links with neo-Nazism and extreme

politics (Copsey, 2007). Griffin remained in the leadership until 2014; his involvement in the group ended over internal disputes about finances, electoral losses, and lack of future prospects (Milmo, 2014).

Looking at the ideological underpinnings and orientation of the BNP in more detail, it is evident that the party can be considered as a continuation of the neo-fascist organisations that emerged after the end of the Second World War. In 1991, for instance, the militant neo-Nazi group Combat 18 was operating as a stewarding group for the BNP to protect its events from anti-fascist attacks (*State of Hate 2020: far-right Terror Goes Global*, 2020). The ideology was a combination of white nationalism, biological racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism (Goodwin, 2011). The modernisation phase paid less attention to the aforementioned ideological features due to the fact that the BNP could not be easily accepted by wider British society. The ideas of ethno-pluralism that were introduced aimed to hide the true beliefs of its members and focus instead on modern political issues and the opportunities they offered (Copsey, 2007). Specifically, the BNP was quick to take advantage of the anti-Muslim sentiments that became a prominent topic of the public debate after the 2001 riots in Bradford, Burnley, and Oldham mostly between young whites and Muslims, the attacks in New York in 2001 and the 2005 London bombings by supporters of fundamentalist groups (Allen, 2011; Eatwell, 2006). Nevertheless, the strategic change and adaptation to the needs of the modern era bore some fruits in 2009, as explained before, when the BNP reached the peaked of political significance. It was around this period, and more specifically after August 2009, that news media and public attention were turned to the EDL.

5.3 EDL

The EDL was founded in late June 2009 in response to a confrontational event that had been organised in Luton by a small group of radical Islamists against a homecoming parade of British troops returning from the war in Iraq on 10 March 2009 (Richards, 2013). According to Busher (2015a), the EDL formed into a social movement organisation after several instances of reactive mobilisations occurred in Luton due to this catalyst event in March. For example, approximately 150 members of a small group called the United People of Luton, that was assumed to be a precursor to the EDL, held an illegal protest in April, while a month later another demonstration by far-right activists related to the March For England group descended into violence; the far-right targeted and attacked the Muslim community and caused chaos in the town (Jackson & Feldman, 2011). The first major EDL demonstration occurred in August in Birmingham. The event co-organised with Casuals United led once again to violence mainly due to the presence of counter-demonstrators from the anti-fascist group Unite Against Fascism and members of the Muslim community. As Allen (2011) writes, this was the first time that the media paid attention to the EDL and the group was mentioned in the British press. The next years would see the EDL and its offshoot organisations in Scotland, i.e. the Scottish Defence League, and Wales, i.e. the Welsh Defence League, to mobilise hundreds and event thousands of like-minded individuals and groups in the United Kingdom over issues questioning the religion of Islam and Muslims. In the first years of its development, many commentators noted that the EDL posed a greater challenge to the social cohesion of communities than the BNP mainly due to the intensity and confrontational nature of their protest activities (Bartlett & Littler, 2011).

Regarding the ideological stance of the EDL, its leaders attempted – emphatically in some cases – to break ties with extremist views and the notions of biological racism that characterised groups of the far-right family in the previous years; they channelled their anger and concerns towards Muslims and what they perceived as Islamic extremism. In essence, the EDL managed to mainstream ideas and implement more successfully the modernisation phase of the far-right (Mulhall, 2019). Although it is true that the EDL had also attracted people that had been inspired by fascist and neo-Nazi ideas (Bartlett & Littler, 2011), its worldview revealed “the striking characteristics of populist, ultra-patriotic and anti-Muslim ideology that characterises the ‘new far-right’” (Jackson & Feldman, 2011, p. 12). This does not mean that the deviation from biological racism and the transition to cultural racism, which implies that liberal Western societies cannot co-exist and develop with the conservatism of monolithic religions, does not have consequences and real impact on people’s life. In their study on the ideology and discourse of the EDL, more specifically, Kassimeris and Jackson (2015a) note how the EDL’s activism and views had the tendency to categorise British society into in-groups and out-groups and to contribute as a result to the creation of hierarchical and exclusionary relations. In line with that, Copsey (2010) warned that the EDL posed a threat to the country and its values, and this was the reason why it should be adequately addressed by authorities.

Looking at the internal organisational composition of the EDL now, it was described as a “complex and amorphous” structure (Bartlett & Littler, 2011, p. 3). One reason for this description was the absence of official membership processes. Following the research of Morrow and Meadowcroft (2019), this meant that anyone who had regularly participated in protests was considered a member. However, during its development and expansion stages, there had been established a central social movement organisation

that was responsible for coordinating activities and had the power to bring under its auspices several groups, e.g. with roots in football hooligan networks or ultra-patriotic groups (Copsey, 2010; Jackson & Feldman, 2011). EDL had also created local and regional divisions but also divisions whose aim was to represent minority groups, e.g. youths, women, or the Jews (Busher, 2015a). Prominent members of its leadership team had been, among others, Jeff Marsh, Jack Smith, Steven Yaxley-Lennon, who is known as Tommy Robinson, and Kevin Carroll (Copsey, 2010). The latter two remained in the leadership until 2013 but decided to quit on 8 October of that year. Although they were replaced by regional organisers (Busher, 2015a), it was already clear by late 2013 that the EDL had entered its decline phase and was unable to gain back the mass character of its public gatherings (Morrow & Meadowcroft, 2019).

5.4 Britain First

Britain First was launched by James Dowson, a former BNP member and anti-abortion activist, in May 2011 in collaboration with another former BNP member and councillor, Paul Golding (Dearden, 2014). Dowson was connected to Loyalist paramilitaries in Northern Ireland and his ideology can be described as a mix of several far-right characteristics that include “Calvinist chauvinism, religious bigotry and the raptures of evangelical and biblical Armagedon prophecies” (*Britain First: Army of the Right*, 2014, p. 4). Although during the first years, the focus of Britain First was not against Islam and Muslims, this radically changed in the wake of Lee Rigby’s murder in May 2013 by two Islamists. The group started organising campaigns – allegedly through intimidation – against the followers of Islam. Allen (2014, p. 356) writes specifically: “what is interesting and perhaps somewhat surprising is that until Rigby’s murder neither Islam nor Muslims had featured prominently in any of Britain First’s strategies or actions.” In addition to that, the Tell MAMA project, which records Islamophobic incidents in the

United Kingdom since 2012, reported in 2014 that within a period of five months Britain First activists targeted and confronted worshippers at mosques in at least 18 occasions (*Britain First, Mosque, Worshippers and Imams Intimidation Map*, 2014). Also, after the death of Lee Rigby, Paul Golding announced that if the Metropolitan police did not proceed with the of arrest Anjem Choudary, the extremist preacher who was deemed to be responsible for the radicalisation of Rigby's murderers, Britain First would hunt him (Milnes, 2013). The disruptiveness and radicalism of Britain First however had side-effects. In 2014, Dowson resigned from Britain First because he could not accept the fact that the group he founded was derailing from its initial goals and practices (Dearden, 2014).

Moreover, it is important to discuss here two additional comments made by Allen (2014) with regard to the development of Britain First. First, after the electoral defeat of BNP at the European elections in May 2014 and the weakness of the EDL to regain its mobilising capacity after the resignation of its leaders in 2013, Britain First had the opportunity to fill the void that had emerged in the British far-right scene by attracting disillusioned individuals. Second, Britain First attempted to combine the tactics of the BNP and of the EDL by fielding candidates for elections on the one hand and, on the other hand, by organising street actions with the aim of communicating their ideas in a more direct way. Although Britain First was not successful in achieving these goals, it managed to gain huge publicity and there was a period in which it was perceived by anti-fascists as "the most dangerous group to have emerged on the British far-right scene for several years" (*Britain First: Army of the Right*, 2014, p. 2).

Britain First partly owes its reputation to its social media presence and its efficient way of communicating its street-based interventions. According to research by the anti-fascist platform Hope Not Hate, Britain First did not simply follow the example of previous far-right organisations on how to

use social media, but evolve it significantly (*Britain First: Army of the Right*, 2014). For example, a common practice of the group was to pre-record videos of its members visiting and terrorising Muslims, e.g. at mosques or even at slaughterhouses (Meyjes, 2016). Its strategy seemed to be fruitful. Before Facebook decided to delete Britain First but also its leaders from its platform, there were more than two million people who had liked its page and almost two million followers in 2018 (Cellan-Jones, 2018). Although it would probably be wrong to assume that all Facebook followers are true supporters of the group, given the potential outreach of its campaigns and the fact that many individuals might be interested in following the group for more informational or even oppositional reasons, Allen (2014, p. 358) was correct to say that Britain First's social media approval "not only enhances its populist appeal but provides it with a constant – albeit largely passive – constituency to whom it is able to drip-feed nationalistic and Islamophobic content."

We should finally mention that Britain First has been in decline over the last years, and its leader Paul Golding has been involved in a number of troubles that include, among others, charges of incitement of racial hatred, assaults against women, and breaches of electoral law (*State of Hate 2020: Far Right Terror Goes Global*, 2020). However, what was mentioned before needs further attention. Facebook's decision to ban Britain First seemed to be an effective way of curbing its popularity, since it led the group to smaller networking platforms. In a report that studied the role and impact of de-platforming for the far-right, Nouri et al. (2019) found that hateful content and the accounts of far-right groups should be removed because they can lose part of their ability to reach wider audiences and become influential.

5.5 National Action

National Action was a short-lived group that was founded in 2013 by two known figures in the British far-right scene, i.e. Benjamin Raymond and Alex Davies, and officially ceased to exist in December 2016 after it was proscribed as a terrorist group under the Terrorism Act 2000 (Elgot, 2016). National Action made the news in 2016 after its members publicly celebrated the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox and praised Thomas Mair, the perpetrator of the attack (Tolhurst, 2016). This was not the first time that National Action sympathisers provoked political opponents publicly. Two years before this incident one of its members engaged in a harassment and terror campaign against Jewish Labour MP Luciana Berger through Twitter; Garron Helm was sent to prison for four weeks for sending offensive messages that justified the actions of Hitler against the Jews (Perraudin, 2014). Over the years, their actions involved, among others, political stunts, outdoor training activities, and demonstrations to support the idea of a white nation (Jackson, 2014).

In a more recent review of the group's activities and ideology, Jackson (2020) – interestingly enough – notes that during the period that National Action remained active and operated overtly, i.e. 2013-2016, there were approximately 100 members that had joined its ranks. This number stands in stark contrast to the membership numbers the EDL had achieved. For instance, Bartlett and Littler (2011) reported in 2011 that at least 25000 to 35000 EDL members were active. On the other hand, the low membership levels are probably the result of the confrontational and violent inclination of National Action. Besides, the latter is in line with social movement scholars' theorisation of demobilisation processes. A protest movement is likely to radicalise in the latter stages of the protest cycle (Busher & Macklin, 2014), if radicalisation is conceptualised as a process that leads to more violent actions and extreme ideological

positions. After the decline of the EDL and loss of its momentum, this indeed seemed to be the case for the far-right in Great Britain. More specifically, the leadership of National Action criticised EDL's tactics to mobilise on the side of Israel's supporters and attempted to distinguish their aspirations and political goals. Allen (2019a) describes the ideological orientations of National Action that can be considered as a continuation of the fascist ideas developed during the 1940's; in other words, a National Socialist group that was anti-Semitic and was striving to preserve the white race and the idea of the pure nation.

We should also mention that National Action has played a role in the so-called "transnationalisation" of far-right ideas and practices, a topic that has gained increasing attention over the last years. Froio and Ganesh (2019) write that the concept of transnationalisation consists of three dimensions, i.e. issues, targets, and mobilisation, and involves political groups and individuals from more than one nation-state who share similar concerns and ideological platforms. In the case of National Action, its members built relations with far-right groups from Germany, the Baltics, and Scandinavia but also from Ukraine and more specifically with the Azov Battalion (Macklin, 2019). The latter is a "a well-established, trained, and equipped far-right militia" that has been fighting in the conflict that has broken out between Russia and Ukraine (Lister, 2020, p. 30). According to a recent Hope Not Hate report (*State of Hate 2018: Far Right Terrorism on the Rise*, 2018), Azov Battalion established relationships with National Action and other far-right groups in the United Kingdom through its front group Misanthropic Division and its aim was to recruit members to join their fight in Ukraine. At the same time, the violent activities of National Action have inspired groups beyond the Atlantic and more specifically the Atomwaffen Division, which is a group that also espouses a National Socialist ideology. Jackson (2020) exemplifies that the

online forum ironamrch.org was the initial medium through which National Action and Atomwaffen Division members came into contact. It is also interesting to see here how networking between far-right groups develops. Allen (2019a) writes that Atomwaffen Division played a role in the radicalisation process of another British group, the Sonnenkrieg Division, which is viewed by some commentators as the third generation of National Action (Dearden, 2019b). If we follow the same terminology, National Action's second generation consisted of Scottish Dawn, National Socialist Anti-Capitalist Action (NS131), and System Resistance Network. These three groups were simply an attempt by National Action members to regroup under a different name and evade as a result the law (Ariza, 2020).

Finally, it would be an omission not to mention here that the British government has taken the decision since September 2017 to treat Scottish Dawn and NS131 as two alternative names for the proscribed National Action while for System Resistance Network this applies since February 2020. Sonnenkrieg Division was also proscribed in February 2020 under the UK Law for actions, as we will examine in more details in the next chapter, that involved threats against the Duke of Sussex (*Proscribed Terrorist Organisations*, 2020).

5.6 FLA and DFLA

The FLA was founded by John Meighan, a fan of the English football team Tottenham Hotspur, in June 2017 (Bryant & Frymorgen, 2018). The formation of the FLA shares many similarities as we will show in this section with the initial stages of the EDL. First, its appearance in British politics was branded as an urgent need to counter the threats that emanate from extremism. Although the founder of the FLA denied in his public statements and interviews that he represents an Islamophobic and racist group, and that the reason they wish to make their voices heard is their opposition to all forms of extremism, there

was evidence in FLA demonstrations but also in their activity on social media sites that followers were directing their attention either openly or more covertly to the threat coming from what they have named Islamic extremism (Shifrin & Smith, 2017). Second, the FLA was founded immediately after Great Britain experienced three deadly terrorist attacks by radical Islamists in London (twice) and in Manchester (once) within a period of three months, from March to June 2017. Similarly, and as has already been explained in a previous section, the EDL was in essence a reaction to the confrontational protests of extremists in Luton against British soldiers and – most importantly and generally – against what they represented.

Third, as the name of the group suggests, the support base of the FLA relied on football firms. As Allen (2019b) explains, the selection of the name, i.e. “Football Lads Alliance,” does not seem to be random. From a semiotic point of view, this was important because the term “football lads” has been frequently used by football hooligans to describe and identify themselves. In other words, with this name selection “Meighan would have hoped to have spoken directly to the FLA’s core constituencies in their own language” (Allen, 2019b, p. 4). A fourth similarity was with regards to the composition of FLA’s demonstrations that had also attracted different groups and individuals whose levels of extremism differed. On the one hand, there were representatives from minority groups, such as Mohan Singh who is a token Sikh, and on the other hand there were ultra-nationalist groups that had a more extreme agenda, e.g. the Pie and Mash squad (Smith & Shifrin, 2017b). Finally, another characteristic that shows the similarities between the EDL and FLA is the logic of “march and grow” that was employed. In general, this is a tactic that has a twofold aim, firstly, to generate more publicity for the causes of the

protest movement and, secondly, to attract as a result more sympathisers to its ranks (Ford & Goodwin, 2010).

Moreover, Allchorn and Feldman (2019) summarise the developments within the group during the first months after its formation. As has often been the case with the British far-right during the last few decades, the FLA faced a number of challenges that finally led to its split and the creation of a separate group in 2018, the True Democratic Football Lads Alliance (DFLA). More specifically, John Meighan resigned in April 2018 over a disagreement that emerged after the Royal British Legion decided to return to the FLA a £1,104 donation due to concerns that the group had inappropriately used the poppy, which has high symbolic value for the British people and culture, in order to raise money (Bryant & Frymorgen, 2018). Allchorn and Feldman (2019, p. 7) highlight additionally another fact that the FLA “was quickly becoming an increasingly fractious movement.” They provide as evidence two independent research projects by the Observer newspaper and the Institute of Strategic Dialogue which found that the online behaviour of FLA supporters was resembling and imitating the rhetoric of known far-right figures and groups, such as Britain First or Tommy Robinson. From the above, it would be safe to assume then that the formation of the DFLA was inevitable.

Although there was initially some confusion among analysts about the true intentions and ideologies of the FLA, there was a clearer picture about the DFLA. The new group was smaller but more extreme, it adopted a rhetoric that focused more on issues that have concerned the British far-right since 2009 and more specifically, a political stance mainly driven by Islamophobia (Allen, 2019b) and ultra-patriotism as recent demonstrations have revealed. To be more specific, the murder of George Floyd, a black man from Minnesota, US on 25 May 2020 by the police was the reason the Black Lives Matter movement

and its sympathisers around the world organised a series of public demonstrations to demand the end of racism and for justice to be had. This in turn caused the reaction of the far-right. In Great Britain, in the summer of 2020 the DFLA managed to reactivate its network, after a quiet year during 2019 that the group was not very active (*State of Hate 2020: Far Right Terror Goes Global*, 2020), along with other representatives of the far-right milieu, such as Britain First and Tommy Robinson, who supported these mobilisations (Sabbagh, 2020a). The rise of the Black Lives Matter movement was seen by the far-right as a threat to the nation and even to the white race (Allchorn & Dafnos, 2020), and this is the reason why the DFLA took to the streets to protect memorial statues and monuments from vandalism. In June, for example, thousands of people demonstrated in Central London, while protests were also organised in numerous cities across the United Kingdom for several days (Smith & Shifrin, 2020).

The DFLA and the far-right more generally showed that the current social and political circumstances can determine to a large degree their narratives and reasons of mobilisations; what does not change is their exclusionary understanding of the nation-state.

5.7 The transnational aspect of the British far-right

Pegida UK, Generation Identity, and Yellow Vests are examined in this section because they constitute examples of the transnational aspect of the far-right and proof of how political developments in other countries may have a direct impact on domestic politics in Great Britain.

5.7.1 Pegida UK

Pegida is the acronym for the German *Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes* (Pegida), which translates into Patriotic Europeans against Islamisation of the Occident in English. It is

a German-based movement that was established in October 2014 in Dresden. It grew rapidly within months, with scholars claiming that Pegida constitutes “the biggest radical right mobilisation effort in Germany since 1945” (Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016, p. 556). It also inspired spin-off groups in other European countries, including Austria, Scandinavia but also the United Kingdom. Tommy Robinson in collaboration with Ann Marie Waters, a far-right politician who was the director of Sharia Watch UK and founder of the For Britain party, and Paul Weston, another far-right politician who was involved in several parties in the past, such as the British Freedom Party and Liberty GB, re-launched the British branch, i.e. named Pegida UK, in 2016 (Sikdar, 2019). A previous attempt by relatively unknown far-right activists to launch Pegida UK in 2015 did not seem to have the permission of the German Pegida and was short-lived, despite the fact that their first demonstration in Newcastle brought around 300 demonstrators to the streets (*Short History of Pegida*, 2016). However, even Tommy Robinson’s involvement in the British franchise of Pegida did not result in successful mobilisations and the group ceased to organise protest events the same year.

The ideological pillars of Pegida UK followed to a great extent the ideas of the mother organisation in Germany and can be summarised as an antithesis to suspicious Islamic activities, migration, the media and political establishment but also to the politics of the extreme right (Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016; Sikdar, 2019). Pegida branded itself as a humanitarian collectivity of people; the moderate profile that they tried to adopt was evident, for example, in Tommy Robinson’s statements in January 2016 when he was reassuring that the football culture and confrontational tactics of the EDL would not be repeated with Pegida UK (Goldberg, 2016). However, Lee (2016) points out that Pegida UK was a typical example of the counter-jihad movement, i.e. a sub-category of the far-right, that focused on Islam and

minorities and not on issues that usually concerned the traditional far-right. Its deliberate attempt, however, to disassociate itself from stigma does not mean that Pegida's understanding of what cultural or national identity is did not remain exclusionary and as a result deeply problematic for the functioning of liberal democracies.

5.7.2 Generation Identity UK

Generation Identity is another international network of far-right individuals and groups that originated in France and made the news in several occasions over the last years due to the provocative stance and even violent actions of its adherents. The first time was in the summer of 2017 when Generation Identity members were planning to prevent humanitarian ships from saving the life of migrants and refugees across the Mediterranean Sea. Mobilising under the slogan "Defend Europe," the aim was to push back to African shores boats carrying migrants and to protect the European land (Wildman, 2017). Second, another case that attracted publicity happened on 15 March 2019, when 29-year-old Brenton Tarrant opened fire in an attack that was livestreamed over Facebook and killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand ('Christchurch Shooting: Grief and Defiance as Victims Confront Gunman', 2020). In his manifesto, the perpetrator justified the extremity of his actions, reciting ideas that Generation Identity had been spreading for years (Davey & Ebner, 2019). Even worse, two subsequent violent incidents, that involved mass shootings, happened in the US; in California in April 2019 and after three months in Texas. In both cases the attackers appeared to have been inspired by the same ideological positions as Brenton Tarrant (Murdoch & Mulhall, 2019). Regarding the British chapter of Generation Identity, it was formed in late October 2017 after a meeting in London that was attended by international far-right activists, such as the Austrian co-leader

of Generation Identity Martin Sellner and American activist Brittany Pettibone (Dearden, 2017a). The UK branch, however, was dissolved in January 2020 due to its fighting and disagreements with the European leadership of the movement, changing its name instead to Identitarian Movement (Dearden, 2020b).

The main ideological vehicle of Generation Identity is the so-called “Identitarianism,” i.e. a set of ideas that have been circulating in different forms since the advent of the European New Right movement (see Chapter 2 for more details on the origins and ideological influence of this movement). However, as Murdoch and Mulhall (2019) explain the ideology of Identitarianism differs from its predecessor in one important aspect: the emphasis that is placed on the role of race. The identitarian movement speaks of the need to protect the white race through narratives that have been influenced by the so-called “Great Replacement” and “White Genocide” theories (Murdoch & Mulhall, 2019). More specifically, in their recent report for the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, Davey and Ebner (2019, p. 4) write that the theories “focus on the premise that white people are at risk of being wiped out through migration, miscegenation or violence.” This is a toxic ideology that may have negative consequences, since its advocates demand the forced deportation – known as remigration – of community members that do not fit into the imagined model of homogeneous societies, in terms of their ethnic and cultural composition.

5.7.3 Yellow Vests UK

The Yellow Vests UK group appeared on the British streets on 14 December 2018 for the first time. In a roadshow that involved the blocking of several bridges in London, the Yellow Vests initiated a series of disruptive demonstrations and intimidating acts that would lead more than 60 MP’s in January 2019 to ask the police to take action against the group (Dearden, 2019a). The group was named after the “gilets

jaunes” movement in France that spread across the country in 2018 in reaction to the economic policies of the government to increase the cost of living (Fuentes & Napolitano, 2020). It was composed of far-right individuals that had been associated in the past with Tommy Robinson, Pegida UK, or Britain First among others (Henden, 2019). We should note here, however, that its actions were short-lived and the group “split over political direction, finances and leadership” (*State of Hate 2020: far-right Terror Goes Global*, 2020, p. 84).

The main reason for the mobilisation of the Yellow Vests was their support of Brexit (*State of Hate 2020: Far Right Terror Goes Global*, 2020). This explains why they repeatedly targeted and harassed anti-Brexit campaigners outside the parliament. However, there were more issues they were concerned with. For example, they supported a conspiracy theory that claimed that Jaynesh Chudasama, a drunk driver who killed three teenage boys at a bus stop in London, was a terrorist and that the authorities intentionally covered up the story. In March 2019, they even protested at the Attorney General’s office demanding justice for the three boys (De Vaal, 2019). In their demonstrations, they were also campaigning against child abuse, the corrupt government, and in support of pensioners who live in dire economic conditions and poverty (Staples, 2019). Although some of their demands did not appear to be sinister, the personal history of Yellow Vests’ members revealed the true intentions of the group and the threat it could pose to the British society.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter analysed in detail the origins and ideological orientation of the most important far-right organisations in terms of their historical continuity, protest size, innovation, disruption, violence, media attention, and transnational links. The preceding discussion revealed what has already been known for

years amongst the academic community: that the far-right is composed of different ideologically-driven groups that nonetheless may have different starting points (Mudde, 2007). However, what is common and what unites them under the same family of groups is their interpretation of current political and social phenomena; this happens through a nativist lens that excludes minorities or what is perceived by the far-right as the “Other.” In Great Britain, the majority of far-right groups have focused on the Muslim question and have employed various tactics to achieve their goals, e.g. through participation in the electoral or street arena, and even through meta-politics as in the case of Identitarianism that seeks to influence the wider political culture and debate.

This chapter also made clear that the far-right in Great Britain is not a new phenomenon. It has a long presence in British society that has participated in both institutional and extra-institutional processes. Although it has not always been successful, the British far-right has used various repertoires of action in the protest arena to advance its claims, ranging from demonstrative (e.g. EDL and FLA/DFLA) to more confrontational (e.g. Britain First) actions and even acts of terror (e.g. National Action). Another key lesson we can draw from this chapter is the tendency of several far-right activists to create or be part of different political formations within the far-right family (e.g. this reveals the life of James Dowson, a former BNP member who launched Britain First or John Tyndall’s trajectory from National Front to BNP) as well as the effort of some far-right figures to establish links with other far-right groups beyond the borders of the country (e.g. through the development of the British branch of Pegida that was originally formed in Germany). Moreover, another lesson that becomes more clear in Chapter 6, where we present in detail the main reasons of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain, is that the far-right – although it has been viewed primarily as an Islamophobic movement – has multiple targets that

may change when public discourse and media attention shift to new issues. For example, the recent demonstrations against the Black Lives Matter movement or the demonstrations in support of Brexit prove this realisation that the far-right does not focus exclusively on Islam.

To conclude, in Great Britain, there are groups that have managed to organise street protests for long periods of time, others that were successful only electorally, and others that have used extreme types of violence as a means to achieve political goals. In the next chapter, we focus on the repertoire of action of the far-right and present in detail the results of the new dataset that has mapped the protest actions of the British far-right in the period 2009-2019. By looking at the main social movement organisations, their issues, and locations of protest, our aim is to better understand the intensity and frequency of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain, how far-right groups respond to their opponents, and how strong they have managed to remain over the years.

Chapter 6. The ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations in Great Britain, 2009-2019

6.1 Introduction

Over the last decade, academics along with practitioners and politicians have focused their attention on the changing dynamics of far-right groups in Great Britain (Mulhall, 2019) and Europe more generally (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018). After the end of the Second World War the biologically-driven and anti-democratic master frames of the far-right had lost their appeal, isolating the far-right which existed only on the margins of Europe's socio-political space (Rydgren, 2005). However, since the 1980s the far-right, either within or outside the protest arena, has detached itself from the label of pariah and has become an influential political actor with the ability but also means to impact discourse and policies of mainstream political parties (Caiani, 2017). Besides, the widely used phrase "the mainstreaming of the far-right" (Feischmidt & Hervik, 2015) encapsulates this trend and partly shows the reasons why it is often difficult to establish clear "boundaries between populist radical right parties and mainstream right-wing parties" (Mudde, 2016, p. 15). The latter does not mean that our understanding of the far-right has not advanced; instead, it proves once again that the study of far-right mobilisations presents several challenges to researchers. However, we should not neglect the fact that the extant research and literature have satisfactorily unravelled the micro, meso, and macro processes of the ecosystem of the far-right (e.g. see Art, 2011; Giugni et al., 2005; Klandermans & Mayer, 2015).

However, if one looked into recent bibliographies on the British far-right movement, they would notice that most academics tend to analyse specific case studies, i.e. the origins and developments of political groups in isolation, overlooking the developments of the movement sector as a whole (e.g. see Allen, 2019a; Jackson, 2014; Richards, 2013). Although the advantage of this approach is that it can provide detailed descriptions of the practices and claims made by political actors, it fails to systematically assess the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisation, i.e. the extra-institutional actions of multiple groups and individuals at the same time. An exception to this is the work of Caiani and Parenti (2013), who conducted research on the British far-right movement sector along with other case studies in the US, Italy, Spain, Germany, and France. However, there are two major differences in this study compared to the approach taken in this thesis. Firstly, their research was limited to the 2005-2009 period, and secondly – and most importantly – their protest event dataset has relied on one national newspaper, the Guardian. As discussed previously in the methodology chapter, this decision may have resulted in the identification of fewer social movement groups and protest activities, leading again to questions of sample representativeness and selection bias (Earl et al., 2004).

In line with the above, we should also not neglect the fact that far-right actions might be the product of coalitions between different groups and individuals with shared beliefs and goals. In 2018, for example, the UK Freedom Marches group brought together activists from different backgrounds and ideological identities, who had nonetheless exhibited commitment to the same cause. According to Shifrin (2018, para. 1), the group consisted of “key personnel from the Football Lads Alliance, former EDL activists, hardcore Nazis and a UKIP MEP.” Therefore, if we omit from our analysis the continuous interactions between activists who mobilise around similar issues, we are likely to form only a partial understanding

of the phenomenon we intend to study. By using original data on far-right events that have occurred in Great Britain, this chapter aims to fill this gap in the current literature, discussing the forms that far-right mobilisation has taken over the last decade, and more specifically in the period 2009-2019.

Having said that, the present chapter looks into the dynamic interplay of six variables: who does what, when, where, why, and how. The first section discusses the development of far-right mobilisation and analyses the degree and characteristics of the different types of protest actions. The latter range from demonstrative and confrontational actions to incidents of light and heavy violence (Kriesi et al., 1995). The second section turns its attention to the protagonists of far-right activity, i.e. the most active groups that dominated in the street arena since 2009, while it also looks into the main reasons, i.e. issues or targets, that drove mobilisation. Although the British far-right has often been described as the counter-jihad or anti-Muslim movement (e.g. see Carter, 2020), implying in this way that it campaigns only on a single issue, in this chapter we provide more accurate and representative statistics with regard to the reasons behind the intentions of far-right activists. We should also add at this point that there have been attempts in the past by academics to reduce the far-right to a single-issue movement, and this tendency was evident in the ways they preferred to label it. Some of the terms that had been utilised, for instance, were neo-fascist (Karapin, 1998), anti-immigrant (Fennema, 1997), and antipartyism parties (Bélanger, 2004). Although we acknowledge that the rhetorical vehicle of the British far-right has been primarily directed against Muslims, there were periods in the long history of British politics that its targets and issues did not remain the same (Jackson, 2018).

Moreover, the third section of this chapter situates the far-right into the broader organisational field of institutional and extra-institutional actors in an attempt to address the next question: how often and in

what strengths do opposition groups mobilise against the far-right? The last section presents terrorism related incidents in order to analyse the profiles of these individuals who have spread fear to minority communities in Great Britain during the last decade.

