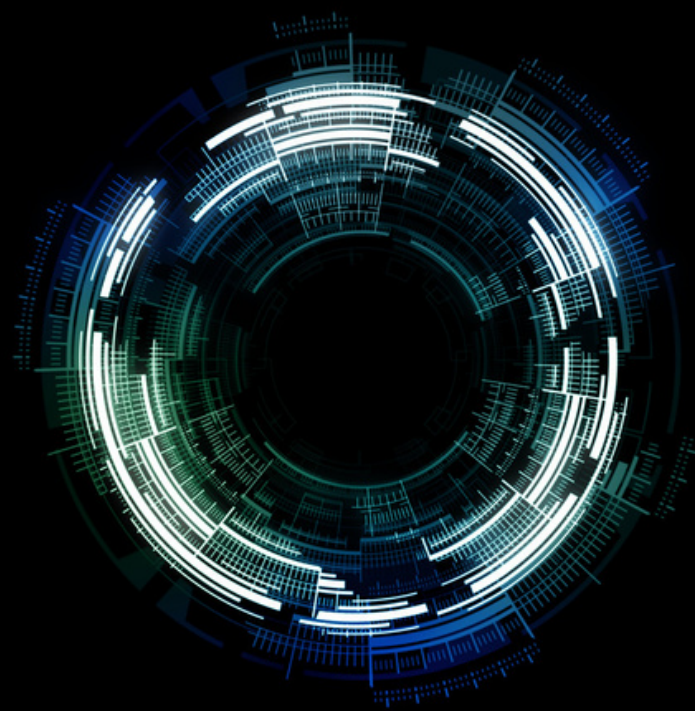


2023

OSINT Report 5

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM IN SPAIN:

MONITORING OF 20-N AND 25-N



AN OPEN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS

DEVELOPED BY:

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ABOUT THE REPORT

The report has been developed in the framework of the EU-funded project "STAND-UP: Standing up against hate in the EU". The project has received funding from the European Commission Directorate General for Justice and Consumers under Grant Agreement no. 101049532.

The OSINT Reports Series, of which this report constitutes the first release, has been developed with the aim of providing an overview of the potential applications, on a European scale, of open-source research and analysis methodologies in prevention and mitigation activities directed against a range of potential threats. Each report in the OSINT Reports Series will provide insights, gathered through open source intelligence, concerning a potential threat identified by Agenfor International Foundation with the support of public and private partners.

To conduct the research and analysis, the team involved in the project relied both on freely available tools and on an AI-powered OSINT software.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the increase in hate crimes and hate speeches is part of the polarisation of societies. Every day, countless hate messages are disseminated on social networks. This phenomenon is very complex due to the wide variety of actors who are senders of hate speeches and the different interacting variables.

Bias motivation is a basic element of hate crime that is compiled by national and European law. The law constrains to a closed list of reasons that individuals can allocate as hate crimes: racist acts, anti-Semitic reasons, ideology, religion or beliefs, family situation, belonging to an ethnic group, race or nation, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or identity and reasons of gender, illness or disability.

However, ideology of hate speech senders is one of the most important variables to consider not only as bias motivation but also understood as narratives involving hate phenomena. Norris (2005)[1] pointed out as a characteristic of far-right groups their tendency to use violence and to perpetrate hate crimes. In the case of Spain, at the end of 2022 far-right groups were particularly active on social networks due to the celebration of different events such as the Football World Cup in Qatar, November 20th, or the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

The report will use OSINT analysis in order to identify online far-right narratives during the events of 20th and 25th November. Thus, it is divided into three main sections:

- The analysis of the November 20th narratives.
- The analysis of the November 25th narratives.
- Summarising the main results of the analysis identifying tendencies, narratives, and ideological characteristics of the far-right in Spain.



ANALYSIS: NOVEMBER 20TH AS A NEO-FASCIST INSPIRATION EVENT

November 20th is one of the most symbolic days for the Spanish far-right. The Falangist leader, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, was executed by the Spanish Republicans at the beginning of the civil war on November 20, 1936. The result of this war was the triumph of the military rebels with the support of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, establishing a dictatorship headed by Francisco Franco. Almost four decades later, the dictator died on November 20, 1975.

After this coincidence, November 20th has become a day that some extreme right groups celebrate, taking advantage of it to make an apology for Francoism and Falangist demands. The events include a wide range of activities, from masses in honour of these two personalities to demonstrations and meals.



Figure 1: Different calls found during the monitoring of events for this day.

In 2022, the acts were marked by the recent approval of "Law 20/2022, of October 19th, on Democratic Memory"[2]. Among other measures, the law prohibits the glorification of the dictatorship and the humiliation of the victims (subject to sanctions), and the redefinition of the Valle de los Caídos "to strengthen constitutional and democratic values". Now renamed "Valle de Cuelgamuros", this place is a monumental complex built by the dictator to glorify the dead of the rebel side during the civil war, where José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Francisco Franco were buried until the exhumation of the latter on October 24, 2019.[3] As a symbol of the Franco regime, this was a regular meeting point where far-right groups used to hold events and masses, sometimes leading to altercations.[4]

Francoist chants, fascist salutes and speeches paying homage to the military coup that started the Spanish civil war are used in these called demonstrations. Also, participants paid tribute to the Francoist dictatorship and other authoritarian personalities.

