

THE FAR-RIGHT PROTEST OBSERVATORY

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PROTEST EVENTS: IDENTIFICATION, CODING, AND RELIABILITY

To identify and code protest events, we instructed six research assistants proficient with one or more languages of the country cases. Following previous studies, coders were first asked to identify relevant coding units in newspaper articles, with the help of a dedicated keyword search on Factiva and Lexis-Nexis (Berkhout et al. 2015). We opted for the printed press because the comparative design covering eleven European countries made accessibility a primary concern, and thus the national press preferable to other sources such as agency dispatches and police reports (Hutter 2014). In the Hungarian case, *Népszabadság* would have been the most coherent choice in comparative perspective, but the newspaper ceased publication in 2016 under mounting government pressure. The Orbán government has attacked freedom of the press and colonised the media landscape since 2010 (Bajomi-Lázár 2013; Bátorfy and Urbán 2020). At the time of data gathering, there were no reliable or independent information sources to draw from outside of the internet, hence our decision to rely on two online news portals (i.e. Index and the website of the HVG weekly magazine) providing information on domestic affairs on a daily basis.

Since we wanted to employ sources that were as comparable as possible, we opted for one quality newspaper per country. Following previous examples, we chose the main liberal outlet in each country: these are considered particularly suited for comparative studies because they mirror the debates in a detailed manner and influence the editorial decisions of a wide range of other news organisations (Kriesi et al. 2012). To control for possible biases due to news outlet selection, we used the FACTIVA archives to compare the number of relevant articles in our target outlets with the ones of other mainstream quality newspapers in each country, for a sample period of six months. The results illustrate that the quantitative difference in the coverage of far-right protest mobilisations across quality

papers is marginal (below 10 per cent), which is in line with the findings of previous studies (Koopmans 2004).

We used the standard definition of a protest event as a collective, public action, organised by a far-right collective actor with the explicit purpose of expressing critique or dissent (Hutter 2014). Subsequently, coders were asked to perform the same search on websites, browsing news and/or press release section, and coding all protest events described therein. Finally, coders were asked to code protest events according to 23 variables, including action repertoires and issue focus (See codebook).

Since multiple researchers were involved in the coding, we ran reliability tests to check for inter-coder consistency (Berkhout et al. 2015). To test for selection bias, we asked coders to select the relevant articles/press releases within a broader sample whereby we included a number of false positives. To test for description bias, we then asked coders to code the relevant articles for the 23 variables included in the dataset. These tests yielded a strong consistency regarding both the selection/identification of events and their description. The Cronbach alpha for selection bias (computed on a sample of 15 articles and 10 web posts) was 0.985. The Cronbach alphas for description bias (computed on a sample of ten articles) were 0.998, 0.995, 0.992, 0.879, and 0.987, with an average of 0.970.

The tables below report metadata about the sources used for coding, and the main descriptive statistics for the protest event dataset. In addition, we included a comparison between the data produced in our project, and other publicly available comparative datasets on protest mobilisation.

Table A1. Main collective actors, newspapers, and websites used for data collection

<i>Country</i>	<i>Main actor</i>	<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Website</i>
Austria	Identitare Bewegung	Die Presse	https://www.identitaere-bewegung.at
Bulgaria	VMRO	<i>Dnevnik</i>	www.vmro.bg
Estonia	EKRE	<i>Postimees</i>	www.ekre.ee
France	Les Identitaires	<i>Le Monde</i>	www.les-identitaires.com www.generation-identitaire.com www.bloc-identitaire.com
Germany	NPD PEGIDA	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	www.npd.de www.facebook.com/pegidaevofficial
Greece	Golden Dawn	<i>Kathimerini</i>	www.xryshaygh.com
Hungary	Jobbik	<i>Heti Világgazdaság</i> <i>Index</i>	www.jobbik.hu
Italy	CasaPound Italia Forza Nuova	<i>Il Corriere della Sera</i>	www.casapounditalia.org www.forzanuova.eu
Poland	Ruch Narodowy	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	www.ruchnarodowy.net
Slovakia	Kotleba – Ľudová Strana Naše Slovensko	<i>SME</i>	www.naseslovensko.net

