

Far-Right Mobilisations in Great Britain: 2009-2019

CARR FRGB Dataset Research Report

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About the CARR FRGB Dataset Research Report Series

The CARR FRGB Dataset Research Report Series features publications based on CARR's Far-Right Mobilisations in Great Britain (FRGB): 2009-2019 dataset. The series publishes insights from this dataset in order to bring about awareness to the character of the post-organisational British far right and its mobilisations in the past ten years. We encourage other scholars to contribute to the CARR FRGB Dataset Research Paper Series. Both series editors would like to thank **Sadie Chana**, **Michael Zeller**, **Sabine Volk**, and **Callum Downes** for their help reviewing the entirety of the dataset.

Series Editors: Dr William Allchorn (University of Leeds) & Andreas Dafnos (University of Sheffield)

About the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right

The Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (CARR) leads the world in studies on, and responses to, radical right extremism, past and present. CARR features work by academics, journalists and practitioners via blogs, reference content, blogs and podcasts; but also through media commentary, policy consultation, and responses to the radical right. Throughout, CARR's emphasis is placed upon the public dissemination of specialist insights into manifestations of radical right extremism around the world. We offer serious analysis on this serious issue each day, for the dynamics, influence, and threat of radical right groups and individuals has become more important than ever.

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1. Introduction

During the last 11 years, and especially after the formation of the English Defence League (EDL), academics along with practitioners have placed particular emphasis on the changing dynamics and transformations of far-right organisations in Great Britain. Although the British far-right has also mobilised – even in similarly sizeable numbers – in the past, it would not be an exaggeration to say that this past decade has been one of the most successful periods of mobilisation at the extra-parliamentary level, i.e. at the protest arena (Mulhall 2019), over the past thirty years. Peaceful marches, static protests, disruptive events, politically-motivated murders, and demonstrations that have attracted thousands of people are only a few examples of far-right activity in the country. The aim of this report is to analyse the repertoire of action of the British far-right through the presentation of a new ‘Far-right mobilisations in Great Britain’ (FRGB) protest events dataset that has mapped protest actions during this heightened period of far-right street activism (2009-2019).

In defining Britain’s extra-parliamentary far-right, we are mainly interested in individuals and groups that adhere to what Mudde (2007) suggests are the three defining features of far-right ideology: nationalism and xenophobia (or nativism), and authoritarianism. One of the strengths of this conceptual definition is that it does not conflate ideology with target selection or issue position, allowing the study of the far-right over time and across space. In Great Britain, for instance, the far-right has often been elided and conflated with the counter-Jihad or the anti-Muslim movement in the past ten years. Although it is true that the majority of actions have targeted Muslims over the last decade (Allchorn 2018), various outliers and research that focuses on previous time-periods do not support this claim. Jackson (2018), for example, shows that the Communists or the Jewish people were, among others, the main targets of the British far-right before 2000. More recently, the murder of George Floyd in the USA initiated a series of demonstrations by the Black Lives Matter movement and its sympathisers around the world. The far-right in Great Britain was quick to mobilise on biologically racist narratives of ‘White Lives Matter’ against anti-racists with the aim of defending monuments of high symbolic value for the nation (Sabbagh 2020). Though arguably different in nature, similar patterns have also been exhibited during the 2011 riots when members of the English Defence League had taken to the streets to protect English cities from protesters

and looters (Busher 2012). We argue therefore that by focusing on what the far-right opposes (e.g. religious and ethnic minorities or the Left) and not ideology, researchers might be adding unnecessary confusion to the definitional debate¹.

Moreover, in this report, we have decided to focus our attention on actions that are more likely to be the product of strategic decisions, since we are interested in developments that take place at the meso (or group) level. As a result, and through a present and interesting facet of the FRGB dataset, politically motivated murders (or what some scholars would deem as terrorism (Schmid 2004)), symbolic violence, or political stunts have been excluded from our analysis because they are usually carried out at the micro (or individual) level. Another aspect of far-right mobilisation we take into account is the presence of counter-movements on the same day the far-right organises a demonstration event. Existing literature has long theorised and studied movement and counter-movement interactions and how their relationship unfolds (McAdam 1983; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). In the case of Great Britain, simultaneous protests orchestrated by opposing movements have often challenged and stretched authorities (both financially and operationally), since they have led to tensions and resulted in violent episodes of contention, e.g. in Birmingham in 2009 and 2013, in Walsall in 2012, or in London in 2018.

The report proceeds as follows: the first part discusses methodological issues and explains why Protest Event Analysis (PEA) is a useful tool for researchers who are primarily interested in the extra-parliamentary dimension of the far-right. The second part looks at the size of protests. If we accept what della Porta and Diani (2006:171) have stated that “a movement’s destiny depends to a great extent on the number of its supporters,” then it is important to see how frequently each far-right group has managed to mobilise large numbers of people. In the third part, we discuss another characteristic of protest, and more specifically its main protagonists. We wish to answer the following two questions: 1) which are the most successful groups, in terms of number of events, and 2) when we account for protest size? Next, we look into the main claims that Britain’s far-right make during their protests, and we aim to highlight the reasons that drive far-right mobilisation. In the final part of this report, we focus on the actions of counter-

¹ It should be noted that CARR, over the last two years, has contributed to this debate through the production of blog-posts, reports, and podcasts.

movements, while at the same time we also provide statistical data on the total number of arrests when far-right events go unopposed and opposed.