6.2 The development of far-right mobilisations in Great Britain

As explained in the introductory chapter of this thesis, in order to assess in a methodical way the escalation and de-escalation processes of far-right mobilisations, the present study draws inspiration from the pioneering work of Macklin and Busher (2015); the authors analysed the tactics of the actors involved and not the mechanisms of their ideological radicalisation. They justify this decision stressing that “while the journey of individuals or groups up or down the narrative and action pyramids might at times be closely interrelated, they are nonetheless distinct and discernible phenomena” (Busher & Macklin, 2014, p. 4). Given that this thesis examines the reasons that prompt political actors to air their grievances through the street arena, a thorough analysis of the repertoires of contention, or “claim-making routines” according to Tilly (2008), appears to be the most suitable approach. Except for that, we should also mention here that the analysis is conducted on a quarterly basis. Banaszak and Ondercin (2016) suggest that this time frame allows researchers to capture the dynamic nature of mobilisations and as a result more meaningful conclusions can be drawn.

The intensity of far-right protest campaigns, both in terms of participants and in terms of the number of events, has varied widely since 2009 (Allchorn & Feldman, 2017). Although the far-right has also been active in the past and has been involved in major episodes of contentious politics, among which stand out the confrontations initiated by Oswald Mosley and his supporters in the 1940s, the actions of

National Front in the 1970s, and the mobilisations of the BNP in the 1990s (Macklin & Busher, 2015; Richards, 2013), it would not be an exaggeration to say that the last decade has been one of the most active periods for the British far-right movement (Mulhall, 2019). Mainly England but also Scotland and Wales – however to a lesser degree as we will see in the next paragraphs – have all witnessed instances of far-right activity at the extra-institutional level. The formation and rise of the EDL, which at the time constituted for some analysts “the biggest populist street movement in a generation” (Bartlett & Littler, 2011, p. 3), a series of confrontational political stunts orchestrated by Britain First, demonstrations against migrants and refugees, the decision of the British government to ban National Action and its splinter groups in 2016, political murders, massive street protests by the FLA, and violent encounters between far-right and opposition groups, e.g. in Birmingham in 2009 and in Dover in 2016, are indicative examples of the intensity that characterised the aforementioned period.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to delve into these episodes of contention, to provide details about their intrinsic characteristics, and to depict as accurately as possible the nexus of claims-making as has been expressed by groups and individuals in Great Britain. We should mention here that although we agree to some extent with the view of some academics that the actions of solo-actors and the actions of groups are separate phenomena (Carter, 2020), it is not always possible to examine them independently. Such decision, for example, would have excluded from the analysis the Finsbury Park attack in 2017 by Darren Osborne or the racially motivated murder of Kunal Mohanty, a naval officer of Indian descent, in March 2009 as the perpetrators did not appear to have any links with organised groups (Carrell, 2009; Mohammad, 2018). Except for that, we should also keep in mind that “social movements usually

consist of informal, shifting, and often temporary coalitions of organizations, informal networks, subcultures, and individuals” (Koopmans, 1993, p. 637).

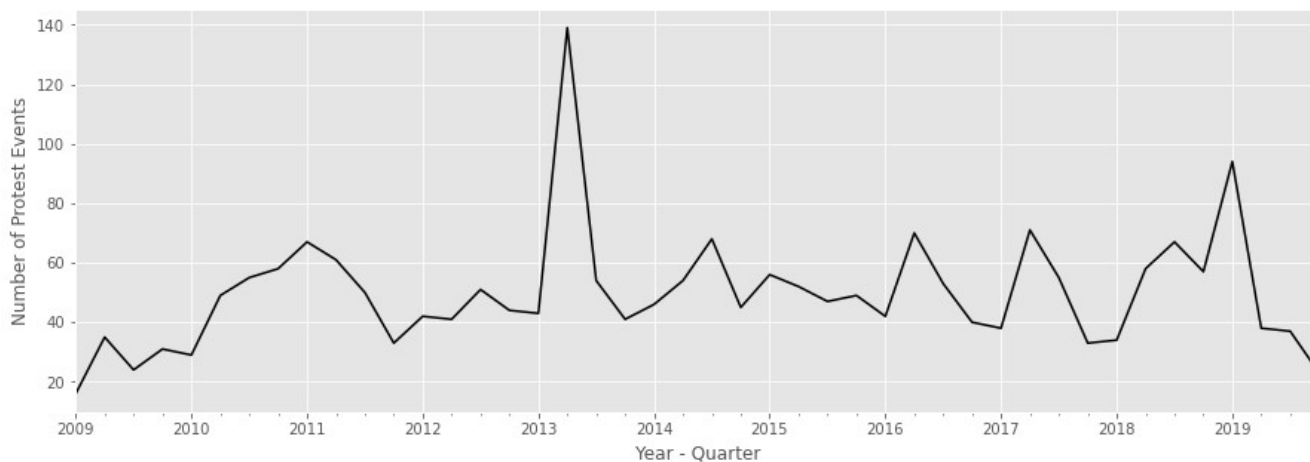


Figure 4: Far-right protests in Great Britain, 2009Q1 – 2019Q4

Looking now at the distribution of protest events in Great Britain before we disaggregate them by type of action, we observe that the far-right has remained rather active in the period under analysis as Figure 4 shows. The total number of protest actions – at least those reported in the press – amounted to 2190, while the total number of unique political actors, including the generic categories “Racists” and “neo-Nazis,” that initiated at a minimum one event was 131. However, at this high level of abstraction and taking into consideration the caveats mentioned previously in the methodology chapter, i.e. that some types of far-right activity, such as physical attacks against persons and incidents of vandalism, might be under-represented in the dataset, only a few general remarks can be made at this point. For example, demonstrations that include a small number of demonstrators, such as a BNP event in 2015 in London that attracted three supporters (*State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016) or Pegida’s failed attempt to march through the streets of Edinburgh after four people showed up (Marshall, 2015)

are also discussed in this section. However, as we explain in the next paragraphs, in order to see clearly and to better understand the dynamics of far-right mobilisation, we need to distinguish between major and minor events based on how many demonstrators participated in a protest event.

To begin with, between the third quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2011 there was an incremental increase of far-right mobilisation, which was closely associated with the decision of the EDL to expand and spread its message through an “updated and modernised” version of the “march and grow” tactic (Jackson & Feldman, 2011, p. 18). Secondly, the murder of soldier Lee Rigby on 22 May 2013 by two supporters of the al-Muhajiroun group (Townsend, 2019), Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, caused the immediate response of the far-right and allowed it to capitalise on an incident that shocked British society (Morrow & Meadowcroft, 2019). Besides, it was in the aftermath of the above event that Pavlo Lapshyn, an Ukrainian neo-Nazi admirer who had already knifed to death Muslim pensioner Mohammed Saleem the previous month, continued his campaign of terror by placing bombs in three different locations in Walsall, Wolverhampton and Tipton in June and July 2013 (Dodd, 2013).

Thirdly, increased levels of activity were also documented in 2014. As we saw in Chapter 5, this period included, among others, the acts of Britain First, a BNP splinter group that made the news in 2017 after Donald Trump, the President of the US at the time, retweeted two Islamophobic posts from the group’s Twitter account (Dearden, 2017b). Besides the so-called “Christian patrols” that Britain First followers launched “in response to the alleged introductions of ‘Sharia controlled zones’ by Anjem Choudary and his Muslims Against Crusades and Islam4UK organisations” (Carter, 2020, p. 178), there were several incidents that targeted political opponents and pro-Palestinian supporters, but there were also protests against grooming gangs and the child sex exploitation scandal that showed the weakness of authorities

to protect their most vulnerable members. More specifically, protests against grooming gangs were the second reason for mobilisation with most events in 2014. It is interesting to see that in five occasions the far-right mobilised around 300-500 people, while the protest organised by the EDL in Rotherham in September 2014 attracted more than 500 and involved limited violence (Childs, 2014).

Finally, after the EU referendum in June 2016 and the terrorist attacks during 2017 by radical Islamists, the country saw several spikes emerge. It is noteworthy to mention that the latter observations are in line with a recently published report on racially and religiously motivated hate crimes that police forces have recorded for England and Wales (Allen & Zayed, 2019). The authors of the report write:

The figures show an increase for the two strands around the July 2016 Referendum and 2017 Terrorist attacks. In July 2016, following the EU referendum, the number of religiously and racially motivated hate crimes was 44% higher than in July 2015. Likewise, in June 2017, following attacks at the Manchester Arena, London Bridge and Finsbury Park mosque there was also a 44% increase in these hate crimes compared to June the previous year (G. Allen & Zayed, 2019, p. 10).

Moreover, in 2018 two further incidents appear to have influenced the political climate in Great Britain. Tell MAMA found that the “Punish a Muslim Day” hate campaign that was calling for Muslims to be murdered in the spring and an article written by the-now Prime Minister Boris Johnson in August in which he compared Muslim women to “letterboxes” caused an increase of anti-Muslim hatred (*Tell MAMA Annual Report 2018: Normalising Hatred*, 2019). In the first quarter of 2019, and according to Figure 4, there is another spike; a new group dubbed Yellow Vests UK was one of the main drivers of

mobilisation. Between January and March, for instance, the group put in place action at 44 events. Although the vast majority of the events were small-scale, the group instigated more confrontational acts through abuse and threats against pro-EU politicians and journalists (Davies et al., 2019).

The map below, Figure 5, synopsis some of the above observations and complements the line chart in Figure 4. It depicts the geographic locations of far-right activity, with Greater London to have attracted the majority of protests events. Only for the City of Westminster, for example, the dataset has mapped 125 protest events, while other locations that have seen at least 50 protests taking place in their territory are Blackburn (50), Edinburgh (53), Newcastle-upon-Tyne (54), Liverpool (57), Birmingham (57), and Manchester (58). Except for that, the map shows that far-right groups and individuals mobilised – to a lesser degree admittedly – in Scotland and Wales too. The former was the epicentre of 176 events, of which 27.8% were organised by the Scottish Defence League, while the latter was selected as a terrain of claims-making 77 times. What stands out in the case of Wales is the violent incident that unfolded in Mold in January 2015. Zack Davies, a National Action supporter attempted to murder during a machete attack Sarandev Bhambra in revenge – as he would claim later – of the death of Lee Rigby ('Lee Rigby Revenge Attacker Zack Davies given Life Sentence', 2015). For many commentators and experts on British politics, this terror plot in Mold came in a moment that the far-right movement was in disarray and splintered into small but more radicalised groups (*State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016). It seems therefore that in order to better understand the internal dynamics of far-right mobilisation, we should disaggregate protest events by type of action strategies, number of participants, and issues.

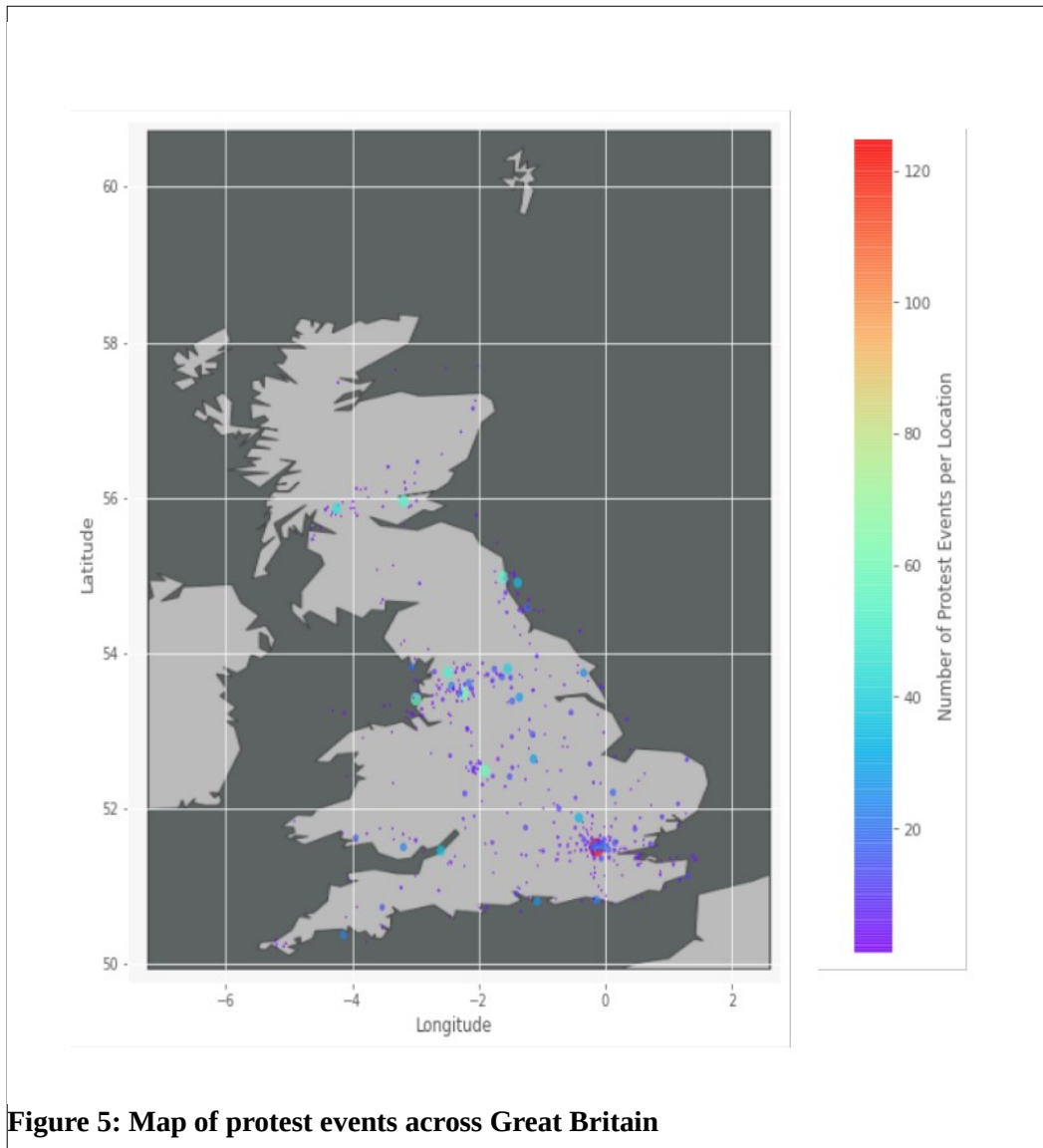


Figure 5: Map of protest events across Great Britain

6.2.1 The characteristics of the action repertoire of the far-right in more detail

The subset of protest events that has been identified and collected for the purposes of the present thesis reveals that far-right activists over the years have instigated in total 874 demonstrative events (or 39.91%), 232 confrontational events (or 10.59%), and 1084 violent events of which 538 events belong

to the “heavy violence” category (or 24.57%) while 546 events belong to the “light violence” category (or 24.93%). Figure 6 below presents more clearly the distribution of these four categories over time; for more clarity we have combined the results of light and heavy violence into the “Violent” category. Within each category, far-right organisations use a wide range of tactics, which include, among others, regional and national marches, public assemblies in the form of static protests, political stunts, criminal damages, symbolic acts of violence, physical violence against persons but also acts of terrorism.

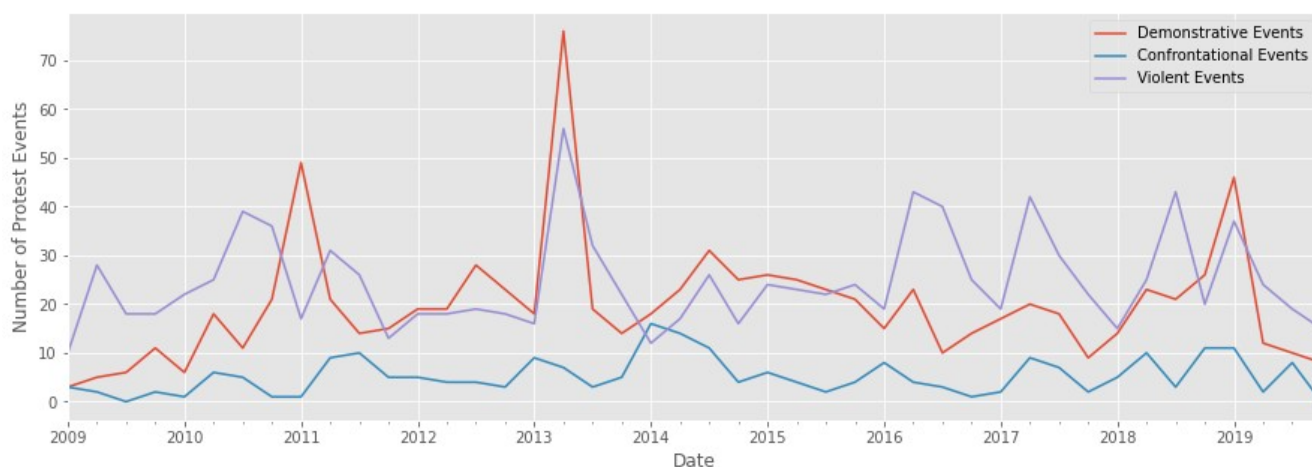


Figure 6: Far-right mobilisation by type of action

It is interesting to see from the above graph that violence, either in light or heavy forms, has remained a constant feature of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. Although terrorism related events attract the most publicity when they happen, another reality exists in the British society that concerns low-level daily attacks that appear to be motivated by racism and hate affecting significantly the lives of minority groups. This is in line with the calls of the Institute of Race Relations, a British think, for more drastic measures against incidents of racist violence and discrimination (e.g. see Burnett, 2016). However, violence is not the only action (or outcome of actions) that has been used by far-right groups and

individuals. Peaceful, non-confrontational events that can take the form of demonstrations, collections of signatures, or vigils also take place and constitute the category with the most protest events. On the other hand, the last category, i.e. the confrontational events category does not include more than 20 protest events per year. However, we should note that this could be due to the difficulty in finding this type of protest in news media. Table 2 presents the variety of different actions within each category. It is evident as Caiani and Parenti (2013, p. 119) also find that the far-right uses “a variegated repertoire of action, made up of conventional, demonstrative, expressive, confrontational and violent (including both soft violence and heavy violence) actions”:

Table 2: Forms of action of the British far-right

Action Type	Action	Number of Actions
Confrontational	Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols	46
	Disruption/intimidation	134
	Political stunt	42
	Suspicious packages/substances	9
	Web-hacking	1
Demonstrative	Counter-demonstration	69
	Demonstration/protest	695
	Petition/collection of signatures	9
	Vigil/protest	101
Heavy violence	Arson/(fire)bomb attack	77

	Brawl	8
	Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols	2
	Counter-demonstration	4
	Demonstration/protest	36
	Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives	32
	Disruption/intimidation	35
	Physical violence against persons	161
	Politically motivated murder	20
	Terror plot/attack	80
	Vandalism/criminal damage	82
	Vigil/protest	1
Light violence	Brawl	6
	Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols	3
	Counter-demonstration	12
	Demonstration/protest	40
	Disruption/intimidation	25
	Suspicious packages/substances	1
	Symbolic violence	457

	Vigil/protest	2
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Besides, it is well established in the field of social movement studies that different types of logic guide the “practice of contentious politics” (Tarrow, 2008). It should be added that the latter is “influenced by the immediate social setting in which protest takes place” (Braun & Koopmans, 2014, p. 633) and aims to influence the decisions of their targets, which are usually the power-holders. Della Porta and Diani (2006) distinguish, in particular, three logics of protest: 1. the logic of numbers, 2. the logic of damage, and 3. the logic of bearing witness. The former refers to protest strategies that seek to mobilise large numbers of people, such as mass demonstrations and petitions, and aim to show the social power and strength of a movement (Tilly, 2004). Biggs (2016, p. 3) writes that “the number of participants appears as a crucial variable in theories of how social movements bring about change.” The second protest logic involves varying degrees of violence against persons or property. For Cammaerts (2012), politically motivated violence, which is an expression of shared grievances and relates to broader social claims, has been an inherent part in many societal attempts to bring about change. The logic of bearing witness on the other hand refers to protests that entail commitment and high personal risk, and are symbolic or theatrical in nature. Their aim is to evoke emotions (Della Porta & Diani, 2006), while it has also been noted that “imagination, creativity, and sensitivity to values and culture are key” in this logic (Rochon, 1988 as cited in Wouters, 2013, p. 88). Typical examples from the British context are the protest actions of Generation Identity UK who dyed red a Bristol fountain in November 2018 as a direct reference to the infamous “Rivers of Blood” speech by Enoch Powell (Grimshaw, 2018), or the stunt by the same group outside the University of Manchester, which saw a handful of activists in hazmat suits to stand

next to – supposedly – toxic waste barrels while carrying banners that read “Warning, Ethnomasochism is Toxic” (*The New far-right: Who Are Generation Identity?*, 2019).

Following the above discussion, it is interesting to look now at the number of protesters that decide to participate in a protest event. Previous research has indicated that a significant proportion of far-right protests is composed of small – and even very small – groups (Caiani et al., 2012; Caiani & Parenti, 2013). Although the PEGIDA movement in Germany might be seen as an exception because it was able to mobilise larger numbers more frequently, its counter-parts formed in Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, and Norway failed to do so (Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016). In the case of Great Britain, the far-right appears to be following the same trajectory. Almost 90%, and more precisely, 89.60% of all registered events have seen fewer than 100 people to participate in a protest event. In this statistic, we also include 786 protest events for which we could not retrieve any information from news media or estimate their approximate size. The assumption, however, is that these events have not been attended by more than 100 people as newspapers and anti-racist reports tend to mention numbers or provide descriptions about the protest size, e.g. “hundreds” or “thousands,” when large-scale events occur.

On the other hand, the most sizeable protest events that involve at least 5001 people (e.g. see Somma & Medel, 2019) are 14 in total as shown in Table 3⁷. If we break them down by type of action and date, we observe that these actions either refer to collections of signatures or street demonstrations. The former, which are usually intended to express solidarity with like-minded members and sympathisers

7 One could add here another protest event that took place in Birmingham on 24 March 2018. This was organised by two separate groups, the FLA and the DFLA. According to some news reports, approximately 5000 people assembled in the city on that date (Authi & Richardson, 2018a); however, the table does not show the combined numbers of independent protest events.

include a petition in support of Rachel Booth, a dinner lady from Preston, who was suspended from work in 2017 after attending a far-right public rally, dubbed “Unite Against Hate,” in Manchester (‘Preston Dinner Lady Suspended after Attending March Organised by Ex EDL Leader’, 2017) as well as a “free Tommy Robinson” petition in 2018 that was signed by more than 500000 supporters and demanded the release of the EDL’s ex-leader after he was arrested for contempt of court in Leeds (Rodger, 2018).

Regarding street demonstrations, i.e. instances of activism that require the physical presence of people and as a result are likely to differ in the levels of personal cost and risk (Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991), the far-right managed to draw very large numbers in six occasions, one in the City of London and five in the City of Westminster. The main reasons and grievances that generated participation in these large public gatherings were expressed through calls 1) against the threats posed by Islamic extremism, 2) in support of Brexit, and 3) in solidarity with Tommy Robinson. It is striking to see that all protest actions occurred in two consecutive years, 2017 and 2018. Even the EDL during the days of its dominance and growth was not able to attract such numbers. Only in one occasion, in Luton on 5 February 2011, they brought approximately 2000-3000 protesters from Great Britain and abroad to the streets despite the fact that the event was highly symbolic, since it was their first visit to the city after a banning order on public processions was imposed by the office of the Home Secretary in 2009 (Allchorn, 2016; ‘Luton Bans Marches amid Fears of Protests’, 2009). However, according to our dataset, the EDL is the only group that has organised more than a dozen demonstrations attended by at least 1001 activists.

Table 3: Far-right protests in Great Britain with at least 5001 protesters

Date	Location	Group	Action	Goal	Size
13-02-2009	Unknown	Racists	Petition	In solidarity with members/leaders	20001-30000
04-08-2011	Unknown	English Democrats	Petition	Other	7001-10000
08-09-2015	Unknown	Racists	Petition	Against immigrants	50001-100000
15-11-2015	Unknown	Racists	Petition	Against immigrants	100001-500000
20-02-2017	Unknown	Racists	Petition	Pro US President	100001-500000
24-06-2017	City of London	FLA	Demonstration	Against Islamists	7001-10000
14-07-2017	Unknown	Racists	Petition	In solidarity with members/leaders	20001-30000
07-10-2017	City of Westminster	FLA	Demonstration	Against Islamists	30001-50000
06-05-2018	City of Westminster	Racists	Demonstration	Against media	5001-7000
30-05-2018	Unknown	Racists	Petition	In solidarity with members/leaders	500001 >
09-06-2018	City of Westminster	Racists	Demonstration	In solidarity with members/leaders	10001-15000

14-07-2018	City of Westminster	Racists	Demonstration	In solidarity with members/leaders	7001-10000
07-11-2018	Unknown	Racists	Petition	In solidarity with members/leaders	100001-500000
09-12-2018	City of Westminster	UKIP	Demonstration	Brexit protest	5001-7000

Moreover, in order to draw a more accurate picture of the dynamics of the far-right movement in Great Britain, we should turn our attention to the different levels of participation and not only on the extreme cases, where participation is very low or very high. A question that naturally comes up is: how can we operationalise the magnitude of protests in terms of their size? Somma and Medel (2019) suggest the following categories for protests (the number of demonstrators in parenthesis):

Very small: (20-75) | Small: (76-250) | Mid-sized: (251-800) | Large: (801-5000) | Very large: (5001 +)

The present thesis takes a similar approach, but the intervals within each category differs slightly. The new categories are:

- Very small: (2-50)
- Small: (51-100)
- Low mid-sized: (101-300)
- High mid-sized: (301-500)
- Large: (501-5000)

- Very large: (5001 +).

To better illustrate these points, the next three line charts track the rise and fall of far-right mobilisation on a quarterly basis. We have selected to present far-right protests that can be described at the minimum as low mid-sized (i.e. if the number of participants is at least 101), high mid-sized (i.e. if the number of participants is at least 301), and large (i.e. if the number of participants is at least 501). Petitions have been excluded from this section because we are more interested in explaining the variation in the size of more unconventional protest actions that are “not influenced by a few, very moderate collections of signatures” (Hutter, 2014b, p. 344). Not only that, in the public dialogue, commentators hardly ever refer to petitions when recounting the activities and potential impact of far-right groups on social cohesion and local communities; instead, what they usually mention is public assemblies, marches, and instances of civil disobedience, vandalism, and violence.

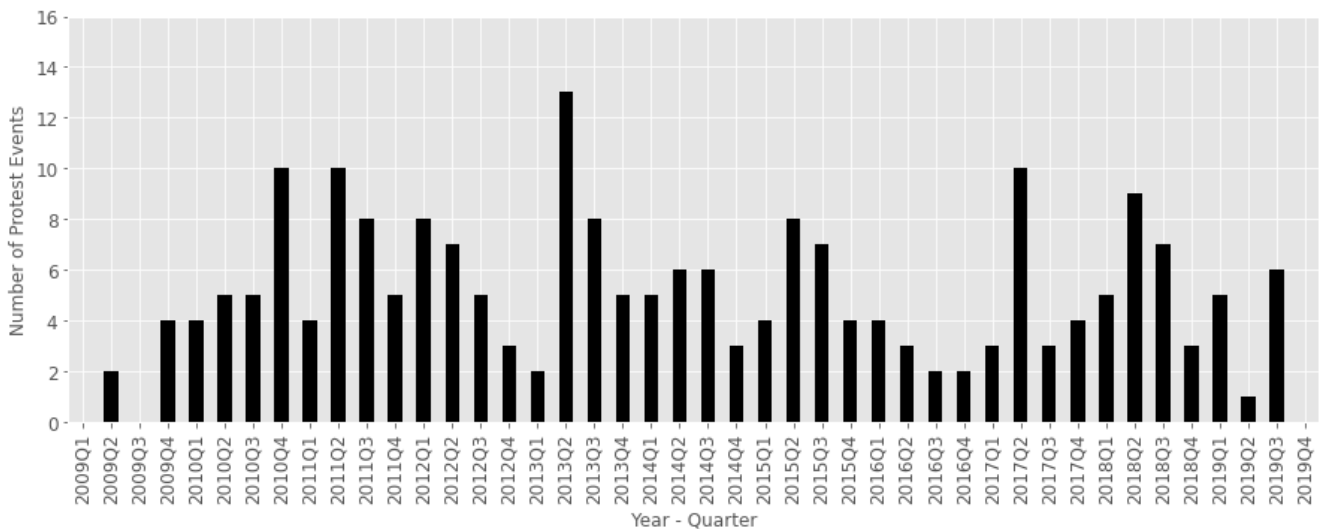


Figure 7: Far-right protests in Great Britain (at least 101 participants): 2009Q1 – 2019Q4, figure adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 10)

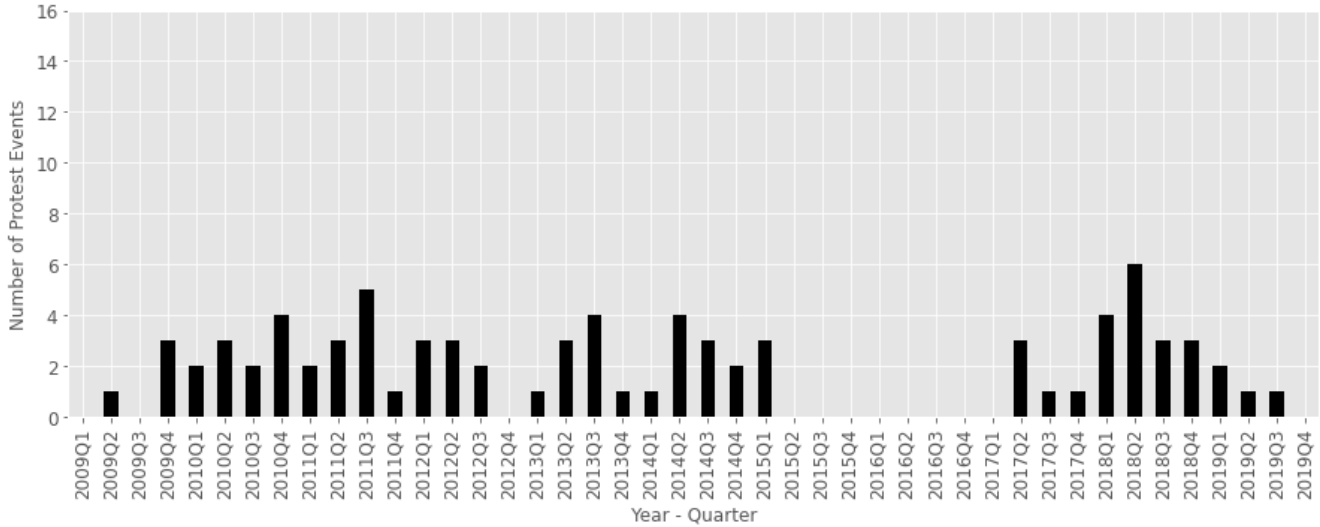


Figure 8: Far-right protests in Great Britain (at least 301 participants): 2009Q1 – 2019Q4, figure adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 10)

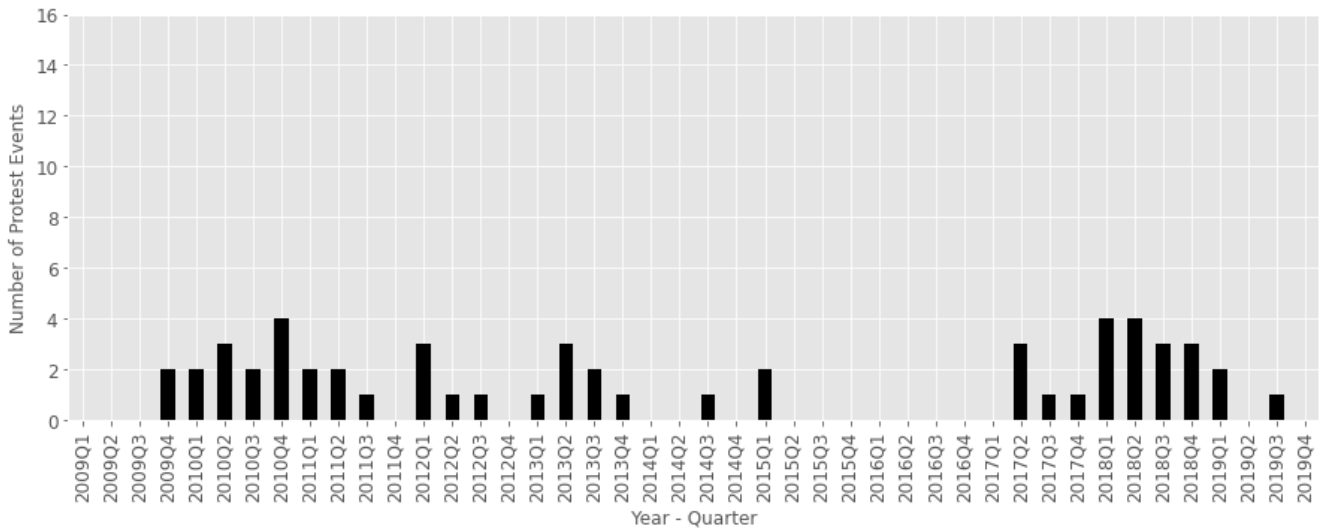


Figure 9: Far-right protests in Great Britain (at least 501 participants): 2009Q1 – 2019Q4, figure adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 10)

It is evident in the first line chart, Figure 7, that there has been organised almost for the whole period at least one demonstration that involves more than 100 people. Only during the first and third quarter of 2009 and also during the last quarter of 2019 there have been no protest events of this size. In total, 218 protests have been documented, or 4.95 protests on average per quarter. The most active years appear to be 2013 with 28 protest actions and 2011 with 27 protest actions, whereas 2009, 2016, and 2019 are the only years with fewer than 20 events of this size; the actual numbers are 6 events for 2009, 11 events for 2016, and 12 events for 2019. The line chart shows that once the protest size is accounted for in our analysis a new reality is presented. Although the far-right has managed to remain relevant in the period under analysis, the total number of protest events per quarter show that the far-right, at the meso-level, did not have the capacity to mobilise large numbers of people for a sustained and long periods of time.

