

The Geenpeil e-petition: Connectivity, collectivity and the power of professional media in a social media world

Keywords: digitally mediated activism, e-petitions, connective action, collective action, Twitter, network analysis, social media logics, weblogs

Abstract

In July 2015 the popular Dutch weblog Geenstijl started off a civil petition movement in favour of a national referendum on the then upcoming association agreement between the European Union and Ukraine, which the Eurosceptic journalists of Geenstijl did not want the Dutch government to sign. Together with the small civil activist organisation Civilian Committee EU, Geenstijl created a website on which people could leave a digital signature to support the referendum request, and employed their online platforms and social media accounts to gather as much public attention and support for their cause as possible. The movement became one of unprecedented success in The Netherlands: for the first time since the establishment of the law Geenpeil appealed at, enough signatures were collected to command a referendum, and the movement generated a lot of public discussion, both on social media and beyond. This thesis analyses the structure of- and discourse within the 'protest ecology' of Geenpeil by means of a network analysis of over 40.000 retweets, and an explorative content analysis of blogs and tweets in which Geenpeil was promoted. Drawing upon Bennet and Segerberg's popular theory of connective action, it is argued that Geenpeil was a hybrid movement with a highly interconnected network, held together by the leadership of Geenstijl and its individual journalists, and characterised by low-threshold, simplified, 'David-versus-Goliath'-like anti-EU and pro-direct democracy narratives. Building upon existing research into the dynamics of digitally mediated activism and the conditions that amplify its impact, it is also argued that the centrality of Geenstijl was both a positive and negative influence on the impact of Geenpeil, and is illustrative of the importance of established organisations such as the professional media for popularising an e-petition.



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1. Introduction

1.1 Geenpeil versus the EU-association agreement with Ukraine

On the tenth of July 2015 the popular Dutch weblog *Geenstijl* published a blogpost titled: *Geenpeil is back! We want an EU-referendum*. In the blogpost, which got 451 comments and was shared via Facebook 7276 times, a petition movement called ‘Geenpeil’ was announced – a name that refers to the opinion polls that the weblog sometimes hosts. The goal of the petition was to appeal for an advisory national referendum on an upcoming association agreement between the European Union and Ukraine, which the journalists of *Geenstijl* considered to be yet another example of “the trampling of Dutch democracy by the insatiable expansion thirst of the EU” (Van Rossem 2015a in Appendix B). Readers of the weblog were asked to print out a form, sign it, and send it to the national Board of Elections – which they did in large numbers. 10.000 people signed and sent the form, after which the official petition procedure could start – a process which required the collection of at least 300.000 signatures in six weeks to be successful. In cooperation with the civil non-profit organisation Burgercomité EU (Civilian Committee EU), *Geenstijl* set out to promote the petition and set in motion a civil activist movement that could hinder the progress of the planned association agreement, as well as sent a signal of civil dissatisfaction to the Dutch national government and the EU.

Though it initially seemed implausible that the necessary amount of signatures would be collected in such a short time, the petition turned out to be highly successful: 450.000 people supported the initiative, and an official referendum took place in April 2016. Digital media played a key role in this success, both as a means of spreading awareness of the *Geenpeil* movement and as a facilitator of the petition itself. Being an online medium, *Geenstijl* made extensive use of its website and social media accounts to promote the movement, and urged its readers to further spread word about the petition. Moreover, instead of solely trying to gather physical signatures, the initiators of *Geenpeil* set up a website on which people could leave a digital signature, after which signatures were collected lot faster. After the website went live, 10.000 signatures were collected in a single day, whereas it had taken four weeks to gather the first 10.000 signatures. Links to the petition website were also shared extensively online: on Facebook alone links to the e-petition received 29522 shares, 22167 likes and 13343 comments.¹

As a (social) media phenomenon and activist movement, *Geenpeil* ties in with two specific debates within the social sciences and culture studies: that on the current state of Western democracy, and that on the efficacy and characteristics of digitally mediated activism. As an unusually successful civil movement with clear anti-establishment and pro-direct democracy sentiments, the *Geenpeil* movement is illustrative of the rise in Euroscepticism across Europe, as well as of the world-wide rise of petitions as mechanisms of political participation (Wright 2015; Stokes 2016). Moreover, the success of *Geenpeil* exemplifies the proliferation of digitally mediated activism in modern societies and the constituting role of social media in this phenomenon. It is this second dimension of *Geenpeil* that will be the focus of this thesis – and then in particular the relations between the structure of the activist network and the dominant discourse inside the movement, and their implications for existing theory on the conditions that amplify the impact of digitally mediated activism.

