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Temporal dynamics of e-petitions to the UK parliament 2015–2022

SUMMARY The tradition of petitioning authorities for redress of grievances can be traced back in England to the 14th century and was completed at the turn of the 21st century in the UK by the introduction of online systems which have proved extremely popular. However, no diachronic study has been conducted so far to precisely appraise this popularity during the premierships of David Cameron, Theresa May and Boris Johnson between 2015 and 2022. The first objective of this paper is thus to explore data pertaining to over 100,000 petitions submitted to the UK Parliament over this period to map petition submission numbers over time, analyse the evolution of the system and probe the factors which may influence trends in submissions. The second part of the article focuses on the volume of signatures achieved by petitions and the dynamics of petition signing. The main goal is to determine whether a petition's fate is set in the hours following its opening to the public. The analysis relies on a triangulation methodology, combining insight from data mining, data visualisation, close

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reading and statistics in order to build a web of evidence supporting the results being offered.

KEYWORDS petition, politics, parliament, UK, temporality, diachrony

Introduction

While online petitions are 21st century tools of political participation, petitions themselves date as far back as Pharaonic times and pre-modern China. Definitions of the concept may however vary (Briassoulis, 2021). For Huzzey & Miller, petitions are "formalised requests to authority" (2020) while Carpenter sees them as "technology mapping human pain and experience into a set of symbolic (textual) grievances" (2016).

In the UK, the first known petitions to parliament date from the 14th century with the right to petition recognized both in the Magna Carta and the 1688 Bill of Rights. By the 17th century, petitions had become a major tool for bringing forward grievances, particularly for those who could not stand or vote for Parliament. At the time, such grievances essentially addressed local or personal concerns but from the 18th century, they increasingly dealt with matters of public policy. Petitioning activity, both submission and signing, peaked in the 19th century before decreasing significantly after WWI (House of Commons Information Office, 2010).

In 1999, the Scottish parliament was the first to launch its e-petitioning system, followed by a variety of initiatives at the local, regional, national and international levels from both private and public operators. In the UK, local authorities pioneered e-petition projects from 2004. Nationally, the Downing Street e-petition site was launched by the government of Tony Blair in 2006. In 2011, following the election of the Conservative-Liberal coalition, the Downing Street site was replaced with a new platform which in turn paved the way for the 2015, parliament-based version supported by the creation of a dedicated committee.

Under this system, petitions reaching over 10,000 signatures are entitled to a government response while petitions reaching 100,000 signatures can be allowed by the government to be debated in parliament. The present article will focus on e-petitions published between 2015 and 2022 during the premierships of Cameron, May and Johnson.

This paper builds on the abundant academic literature on e-petitions. The ground-breaking Scottish e-petition system was naturally the first to become the object of studies (Macintosh et al., 2002; Carman, 2006) but research

has since been published on a variety of countries. Signers of petitions (Lee et al., 2014; Puschmann et al., 2017) as well as petitioners (Bright et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2021) have also been investigated together with the topics of petitions (Hagen et al., 2015; Hitlin, 2016) and reasons for success (Cruickshank et al., 2010; Cabonce et al., 2019). Studies have addressed the democratic potential of such initiatives (Palmieri, 2008; Horstink, 2017; Zadra, 2020), their relevance as tools for political participation (Christensen, 2011; Böhle & Riehm, 2013), their broader role (Hough, 2012; Leston-Bandeira, 2019) as well as their impact (Morva, 2016).

However, Girvin (2018) emphasizes their failure to enhance participatory forms of democratic decision-making and Matthews (2021) the apathy of Westminster's elected MPs towards them. Yet studies like Sheppard's (2015) move away from dualistic interpretations and underline the range of possibilities between slacktivist and democratic visions of e-petitions. As for Leston-Bandeira (2019) and Wright (2016), they warn against Manichean definitions of success and failure in this area, highlighting a myriad of subtle ripples rather than straightforward and outstanding effects.

Beyond academic debates, for McKinnell, the chair of the House of Commons' Petitions Committee from 2020 to 2024, "the UK Parliament petitions system is the most popular parliamentary initiative of its kind in the world" (2022). And indeed, despite their limits, e-petitions remain, according to the latest Hansard Audit of Political Engagement, the third most popular political activity after voting and getting in touch with elected representatives.

However, if such assessments are supported by synchronic evidence, no diachronic study has been conducted to precisely appraise this popularity between 2015 and 2022. The first objective of the current analysis is thus to map petition submission numbers over time to analyse the dynamics of the system and probe the factors which may influence this, in keeping with Hough's notion that petitions are not stand-alone units but come with a process (2012) and that such processes matter (Carman, 2010; Bochel, 2020). Indeed, sustained, high levels of usage of such tools are not a given. The German Bundestag (Leston-Bandeira, 2019), the 'We the People' system in the US (Hitlin, 2016) as well as Change.org (Halpin, 2018) all witnessed a decline in the number of submissions over time while the French platform for the National Assembly never took off. Conversely, the present work will show that the UK parliament's e-petition tool demonstrated exceptional resilience over an extended period of time and present explanations for variations in usage.