However, we should not neglect the fact that over the years, especially after the demise of the EDL, the British far-right has faced challenges that relate to a number of reasons. The most important of these reasons are the following: internal fighting and quarrels, fragmentations, leadership resignations but also lack of leadership, personal resentment and disillusionment due to the absence of a viable vision about the future of the nationalist movement (Busher, 2018; Morrow & Meadowcroft, 2019; *State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016). Several examples from this period corroborate the observations that the far-right often enters periods of uncertainty. In 2012, for example, one year after Anders Breivik's terrorist attack in Norway there was a debate in the country about whether the splintering and electoral failure of the far-right could lead to increased levels of political violence (Brown, 2012). Moreover, in October 2013, the resignation of EDL's leaders and the more recent resignation of John Meighan, the founder the FLA, the formation of splinter groups, such as the

Infidels and the South East Alliance, demonstrate how fluid the far-right movement can be. Even separate protests have taken place at the same time and location, e.g. a street protest in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham in March 2011 where the EDL and the English Nationalist Alliance both objected plans for a proposed Mosque (Phillips, 2011), despite the fact that only a month before this event they stood side by side on the same issue.

The second line chart in Figure 8 presents a different picture of far-right mobilisation. The total number of protests events that attracted at the minimum 301 attendants is rapidly reduced to 81, or 1.84 events on average per quarter. The most successful year is 2018 with 16 protest actions, while only three times in 2010, 2011, and 2014 the far-right mobilised the same numbers more than (or equal to) 10 times in a single year, with 11 protest events in 2010 and 2011 and 10 protest events in 2014. It is also surprising that in 2015 only three events of this size occurred while in 2016 there were no protest events with more than 300 participants; these two years are at the same time the least successful. Nevertheless, one might have expected more crowded demonstrations. First, the volatile political conditions that had emerged during 2015 due to the refugee crisis, the terrorist attack in Paris in November that resulted in the death of 130 people and another attack in London at Leytonstone station on 5 December that was carried out three days after the British Parliament voted in favour of the continuation of the bombing campaign against the Isis, along with concerns about the economy had created a mix of grievances that could have been exploited more efficiently by the far-right ('Leytonstone Tube Attacker Muhiddin Mire Jailed for Life', 2016; 'Paris Attacks: What Happened on the Night', 2015; *State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016). Second, in 2016, the year the EU referendum took place, public figures and the media slipped into a toxic and divisive discourse (Allchorn & Feldman, 2017)

that gave rise to nativist sentiments by increasing the impact of discursive opportunities, i.e. the “aspects of the public discourse that determine a message’s chances of diffusion in the public sphere” (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004, p. 202) with regard to far-right ideas, expectations, and demands.

Finally, there are even fewer large events, where the minimum number of participants is 501, during the period of analysis; 55 in total or 1.25 on average per quarter. Most protest events happened in 2010 and 2018, with 11 and 14 actions respectively, while for 2016 the dataset has not mapped any protest events of this size. We should add that fewer than 10 protests happened every year for the remaining period. It is clear from the third line chart, i.e. Figure 9, that two major phases can be identified. One that starts in the fourth quarter of 2009, peaks one year later, and then shows declining participation after the second quarter of 2011. Typical examples of the intensity of this period are the seven EDL demonstrations that occurred in 2010 – a busy and violent year, undoubtedly, as six of the demonstrations that took place throughout 2010 ended in increased levels of violence between the far-right and counter-movements or the police – in the following cities and involved more than 501 demonstrators who agreed to support EDL’s message and cause:

1. Hanley, England, 23-01-2010: The EDL protests in Hanley and demands measures against the threats of Islamic extremism. Approximately 1500 of EDL’s members and supporters engage in violent episodes that lead to several arrests (‘Trouble at Stoke-on-Trent English Defence League Rally’, 2010)
2. Bolton, England, 20-03-2010: Two months later, the EDL organises another large protest; the theme remains the same, with the group protesting against Islamic extremism. Violence breaks

out and the police arrests 74 people the majority of which included anti-fascists (T. McVeigh, 2010)

3. Dudley, England, 03-04-2010: Two weeks after Bolton's march, the EDL reacts to plans for a new mosque, with the news media to report that "some of the protesters broke out of a pen in a car park, breaking down metal fences and throwing the metal brackets at officers, who were armed with riot shields and batons" ('Violence at Anti-Mosque Protest', 2010, para. 3)
4. Newcastle, England, 29-05-2010: For a third consecutive month, the EDL managed to mobilise more than 1000 people. The police estimated that 1500 to 2000 EDL supporters participated, while there were no arrests or violence despite the presence of counter-demonstrators (Lawson, 2013)
5. Bradford, England, 28-08-2010: The protest event organised in Bradford caused the reaction of anti-fascists and local communities due to the race riots that had spread in the North of England in 2001, including Bradford. Newspapers at the time had reported that the violent encounters between white extremists, British Asians, and the police had left several people injured ('Race Riots Ignite Bradford', 2001). A repetition of a violent episode in 2010 was likely, urging 10000 people to sign a petition that called the Home Office to ban EDL's proposed march ('EDL Wants "peaceful Demonstration" in Bradford', 2010). Although the Home Secretary decided to ban the march, EDL's presence, manifested through a static protest, resulted in violence during a police operation that involved more than 1600 officers (Taylor & Wainwright, 2010)

6. Leicester, England, 09-10-2010: EDL's static protest once again failed to be peaceful. Although that day the police put into action its biggest operation since the 1980s, different parts of the city saw the far-right organisation and counter-demonstrators to turn violent and cause injuries, including a policeman who was taken to the hospital ('Thirteen Arrests in Leicester Protests by EDL and UAF', 2010)

If viewed solely from this size perspective, i.e. mobilisation that involves more than 501 demonstrators, the far-right seems rather insignificant for most of the years. If we exclude the year 2013, participation numbers resurge again in 2017 and peak the next year; for two consecutive quarters, during the first and second quarter, the country experienced in total eight protest events of this size, and this was the first time in the period of analysis that the far-right showed such strengths and persistence for a period of six months. The second phase was triggered by two Islamist attacks, as has already been mentioned before, the first on Westminster Bridge in London on 22 March 2017 that left six people dead and more than 50 people injured ('Westminster Attack: What Happened', 2017), and the second two months later in Manchester; the second attack, which was even deadlier, resulted in 22 fatalities with more than 100 injuries ('Manchester Attack: What We Know so Far', 2017).

In the aftermath of these terror plots, thousands of people took to the British streets in June 2017 to call attention to the threats posed by Islamic extremism. We should note, however, that retaliations after a high profile terrorist attack, especially if the latter is committed by Islamists, are common and may also involve hate crimes. As Bartlett and Birdwell (2013) contend, these are usually driven by emotional and not rational responses. Looking at the British incidents in June 2017, it was the first time that protests of this size were organised by three different groups within the same month. More specifically,

Tommy Robinson, after his unsuccessful attempt with Pegida UK, brought more than 3000 people to the streets of Manchester, a mixed crowd that even contained the most extreme elements of the far-right scene (Smith & Shifrin, 2017a), leading to violent episodes and eight arrests ('Arrests Made as Manchester Protest by UK Against Hate "Turns Nasty"', 2017). Almost two weeks later, and more specifically on June 24, two simultaneous marches took place in Central London. One march attended by the EDL that was poorly attended, since according to some estimates approximately 50 members showed up, and was countered by hundreds of anti-fascist organisations ('*Brief Reports and Pics from the Weekend*', 2017; Osborne, 2017), and another march organised by the FLA and mustered around 10000 supporters (Allchorn & Feldman, 2019). The next day, on June 25, Manchester became the epicentre of another far-right march. More than 500 supporters of a group named Veterans Against Terrorism assembled in the city to denounce extremism and stand in solidarity with the victims of the attacks. Although the organisers stated their campaign was not motivated by political reasons (Britton, 2017), Hope Not Hate has included this event into their report on far-right demonstrations for 2017, and this is the reason why this thesis also analyses their actions (*State of Hate 2018: Far Right Terrorism on the Rise*, 2018).

If we compare the early years of the most successful – in terms of protest size – far-right mobilisation, the above phase is significantly less violent. The dataset has mapped only six incidents, in Manchester (June 2017), Sunderland (September 2018), as well as the City of Westminster (March, June, July, and October 2018), where the outcome of street demonstrations can be described as involving either light or heavy violence. At the same time, and even if we simply rely on a conservative estimate of the total number of protest participants, more than 80000 people attended far-right events in less than 24

months, from the second quarter of 2017 until the first quarter of 2019. This number does not represent unique cases, as individuals may have participated in multiple campaigns, but it can be seen as an indicator on the one hand of the strength of the organised far-right during that period and on the other hand of its ability to spread its message to wider audiences. A protest event that stands out occurred in Central London on 7 October 2017 and was organised by the FLA. Between 30000 to 50000 marchers demanded from the government to design and implement better policies that would be able tackle to extremism and terrorism more effectively (Worley, 2017).

Although 2018 did not experience events of such magnitude, there were six street protests that involved more than 2000 participants. The first was in Birmingham on 24 March and saw two separate protests by the FLA and the DFLA to assemble 5000 protesters. The FLA was demonstrating against the threat of extremism, while the reason of the DFLA protest was to support the Justice4the21 campaign (Authi & Richardson, 2018b). It is important to mention here that the Justice4the21 group was created in 2011 with the aim of restoring justice for the victims of the allegedly Irish Republican Army pub bombing in Birmingham in 1974 that killed 21 people ('Why the Home Secretary MUST Resolve the Pub Bombs Inquest Funding Debacle', 2016). The second protest that attracted more than 2000 demonstrators was on 5 May in Central London and was dubbed as a "Freedom of Speech" march in support of Tommy Robinson who had been banned from Twitter (Gayle, 2018a), whereas the third protest took place again in Central London one month later after Tommy Robinson was jailed for contempt of court. As many as 15000 protesters reacted to Robinson's arrest and some of them also clashed with the police (Gayle & Ntim, 2018). The following weeks were intense for the authorities, as the far-right organised another two sizeable events. One on 23 June, when the UK Freedom Marches group called a demonstration on

the Brexit anniversary with 2000 to 3000 people to participate (*'Fascists and Racists Rally in London for "Unity" March'*, 2018), while the second event in July involved more than 7000 demonstrators who expressed their sympathy towards Tommy Robinson and US President Donald Trump (*State of Hate 2019: People vs the Elite*, 2019). The last protest of this size occurred in Central London in December and was organised by Tommy Robinson and the UK Independence Party in reaction to the Brexit deal secured by the then Prime Minister Theresa May and the European Commission (Gayle, 2018b).

To summarise, the levels of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain differ, depending on what constitutes the main unit of analysis. The number of large events is low and clusters around certain periods of time, while less crowded protests happen more consistently. However, if we also focus on contentious actions that are more likely to be carried out by individuals or small groups as in Figure 4, for instance, we are led to the realisation that the far-right and its ideas can pose a persistent concern for the British society. In order to assess whether the latter is significant, we need to put far-right mobilisation in perspective. Ideally, we would have access to datasets that compare the protest actions of the far-right – based on the criteria that we have set in this thesis – with the actions of all political actors in Great Britain that have used the protest arena as a platform to make claims. Unfortunately, such datasets do not exist. We can only rely on Bailey's analysis; he has conducted PEA by retrieving information from two national newspapers, i.e. the Guardian and the Times (Bailey, 2014). Although the interpretation of the data should be treated with caution due to the limitations that may arise when relying on a limited number of newspapers and differences in the coding criteria, in his study Bailey (2020) finds that categories such as "workers/professionals" and "environmentalists" have been more consistent and prominent from

2010 to 2019, whereas the extra-institutional actions of far-right groups have remained rather marginal compared with them in the period under analysis.

6.2.2 Disruptive events and counter-demonstrations

As noted before, protest movements have at any time an array of means available for making political claims (Tilly, 1986). In this section, the focus is mainly on protest actions that aim to cause intimidation and disturbances to social structures, such as disruption of political meetings by opponents (Koopmans, 1993) or political stunts. Vaillant and Schwartz (2019), who conducted research on the strategies of the Argentinian student movement, distinguish two forms of disruption, structural disruption and invasive disruption. In the first case, disruption is caused when the subordinate part of a hierarchical system cease to function in the role they have been assigned to. For example, if the workers in a factory strike and deny complying with the orders of the leadership, production stops and disruption has been achieved. On the other hand, the aim of invasive disruption is primarily to “interfere with the functioning of other institutions in which they do not have a routinised role.” For student movements, “these protests generally involve leaving the campus and occupying public spaces, government buildings, and private institutions in an attempt to prevent them from conducting ‘business as usual’ in that space” (Vaillant & Schwartz, 2019, p. 114). Added to this, invasive tactics, which can range from street blockades to building occupations and sit-ins, have the potential to be embedded in narratives and make “high risk activism” (McAdam, 1986) more attractive (Polletta, 1998) as previous instances of contentious politics have shown in different social contexts.

Looking at the British data now, we are mainly interested in untangling the trajectory of protest actions that belong to the “invasive disruption” category. Events of the latter category, which are by definitions confrontational in nature, have also turned violent in several occasions in the period under analysis. For example, on 22 September 2010 a group of more than 20 EDL members targeted a Socialist Workers Party meeting in Newcastle. Although their actions caused damages to the building only, as the meeting had already been cancelled, several of those who participated were jailed (Kennedy, 2019). In another incident, after the murder of Lee Rigby Geoffrey Ryan, a 44-year-old man, attacked Al Falah Islamic Centre in Braintree and threatened to kill all Muslims (‘Update: Man Remains in Custody after Incident Outside Al Falah Braintree Islamic Centre’, 2013). In total, and if we include political stunts too, 287 disruptive actions have occurred since 2009. Most happened in 2014, and more specifically 50 actions which coincided with the rise of Britain First as discussed earlier, whereas the year that follows with 37 actions is 2011. Anti-fascists had repeatedly warned at the time, i.e. in 2011, about the changing tactics of far-right activists (*Brighton: EDL Thugs Attempt Attack on Antiracist Meeting*, 2011). In April and May, for instance, far-right activists turned against trade union conferences and public meetings on multiculturalism using violent methods, while they also attempted to prevent anti-fascist campaigners from distributing leaflets against the participation of the BNP in the local elections (Taylor, 2011). It is also important to note here that disruptive actions were a permanent feature of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain over the last 11 years. To be more precise, the minimum number of disruptions that has been documented in our dataset is 10 and happened in 2009. The remaining years, with the exception of 2016 which experienced 19 disruptions, has seen more than 20 events per year.

Moreover, another interesting statistic about the actions of the British far-right is that targeted attacks against political opponents have continued consistently throughout the whole period. On 6 July 2012, activists associated with several far-right groups, among others the North West Infidels, National Front, and the English Defence Force, engaged in a violent incident against anti-fascists who were on their way to a fundraising gig (Stewart, 2013). In April 2015, Labour campaigners who were canvassing in Broadstairs were intimidated by a group of far-right sympathisers – who were believed to belong to the EDL’s splinter group South East Alliance (Francis, 2015), while more recently on 13 January 2018, the White Pendragons disrupted the speech of London’s Mayor, Sadiq Khan, at the annual conference of the Fabian Society, a Labour-affiliated think tank (Raw, 2018). In August of the same year, supporters of Make Britain Great Again, a far-right group supporting US President Donald Trump, threatened staff at the left-wing bookshop “Bookmarks” in Central London (*State of Hate 2019: People vs the Elite*, 2019). Indicative of how the far-right sees some political opponents is the next paragraph taken from a British Freedom Party blog (original text):

The Met treated the EDL patriots like wild animals and allowed the islamic/commie scumbags within 6-12 ft of the EDL marchers. Bricks, bottles, firecrackers and wood rained down on the EDL. The RMT even instructed train drivers to refuse EDL members from travelling on their trains. These union members should get on with doing their jobs and stop trying to dictate marxist agendas to the rest of us. The EDL are not troublemakers they are only trying to peacefully protest and bring subjects to light that politicians shy away from. The main source of violence and mayhem always comes from the same suspects..... the left wing unwashed tramps of the UAF. The fact these scumbags continually get away with attacking EDL

demonstrations leads me to believe they are state sponsored (*How EDL Myths Are Created*, 2013, para. 17).

It is noteworthy to mention that 101 of all identified disruptive actions – approximately 35% – concern actions against political opponents. This finding is not surprising however; in a recent report that looks into far-right violence and terrorism in Western Europe, Ravndal et al. (2020, p. 14) conclude that for all non-fatal events during 2019 “political opponents were the second most frequently targeted group, with a majority of events targeting left-wing and anti-fascist activists.” Another interesting statistic is associated with the levels of violence when analysing disruptions against political opponents. In almost one in three cases, i.e. 33.66%, the far-right deployed light or heavy forms of violence. Although the most frequent reasons of mobilisation, either targets or issues, are motivated by anti-Islam sentiments as we will explain in more detail later, it becomes clearer in this section that the far-right should not be treated solely as a single-issue movement.

However, the tactical choices of the far-right are not limited to demonstrations or disruptive actions, but also take the form of reaction to protest activities organised by minority groups and political opponents, as a counter-movement (Froio & Castelli Gattinara, 2015). Ennis (1987, p. 520) contends that “tactical choices are the essence of collective action;” they have their own meaning and purpose and can be constrained by the same external limits that also affect the overall levels of social mobilisation. The far-right, if viewed as a counter-movement, reveals therefore its intention to operate in arenas of collective action that other protest movements have selected first. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996, p. 1649) have hypothesised that “once a movement enters a particular venue, if there is the possibility of contest, an opposing movement is virtually forced to act in the same arena.” In the case of Great Britain, the far-

right has deployed this tactical response 85 times, of which 16 times involved violence; four events can be described as heavy violence and 12 events as light violence. However, these counter-demonstrations did not attract large crowds. Most events, i.e. 32, were attended by fewer than 20 people, while in 23 occasions there were approximately 21 to 50 participants. Only in eight counter-demonstrations there were more than 50 – but fewer than 100 – activists, and in 22 cases an approximate number of protest size could not be estimated. Moreover, far-right mobilisation was driven by multiple factors each time but they can be summarised into the six broad categories presented below:

Table 4: The far-right as counter-movement: reasons of mobilisation

Reasons of Mobilisation	Number of incidents
Against Asians/Muslims	3
Ultra-patriotism	5
Against immigrants/refugees	8
Against Islamic extremism/Sharia law/Islamic preachers etc.	12
Against pro-Palestinians/in solidarity with Israel	20
Against political opponents	37

Table 4 shows that actions directed against political opponents are the most frequent once again, while counter-demonstrations that show solidarity with Israel or their opposition to Palestinians come second. Although the former has also been analysed in previous paragraphs, it is important to note here

that in some occasions counter-demonstrations against political opponents were simultaneously an expression of support for other political groups that belong to the far-right family. Two indicative examples better illustrate the aforementioned observation. In October 2009, the appearance of the then BNP leader Nick Griffin on BBC's Question Time programme sparked a series of demonstrations by left-wing and anti-racist groups around the country that culminated in violent clashes between protesters and the police at the BBC headquarters on 22 October (Davies & Robinson, 2009). However, a few days earlier in the city of Southampton around 20 far-right members – believed to have links with the EDL – countered in a peaceful manner a static protest organised by Unite Against Fascism and trade unions representatives who were objecting the BBC's decision to invite Nick Griffin ('Anti-Fascist Protest Passes Peacefully', 2009). The second incident on 19 February 2011 involved the same protagonists; more than 50 EDL supporters descended on Barnsley to join a BNP stall and to oppose anti-fascist marchers before a by-election in the Barnsley Central ('Barnsley Protests as EDL Backs the BNP', 2011). Nevertheless, we should not neglect the fact that there are periods in time when far-right groups criticise each other and engage in dialectical battles publicly. For instance, the relationship between the EDL and the BNP has been problematic since the formation of the former; in one of the first EDL street demonstrations there were placards against the BNP that read "We are not the BNP and we are not racist" (Copsey, 2010, p. 12). In 2012, on the other hand, Nick Griffin in a speech he made to some BNP supporters described the EDL as "sinister" and "ultra-Zionist terrorist sympathisers" (Collins, 2012, para. 5).

Regarding protest actions against pro-Palestinians activists that can often be interpreted as protests in solidarity with Israel, most – 12 out of 20 – counter-demonstrations occurred in 2014 within two

months from July to September. The crisis in Palestine that started in July 2014 and saw more than 2000 people dead in the Gaza strip during the Israeli operations ('Gaza Crisis: Toll of Operations in Gaza', 2014), mobilised pro-Palestinians protesters, demanding the end of war. However, the EDL confronted them with the accusation of being supportive of Hamas and terrorists ('EDL Try to Attack Gaza Protestors in Portsmouth', 2014). The Anti-Fascist Network (2014) created a detailed chronology of far-right events for this period that were mainly attended by EDL members. To be more specific, three counter-protests happened in Newcastle, two in Middlesbrough and Portsmouth, and one counter-protest in Wakefield, Lincoln, Sunderland, Southampton, and Cardiff. All were poorly attended, and the maximum number of attendants did not exceed 20 people, while the most serious and violent incident took place in Wales in July. Pro-Palestinian marchers fought with racist abusers who interrupted the anti-war protest twice by throwing several objects, including glasses, chairs, and tables ('Chronology of Fascist Harassment of Pro-Palestine Demonstrations', 2014).

We should also mention that this short-lived episode of contention is a reminder of the diverse nature of the far-right (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018). For years, far-right groups were associated with anti-Jewish positions due to the legacy of post-war movements. We explained in previous chapters that the latter were still informed by ideologies based on biological racism and not cultural racism (Rydgren, 2007). In 2008, Davies and Jackson (2008) contended that anti-Semitism was still present in far-right narratives, either as a manifestation of their embedded racism or mechanism that was giving meaning to their conspiracy theories, e.g. with regard to the Holocaust. The BNP had adopted similar views with some members even declaring openly their hatred towards Jews (Copsey, 2007). The attempt of the BNP, however, to modernise and focus on the "clash of civilisations" between the West and Islam, also

led to the acceptance of some Jews and non-whites into its ranks (Copsey, 2007, p. 77). In addition to that, Jackson and Feldman (2011, p. 19) noted at the time that “in recent years the BNP too has tried to appeal to Sikh communities too.”

Moreover, the EDL also created a Jewish Division with the aim of dispelling doubts concerning their relationship with neo-Nazi ideologies (Richards, 2013). In 2015 and 2017, there were also reports that members of Britain First and pro-Israel groups attended anti-Palestinian political and cultural events; in the most recent demonstration, the groups congregated outside a conference in London organised by the Palestine solidarity group “Friends of Al-Aqsa” as the far-right claimed its aim was to promote terrorism (Winstanley, 2017). However, within the far-right family, the ideology of some groups is not always compatible with the approach that sees Jews as friends. For example, “it has been suggested that the EDL collapsed because of in-fighting and ‘factioning’ that created tension within the group and led to the formation of white supremacist splinter organisations such as the North-West Infidels” (Morrow & Meadowcroft, 2019, p. 553). To further expand on the activities of North West Infidels, they often protested together with the extreme right; Macklin (2018) mentions the Liverpool demonstration on 27 February 2016 that ended in violent clashes between the far-right, i.e. the National Action, North West Infidels, and Polish hooligans, with anti-fascists and led to 34 arrests (‘Arrests after North West Infidels and Anti-Fascist Groups Clash’, 2016; Docking, 2017). Besides that, they also allied with the National Front in Manchester and Preston in 2015 in so-called “white pride” and anti-immigrants protest events (*State of Hate 2015: Extremism in the UK and Europe*, 2016). In other words, this brief account of activities reveals the plurality of enemies the far-right constructs and how they change over time.

6.3 Who are the protagonists of protest events in Great Britain, and what are the reasons – either targets or issues – of far-right mobilisation?

6.3.1 Main protagonists of far-right mobilisation

It is well established in social movement theory that apart from structures, agency, i.e. the decisions and strategic choices of movement participants, also determines the evolution of collective action (Jasper, 2004). Caiani and Parenti (2013) point out that internal organisational factors should be accounted for, if our aim is to explain in a more holistic way the development but also the forms far-right mobilisation takes. While early conceptualisations of social movements approached them as being reactionary and irrational and they placed more emphasis on grievances, “resource mobilization models emphasized the significance of organizational bases, resource accumulation, and collective coordination for popular political actors” (McAdam et al., 2004, p. 15). Therefore, in the first part of this section, we analyse the protagonists of far-right mobilisation, so that we better understand the composition of protest politics in Great Britain over the last 11 years.

From 2009-2019, there were 131 different far-right actors that organised at least one protest event in Great Britain. We should note that we focus here only on these social movement actors that appear to have organised the protest event. As is often the case, more than one protest groups take part in a protest. This is the reason why in the methodology chapter we explained that the maximum number of social movement actors we code is three. However, since the news media fail to report consistently the names of all groups that participate in protest events, we have decided to analyse in this section only the primary social movement organisations. In addition to that, it is not always clear which groups have

organised the protest despite the fact that the newspaper article makes reference to the names of the groups. In these cases, we have used the generic categories Racists and Neo-Nazis, so that at least we can capture the ideological orientation of the participating actors. These two generic categories are also used when the only information we have available is a description of their world-views or actions. For example, in a “Free Tommy Robinson” march in London on 24 August 2019 that was called after the ex-leader of the EDL was sent to prison for contempt of court, hundreds of his supporters gathered to demand his release (Tanno, 2019). Since the newspaper article did not mention explicitly the names of the protest groups that participated, we used the category “Racists.”

Having said that, the most active far-right groups with more than 50 protest actions are the following:

Table 5: Number of protest events by group: all action forms

Protest Groups	Number of Protest Events
Racists	667
EDL	528
Neo-Nazis	203
Britain First	120
BNP	94
National Front	57
Yellow Vests	56
Scottish Defence League	53

If we exclude the generic categories “Racists” and “Neo-Nazis”, the above Table shows clearly that the EDL is the most important and successful far-right group in terms of total numbers of protest events that have been organised in Great Britain in the period under analysis. Another far-right group that has been involved in more than 100 actions is Britain First, whereas more than 50 protests have also been initiated by the BNP, National Front, Yellow Vests, and the Scottish Defence League. Nevertheless, we should clarify that Table 5 also includes actions that are likely to have been the product of individuals as it consists of all forms of protest, such as instances of symbolic violence or physical violence. It is interesting therefore to see whether the aforementioned groups are the most successful when our focus turns to street demonstrations, i.e. actions that take place at the meso-level.

Table 6: Number of protest events by group: focus on meso-level analysis, table adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 12)

Protest Groups	Number of Protest Events
EDL	453
Britain First	115
Racists	104
BNP	75
Yellow Vests	56
Scottish Defence League	51

Even if we focus on the meso or group level, from Table 6, we can observe that the EDL remains the most successful and prominent group in the last decade. By setting the number 50 as the lowest limit

for classifying a political group as successful in this section, the other far-right groups that have been rather active are Britain First with 115 actions, the BNP with 75 actions, Yellow Vests, and the Scottish Defence League with 56 and 51 actions respectively. The last step involves the examination of the most important groups if the protest size exceeds 100 participants. The latter is also an indicator of the ability of a protest group to inflict change and challenge authorities, since protest size matters (Biggs, 2016).

Table 7: Number of protest events by group: focus on meso-level analysis (at least 101 protesters), table adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 13)

Protest Groups	Number of Protest Events
EDL	114
Racists	14
Britain First	9
National Front	7
DFLA	7
March For England	6
Justice for Chelsea	5

Undoubtedly, there is a stark difference between the EDL and all the other far-right protest groups in Great Britain. The former has carried out more than 100 street demonstrations that involved at least 101 participants, while the total number of the other groups does not even approach EDL's numbers. Again, this should not be viewed as the only criterion of a group's success or as the only criterion of a group's – potential – impact on governmental decisions or even community relations. For example, in a recent

report, it has been found that direct and indirect experiences of hate crimes, which is also an aspect of far-right mobilisation, have a negative impact on people's life because they affect the way individuals perceive their reality and position in society by creating "increased feelings of vulnerability, anxiety, anger, and sometimes shame" (*Hate Crime: Cause and Effect. A Research Synthesis*, 2018, p. 6).

6.3.2 Main reasons of far-right mobilisation

In this section, we analyse the reasons, i.e. targets and issues, that have driven far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. We have decided to combine the targets and issues of far-right groups as it is often difficult to distinguish these two when relying on news media accounts. This challenge becomes apparent, more specifically, when we collect information on incidents that involve physical violence and criminal damage. In these cases, we often know the identity of the victim only or the symbolic value a building may have, and as a result our inferences are based on these limited features of the object of the protest.