2. The methodology of social movement analysis: protest event data

The main unit of analysis in the new FRGB dataset is the protest event. To collect data on the activities of far-right organisations, we have relied on Protest Event Analysis; a content analysis method that has been central in the study of collective action (Hutter 2014) due to the fact that it has contributed to a better understanding of the development and decline of social movements. Its main advantage is that it allows researchers to document several characteristics of the protest event, while for Earl et al. (2004:66), PEA “moves toward a stress on action and away from purely organizational views of social movements.” Our dataset therefore provides information on the following variables: date and location, name of social movement organisation (or group), action form (or type of action if it is not protest), main goal of the action (e.g. protest), size of event, and number of arrests. Since there is no agreement in the academic literature on which action forms should be considered as protest events (Kriesi et al. 1995; Pirro et al. 2019) and instead of adopting broad definitions that may lead to coding inconsistencies, we have created a detailed codebook which includes groupings of more homogeneous action forms (Lorenzini et al. 2016). Another criterion we have set to ensure the reliability of the data presented in the FRGB dataset is to exclude action forms (such as far-right threats, political festivals, and public meetings) that are less likely to be reported by news media on a consistent basis over time. This is the reason why such actions fail to appear in the dataset.

The main source of information for the collection of relevant protest data is newspapers articles. Although most comparative, large-scale studies of protest events utilise a limited number of newspapers – usually national newspapers – to identify events, our dataset retrieves information from both national and local newspapers. In addition to that, several anti-racist websites and independent reports (e.g. from Hope Not Hate and Unite Against Fascism) have also been sourced, as they provide useful contextual information that we can rely on to analyse with more confidence the longitudinal distribution of far-right events. In doing so, we hope we have convincingly managed to address the main criticisms related to PEA, and more specifically the issue of selection bias, whereby critics of the PEA approach argue that news agencies tend to

cover events that involve large numbers of participants, are violent, and attract the attention of counter-protesters among others (Hutter 2014). In other words, the confrontational nature of protest events increase the chances that they will make it to the news and therefore be reported upon. The inclusion of local newspapers and anti-fascist accounts², however, ensures that our dataset is a representative sample of far-right mobilisation in Great Britain over the ten year period, picking up on events that might evade the radars of national newspaper coverage.

All data collected refer to protest events in which the British far-right is the main participating group. We code a maximum of three social movement organisations for each event, while we also try to identify the most important reason of mobilisation; this is rather challenging because in many instances multiple claims are made in demonstrations. We should also note here that we have added an additional qualitative variable that measures the degree of radicalism of each event and takes four values: a) Demonstrative – for actions that mobilise large numbers of people; b) Confrontational – for actions that attempt to disrupt meetings and institutional procedures; c) Light Violence – refers to limited escalation of violence, while d) Heavy Violence – includes severe forms of violence (Koopmans 1993; Kriesi et al. 1995). The dataset includes 2,185 events in total and has information on the following protests actions, namely:

- Arson or firebomb attacks
- Brawls
- Christian patrols, Mosque invasions or vigilante patrols
- Demonstrations
- Counter-demonstrations
- Discovery of large weapons caches, bomb-making materials or explosives
- Disruption or intimidation
- Petition/collection of signatures

² We acknowledge that this is a time-consuming process that might not be always necessary. We agree with Hutter (2014) who states that researchers should be pragmatic when they design their data collection approach.

- Physical violence against persons
- Political stunts
- Politically-motivated murders
- Suspicious packages
- Symbolic violence (e.g. in the form of political graffiti)
- Terror plots and attacks
- Vandalism/criminal damage
- Vigils
- Web-hacking

However, and as mentioned before, in this report we limit our analysis to protest actions that are likely to have been planned and put into action by social movement actors, i.e. brawls, Christian patrols, Mosque invasions or vigilante patrols, demonstrations, counter-demonstrations, disruptions (e.g. political opponents' meetings) and vigils. As a result, our comments here are related to a specific 'street protest' subset sample of 1,216 events in total.

3. Estimating the size of far-right protests

For Biggs (2016), the size of protest is measured in various ways. The three most important dimensions are the number of participants, the duration of protest, and the degree of radicalism/severity (e.g. property damage or violence against persons). As a preliminary look at the FRGB dataset, here we focus on the first dimension, i.e. the number of participants. Previous research, in different countries and periods, has shown that a small number of people (Caiani et al. 2012; Berntzen and Weisskircher 2016) attend the majority of far-right protest events. Our data for Great Britain over the past decade confirm these findings. Indicatively, in only 54 occasions (approximately 4.4% of total protest events), there were at least 500 protesters involved in a far-right demonstration. However, before providing a more detailed set of statistics, we should explain how we understand and measure protest size.

