Northern Ireland Violent Event Coding Manual

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1 Project Description

How do militant pro-state groups influence conflict dynamics? Does the presence of militant pro-state groups contribute to greater conflict escalation and violence against civilians? This project contributes to an understanding of the presence of militant pro-state groups in conflict, how that influences anti-state violence against civilians, the state, and the pro-state group itself.[1] The data collected from this project will provide an understanding of a) the geographic and temporal distribution of pro-state groups relative to the state security forces and anti-state groups, b) how pro-state violence affects conflict intensification, and c) how pro-state violence affects patterns of anti-state violence against civilians, state security forces, and pro-state groups. These event data describe conflict-related incidents in Northern Ireland from roughly 1971-1973, and are predominantly from the Prime Ministers Correspondence Files.

2 Coding Introduction

2.1 The Unit of Analysis

This project aims to code the incidents that provide information about the ability of the actors active in the Troubles to project power and exert control. The unit of analysis for these data is the incident-actor; that is, each observation in this dataset provides information about the actions taken by a singular actor involved in an incident. **An incident is an event or collection of interrelated events at a singular location and time.** Each event that makes up an incident is

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- taken by a political actor (such as the IRA, the British government, or a pro-government militia) **and/or**
- and provides information on the projection of power over a given area by conflict actors or on the lack of power in a given area by conflict actors. Under this definition, for example, protests can either provide information on the lack of control or strength of the state; shootings and bombings demonstrate the power of non-state actor; prison escapes demonstrate a lack of control by the state.

Incidents can include multiple actors. Because the unit of analysis is the **incident-actor**, each actor that **takes an action** in an incident gets its own observation. For example, in a shooting incident, the actor is the shooter not the shot. Likewise, all of the relevant (i.e., political or violent) actions taken by an actor are coded as being a part of a given incident. The following passage better demonstrates the interaction between incidents, events, and actors. This passage describes an interaction between a civilian and the state security forces:

In the Lower Falls Joe CURLEY (RC) (31) was stopped by a patrols he became abusive, resisted arrest and assaulted a soldier of 1 PARA. Minimum force was used to restrain him but he was cut on the head and was later stitched in RVH.

This incident involves two actors: Joe Curley and a member of the British Security Forces (SF); thus, there are two incident-actors, and two observations emerge from this passage. Because we code the actions **taken** by a given actor, we do not code actions that happen to that actor. For example, in the passage above, Joe Curley is arrested; the observation in which Joe Curley is the actor of interest would not reflect his arrest, but the observation in which the SF is the actor would. Likewise, an individual that is shot would not receive an observation; the actor that shot that individual, however, would. Given that, the events that make up Joe Curley's incident would be the use of non-armed[2] physical force (Event_Type == 6). The events that make up the Security Force agent's incident would be patrolling (Event_Type == 7), arrest (Event_Type == 8) and physical force (Event_Type == 6).

2.2 What If There Is Only One Event Per Incident-Actor Observation?

Fill in the information that is relevant for Event 1; if an incident-actor only has one associated event, leave the cells that could hold information for Events 2 - N blank!

2.3 Who Is A Target?

Any person either **targeted** by the event actor or any person **affected** in some way by the event (including someone explicitly given as collateral damage). For example, if a shooting incident affects both the SF and a civilian, **both** are targets. This is true **even if** the text explicitly outlines that the SF was the intended target of the event.

[2]Here, armed specifically being armed with a gun or a bomb.

2.4 On Multiple Target Groups

There may be multiple targets in a given event; when those targets are of different groups (e.g., civilians and state security forces, or two different pro-government militia), we include information for each target group. Because there can be multiple events in an incident-actor observation, all targets of a given incident are listed within one cell, separated by columns.

2.5 On Coding Duplicates

Code every event you encounter. This means that you will likely code duplicates, especially of incidents of greater political significance. For example, there are multiple documents that discuss Bloody Sunday, a shooting incident by British soldiers. Although you may encounter this event multiple times across multiple documents, continue to code each occurrence. In sum, you should code every event that you encounter, even if you know that it is already in the dataset. There is a variable, **Repeat_Event,** that you should code as a 1 if you know that an event has been included multiple times.