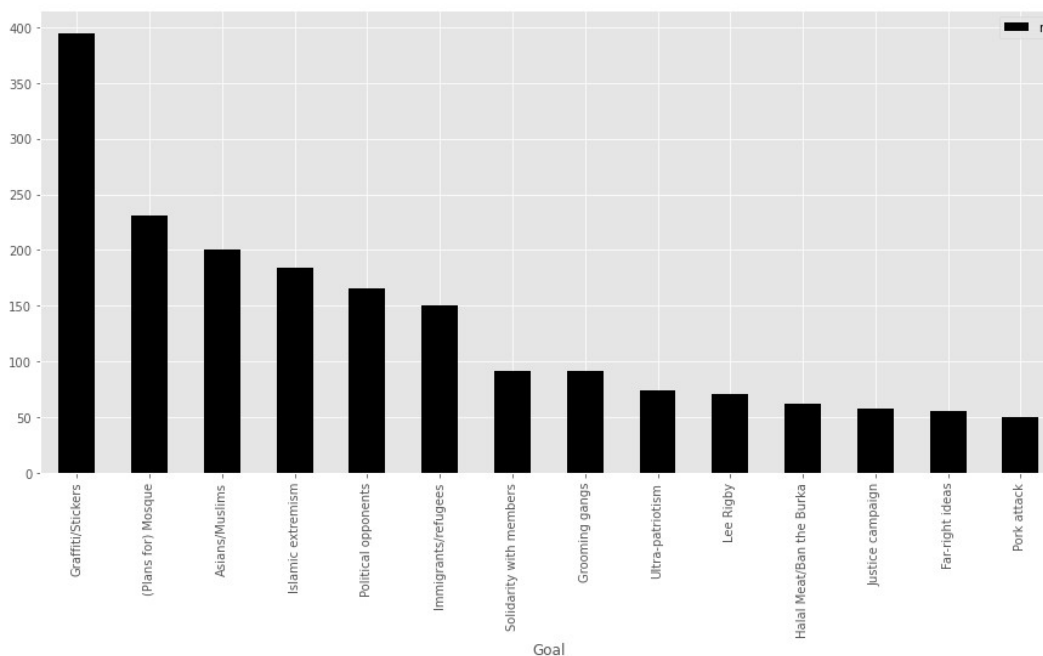


Figure 10: Main reasons of far-right mobilisation

Figure 10, which presents all reasons that have appeared at least 50 times in public space, confirms to some extent previous understandings of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain. If we exclude the first category, i.e. manifestations of racism in public areas as expressed through graffiti, stickers, or posters, we can see that the majority of protest actions since 2009 have been motivated by the idea that Islam and Muslims are not compatible with the British culture and way of life. Besides, questions about Islam and the role of Muslims in society constitute the basis of several research projects that focus on Great Britain as a case study (e.g. see Carter, 2020; Macklin & Busher, 2015).

According to our dataset, the Muslim population has been, either directly or indirectly, targeted in 1002 occasions, which translates to 45.75% of all recorded cases. Indirect targeting includes, for instance, the street demonstrations that have been organised by the far-right after the murder of Lee Rigby. Although

the main reason was to pay tribute to the memory of the British soldier, protests were accompanied by anti-Islam claims, since “problematic” Muslims were to blame for the terrorist attacks. Kassimeris and Jackson (2015b, para. 4) put it eloquently in their analysis on the EDL discourse: “By representing Muslims as uniquely problematic within Britain, explaining this behaviour as the product of ‘Islamic ideology’ and demanding nothing less than total reform of the religion, EDL discourse constructs opposing and antithetical ‘British’ and ‘Muslim’ subjects.” Actions against pro-Palestinians activists could also be included in this category because the underpinning reason of mobilisation targets again Muslims as is often the case, for instance, at the Al Quds Day in London, which takes place on an annual basis in order to show solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine (Taylor, 2009). On the other hand, Muslims become direct targets when protests focus on new (plans for) mosques and Islamic Centres, the threat of Islamification of the United Kingdom, or when the aim of protests is to desecrate the holy places and books of Muslims, e.g. through pork attacks.

Beyond Islam and Muslims, the protest actions of the British far-right have also turned against political opponents but also migrants and refugees, 166 and 150 times respectively. We should point out here that when the far-right targets political opponents in the period of analysis, the most frequent form their protest takes (or the level of its radicalism) can be described as confrontational, and more specifically in 69 occasions, while light and heavy violence combined appears 55 times (34 for heavy violence and 21 for light violence). Demonstrative actions, on the other hand, have been carried out 42 times. If we conduct the same analysis for the category “immigrants/refugees,” the dataset reveals that 68 times the far-right engaged in demonstrative actions, while the number of violent actions increased to 70 (63 incidents of heavy violence and 7 incidents of light violence). This is not surprising because many

instances of everyday racism and violence target minority groups, such as migrants and refugees. For example, in their report on far-right terrorism and violence, Ravndal et al. (2020) find that migrants, foreigners, and refugees are the groups that become a target most frequently. Confrontational tactics have been used only 12 times and took the form of disruption and intimidation, political stunts, patrols, or suspicious packages.

Two further categories that need more attention are actions that intend to show solidarity with a far-right member or sympathiser and actions labelled as “ultra-patriotism” which aim to express allegiance to ideals of the Nation. To be more precise, the dataset maps 92 protest events in solidarity with far-right members and 74 ultra-patriotism protests. The former involves examples such as demonstrations demanding the release of Tommy Robinson. Only in 2018 and 2019, for instance, his supporters took to the streets 31 times to oppose the authorities’ handling of Tommy Robinson’s case. Even in previous years, however, this type of protests were common (see Table 8). Most happened the last two years of the period under analysis, but according to the data also in 2010 and 2011 there were several solidarity events. Focusing on 2010, for example, the largest solidarity events that year took place in the City of Westminster in March and November. In the first instance, around 200 EDL members demonstrated in support of the Dutch far-right politician Geert Wilders, who was visiting England to show his anti-Islam film (‘Dutch MP Geert Wilders’ Anti-Islam Film Sparks Protests’, 2010). The second protest on 8 November involved more than 100 BNP members demonstrating outside the Royal Courts of Justice. It was the period that the BNP had been accused of discriminatory policies because the party did not accept and provide membership to non-whites (‘High Court Reserves Judgement in BNP Membership Case’, 2010).

Table 8: Far-right solidarity events

Year	Number of Events
2009	5
2010	13
2011	11
2012	8
2013	1
2014	5
2015	4
2016	3
2017	3
2018	21
2019	18

Looking at the category “ultra-patriotism” events now, the far-right organised at least one protest every year with the most taking place in 2010, 2011, and 2012. These years there were 15, 10, and 14 events respectively. All the remaining years, there were no more than seven ultra-patriotism events. To give some examples from this period, in September 2010 the far-right gathered in Nuneaton twice, Glasgow, and Liverpool in order to support the British troops. Besides, this was the month, according to media reports of the time, that the BNP had been accused of hijacking the anti-war movement by asking the

government to bring the British troops home from the war in Afghanistan (Hamill, 2010). Two months later in November 2010, the far-right, and more specifically the EDL twice, the National Front, and the BNP organised another four ultra-patriotism protests. We should explain that every year National Front members march in London on Remembrance Day in November in order to pay respect to the heroes of the British Nation. In 2011, the country also experienced four instances of this type of demonstrations within the same month. The riots that broke out in August urged EDL members to defend the streets by organising vigilante groups in several Boroughs in London and Cambridge. Finally, another interesting ultra-patriotism campaign in October 2012, according to information provided by anti-fascists, saw the “Support the 5” group to appear in Liverpool, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Norwich in order to express their solidarity with the five British Marines who had been charged with murder (*Old New Tactics From The Fragmented Right*, 2012).

The above examples show that the British far-right, especially if the media agenda and public discourse change, mobilise on other issues too, deviating from an explicit focus on the threats posed by Islam and the Islamification of Western culture. Besides, Koopmans and Olzak (2004, p. 218), who studied the relationship between targets and discursive opportunities, contend that “shifts across targeted groups were systematically related to the differential discursive opportunities open to the radical right.” Hence, and as mentioned before, the scholars focusing on the far-right should probably avoid characterising it as counter-Jihad or anti-immigrant, since targets and issues of mobilisation tend to change (Jackson, 2018).

6.4 The presence and role of counter-movements in far-right mobilisation

In Chapter 3, we discussed in more detail the presence of counter-movements in far-right mobilisation, how they develop protest strategies, how they learn from interactions with their adversaries (Oliver & Myers, 2003), and how they depend on “the availability of political opportunities as their adversaries” (Koopmans, 2004, p. 27). In the context of far-right mobilisation, previous studies have highlighted the role of counter-movements, since the activities of far-right groups and individuals do not take place in a vacuum (Caiani et al., 2012). Taking into consideration the evolution of far-right politics since the end of the Second World War, the racist and exclusionary rhetoric of far-right actors as well as their often violent behaviour, it should not be surprising that different categories of people have reacted – fiercely sometimes – to their protest actions. In Great Britain, counter-protests happen on a consistent basis, and this is one of the reasons why it is interesting to analyse in this section their characteristics.

Counter-movements can be divided into the following broad categories: 1) dedicated anti-fascist groups such as the Unite Against Fascism and Stand up to Racism 2) trade unions, 3) political parties, 4) faith groups, and 5) community groups. Although they do not organise protest events only on the same day as far-right protests, the dataset has paid particular emphasis on simultaneous far-right demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. In the methodology chapter, we have explained this logic; since there are numerous groups that oppose the far-right it would not be possible to code their actions exhaustively and consistently over time, given the time constraints of this PhD project. However, we should present here some examples that show the strengths of the anti-far-right movement as well as its ability to attract large numbers of people even if the main reason of mobilisation is not to challenge and oppose directly a far-right protest. To begin with, every year in March, thousands of people parade in London,

Cardiff, and Glasgow to mark the United Nations Anti-Racism Day and celebrate multi-culturalism. Except for that, on 6 November 2010 Unite Against Fascism co-organised with Love Music Hate Racism a rally and march in London with the aim of raising concerns about the activities of the EDL, which was on the rise, and about the far-right more generally; several thousands of people attended the event to send a message of love and living together (Marshall, 2010). On 12 September 2015, refugee campaigners and anti-racists in several European countries, including England, demonstrated massively in solidarity with refugees. In London, tens of thousands of people marched through the streets to make their voices heard that they stand against the ongoing refugee crisis. The Guardian reported, more specifically, that around 100000 people staged a protest that day (Khomami & Johnston, 2015; Slawson, 2016); numbers that the far-right has not been able to muster during the last decade. It would be an omission not to mention that the anti-racist movement has also utilised a variety of different actions to oppose far-right plans. For instance, in July 2009, the anti-fascist organisation Hope Not Hate asked the British people to support and sign a petition against the BNP and the election of its members in the European Parliament. More than 85000 people signed, sending a strong message that the party does not represent the majority of the British population ('Join Thousands Signing Anti-BNP Petition', 2012). Finally, in more recent years, the anti-racist movement started to exert pressure on so-called "tech giants" to ban far-right groups and individuals from using their services. In 2018, more than 60000 people achieved a victory against Tommy Robinson, who was prohibited from using the online payment processor PayPal for his transactions (Lownsborough, 2018).

Having said that, there have been organised 653 counter-demonstrations in Great Britain from 2009 to 2019. Most counter-events concern actions that directly oppose far-right street protests; according to

the dataset, in 445 occasions opposition groups have reacted to a far-right protest. The majority of these counter-mobilisations, i.e. 409 events in total, were peaceful and did not result in violence. However, in 23 cases, extended levels of violence were observed. For example, the first two months of 2016, Dover initially and one month later Liverpool saw counter-protesters to fight fiercely with their opponents; in Dover on 30 January, several far-right groups, including the National Front and South East Alliance, hurled missiles at anti-fascists who responded in the same way (Lennon, 2017). On 27 February, the same pattern of violence repeated itself in Liverpool this time, as we explained before when discussing the activities of the North West Infidels. If we look at counter-demonstrations before 2016, there have been recorded several violent encounters where the anti-far-right movement has participated. In 2014, more than 1000 anti-racists confronted 150 members of the March For England group in Brighton. Although there was a strong police presence, local media reported that small groups of demonstrators fought each other in various part of the city (James, 2014).

All these examples are presented here in order to show that violence is likely to escalate beyond the control of the police at the site of protest if authorities are not well prepared. This is important because social movement theory has suggested in the past that street battles with adversaries have the tendency to radicalise protest repertoires, to justify violence in the, and to create an atmosphere of revenge between movements (Della Porta, 2014). Related to the latter, Busher (2015b) argues that it is not only the impact of far-right ideas on activists' understanding of social reality, it is also the "lived experiences" that play a vital role. Therefore, outbursts of violence between opposing groups should be viewed through the "socialisation to violence" (Della Porta, 2014) prism and its consequences for society. Besides, in an earlier paper on violence during cycles of protest, Della Porta and Tarrow (1986,

p. 622) contend that violence is more likely to happen when “opposing ideological groups meet.” The interactions between the far-right and anti-racist groups are ideologically different and compete over ideas about fundamental human rights and values and also conceptions of the Nation.

Another statistic of interest is the number of protest actions that anti-racist groups organise against conventional far-right events, such as conferences or public meetings. In the period under analysis, the dataset has mapped 208 actions. These include the so-called “milkshake protests” in 2019 that targeted far-right politicians before the European Parliament election, actions that aim to disrupt or intimidate political opponents, such as the case in Leigh in March 2009 when a BNP member was attacked with a hammer (‘BNP Member Attacked with Hammer’, 2009), and also brawls between opposing groups, e.g. between Generation Identity members and anti-fascists in Sevenoaks in April 2018 (Mulligan, 2019). In other words, the British case shows that if the far-right is perceived as a threat by opposition groups, counter-protests constitute a permanent feature of far-right mobilisation. We should also add that within the anti-far-right movement there have been developed different voices over the years about the most effective approach to counter the rise and impact of the far-right; whereas some argue that ignorance may be a good strategy, others believe that far-right groups should be confronted before they create a toxic social and political environment (Shifrin & Smith, 2017).

Finally, another aspect we should focus on is the number of arrests when the far-right and its opposition met on the streets. Since we could not retrieve information separately on each protest group the graphs below show the number of arrests when the far-right demonstrates opposed and unopposed. In Bolton, for instance, the majority of arrests came from the anti-fascist camp (Copsey, 2010). In addition, there are cases where the number of arrests increased after the police continued the investigations for several

days identifying more suspects, e.g. after a violent EDL protest in Walsall in 2012, the police launched an investigation that lasted more than one year ('EDL Supporters Are Jailed for Walsall Violence', 2013). We have decided therefore to focus only on arrests that happen on the same day a demonstration takes place.

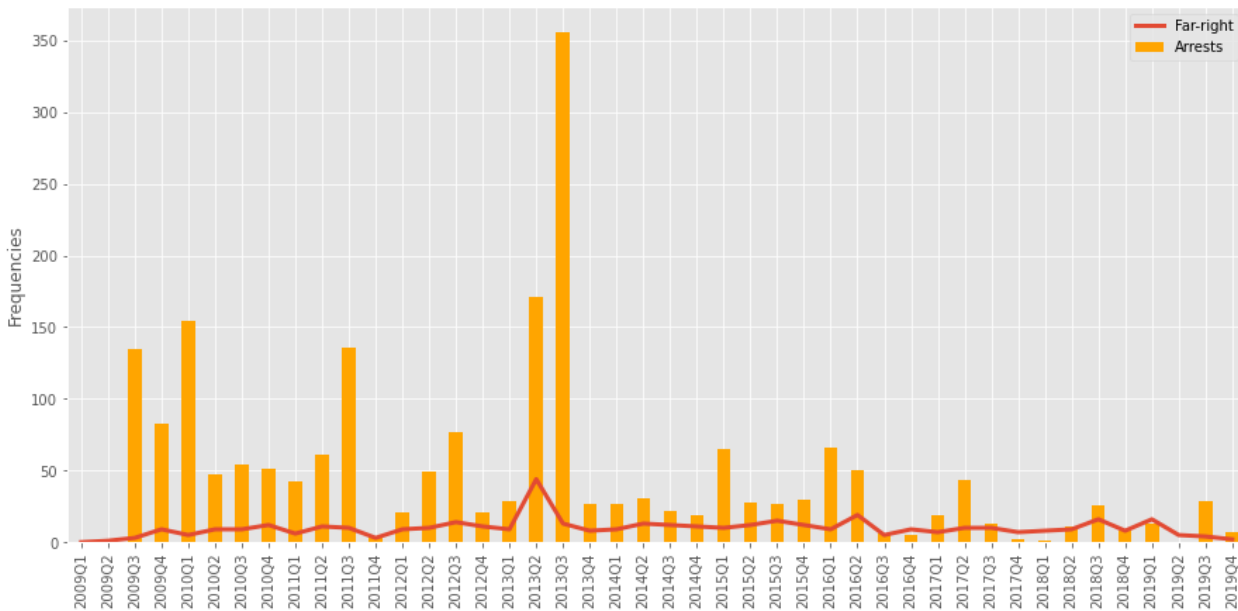


Figure 11: Arrests and far-right demonstrations: opposed, figure adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 19)

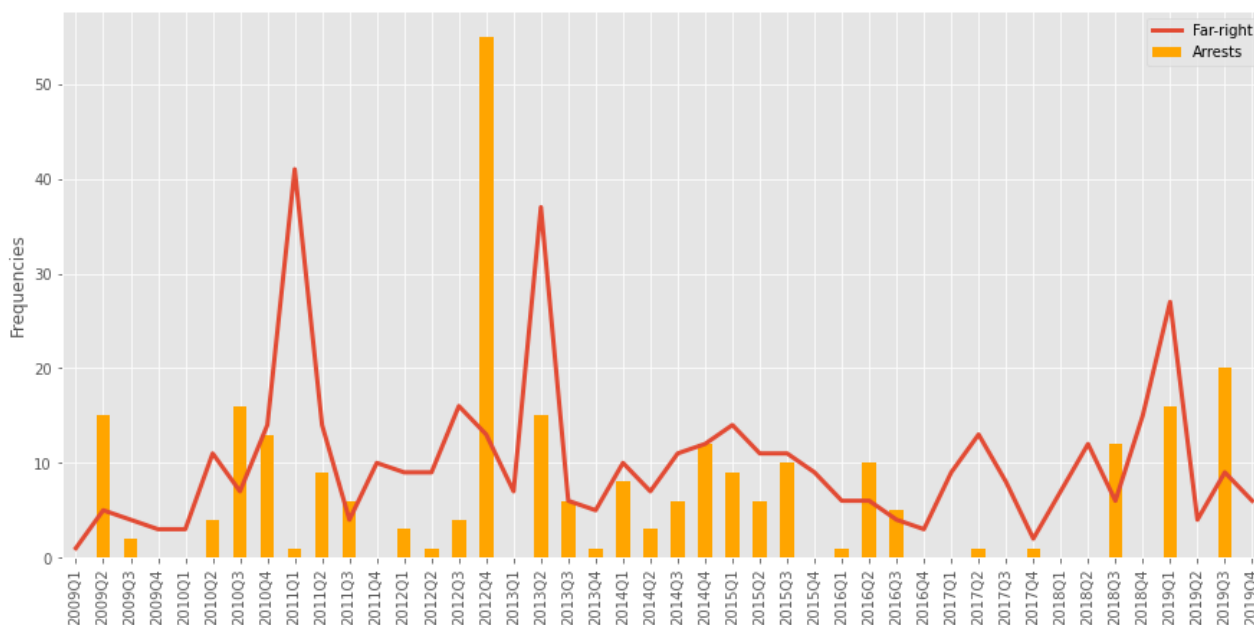


Figure 12: Arrests and far-right demonstrations: unopposed, figure adapted from Allchorn and Dafnos (2020, p. 19)

The above two graphs present the number of arrests when the far-right organises two types of protests, i.e. street demonstrations and vigils. It is clear from these two graphs that most arrests occur when the far-right meets opposition on the streets. In Figure 12, we can see that there are no quarters in the period under analysis with more than 20 arrests, except the fourth quarter of 2012 (Allchorn & Dafnos, 2020). This outlier refers to an incident where 53 EDL members were arrested moments before a flash protest took place outside a mosque in East London (Hough, 2012). On the other hand, Figure 11 shows several quarters with more than 50 arrests, and even with more than 100 arrests from 2009 to 2013. The protest event that led to 300 arrests in a single day was another EDL demonstration in Central London in September 2013, four months after the death of Lee Rigby; we should note that most arrests, however, were for counter-demonstrators (Jivanda, 2013). Overall, how to police far-right street

protests is a topic that lies beyond the scope of this thesis, but we should highlight what previous research on the EDL's handling suggests: "a more low-key, consensual style of policing and a less confrontational style of anti-fascist activism would help ameliorate the potentially disorderly effects of" far-right demonstrations (Allchorn, 2016, p. 20).

6.5 Far-right violence and terrorism

In September 2019, the UK head of counter-terrorism, Neil Basu, said that the terror threats emanating from far-right extremism constitute the fastest growing problem in the country; in a period of two years from 2017 to 2019, seven of the 22 terror plots that have been foiled can be attributed to the far-right ideology ('Fastest-Growing UK Terror Threat "from Far-Right"', 2019). According to the 2019 Global Terrorism Index report, the number of far-right terrorist incidents, although it remains low compared to other types of terrorism such as far-left or Islamist, has increased by 320% in the last five years in the West, i.e. in Western Europe, North America, and Oceania (*Global Terrorism Index 2019: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism*, 2019). The discussion around far-right terrorism, its causes, and consequences has gained further attention after the attacks in New Zealand and Texas in 2019 (*Far-Right Attacks in the West Surge by 320 per Cent*, 2019).

Looking at the British case again, recent revelations by the Home Office that the number of far-right terrorist prisoners has increased from 33 to 40 in one year (Sabbagh, 2020b) provide further evidence that a substantial number of far-right actors have accepted violence as a viable means to achieve their political goals. This should be viewed along with another trend that seems to be taking place over the last years and concerns teenagers in the United Kingdom who are influenced by the extreme ideologies

of the far-right and plan as a result to carry out a terror attack (Johnson, 2020). Speaking in front of the Commons Home Affairs select committee in September 2020, Neil Basu stated that a growing number of young people are likely to be radicalised and groomed online and turn to violence (Hamilton, 2020). More specifically, in the first six months of 2019, “17 children under the age of 18 were arrested on suspicion of terror offences” (Dearden, 2020c, para. 7). The British government has taken more drastic measures in 2020 by proscribing two neo-Nazi groups, Sonnenkrieg Division and Feuerkrieg Division; the System Resistance Network, on the other hand, has been recognised as an alias of National Action (*Feuerkrieg Division (FKD) Proscribed as Terrorist Group*, 2020; *Neo-Nazi Group Sonnenkrieg Division Proscribed*, 2020).

Nevertheless, it is not only the threats coming from far-right terrorism. Hate crimes and casual racism that unfolds on a daily basis on the British streets is another phenomenon that cannot be neglected. The police in England and Wales records five different types of hate crimes: 1) race or ethnicity, 2) religion or beliefs, 3) sexual orientation, 4) disability, and 5) transgender identity. Although one would not expect all of these hates crimes to be committed by individuals or groups who are sympathetic to far-right ideas, the trends over the last five years reveal that the majority of hate crimes, i.e. 76%, were race hate crimes (*Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2018/19*, 2019). Again, it would be simplistic to assume that only the far-right is concerned with race and attacks minority groups based on this characteristic. However, since it is not always possible to know the exact ideological background of perpetrators, it is fair to assume that the exclusionary nature of far-right narratives and discourses, even when they are delivered by so-called “mainstream” politicians, contribute to the expansion of the aforementioned trends (*Tell MAMA Annual Report 2018: Normalising Hatred*, 2019).

One caveat that needs to be kept in mind when reading new statistics and reports about hate crimes and terrorism numbers relates to the amount of attention that the authorities and researchers decide to pay to the political phenomena of interest. To clarify the previous sentence, for years after the terrorist attacks in New York on 11 September 2001 by Al-Qaeda, the focus of researchers and policy-makers shifted predominantly to the “global war on terror” (Smith & Zeigler, 2017) as well as the threats that Islamists pose, leading to less understanding of other type of terrorist threats (Koehler, 2019). If this is the case, it is justified to assume that a consistent recording of far-right violence and terrorism would be limited in the years after the 2001 attacks, making therefore comparisons over time more challenging. For example, the increase in hate crimes over the last five years in England and Wales can also be explained due to “improvements in crime recording by the police” (*Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2018/19*, 2019, p. 1). This does not mean that trends cannot be discerned, or key findings be drawn, it is pointed out, however, in order to show that far-right violence could also have been present in previous years, albeit undetected. Another significant factor that has helped to identify incidents of far-right violence and radicalisation is the Internet. Although this medium has created opportunities for activists to network around the world with like-minded individuals and inspire actions, it has also provided the opportunity to the authorities and researchers to discover cells that could potentially plot or carry out an attack.

Having said that, the United Kingdom is amongst a group of countries, along with Sweden, Germany, Italy, Greece, and Spain that over the last years has experienced more incidents of far-right violence, including both fatal and non-fatal attacks (Ravndal et al., 2020); this trend repeats in 2019 with the United Kingdom being placed in the third place, after Germany and Italy. The findings of Ravndal et al.

(2020) show that all attacks were non-fatal. It is important to note that this report is based on a stricter definition of far-right violence. The logic has been explained in more detail in the methodology chapter because the present thesis follows the same approach, i.e. focus on more severe forms of far-right violence, including, for example, incidents that lead to death, hospitalisation, or terror plots. If one is more familiar with the British case study will note that this stricter definition, although it might increase coding consistency is likely to result in a limited number of relevant cases. For example, for 2019 the research of Ravndal et al. (2020) identified fewer than 20 far-right incidents. On the other hand, the Institute of Race Relations publishes a calendar of racism and resistance regularly, providing a list of incidents that could have been motivated by hate and racism. Tracing these reports over time, one would probably come to the conclusion that far-right ideas result in higher numbers of violence. The only limitation is that it is often difficult for researchers to determine whether or not violence is politically motivated or whether the perpetrators are inspired by the far-right, since sometimes there is a dearth of information in the descriptions of each incident.

Taking into consideration all the above, our research finds that far-right violence has been a consistent feature of far-right mobilisation in the period of analysis. There are different types of violence that we are looking at, namely:

- Arson/(fire)bomb attack
- Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives
- Physical violence against persons
- Politically motivated murder

- Suspicious packages/substances
- Symbolic violence
- Terror plot/attack
- Vandalism/criminal damage

In total, the dataset has mapped 919 incidents that could be classified as light or heavy violence. In some cases, e.g. when some suspicious packages are delivered to potential targets, there is no violence and the action might be better described as confrontational. However, since the number of these actions are low, i.e. nine, they have also been included in the aforementioned statistic. If we disaggregate them by year, most violent events have been recorded for 2016. The total number for this year is 119, while 2013 is the year that follows with 114 violent events. Another year that saw more than 100 incidents of violence is 2017 with 105 actions. 2014 is the year with the lowest record, 56.

If we focus on the most extreme and severe forms of violence, i.e. we exclude the categories symbolic violence, suspicious packages, and vandalism, we obtain the following results (370 in total):

Table 9: Far-right violent events

Year	Number of Far-Right Violent Events
2009	41
2010	36
2011	22
2012	28

2013	46
2014	30
2015	30
2016	40
2017	40
2018	30
2019	27

From the above Table, it would be misleading to conclude that there is a downward trend in terms of far-right violence and terror in Great Britain, which would be in contrast to recent reports. The only reliable inference one could draw is that far-right violence is present throughout the whole period of analysis. The difference between the lowest and highest number of incidents that we have retrieved from news media is only 24 incidents. Small changes in the coding decisions, for instance, could have yielded a slightly different picture. Therefore, it is safe to assume in this section that far-right violence constitutes a constant threat that needs to be continuously reassessed and addressed because it can lead to community tensions and feelings of unsafety.

Finally, we present six indicative examples of far-right violence that took place since 2009 and have not been mentioned previously in this thesis (e.g. the Mold attack by a National Action member or the attack against Labour MP Jo Cox), so that the reader can understand the nature of violence as has been unfolded in the period under examination:

1. In 2009, the police arrested Michael Heaton and Trevor Hannington who were members of the neo-Nazi group Aryan Strike Force. The aim of the group was to destroy and eradicate ethnic minorities in Britain. The police found a collection of weapons at their homes, including knives, nunchucks, batons, and a BB machine gun ('Neo-Nazis Jailed over Anti-Jewish Internet Posts', 2010).
2. One year later, in December 2010, David Folley, a BNP supporter who had also in his possession a swastika-embossed dagger and a collection of other weapons, murdered Inderjit Singh by slashing his throat. At court, Folley said to jurors "I believe you should put British people first," showing in this way the main motivation of his violent crime ('BNP Supporter with Swastika-Embossed Dagger Jailed for Life after Slashing Indian Man's Throat on Christmas Night', 2012, para. 10).
3. In 2012, another murder by far-right sympathisers happened in Stoke-on-Trent. Lee Shaw killed Dalbagh Singh Malhi, stabbing the victim several times and hurling racist abuse. According to the police, this was an unprovoked attack; Shaw was sentenced to prison (Traynor, 2013).
4. In 2014, two schoolboys from Tyneside were discussing a terror attack against targets, including the "Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, a local school, and Eldon Square" (Kennedy, 2015, para. 1). Their plans were intercepted after the mum of one of the young boys found unknown substances in his room. In the material confiscated by the police, there were notes that showed hatred against Jews and Black people.

5. The arrest of Peter Morgan in July 2017 is a case of far-right violence that recently made the news. Morgan's actions were driven by far-right, and more specifically neo-Nazi ideology. His plan that could be catastrophic, according to experts, had already been put in action. The police found in his home in Edinburgh instructions on how to make bombs as well as evidence that he had already started to assemble an improvise bomb (Carrell, 2018).
6. The last example we will be looking at here that is also the last incident recorded in the dataset occurred in 2019. Filip Golon Bednarczyk, a Luton-based Polish national, had developed hatred for Muslims, Jews, and homosexuals. The police search found "handwritten notes, electrical component parts and a 2kg bag of sulphur powder" (Dearden, 2020a, para. 19). He had also downloaded a copy of the attacker at Christchurch mosques in New Zealand.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter thoroughly discussed several features of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain in the last 11 years, i.e. 2009-2019. The discussion was based on actions that take place at the meso-level but also protest actions that are likely to have been initiated by solo-actors. We highlighted the fact that most academic studies have focused on the analysis of specific case studies, whereas in the present thesis we decided to follow a different approach and shed light on the whole movement sector. In doing so, we were able to delineate the characteristics of protest during one of the most active periods for the British far-right movement in the history of the country.

The data revealed that far-right actors have remained rather active in the period under study (see Figure 4), with the total number of actions being 2190, while more than 100 groups appear to have initiated at

a minimum one protest event. More specifically, by disaggregating the data by type of protest action, we saw that the far-right organised in total 874 demonstrative events, 232 confrontational events, and 1084 violent events (538 events belonged to the “heavy violence” category and 546 events to the “light violence” category). This finding led us to the conclusion that violence constituted a constant feature of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain.