Although it may seem straightforward to code protest event variables once there are clear rules and instructions, reality is more complicated. Newspaper articles often

contain contradictory information and it is the task of researchers to depict the real sequence of events as accurately as possible. For instance, Hutter and Borbáth (2018), who have also collected protest event data, find that the average Cohen’s Kappa – which is a measure of inter-coder reliability – for the number of participants is 0.45, while the standard deviation is 0.06. In order to mitigate this problem, we have created different categories for protest participation. Drawing on the work of Somma and Medel (2019), who follow a similar design, we put forward the following ranges within each category:

Table 1: FRGB Database Protest Size Intervals

Protest size	Number of participants
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 the above points, the next four line charts display the rise and fall of far-right protest as they have unfolded on a quarterly basis in Great Britain in the period 2009-2019. What follows is the distribution of events if the number of demonstrators is at least 1 (i.e. recording the total number of protests regardless of size), 101, 301, and 501. In the cases that we do not have information about numbers, the assumption we make is that the size is below 100, given that journalists are more likely to report this variable if hundreds of people decide to protest.

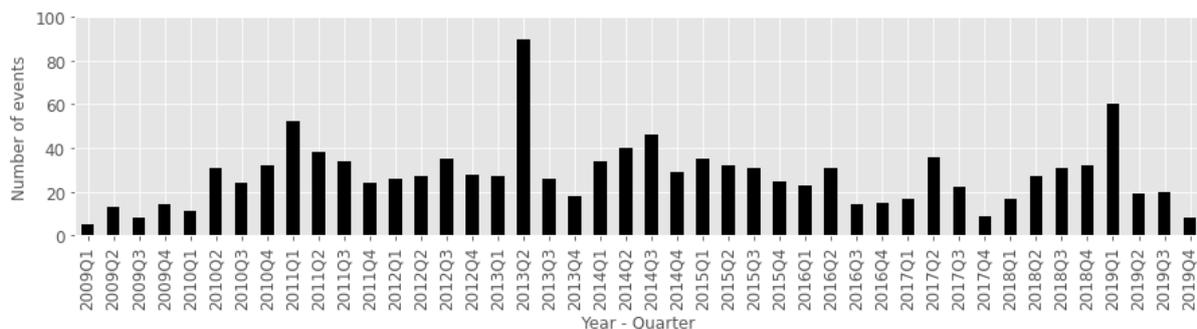


Figure 1: Total Quarterly Far-Right Protests in Great Britain, Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

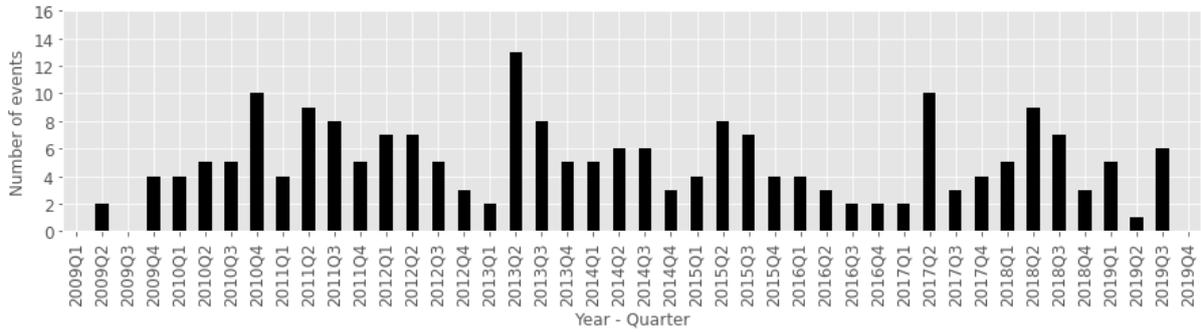


Figure 2: Quarterly Far-Right Protests (with at least 101 protesters) in Great Britain, Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

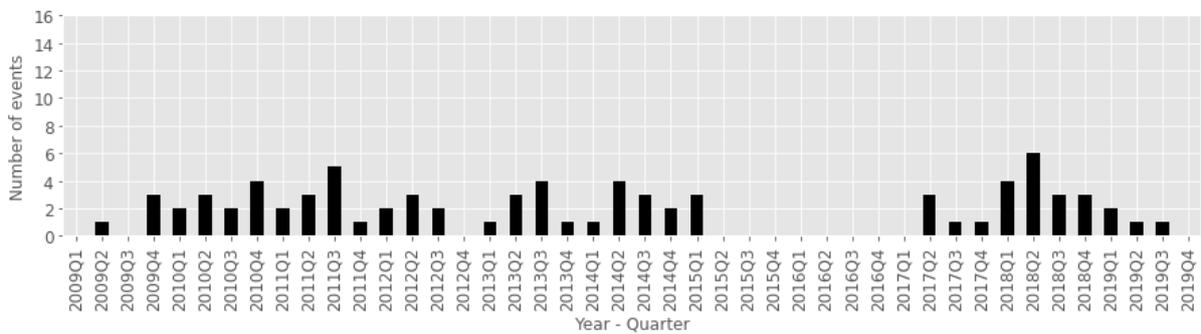


Figure 4: Quarterly Far-Right Protests (with at least 301 protesters) in Great Britain, Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