2.6 Questions?

When in doubt, feel free to contact Dani at danielle.villa@emory.edu with questions or concerns. Please note that these coding instructions following the coding schema developed by the NIRI Research Team,[3] with slight variation in the ordering and inclusion of certain variables. Each variable indicates its change from the NIRI data, so that both datasets can be used more efficiently.

3 Variables and Coding Instructions

1. **Coder Name** Enter your initials in this column.

2. **Event ID** Enter in a unique numerical value to identify each event. The first event you code will get an Event ID of 1; no other event will have this as an ID number.

3. **Report_Date** This variable describes the range of dates for a given report; this captures the dates in which the events occurred. If the report spans multiple days, label the range as D1/M/Y - D2/M/Y. If there is only one day covered by a report, label the range as D1/M/Y - D1/M/Y. Don't forget that these reports will have the day before the month!

   Start by examining the range of dates at the top of the page. For example, Situation Reports will include something like: "NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION REPORT FROM 030700 TO 040700 HRS OCT 72." In this instance, Date of Report would be labeled as 03/10/1972 - 04/10/1972. While there are likely to be multiple events that occur in a given report and the dates of those reports may vary (e.g., one event may

[3]Funded by National Science Foundation Grant 1565409; more information here: https://niresearchinitiative.weebly.com/.

have occurred October 3rd, and another occurred October 4th), all events coded from a single report should receive the same report date.

4. **Folder** Enter the folder that the report was filed in (e.g., DEFE 13 1358)

5. **Document** Enter the image number that the event is coded from. When an event description spans multiple documents, enter the first image number that it appears on.

6. **Incident_Day** [1-31] Some events will clearly have a date attributed to them. Others will not. If the report specifies that the event occurred on a given weekday within its range, you can Google the first date in the range plus "day of the week" to figure out which date a certain weekday was. If there is no indication as to which date an event occurred, then put the first date in the range of the report.

7. **Incident_Month** [1-12]

8. **Incident_Year** [1971- 1973]

9. **Incident_County** Enter the numerical value that corresponds with the county in which the incident occurred. Email Dani if you encounter a county that is not listed. This variable closely follows the NIRI county coding scheme, but excludes Belfast and Derry as county categories.

County
0 - Unknown
1 - Antrim
2 - Armagh
3 - Tyrone
4 - Down
5 - Fermanagh
6 - Londonderry
7 - Belfast
8 - Cross-border
9 - Border and Rural Counties
10 - Outside of NI

10. **Repeat_Incident** [0/1] Code whether or not an incident already exists as an observation in the dataset; do your best and use your judgment.

11. **Related_Incident** List the event ID/s of observations that are related to the actions take by a given actor. For example, in the Joe Curley instance, the actions of Joe Curley and the British SF are clearly related as Joe Curley is responding to the patrol and arrest attempt of the SF, and the SF are arresting and using force towards Joe Curley. If there are multiple incident-actors that are related, use a comma to separate the event IDs.

12. **Text** Enter **all** the direct text from the document that describes the event type or gives event details. When there are multiple passages or sentences that describe the event (for example, when an event is described in the "General" section of a Situation Report and more details are later provided under the location-specific section), use ellipses to separate those sections of text.

13. **Actor_Org1** Enter the number from the table below that best corresponds with the actor's most general organizational affiliation; still code the organizational affiliation, even if it is only suspected. **If there is information about the actor (such as his or her name, age, religion, etc.) but not his or her organizational affiliation, assume that they are a civilian and enter 4. If there is no information about the actor at all (i.e., "a gunman" or a the text provides no information about who perpetrated an event, just that it occurred), leave it blank.** For example, in the Joe Curley example, assume that he is a civilian.

    If you are unsure of the affiliation of an actor or if you think that there is a group that is not listed, make a note and contact Dani. While this variable is essentially a condensed version of the NIRI event types, the organizational affiliation codes do not correspond with each other.