Moreover, another interesting finding that emerged from our analysis in this chapter (which is also in line with previous studies on far-right protests) is the realisation that the majority of far-right street demonstrations have attracted small numbers of participants. In total, only 55 demonstrations managed to convince more than 501 people to take to the streets. The exemptions were the initial mobilisations of the EDL, the reactions to the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013, as well as the massive mobilisations in 2017 and 2018. However, as we made clear in the chapter, protest size is not the only factor that can have an impact on local communities and their immediate environment. Even small protests but also violent events carried out by individuals have the ability to disturb social structures and the well-being of society.

In line with the above, we also saw several far-right activists to plan and organise disruptive actions in the period under study. Our data showed that this type of protest action was a permanent feature of far-right mobilisation, with most years experiencing more than 20 events. Moreover, what stood out as an interesting finding was the target of these actions; we found that in 35% of all disruptive events the far-right targeted political opponents, while one third of these disruptions led to either light or heavy forms of violence. Political opponents were also the target of the far-right when the mobilisation of the latter

took the form of counter-demonstrations. Thus, these two findings remind us once again that it would be simplistic to treat the far-right as a single-issue movement.

Regarding the main protagonists of far-right protest (all action forms) in Great Britain, the EDL appears to be the most important and successful group (528 protest events in total), with Britain First being the second most successful group with more than 100 protests. The BNP, National Front, Yellow Vests, and the Scottish Defence League are also the groups that have organised more than 50 protests in the period 2009-2019. The difference between the EDL and all the other far-right groups becomes more apparent if we focus exclusively on protest actions that involved at least 101 participants. In this case, the EDL organised 114 events whereas the second most successful group, i.e. Britain First, only nine events.

Confirming previous understandings of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain, our research showed that issues related to Islam and Muslims were the main motivating factors of protest. In 1002 cases, the Muslim population was the target of protest actions by the far-right. Apart from that, the far-right also mobilised against political opponents, as explained previously, but also against migrants and refugees (166 and 150 times respectively). Less frequently, other motivating factors were actions in solidarity with other members or sympathisers as well as ultra-patriotism actions (e.g. in support of British troops returning from war zones or the Remembrance Day events).

We also paid particular attention to the mobilisation capacity of counter-movements (e.g. anti-fascist groups, trade unions, or faith groups) when the far-right organised protest events. The data showed that although the majority of counter-mobilisations did not lead to violence, in 23 cases there were extended levels of violence. This means, in other words, that authorities cannot remain vigilant and need to be

prepared, since violence can escalate if they are not well prepared. The interaction between the far-right with its opponents finally showed – as one would expect – that the number of arrests is higher when opposing groups meet on the streets.

The final topic of the present chapter turned its attention to far-right violence and terrorism. From the data we presented in previous pages, we can claim that far-right violence has been a constant threat in Great Britain during the last 11 years. Looking, for example, at the most extreme and severe forms of violence, the dataset mapped 370 events in total, with Great Britain to have experienced more than 20 incidents per year. We should reiterate, however, here that coding violent events and comparing them over time is a challenging task; researchers need to define clearly the unit of analysis and invest more time and effort in coding consistently its evolution and development.

In conclusion, chapters 5 and 6, in other words, introduced the ideological background and characteristics of far-right mobilisation to readers who might not be familiar with the the history and recent developments of this phenomenon in Great Britain. Equipped with this knowledge , in the next chapter our aim is to explain through time series analysis which factors have contributed to the development and decline of far-right mobilisation in the period 2009-2019. In essence, the next chapter intends to show how the social movement theories exemplified in Chapter 3 can help us understand the far-right movement in Great Britain.

Chapter 7. Regression analysis: time series counts

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this second analysis chapter is to present on the one hand the main hypotheses of this study and how they have been derived from theory, and on the other hand to explain quantitatively, and more specifically through quarterly times series, the main factors that have influenced the levels of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain over the last 11 years. So far, we have shown that far-right activists, either collectively or individually, have utilised an array of different protest tactics to express their grievances and demands. In the previous chapters, for example, we shed light on the most important goals, i.e. the issues and targets of far-right mobilisation, that have determined the decisions and actions of the far-right, while a number of references were also made to some highly symbolic (trigger) events, such as the confrontational demonstration by a small group of radical Islamists in March 2009 against a British soldiers parade in Luton that led to the formation of the EDL, the sex grooming scandal, and terrorist attacks, that generated high publicity for the far-right, opening the debate about whether it constitutes a major threat or what it can be done to effectively prevent its spread to broader segments of the British society. However, in order to better understand the reasons that push political actors to the protest arena we need to define a more comprehensive framework that can sketch a better description of far-right mobilisation. Therefore, in order to provide a convincing answer we will have to rely on the theoretical approaches that were discussed extensively in Chapter 3.

This chapter is therefore structured as follows: The first part focuses on the theoretical perspective of the thesis and the hypotheses that we derive from the latter. Next, we discuss measurement issues and

how we have operationalised the dependent and independent variables. The third part looks into the regression model that has been preferred in this thesis and enlists its advantages compared to other models that have been used in the past. In the fourth part, we present all the steps we followed in order to perform the statistical analysis, and in the last part we present the results while also discussing whether our theoretical expectations are being met.

7.2 Theory and hypotheses

The focus of Chapter 3 was on different types of theoretical explanations that have been identified in previous research, and we argued that these are grouped into two distinct but interrelated categories, labelled as the a) demand-side and b) supply-side explanations. We also included in a separate section the idea of reciprocal mobilisation between the far-right and opposition groups because this relationship has not been studied extensively in projects that use quantitative data and look at the interplay between the far-right and anti-far-right activists. In the British context, more specifically, the far-right has been viewed through the prism of cumulative extremism that involves the far-right and the actions of radical Islamists, e.g. terror attacks (Carter, 2020). Except for that, three studies that look into this idea of co-evolution in the United Kingdom, i.e. Bartlett and Birdwell (2013), Macklin and Busher (2015), and Carter (2020), take a different approach from the one we have adopted in this thesis, e.g. through a (qualitative) comparative historical analysis or through explanations that involve analysis of the online activities of groups as well as hate crime statistics. Since we have data for counter-mobilisations that have been initiated, for instance, by anti-fascists or community groups on the same day that the far-right has organised an event, we are in a position to present a different angle to this research problem.

Chapter 3 described the logic of each theoretical approach, providing examples of how scholars have used them in the existing literature. Our theoretical argument is based on the idea that macro-processes have led to dire economic conditions (on a personal or national level) and uncertainties, which are the basic propositions of the economic insecurity theory (Georgiadou et al., 2018). The so-called “losers of modernisation,” those who have not benefited from the transformations of society, are usually defined as the “unemployed people and unskilled workers threatened by unemployment in the near future” (Rydgren, 2007, p. 249). Moreover, changes in the migrant populations make the native population realise that their life is under threat and may be affected either by economic, cultural, or security threats (Arzheimer, 2018). The latter mechanisms are predicted by the ethnic group conflict theory but since it is not easy to untangle and separate their effects, we are more interested in explaining how the co-existence of native and non-native populations unfolds; in other words, is the far-right more likely to gain support if these demographic changes take place? The combination of these two theories constitute the mix of grievances we theorise here that creates a fertile ground of support for far-right groups. In addition, our theoretical perspective is supplemented with supply-side explanations that describe how the broader political context, i.e. the political opportunities structures that become available, determines levels of mobilisation. We have theorised that party competition and the negative coverage of Muslims and the religion of Islam by the media contributes in a positive way to far-right mobilisations. We have theoretical reasons to expect that this is the case. Giugni et al. (2005) argue that political competition is a political opportunity structure that shapes the extra-institutional activities of protest movements, with Koopmans and Olzak (2004) arguing that where there is more far-right violence there is competition between the main parties. Regarding the role of discursive opportunities, they have also been discussed in the work of Koopmans and Olzak (2004). Della Porta and Diani (2006, p. 220), in their discussion

on the role of discursive opportunities note rather convincingly that “control of the media and symbolic production therefore becomes both an essential premise for any attempt at political mobilization, and an autonomous source of conflict.” We expect that the negative framing of Muslims and the religion of Islam will be another determinant of far-right mobilisation. Finally, in order to see how the protest activities of opposition groups affect the decision of far-right activists to take to the streets, we also theorise that the interactions of the far-right with anti-far-right protesters will affect the former negatively, especially when there is a strong opposition. This means that in occasions where the far-right feels defeated, i.e. when its protest actions are outnumbered by its opponents, its members and supporters will be less inclined to participate in future campaigns. From the above therefore we can expect that

1. The activities of opposition groups will lead to lower levels of far-right mobilisation
2. Higher migration is expected to increase the levels of far-right mobilisation
3. Higher unemployment rates within the white population will lead to further support for the far-right movement
4. Strong competition between the main political parties will increase support for the far-right movement
5. Media attention to the Muslim question through negative frames will boost support for the far-right

However, before moving to the empirical analysis sections of this chapter, we should clarify here why we have decided to omit some explanations and variables from the regression model. In essence, we

expand on the reasons we discussed previously in Chapter 3. The main reason is that due to the design of this thesis there are limitations with regard to the theoretical arguments that can be of use. For example, although resources play an important role in the development and success of collective action (McCarthy and Zald (1977)), they cannot be taken into account if researchers focus on the actions of the movement as a whole; instead, studies that intend to analyse particular social movement organisations are better suited to measure and discuss the impact of this factor. Since our aim is to look at the majority of far-right groups in Great Britain, it makes more sense to consider only variables that reflect the macro-level activity of the far-right movement.

Another limitation that needs to be mentioned again here relates to the number of theoretical arguments and as a result independent variables that can be included in a regression model. It has been suggested that “it is best to keep the number of predictors around five per equation (ten cases per independent variable)” (Boutcher et al., 2017, p. 696), while for other scholars “a 5:1 ratio or even smaller may at times produce a well-fitted model” (Hilbe, 2014, pp. 52–53). In our case, the time period we intend to examine covers the years 2009-2019. The study is being conducted on a quarterly basis, as the British government does not provide monthly data on significant variables, such as migration, and this results in 44 time units. Therefore, we have included five independent variables and the auto-regressive term that captures the dynamic relationship of far-right protests over time (see section 7.4). This means that some variables, e.g. the interaction terms between migration and unemployment that measures the ethnic competition thesis (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004) or the influence of crime rates (Amengay & Stockemer, 2019), had to be excluded. Otherwise, the impact of some important variables, i.e. the usual suspects, would have been omitted from the analysis. The implications of this decision are further

discussed in the next paragraphs, where we describe how the dependent and independent variables have been conceptualised and operationalised.

7.3 Dependent and independent variables

7.3.1 Dependent variable: far-right mobilisation

As explained elsewhere, the present thesis is structured around the following question: what are the most important factors that help explain the mobilisation of the British far-right in the period 2009-2019? The main goal is to capture the changing dynamics of far-right protest action and explain its variation on a quarterly basis for the period 2009-2019. The challenge, however, is how to quantify protest. Scholars usually construct this variable by counting the total number of events per time unit, i.e. the frequency of events (Boutcher et al., 2017; Inclán, 2012; Karpantschhof & Mikkelsen, 2017). In a similar fashion, Bailey (2014, p. 74) states that “a decision was taken for this study to focus on the number of events reported, rather than the number of participants for each event, in order to provide a comparable measure of varying types of extra-parliamentary political protest events.” This could have also been the measure of far-right protest. However, our understanding of how far-right mobilisation unfolds might have been biased if we did not take into account the number of participants in a protest event. One might even argue that disruptiveness and duration of protest as two additional dimensions that characterise protest actions (Biggs, 2016) also impact protest processes and outcomes. For the dependent variable, we focus on the most basic dimension of protest, i.e. the event size. The reason is mainly practical because this variable has been coded more consistently than the levels of severity (or radicalism) variable. It is often hard to distinguish between demonstrative, confrontational, and violent events and applying this criterion consistently poses challenges. Regarding the duration criterion, the

dataset has mapped only a few events that last more than one day, and their inclusion would not alter the final results.

Therefore, instead of counting the total number of events per quarter, we have created a new composite variable based on how many people have taken part in some specific protest actions, namely: 1) brawls that break out between the far-right and opposing groups, 2) Christian patrols, Mosque invasions, and vigilante patrols, 3) counter-demonstrations, 4) demonstrations, and 5) disruptive events that usually aim to intimidate and confront the activities of political opponents. Here, we have excluded petitions or collections of signatures, web-hacking, political stunts, and politically motivated violence for two reasons. Firstly, it is questionable whether the practice of social movement scholars to lump together heterogeneous actions is meaningful (Biggs, 2016), since some of them require less risk or preparation time (see Chapter 6). For example, symbolic violence, either in the form of political graffiti or stickers, cannot compare with the potential risk that demonstrations or more confrontational actions may have. Secondly, if we had included collections of signatures, which tend to attract large numbers of people, the measure of far-right mobilisations would not have reflected protest dynamics as unfold on the streets, which are the main concern of this thesis.

Having said that, we have assigned different weights to the protest event data based on the following criteria (see Appendix A for the python code we used to transform the dependent variable): if the size of a far-right event is below 100 people, the weight equals 0. In this case, we count only one event. The same rule applies to protest events for which we have no information about the number of participants. The assumption we make is that journalists are more likely to report this information if a protest event is large enough. Applying the same logic to the next categories, for protest events that range between

101 and 500 participants, the weight is 0.1 and as a result the final value of the composite variable is 1.1, while for the range 501-1000 the weight is 0.2. Larger events that attract thousands of people but below the limit of 5000, the weight we assign is 0.3, and for the last category, i.e. more than 5000 demonstrators, the weight equals 0.4. The sum of weights, as one would expect, is 1. Table 10 below shows three indicative examples of the transformations of the variables:

Table 10: Composite variables

Number of Events	Protest Size	Weights	Composite Variable
1	21-50	0	$1 + 1*0 = 1$
1	101-300	0.1	$1 + 1*0.1 = 1.1$
1	1001-2000	0.3	$1 + 1*0.3 = 1.3$

The logic for the above transformations is simple. We assume that mobilisations that involve only a few people are not the same with mobilisations that involve hundreds of people. The difference becomes more obvious if we create a new variable that takes into account frequencies of protest events and their size. The weighting system is based on the familiarity of the author of this thesis with the British context, and more specifically with how anti-fascists often perceived far-right demonstrations. While, for example, protests with small groups of people were ridiculed, massive protests had the opposite effect on how they treated the far-right. Therefore, we attempted to devise the above system that will assign more “significance” to mobilisations when the protest size exceeds certain limits. Those were defined to be 100, 500, and 5000. We would not expect that a protest march with 2000 participants would be perceived by anti-far-right groups differently from a demonstration with 4000 participants.

However, if the protest march attracted 10000 demonstrators, the anti-far-right would frame far-right mobilisations in a different way.

However, when we aggregate the protest events by quarter, the composite variable includes decimal numbers. In this case, we round the numbers, so that we can use the variable in the R package `tscount` that will be analysed later; the package does not allow decimals because it analyses count time series. The main logic that drives this decision is that events with hundreds of participants are more important than events with only a few. We should also note here that some social movement scholars often count two events instead of one if, for instance, violence breaks out during demonstrations. Lorenzini et al. (2016, p. 8) state that “when part of a peaceful demonstration breaks off and turns violent, the change in action form signals that we should count two separate protest events.” Therefore, if our decision to assign weights to far-right events seems to inflate the actual number of protest events that have been recorded in the dataset, it should be recognised that this stems from our assumption that different dynamics underpin the evolution of far-right mobilisation. In the British context, this was often the case with anti-fascists claiming victories over the mobilisations by far-right groups. This can be shown through the descriptions of anti-fascists; for example, in 2012 the EDL had threatened to return to Walthamstow, after the September protest that was presented in Chapter 1, but fewer than 100 people attended the demonstration. On the other hand, around 1000 people opposed the far-right group with some of its political opponents claiming: “who would have believed it would be Walthamstow that stopped the EDL? But on 1 September we built the coffin that they climbed into and today we shut the lid” (‘Anti-Fascists Celebrate Victory in Waltham Forest over EDL Racists’, 2012, para. 9). Given that “ongoing strategic interactions of opposing movements and states are critical to social movement

outcomes and development, maintenance, and decline” (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2008), it is unrealistic to assume therefore that protest events of this magnitude would not have an impact on the decisions and future mobilisation of the far-right.

The above discussion should not lead to the – misleading – conclusion that small-scale protest events do not have an impact on their immediate environments. However, it leads to several questions that are not easy to answer in a single research project. More specifically, how do we define impact and how do we measure it? As we saw in the previous chapter, the far-right, over a time-span of 11 years, did not manage to organise many large-scale protest events. Does this mean that their demonstrations did not affect the perceptions and reactions of society? We know that not only were authorities forced to change their policing of protest (Allchorn, 2016), but that the occurrence of protest events had additionally an impact on the local economy and cost of policing. In a recent demonstration organised by Yorkshire Patriots in Dewsbury on 12 October 2019, the police spent more than £215000 and deployed more than 500 officers to make sure that it would end peacefully; it is interesting to note that only 50 members of the far-right group participated in the demonstration with counter-demonstrators to be present (Hirst, 2020). In the early years of EDL’s mobilisation, the police had spent millions of pounds to guard its protests (Talwar, 2013). Although large numbers of protesters are capable of sending strong messages of unity and determination that are likely to persuade authorities to accept their claims (Popovic & Miller, 2015), there are undoubtedly different types of impact that also need to be addressed and be the main object of the analysis. For this thesis, however, we examine the far-right, and more specifically the patterns of its mobilisation, as the dependent variable. Our research design would be different if the far-right was one of independent variables.

Having clarified that, we now turn to the values of the dependent variable. Table 11 shows the values before and after we assign weights to the dependent variable, and the distribution of far-right events is as follows:

Table 11: Values of dependent variable before and after assigning weights

Year Quarter	Number of Events: Before	Number of Events: After
2009 Q1	5	5
2009 Q2	13	13
2009 Q3	8	8
2009 Q4	14	15
2010 Q1	11	12
2010 Q2	31	32
2010 Q3	24	25
2010 Q4	32	34
2011 Q1	52	53
2011 Q2	39	40
2011 Q3	34	35
2011 Q4	24	25
2012 Q1	26	27
2012 Q2	27	28

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2012 Q3	35	36
2012 Q4	28	28
2013 Q1	27	27
2013 Q2	90	92
2013 Q3	26	27
2013 Q4	18	19
2014 Q1	34	35
2014 Q2	40	41
2014 Q3	46	47
2014 Q4	29	29
2015 Q1	35	36
2015 Q2	32	33
2015 Q3	31	32
2015 Q4	25	25
2016 Q1	23	23
2016 Q2	31	31
2016 Q3	14	14

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2016 Q4	15	15
2017 Q1	19	19
2017 Q2	36	38
2017 Q3	22	23
2017 Q4	9	10
2018 Q1	17	18
2018 Q2	27	29
2018 Q3	31	32
2018 Q4	32	33
2019 Q1	60	61
2019 Q2	19	19
2019 Q3	20	21
2019 Q4	8	8

We should note here that despite the fact that the differences between the two variables, i.e. before and after assigning weights, are not significant for the dependent variable, this is an important step that we had to follow. In the previous paragraphs, we stressed that the way that current studies conceptualise

mobilisation is problematic because they neglect to take into account the size of protest, which is an important factor that is likely to affect the future decisions of political actors. Since the present thesis introduces for the first time this new way of conceptualising and measuring far-right mobilisation (but also the mobilisation of opposition groups as we show below), we preferred to adopt a more conservative approach and use a weighting system whose values increase incrementally. Granted, we could have used different weighting procedures; however, since this topic has not been discussed extensively in the current literature, our aim was to start the debate on how to measure mobilisation more accurately.

7.3.2 Independent variables

A. Number of counter-protests

According to the reciprocal mobilisation thesis, we expect that the actions of counter-demonstrations will have an impact on the mobilisation of the far-right. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996) theorise this dynamic relationship through the proposition of 14 different forms mobilisation can take; this involves, for example, the organisational structures, tactics, or the venues of the conflict. Banaszak and Ondercin (2016) simplify the mechanisms that mediate this relationship, looking only at protest groups that react to the actions of their opposition groups or react to their successes. In this thesis, we focus on the reactions of protest groups to the actions of their political opponents. Although, previous research finds that this relationship is positive, i.e. the mobilisation of its opponents leads to further mobilisation of the protest movement (e.g. see Inclán, 2012; Karpantschhof & Mikkelsen, 2017), in our project, since we have conceptualised this relationship throughout the thesis in a different way, we expect a negative relationship and the reason is related to the fact that we account for protest size.

Therefore, in order to measure opposition, we follow the same approach as described previously and we assign weights based on the number of demonstrators. Again, we have excluded actions that might inflate the number of opposition events, while we also set another criterion that ensures that the variable has been coded consistently. To be more specific, we take into consideration only events that occur on the same day that far-right groups either demonstrate or participate in conventional events, such as conferences, public meetings, or festivals, i.e. activities that according to the codebook of the dataset do not constitute protest events and as a result are not added to the total number of far-right events. For example, an anti-fascist demonstration that took place in Birmingham in July 2009 one week after the EDL protested for the first time in the city (Dayani, 2009) is not counted as a counter-demonstration or an event of interest because it happens on a different date.

To further justify this decision, the first reason relates again to whether researchers are able to identify and code as accurately as possible events that capture the dynamics of counter-movements. According to a recently published report by the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (Richardson & Wasser, 2020, p. 65), the anti-fascist movement can be divided into two categories: 1) a broad category that refers to any movement that opposes far-right politics and 2) dedicated anti-fascist groups, such as the Unite Against Fascism, which are “typically based around organizing to physically confront radical right activists seeking to demonstrate in public, forcing them to demonstrate meekly or under police protection.” In the British context, a broader definition of anti-fascism would make more sense, since people with different backgrounds and ideological orientations have opposed the far-right over the last decade. Therefore, if we expand the unit of analysis with regards to counter-movements, it is almost impossible to document all the actions that occur against the ideology of far-right groups. In this case,

one would have to include anti-racist demonstrations, actions against deportations of refugees and migrants, and protests in support of minority rights, among others. Secondly, if we looked at the targets of counter-demonstrations organised by the far-right, it would also be relevant to map events that have been initiated by these groups that the far-right perceives as opponents. Far-right activists who have clashed with pro-Palestine groups at the annual Al Quds Day in London (Harpin, 2019) is a typical example because it shows that in many instances the far-right may target communities that have no relation to extremism and terrorism. Jews and Blacks as two historical categories that the far-right opposes and should also have been included in this expanded conceptualisation of opposition. Therefore, in order to overcome these limitations, we have decided to count only these counter-events that might be perceived as immediate threats by the far-right and are also more likely to be noticed by far-right actors the day they protest.

The distribution of opposition events before and after transforming this independent variable is: Table 2: Values of opposition before and after assigning weights

Table 12: Values of opposition before and after assigning weights

Year Quarter	Number of Events: Before	Number of Events: After
2009 Q1	4	6
2009 Q2	22	28
2009 Q3	8	13
2009 Q4	29	37
2010 Q1	9	10

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2010 Q2	19	26
2010 Q3	10	11
2010 Q4	15	16
2011 Q1	12	13
2011 Q2	13	14
2011 Q3	16	17
2011 Q4	6	8
2012 Q1	11	12
2012 Q2	12	13
2012 Q3	17	19
2012 Q4	12	14
2013 Q1	12	13
2013 Q2	52	55
2013 Q3	17	18
2013 Q4	14	16
2014 Q1	10	11
2014 Q2	21	25
2014 Q3	20	22

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2014 Q4	13	13
2015 Q1	14	16
2015 Q2	12	13
2015 Q3	16	18
2015 Q4	14	16
2016 Q1	12	14
2016 Q2	24	25
2016 Q3	8	9
2016 Q4	11	12
2017 Q1	13	19
2017 Q2	12	14
2017 Q3	12	15
2017 Q4	12	12
2018 Q1	11	14
2018 Q2	13	15
2018 Q3	18	19
2018 Q4	15	18

2019 Q1	19	20
2019 Q2	35	38
2019 Q3	4	4
2019 Q4	4	5

Unlike the transformation of the dependent variable, i.e. far-right mobilisation, we see from Table 12 that the changes in one of the main independent variables, i.e. the mobilisation of opposition, are more clear. This is important because it shows that far-right protesters, when they take to the streets, face the reactions of different social and political groups, and as a result the far-right needs to adjust strategies and decisions accordingly. In Chapter 6, we also highlighted the fact that the majority of far-right protests fail to attract large numbers of people, whereas opposition groups appear to be more successful in convincing people to support their cause. Thus, it should not be surprising that the transformation of the dependent variable differs from the transformation of the independent variable.

B. Migration

One of the demand-side explanations we are testing in this thesis is what we name “ethnic group conflict theory.” In Chapter 3, we explained that this theory involves different interpretations and it is not clear which exact mechanisms are taking place when looking at its effect on far-right support. Is it, for instance, cultural threats, economic threats, security threats, or their combination that matters the most when attempting to explain far-right mobilisation? Not only that, another question concerns the

nature of the non-native population, is it asylum seekers, non-European or European migrants (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018)?

Given the British context, we measure this theory using data on migration. Migration is one of the most tested – in a quantitative context – variables on support of far-right political parties. Amengay and Stockemer (2019) argue that this is not surprising, as their stance against migration, either through their rhetoric or through proposed policies, justifies the decision of researchers. As we already mentioned in previous chapters, the prevalence of the migration factor in studies focusing on the far-right is also seen in the tendency of academics, especially during the 1990s (Fennema, 1997), to even use the term “anti-immigrant parties” to label the far-right. Migration is not only utilised in research projects where far-right parties are the main unit of analysis, but also in studies that are concerned with other instances of far-right activity. For example, Koopmans and Olzak (2004) and Braun and Koopmans (2014) look at far-right violence in Germany, Braun (2011) studies racist violence in the Netherlands, and Boutcher et al. (2017) – as we already mentioned – explain far-right mobilisation in the US.

Having said that, our expectation is that increased levels of migrant populations will lead to increased far-right activity. Existing literature offers, however, conflicting results with regard to the relationship between far-right and migration. Cases where this relationship appears to be negative have also been found. The reasoning is that the continuous contact between natives and foreigners is likely to lead the former to positive dispositions towards the latter (Amengay & Stockemer, 2019).

In order to measure migration levels in Great Britain, we have relied on official statistics provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). ONS publishes data for the quarterly changes in migration patterns, and more specifically long-term international migration estimates for the United Kingdom.

The migrant population is further divided into EU and non-EU migration. In order to construct the migration variable, we added data for EU migrants to data for non-EU migrants. However, we should highlight two caveats at this point; the latest available data published in August 2020 cover only the last 40 quarters, i.e. they cover the period from the second quarter of 2010 until the first quarter of 2020, while estimates for the first and third quarter of 2009 are not available at all. To address the first shortcoming, we use previous migration reports and code each time the most updated estimates, whereas for the second shortcoming we have relied on the R package: `imputeTS` (see Appendix B for the R code), which performs time series imputation of missing values. To be more specific, we have used the `na_kalman` function. The creators of the package Moritz and Bartz-Beielstein (2017, p. 3) state that “in general, for most time series one algorithm out of `na_kalman`, `na_interpolation`, and `na_seadec` will yield the best results.” Alternatively, if we had focused on a different case study, we could have possibly used the number of asylum applicants. This statistic, which is more accurate than migration estimates, is provided by Eurostat and tracks monthly changes. However, for Great Britain this statistic does not seem to be appropriate; for instance, in 2018 only 5% of the total migrant population in the United Kingdom were asylum seekers (Sturge, 2019). According to the same report, “in 2018, 37,453 people applied for asylum. This number has been roughly constant over the past five years and is substantially lower than in 2002, when the number of applications peaked at 103,000” (Sturge, 2019, para. 7). Having clarified that, we also divide the values of this variable to reduce, similarly to Braun and Koopmans (2014), the number of digits, and we calculate their first difference so as to remove any trends that the time series may have. In other words, we have included in our time series model the quarterly change in the number of both EU and non-EU migrants residing in Great Britain.

C. Unemployment

Except for the ethnic group conflict theory, the second theoretical argument that we investigate for its impact on far-right mobilisation is the consequences of economic grievances or insecurity theory. In brief, economic miseries either on a personal or national level cause distress and make the far-right appealing to Western societies (Georgiadou et al., 2018). There are several ways to assess whether this theory is related to far-right support, among which stand out unemployment, Gross Domestic Product and income levels (Amengay & Stockemer, 2019).

In their meta-analysis of the most important structural factors for the rise and fall of far-right parties in Europe, Amengay and Stockemer (2019) identify unemployment as the second most tested independent variable for the socio-economic dimension of grievances. Whether unemployment can really measure this dimension is open to debate. Koopmans and Olzak (2004) also use the Gross Domestic Product on a per capita basis to explain far-right violence, while Altiparmakis and Lorenzini (2018, p. 82) who are interested in explaining protest in Southern Europe during the economic crisis, they make an interesting observation about unemployment. The authors argue that unemployment as an “objective measure of economic distress” cannot capture “household concerns about stagnating income and debt;” rather, they have decided to use the Consumer Customer Index provided by Eurostat. However, since the other major study that this thesis is based on, i.e. the work of Boutcher et al. (2017) on far-right protest mobilisation in the US, also takes into account unemployment along with other economic variables, such as the percent changes in the number of farms or manufacturing jobs, we selected unemployment as the main socio-economic variable.

ONS constitutes the main source of retrieving data on the unemployment rates. The most recent report that this thesis relies on – published on 11 August 2020 – provides unemployment data by ethnic group since 2001. Instead of using general unemployment rates, we used only the data provided for the white population (see also Boutcher et al., 2017). The variable has been divided by 100 in order to be in line with the variable transformations that Braun and Koopmans (2014) have made. Our expectation, in this case, is that higher unemployment rates will cause increased levels of far-right mobilisations.

D. Political Competition

The theory we put forward in this thesis predicts that apart from demand-side explanations and the presence of counter-mobilisations, a number of supply-side explanations will impact the development of far-right protest actions. We focus now on the competition between the main political parties. The fourth independent variable that has been included in the time series model is the degree of competition that exists between the two main political parties in Great Britain, i.e. the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. Political competition has been taken into consideration in order to capture the effects of opportunity structures; a theoretical strand that emphasises the role of the broader environment in which social movement actors operate, offering opportunities for development but also constraints that affect future decisions and action (for a full discussion, see the third chapter).

Two of the research studies we rely on for the operationalisation of the variables that best capture the dynamics of each theory, Koopmans and Olzak (2004) and Boutcher et al. (2017), construct different measures. For example, Koopmans and Olzak (2004, 211) “use the absolute difference between the percentage of CDU votes (or Christian Social [CSU] in Bavaria) and SPD votes in state-level elections as a measure of the degree of electoral competition between the two major parties,” while Boutcher et

al. (2017), look at three measures: 1. the power of Northern Democrats, 2. the institutional power of African-Americans in the US Senate and House, and lastly 3. whether or not the federal government is divided.

For the purposes of this thesis, we expect that in periods where left-wing parties challenge the dominant position of right-wing parties, the far-right will organise more protests. There are examples that make this assumption plausible. In September 2019, Tommy Robinson through his Telegram channel called his followers to support the candidacy of the leader of the Conservative Party, Boris Johnson, in the upcoming general elections of December (Embury-Dennis, 2019). To measure political competition, we have relied on a unique dataset that was created by the author of “101 Ways To Win An Election and Bad News,” Mark Pack (2020) and contains information on voting intention opinion polls since 1943. The dataset appears on the webpage of the author. In the online excel sheet, which is named “monthly averages,” the author provides monthly data on the difference in voting intentions between the two main parties in the United Kingdom, the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. We used this column to calculate quarterly averages. For months that include election outcomes, more than one voting intention statistic is provided. In these cases, we calculated the average of the two statistics for this month which is later used in the three-month average. We divided again the political competition measure by 100.