1.2 The research focus of this thesis

Within the fields of new media studies and political theory, much has been written about the effects of digitally mediated activism on politics, activism or societies as a whole. These studies often offer a conclusion that is either mostly positive or negative about the effects of the use of social media on the *impact* of activism: the political and societal results of the process of making people aware of a certain

¹ I found this information using Netvizzz, a free-to-use tool for Facebook statistics (version 1.3).

activist issue or mobilizing them to contribute to a cause.² Central here are the question of what makes digitally mediated activism different from more traditional forms of activism (e.g. Dean 2008; Karpf 2010; Bennet and Segerberg 2012; Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia 2014), and the question when a (certain type of) online campaign becomes effective (e.g. Juris 2012; Lim 2013; Velanzuela 2013).

Several researchers have observed that there is little ontological difference between digitally mediated activism and activism that does not make use of digital technologies.³ Whether an activist campaign is digitally mediated or not, the essence of the endeavour remains the same: creating awareness of an issue amongst a certain audience, or motivate them to undertake a certain action, such as signing a petition. Still, the specific dynamics of the ‘protest ecology’ that is created do differ, as the logics underlying social media influence or even determine the conditions in which social interaction and information distribution takes place (Van Dijck and Poel 2013, 2, 5). In other words: the logics of (social) digital media affect the organisation and discourse of a (partially) online campaign. However, what this effect is exactly, how it interacts with the various contextual factors that influence a movement, and how this affects the impact of a campaign, is still largely unclear (Bennet and Segerberg 2011, 199-200).

There is already some noteworthy research in this area. The media scholar Lim for example observes that social media are biased towards a certain type of activist movement, namely those that offer simplified narratives with victimisation framing, that “resonate within multiple social clusters” (2013, 644). In a similar vein, the political scientists Bennet and Segerberg infer that it is especially self-organising, digitally mediated activist movements that make use of personalizable activist narratives that are likely to be effective in many contemporary societies, as the engagement with politics has become more personal and less ideological, and social media have become an important way of accessing information and performing one’s identity (2012, 743, 748). They call this type of movements ‘connective action’ and argue that it is fundamentally different from the traditional ‘collective action’ that is characterized by top-down planning, formal organisations and established group identities.

Both Segerberg and Bennet and Lim base their conclusions on analyses of protest movements, as is the case for most studies of digitally mediated activism (e.g. Juris 2012; Gladarev and Lonkila 2012; Lim 2013; Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia 2014; Barbéra et al. 2015). E-petitions appear to be a much rarer subject of study, despite the fact that they are increasingly popular forms of digitally mediated activism (Wright 2015; Stokes 2016). Still, there exists some interesting research into the dynamics and impact of e-petitions – most notably by the political communication scholars Jungherr and Jürgens (2010) and Wright (2015), who each showed that only a small minority of all petitions on the respective e-petition platforms they examined become relatively popular.

All the described studies have some limitations though, that leave room for further research. Bennet and Segerberg’s comments on the likely advantages of connective action over collective action are

² There is a historical disagreement within academic discourse about the positive and negative effects of digitally mediated activism on activism, politics and society as a whole. On the one side of this debate there are those who denounce digitally mediated activism as pointless ‘slacktivism’ or ‘clicktivism’: small-effort activities that make participants feel good about themselves, but are little more than superficial signals in an enormous stream of easy-to-dismiss online content, that have little to no real-life political impact and are even harmful for the public perception of activism in general (Morozov 2009; Shulman 2009; Hindman 2009; White 2010). On the other side of the slacktivism-debate there are those who observe that online activism *can* in fact have real, positive political and societal impact (Bouliane 2009; Christensen 2011; Visser and Stolle 2014; Vie 2014; Halupka 2014; Kristofferson et al. 2014; Barberá et al. 2015; Vaccari et al 2015; Thimsen 2015).