Sweden	Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen SverigeDemokraterna	<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	www.nordfront.se www.sd.se
United Kingdom	EDL Britain First	<i>The Guardian</i>	www.englishdefenceleague.org.uk www.britainfirst.org

To test for potential sources of bias due to the political leanings and journalistic practices of the selected news sources, we looked at whether the same list of keywords would yield significantly different findings if applied to other quality newspapers. For a subsample of countries for which additional news sources were available in the Factiva web archives, we compared the overall number of articles produced by the keywords applied to two alternative quality newspapers. The results for a sample period of 12 months (May 2019-May2020) show that, while different quality newspapers might have diverging political leanings, this does not substantially affect the visibility of far-right collective actors, at least in terms of mentions.

Table A2. Media coverage of far-right groups in different newspapers

<i>Name actor</i>	<i>Newspaper 1</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Newspaper 2</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>% Diff</i>
CasaPound Italia	<i>La Repubblica</i>	188	<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	240	12
EDL	<i>The Guardian</i>	48	<i>The Times</i>	47	1
Britain First	<i>The Guardian</i>	46	<i>The Times</i>	49	3
Les Identitaires	<i>Le Monde</i>	60	<i>Le Figaro</i>	71	8
PEGIDA	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	163	<i>Die Zeit</i>	135	9
NPD	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	167	<i>Die Zeit</i>	120	16
Ruch Narodowy	<i>Gazeta Wyborzca</i>	87	<i>Fakt</i>	73	9
EKRE	<i>Postimees</i>	90	<i>DELFI</i>	74	9
VMRO	<i>Dnevnik</i>	554	<i>24 Chasa</i>	632	7

While no existing dataset focuses specifically on the far right, the archive by the Observatory for Political Conflict and Democracy (PolDem) allows for a comparison on a subset of the data, as it houses a large stock of comparative data on protest events and issue-specific public contestation covering a wide range of European countries over a long period of time. We focus on the poldem-protest_30 dataset (Kriesi et al. 2020a), which stores protest events in 30 European countries over the period 2000-2015. Since the dataset covers all issues of protest and does not include a variable for far-right collective actors, we selected protest events coded as ‘xenophobic’, and then excluded those that were promoted by mainstream political actors. From our data, we excluded all protest events derived from far-right collective actors’ websites, limiting the comparison to newspapers data only. While we assume that this offers good grounds for comparison with far-right protest mobilisation, important differences exist between the two datasets, notably concerning the source of data (English language news wires vs. national quality newspapers), sampling strategy, and the string used to extract the data (general string vs. organisation names).

The figures below illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of respective designs, showing that the two data collection strategies produce slightly dissimilar data, notably with respect to countries like Germany and Italy. Our goal is not to assess which strategy

performs best, but we believe that these divergences can be explained by the sampling technique adopted in the PolDem dataset, and the actor-based approach used in our own. A closer look at the data shows that, if our approach certainly reduces the bias of sampling over the total amount of protests reported, it underestimates the weight of spontaneous protests that could not be attributed to any specific actors (as confirmed by the large share of xenophobic protest events which did not have a ‘sponsoring’ actor in the PolDem dataset).

Table A3. Protest events by country (PolDem data vs. FARPE data, newspapers only)

<i>Country</i>	<i>POLDEM Data</i>		<i>FARPE Data</i>	
	<i>No. protests</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. protests</i>	<i>%</i>
Bulgaria	37	3.94	68	3.39
Estonia	3	0.32	44	2.19
France	137	14.62	151	7.53
Germany	290	30.95	315	15.70
Greece	79	8.43	187	9.32
Hungary	44	4.7	201	10.02
Italy	64	6.83	601	29.96
Poland	29	3.09	167	8.33
Slovakia	85	9.07	58	2.89
Sweden	62	6.62	120	5.98
United Kingdom	107	11.42	94	4.69
<i>Total</i>	<i>937</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>100</i>

Figure A1. Cross-country and overtime distribution of protest events, PolDem data