E. Media

In this thesis, we are also interested in media effects. Our theory suggests, in line with discursive opportunities, that the far-right movement has more chances to succeed if there are frames in the public space that align with its concerns and issues that far-right activists emphasise. Therefore, the last

independent variable we are examining is the role of media. So far, we have talked about the possible impact of opposition movements, migration, economy, and political opportunities but we have not made any references yet to an important factor that is likely to have driven and affected far-right mobilisation in Great Britain: i.e. anti-Muslim sentiments that were rather prevalent in the period under analysis (Mulhall, 2019). For British commentators, many far-right groups in the country were formed in reaction to what they understood as Islamification of the UK (Allen, 2011). Our dataset provided further evidence that the far-right did not only protest against Islamic extremists but also against the idea of Islam and the Muslim community. For example, we saw that in more than 100 incidents the main reason of mobilisation for the far-right was to protest against plans for Mosques or Islamic Centres. The variable on media content is constructed to measure the extent the far-right is influenced by newspaper articles that associate Muslims with extremism and violence.

In Chapter 3, we mentioned that Koopmans and Olzak (2004, p. 202) coined the term “discursive opportunities” to define “the aspects of the public discourse that determine a message’s chances of diffusion in the public sphere.” The hypothesis is that negative claims against the Muslim population will lead to higher levels of far-right mobilisation. Since our dataset follows a PEA design and does not code verbal claims, we collect our media data through the Media Cloud platform. Media Cloud is an open-source content analysis platform that allows the exploration of the media ecosystem through three tools: 1. the Explorer, which performs instant analysis of the coverage of newspapers for the topic of interest; 2. the Topic Mapper, which is a second tool for a more thorough media analysis, since it provides several statistics that might be useful to researchers; and 3. the Source Manager, a tool that gives the opportunity to researchers to suggest more sources for their topic of interest. For the current

project, we have used the first tool, i.e. the Explorer. In order to identify the most relevant articles that associate Muslims with negative framing we created the following code (the inclusion of the asterisk ensures that all variations of the selected words will also be included):

```
((muslim* OR islam* OR mosque) AND (terroris* OR extremis* OR grooming OR radical* OR preacher* OR sharia OR rape OR violen*)) AND (tags_id_stories:8878466)
```

The code identifies articles that include the words Muslims, Islam, or Mosque but also words such as violence, extremism, and radicals. The tags_id_stories:8878466 has been included to limit the search only for stories that are more likely to refer to the social and political situation of Great Britain. The Explorer also allows to select certain media. For this project, only the BBC has been selected for the period 2009-2019 because other newspapers that could be of use, such as the Guardian, were added on a later date to the Media Cloud platform and as a result their articles do not appear for the first years of our analysis. If we had included more newspapers, it is likely that the total number of articles that refer to Muslims and extremism would be higher in subsequent years but not necessarily because there was more attention to these issues; one reason could be the addition of more sources to the platform and as a result the comparison between different years would be problematic. Having said that, the values of the media variable consist of the total number of newspaper articles that include the aforementioned code and show, in essence, the attention that our topic has attracted over the years.

7.4 Time series events counts following generalised linear models: the R package `tscount`

In this sub-section, we provide more details about the time series method we have used in order to perform statistical analysis. Due to the nature of the dependent variable, i.e. far-right protest events, our options are limited and we need to select methods that address on the one hand the distribution of count data, which is discrete and contains non-negative values (Hilbe, 2014), while on the other hand another factor we need to take into account is the time dimension of the variable; protest that happens in one period will affect protest in the subsequent period (Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016). In addition to that, Braun and Koopmans (2014) stress that Poisson regression models are not suitable for the analysis of collective action because they assume that the mean and variance of the distribution are equal. Since instances of collective action tend “to cluster non-randomly in time due to imitation processes” (Braun & Koopmans, p. 639) overdispersion is likely to be the outcome and needs to be adjusted. When overdispersion is present, the “variability of the data is greater than the mean” (Hilbe, 2014, p. 9). Regarding the time dependence of protest events, Brandt and Williams (2001, p. 2) write that “from what we know of standard time series analysis and linear models, failing to account for some pattern of systematic dynamics leads to incorrect inferences.” In other words, if we rely on models that do not address overdispersion and the dynamic between time periods, the estimates are likely to be biased and inefficient. In order to address this shortcoming, in the next section, that describes the relationship between the variables that we have included in the regression model and how they relate over time on a quarterly basis, we explain that this is the reason why we also test the impact of the auto-regressive

component; we are interested in capturing this dynamic association and seeing if it is statistically significant.

In the field of social movement studies, there are not many studies that take into consideration both of the aforementioned points. Banaszak and Ondercin (2016) estimate a Poisson Autoregressive model of order p , the so-called Par(p) model, that was introduced by Brandt and Williams (2001), whereas Braun and Koopmans (2014) follow the Stata procedure named ARPOIS. For this thesis, we decided to use a similar tool, the R package `tscount`, that addresses the shortcomings mentioned above, while at the same time its most recent version became available in September 2020. According to the official documentation of the package, it follows the generalized linear model framework for time series of counts and is rather flexible as it allows the conditional mean of the dependent variable to relate to its past values as well as the past values of possible covariates (Liboschik et al., 2020). It is also important to note here that this package allows the conditional distribution to be Poisson regression or Negative Binomial, and researchers can also choose either the identity or logarithmic link function. In our case, the logarithmic link function was chosen because the covariates can have negative effects. As we will see later, another advantage is that the package includes model fitting and model assessment methods, so that researchers are confident that the final process is white noise, meaning that the residuals do not correlate with each other over time.

7.5 R implementation of statistical model and discussion of results

The statistical methods below have been implemented in the open source R programming language (see Appendix B for the code). First, we describe the variable transformations, which are deemed to be necessary before being used in the time series model, and also how the model has been used. Next, we

present the results of the regression analysis and discuss which variables are statistically significant, i.e. which factors help explain the ebb and flow of far-right protest activities in Great Britain in the period 2009-2019.

When working with time series, one thorny issue that often arises is whether variables are stationary. Stationarity refers to the basic properties of the time series, i.e. its mean, variance, and covariance, that do not change over time. If non-stationary variables enter the regression models, however, the results are likely to be spurious (Banaszak & Ondercin, 2010). More specifically, the authors contend that

in time series analysis each of the variables need to be stationary in order to complete a multivariate analysis. If a variable or set of variables are not stationary then the analysis runs the risk of obtaining spurious regression results. Moreover, tests of significance are no longer valid because one cannot apply the usual assumptions about underlying probabilities in calculating estimates or standard errors (Banaszak & Ondercin, 2010, p. 13).

Based on this idea and in order to determine whether our dependent and independent variables are stationary, we have therefore relied on two tests: the Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) and the Kwiatkowski-Phillips-Schmidt-Shin (KPSS) test. Since the null hypothesis for each test is different, we should provide more details about their underlying logic. The null hypothesis for the ADF test is that the time series is not stationary, while for the KPSS test the null is that the data are stationary (Holmes et al., 2020). This means, in other words, that for the former test we should reject the null hypothesis (i.e. the p-value should be less than 0.05, which is the level of significance), but we should fail to reject it for the KPSS test (i.e. the p-value should be greater than 0.05). Following the recommendations of Holmes et al. (2020), we test for stationarity by using the `ndiffs()` function from the `forecast` package,

which is also an R package, because this is a convenient and automatic way that shows us how many times the time series needs to be differenced in order to achieve stationarity. Alternatively, one should experiment with “many different differences and remembering to include or not include the trend or level” (Holmes et al., 2020, para. 8).

The code lines below show the exact steps we have followed in order to test for stationarity. Although we agree that the inclusion of this sub-section here might seem odd to most readers, the reason we have decided to show as clearly as possible the transformations of the variables is due to the nature of our data. The time series consists only of 44 observations, and as a result the tests for stationarity might be erroneous if not handled properly. Having clarified that, after we convert the data to time series in the R programming language, we use the `ndiffs()` function to see if we need to take differences and also how many difference so that the stationarity condition is met. As one can see, we have included one more argument in the below function, and more specifically `max.d = 5`, because the length of the time series is small. This is important because the inclusion of this argument allows for a greater maximum order of integration; the discussion in the online forum StackExchange proves the latter observation (Hardy, 2016).

We convert the variables to time series, where “fre” stands for the number of far-right protest events, “ope” stands for the number of opposition events, as defined in previous section, “Dmigr” stands for difference in migration (see previous section on how we measure it and why we make this decision), “unemrate” for unemployment rate, “polcomp” for political competition, and the variable “media,” as the name suggests, stands for media:

- `fre <- ts(data["fre"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`

- `ope <- ts(data["ope"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`
- `migr <- ts(data["migr"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`
- `unemrate <- ts(data["unemrate"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`
- `polcomp <- ts(data["polcomp"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`
- `media <- ts(data["media"], start = c(2009, 1), end = c(2019, 4), frequency = 4);`

The results of the two tests, ADF and KPSS, are presented below:

- `forecast::ndiffs(fre, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(fre, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`
R outcome: difference 0 times for both tests
- `forecast::ndiffs(ope, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(ope, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`
R outcome: difference 0 times for both tests
- `forecast::ndiffs(Dmigr, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(Dmigr, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`
R outcome: difference 1 time for ADF test, 0 times for KPSS test
- `forecast::ndiffs(unemrate, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(unemrate, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`
R outcome: difference 1 time for both tests
- `forecast::ndiffs(polcomp, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(polcomp, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`
R outcome: difference 1 time for ADF test, 0 for KPSS test

- `forecast::ndiffs(media, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(media, test = "kpss", max.d=5)`

R outcome: difference 1 time for both tests

The results from the above analysis suggest that the variables: number of far-right events, number of opposition events, the quarterly change of migration levels, and the political competition between main parties, are stationary and as a result we do not have to difference them. However, we should explain in more detail the tests for unemployment rate and political competition. In these two cases, the results from the two tests are conflicting, since the ADF suggests that we should calculate the first difference, while the KPSS suggests that this step and transformation is not necessary because the result is 0. To solve this puzzle, we rely on the findings of Hyndman (2014, para. 1); the author clearly explains that

The KPSS test will often select fewer differences than the ADF test or a PP test. A KPSS test has a null hypothesis of stationarity, whereas the ADF and PP tests assume that the data have I(1) non-stationarity. Consequently, the KPSS test will only select one or more differences if there is enough evidence to overturn the stationarity assumption, while the other tests will select at least one difference unless there is enough evidence to overturn the non-stationarity assumption.

According to the same source, these two tests have also been used to compare the forecast accuracy of the ARIMA models, and the author concluded that the KPSS tests will generate models that give better forecasts (Hyndman, 2014). Therefore, and given the nature of our time series, we have decided to select the outcomes of the KPSS tests if there are any discrepancies with the ADF tests. This means that for the variables “difference in migration levels” and “political competition between main parties,” we

do not have to calculate the first difference to make them stationary, since the outcome of the KPSS test is 0.

Having said that, the last step before we perform regression analysis with the `tscount` package is to lag all the independent variables one time period. We follow again the approach of Braun and Koopmans (2014) for the main reason being that we have to establish causal order in the relationship between our variables; otherwise, it is likely our model to suffer from simultaneous bias (Boutcher et al. 2017).

- `Lope <- lag(dataTwo[, "ope"], 1)`; number of opposition events lagged one period
- `LDmigr <- lag(dataTwo[, "Dmigr"], 1)`; difference in migration levels lagged one period
- `LDunemrate <- lag(dataTwo[, "Dunemrate"], 1)`; difference in unemployment rate lagged one period
- `Lpolcomp <- lag(dataTwo[, "polcomp"], 1)`; political competition lagged one period
- `LDmedia <- lag(dataTwo[, "Dmedia"], 1)`; difference in the number of BBC articles lagged one period

What follows now is first the code line to run the regression analysis and second the results we obtain. In the next paragraphs, after the presentation of these steps we discuss in more detail the results and show how they relate to the hypotheses and theories of previous sections.

The R command for the time series model is:

- `tsglm(timeseries, model = list(past_obs = 1), link = "log", distr = "nbinom", xreg = regressors)`

According to the instructions provided in the documentation of the `tsglm` package (Liboschik et al., 2020), we use the function `tsglm` to fit the model into our time series. As one can see from the third argument of the above function, we fit a model with the logarithmic link because in this case the model allows for the negative effect of covariates. The distribution, i.e. argument four is negative binomial. In the previous paragraphs of this chapter, we highlighted the fact that traditional distributions of count data, e.g. the Poisson distribution, may not be appropriate, since they are based on the assumption that the mean and variance are equal to each other (Hilbe, 2014). However, we need distributions that deal with over-dispersion, and the Negative Binomial distribution fits the purposes of this task because it relaxes the aforementioned assumption. The `tsglm` function includes three other arguments. The first argument is `timeseries` and refers to the dependent variable, i.e. far-right mobilisation, while the `xreg` argument refers to the set of independent variables we have theorised that have an impact on the far-right. More specifically, the R code for the dependent and independent variables is:

```
1. timeseries <- dataTwo[ , "fre"]

2. regressors <- cbind(Lope = dataTwo[ , c("Lope")],
                      LDmigr = dataTwo[ , c("LDmigr")],
                      LDunemrate = dataTwo[ , c("LDunemrate")],
                      Lpolcomp = dataTwo[ , c("Lpolcomp")],
                      LDmedia = dataTwo[ , c("LDmedia")])
```

It is also interesting to see that the `tsglm` function includes another argument for the past values of the dependent variable, the auto-regressive term that takes into account the dynamic relationship of far-

right protests over time. We have selected to test the impact of past observations in time period one due to the small length of the series.

After this brief presentation of the components of the model and the logic that has driven our decisions, in Table 13 we show the results of the analysis. For the below analysis we need to know that all the standard errors and confidence intervals (level equals 95%) have been obtained by normal approximation. The estimates of the model parameters are as follows (we have used bold to highlight the rows with all the variables that are statistically significant at the 0.05 level):

Table 13: Regression analysis results: negative binomial distribution - tscount

	Estimate	Standard Error	CI(lower)	CI(upper)
(Intercept)	3.26	0.598	2.09	4.43444
Auto-regressive term	0.119	0.189	-0.25	0.48898
Opposition events	-0.0178	0.00844	-0.0343	-0.00125
Migration	0.000198	0.000369	-0.000525	0.00092
Unemployment rate	-10.6	22.8	-55.3	34.19196
Political competition	-3.13	1.06	-5.2	-1.05567
Media	0.00849	0.00356	0.00152	0.01547
sigmasq	0.138	NA	NA	NA
Link function: log				

Distribution family: nbinom (with overdispersion coefficient 'sigmasq')

Number of coefficients: 8

Log-likelihood: -156.8415

AIC: 329.683

BIC: 343.5843

QIC: 458.6658

The results in the above table are interesting. It can be observed that the 95% confidence intervals for the estimated coefficients corresponding to the following three covariates, namely opposition, political competition, and media, do not contain any zeros, implying statistically significant results. On the other hand, the past values of far-right events (the auto-regressive term), migration, and unemployment rates are not statistically significant for the same reason. Here, we explain what the findings mean for our theoretical propositions and expectations.

We argued in Chapter 3, that social movements that manage to gain attention are more likely to generate counter-mobilisations. Through the examples we provided in Chapter 6, we showed that this was the case in Great Britain. Not only that, we theorised that the size of protests will have an impact on how protest actors perceive their struggle and also their future decisions. From the analysis in this chapter, we find evidence that the actions of counter-demonstrators have a negative impact on the levels of far-right mobilisation. Although the number of far-right events may increase in reality, we decided to create a composite variable to measure mobilisation after we assign weights to frequencies based on how many protesters participate in these events. This line of reasoning leads us to the

conclusion that crowded demonstrations and protests in previous time periods will affect the far-right movements in the future, and will force fewer individuals to support far-right claims in the street arena.

There is, however, a caveat we need to highlight at this point. In previous studies that investigate the reciprocal mobilisation thesis (e.g. Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016; Inclán, 2012), the authors also look at the effect of the movement on counter-movements. This translates in our case into estimating the effect of far-right protests on opposition events. We have not included this part in our analysis for reasons that have already been explained, but we feel it is necessary to repeat in this section. The composition of the anti-far-right movement in Great Britain, at least in the period we are examining, could be described as an amalgamation of different organisations and individuals, including dedicated organisations such as anti-fascists, that may mobilise over several issues and not only due to their anti-thesis to the politics of the far-right. Therefore, if we followed common practices that exist in previous academic studies with regard to this matter, i.e. by using the same set of independent variables for the opposition movement, we feel we would not be able to explain accurately its mobilisation levels, since this would imply that the Black community, for example, and the Muslim community are driven by the same combinations of opportunities and grievances.

The variable political competition also appears to be statistically significant providing evidence that the political space as defined by the two main political parties in Great Britain creates opportunities for the far-right in the protest arena. We theorised that competition between the main political parties will enhance the levels of far-right mobilisation (e.g. see Koopmans & Olzak, 2004). We find that when the voting intention between the Conservative party and the Labour party is small, the far-right tends to mobilise. The final variable that we examined in the regression models is the number of media articles

that associate Muslims and Islam with violence and extremism. This is also statistically significant. We find that the change in media coverage is positively associated with far-right protest activity. Similarly to the idea of discursive opportunities studies, we show that that far-right activists react when the community group they have targeted the most (see Chapter 6) in the last 11 years make the headlines in a negative way. The terrorist attacks in 2013 and 2017, for example, or the “Punish a Muslim Day” hate campaign have contributed to a great extent to this negative representation of the Muslim community, and as the report of Tell MAMA (*Tell MAMA Annual Report 2018: Normalising Hatred*, 2019) showed in the latter case, this trend was also associated with increased levels of hate crimes.

Regarding the findings in Table 13, we had theorised that socio-economic and socio-cultural grievances measured as difference in migration levels and difference in white unemployment rates would have a positive effect on far-right mobilisation. However, in Table 13, we see that these two variables are not statistically significant. This could mean on the one hand that ethnic group conflict and economic insecurity theories fail to predict the causes of far-right mobilisation. However, as we made clear in previous sections and chapters, this would be an erroneous inference. It could also be the case that these specific measures are not appropriate for capturing the mechanisms that the aforementioned theories involve. This is the reason why Amengay and Stockemer (2019, p. 9) conclude that not only are there differences in the set of variables that are need to explain far-right support, even in cases where agreement exists among scholars “there is little chance that they will agree on what are the best proxies to operationalize them.” Also, Braun and Koopmans (2014) find support for these two variables only when they calculate their interaction; otherwise, the independent effect of each variable is not significant.

Looking at the other variable that is not statistically significant, i.e. the autoregressive term, this implies that the actions in previous time periods do not have a dynamic effect on subsequent actions. Previous research has indicated, however, that this variable is statistically significant and positive (e.g. Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016; Robert Braun & Koopmans, 2014). In our project, the difference could be explained by two factors, the length of the time series, which is 44 time units, and our decision to aggregate the data to quarterly level. Since there does not appear to be any relationship within the time series, we also run a Negative Binomial model with Stata. Following the recommendations of Boutcher et al. (2017), we also include robust standard errors. The Stata command we have used is:

- `nbreg fre Lope LDmigr LDunemrate Lpolcomp LDmedia, dispersion(mean) vce(robust)`

The findings of the above regression are presented below. We should also remind that in this case the number of independent variables reduces by one, as we do not include the effect of the autoregressive term. Given the length of the series, this should be seen as an improvement of the model.

Table 14: Negative binomial regression - Stata

Negative Binomial Regression						Number of obs	=	42
						Wald chi2(5)	=	23.80
Dispersion	=	mean				Prob > chi2	=	0.0002
Log pseudolikelihood	=	-156.35217				Pseudo R2	=	0.0643
Far-right events	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]			
Opposition events	-.0161209	.0053505	-3.01	0.003	-.0266077	-.0056341		
Migration	.0001425	.0003727	0.38	0.702	-.0005879	.0008729		

Unemployment rate	-13.40177	17.68367	-0.76	0.449	-48.06114	21.25759
Political competition	-3.303775	1.046566	-3.16	0.002	-5.355006	-1.252544
Media	.0091674	.0028127	3.26	0.001	.0036546	.0146802
_cons	3.634581	.1348021	26.96	0.000	3.370374	3.898788
/lnalpha	-2.290034	.322513			-2.922148	-1.65792
alpha	.101263	.0326586			.053818	.1905349

The output above shows that the variables that remain statistically significant are the presence of opposition, political competition, and difference in media coverage. In essence, this robustness check confirms the results obtained with the `tscount` package.

After we discussed how the above findings relate to our theoretical arguments and previous research, we should present now another approach we could have followed in order to see whether the results are deemed reliable. Although we have theoretical reasons to expect that the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations should be described through a Negative Binomial distribution, here we also present the results of the `tsglm` function when we select Poisson as the condition distribution to see whether the model fit improves by looking at the information criteria, AIC and BIC. The line code for this R command is the same as before, the only change is the selection of Poisson in the “`distr`” argument of the `tsglm` function. Table 15 shows the results of this analysis:

Table 15: Regression analysis results: Poisson distribution - tscount

	Estimate	Standard Error	CI(lower)	CI(upper)
(Intercept)	3.26	0.271994	2.72974	3.795935
Auto-regressive term	0.119	0.086235	-0.04970	0.288334
Opposition events	-0.0178	0.003969	-0.02557	-0.010009
Migration	0.000198	0.000157	-0.00011	0.000505
Unemployment rate	-10.6	9.811097	-29.78579	8.673006
Political competition	-3.13	0.467997	-4.04594	-2.211425
Media	0.00849	0.001497	0.00556	0.011428
Link function: log				
Distribution family: poisson				
Number of coefficients: 7				
Log-likelihood: -192.7219				
AIC: 399.4437				
BIC: 411.6074				
QIC: 399.4437				

It is clear from the above that the selection of the first model better fits the data, since the model with the Negative Binomial distribution produces lower information criteria, i.e. AIC in Table 13: 329.683 versus AIC in Table 15: 399.4437 and BIC in Table 13: 343.5843 versus BIC in Table 15: 411.6074. In addition to that, we present a model diagnostic that shows whether residuals exhibit any autocorrelation patterns; for this purpose, we rely on the autocorrelation function that is also packaged with the `tscount` package (Liboschik et al., 2020).

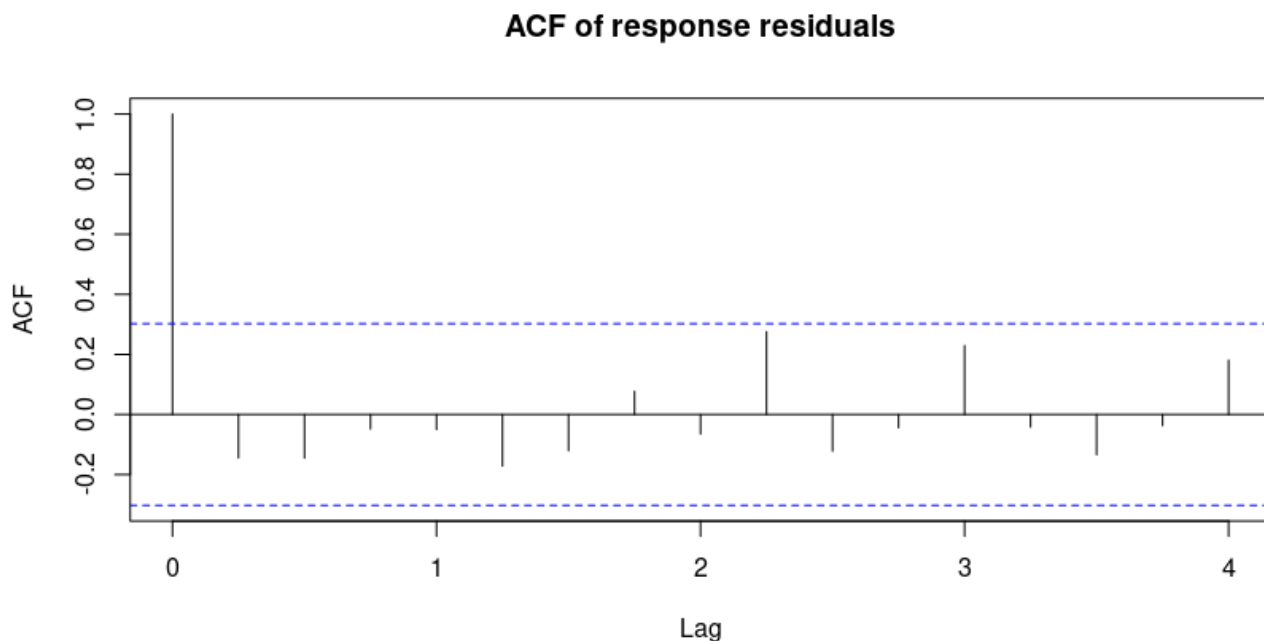


Figure 13: Autocorrelation function

Finally, Figure 13 shows in a clear way that there is no autocorrelation patterns that the model we have selected with the Negative Binomial distribution has not taken into account, since the autocorrelation functions appears to be an impulse at lag 0 as expected (e.g. see Liboschik et al., 2020). We can be more confident therefore that the statistical relationships that exist between our dependent and

independent variables in Table 13 are able to provide a more accurate picture of the determinants of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain in the period under examination.

7.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to present the results of the statistical analysis, which was conducted by using mainly the R package `tscount` but also – on a secondary level – on the Stata implementation of the Negative Binomial model with robust standard errors. The chapter should be seen as the last piece of a thought process that began in Chapter 2 and the conceptualisation of the main object of analysis, i.e. the far-right and its street manifestation, continued in the third chapter with the analysis of the most important theories that have been developed so far and they offer some suggestions about its success, and after the familiarisation of the reader with the British case study ended in Chapter 7 with some new findings or suggestions about the factors that contribute to far-right mobilisation.

We found that counter-mobilisations, political competition, and the media have an important role to play in the decisions of far-right activists. While opposition, after we take into consideration and adjust measures for protest size, and political competition have a negative effect on the far-right, media and especially the way they frame particular categories of the population, in this case study the Muslim population and Islam, has a positive effect on far-right mobilisation. Our research provides evidence therefore for the two political opportunities theories, i.e. political competition between parties and discursive opportunities, and also for the reciprocal mobilisation theory which assumes that counter-movements contribute to the development and decline of the far-right movement.

In the last chapter, we further discuss what our findings mean and the contribution of this thesis to the current literature on social movements, while at the same time we briefly summarise the content of each chapter and conclude with some suggestions about future research on the far-right movement.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

8.1 Key findings and summary of the thesis

The aim of this thesis was to answer the following research question: what are the most important factors that help explain the mobilisation of the British far-right in the period 2009-2019? Our main focus was the street actions of the British far-right in a time period that saw new far-right activists to emerge and mobilise in big numbers, organise provocative protest events, and even use violence in order to achieve their political goals (Macklin, 2018; Mulhall, 2019). We decided to approach the far-right as a social movement and pay more attention to the extra-institutional actions, following calls by scholars who noted that the current literature has “made very little empirical and theoretical effort for understanding the non-electoral articulations of far-right politics” (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018, p. 3). Great Britain was an interesting case study as we showed especially in Chapter 6, which looked at the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations, providing enough data to examine the dynamics of the movement.

Our research showed that the far-right is not a new phenomenon in Great Britain. Over the years, new political groups appeared (e.g. EDL), others attempted to transform (e.g. BNP), while there were also groups that adopted violence as a means to achieve their goals (e.g. National Action). In the period under study, the far-right achieved victories in the protest arena, but there were also time periods that revealed the failure of far-right actors to mobilise successfully. Our conceptualisation of mobilisation, which took into account the number of protesters along with the number of protest events, allowed us to measure and study more accurately the true dynamics of the far-right movement. We should also

mention here that the latter was innovative with regard to the forms their protest took over the years. From street demonstrations, to disruptive and provocative actions, and even violent events (our dataset mapped 370 extreme forms of violence), the British far-right used a variety of tools to express and communicate its claims.

Moreover, the British far-right remained rather active during the last 11 years. Our research showed that in total 2190 protests were organised by the far-right, either by individuals or groups, and more than 100 different far-right actors initiated at least one protest event. Related to the latter, the EDL appeared as the most successful group in the recent history of far-right mobilisations in the country. It is important to note again, however, that the majority of far-right protest events were not attended by a large number of participants. Regarding the main reasons of mobilisation, the British far-right to a large degree targeted Islam and the Muslim community (i.e. in 1002 cases). Except for that, other motivating factors were actions against political opponents (e.g. the far-right turned against political opponents in 35% of all disruptive cases), actions against migrants and refugees or events in solidarity with other far-right members and sympathisers, as well as ultra-patriotism events. Furthermore, far-right groups met multiple times their opponents on the streets, and while the majority of these encounters did not lead to violence, in 23 cases extended levels of violence were observed.

Having studied and analysed the characteristics of far-right protest in Great Britain, in Chapter 7 we examined the reasons that affect the dynamics of mobilisation and more specifically what causes the success or failure of the far-right movement. Our theoretical arguments were based on the idea that dire economic conditions and economic scarcity in combination with tensions that may arise between ethnic groups, i.e. the native population versus the “Other,” create a mix of grievances that the far-right is able

to exploit; two theories we put into test in this case, 1. the economic grievances or insecurity theory and 2. the ethnic group conflict theory. Since the latter demand-side explanations cannot fully explain far-right support, our theory predicted that a number of opportunities allow the far-right to succeed in mobilising sympathisers. We focused on the antagonism between the main political parties and the role of media, which were derived from supply-side explanations on the dynamics of competition between the main political parties and discursive opportunities. We expected that in an environment where there is strong competition between the main political parties, the far-right will not find the opportunity to mobilise in order to make its voice heard and advance its claims. In addition to that, the theory suggested that the media have a role to play in the different patterns of mobilisation of far-right activists in Great Britain, as the way they portray certain categories of community groups can help the far-right convince potential sympathisers to support its cause. A final factor that we took into account and theorised that has an impact on the far-right is the presence and activities of opposition groups, i.e. the reciprocal mobilisation thesis, which were expected to contribute to its mobilisation levels in a negative way. This happens especially if we account for protest size and not only the total number of protest events that are being organised against far-right events. The relationship was predicted to be negative because – as previous scholars on movement and counter-movement interactions have put forward – protest groups tend to decline when they fail to have any victories in the long run (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996). In order to see whether the far-right declined, we created a new composite variable based on the number of protest events and the number of participants. In doing so, decline could also mean more events with very few participants.