The focus on processes and temporal dynamics will also underpin the second part of the demonstration by analysing the speed of mobilization once a petition is open to signatures. For Yasseri et al. (2013; 2017), working on the Downing Street site, "After a day or two, a petition's fate is virtually set". The current work, from a dataset significantly larger than those of previous studies will instead support the view of Clark and Lomax for the UK parliament's platform in 2015/2016 that "a low initial number of signatures is not a death knell for an e-petition" (2020). To understand the reasons for such a situation, it will build upon Briassoulis's view that "Outputs and outcomes are uncertain and situated, determined by the unique, emergent e-petition assemblages that reflect its History and link the microbehavior (molecular) of individual signing to the macro- (molar) behavior of the e-petition."

Data and tools

As emphasized by Hale et al. (2012), e-petitions are useful sources for studies of political participation as they make available "a transactional audit trail of what people actually did (as opposed to what people think they did) and an entire population (without the need to take a representative sample)" Barats et al. (2016) nevertheless also stressed the challenges such data represent.

In the case of the current project, data pertaining to petitions published via the UK parliament portal are made available under an Open Parliament license. Besides, an API is provided to help with data collection. However, the data collected via the API presented various reliability issues, with the major difficulty coming from the fact that although the queries were run when all petitions were closed, thousands of them appeared to have been archived when they were still open and data for these, such as ultimate number of signatures or government response, was thus unusable.

In the end, what Jouët and Le Caroff call the "Intellectual and Technical DIY of online observation" (2013) had to be mobilised to carry out the collection of the data. At the bottom of the Published Petitions' page on the petition.parliament.uk website was offered the possibility to download petition data in csv or json formats. The URLs for all the petitions were therefore collected in csv and a json extension added via Excel. The complete data was then collected thanks to Open Refine queries and exported in csv for analysis.

As a result, for each of the 101,727 petitions published between 2015 and 2022, the following data was available: ID, title, summary, number of signatures,

date of submission, date of rejection (if applicable), reason for rejection (if applicable), date when the government response threshold of 10,000 signatures was reached (if applicable), and date when the debate threshold of 100,000 signatures was reached (if applicable).

Note that the platform was suspended for the General Elections of 2017 and 2019 and that the British Parliament only makes public data on published petitions. No data is available on petitions excluded at the moderation stage, essentially because they did not reach the required threshold of five signatures or because they contained potentially defamatory, offensive or extreme content.

Over the whole project, Open refine was used for data filtering, Excel for calculations, Tableau and R for data visualization and Voyant and AntConc to mine textual data from petition titles.

The popularity of the UK's e-petition site: A diachronic study of petition publication 2015–2022

In the late modern period, petitions were a common tool of manifesting political grievances. The average number of petitions presented annually to the Commons in 1785–1789 was 176, but by 1841, the figure had risen to 18,648 and a record was set in 1843 with 33,898 petitions presented. Overall, in the 19th century, the number of petitions published rarely fell below 10,000 per session. Yet by the end of the 1990s, only about one hundred petitions were presented each session. (House of Commons Information Office, 2010).

In the UK, unlike in Germany where the launch of the Bundestag platform did not significantly alter the number of petitions submitted (Lindner & Riehm, 2011), the introduction of the Downing Street e-petition system resulted in the opposite with 67,000 e-petitions submitted between December 2006 and January 2010 (Riehm, Bohle, & Lindner, 2013).

For 2015–2022, the figures show a high and sustained use of e-petitions:

Table 1. Number of published petitions, 2015–2022

Government	Government Dates	Petitions (Dataset) Dates	Number of Petitions Published	Number of days Average nb petition/day Median nb petition/day
Cameron	9 May, 2015 12 July, 2016	20 July, 2015 12 July, 2016	19,360	359 days 53.9/day Average 31/day Median
May A	13 July, 2016 10 June, 2017	13 July, 2016 19 April, 2017	12,371	281 days 44.1/day Average 35/day Median
May B	11 June, 2017 24 July, 2019	12 Sept., 2017 24 July, 2019	24,167	681 days 35.5/day Average 30/day Median
Johnson A	25 July, 2019 12 Dec., 2019	25 July, 2019 2 Nov., 2019	3,935	101 days 38.9/day Average 32/day Median
Johnson B	13 Dec., 2019 6 Sept., 2022	2 March, 2020 6 Sept., 2022	41,894	919 days 45.6/day Average 32/day Median
Total	9 May, 2015 6 Sept., 2022	20 July, 2015 6 September, 2022	101,727	2,341 days 43.5/day Average 32/day Median

Source: own work.