These proclamations reflect the neofascist ideology of the participants in these protests and of their broadcasters on social networks. Participants and online supporters have falangist inspiration lead by nostalgic for the Franco regime, such as the ultra-Catholics of the Spanish Catholic Movement (MCE, by its acronym in Spanish). This party usually carries out these types of demonstrations as part of the different "families" of power that supported the Franco regime.

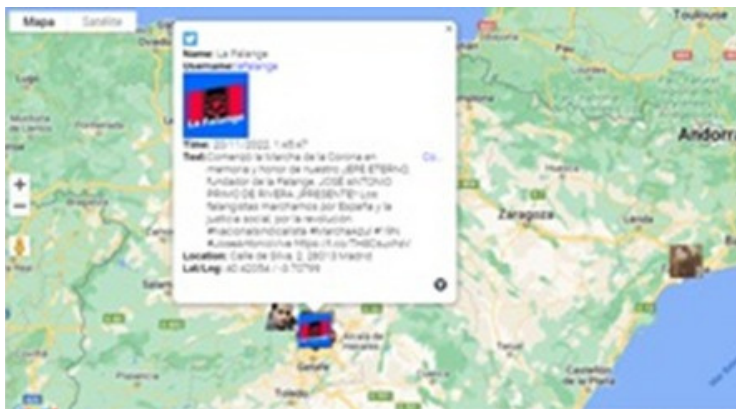


Figure 2: the previous tweets [5][6] show videos where protesters appear singing the hymn of the falangist "Face to the Sun". The extensive police force deployed to control the "Blue March" and the different proclamations that were intoned Falangist messages.



In addition, anti-democratic and anti-establishment characteristics are present in their demonstrations. Also, this report found evidence using keywords which contains posts of far- right groups rejecting the democratic regime established in 1978. [7] [8]



Figure 3: This kind of celebration is used to glorify an authoritarian regime and to spread anti-democratic values through historical revisionism and the exaltation of the old "myths" of the regime.

Some keywords used for this monitoring were: José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Francisco Franco, Valle de los Caídos, Falange, JONS, 1978, 78, fascista, franquista, nacionalsindicalista, 20N.

Also, there were plenty of relevant hashtags: #MarchaAzul, #Derogacionley memoriademocratica, #SomosLaFalange, #vuelveacreer, #JoseAntonioVive. Using OSINT, we were able to search through accounts linked to neo-fascist and phalangist groups, where we found a wide dissemination of images of the day's events.





Figure 4: In the previous photos, there are flags of the Franco regime, fascist greetings, images of José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Francisco Franco, flags of the tercios and demonstrators in the Cuelgamuros Valley.

ANTIFEMINISM THROUGH THE DEFENSE OF TRADITIONAL VALUES ON NOVEMBER 25TH

November 25th is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. [9] Every year women from all over the world participate in demonstrations for their rights and protest against gender violence. This report found evidence that Spanish far-right is more active on social media in the 25-N if compared with other demonstrations. Extreme right groups and deniers of gender violence take advantage of this day to generate debate around feminism and violence against women.

Organic Law 10/2022, of September 6, on the comprehensive guarantee of sexual freedom, [10] better known as the "Law only if it is yes" (in Spanish), has been one of the central themes around which the protests of the 25-N.

The main controversy surrounding this law evolves from a sentence reduction from which some prisoners for sexual offenses have benefited due to the retroactive nature of its application.[11] This fact was used by the entire right-wing bloc (including those parties that are not far-right) to criticize the government, the equality ministry and its minister. Throughout the day of November 25th and the days before and after, social networks were full of publications accusing Minister Irene Montero of releasing rapists. Contradictorily, the senders of these messages gave different numbers of how many people had been released.

 **Joaki** 
@joaquin_rp1963

Replying to @IreneMontero

Si te sientes ofendida por lo que te dijeron en el Parlamento, imagínate cómo se sienten estás víctimas gracias a tu Ley del "Solo Sí es Sí", también conocida como "Ley Montero"

[Translate Tweet](#)

JUSTICIA

Otros tres agresores reducen su pena con el 'sólo sí es sí', entre ellos un padre que violó a su hija

 **Cristina Seguí** 
@CristinaSegui_

Ya son 46 los condenados beneficiados por la 'ley del solo sí es sí': 10 de ellos, excarcelados.

[Translate Tweet](#)



theobjective.com
Ya son 46 los condenados beneficiados por la 'ley del solo sí es sí': 10 de ellos, ... El número de condenados que se han visto beneficiados por el nuevo marco de penas que recoge la ley del sólo sí es sí asciende al menos a 36, entre revisiones

6:00 PM · Nov 25, 2022

243 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 396 Likes



Figure 5: Examples of tweets found by OSINT analysis. In general, the messages seek to contrast the "hypocrisy" of the equality minister. The accounts that contain more aggressive hate messages are those that are not from public figures. Among the chosen examples, an account of a woman that calls members of the government "murderers" and another account that insinuates that the minister seeks revenge on other people spending public money.