Based on the above the hypotheses we formed were:

1. The activities of opposition groups will lead to lower levels of far-right mobilisation
2. Higher migration is expected to increase the levels of far-right mobilisation
3. Higher unemployment rates within the white population will lead to further support for the far-right movement
4. Strong competition between the main political parties will increase support for the far-right movement
5. Media attention to the Muslim question through negative frames will boost support for the far-right

In Chapter 7, we provided evidence that some of the above factors do effect far-right mobilisation. To be more specific, the variables derived from hypotheses 1, 4, and 5 were statistically significant and, more importantly, the direction of their relationship with the far-right was as theorised and expected. These findings provided evidence that political opportunities have a significant role and determine the future actions of far-right activists. In cases where the political space is characterised by a strong competition between the main parties, we find that far-right mobilisation will increase. Added to this, the media will further contribute to far-right mobilisation when they portray Muslims through negatives frames and associations with violence and extremism. One factor that appears significant and have the opposite effect is the role of counter-mobilisations. In previous chapters, we showed that there were several occasions where anti-far-right activists in Great Britain had the feeling that their actions against the far-right were successful, leading to victories. Our data showed that over time if we conceptualise mobilisation, both for the far-right and its opposition, as the combination of protest size and frequency

of events, we can see that the actual levels of far-right mobilisation tend to decrease. Although previous scholars have found that the relationship between movements and counter-movements is positive (Inclán, 2012; Karpantschhof & Mikkelsen, 2017), they define the relationships in a different way, counting only the number of protest events that the groups organise. Therefore, we argue that this thesis shows a new way on how to perceive the dynamics of these interactions, taking into account factors that might represent reality in a better and more accurate way. If, for example, we continue to assume that all protests, regardless of their size are equally important, we may exaggerate their true dynamics.

On the other hand, our data analysis in Chapter 7 did not find evidence for the economic insecurity and ethnic group conflict theories. In both cases the measures that we used, i.e. unemployment rates for the white population and total migration from both EU and non-EU countries, were not statistically significant. This means that either grievances in its variant forms do not determine the development of the far-right movement or the measures we have used are not able to capture the effects of these factors. We explained in Chapter 7 that some scholars have argued against the use of unemployment as a variable for measuring economic grievances because it is being considered an objective measure of economic distress that ignores “household concerns about stagnating income and debt” (Altiparmakis & Lorenzini, 2018, p. 82). However, as we already said in the same chapter our intention was primarily to introduce a new factor, i.e. the effect of counter-mobilisations on the development of the far-right, and test whether the findings of traditional explanations that use the above measures are in line with our research.

Another finding is that far-right events that happen in previous time periods do not have a statistically significant relationship with the future actions of the far-right. Although we explained in the first

sections of Chapter 7 that it is important to include this factor in regression analyses in order to capture the dynamics within the movement as evolve over time, our data and more specifically the structure of our data, which were aggregated to the quarterly level, did not show any relationship. This does not necessarily mean that there is no relationship however; it could be due to the the length of our time series. For instance, if we had available data for all the independent variables of interest, we could have run regression models with monthly data (i.e. 132 observations).

It is interesting, however, that of the variables that are statistically significant, their association with the far-right unfolded as we had expected. Except for that, the second and third contribution of this thesis, as explained in the Introduction, were fulfilled. In that chapter, we contented that the aim of our research is to include the potential influence of opposition groups on far-right mobilisation. Given that the rhetoric, actions, and decisions of movement actors is also determined by its opponents in a socio-political environment (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2008), we argued that this is an important factor that cannot be neglected. Regarding the third contribution, we conceptualised far-right and opposition mobilisation as a composite variable that assigns different weight to the total frequency of events based on the number of demonstrators. A protest event that attracts only a few activists cannot be the same with events that attracts hundreds and even thousands of people.

Another contribution of the thesis that was also fulfilled refers to the ways we conceptualised the far-right. Although most studies simply provide a working definition that will help them analyse their research questions, in our project we followed a different path and showed in Chapter 2, more specifically, that how one defines political phenomena is important. This was the reason why we analysed in this chapter different approaches to concept formation, i.e. the necessary and sufficient

condition structure on the one hand and the family resemblance structure on the other hand. We also clarified that for the far-right the former approach seems to be the most appropriate in order to define clearly its constituent parts, i.e. nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism. Our work was built on the ideas of Sartori (1970) and Mudde (2007). The contribution of Mudde (2007) to the study of the far-right and the populist radical right, which is a sub-category of the far-right, has been widely accepted in the academic community, and this is the reason why Chapter 2 was influenced to a great extent by his ideas. We presented therefore through the metaphor of the “ladder of abstraction,” which was introduced by Sartori (1970), the boundaries between different types of far-right organisations. Given the design of our thesis, which aimed to look at the protest actions of the far-right movement in Great Britain over time and as a result involved several organisations that might appear ideologically different, with this approach we were able to explain clearly why groups such as the EDL and the more extreme National Action can be grouped and analysed together through the same prism.

In order to study the development of the British far-right during the period 2009-2019 and due to the absence of publicly available protest data, we decided to construct our own protest event dataset, so that we can answer the question we set in the beginning of this research process. This was the fourth contribution of the thesis, and one of the most important, as it allows other researchers in the future to study different aspects of the far-right. The dataset at its current stage maps more than 2000 protest actions that include peaceful demonstrations, disruptive events, symbolic violence, and more extreme forms of violence, such as terror plots and attacks and politically motivated murders. Having said that, it is our expectation that the dataset itself will continue to contribute to the current debate on the the far-right because it provides another source of information for the last 11 years in Great Britain. For the

construction of the dataset, we had to make a number of methodological decisions and choices that were explained at length in Chapter 4. After a review of current approaches in protest event analysis (e.g. see Hutter, 2014b), i.e. one of the most common methods to collect data in a systematic way, we discussed what the sources of data collection are, their limitations, and also our approach to address these shortcomings. Since the thesis was structured on the idea that all decisions should be transparent, in the last section of Chapter 4 we also included the codebook that guided our research during the coding process.

Moreover, we mentioned earlier that the hypotheses for the quantitative analysis were derived from Chapter 3. The latter involved an extensive discussion of the most relevant and important theoretical perspectives that have been put forward in the literature of far-right politics, while at the same time we explained the constraints that led us to the theoretical argument we examined in this thesis. The structure of this chapter was determined by the nature of the research question and our research interest in finding the reasons that explain the ebb and flow of far-right mobilisations.

Our intention was to provide an accurate picture of the British far-right, so that the reader can better understand the findings of our analysis. The aim of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 was to describe the main political groups that have influenced social and political processes in Great Britain (i.e. Chapter 5) and to provide a detailed narration of the mobilisation of far-right activists during the period 2009-2019. Without this knowledge, the quantitative analysis that followed in Chapter 7 would have been baseless. Thus, the purpose of Chapter 6 was to present through graphs, tables, and statistics the most important aspects of the British far-right. In line with other studies on the far-right in different countries (e.g. Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016), we showed, for instance, that the majority of far-right protests are not

attended by a large number of people, while we also discussed the different forms far-right protest can take, e.g. counter-demonstration or disruptive activities.

Finally, and before we highlight some limitations of this study, we should reiterate at this point that the thesis in its attempt to find answers about the determinants of far-right mobilisation covered all aspects of the research process. It conceptualised the main object of analysis in a transparent way, described the theoretical framework, explained the form of the data and how they have been collected, and provided all the needed information about the case study before performing statistical analysis in the last chapter that confirmed some of the assumptions we had set, i.e. that political opportunities and insights from the reciprocal mobilisation thesis can contribute to the development and decline of far-right groups.

8.2 Limitations of the thesis and directions for future research

One limitation of the thesis was the analysis of quarterly data; given the length of the whole time series this decision resulted in 44 time units. One could argue that the estimates of the regression model should have relied on more observations. We explained the reasons why we could not analyse monthly data, in which case our analysis would have involved 132 observations, with the main reason being the lack of available data with regard to some independent variables of interest, i.e. migration. It would be interesting to see, however, whether the autoregressive term is statistically significant when the length of the time series increases. Also, the latter would have provided us the opportunity to include more independent variables in the regression model and help us measure the impact of additional factors that have been identified in the current literature; equally, we could have included more measures that test the mechanisms of the same theory, e.g. apart from unemployment rates we could have tested the levels of the Gross Domestic Product for the economic grievances thesis.

Regarding the reciprocal mobilisation thesis, another limitation points to the fact that we theorised that only the counter-mobilisations taking place on the same date that the far-right has organised a protest or conventional event matter. If we had data on the actions of opposition groups for all dates they decide to mobilise against the politics of the far-right, we would have provided a more complete picture of the protest activities of the opponents of the far-right. However, given the challenge in coding this type of events and the fact that the relationship between opposition and far-right mobilisation is statistically significant supports our hypothesis that interactions matter. For example, Karpantschhof and Mikkelsen (2017, p. 723), who faced similar challenges in their research, reached the same conclusion, contending that “given how difficult it is to achieve statistical significance with a small number of observations we are inclined to regard this result as supporting the hypothesis that the presence of a countermovement and change in organizational tactics do have an effect on the development of the right-wing movement.” In addition to that, we should note that the reciprocal mobilisation thesis was tested as the impact of one movement on the actions of another movement. In order to see how this relationship fully unfolds, we should also model the impact of far-right groups on opposition groups. This, however, means that we have a better idea of the composition of the anti-far-right movement. Otherwise, it will not be possible to determine the variables that impact its development and decline.

Finally, it has been observed – at least in the context of Great Britain – that the far-right has also the capacity to influence the political debate, not only through electoral performances and street activities, but also through the opportunities that the internet and the online arena more generally offers (Mulhall, 2018). This creates new challenges to researchers who wish to better understand the main factors of its mobilisation. In other words, this paragraph reveals that the far-right has proved over the years that it

can find new ways to make its claims heard. In this thesis, we attempted to contribute to the current literature by looking at the influence of the anti-far-right movement on far-right mobilisation, deviating from a predominant focus on radical Islamists. With this research project, we claim that there is enough evidence to show that this dynamic interaction matters, hoping that other scholars in social movements studies will follow our example.

Appendix

Below, we have included both the Python and R code we have used for the analysis chapters.

A. Python code

```
# Load packages
```

```
import os
```

```
os.environ['PROJ_LIB'] = '../anaconda3/lib/python3.7/site-packages/mpl_toolkits/basemap'
```

```
import numpy as np
```

```
import pandas as pd
```

```
from mpl_toolkits.basemap import Basemap
```

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
```

```
import matplotlib.image as mpimg
```

```
from matplotlib.pyplot import figure
```

```
import matplotlib.dates as mdates
```

```
import datetime
```

```
# Set options (https://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/stable/user\_guide/options.html#available-options)
```

```
plt.style.use('ggplot')
```

Appendix

```
pd.set_option('max_rows', 60)

pd.set_option('max_columns', 8)

# Change directory, load data, and add new variables

os.chdir('../Data/Dataset')

excel_file = 'dataGB.xlsx'

df = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0, usecols=['Date', 'Location', 'Longitude',

'Latitude', 'Country', 'SMO_Type', 'SMO_1', 'SMO_2','SMO_3', 'Action_Type', 'Action',

'Goal', 'Size', 'Arrests', 'Comments'])

def f(row):

    if row['Size'] == '<Not known>':

        val = 0

    elif row['Size'] == '1-1':

        val = 1

    elif row['Size'] == '2-20':

        val = 10
```

Appendix

```
elif row['Size'] == '21-50':
```

```
    val = 25
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '51-100':
```

```
    val = 75
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '101-300':
```

```
    val = 150
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '301-500':
```

```
    val = 400
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '501-700':
```

```
    val = 600
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '701-1000':
```

```
    val = 850
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '1001-2000':
```

```
    val = 1500
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '2001-3000':
```

```
    val = 2500
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '3001-4000':
```

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```
val = 3500

elif row['Size'] == '4001-5000':

    val = 4500

elif row['Size'] == '5001-7000':

    val = 6000

elif row['Size'] == '7001-10000':

    val = 8500

elif row['Size'] == '10001-15000':

    val = 12500

elif row['Size'] == '15001-20000':

    val = 17500

elif row['Size'] == '20001-30000':

    val = 25000

elif row['Size'] == '30001-50000':

    val = 40000

elif row['Size'] == '50001-100000':

    val = 75000
```



```
elif row['Size'] == '100001-500000':
```

```
    val = 300000
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '500001 >':
```

```
    val = 750000
```

```
return val
```

```
df.insert(13, 'Size_Avg', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    if row['Action'] == 'Symbolic violence':
```

```
        val = 1
```

```
    elif row['Action'] == 'Disruption/intimidation':
```

```
        val = 2
```

```
    elif row['Action'] == 'Demonstration/protest':
```

```
        val = 3
```

```
    elif row['Action'] == 'Petition/collection of signatures':
```

```
        val = 4
```

```
    elif row['Action'] == 'Vandalism/criminal damage':
```

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val = 5

elif row['Action'] == 'Counter-demonstration':

val = 6

elif row['Action'] == 'Physical violence against persons':

val = 7

elif row['Action'] == 'Politically motivated murder':

val = 8

elif row['Action'] == 'Arson/(fire)bomb attack':

val = 9

elif row['Action'] == 'Terror plot/attack':

val = 10

elif row['Action'] == 'Vigil/protest':

val = 11

elif row['Action'] == 'Political festival/event':

val = 12

elif row['Action'] == 'Web-hacking':

val = 13

Appendix

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives':
```

```
    val = 14
```

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Political stunt':
```

```
    val = 15
```

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Suspicious packages/substances':
```

```
    val = 16
```

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Brawl':
```

```
    val = 17
```

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols':
```

```
    val = 18
```

```
elif row['Action'] == 'Milkshake protest':
```

```
    val = 19
```

```
return val
```

```
df.insert(11, 'Action_Num', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    if row['Goal'] == '<Not known>':
```

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val = 0

elif row['Goal'] == 'Racist graffiti/stickers/posters in public area':

val = 1

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against immigrants/refugees':

val = 2

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against racism and fascism & far-right':

val = 3

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against political opponents':

val = 4

elif row['Goal'] == 'In solidarity with sympathisers/members/leaders':

val = 5

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against Asians/Muslims':

val = 6

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against Islamic extremism/Sharia law/Islamic preachers etc.':

val = 7

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against British foreign policy/people/soldiers etc.':

val = 8

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elif row['Goal'] == 'Against (plans for) Mosque/Islamic Centre or School':

val = 9

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against Blacks/Jews/Sikhs':

val = 10

elif row['Goal'] == 'Ultra-patriotism':

val = 11

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against media/social media or Freedom of speech':

val = 12

elif row['Goal'] == 'Far-right ideas':

val = 13

elif row['Goal'] == 'In solidarity with immigrants/refugees':

val = 14

elif row['Goal'] == 'Life under Sharia/being proper Muslim':

val = 15

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against pro-Palestinians/in solidarity with Israel':

val = 16

elif row['Goal'] == 'Racist attack by whites':

Appendix

val = 17

elif row['Goal'] == 'Desecration of (Asian/Muslim) graves':

val = 18

elif row['Goal'] == 'Halal Meat or Ban the Burka protest':

val = 19

elif row['Goal'] == 'Pork attack against Asians/Muslims':

val = 20

elif row['Goal'] == 'Justice campaign':

val = 21

elif row['Goal'] == 'Desecration of Koran':

val = 22

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against US politics/President':

val = 23

elif row['Goal'] == 'Against (Asian/Muslim) grooming gangs':

val = 24

elif row['Goal'] == 'Brexit/anti-EU protest':

val = 25

```
elif row['Goal'] == 'White Pride':
```

```
    val = 26
```

```
elif row['Goal'] == 'Against UKIP or Brexit Party':
```

```
    val = 27
```

```
elif row['Goal'] == 'In memory of Lee Rigby':
```

```
    val = 28
```

```
elif row['Goal'] == 'Pro US President':
```

```
    val = 29
```

```
elif row['Goal'] == 'Other':
```

```
    val = 30
```

```
return val
```

```
df.insert(13, 'Goal_Num', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    if row['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative':
```

```
        val = 1
```

```
    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational':
```

```
    val = 1

elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence':

    val = 1

elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence':

    val = 1

return val

df.insert(16, 'Events', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):

    if row['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative':

        val = 1

    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational':

        val = 0

    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence':

        val = 0

    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence':

        val = 0
```


Appendix

```
return val
```

```
df.insert(17, 'Demonstrative_Events', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    if row['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative':
```

```
        val = 0
```

```
    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational':
```

```
        val = 1
```

```
    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence':
```

```
        val = 0
```

```
    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence':
```

```
        val = 0
```

```
    return val
```

```
df.insert(18, 'Confrontational_Events', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    if row['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative':
```

```
    val = 0

elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational':

    val = 0

elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence':

    val = 1

elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence':

    val = 0

return val

df.insert(19, 'Light_Events', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):

    if row['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative':

        val = 0

    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational':

        val = 0

    elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence':

        val = 0
```

```
elif row['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence':
```

```
    val = 1
```

```
return val
```

```
df.insert(20, 'Heavy_Events', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

```
def f(row):
```

```
    val = 1
```

```
    if row['Size'] == '<Not known>':
```

```
        val = val + (val * 0)
```

```
    elif row['Size'] == '2-20':
```

```
        val = val + (val * 0.0)
```

```
    elif row['Size'] == '21-50':
```

```
        val = val + (val * 0.0)
```

```
    elif row['Size'] == '51-100':
```

```
        val = val + (val * 0.0)
```

```
    elif row['Size'] == '101-300':
```

```
        val = val + (val * 0.1)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '301-500':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.1)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '501-700':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.2)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '701-1000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.2)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '1001-2000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.3)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '2001-3000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.3)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '3001-4000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.3)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '4001-5000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.3)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '5001-7000':
```

```
    val = val + (val * 0.4)
```

```
elif row['Size'] == '7001-10000':
```

Appendix

```
    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '10001-15000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '15001-20000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '20001-30000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '30001-50000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '50001-100000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '100001-500000':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

elif row['Size'] == '500001 >':

    val = val + (val * 0.4)

return val

df.insert(21, 'Composite', df.apply(f, axis=1))
```

Appendix

```
df.insert(1, 'Month_Year', df['Date'].dt.to_period('M')) # monthly
df.insert(2, 'Quarter_Year', df['Date'].dt.to_period('Q')) # quarterly
df.insert(3, 'Year', df['Date'].dt.to_period('Y')) # yearly

### ### ### Quarterly Data for Regression Analysis ### ### ###

fre = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Far-right']

fre_id = fre.set_index('Date') # with index: Date

actions = fre['Action'].unique()

sorted(actions)

fre_q = fre[fre["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols",
                                "Counter-demonstration", "Demonstration/protest",
                                "Disruption/intimidation", "Vigil/protest"])]

fre_qid = fre_q.set_index('Date')

fre_q = fre_qid['Composite'].resample('Q').sum()
```

Appendix

```
ope = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Opposition']

actions = ope['Action'].unique()

sorted(actions)

opeOne = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Counter-demonstration", "Milkshake protest"])]

opeTwo = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Demonstration/protest", "Disruption/intimidation", "Political
stunt", "Vigil/protest"])]

os.chdir('../Data/Python')

opeTwo = 'opeTwo.xlsx' # have deleted non-relevant events; only those that oppose conventional far-
right actions

opeTwo = pd.read_excel(opeTwo, sheet_name=0)

ope_q = opeOne.append(opeTwo)

ope_q = ope_q.sort_values(by="Date")

ope_qid = ope_q.set_index('Date')

ope_q = ope_qid['Composite'].resample('Q').sum()
```

Appendix

```
### ### Monthly Data for Regression Analysis ### ###
```

```
fre = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Far-right']
```

```
fre_id = fre.set_index('Date') # with index: Date
```

```
actions = fre['Action'].unique()
```

```
sorted(actions)
```

```
fre_m = fre[fre["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols",  
                                "Counter-demonstration", "Demonstration/protest",  
                                "Disruption/intimidation", "Vigil/protest"])]
```

```
fre_mid = fre_m.set_index('Date')
```

```
fre_m = fre_mid['Composite'].resample('M').sum()
```

```
ope = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Opposition']
```

```
actions = ope['Action'].unique()
```

```
sorted(actions)
```

```
opeOne = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Counter-demonstration", "Milkshake protest"])]
```


Appendix

```
opeTwo = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Demonstration/protest", "Disruption/intimidation", "Political
stunt", "Vigil/protest"])]

os.chdir('../Data/Python')

opeTwo = 'opeTwo.xlsx'

opeTwo = pd.read_excel(opeTwo, sheet_name=0)

ope_m = opeOne.append(opeTwo)

ope_m = ope_m.sort_values(by="Date")

ope_mid = ope_m.set_index('Date')

ope_m = ope_mid['Composite'].resample('M').sum()

### ### ### The Far-Right ### ### ###

# Far-right dataset

fre = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Far-right']

fre_id = fre.set_index('Date') # with index: Date

# Protest events quarterly and line plot
```

```
fre_q = fre_id['Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
ax = fre_q.plot(figsize=(15, 5), color='k')
```

```
ax.set_xlabel("Year - Quarter")
```

```
ax.set_ylabel("Number of Protest Events")
```

```
# Unique political actors
```

```
unique_smo = fre['SMO_1'].unique()
```

```
# Far-right protest events in 2014
```

```
fre_2014 = fre[fre['Year'] == '2014']
```

```
fre_2014.groupby('Goal')['Events'].count()
```

```
# Far-right protest events in 2018
```

```
fre_2018 = fre[fre['Year'] == '2018']
```

```
fre_2018.groupby('Goal')['Events'].count()
```

Appendix

```
# Far-right protest events in 2018
```

```
fre_2019 = fre[fre['Year'] == '2019']
```

```
fre_2019.groupby('SMO_1')['Events'].count()
```

```
fre_2019.groupby('Action')['Events'].count()
```

```
# Yellow Vests UK events
```

```
yellow = fre_2019[fre_2019['SMO_1'] == 'Yellow vests']
```

```
# Map Great Britain and protest events
```

```
# https://data.gov.uk/dataset/e56ce784-7b7a-4e80-9231-8bc558efb750/nuts-level-1-january-2018-super-generalised-clipped-boundaries-in-the-united-kingdom
```

```
# make copy and remove coordinates with value 0
```

```
fre_map = fre.copy()
```

```
fre_map = fre_map[fre_map.Latitude != 0]
```

```
fre_map.info()
```

```
fre_map.shape
```

Appendix

```
# plot protest event data

# https://gawron.sdsu.edu/python\_for\_ss/course\_core/book\_draft/visualization/visualizing\_geographic\_data.html

t_events = fre_map.groupby(['Location', 'Longitude', 'Latitude'])['Events'].sum() # total number of
events per location

t_events = t_events.to_frame() # new dataframe

t_events.reset_index(inplace=True) # reset index

t_events.rename(columns={'Events': 'Number of Protest Events per Location'}, inplace=True) # rename
columns

t_events.plot(kind="scatter", x="Longitude", y="Latitude", c='Number of Protest Events per Location',

               s=t_events['Number of Protest Events per Location'], cmap=plt.get_cmap("rainbow"),

               colorbar=True, alpha=0.7, figsize=(10,10))

plt.legend(fontsize=10)

plt.show()

# plot GB map

# https://www.kaggle.com/daveianhickey/using-basemap-for-geographical-data

fig, ax = plt.subplots(figsize=(10,12))
```

Appendix

```
m = Basemap(llcrnrlon=-7.5600,llcrnrlat=49.7600,
            urcrnrlon=2.7800,urcrnrlat=60.840,
            resolution= 'l',
            projection='merc',
            lon_0=-4.36,
            lat_0=54.7)

m.drawmapboundary(fill_color='#232b2b')

m.fillcontinents(color='#A9A9A9',lake_color='#46bcec')

m.drawcoastlines()

plt.show() # save image

# combine previous two plots

# https://gawron.sdsu.edu/python\_for\_ss/course\_core/book\_draft/visualization/visualizing\_geographic\_data.html

GB_img = mpimg.imread('../Data/Python/GB_map/GB.png')

ax = t_events.plot(kind="scatter", x="Longitude", y="Latitude", c='Number of Protest Events per Location',
```

Appendix

```
s=t_events['Number of Protest Events per Location'], cmap=plt.get_cmap("rainbow"),
colorbar=False, alpha=0.7, figsize=(10,10))

plt.imshow(GB_img, extent=[-7.5600,2.7800,49.7600,60.840], alpha=0.7)

plt.show()

# Unique protest events per Location

unique_locations = fre.groupby('Location')['Events'].count().sort_values()

# Protest events in Scotland and Wales

scotland = fre[fre['Country'] == 'Scotland']

wales = fre[fre['Country'] == 'Wales']

scotland.groupby('SMO_1')['Events'].count()

# Information about actions within each category

fre.groupby(['Action_Type', 'Action'])['Events'].sum()
```

Appendix

```
# Number of Demonstrative, Confrontational, Light violence and Heavy violence events
```

```
actions = fre.groupby('Action_Type')['Events'].sum()
```

```
actions
```

```
pcts_actions = actions.transform(lambda x: x/x.sum()) # percentages
```

```
pcts_actions
```

```
pcts_actions*100
```

```
# Quarterly far-right protests by type of action, line plot
```

```
fre_idq = pd.DataFrame()
```

```
fre_idq['Demonstrative Events'] = fre_id['Demonstrative_Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
fre_idq['Confrontational Events'] = fre_id['Confrontational_Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
fre_idq['Light Violence'] = fre_id['Light_Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
fre_idq['Heavy Violence'] = fre_id['Heavy_Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
fre_idq['Violent Events'] = fre_id['Light_Events'].resample('Q').sum() +
```

```
fre_id['Heavy_Events'].resample('Q').sum()
```

```
ax = fre_idq[['Demonstrative Events', 'Confrontational Events', 'Violent Events']].plot(figsize=(15, 5))
```

```
ax.set_xlabel("Date")

ax.set_ylabel("Number of Protest Events")

# Size of protest actions

fre.groupby('Size_Avg')['Events'].count()

large_demos = fre[fre['Size_Avg'] > 3500]

# Exclude petitions and calculate protest size

no_petition = fre[fre['Action'] != 'Petition/collection of signatures']

no_petition.groupby('Size_Avg')['Events'].count()

large_demos = no_petition[no_petition['Size_Avg'] > 3500]

# Actions of EDL

edl = fre[fre['SMO_1'] == 'English Defence League']

edl_above1000 = edl[edl['Size_Avg'] > 1000]

edl_above2000 = edl[edl['Size_Avg'] > 2000]
```


Appendix

```
# Size of far-right protests, exclude petitions

no_petition = fre[fre['Action'] != 'Petition/collection of signatures']

# Above 101

freab100 = no_petition[no_petition['Size_Avg'] >= 100]

# quarterly

freab100 = freab100.groupby('Quarter_Year')['Events'].sum()

freab100 = freab100.to_frame() # series to df

# for missing values, write excel and load back

freab100.to_excel('freab100.xlsx')

excel_file = 'freab100.xlsx'

freab100 = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0)

freab100 = freab100.set_index('Quarter_Year')

# plot

ax = freab100[['Events']].plot(kind='bar', title="", color='k',

                               figsize=(15, 5), legend=False, fontsize=12)

ax.set_xlabel("Year - Quarter", fontsize=12)
```

```
ax.set_ylabel("Number of Protest Events", fontsize=12)

ax.set_ylim(0,16)

plt.xticks(rotation=90)

plt.show()

# Above 301

freab300 = no_petition[no_petition['Size_Avg'] >= 300]

# quarterly

freab300 = freab300.groupby('Quarter_Year')['Events'].sum()

freab300 = freab300.to_frame() # series to df

# for missing values, write excel and load back

freab300.to_excel('freab300.xlsx')

excel_file = 'freab300.xlsx'

freab300 = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0)

freab300 = freab300.set_index('Quarter_Year')

# plot
```

Appendix

```
ax = freab300[['Events']].plot(kind='bar', title = "", color='k',  
  
                               figsize=(15, 5), legend=False, fontsize=12)  
  
ax.set_xlabel("Year - Quarter", fontsize=12)  
  
ax.set_ylabel("Number of Protest Events", fontsize=12)  
  
ax.set_ylim(0,16)  
  
plt.xticks(rotation=90)  
  
plt.show()  
  
# Above 501  
  
freab500 = no_petition[no_petition['Size_Avg'] >= 500]  
  
# quarterly  
  
freab500 = freab500.groupby('Quarter_Year')['Events'].sum()  
  
freab500 = freab500.to_frame() # series to df  
  
# for missing values, write excel and load back  
  
freab500.to_excel('freab500.xlsx')  
  
excel_file = 'freab500.xlsx'
```

Appendix

```
freab500 = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0)

freab500 = freab500.set_index('Quarter_Year')

# plot

ax = freab500[['Events']].plot(kind='bar', title = "", color='k',

                               figsize=(15, 5), legend=False, fontsize=12)

ax.set_xlabel("Year - Quarter", fontsize=12)

ax.set_ylabel("Number of Protest Events", fontsize=12)

ax.set_ylim(0,16)

plt.xticks(rotation=90)

plt.show()

# Above 100 participants, protest events per year (no petitions)

per_year = freab100.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()

# Above 300 participants, protest events per year (no petitions)

per_year = freab300.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()
```

Appendix

```
# Above 500 participants, protest events per year (no petitions)
```

```
per_year = freab500.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()
```

```
# Disruptions, political stunts, and counter-demonstrations
```

```
disruption = fre['Action'] == 'Disruption/intimidation'
```

```
patrols = fre['Action'] == 'Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols'
```

```
stunts = fre['Action'] == 'Political stunt'
```

```
disruptive_events = fre[disruption | patrols | stunts]
```

```
disruptive_events_year = disruptive_events.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()
```

```
disruptive_events.groupby('Goal')['Events'].sum().sort_values()
```

```
political_opponents = disruptive_events[disruptive_events['Goal'] == 'Against political opponents']
```

```
political_opponents_heavy_violence = political_opponents['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence'
```

```
political_opponents_light_violence = political_opponents['Action_Type'] == 'Light violence'
```

```
political_opponents_violence = political_opponents[political_opponents_heavy_violence |  
political_opponents_light_violence]
```

Appendix

```
counter_demonstration = fre[fre['Action'] == 'Counter-demonstration']

counter_demonstration.groupby('Goal')['Events'].sum().sort_values()

counter_demonstration.groupby('Size_Avg')['Events'].sum().sort_values()

counter_demonstration.groupby('Action_Type')['Events'].sum()

against_palestinians = counter_demonstration[counter_demonstration['Goal'] == 'Against pro-
Palestinians/in solidarity with Israel']

# Main protagonists of far-right mobilisation

protagonists = fre.groupby('SMO_1')['Events'].sum().sort_values(ascending=True)

protagonists.tail(15)

# Analysis at the meso (group) level

fre = fre[fre["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Christian patrols/Mosque invasion or Vigilante patrols",
                             "Counter-demonstration", "Demonstration/protest",
                             "Disruption/intimidation", "Vigil/protest"])]

protagonists = fre.groupby('SMO_1')['Events'].sum().sort_values(ascending=True)
```

Appendix

```
protagonists.tail(15)
```

```
freab100 = fre[fre['Size_Avg'] >= 100]
```

```
protagonists = freab100.groupby('SMO_1')['Events'].sum().sort_values(ascending=True)
```

```
protagonists.tail(15)
```

```
# Main reason of far-right mobilisation
```

```
goals = fre['Goal'].value_counts()
```

```
# write to excel and load back
```

```
goals.to_excel('goals.xlsx')
```

```
excel_file = 'goals.xlsx'
```

```
goals = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0)
```

```
goals = goals.set_index('Goal')
```

```
goals.plot.bar(title="", color='k', figsize=(15,7))
```

```
political_opponents = fre[fre['Goal'] == 'Against political opponents']
```

```
political_opponents.groupby('Action_Type')['Events'].sum()
```