Organization Type	**Description**	**Sample to Include**
0 - Tartan Gangs or Hooligans		
1 - Republican Group	Sometimes referred to as nationalist groups, these are non-state actors that wants Northern Ireland leave the United Kingdom and join a united Ireland. They are typically predominantly Roman Catholic	Provisional Irish Republican Army/ "Provos"; Official Irish Republican Army; Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association
2 - Loyalist Group	Sometimes referred to as unionist groups, these are non-state actors that want Northern Ireland to remain a part of the United Kingdom. These groups are typically predominately Protestant	Protestant vigilantes or mobs; Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF); Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF); Ulster Defence Association (UDA); Loyalist Defence Volunteers (LDV); Vanguard Service Corps (VSC); Orange Volunteers (OV); Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW); Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR); Ulster Special Constabularly (USC, B-Specials, B-Men); Ulster Vangard Rally; Red Hand Commandos; Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve (TAVR); Ulster Protestant Volunteers (UPV)
3- State Security Forces	Members of the British or Northern Irish security forces (police, military, etc.)	Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), British Armed Forces
4 - Civilian		If there is no identification of organizational identity but there is information about the actor (such as that person's name, age, religion, etc.) label the actor as a civilian.

14. **Actor_Org2** Enter the numerical value that corresponds with the target's organizational affiliation; still code the organizational affiliation, even if it is only suspected. If the text refers to armed groups only by the most general grouping (e.g., "Republican

terror groups" or "Republican paramilitaries"/"Loyalist paramilitaries", then use the Org1 categorization as usual but use the code 0 to indicate that the more specific grouping is unknown. **If there is no information about the actor at all, leave it blank.** If you are unsure of the affiliation of a victim, make a note and contact Dani. Likewise, if you think that there is a group that is not listed, make a note and contact Dani. While this variable is essentially a condensed version of the NIRI event types, the organizational affiliation codes do not correspond with each other.

Organization Type	**Acronym or Other Name**
0 - Other Organizational Affiliation	
1- Provisional Irish Republican Army	"Provos"
2 - Official Irish Republican Army	
3 - Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association	CESA
4 - Other Republican Group	
5 - Ulster Volunteer Force	UVF
6 - Ulster Freedom Fighters	UFF
7 - Ulster Defence Association	UDA
8 - Loyalist Defence Volunteers	LDV
9 - Vanguard Service Corps	VSC
10 - Orange Volunteers	OV
11 - Loyalist Association of Workers	LAW
12 - Ulster Defence Regiment	UDR
13 - Ulster Special Constabularly	USC, B-Specials, or B-Men
14 - Ulster Vangard Rally	
15 - Red Hand Commandos	
16 - Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve	TAVR
17 - Ulster Protestant Volunteers	UPV
18 - Other Loyalist Organization / unknown Protestant milita	Protestant extremists, vigilantes, etc.
19 - Royal Ulster Constabulary	RUC
20 - British Armed Forces	This includes the RMP
21 - Hooligans	
22 - Tartan gangs	
23 - Criminal Organization	
24 - Civilian	
25 - Gardai	

15. **Actor_Relig** Here, sectarian refers to the religious identity of the individual or group. Enter the numerical code that corresponds with the perpetrator's sectarian affiliation. **If there information about the actor but no information on his or her religious affiliation, enter a 0. If there is no information about the actor at all, leave this blank.** If you are unsure of the sectarian affiliation, make a note and contact Dani. This variable follows the coding of NIRI's sectarian affiliation.

Affiliation Type	Sample to Include
0 - Unknown, No, or Other Affiliation	
1 - Catholic	RC
2 - Protestant	Prot

16. **Event1** Using the typology listed below, enter the event number that best matches the first described event taken by an actor in a given incident. **Use the "other" categories sparingly, and be sure to list in the coding log which event text you have designated as an "other" event.** If you are unsure of which category an event falls under or you think you have found an event that is not captured by the current list, please contact Dani. While this variable is essentially a condensed version of the NIRI event types, these numerical codes do not correspond with each other.