The discrepancy between average and median suggests the figures for the number of petitions published per day were affected by outliers, which is indeed confirmed by the following graph:

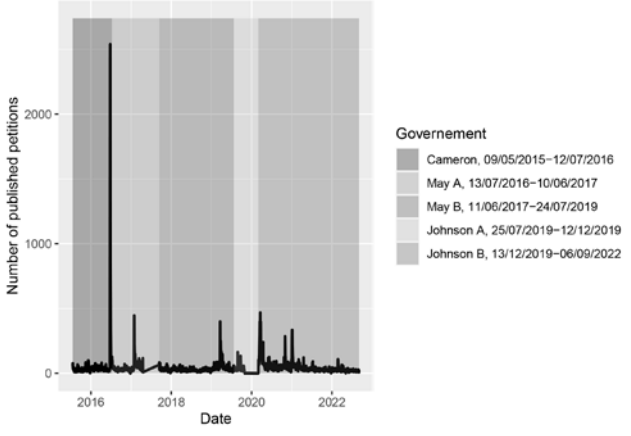

Image 1. Number of petitions published per day with Government dates, 2015–2022

Source: own work.

The days with the highest number of publications over the 2015 to 2022 period were the following:

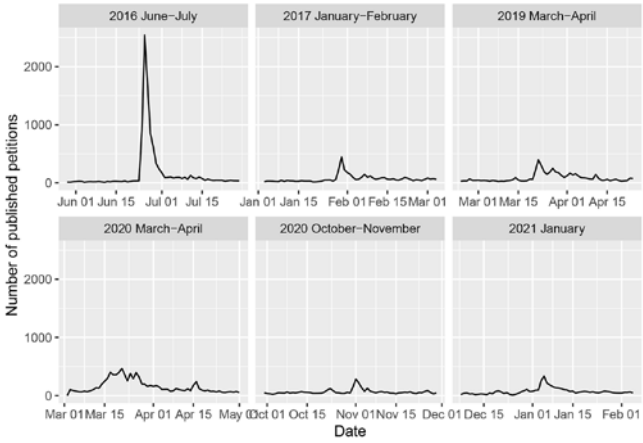

Image 2. Six periods of peaks in petition publications 2015–2022

Source: own work.

The busiest day for the whole period was June 25 2016, two days after the European Union Membership referendum, with 2,540 petitions published, hence the main area of concern expressed in their titles:

Image 3. Word cloud for the title of petitions published on June 25, 2016

Source: own work.

The spike on January 30, 2017 came on the day Theresa May announced that Donald Trump was invited to visit the UK, with titles indicating this visit was indeed the main trigger for exceptional activity for this date. A spike at the end of March 2019 was related to significant mobilisation from British citizens on Europe, and particularly a march organised on March 23, once again calling for

the government to organise a second EU referendum and revoke Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. The last three periods of unusually high petition publication in 2020 and 2021 happened each time a lockdown was announced in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

Beyond such exceptional days linked to contextual stimuli, image 4 suggests a stable level of usage throughout the 2015–2022 period.

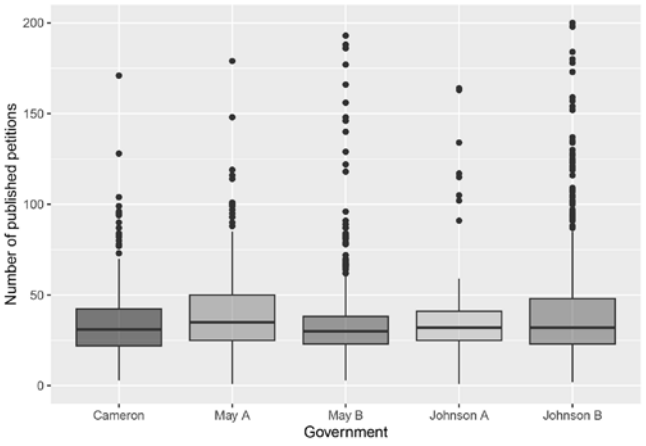

Image 4. Boxplot of the distributions of the number of petitions submitted per day for each government, 2015–2022

Source: own work.

If the distributions differ between governments in terms of outliers (the dots outside the boxes) with a greater number of exceptional days during the second governments of May and Johnson, days with above average petition publications remain stable over the period as shown on image 5.