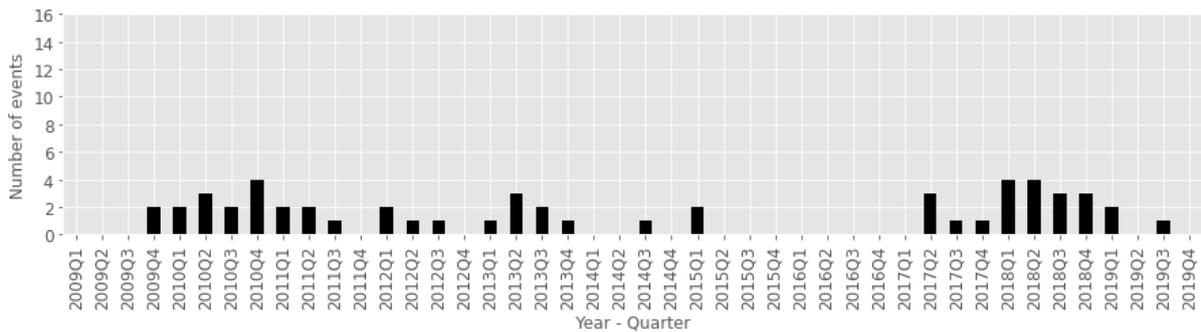


Figure 3: Quarterly Far-Right Protests (with at least 501 protesters) in Great Britain, Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

The line charts show that the far-right in Great Britain over the past ten years has not managed to protest in sustained, sizeable numbers for long periods of time. Only in the first graph (i.e. figure 1), which maps all events regardless of protest size, did more than 20 events occur in the three-month intervals we are examining. On the other hand, once the size of protests is accounted for (in figures 2 to 4), a new reality is presented. We can see that as the protest size increases, the most successful periods for the far-right are related to the protests organised by the EDL in its early years of

development (Q3 2009 – Q3 2012); the reaction of the far-right after the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013; and finally the massive demonstrations in Q2 of 2017 and 2018 which saw tens of thousands of people take to the streets behind the newly formed Football Lads Alliance and the ‘Free Tommy’ protest movements of the subsequent year. One could argue, however, that even in these three periods, the total number of events per quarter remains rather low in relation to other forms of protest.

Having said that, there are two caveats that we should mention at this point. The first concerns the impact a far-right event might have on local communities, authorities, and the immediate environment more generally. Although it is beyond the scope of this report to discuss what the impact is or how to quantify it, we ought to mention that the size of protests is only one of the many aspects we should be looking at when researching far-right mobilisations. In the case of Great Britain, a typical example is the confrontational acts by some Britain First members in May 2014 when they invaded Mosques in England and Scotland creating a sense of fear to Muslim communities, or a recent Yorkshire Patriots demonstration in Dewsbury that was confronted by counter-protesters, and cost police forces more than £200,000 from the public finances (Hirst 2020). Regarding the second caveat, in our report we do not analyse voluble online actions and spontaneous offline actions (such as hate crimes) that might not be reported on by newspapers and other authoritative outfits. For instance, the online threats in 2014 against Labour MP Luciana Berger have not been included (Perraudin 2014). We warn readers therefore that the above line charts only reveal one aspect of far-right mobilisation and should be combined with other data before any conclusions are drawn about the true dynamics of the far-right movement in Great Britain.

4. Who are the main protagonists of far-right protest in Great Britain?

Social movement scholars have written extensively in the past about the role of internal organisational factors in the development of collective action (Caiani and Parenti 2013). Jasper (2004:1) notes that “if structure is one aspect of social life, agency is the other, and many scholars have searched for ways to incorporate agency into their descriptions and explanations.” Della Porta and Diani (2006:15) further point out that adherents of resource mobilisation theory placed particular emphasis on “how collective actors operate, how they acquire resources and mobilize support.” In other words, it is not only the structural dimension of social and political life that shapes the form of

collective behaviour but also the decisions, strategic choices, and internal organisation of social movements. It is interesting therefore to identify the main protagonists of far-right mobilisation and see which protest groups have been the most active in the period under analysis.

According to our dataset, between 2009-2019, there were more than 100 different political groups in Great Britain that appear to have organised at least one protest event. In many occasions, there is a tendency for members from several different far-right groups to participate in a single protest event; however, we analyse the primary group that organise mobilisations, since newspaper articles do not always provide detailed information about the several groups that make up a single protest. Also, it is often not possible to identify the main social movement organisation that has called a protest, and this is the reason why the generic categories ‘Racists’ or ‘Neo-Nazis³’ have been preferred in order to at least encapsulate the ideology of protesters at the site of mobilisation. For example, on 12 January 2015, after the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks in Paris, the Huddersfield Daily Examiner reported that hundreds of people gathered in Sheffield “to remember those who died in Paris - defying a group of right-wing protesters who tried to hi-jack the event. Police stepped in following a confrontation between a small group of shaven-headed demonstrators and anti-fascist activists.” In this case, we have used the generic category ‘Racists’ because we do not have more information about the specific far-right group that organised the counter-demonstration.