Event Type	**Description**	**Sample to Include**	**Sample to Not Include**
1 - Initiated Shooting	A one-sided incident involving a discharged firearm using **live rounds**; this may or not be met with returned fire in the form of a singular shot or a sustained firefight.	A shooting incident without returned fire; Punishment shooting; A shooting incident that initiates a gun battle or shootout; A shooting incident that is responded to with fire; Shooting into a crowd to break up riots or protests	The firing of baton rounds (not live fire); Seizure of weapons; returned fire; bullets found but no record of the shooting itself; bow and arrow shootings
2 - Returned Fire	The use of a firearm in response to an initial shooting. **Instances in which there is an initiated shooting incident that is met with returned fire should receive two observations: one reflecting the actor who shot first, and one reflecting the actor that returned the fire. Also, if there is no indication as to which actor shot first, create an observation for all actors involved; each actor-incident will include returned fire, and none will be listed as initiating the shooting.**	Shooting incidents where fire is returned; "Opened fire" in response to another armed actor; Shootouts; Gun battles	Shooting incidents where fire is not returned; "punishment" shootings; shootings involving only one actor
3- Bombing	The use of explosives in either populated or unpopulated areas, **regardless of its successful detonation status**.	Bombings; Claymore attacks; Use of IEDs; deployment of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD); failed explosions	Seizure of materials that can be used to create explosives

17. **Target_Org1_Event1** Enter the numerical value that corresponds with the general organizational affiliation of the target affected by the first listed event. If there are multiple targets, separate them with a comma and no spaces. If there are multiple targets, and one is unknown, use a period to indicate that unknown affiliation. **If there was no target (i.e., in instances of patrolling), leave the cell blank. If there is information about the target (e.g., a person's name and age) but no information about his or her organizational affiliation, assume that they are a civilian and enter 4. If there is is no information about a target at all, leave it blank.**

    If you are unsure of the affiliation of a victim, make a note and contact Dani. Likewise, if you think that there is a group that is not listed, make a note and contact Dani. While this variable is essentially a condensed version of the NIRI event types, the organizational affiliation codes do not correspond with each other.

Table 1: Organization Types and Coding Rules

Organization Type	**Description**	**Sample to Include**
0 - Tartan gangs; Hooligans	Hooligans: Offensive and subjective label with a racialized history, usually used to refer to Republican and Catholic individuals. Originated as an ethnic slur. Someone who "causes trouble." Because the word is loosely defined and discretionary, we only code "hooligan" when the document uses it. Tartan Gangs: Loosely organized Loyalist gangs, e.g., Ulster Youth Militants, The Shankill Young Team. Gained traction after IRA killings and often accompanied Loyalist marches as a threat.	
1 - Republican Group	Also called nationalist groups. These are non-state actors seeking Northern Ireland's union with the Republic of Ireland. Typically Roman Catholic, though may include Protestants.	Provisional IRA ("Provos"), Official IRA, Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association

thumb: anytime you see mention of a patrol, code it!

Organization Type	Description	Sample to Include
2 - Loyalist Group	Also called unionist groups. Non-state actors who want Northern Ireland to remain in the UK. Typically Protestant, but may include Catholics.	UVF, UFF, UDA, LDV, VSC, OV, LAW, UDR, USC/B-Specials/B-Men, Ulster Vanguard Rally, Red Hand Commandos, TAVR, UPV
3 - State Security Forces	Members of British or Northern Irish official security forces.	Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC); British Armed Forces (e.g., Royal Irish Regiment)
4 - Civilian	Individuals not part of an armed organization or formal security service.	Used when the document identifies the individual (e.g., name, age, religion) but not their affiliation with any group.

18. **Target_Org2_Event1** Enter the numerical value that corresponds with the target of the first event's specific organizational affiliation. If the text refers to armed groups only by the most general grouping (e.g., "Republican terror groups" or "Republican paramilitaries"/"Loyalist paramilitaries", then use the Org1 categorization as usual but use the code 0 to indicate that the more specific grouping is unknown.