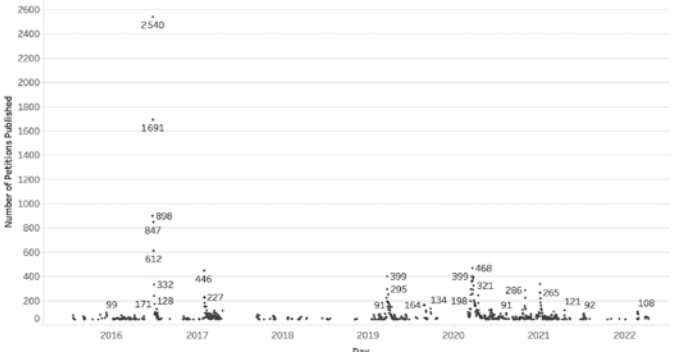

Image 5. Days with number of petitions above average (44), 2015–2022

Source: own work.

The use of e-petitions in the UK, contrary to what happened in other countries with institutional e-petition systems, thus seems to show no sign of a sustained downturn pointing to a growing indifference to the system.

Over the same period, there doesn't appear to be any let-up in mobilization either. Indeed, the number of petitions reaching the 10,000 and 100,000 signature thresholds actually increased between 2015 and 2022 as shown below.

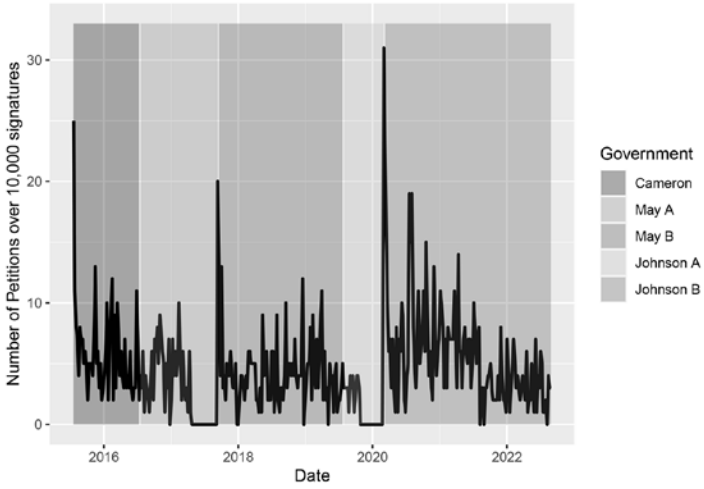

Image 6. Number of petitions which gathered over 10,000 signatures, 2015–2022

Source: own work.

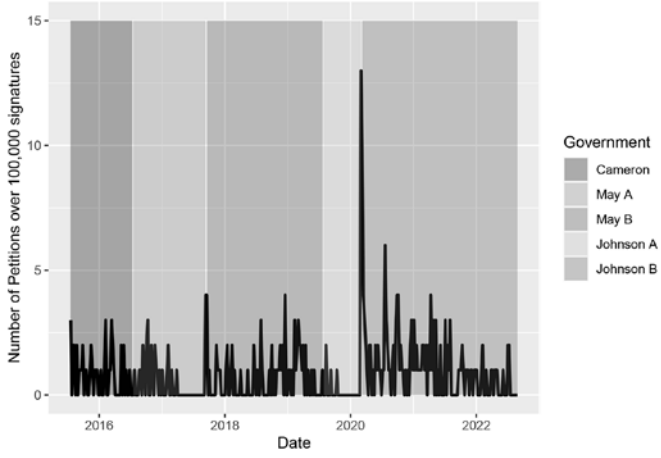

Image 7. Number of petitions which gathered over 100,000 signatures, 2015–2022

Source: own work.

In the UK, evidence thus indicates that the e-petition system is not a passing novelty but a tool for political mobilisation integrated in users' inventory for action and activated when needed.

Temporality of petition signing

Between 2015 and 2022, 1702 petitions received over 10,000 signatures, i.e 1.7% of the number of petitions published in this period, and 302 reached the 100,000 threshold, which is 0.29% of the whole. 28 petitions reached the 10,000 threshold the day they were opened while the longest time between opening and 10,000 signatures was 198 days. On average, it took 55.3 days for petitions to reach the threshold with the median at 31. 50.6% of petitions took over 30 days to reach the response and debate thresholds.

The graph on image 8 shows the proportion of petitions, among those reaching the threshold of 10,000 signatures (solid line) or 100,000 signatures (dotted line), whose duration up to the threshold is greater than the duration indicated on the x-axis. It suggests that 60% of petitions which reached the 10,000 threshold did so in 50 days or less, and the figure rises to 80% for those which passed the 100,000 threshold.

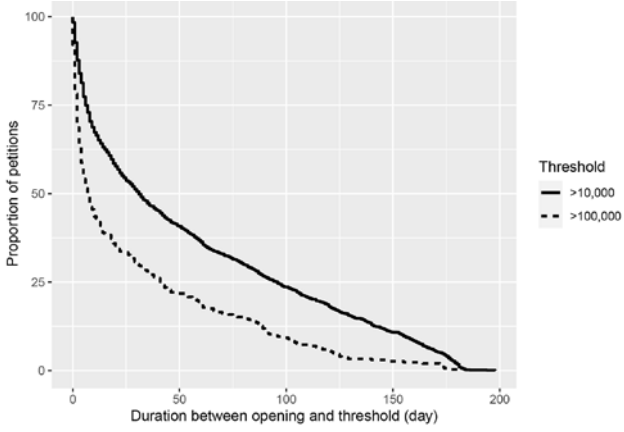

Image 8. Duration between petition opening and passing of thresholds, 2015–2022

Source: own work.