³ The activist and political scientist Karpf for example has argued that digital media represent a ‘difference-of-degree’ rather than a ‘difference-in-kind’, meaning that the significance of digital media in activism mostly derives from the fact that they make it easier to send activist messages or requests on a large scale (2010). Building upon Karpf’s work, as well as survey research that showed a positive correlation between social media use and ‘physical’ protest activities, the communication scholar Velanzuela has observed that social media are not so much replacing ‘offline’ activism as amplifying it, as a means of spreading and finding mobilizing information (2013).

hypothetical rather than proven, while the cases Lim examined are embedded in local Indonesian political and religious context. The analyses by Wright and Jungherr and Jürgens on the other hand are both restricted to a specific e-petition platform. Moreover, while they make some interesting observations about the characteristics of relatively popular petitions, they leave open the question of what characterizes petitions that were actually effective in reaching the goal they petitioned for.

This thesis aims to fill these open spaces in existing research by performing a partially textual, partially data-driven analysis of a single independent e-petition, in order to uncover the characteristics of this particular movement and their implications for the impact of the campaign. More specifically, I will reconstruct the ‘protest ecology’ of Geenpeil – the networked whole of actors, practices, technologies and discourse that was Geenpeil –, by uncovering material and discursive traces of the Geenpeil movement from blogs and Twitter data, and using those to recreate an image of the dynamics of the activist network, in spirit of both Latour’s sociology of associations (better known as ‘actor network theory’) and Roger’s web epistemology (Latour 2005; Rogers 2009).

In doing this, I will also follow the directions for further research into digitally mediated activism given by Bennet and Segerberg, who stress the need for research that refrains from isolating social media from their “more complex contexts”, in order to “develop realistic ways of thinking about the role of communication technologies in the transformation of contentious politics and, ultimately, the effectiveness of such politics” (2011, 199-200). Thus, I will take both the political and socio-technological context of Geenpeil into account in my analysis, as both these dimensions are vital for understanding the dynamics of a civil movement, and the causes and nature of its impact – the political and societal results of the process of making people aware of a certain activist issue or mobilizing them to contribute to a cause.⁴ Moreover, I will use Bennet and Segerberg’s popular framework of connective and collective action to interpret and describe the dynamics of the Geenpeil movement. This framework is particularly useful because it distinguishes between the organisational and discursive dimension of the dynamics of activism: between the way the network of actors that makes up the movement is structured, how it expanded, and which actors played a role in this; and the kind of language that was used to promote the movement.

This analysis will be guided by the following research question: *What characteristics of connective and collective action did Geenpeil display, and to what extent can these be considered a positive or negative influence on the impact of the movement?*

This research question is supported by the following three sub-questions: What kinds of actors were most influential on the organisation and discourse of the campaign? Are the frames of action that were used rather personal or collective? And what is the likely relation between these characteristics of Geenpeil and the societal and political consequences of the activism (or in other words: its impact)?

These questions will be answered by means of two different analyses, that cover both the organisational and discursive dimension of the movement. First there will be a network analysis of over 40.000 retweets in which Geenpeil is mentioned. This will allow for making observations about the structure of the

⁴ With “more complex contexts”, Bennet and Segerberg specifically mean the “broader technological and social contexts in which [social media] operate” – which are often not taken into account in research into activism on social media, or assumed rather than demonstrated (199). It must be noted here that the term ‘social context’ is rather fuzzy: what does it mean for a phenomenon to have a distinctly social dimension, when arguably everything that people do in relation to other actors, be they human or non-human, is social? (Latour 2005). The concept of a socio-technological context however, is more productive, as it refers to the role of social media in relation to other technologies and their users; a point of view that averts the fetishization of social media as unique, isolated platforms, and also takes into account the non-digital and media as actors. The concept of a political context of activism is equally useful, as it refers to the broader political problems in a society – which are meaningful for understanding the impact of a campaign, as well as the motivation of its promoters.

online network and the kinds of actors that were retweeted most – and were thus most influential on the discourse and structure of the network. Though these observations will be restricted to the Twitter platform, they are expected to be telling for the movement as a whole, as online activist networks can function as a ‘window’ into a certain protest ecology when the platforms these networks are facilitated by are sufficiently embedded in the protest ecology (Segerberg and Bennett 2011, 200). This is very likely to be true for the retweet network of Geenpeil, as the initiators of Geenpeil made extensive use of (personal) Twitter accounts to promote the petition, and a lot of tweets were sent about the movement. Moreover, Twitter is a highly popular social medium in The Netherlands, that is also broadly used in the media as a source of information.⁵

The network analysis will be followed by an explorative content analysis of randomly selected popular tweets from the corpus, and blogs about Geenpeil published on Geenstijl. This analysis will allow for making observations about the discourse constituted by the promoters of Geenpeil, and placing the language inside this discourse in Bennet and Segerberg’s conceptual framework of connective and collective action. The results of these two analyses will be explored in light of the specific political context of this civil movement, as well as the logics of social media (the socio-technological context) and recent theory on the nature of digitally mediated activism and the (social) media landscape.