    If there were multiple targets that correspond to the first event, separate them with no spaces and a comma. If there are multiple targets, and one is unknown, use a period to indicate that unknown affiliation. **If there was no target (i.e., in instances of patrolling), leave the cell blank. If there is information about the target (e.g., a person's name and age) but no information about his or her specific organizational affiliation, assume that they are a civilian and enter 24. If there is no information about a target at all, leave it blank.**

19. **Target_Relig_Event1** Enter the numerical code that corresponds with the sectarian affiliation of the target/s from the first event. **If there are multiple targets for a given event, separate the numerical code with a comma and no spaces.** If there is no information about the actor at all, leave this blank. If there is some information about the actor (e.g., his or her name and age), but not her or her religious affiliation, enter a 0. If you are unsure of the sectarian affiliation, make a note and contact Dani. This variable follows the coding of NIRI's sectarian affiliation.

Event Type	Sample to Include
0 - Unknown, No, or Other Affiliation	
1 - Catholic	RC
2 - Protestant	Prot

20. **Perps_Event1** For the first event associated with an incident-actor, enter the number of people that carried out that event. For example, if there is a brigade of 12 soldiers

patrolling, then the number of perpetrators for that event would be 12. If 3 men shoot at a UDR patrol, the number of perpetrators would be 3. If there is no information on the number of perpetrators, leave this blank.

21. **Affected_Event1** If included, enter the number of individuals affected by the first event. If a violent event (shooting, returned fire, bombing, riot, physical force, sexual violence, or other violent event) is being coded, the number of affected individuals is the number killed or injured. Put a 0 if the text describes that there were no casualties.

    If the event coded is non-violent, then code the number as affected as the number who the event is directly carried out against. For example, if the British SF arrest 50 individuals, the number of targets would be 50. If there is no information on the number of affected, leave this blank.

22. **Event_n** Using the same typology as **Event_Type_1**, enter the event number that best matches the other described events taken by an actor in a given incident. Create as many event column as there are events. **Use the "other" categories sparingly, and be sure to list in the coding log which event text you have designated as an "other" event.** If you are unsure of which category an event falls under or you think you have found an event that is not captured by the current list, please contact Dani. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not n events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank).

23. **Target_Org1_EventN** If there are multiple events carried out by an actor in a given incident, repeat the coding scheme for **Target1_Org1** for the general organizational affiliation of the target/s affected by each event. For example, if there were four events that make up a given actor-incident, then there should be a total of 4 Target_Org1 variables, Target1_Org1 - Target4_Org1.) For example, in the Joe Curley instance, there were three SF events: the patrol, the arrest, and the use of physical force towards Joe Curley. Here, there is no target of the first event, and Joe Curley is the target of both the second and third events. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not additional events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank). Again, if there are multiple targets in a given event, list all within the cell and separate with a comma. If an target is unknown but you need to list multiple targets, use a period to indicate that their affiliation is unknown.

24. **Target_Org2_EventN** If there are multiple events carried out by an actor in a given incident, repeat the coding scheme for **Target1_Org2** for the specific organizational affiliation of target/s of the each subsequent event. If there are multiple targets in a given event, list all within the cell and separate with a comma. If an target is unknown but you need to list multiple targets, use a period to indicate that their affiliation is unknown. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not n events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an

incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank).

25. **Target_Relig_EventN** Repeat the coding scheme for **Target1_Relig** for the religious affiliation of target/s of the second event associated with an incident. Repeat for Event3, Event4, etc. If there are multiple targets in a given event, list all within the cell and separate with a comma. If an target is unknown but you need to list multiple targets, use a period to indicate that their affiliation is unknown. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not n events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank).

26. **Perps_EventN** Repeat the coding scheme of Peprs_Event1: for each of the subsequent events associated with an incident-actor, enter the number of perpetrators. For example, if there is a brigade of 12 soldiers patrolling, then the number of perpetrators for that event would be 12. If 3 men shoot at a UDR patrol, the number of perpetrators would be 3. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not n events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank).