The fastest petitions to garner 10,000 signatures on the day they were opened can be found in table 4 in the appendix at the end of the article.

A closer look at the chronology of events around the submission and opening to signatures of the first five petitions in the list makes it easier to understand

their fast take-off. Petition 300628 (*Close all universities down for an appropriate amount of time amidst COVID-19*) and 300403 (*Close Schools/Colleges down for an appropriate amount of time amidst COVID19*) were the fastest to reach the 10,000-signature mark after they were opened, in 1h28mn for the first and 1h45mn for the second. The first was created on March 6, but opened on March 11 as concern for covid at universities had been mounting since Leicestershire University first Coronavirus case was confirmed on March 8. The second was created on March 5, 2020 and opened the following day as the media reported the first coronavirus death in the country.

The next fastest petition reached the 10,000-signature threshold in 2h17mn. This was petition 126128 (*Call on David Cameron to act to protect our steel industry & recall Parliament*) created and opened on the day Tata Steel announced plans to sell its entire UK business. It was followed by petition 178844 (*Donald Trump should make a State Visit to the United Kingdom*) opened on January 30, 2017 and passing the threshold in 3h29mn on the day Theresa May invited Donald Trump for a state visit to the UK.

Petition 573209 *(Trigger Article 16. We want unfettered GB-NI Trade*) came next. Article 16 of the Northern Ireland Protocol made it possible to take safeguard measures if the application of the protocol led to serious economic, societal or environmental difficulties. The petition was created by the Democratic Unionist Party and advertised on social media to its followers on February 4, 2021 by its leader, Arlene Foster the day before it was opened, hence its rapid take-off.

The dynamics of mobilisation for those five petitions thus supports the theory of Yasseri and Al. that some petitions indeed soar immediately, gathering momentum to reach high numbers of signatures.

Conversely, as shown in table 5 (Appendix), the petitions which took the longest to reach the 10,000-threshold did not go far beyond this figure with 18 out of 20 staying below 12,500 signatures.

As for the petitions which reached the 100,000-threshold, there were 302 in the 2015 to 2022 period during the terms of office of Cameron, May and Johnson. The time to reach the 100,000-threshold varied from 1 to 191 days, with an average of 75.7 days and a median at 64. The quickest are listed in Table 6 in the appendix.

The fastest petitions to reach the 10,000-threshold all reached the 100,000-threshold the following day or faster. Indeed, the 74 petitions which reached 100,000 signatures in 10 days or less had reached the 10,000-mark

in 2.1 days on average, with a median at 1. Thus, those petitions which reached the thresholds fast indeed achieved high levels of signatures, making all of them eligible for a Parliamentary debate, here again confirming insight from Yasseri et al. (2013; 2017).

However, on average, the ten most signed petitions took 33.7 days to reach the 10,000-threshold, with the median at 19.5, and 37.6 to reach 100,000 signatures with a median at 20.5. Details are provided in Table 7 in the appendix.

Only one such petition took off on the day it was opened. This was petition 300403 mentioned above. It was followed by petition 554276 (*End child food poverty – no child should be going hungry*) launched on October 14, 2020 by Manchester United football player Marcus Rashford and passing both thresholds the next day. This petition was part of a very visible nation-wide campaign initiated in June of the same year when Rashford asked the government to provide free school meals to vulnerable children over the summer school holidays in the context of the pandemic. The ongoing characteristic of the campaign, its high presence on social networks and its prominent spokesperson ensured instant mobilisation once the petition was launched.

Yet overall, among the 50 most signed petitions between 2015 and 2022, only 14 reached the 10,000-threshold on the day they were opened or the next and 10 of them passed the 100,000 threshold the following day. Immediate take-off is thus not the norm for the most signed petitions on the platform.

The next petition to go fast from opening to 100,000 signatures was again petition 300403 mentioned above, followed by petition 575833 (*Make verified ID a requirement for opening a social media account*). Created on February 19, 2021, it was opened on March 5 but passed the thresholds on March 10 and 11 respectively. March 10 was the day the petitioner, TV personality Katie Price, asked her followers to support the petition on social media to help protect her son from online abuse.