Geenpeil is a highly interesting e-petition case to study in this regard, as the movement had definite societal and political impact: the actors that started the petition reached their goal and achieved a national referendum, of which the results hindered – and continue to hinder to this very day – the ratification of the association agreement. Moreover, the movement is embedded in ‘Euroscepticism’ and related sentiments that are symptomatic of the current political reality of European societies, as well as exemplary of how social media can be used effectively by civil actors to gain political power (a debated issue, see footnote 2). Gaining a grounded understanding of the dynamics of Geenpeil will then also further practical understanding of how future movements like Geenpeil may develop, which is useful for both (aspiring) activists and policy makers – especially considering that initiatives like Geenpeil may become increasingly frequent, following the abundance of politically subjective, professional weblogs like Geenstijl in the media landscape (Haas 2005; Heinrich 2008).⁶

The remainder of this thesis is organised as follows: The next chapter will begin with an exploration of the political context of Geenpeil, followed by a discussion of the various concepts and theories about the contemporary (social) media environment and the role of digital media in activism that will be used in the research part of this thesis. In Chapter 3 the method and methodology of the research part of this thesis will be detailed. In the chapter after that, the protest ecology of Geenpeil will be reconstructed and analysed. In Chapter 5 the main research questions will be answered, and conclusions will be drawn about the relations between the structure of the activist network and the dominant discourse inside the movement, and their implications for existing theory on the conditions that amplify the impact of digitally mediated activism. Lastly, the limitations of this research will also be discussed, and topics for further research will be suggested.

⁵ According to commercial statistical research Twitter had 313 million monthly active users in 2016, which makes it the ninth most popular social medium worldwide (*statistica.com*; Chaffey 2016). It is estimated about 2,8 million of these active users are Dutch, and in 2014 the country came in second where per capita use was concerned (*nu.nl*; Lipman 2014). It is quite common in the Dutch media sphere to see quotes taken from tweets, and articles about certain discussions, controversies and trending topics on Twitter. Another reason Twitter was chosen rather than another social medium is the fact that it is one of the easiest platforms to analyse, as Twitter offers various ways for third parties to access part of their data, and the data itself is conveniently structured for network analysis.

⁶ Especially considering there is research that suggests that readers regard (certain) weblogs as just reliable as- or even more reliable than traditional news media (Johnson and Kaye 2004). Moreover, an analysis of over 1000 comments on 33 popular blogs showed that 77,9 percent of the comments were in agreement with the statements made in the blogs (Gilbert 2009).

2. Euroscepticism, (e-)petitions and social media

At the core of this research lays a network analysis of over 40.000 retweets, where the dynamics of this specific online network are expected to be telling for the Geenpeil movement as a whole. Following the directions of Bennet and Segerberg, the political and socio-technological context of Geenpeil will be taken into account in this analysis, in order not to isolate the online dynamics of the movement from the rest of the protest ecology. To this end, the next subchapter will briefly describe the course of Geenpeil and its eventual political and societal impact. Moreover, attention will be paid to the ideological standings voiced by the initiators the movement, as well the broader societal phenomena these standings are embedded in – specifically the ‘spread’ of political power and the rise of e-petitions as democratic tools. In the subchapter after that, recent popular theory on social media and their role in activism will be discussed, focussing especially on Bennet and Segerberg’s theory of connective action. These theories will form the theoretical tools that I will use to analyse Geenpeil and answer the research questions.

2.1 The political context of Geenpeil

The course and impact of Geenpeil

As described in the previous chapter, Geenpeil was a civil petition movement initiated by the journalists of a weblog called Geenstijl, in cooperation with the members of the small civil activist organisation Burgercomité EU. Geenstijl is one of the most popular weblogs in the Netherlands, and is (in)famous for its characteristically informal, humorous and sometimes aggressive writing style – the weblog’s motto is “tendentious, unfounded and needlessly offensive” –, as well as for hosting the popular video platform Dumpert, on which people can upload, rate and discuss video clips.⁷ The goal of the movement was to get an advisory national referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement – a cooperation agreement between the member states of the European Union and the government of Ukraine about various political and economic matters –, that the initiators of Geenpeil viewed as symptomatic of the EU’s desire for expansion of its political power, which they were opposed to.