27. **Affected_EventN** Repeat the coding scheme of Affected_Event1: enter the number of individuals affected by each event. For example, if the British SF arrest 50 individuals, the number of targets would be 50. If there is a violent event, this number should include deaths and injuries. Leave the cells blank for observations in which there are not n events associated with the incident-actor (e.g., if there are only two events that make up an incident, fill in the relevant codes for Event 1 and Event 2, and then leave Event 3 - Event N blank).

4 Coding Decisions

- If the SF are described as being "involved in a shooting incident," but there is no indication as to whether or not the actor was the target or perpetrator of the shooting, **assume that they are the target.** This includes events that are "thought" to have targeted the SF, such as shootings "thought to draw in the SF."

- If there is no indication as to which actor shot first (for example, in the instance of a sustained gun battle or shootout where the document does not describe the events that led to the initiation of the shooting), **create an observation for all actors involved; each actor-incident will include returned fire, and none will be listed as initiating the shooting.**

- Instances in which there is an initiated shooting incident that is met with returned fire should receive **two observations**: one reflecting the actor who shot first, and one reflecting the actor that returned the fire. See Footnote 5 for the only instance in which

there might be a shootout that does not also have a corresponding initiated shooting incident.

- If the state military organization is not specified, assume it is the *British military*.
- Do not include information about victims if you cannot be certain as to which event they are from. Some events will list all of the victims in a given day or weekend, but not describe which event they were victimized at. Do not guess; the document may later actually detail which victim corresponds with which event. You can fill in the victim data with the previous summary, once you have confirmed which event.
- Assume that "a hit was claimed" corresponds with one casualty, "two hits were claimed" corresponds with two causalities, and so forth.

5 Coding Example

Using the example of Joe's Curley's run-in with the British SF, we can set out an example of how to code some of the key variables presented in this codebook.

In the Lower Falls Joe CURLEY (RC) (31) was stopped by a patrols he became abusive, resisted arrest and assaulted a soldier of 1 PARA. Minimum force was used to restrain him but he was cut on the head and was later stitched in RVH.

This incident involves two actors: Joe Curley and a member of the British Security Forces (SF); thus, there are two incident-actors, and two observations emerge from this passage. Because we code the actions **taken** by a given actor, we do not code actions that happen to that actor. For example, in the passage above, Joe Curley is arrested; the observation in which Joe Curley is the actor of interest would not reflect his arrest, but the observation in which the SF is the actor would. Likewise, an individual that is shot would not receive an observation; the actor that shot that individual, however, would. Given that, the events that make up Joe Curley's incident would be the use of non-armed[5] physical force (Event_Type == 6). The events that make up the Security Force agent's incident would be patrolling (Event_Type == 7), arrest (Event_Type == 8) and physical force (Event_Type == 6). Note that the table below has eliminated some variables here, as well as added the name of each of the actors associated with each actor-incident, for ease of interpretation. It has also only coded the first two events for the sake of space. Please refer to "Coding Example" for more information.

[5]Here, armed specifically being armed with a gun or a bomb.

Actor	**Actor_Org1**	**Actor_Org2**	**Actor_Relig**	**Event1**
Joe Curley	4	24	1	6 ...
British SF	3	20	0	7 ...

(continued)

Actor	**Target_Org1_Event1**	**Target_Org2_ Event1**	**Target_Relig_Event1**
Joe Curley	3	20	0...
British SF	.	.	.

(continued)

Actor	**Perps_Ev1**	**Affected_Ev1**	**Event2**	**Target_Org1_Ev2**	**Target_Org1_ Ev2**
Joe Curley	1	1			
British SF	.	.	8	4	24...

(continued)

Actor	**Target_Relig_Event2**	**Perps_Ev2**	**Affected_Ev2**
Joe Curley			
British SF	1	.	1

6 Events Not To Be Coded

- Car accidents (that categorization does not purposeful events in which a vehicle is clearly intended to cause damage and harm)
- Border crossings
- Rumored events
- Events that have not yet happened (e.g., British SF announce plans to raid an IRA hold-out)
- Threats
- Events that occurred outside of the date range of the document you are coding