For petitions with a longer delay between opening and passing the thresholds, understanding the context is essential too, like for instance for petition 241584 (*Revoke Article 50 and remain in the EU*), the most signed in the dataset. On 14 February 2019, the day it was submitted, MPs voted against a motion endorsing May's government's Brexit negotiating strategy. The petition was opened 4 days later and took 26 days to reach the 10,000-mark. However, the number of signatures jumped to 100,000 as the deadline of March 29 for the UK to withdraw from the European Union approached. This deadline was clearly the trigger for mobilization.

Petition 108072 (*Give the Meningitis B vaccine to ALL children, not just newborn babies*) is very illustrative of the dynamics behind the slower mobilisation around some petitions, as explained by its initiator Lee Booth:

> I started the petition on the 14th September 2015. Despite my best efforts to get it to go viral, it didn't. […] I couldn't understand it, why were people not signing, it would potentially save children's lives. […] I'd spent ages tweeting and posting on Facebook etc… but it really wasn't going anywhere. That was until the night of 13th February. […] I said to my wife, something is happening. The numbers were starting to climb faster than at any point since the petition started! I was contacted by members of a Facebook group of mums who had all had children in the same month. Faye was one of those children… After chatting online to various members, I became aware that Faye had contracted Meningitis B and was in a serious condition in hospital. Then the worst possible news came the next day, on 14th February that Faye had died. […] From that point onwards and after the pictures were released, the petition soared. […] Meningitis B became headline news, EVERYWHERE !!! It started off with local radio interviews, then local TV, then I had to go to BBC Newcastle. (Houses of Parliament, 2016).

The pictures mentioned here being those released by the parents of Faye on social media to raise awareness about the issue following the death of their daughter.

The passing of signature thresholds is thus clearly linked to a trigger event, but such triggers do not necessarily happen on the day the petition is created or opened, hence the delay between opening and high signature levels observed for most successful petitions.

The impact of a rule regulating petition submissions can explain this situation as well as the occasional gap between publication and mobilization. Indeed, once a petition is published on a given topic, no other petition on the same topic can be accepted. In the case of petition 171928 (*Prevent Donald Trump from making a State Visit to the United Kingdom*) for instance, the petition was submitted while no formal announcement had been made about a potential visit by Donald Trump and therefore remained dormant. On the day the visit was announced however, other such petitions were submitted (Cf Petitions 178831or 178991) but were rejected. The public thus had to sign the original petition. When a trigger for mobilization is pulled, quick, high-volume signing is thus often correlated with ultimate success for a petition. But trigger and opening of the petition are not always simultaneous, hence the need to consider the pre-existence of a petition on a given topic.

Indeed, for those petitions which ranked among the most signed but took longer to get from 10,000 to 100,000, the trigger for mobilisation occurred later. For instance, petition 231521 (*Ban all ISIS members from returning to the UK, 598254 signatures*) was submitted on 30 October 2018 after the Kurdish authorities urged the British government to take responsibility for its nationals, and reached 10,000 in only fifteen days. But the 100,000 marker was exceeded 93 days later, in February 2019 when Shamima Begum, a 19-year-old British teenager who had run away to join ISIS in Syria gave a series of interviews to express her desire to return home. Likewise, petition 107516 (*Stop all immigration and close the UK borders until ISIS is defeated*) took 70 days to get 10,000 signatures but reached the 100,000-threshold in a few hours on 14 November 2015 after the Paris terrorist attack. For petition 105991 (*Accept more asylum seekers and increase support for refugee migrants in the UK*) opened on August 13, 2015, the trigger was the speech made by Angela Merkel, the former German Chancellor, on August 31 to welcome refugees to Germany in the context of the Syrian migration crisis of that year. Such evidence therefore suggests that a petition's fate is in fact not set if its take-off is not immediate.

Images 9 and 10 confirm that the relationship between speed of mobilisation and final number of signatures is not straightforward but rather a complex phenomenon affected by a variety of factors, including the pre-existence of a petition on a given topic as well as contextual triggers as demonstrated above.

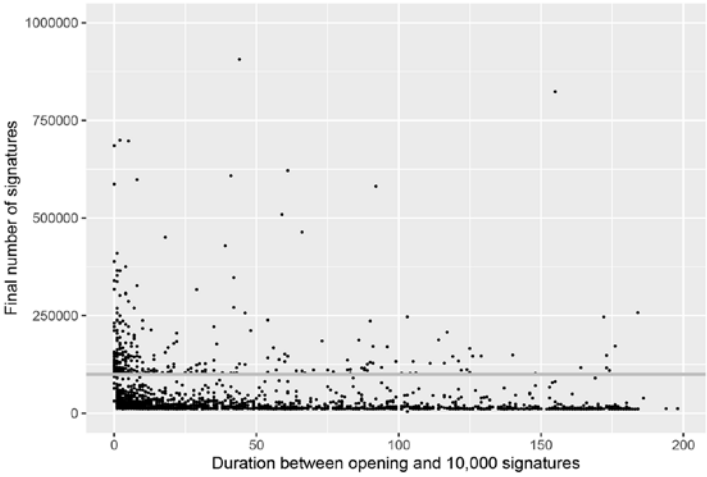

Image 9. Final number of signatures as a function of the time to reach the 10,000 threshold (days)

Source: own work.

