

British Radical Right Parties on Social Networks and Their Supporters

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What is the support base of the British Radical Right parties?

- Robert Ford and Matthew J. Goodwin (2014):
 - Old, white, male, blue-collar workers
 - Little formal education and obsolete skills
 - 'Left out' of the political life
 - Strong feelings about national identity, Europe and immigration
 - Disillusioned with mainstream parties

Data sources

- The British Election Study - Continuous Monitoring Survey (BMS-CMS) 2004-2013
- Monthly YouGov Internet panel, 5'593 UKIP supporters, 1'332 BNP supporters

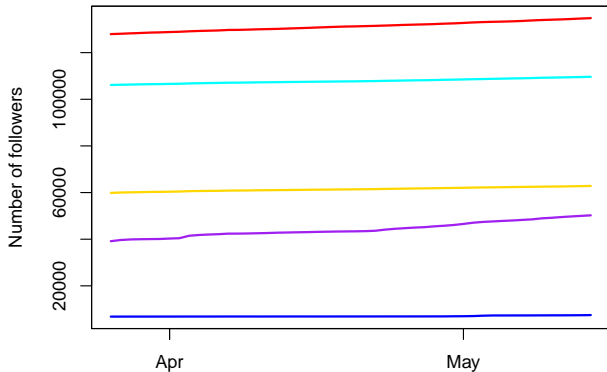
Survey data	Twitter data
+ socio-demographic information	- limited socio-demographic information
- small sample size	+ large sample size
- social pressure to under-report	+ limited peer pressure to follow
- rigid analytical framework	+ massive data for building nuanced picture
+ established methodology	- analytical tools in their infancy

British political parties on Twitter

Party	Twitter account	Date of creation	Tweets	Followers	Friends
BNP	'bnp'	08/04/2011	5549	6867	15
UKIP	'ukip'	19/08/2011	10237	43288	4980
Liberal Democrat	'LibDems'	01/05/2007	5593	61336	18963
Conservative	'Conservatives'	02/04/2008	5280	107637	1379
Labour	'UKLabour'	03/04/2008	7610	131127	15394

Table : Summary statistics on Twitter usage (as of 18/04/2014)

British political parties on Twitter



BNP

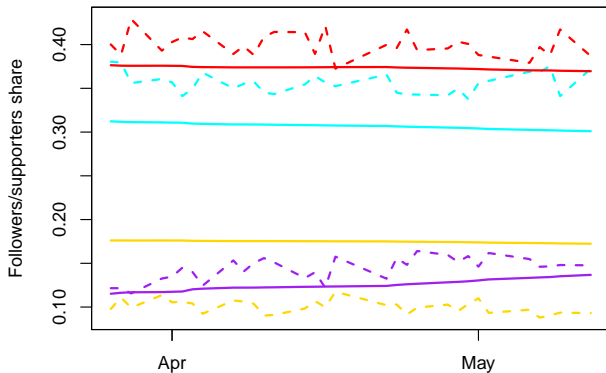
UKIP

Cons

Lab

LibDer

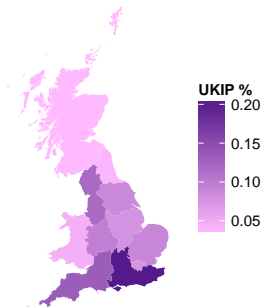
Comparing Twitter and YouGov data



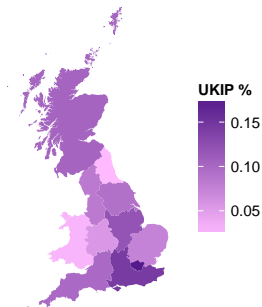
UKIP(T) Cons(T) Lab(T) LibDem(T)
UKIP(Y) Cons(Y) Lab(Y) LibDem(Y)

Comparing Twitter and BES-CMS data

P Respondents Distribution



UKIP Followers Distribution



Regression Analysis

- Model of voting for RR party

$$\ln \left[\frac{P_{rr}}{1 - P_{rr}} \right] = \alpha + \beta_{gender} X_{gender} + \beta_{ethnicity} X_{ethnicity} + \beta_{region_i} X_{region_i} + \beta_{party_j} X_{party_j} \quad (1)$$

- Model of voting for RR party against other parties

$$\ln \left[\frac{P_{party_{rr}}}{P_{party_{other}}} \right] = \alpha + \beta_{gender} X_{gender} + \beta_{ethnicity} X_{ethnicity} + \beta_{region_i} X_{region_i} \quad (2)$$

Community Analysis

- Analysis of followers links
- Searching for the most common Twitter accounts that party followers follow
- Building graph based on those connections
- Including Twitter accounts with the most predictive power into the regression model

Combining Regression and Community Analysis

- Model of voting for RR party that includes Twitter accounts with the most predictive power

$$\ln \left[\frac{P_{rr}}{1 - P_{rr}} \right] = \alpha + \beta_{gender} X_{gender} + \beta_{ethnicity} X_{ethnicity} + \beta_{region_i} X_{region_i} + \beta_{party_j} X_{party_j} + \beta_{account}^k X_{account}^k \quad (3)$$