If we look at these groups that have organised at the minimum 10 protest events, the most active are the following:

Table 2: Number of British Far-Right Demonstrations by Group, Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

Name of social movement organisation	Number of protest events (in descending order)
English Defence League	452
Britain First	115
Racists	104
British National Party	75

³ For the ‘Neo-Nazis’ category, it must be clear that the ideas of a protest group are associated with fascism or neo-Nazism.

Yellow Vests	56
Scottish Defence League	51
National Front	48
North West Infidels	25
South East Alliance	17
Democratic Football Lads Alliance	15
Neo-Nazis	15
National Action	11
North East Infidels	10

From table 2, we can observe that the most significant group, in terms of total number of protests, is the English Defence League with 452 events, while Britain First follows with 115 events. The British National Party, Yellow Vests, and the Scottish Defence League are three other groups that have also organised more than 50 protests. We should note that in 119 occasions (coded as ‘Racists’ or ‘Neo-Nazis’), we were not able to identify the name of social movement organisations. Moreover, it is interesting to see whether the above picture changes if we take into account only sizeable forms of protests. If we, for example, focus on protests that involved more than 100 participants and present these groups that have organised at least three events, we receive the following refined picture:

Table 3: Number of British Far-Right Demonstrations by Group (Protests of 100+ Participants), Q1 2009 – Q4 2019

Name of social movement organisation	Number of protest events (in descending order)
English Defence League	113
Racists	14
Britain First	9

National Front	7
Democratic Football Lads Alliance	7
March For England	6
Justice for Chelsea	5
Football Lads Alliance	4
Veterans Against Terrorism	4
British National Party	4
North East Infidels	4
Pegida	4
Scottish Defence League	3
Yellow vests	3

Table 3 shows again that, even after we account for size, the English Defence League remains (unsurprisingly) the most successful protest group in the period under analysis. If we exclude the generic category ‘Racists,’ other groups that have persuaded (in at least five occasions) hundreds of people to take to the streets and support their claims are: Britain First, National Front, Democratic Football Lads Alliance, March for England, and the Justice for Chelsea group. However, as has been mentioned in the previous section, these high-level mobilisations are fairly infrequent as the British far-right finds it difficult to maintain their ability to mobilise large numbers of people consistently over time.

5. What are the main reasons of far-right mobilisation?

In order to answer the question of what strategic issues the British far-right has been protesting on over the past decade, we have focused in this report on these reasons that have appeared at least ten times in the dataset. As one would expect, most protests have targeted Islam and Muslims, and what the far-right has framed as issues surrounding “Islamic extremism” (Busher 2018). Protests against the Muslim community

can happen both directly and indirectly. For instance, all protests in memory of Lee Rigby were organised after two supporters of al-Muhajiroun, Michael Adebowale and Michael Adebolajo, murdered the British soldier in May 2013. Protests in support of Israel may also belong to this category, since the perceived threat in this case is the Islamic religion of the Palestinian people (Taylor 2009). More than 600 anti-Muslim events (i.e. more than 50%) have been identified for Great Britain in the period under analysis.

It is also interesting to see in figure 5 that the second reason of mobilisation with most events (n=151 events), refers to actions against political opponents (i.e. anti-fascist or anti-racist activists as well as the organised Left more generally). The latter range from peaceful disruptions of public meetings to counter-demonstrations and instances of extreme physical violence. For example, in April and May 2011, the far-right targeted political opponents in at least nine occasions. One particular incident which stands out was the attack against a meeting on multiculturalism that had been organised by Labour councillors in east London (Taylor 2011). Another attack that made the news at the time happened in Liverpool on 6 July 2012, when members from several far-right groups, including the National Front and North West Infidels, chased and beat opponents who were on their way to an anti-fascist gig (Stewart 2013). More recently, in January 2018, the White Pendragons disrupted London's elected mayor, Sadiq Khan, who was giving a speech at the Labour-affiliated think tank, the Fabian Society, in London (Johnston 2018).

Other reasons for mobilisation⁴ that have appeared frequently (i.e. more than 70 times) in the period under consideration centre around the issue of immigration and ultra-patriotism, or include protests in support of far-right activists who are either on trial or who are in prison. In brief, the majority of events that were organised against immigrants and refugees took place at a heightened time of media discourse around such issues in 2015 and 2016, with 24 and 26 events respectively. Regarding protests in support of members and leaders of far-right organisations, the event that had attracted most of public's attention was a pro-Tommy Robinson demonstration in London in June 2018, after the ex-leader of the EDL was jailed for contempt of court, that ended in violent clashes between the far-right and the police (Gayle and Ntim 2018). Ultra-patriotism – the seventh most popular cause for British far-right mobilisations over the past decade – is a generic and loose term that has been used in the dataset for events that are

4 We should also mention here that in 97 cases the reason of mobilisation is not known.

associated with the idea of Nation; for example, several far-right groups have mobilised over the years against IRA supporters or at other times in support of British troops. In this category, for example, we have also included the annual National Front parades on Remembrance Day.

