**INTRO PAGE**

**What does Twitter have to say about Brexit?**

This data set comes from the Neuropolitics Research Lab at the University of Edinburgh, a transdisciplinary research centre that utilises developments in cognitive neurosciences to shed light on new political attitudes, identities and behaviours. Their aim with providing this large data set was to provide new insights into how citizens’ Brexit-related expectations are shaped in a digital world. How have their expectations about Brexit changed? Have their expectations changed from when they voted? What are the perceptions of digital authenticity and trust?

Brexit-related Tweets in this visualisation come from the following days:

Pre-Referendum (21-22 June 2016)

Referendum (23 June 2016)

Post- Referendum (22-23 September 2017, Florence Speech)

**REFERENDUM**

1

These are all Twitter accounts posting about Brexit during the referendum. This is our largest data set with over half a million accounts. Each dot represents 100 users.

2

We started by eliminating all users that did not list a location on their profile.

3

We then removed all users with unrecognisable locations.

4

Here we map all users with a validated location. The majority of tweets originate from Europe and North America, but we can also see a reaction to the results from various countries around the world.

5

Using the whole sample of users, we now re-arrange them according to account creation date. The dates vary, but the majority of the accounts were created in the same day that they were tweeting. (date displayed in number months)

6

These are the top ten biggest influencers, the most retweeted users, on the referendum day. Six of these accounts are pro-Brexit. @Mis Standen (sixth place) is a Dutch politician account that promotes racism and hatred, thus showing how such polarised positions can generate a big impact in the digital world.

**PRE-REFERENDUM**

1

These are all Twitter accounts posting about Brexit before the referendum.

2

We eliminated all users that did not list a location on their profile.

3

Again, we also removed all users with unrecognisable locations.

4

In this map, the majority of users are located in Europe and North America, however there are a few outliers in other parts of the world.

5

A large number of accounts were created the same day they tweeted.

(date displayed in number months)

6

Before the referendum, the top ten biggest influencers varied in message. However, the top two were pro-Brexit and their accounts were recently created.

**POST-REFERENDUM**

1

These are all Twitter accounts posting about Brexit after the referendum, during the Florence Speech.

2

Once again, we eliminated all users that did not list a location on their profile.

3

And removed all users with unrecognisable locations.

4

The majority of users are located in Europe and in this case, the outliers are in North America.

5

Using the whole sample of users, we now re-arrange them according to account creation date. We can now see a more even distribution of account creation dates.

6

The top ten biggest influencers have now shifted. The top two are now anti-Brexit, as is the majority in this list.

**CONCLUSION**

Across all data sets, a large majority of accounts were created on the same day they were tweeting. The biggest influencers were pro-Brexit and we hypothesize many of their accounts were solely created for campaign purposes, rather than “real” users expressing their opinions. We also wonder if the leave-campaigners were substantially more active on Twitter, rather than remain-backers, thus influencing public opinion on a large scale.

A year after the referendum, the biggest influencers have shifted, and now users on Twitter favour a remain position.