Needless to say, the Geenpeil movement was very effective in reaching this goal. After the launch of the e-petition website, the amount of collected signatures accumulated at a high and steady pace, and one and halve times as much signatures as required ended up being collected (see figure 1 in Appendix A). As stated by the Dutch referendum law, that had never been activated before since it passed in 2015, a national referendum had to be organised by the government – a referendum that ended with a ‘no’ for the association agreement (though the public turnout of 32 percent was only just high enough for the result to be binding). Despite the fact that the referendum was only advisory, the Dutch government took the result of the referendum to heart, and has up till this moment not yet ratified the agreement, which prevents it from entering into full force (though the greatest part of the agreement has already been operative since November 2014).⁸

But the impact of the Geenpeil movement went further than just policy alone. The Geenpeil movement generated a lot of public discussion about the agreement, the EU and the mechanisms of political influence available to people, both within the political sphere and the (mass news) media, as well as on

⁷ There is no reliable research into the exact popularity of Geenstijl, but the weblog is mentioned as the medium with the fifth largest reach amongst Dutch males from 25 to 54 year in the preliminary results of the ‘Nederlands Online Bereiksonderzoek’ by VINEX, a research institute funded by twenty major Dutch publishers (2016). Moreover, it is important to note that Geenstijl is not just a weblog: it is also affiliated with the broadcaster PowNed, that has a weekly satirical tv-show on the channel of the public broadcasting organization NPO.

⁸ More information on the contents and legal procedures of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement can be found on the website of the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu>). Also informative is the commentary on the agreement by the Centre for European Policy Studies (Van der Loo 2016).

social media, and both positive and negative about the movement.⁹ This was also one of the goals of the Geenpeil movement: though the initiators sent an email to all members of the Dutch parliament in which they stated that “this action is not about being against or in favour of the EU. It’s about democracy” (Van Rossem 2015b), the petition was in reality not just about the association agreement in itself, nor predominantly a statement in favour of direct democracy – it was also about showing discontent with the EU in general. It was not for nothing that the desired referendum was usually referred to as the ‘EU referendum’ by supporters of the movement, rather than the ‘association agreement referendum’: getting a referendum, and then having a ‘no’ as a result, would be a clear sign of dissatisfaction with the current political establishment amongst a significant part of the public, especially regarding the workings of the European Union.¹⁰ As such, Geenpeil is illustrative of the rising ‘Euroscepticism’ in many European societies, where there is a growing degree of dissatisfaction with the current practices of the EU, or even its principles, present amongst a certain percentage of the European people.¹¹

The ideological underpinnings of Geenpeil and the spread of political power

The Eurosceptic nature of Geenpeil was not just apparent in the goal and success of the petition, but also in the political orientation of the actors that initiated it. The journalists of Geenstijl are known in the Dutch public sphere for being strongly Eurosceptic civil actors, as they have published many blogs in which the processes, policies and actors of the EU are being criticized, especially where immigration policy is concerned. Moreover, the weblog is also known for its critical stance on the practices and ideals of the current government of the Netherlands as well as some of the opposition parties; its criticism on the reporting done by the national news media and ‘liberal’ media; and its support for mechanisms of direct democracy such as referenda.

The political orientation of Geenstijl as a medium resonates with that of Burgercomité EU – a small, non-profit, civil activist organisation that has been working on projects “in favour of Europe, so against the EU” since 2013, according to their Facebookpage. Particularly telling for the political stance of this organisation are the contents of the pamphlet that it published in May 2015, called ‘Aan het volk van Nederland’ (To the people of the Netherlands).¹² In this pamphlet it is argued that the Netherlands is not a democracy any more thanks to the EU, and is called for an official referendum to cancel the country’s EU-membership – which is the most extreme, rejecting form of Euroscepticism possible.