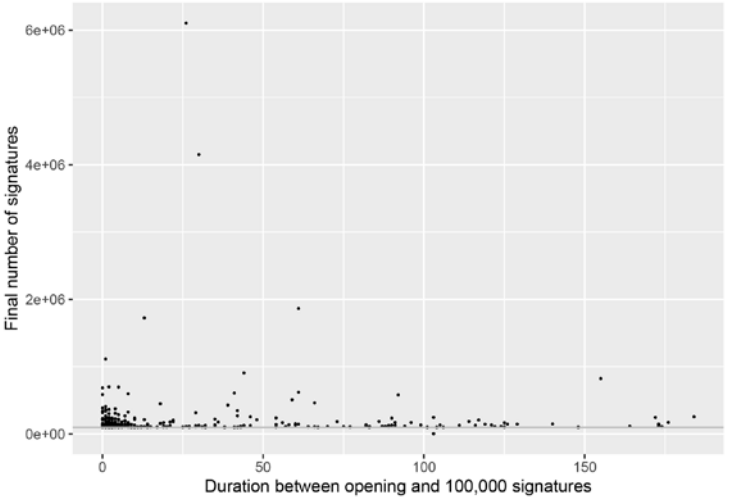

Image 10. Final number of signatures as a function of the time to reach the 100,000-threshold (days)

Source: own work.

Indeed, images 9 and 10 illustrate that there are petitions which reached both thresholds quickly and had a high final number of signatures, but also a number which had a final number close to the threshold as well as petitions which reached the threshold late but had a very high final number of signatures. In fact, the correlation test between the final number of signatures and the duration to the threshold is significant for 10,000 signatures (Spearman coefficient rho = −0.50, p-value < 10–16), with the negative Spearman coefficient suggesting that the shorter the duration to 10,000 signatures, the higher the final number of signatures, but not for 100,000 signatures.

Moreover, if the petitions reaching the 100,000-threshold did so in 75.7 days on average with a median at 64, time from one threshold to the next averaged 46.4 days with a median at 14. This hints at a potential correlation between a petition's capacity to go fast from one threshold to the other and its ultimate success. Speed of take-off from triggering event might therefore be more useful than from opening date to assess a petition's chance of reaching high levels of signatures. Such a theory would however need further work and corroboration.

Discussion

The enduring popularity of the UK's parliamentary e-petition platform has been revealed by various surveys of the country's population but lacked empirical, diachronic proof. The current article therefore demonstrates sustained level of submissions and signatures over the 2015 to 2022 period, but also a broader willingness from the British population to engage with the platform over time, thus paving the way for the record highs achieved during the coronavirus pandemic. While the novelty of e-petition systems has worn off since their introduction at the beginning of the 21st century, the ongoing, high levels of usage of the parliamentary platform in the UK make further research in this area relevant to advance understanding of political activism and online mobilisation in the country.

In addition, the current work has shown that the dynamics of petition signing is an intricate matter which, to be understood fully, requires contextualization. Indeed, if petitions quickly achieving strong momentum in the hours or days following opening for signatures are more likely to receive large numbers of signatures, as demonstrated in previous work, it does not follow that petitions lacking this rapid start are doomed. In fact, the most signed petitions in the dataset did not peak early.

Predicting whether a petition will attract signatures or not is very challenging as petition use is affected by a variety of factors. For instance, while the students' climate strike of February 15, 2019 failed to affect the mobilisation around petition 232684 (*Ban the use of all non-recyclable and unsustainable food packaging*), a similar demonstration which took place a month later, on March 15 was followed by the passing of the 100,000-threshold shortly afterwards. Thus, all events providing visibility to a cause do not necessarily trigger a surge in petition signing. However, evidence suggests some events do trigger a surge, and that the speed of mobilisation from this triggering event can help figure out the potential success of a petition more effectively than speed of mobilisation from submission or opening date.

Appendix

Tables with captions on individual pages

Table 4. Quickest petitions to reach the 10,000-threshold, 2015–2022

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000	Nb of hours from Opening to 10,000
300628	*Close all universities down for an appropriate amount of time amidst COVID-19*	123903	11/03/2020 15:32	11/03/2020 17:00	0	1,28
300403	*Close Schools/ Colleges down for an appropriate amount of time amidst COVID-19*	685394	06/03/2020 17:40	06/03/2020 19:26	0	1,45
126128	*Call on David Cameron to act to protect our steel industry & recall Parliament*	153679	30/03/2016 13:32	30/03/2016 15:49	0	2,17
178844	*Donald Trump should make a State Visit to the United Kingdom*	317542	30/01/2017 16:56	30/01/2017 20:25	0	3,29
573209	*Trigger Article 16. We want unfettered GB-NI Trade*	144632	04/02/2021 09:50	04/02/2021 13:59	0	4,09

Source: own work.