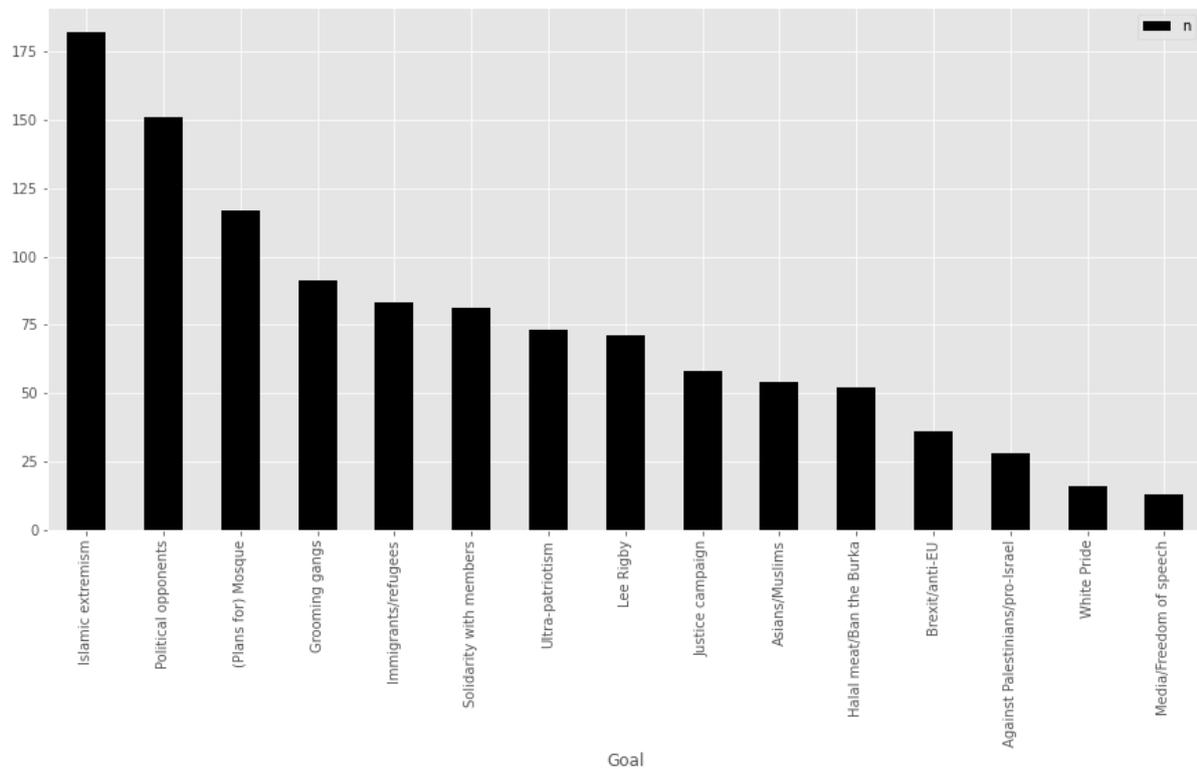


Figure 5: Main reasons of far-right mobilisation

6. Counter-movements and arrests

Social movement actors, especially those “of potential political significance” (Meyer and Staggenborg:1630) have the tendency to create opposition (Zald and Useem 1983). Oliver and Myers (2003:3) further stress that political groups “not only interact strategically at each point in time, they learn over time from past interactions and from information communicated to them by other actors.” Given the historical origins of the far-right in Europe and its relationship with fascism and racism – either biological or cultural – it is not surprising that counter-protesters in Great Britain have been reacting to far-right mobilisation on a consistent basis. Therefore, interactions between opposing groups – and its contribution to levels of unrest, violence, and arrests at far-right protest events – is another important aspect of far-right mobilisation that cannot be neglected.

Similar to Caiani et al. (2012), we code opposition when it happens on the same day far-right organisations initiate a protest event. This does not mean that so-called ‘anti-

far-right actors' restrict themselves to these actions only. For instance, in November 2010, London saw a massive demonstration by anti-fascists and trade unionists who were protesting against the ideology and politics of the far-right (Stone 2010). Moreover, the UN anti-racism Days that mobilise thousands of people in London, Glasgow, and Cardiff every year are another example. However, we are not coding these events for two reasons: firstly, we are mostly interested in counter-events that are more likely to be perceived by the far-right as an immediate threat. The second reason is more pragmatic; apart from dedicated anti-fascist organisations (e.g. Unite Against Fascism, Stand Up Against Racism, and Anti-Fascist Network), opposition consists of different types of social groups, and as a result it is rather challenging to code their actions in a consistent way over time.

In Great Britain, there were at least 457 events that far-right protests were met with counter-mobilisation. Although the majority of these encounters ended peacefully, there were cases which involved extreme violence. For example, within one month in 2016, first in Dover and then in Liverpool, members of far-right and opposition groups fought fiercely against each other, causing a large amount of damages and chaos in the cities where they mobilised. Busher (2015) points out that not only ideas but also the "lived experiences" of far-right activists play an important role in their understanding of reality. It would make sense to assume then that the presence and actions of counter-movements shapes the perceptions of themselves and their opponents as well as future decisions of far-right actors of how and where to mobilise. Moreover, and as outlined in studies on cumulative extremism (Busher and Macklin 2014; Allchorn 2020; Carter 2020), it is often counter-movements (aside from the *bête noire* of Islamist extremism and terrorism) that contribute to an escalation in violence at the site of protest if they are not carefully managed.