Appendix

```
migrants = fre[fre['Goal'] == 'Against immigrants/refugees']

migrants.groupby('Action_Type')['Events'].sum()

confront = migrants[migrants['Action_Type'] == 'Confrontational']

solidarity = fre[fre['Goal'] == 'In solidarity with sympathisers/members/leaders']

solidarity.to_excel('solidarity.xlsx')

solidarity.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()

large = solidarity[solidarity['Size_Avg'] >= 100]

patriotism = fre[fre['Goal'] == 'Ultra-patriotism']

patriotism.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()

patriotism.groupby('Size_Avg')['Events'].sum()

# Counter-mobilisation

ope = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Opposition']

large = ope[ope['Size_Avg'] > 50000]
```


Appendix

```
actions = ope['Action'].unique()
```

```
sorted(actions)
```

```
opeOne = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Counter-demonstration", "Milkshake protest"])]
```

```
opeTwo = ope[ope["Action"].isin(["Demonstration/protest", "Disruption/intimidation", "Political  
stunt", "Vigil/protest"])]
```

```
os.chdir('../Data/Python')
```

```
opeTwo = 'opeTwo.xlsx' # have deleted non-relevant events; only those that oppose conventional far-  
right actions
```

```
opeTwo = pd.read_excel(opeTwo, sheet_name=0)
```

```
ope = opeOne.append(opeTwo)
```

```
ope = ope.sort_values(by="Date")
```

```
ope_id = ope.set_index('Date')
```

```
actions = ope['Action'].unique()
```

Appendix

```
sorted(actions)

counter_demonstration = ope[ope['Action'] == 'Counter-demonstration']

peaceful = counter_demonstration[counter_demonstration['Action_Type'] == 'Demonstrative']

violent = counter_demonstration[counter_demonstration['Action_Type'] == 'Heavy violence']

brawl = ope[ope['Action'] == 'Brawl']

# Arrests, far-right and opposition

#df

#actions = df['Action'].unique()

#sorted(actions)

#df = df[df["Action"].isin(["Brawl", "Counter-demonstration", "Demonstration/protest",
#
#                        "Disruption/intimidation", "Milkshake protest", "Vigil/protest"])]

os.chdir('/.../Data')

#df.to_excel('arrests_report.xlsx')
```

Appendix

```
excel_file = 'arrests_report.xlsx'

df = pd.read_excel(excel_file, sheet_name=0)

fre = df[df['SMO_Type'] == 'Far-right']

fre = fre[fre["Action"].isin(["Demonstration/protest", "Vigil/protest"])]

# with opposition

opposition = fre['Counter'] == 1

opposition = fre[opposition]

# without opposition

noposition = fre['Counter'] == 0

noposition = fre[noposition]

# With opposition

opposition_id = opposition.set_index('Date') # with index: Date

# events
```

Appendix

```
opposition_events = pd.DataFrame()

opposition_events['Far-right'] = opposition_id['Events'].resample('Q').sum()

# create new rows for opposition because zero values for some quarters do not appear

q109 = pd.DataFrame([[20090331, 0]], columns=('Date', 'Far-right'))

q109['Date'] = pd.to_datetime(q109['Date'], format='%Y%m%d') # datetime

q109.insert(1, 'Quarter_Year', q109['Date'].dt.to_period('Q'))

q109 = q109.set_index('Date')

# add new rows to ope_events dataframe

opposition_events = pd.concat([q109[['Far-right']], opposition_events])

# arrests

opposition_arrests = pd.DataFrame()

opposition_arrests['Arrests'] = opposition_id['Arrests'].resample('Q').sum()

# create new rows for opposition because zero values for some quarters do not appear

q109 = pd.DataFrame([[20090331, 0]], columns=('Date', 'Arrests'))

q109['Date'] = pd.to_datetime(q109['Date'], format='%Y%m%d') # datetime

q109.insert(1, 'Quarter_Year', q109['Date'].dt.to_period('Q'))

q109 = q109.set_index('Date')
```

Appendix

```
# add new rows to ope_events dataframe

opposition_arrests = pd.concat([q109[['Arrests']], opposition_arrests])

# plot

merged = opposition_events.merge(opposition_arrests,

                                left_index=True, right_index=True, how='inner')

merged.reset_index(inplace=True)

q = {'Quarter-Year': ['2009Q1', '2009Q2', '2009Q3', '2009Q4',

                    '2010Q1', '2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4',

                    '2011Q1', '2011Q2', '2011Q3', '2011Q4',

                    '2012Q1', '2012Q2', '2012Q3', '2012Q4',

                    '2013Q1', '2013Q2', '2013Q3', '2013Q4',

                    '2014Q1', '2014Q2', '2014Q3', '2014Q4',

                    '2015Q1', '2015Q2', '2015Q3', '2015Q4',

                    '2016Q1', '2016Q2', '2016Q3', '2016Q4',

                    '2017Q1', '2017Q2', '2017Q3', '2017Q4',

                    '2018Q1', '2018Q2', '2018Q3', '2018Q4',

                    '2019Q1', '2019Q2', '2019Q3', '2019Q4']}
```

Appendix

```
qy = pd.DataFrame(data=q)

merged['Quarter-Year'] = qy

fig, ax = plt.subplots(figsize=(15,7))

merged.plot(linestyle='-', marker='', y='Far-right', linewidth=3, ax=ax)

merged.plot.bar(x = 'Quarter-Year', y='Arrests', color='orange', ax=ax)

ax.set_title("")

ax.set_ylabel('Frequencies')

ax.set_xlabel("")

# Without opposition

noposition_id = noposition.set_index('Date') # with index: Date

# events

noposition_events = pd.DataFrame()

noposition_events['Far-right'] = noposition_id['Events'].resample('Q').sum()

# arrests

noposition_arrests = pd.DataFrame()
```

Appendix

```
noposition_arrests['Arrests'] = noposition_id['Arrests'].resample('Q').sum()

# plot

merged = noposition_events.merge(noposition_arrests,

                                left_index=True, right_index=True, how='inner')

merged.reset_index(inplace=True)

q = {'Quarter-Year': ['2009Q1', '2009Q2', '2009Q3', '2009Q4',

                    '2010Q1', '2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4',

                    '2011Q1', '2011Q2', '2011Q3', '2011Q4',

                    '2012Q1', '2012Q2', '2012Q3', '2012Q4',

                    '2013Q1', '2013Q2', '2013Q3', '2013Q4',

                    '2014Q1', '2014Q2', '2014Q3', '2014Q4',

                    '2015Q1', '2015Q2', '2015Q3', '2015Q4',

                    '2016Q1', '2016Q2', '2016Q3', '2016Q4',

                    '2017Q1', '2017Q2', '2017Q3', '2017Q4',

                    '2018Q1', '2018Q2', '2018Q3', '2018Q4',

                    '2019Q1', '2019Q2', '2019Q3', '2019Q4']}]

qy = pd.DataFrame(data=q)
```

Appendix

```
merged['Quarter-Year'] = qy

fig, ax = plt.subplots(figsize=(15,7))

merged.plot(linestyle='-', marker="", y='Far-right', linewidth=3, ax=ax)

merged.plot.bar(x = 'Quarter-Year', y='Arrests', color='orange', ax=ax)

ax.set_title("")

ax.set_ylabel('Frequencies')

ax.set_xlabel("")

# Far-right violence and terrorism

fre.groupby('Action')['Events'].sum()

violence = fre[fre["Action"].isin(['Arson/(fire)bomb attack',

    'Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives',

    'Physical violence against persons',

    'Politically motivated murder',

    'Suspicious packages/substances',
```



```
'Symbolic violence',  
'Terror plot/attack',  
'Vandalism/criminal damage']])]
```

```
violence.groupby('Action_Type')['Events'].sum()
```

```
violence.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()
```

```
heavy_violence = fre[fre["Action"].isin(['Arson/(fire)bomb attack',
```

```
'Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making material/explosives',
```

```
'Physical violence against persons',
```

```
'Politically motivated murder',
```

```
'Terror plot/attack']])]
```

```
heavy_violence.groupby('Year')['Events'].sum()
```

```
terror_plot = fre[fre["Action"].isin(['Discovery of (large) weapons caches, bomb-making  
material/explosives',
```

```
'Politically motivated murder',
```

```
'Terror plot/attack']])]
```

B. R code

```
# Set working directory, load libraries, and data

setwd('../Data/')

library(tidyverse)

library(tseries)

library(Hmisc)

library(tscount)

#source("pests.R")

# Political Competition - Monthly to Quarterly

#setwd('../Data')

#polcomp = readxl::read_excel('PoliticalCompetition.xlsx')

#monthly <- ts(polcomp, frequency = 12)

#quarterly <- aggregate(monthly, nfrequency=4)/3

#quarterly <- quarterly/100

#library(xlsx)
```

Appendix

```
#write.xlsx(quarterly, file="PoliticalCompetitionQuarterly.xlsx"); #view(quarterly)

data = readxl::read_excel('QuarterlyVariables.xlsx')

keeps = c("YearQuarter", "FarRightEvents", "OppositionEvents", "TotalMigrationDiv100",
"WhiteUnemploymentRate",
        "PoliticalCompetition", "Media")

data = data[keeps]

data <- data %>% dplyr::rename(yq = YearQuarter, fre = FarRightEvents, ope = OppositionEvents,
migr = TotalMigrationDiv100,
                             unemrate = WhiteUnemploymentRate, polcomp = PoliticalCompetition, media =
Media)

# Missing values for Total Migration. One method for imputating missing values is the following:
# https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/imputeTS/vignettes/imputeTS-Time-Series-Missing-Value-Imputation-in-R.pdf

#library(readxl); #library(imputeTS)

#total_migration <- read_excel('Migration.xlsx')

#total_migration <- ts(total_migration['TotalMigration'])
```

Appendix

```
#total_migration <- na_kalman(total_migration) # imputation

# Create time series

fre <- ts(data["fre"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

ope <- ts(data["ope"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

migr <- ts(data["migr"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

unemrate <- ts(data["unemrate"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

polcomp <- ts(data["polcomp"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

media <- ts(data["media"], start = c(2009, 1), frequency = 4)

# How many differences, ADF and KPSS tests (https://stats.stackexchange.com/questions/218976/adf-test-vs-ndiffs)

forecast::ndiffs(fre, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(fre, test = "kpss", max.d=5)

forecast::ndiffs(ope, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(ope, test = "kpss", max.d=5)

forecast::ndiffs(Dmigr, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(Dmigr, test = "kpss", max.d=5)

forecast::ndiffs(unemrate, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(unemrate, test = "kpss", max.d=5)

forecast::ndiffs(polcomp, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(polcomp, test = "kpss", max.d=5)

forecast::ndiffs(media, test = "adf", max.d=5); forecast::ndiffs(media, test = "kpss", max.d=5)
```

```
# Difference variables

Dmigr <- diff(migr, differences = 1)

Dunemrate <- diff(unemrate, differences = 1)

Dmedia <- diff(media, differences = 1)

# Combine variables into new data frame

dataOne <- cbind(fre, ope, Dmigr, Dunemrate, polcomp, Dmedia)

# Delete first rows of each series

dataTwo <- dataOne[2:44, ]

# Lag variables

Lope <- lag(dataTwo[, "ope"], 1)

LDmigr <- lag(dataTwo[, "Dmigr"], 1)

LDunemrate <- lag(dataTwo[, "Dunemrate"], 1)

Lpolcomp <- lag(dataTwo[, "polcomp"], 1)
```

Appendix

```
LDmedia <- lag(dataTwo[ , "Dmedia"], 1)

# Combine variables into new dataframe

dataOne <- cbind(fre = dataTwo[ , "fre"], ope = dataTwo[ , "ope"], Dmigr = dataTwo[ , "Dmigr"],

                Dunemrate = dataTwo[ , "Dunemrate"], polcomp = dataTwo[ , "polcomp"],

                Dmedia = dataTwo[ , "Dmedia"], Lope, LDmigr, LDunemrate, Lpolcomp, LDmedia)

# Delete first rows of each series, and convert to time series

dataTwo <- dataOne[2:43 , ]

dataTwo <- ts(dataTwo, start = c(2009, 3), frequency = 4)

# For Stata

#library(xlsx)

#write.xlsx(dataTwo, file="ForStata.xlsx")

# tscount package
```

```
timeseries <- dataTwo[ , "fre"]

regressors <- cbind(Lope = dataTwo[ , c("Lope")],
                  LDmigr = dataTwo[ , c("LDmigr")],
                  LDunemrate = dataTwo[ , c("LDunemrate")],
                  Lpolcomp = dataTwo[ , c("Lpolcomp")],
                  LDmedia = dataTwo[ , c("LDmedia")])

nbn <- tsglm(timeseries, model = list(past_obs = 1), link = "log", distr = "nbinom", xreg = regressors);
summary(nbn)

psn <- tsglm(timeseries, model = list(past_obs = 1), link = "log", distr = "poisson", xreg = regressors);
summary(psn)

# Diagnostic plots after model fitting

acf(residuals(nbn), main = "ACF of response residuals")

# List of sources

# Source_1
```

Appendix

```
column_1 = df['Source_1']

column_1 = column_1.to_frame()

# Source_2

column_2 = df['Source_2']

column_2 = column_2.to_frame()

# Source_3

column_3 = df['Source_3']

column_3 = column_3.to_frame()

# Split words

spl_1 = 'http://'

spl_2 = 'https://'

spl_3 = 'www.'

# Data cleaning
```


Appendix

```
# Source_1
```

```
# step 0
```

```
column_1['Source_1'] = column_1['Source_1'].astype(str)
```

```
# step 1
```

```
column_1['One'] = column_1['Source_1'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_1)[2] if x[:7] == spl_1 else x)
```

```
# step 2
```

```
column_1['Two'] = column_1['One'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_2)[2] if x[:8] == spl_2 else x)
```

```
# step 3
```

```
column_1['Three'] = column_1['Two'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_3)[2] if x[:4] == spl_3 else x)
```

```
# step 4
```

```
column_1['Four'] = column_1['Three'].apply(lambda x: x.partition('.')[0])
```

```
# step 5
```

```
column_1['Five'] = column_1['Four'].apply(lambda x: x.partition('.')[0])
```

```
# step 6
```

```
column_1.sort_values(by=['Five'], inplace=True)
```

```
# step 7
```

```
column_1 = column_1[column_1.Five != 'None']
```

Appendix

```
# Source_2
```

```
# step 0
```

```
column_2['Source_2'] = column_2['Source_2'].astype(str)
```

```
# step 1
```

```
column_2['One'] = column_2['Source_2'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_1)[2] if x[:7] == spl_1 else x)
```

```
# step 2
```

```
column_2['Two'] = column_2['One'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_2)[2] if x[:8] == spl_2 else x)
```

```
# step 3
```

```
column_2['Three'] = column_2['Two'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_3)[2] if x[:4] == spl_3 else x)
```

```
# step 4
```

```
column_2['Four'] = column_2['Three'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(':')[0])
```

```
# step 5
```

```
column_2['Five'] = column_2['Four'].apply(lambda x: x.partition('.')[0])
```

```
# step 6
```

```
column_2.sort_values(by=['Five'], inplace=True)
```

```
# step 7
```

Appendix

```
column_2 = column_2[column_2.Five != 'None']

# Source_3

# step 0

column_3['Source_3'] = column_3['Source_3'].astype(str)

# step 1

column_3['One'] = column_3['Source_3'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_1)[2] if x[:7] == spl_1 else x)

# step 2

column_3['Two'] = column_3['One'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_2)[2] if x[:8] == spl_2 else x)

# step 3

column_3['Three'] = column_3['Two'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(spl_3)[2] if x[:4] == spl_3 else x)

# step 4

column_3['Four'] = column_3['Three'].apply(lambda x: x.partition(':')[0])

# step 5

column_3['Five'] = column_3['Four'].apply(lambda x: x.partition('.')[0])

# step 6

column_3.sort_values(by=['Five'], inplace=True)
```

Appendix

```
# step 7
```

```
column_3 = column_3[column_3.Five != 'None']
```

```
# Sources - Columns merged
```

```
final = column_1.append(column_2, ignore_index=True)
```

```
final = final.append(column_3, ignore_index=True)
```

```
freqs = final.groupby('Five').count()
```

```
freqs = freqs.drop(columns=['Source_1', 'Source_2', 'Source_3', 'One', 'Two', 'Three'])
```

```
freqs.sort_values(by=['Four'], ascending=False, inplace=True)
```

```
freqs.to_excel('Sources.xlsx')
```

C. List of far-right groups in Great Britain

1. 21st Century Blackshirts
2. All Football Fans/Firms March Against Islamisation
3. Angel United Patriots
4. Aryan Martyrs' Brigade
5. Aryan Strike Force
6. Ayr Protestant Boys Flute Band
7. BNP Reform Group
8. Bishop Auckland Against Islam
9. Blood and Honour
10. Bristol United Patriots
11. Britain First
12. Britannica party
13. British Action
14. British Citizens Against Militant Islam
15. British Citizens against Muslim Extremists
16. British Counter Homeland Offensive

17. British Democratic Party
18. British First party
19. British Freedom Fighters
20. British Freedom Party
21. British Movement
22. British National Party
23. British National Socialist Movement
24. British Patriots Society
25. British People's Party
26. British Renaissance Policy Institute
27. British Renaissance Worcester
28. British Resistance
29. British Voice
30. British Voice and Creativity Alliance
31. Brits and Immigrants United Against Terrorism
32. Carmarthenshire Front
33. Casual Infidels

34. Casuals United
35. Centre for Vigilant Freedom
36. Century Blackshirts
37. Column 88
38. Combat 18
39. Combined Ex-Forces
40. Conservative Monday Club
41. Crane's RWR movement
42. Creativity Movement
43. Croydon Casuals
44. Crusader Bikers
45. Democratic Football Lads Alliance
46. Democratic Nationalists
47. Devon Resistance
48. East Anglian Patriots
49. East Kent Alliance
50. East Kent English Patriots

51. East Midlands National Alliance
52. Eltham Defence League
53. England First
54. England is Ours
55. English Community Group
56. English Defence Force
57. English Defence League
58. English Democrats
59. English National Alliance
60. English National Resistance
61. English Nationalist Alliance
62. English Volunteer Force
63. Firms Re-United
64. Football Lads Alliance
65. For Britain
66. For Darwen Party
67. For England

68. Friends of Oswald Mosley
69. Frontline Patriots
70. Gays Against Sharia
71. Generation Identity
72. Identitarian Movement
73. Infidels
74. Infidels of North Wales
75. International Civil Liberties Alliance
76. Justice for the Women and Children
77. Knights Templar International
78. Last Line Resistance
79. League of Saint George
80. Leicester Casuals
81. Liberate Stamford Hill
82. Liberty Defenders
83. Liberty GB
84. Liverpool Scouse Nationalists

85. London Forum
86. London's Mothers Against Knives
87. Make Britain Great Again
88. March for England
89. Merseyside Front Line Patriots
90. Merseyside Nationalists
91. Middlesbrough against Mass Immigration
92. Misanthropic Division
93. Mothers Against Radical Islam And Sharia
94. NS131
95. Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski
96. National Action
97. National Alliance
98. National British Resistance
99. National Democratic Party
100. National Front
101. National Rebirth of Poland

Appendix

102. National Secular Society and One Law for All
103. National Socialist Anti-Capitalist Action
104. National Socialist Network
105. New British Union
106. New Dawn
107. Newcastle's West/east End
108. North East Frontline Patriots
109. North East Infidels
110. North East of England White Infidels
111. North Wales Alliance
112. North West Front Line Patriots
113. North West Infidels
114. North West Patriots
115. North West Resistance
116. North-West Alliance
117. Northern Infidels
118. Northern Patriotic Front

Appendix

119. Notts Casual Infidels
120. Order of Nine Angels
121. Our England Today
122. Patriots of the White European Resistance
123. Pegida
124. Pie and Mash Squad
125. Racial Force
126. Racial Volunteer Force
127. Scotland First
128. Scottish Awake
129. Scottish Dawn
130. Scottish Defence League
131. Scottish Unionist Party
132. Sharia Watch UK
133. Sikhs Against Sharia
134. Sonnenkrieg Division
135. Soul Crew

Appendix

136. South Coast Resistance
137. South London Infidels
138. South West Infidels
139. South Yorkshire Casuals
140. South-East Alliance
141. Staffordshire Casual Infidels
142. Stoke-on-Trent Infidels
143. Stop Islamification of Europe
144. Sunderland Defence League
145. Support the Calais Truckers
146. System Resistance Network
147. The British Voice
148. The Far Right Infidels
149. Traditional Britain
150. Traditional Britain Group
151. True Brits
152. UK First Party

Appendix

153. United Against Terrorism
154. United British Alliance
155. United Kingdom First
156. United Patriots
157. United People of Britain
158. United People of Luton
159. Valleys Frontline Firm
160. Vanguard Britannia
161. Veterans Against Terrorism
162. Walsall Patriots
163. Waterlooville Defence League
164. Welsh Alliance
165. Welsh Casuals
166. Welsh Defence League
167. Welsh Volunteer Force
168. West Coast Infidels
169. West Midlands Infidels

Appendix

- 170. White Brotherhood
- 171. White Pendragons
- 172. Yellow Vests

D. List of sources

The following list shows in detail the sources and the total number of times they appear in the dataset:

Sources – Name	Frequencies
Islamophobia Watch	417
Unite Against Fascism	383
Institute of Race Relations	212
BBC	209
Guardian	189
Independent	173
Hope Not Hate	133
MailOnline	133
Anti-Fascist Network	128
Manchester Evening News	109
Socialist Worker	98
Mirror	96
Birmingham Mail	79
Evening Standard	77

Appendix

Daily Record and Sunday Mail	65
Liverpool Echo	64
Morning Star	56
Chronicle	55
Sun	51
Argus	38
Bristol Post	38
Yorkshire Post	35
Times	33
Telegraph	32
ITV	32
Tell MAMA	32
Media Wales	32
TeessideLive	30
Coventry Telegraph	30
Daily Express	30
Daily Post	29

Appendix

KentOnline	29
Vice Media	27
Northern Echo	26
Herald	26
Lancashire Telegraph	25
Scotsman	23
Edinburgh Evening News	23
YorkshireLive	23
Oxford Mail	22
Bolton News	21
Hull Daily Mail	21
YouTube	21
HuffPost	20
National	20
Sheffield Star	19
Derby Telegraph	19
Sunderland Echo	19

Appendix

Cambridge Evening News	18
News	18
South Wales Evening Post	17
Daily Star	17
Leicester Mercury	17
Shropshire Star	16
Metro	16
Western Mail	15
Faith Matters	15
Asian Image	14
South Wales Argus	13
Gazette	13
START	13
Twitter	13
Dream Deferred	13
Sunday Mercury	12
Express & Star	12

Appendix

Independent Media Center	12
Sentinel	12
Daily Telegraph	12
Sunday Sun	10
Barking & Dagenham Post	10
Swindon Advertiser	10
Far-Right Criminals	10
Telegraph & Argus	10
Socialist Party	9
News Shopper	9
Eastern Daily Press	9
Dudley News	9
This is Lancashire	9
Lancashire Evening Post	9
South Wales Echo	9
Libcom	9
Digital Journal	9

Appendix

Alamy	9
Business Live	8
Nottingham Evening Post	8
European Union News	8
Yorkshire Evening Post	8
Workers' Liberty	8
Chester Chronicle	8
Luton Today	8
Nottingham Post	8
Wakefield Express	8
Your Local Guardian	8
Courier	8
Huddersfield Daily Examiner	7
Aberdeen Press and Journal	7
Worcester News	7
Exeter Express and Echo	7
Stand Up To Racism	7

Appendix

Evening Times	7
Lincolnshire Echo	7
PresRreader	7
Get Surrey	6
Essex Chronicle	6
Blackpool Gazette	6
Southend Echo	6
Bournemouth Daily Echo	6
Facebook	6
rs21	6
Aberdeen Evening Express	6
Dover Express Series	6
Western Daily Press	6
Web Archive	6
Pendle Today	6
Press Association Mediapoint	6
Tab	6

Appendix

Network 23	6
Kilburn Times	6
Press	6
CORE	6
Channel4	6
Southern Daily Echo	6
Plymouth Herald	6
Jewish News	6
Daily Echo	6
Wigan Post	6
Antifa International	6
IBTimes UK	5
i-Independent Print Ltd	5
Scotland on Sunday	5
Docklands and East London Advertiser	5
Isle of Thanet Gazette	5
Keighley News	5

Appendix

Kent and Sussex Courier	5
Press News Limited	5
Sunday Express	5
Harry's Place	5
MyLondon	5
Repeat Fanzine	5
Scottish Express	5
Bucks Free Press	5
Peterborough Today	5
Freedom News	5
Interpreter	5
Wigan Today	5
Star	5
People	5
Wales on Sunday	5
Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph	5
Far Right Watch	4

Appendix

Hackney Citizen	4
Bristol Evening Post	4
Harrow Times	4
Three Counties Unity	4
Peterborough Telegraph	4
Berwick Advertiser	4
Bury Times	4
Grimsby Telegraph	4
Observer	4
Multicultural Politic	4
Nectar	4
Nationalist Correspondent	4
Bradford Telegraph and Argus	4
BuzzFeed	4
Leeds-Live	4
Cambridge News	4
Jewish Chronicle	4

Appendix

Palatinate	4
Tony Greenstein's Blog	4
BeyondTheFringePolitics	4
Western Morning News	4
Watford Observer	4
PA Newswire	4
Left Foot Forward	4
Times Series	3
Folkestone & Hythe Express	3
Express and Echo	3
Evening News	3
Stirling Observer	3
Warrington Guardian	3
Mansfield and Ashfield Chad	3
Journals	3
Searchlight Magazine	3
Journal	3

Appendix

Walsall Advertiser	3
Doncaster Free Press	3
Hemel Today	3
Notts TV	3
Lincolnite	3
Portsmouth	3
Heart	3
Windsor Observer	3
Canary	3
Croydon Advertiser	3
Stand Up To Hate	3
Dewsbury Reporter	3
GetReading	3
Devon Live	3
Counterfire	3
Rotherham Advertiser	3
MEND	3

Appendix

Skegness Standard	3
Paisley Daily Express	3
Wembley Matters	3
World Socialist Web Site	2
Bexley Times	2
Lancaster Guardian	2
Kent Messenger	2
Dunfermline Press	2
Wisbech Standard	2
Welwyn Hatfield Times	2
Hastings & St	2
Aberdeen Trades Union Council	2
Evening Chronicle	2
Echo (NewsQuest)	2
East Kent Mercury	2
Hartlepool Mail	2
North London Times	2

Appendix

Northampton Chronicle & Echo	2
Belfast Telegraph	2
Chester Standard	2
Halifax Courier	2
Dorset Echo	2
Chichester	2
Ferret	2
East Lothian Courier	2
East Anglian Daily Times	2
Cairde Liverpool	2
Paul Davey Creative	2
Committees.Exeter	2
Chelmsford Weekly News	2
Salisbury Journal	2
Electronic Intifada	2
Eastlondonlines	2
Atlas Shrugs	2

Appendix

Thorne and District Gazette	2
Docs.Google	2
Discover The Truth	2
325 (NoState.net)	2
Bristol Cable	2
York Press	2
Breeze	2
Comet	2
I Am Birmingham	2
Mancunian Matters	2
Mearns Leader	2
Milton Keynes Citizen	2
PressTV	2
Gates of Vienna	2
Salford Star	2
My London Diary	2
Herts Advertiser	2

Appendix

Glasgow Times	2
Islamic Human Rights Commission	2
Hampstead & Highgate Express	2
Slough Express	2
Pontefract & Castleford Express	2
ScouseNationalist	2
TVEyes - BBC 1 North West	2
Newcastle Herald	2
Reading Chronicle	2
Halstead Gazette	2
Berkhamsted & Tring Gazette	2
Stand Up To UKIP	2
Sunday Mail	2
Surrey Mirror	2
Shutterstock	2
South Wales Guardian	2
Sheffield Telegraph	2

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Scottish Star	2
PA Regional Newswire of English Regions	2
Berwickshire News	2
Varsity	2
Books	2
Guardian-Series	2
Boston Standard	2
Revolutionary Communist Group	2
Leaderlive	2
Grantham Journal	2
Edinburgh Live	2
ICARE Hatecrime Database	1
London SE1	1
inews	1
Inside Croydon	1
InYourArea	1
Bridgwater Times	1

Appendix

Ipswich Star	1
Islington Tribune	1
Lancaster UAF	1
Lancashire Evening Post	1
Liberal Conspiracy	1
Hnhnorfolk	1
Lincolnshire Live	1
Hunts Post	1
Derbyshire Times	1
Hillingdon Times	1
Krapital	1
CitiBlog	1
Chorley Citizen	1
Caerphilly	1
Newham Recorder	1
Lowestoft Journal	1
Lancaster Telegraph	1

Appendix

Somerset Guardian	1
Lancaster Evening Post	1
Kentish Express	1
Herald Scotland	1
Middle East Forum	1
Herald Express (Torquay)	1
Birmingham Post	1
GoPetition	1
Messenger Newspapers	1
East Midlands Anti-Fascists	1
Harborough Mail	1
Sky News	1
Defend Evropa	1
Glasgow Anarchist Federation	1
Wiltshire Gazette and Herald	1
Flickr	1
Fife Today	1

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Exposing The English Defence League	1
Exeter Express and Echo	1
EVF News and Blog	1
Evesham Journal	1
Evening Telegraph	1
Evening Express	1
East London Advertiser	1
Mix96	1
Ealing Today	1
DW	1
DnG24	1
DLFA	1
Crown Prosecution Service	1
Court News UK	1
Counter Terrorism Policing	1
counterjihadwarrior	1
Halesowen News	1

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Hate Speech International	1
newhamrecorder	1
Newbury Weekly News	1
Muslim News	1
Haringey Independent	1
Tmg-uk	1
Gloucestershire Echo	1
Secure.Manchester	1
This Is Wiltshire	1
St Helens Star	1
Free Library	1
Sikh24	1
Rochdale Online	1
Times of Israel	1
Richmond and Twickenham Times	1
Unity News Network	1
Ripley and Heanor News	1

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United Against Racism	1
Pure.Northampton	1
Ummid	1
Wiedel.Photoshelter	1
Sussex Express	1
Peeblesshire News	1
Preston Hub	1
Bath Chronicle	1
Talk Radio	1
Plymouth Live	1
Southwark News	1
Scottish Sun	1
Tes	1
Winsford and Middlewich Guardian	1
Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser	1
Wimbledon Times	1
Somerset Live	1

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Wiltshire & Gloucestershire News	1
Wirral Globe	1
Religious Reader	1
5Pillars	1
Evening Herald (Plymouth)	1
Wandsworth Guardian	1
Kentish Gazette	1
Somerset Standard and Guardian	1
Sutton Observer	1
Business Insider	1
Bristol24/7	1
Brighton Antifascists	1
Braintree and Witham Times	1
Blog Preston	1
Bedford Today	1
Basingstoke Gazette	1
Barrhead News	1

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Amnesty	1
West Briton	1
Thisisthewestcountry	1
Nuneaton News	1
Monday Messenger	1
Gloucester Citizen	1
Tamworth Herald Series	1
Newsflare	1
EDL News	1
Whitehaven News	1
Hindu	1
Coventry University	1
This is Local London	1
STV News	1

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