Table 5. Slowest petitions from opening to 10,000 signature-threshold 2015–2022

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000
324465	*Extend business rates relief to include every English language teaching school*	11133	12/08/2020 11:34	09/02/2021 18:03	181
550276	*Ban all unpaid work trial periods*	10218	14/09/2020 12:24	14/03/2021 00:19	181
578133	*Reciprocal agreement with the EU on the transfer of UK CAA Flight Crew Licences*	10533	26/03/2021 15:23	23/09/2021 23:32	181
606788	*Overturn the decision to allow the use of neonicotinoid pesticides*	11074	25/01/2022 09:45	25/07/2022 18:10	181
111185	*Make Organ Donation registration in England automatic*	10821	27/10/2015 18:53	26/04/2016 10:58	182

Source: own work.

Table 6. Quickest petitions from opening to 100,000-signature threshold 2015–2022

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000	Date and time for 100,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 100,000
104334	*To debate a vote of no confidence in Health Secretary the Right Hon Jeremy Hunt*	231136	20/07/2015 14:12	20/07/2015 18:57	0	21/07/2015 15:54	1

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000	Date and time for 100,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 100,000
114003	*Block Donald J Trump from UK entry*	586930	08/12/2015 16:39	08/12/2015 21:53	0	09/12/2015 12:04	1
121152	*Consider a vote of No Confidence in Jeremy Hunt, Health Secretary*	339925	11/02/2016 16:56	11/02/2016 23:00	0	12/02/2016 18:20	1
126128	*Call on David Cameron to act to protect our steel industry & recall Parliament*	153679	30/03/2016 13:32	30/03/2016 15:49	0	31/03/2016 09:15	1
178844	*Donald Trump should make a State Visit to the United Kingdom*	317542	30/01/2017 16:56	30/01/2017 20:25	0	31/01/2017 13:01	1

Source: own work.

Table 7. Most signed petitions 2015–2022 with time to 10,000 and 100,000 thresholds

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000	Date and time for 100,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 100,000
241584	*Revoke Article 50 and remain in the EU*	6103056	20/02/2019 10:25	18/03/2019 13:26	26	20/03/2019 20:33	28
131215	*EU Referendum Rules triggering a 2nd EU Referendum*	4150262	25/05/2016 11:19	24/06/2016 06:54	30	24/06/2016 10:48	30
171928	*Prevent Donald Trump from making a State Visit to the United Kingdom*	1863708	29/11/2016 16:32	29/01/2017 10:50	61	29/01/2017 12:40	61

ID	Title	Signatures Collected	Date and time of Opening	Date and time for 10,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 10,000	Date and time for 100,000 signature Threshold	Nb of days from Opening to 100,000
269157	*Do not prorogue Parliament*	1725630	15/08/2019 16:04	28/08/2019 10:04	13	28/08/2019 11:38	13
554276	*End child food poverty – no child should be going hungry*	1113889	14/10/2020 18:04	15/10/2020 09:10	1	15/10/2020 17:59	1

Source: own work.

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Dynamika czasowa e-petycji do parlamentu Wielkiej Brytanii w latach 2015–2022

STRESZCZENIE Tradycja składania petycji do władz w celu uzyskania zadośćuczynienia za krzywdy sięga w Anglii wieku XIV, a na przełomie wieków XX i XXI została uzupełniona w Wielkiej Brytanii o systemy internetowe, które cieszą się ogromną popularnością. Jednak do tej pory nie przeprowadzono żadnych badań diachronicznych, które pozwoliłyby dokładnie ocenić tę popularność w okresie sprawowania urzędu przez Davida Camerona, Theresę May i Borisa Johnsona w latach 2015–2022. Pierwszym celem niniejszego artykułu jest zatem zbadanie danych dotyczących ponad 100 000 petycji złożonych do parlamentu brytyjskiego w tym okresie, aby przeanalizować ewolucję systemu i zbadać czynniki, które mogą wpływać na trendy w składaniu petycji. Druga część artykułu koncentruje się na liczbie podpisów zebranych pod petycjami oraz na dynamice podpisywania petycji. Głównym celem jest ustalenie, czy los petycji jest przesądzony w ciągu kilku godzin od jej udostępnienia publiczności. Analiza opiera się na metodzie triangulacji, łączącej wnioski płynące z eksploracji danych, wizualizacji danych, dokładnej lektury i statystyk w celu zbudowania sieci dowodów potwierdzających przedstawione wyniki.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE petycja, polityka, parlament, Wielka Brytania, temporalność, diachroniczność

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