One of the central axes of the messages that were disseminated during this day were the attacks against the Minister of Equality, Irene Montero.





Figure 6: As observed in the tweets, Irene Montero appears along with all kinds of disqualifying words such as: ignorant, useless, shameful, lazy, liar, miserable, thief, drunk, and "go home alone." This last comment is especially serious because is referring to a feminist slogan against raping used in the demonstrations of the 25-N and 8-M in Spain which means that women want to arrive alone and save to home. The extreme right groups reframed this narrative suggesting to the minister go home alone removing the word save and using the slogan as a veiled threat.

The neo-fascist Democracia Nacional party posted on dates close to 25-N claiming a "national femininity" against "abortionist feminism" and where they criticize the law "only yes is yes" accusing the law of "abortionist and globalist" nature. In the same way, the message contains disqualifications towards the equality minister with a class component: "Well, imagine a cashier writing laws."



Falangism also shared online contents in this day. Falange Española y de las JONS, through its leader, Norberto Pico, focused on issues related to abortion; although he also tweeted about reduced sentences. He reacted to news about UK abort fetuses with down syndrome at any time of the pregnancy by posting the word "genocide".[17] In addition, he also criticized French radical right leader Marine Le Pen for considering abortion a constitutional right.[18] Finally, he criticized Minister Irene Montero in the following way: "(...) thanks to your legal bungling, your ideological diarrhoea and your obstinacy in not recognizing that you were wrong".[19]



The Falange follows the same path described above and focuses criticism on the reduction of sentences and the ministry's campaign[20]. In addition, they also attacked the "corrupt 1978 Regime that supports all of them"[21] (referring to the Ministry of Equality, feminism and Irene Montero) showing their anti-system and anti-democratic nature.



Vox and its orbit of related accounts were the ones that interacted the most during 25-N. Although they do not share anti-democratic and neo-fascist characteristics with the previous groups, they do share the defence of traditional values. This is a key factor in far-right groups issuing narratives during 25th November.

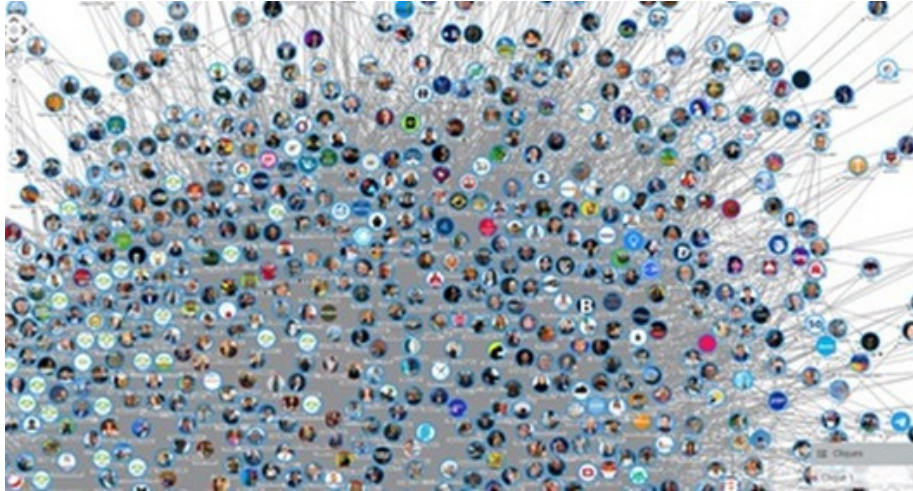


Figure 7: Connections of Vox accounts with other accounts broadcasting the same type of discourse during 25-N.



Figure 8: Vox mainly focuses its publications on criticizing the law “only yes is yes”, highlighting the reduction of sentences for prisoners for sexual crimes and pointing out that the government is guilty of releasing pedophiles and rapists. Mentions of Irene Montero and the Ministry of Equality are also present.

Some keywords used for this monitoring were: Ministerio de Igualdad, Irene Montero, Violencia de Género, Machismo, Violación, Abuso, Agresión, Sólo Sí es Sí, Igualdad, Asesinato, violador, discriminación, concienciación, maltrato, #25N, #25Noviembre.

CONCLUSION

The context of the events was marked by the approbation of the two laws: the Democratic Memory Law and the “Solo sí es sí” Law. Depending on the presence of the not-shared characteristics in the groups, different groups interacted on social media or not the November 20th and 25th.

November 20th was marked for the dissemination of messages by neofascists groups that are characterised for having anti-democratic characteristics, neofascist inspiration and traditional values. These narratives were hegemonized by falangist and they focused on antidemocratic speeches. In their demonstrations was fascist symbology and they protested against the government and the democratic regime.

By contrast, November 25th had more interactions between far-right groups. Vox was the most active. This day, far-right groups focused their hate speeches on Irene Montero and the government using offensive and belligerent language. Also, other neofascist groups such as falangists or Democracia Nacional posted social media content related to abortion accompanied by a direct attack against feminism. The unique characteristic that unified all of these groups is the defence of “traditional values”.



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