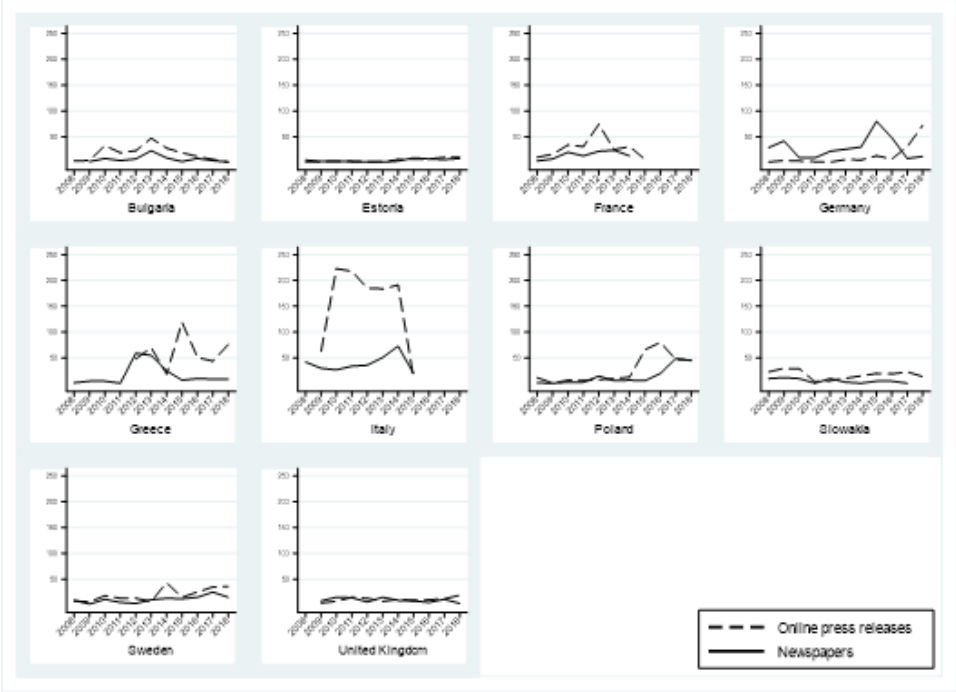
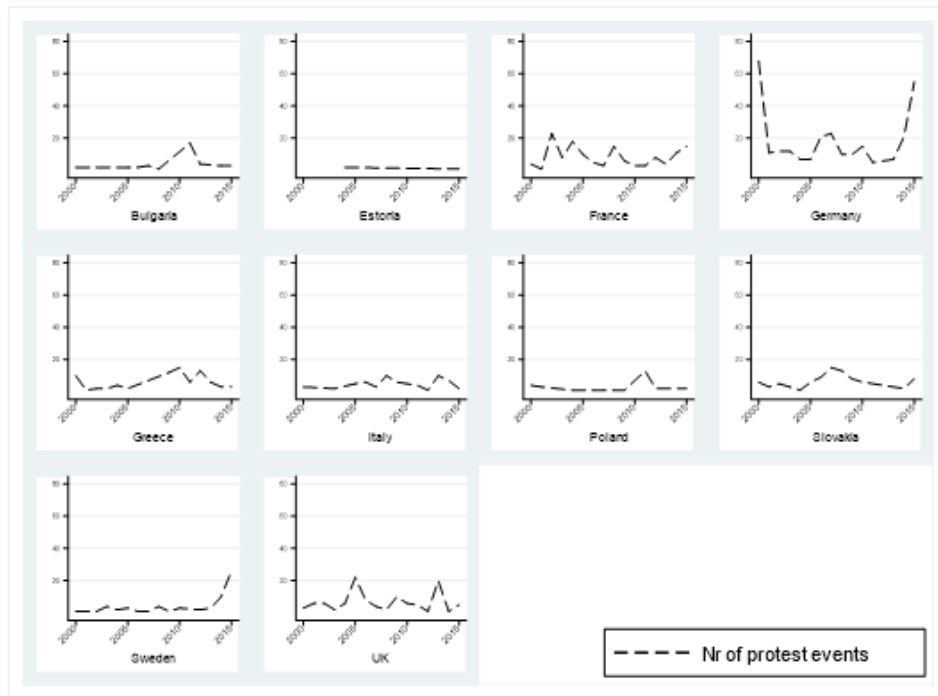


Figure A2. Cross-country and overtime distribution of protest events, FARPE data



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