

Project 3: Is the UK Police Biased?

January 11, 2021

1 Description

This has been a tumultuous year for the world. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an unprecedented number of events concerning police practices and violence against Black people and people of colour. Campaign Zero used a data-driven approach to come up with a set of solutions to end police violence in the US, which are described [here](#).

Although there is evidence of such bias in the UK, and examples of police discrimination towards people of colour have appeared frequently on the news, open data about crime and policing available from the [UK Police](#) and other sources can be used to objectively assess to which extent these practices are commonplace.

2 Materials

The main data source can be downloaded from <https://data.police.uk/data/>. Other possible sources of information are:

- [Arrests by ethnicity](#)
- [Crime in England and Wales](#)
- [Police powers and procedures](#)
- [\(More\) Arrests by ethnicity](#)

You are encouraged to find other datasets that can complement your analysis. The list above is not exhaustive and may not be fit for your purposes. It is only meant as a potential starting point for you to develop your own research ideas.

3 Aim

This project aims to explore bias in the UK police through publicly available datasets. For the first assignment, your job is to explore the provided dataset and come up with a relevant research question (or a set of them) that you can explore using this and other sources. You are free to use any approaches you deem fit for this purpose, but it is expected that you will use some of the tools and techniques explored in Unit 2. Your research questions and methods to address them should be explicitly described in the Methodology section of the report for Assignment 1. Data analyses, visualisation, and preliminary results should be written up in the Results section.

For the second assignment, you will carry out the research that you planned in Assignment 1. Please ensure that you use the feedback received from Assignment 1 to inform your work towards Assignment 2.

4 Help

- In addition to the suggestions above, <https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/publication/hate-crime-data> contains some summary statistics of hate crime data that you can use to get started.
- You can use any other datasets that you need to complement your analysis.
- If you want to look at bias from an algorithmic perspective, you can have a look at <https://research.aimultiple.com/ai-bias/> and <https://github.com/Trusted-AI/AIF360>.
- As this project is fairly open-ended, you are welcome (and encouraged) to discuss options with Dr Matran-Fernandez during Support Hours or by appointment.
- I recommend that you start working on this project early.