Finally, another variable of interest that characterises far-right protests is the number of arrests. The latter refers both to arrests of far-right supporters and counter-demonstrators as the majority of newspaper articles do not contain detailed descriptions (breaking down separate arrest numbers of demonstrators and counter-demonstrators) for this variable. In some cases, e.g. at an EDL demonstration in Bolton in 2010 the majority of those arrested were counter-demonstrators (Copsey 2010). Except for that, it is often difficult to collect reliable data for different types of action, such as

confrontational actions. The far-right also interacts with its opponents in various ways, e.g. through disruptions, brawls, or through counter-protests. To make matters more simple in this section, the graphs below show arrests only for demonstrative events that have been organised by the far-right and counter-demonstrations by opposition groups. Moreover, we should note that in some other cases the number of arrests increased after further investigation of the incidents. A typical example of this is a violent EDL demonstration in Birmingham on 20 July 2013. That day police arrested approximately 20 protesters, but the final number that was sentenced was 50 (BBC 2015). In our dataset, we have only coded arrests that happened during and after demonstrations, but only on the same day and not when there have been subsequent public order investigations.

Figures 6 and 7 show the relationship between arrests and far-right demonstrations, taking also into account the presence of counter-movements. The former refers to protest events where the far-right was confronted by its opponents, while the latter to protest events that far-right groups were able to express their grievances unopposed. It is clear from these two graphs that overall the number of arrests is higher when counter-movements challenge the far-right directly on the day of protest. If we exclude an outlier event in the fourth quarter of 2012 (Hough 2012), and more specifically in October 2012 which involved the arrest of 53 EDL supporters who were heading to a flash demonstration outside a Mosque in east London, there are no quarters with more than 20 arrests. On the other hand, in several occasions, our dataset has recorded more than 50 arrests. The outlier in this case, and the event with most arrests, is the demonstration that took place in east London on 7 September 2013 that resulted in approximately 300 arrests, among which the leadership of the EDL; however, we should note that the majority of those arrested were counter-demonstrators (Allchorn, 2018).

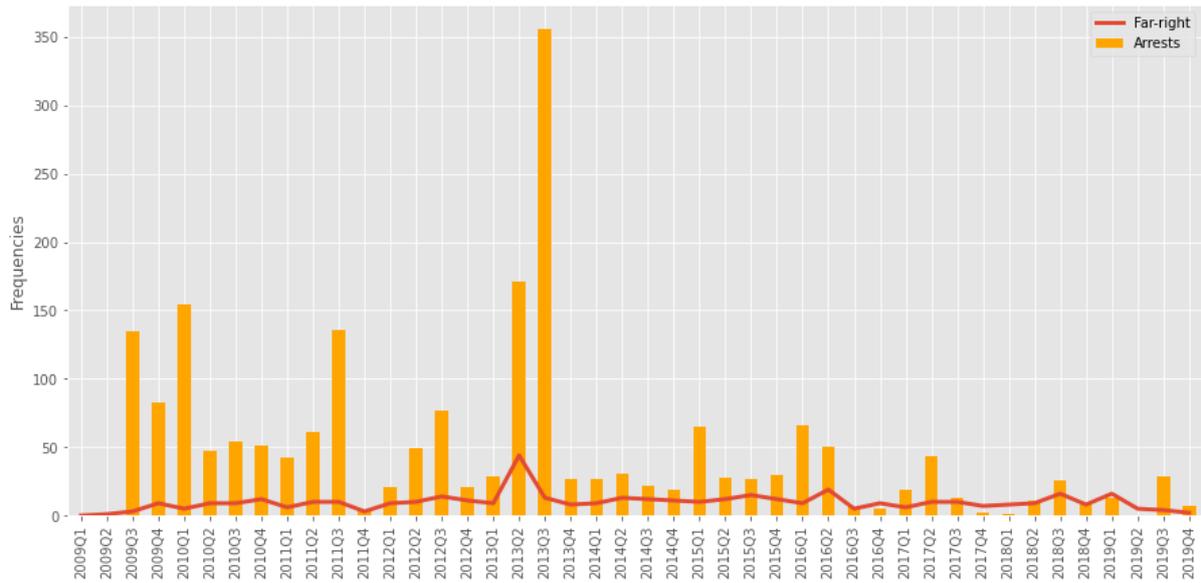


Figure 6: Far-right protest events and arrests when counter-demonstration present

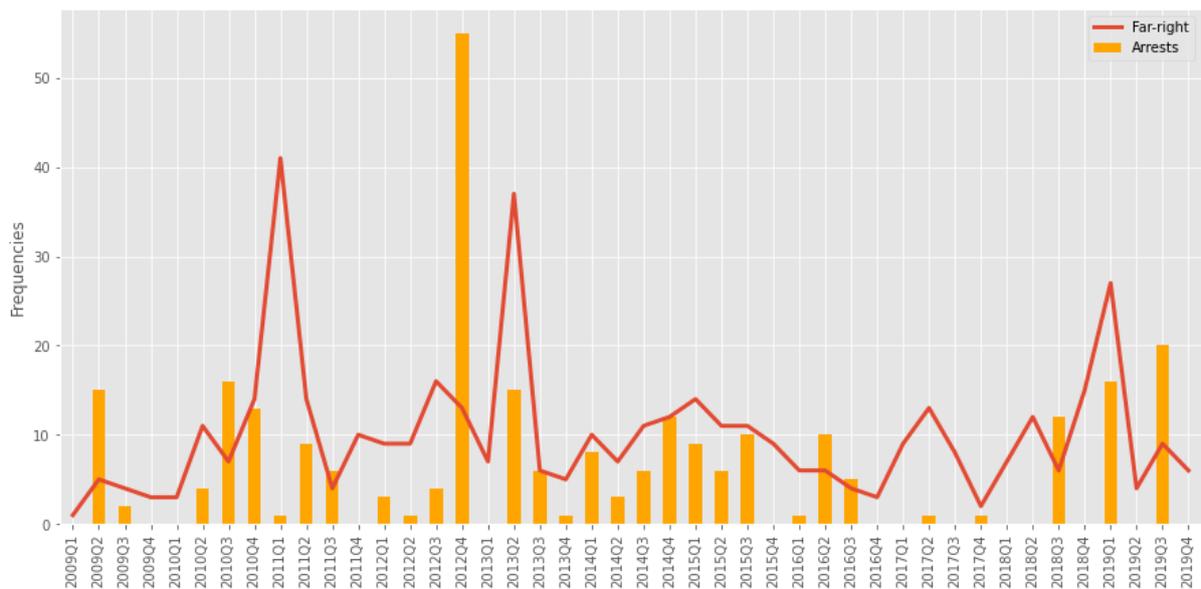


Figure 7: Far-right protest events and arrests when counter-demonstration absent

7. Conclusion

This report has set out to outline preliminary findings from the FRGB dataset. Amid the reaction to Black Lives Matters and the lack of a predominant far-right actor on the British far-right street protest scene, this database (finalised in 2020) comes at what some are billing as a turning point for the ‘post-organisational’ British far-right, i.e. the move away from cultural racism aimed at Islam and Muslims that has occurred since 9/11 and towards a more overtly biologically racist stance (Murdoch 2020). Whether this

will act as a trigger point for more sustained trend of far-right street activities is something that scholars, practitioners, and far-right watchers will watch with anticipation, and will be recorded in future updates to the FRGB database.

As this report has described, however, the FRGB dataset presents a more variegated and nuanced picture of far-right protest over the previous eleven years. For instance, mobilisation events by actors at this particular extreme of the political spectrum in Britain have not been mobilising massively during this period. With the exception of the early EDL demonstrations, the reaction of the far-right after the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013, and finally the massive demonstrations in 2017 and 2018, the majority of protests only attract between 101-301 people (and there are doubts here among scholars about how many of these are hardcore adherents vs. hangers-on, see Treadwell and Garland 2010; Busher 2015; Pilkington 2016). This is not to downplay the impacts that such demonstrations have on the local communities, authorities, and immediate environment more generally but to place such mobilisations in the context of disproportionate media coverage attributed to them.

Another interesting facet highlighted by this new dataset is the variety of strategic reasons used to justify and sustain far-right protests in Britain over the past eleven years. Whilst the majority involved cognate issues related to Islam and the Muslim community (e.g. 'Islamic Extremism', 'Mosques' and 'Grooming Gangs'), mobilisations against political opponents has been the second most significant rallying point for far-right street movements in Britain. This has been evident in instances of extreme violence and heightened arrest numbers when large-scale counter-mobilisations against the far-right have taken place, and suggests we should take seriously the role of political inter-group dynamics and potentials for spirals of escalation between opposing groups in the arena of protest, with (in addition) several violent plots being either successfully or unsuccessfully carried out by the far-right against elected officials in Britain over the past five years. Moreover, despite the marginal presence of racially nationalistic groups (such as the National Front and the BNP), their causes around 'white pride' and anti-migrant causes are present in the database, and should also not be discounted. Within the 'White Lives/All Lives Matter' narrative that has arisen in reaction to the BLM protests, there is a rich seam of grievance around white marginalisation that could be potentially exploited going forwards.

Finally, and looking forward, the authors of this report will be releasing another next month focusing on the rising threat of terrorism that we have seen in the dataset and has grown among counter-radicalisation referrals in Britain in the past five years. This will focus on physical violence or politically motivated murders (both attempted and successful) that have arisen from Britain's far-right extremist milieus in the last eleven years. We will further explore the dynamics of this, as well as the profiles of perpetrators and how many we successfully interdicted before they were able to carry out their bloody plots to build up a more fine-grained picture of what has been going on here beyond the national news headlines.

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