⁹ I used the search function on the websites of Dutch news media to find out in how many articles Geenpeil was mentioned. The newspapers NRC, Volkskrant, Algemeen Dagblad, Telegraaf and Trouw mentioned the movement 121 times, 152 times, 43 times, eight times and 69 times respectively; while the major news broadcasters RTL and NOS mentioned it 54 times and two times respectively – though this was on their website, which needn’t mean they also reported on it in their news broadcast.

¹⁰ In a conversation with the Dutch newspaper NRC the chairman of Burgercomité said that they used the Ukraine issue as a means to weaken the relation between The Netherlands and the EU (Heck 2016).

¹¹ For example, recent survey research by the commercial research centre Pew Research across ten European countries has shown that 41 percent of the respondents wants more power returned from Brussels to their national governments, and that the percentage of people that holds a favourable opinion on the EU in general has been declining since 2004 – though there are differences between various countries, as well as significant historical ups and downs in EU-appreciation that correlate with the condition of the economy (Stokes 2016). Where the Netherlands in particular is concerned, interview research by Eurobarometer (the opinion analysis sector of the European Commission) amongst a thousand Dutchmen has shown that 42 percent of the respondents tends not to trust the European Union – though it is worthy to note that there is even less trust in the own government (2015).

It must also be noted that it is difficult to ascertain exactly how big the Euroscepticism in Europe is – not just because of the difficulties of translating complex, unstable personal feelings towards the numerous facets of the EU into a survey, but also because Euroscepticism is not one, clearly defined concept. It rather forms a sliding scale of opinions, going from merely opposing further European integration to rejection of the entire principle of a European Union, all of which are present amongst the European public and influential on their democratic choices (Vasilopoulou 2009).

¹² The title echoes that of a patriotic pamphlet spread around the Netherlands in 1781 to call for an uprising against the (allegedly) corrupt, oligarchical regents that ruled the Dutch republic.

The Euroscepticism of *Geenstijl* and *Burgercomité* is thus strongly intertwined with dissatisfaction with the establishment in general – political, economic and cultural –, as well as with resistance against immigration and an emphasis on the value of democratic processes and the power of the people – all of which are common topics of political discussion within Western democracies, that are widely considered symptomatic of contemporary right-wing political populism.¹³ Taken in isolation though, the dissatisfaction with the current democratic system voiced by *Geenstijl* and *Burgercomité* is also exemplary of the ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU that has been signalled by scholars as well as EU officials, where the architecture of the EU has been diagnosed as being not representative enough of the wishes of the general public (Taggart 2004, 277).

This deficit in turn is exemplary of what the public administrations scholar Bovens has described as the ‘spread’ of political power from national to international arenas that has accompanied globalisation (2005). Where political decision-making once used to be solely in the hands of national governments, the past decade has seen more and more power flow to actors that do not fall under the umbrella of the representative democracy, like independent executive or supervisory agencies such as the European Central Bank, and inter-governmental global organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (120-123). These actors have the benefit of professional expertise and (to some extent) political impartiality, but are accompanied by questions and problems regarding the transparency and accountability of decision-making; and whether the decisions that are made sufficiently serve the general public interest (124). These same worries accompany the European Union, and as a response to this the European Parliament over the years has gained more and more power compared to the Commission – a move that can be considered as spreading democracy along the same lines as power has spread, which is one of the strategies Bovens identified for increasing the legitimization of insufficiently democratically legitimized political actors (123-125).

Next to increasing the power of representative bodies, the other way in which democracy can be spread according to Bovens are mechanisms of direct public influence, such as referenda – either advisory or binding – and official civil opinion inquiries.¹⁴ The establishment of the Dutch referendum law in 2015 can be considered exemplary of this strategy. But mechanism of direct public influence don’t need to be top-down initiatives, organized by a government: bottom-up, activist initiatives such as petitions can also function as a democratic tool and a means of civil political influence, given the right conditions.

(E-)petitions as democratic tools

The past ten years, petitions have become increasingly popular, making them currently one of the most widely used tools for civil political participation (Wright 2015, 418). They are started by either one or more formal activist organisations or an individual, who can be either affiliated with some group or company, or a completely independent civil actor. Anyone can start their own (e-)petition, for example via free-to-use online platforms such as the Dutch *petities.nl* (which has been around since 2005) and the international *change.org* (founded in 2006). This kind of platform is either hosted by companies who

¹³ The political attitudes and rhetoric voiced by *Burgercomité* and *Geenstijl* corresponds to that of contemporary right-wing populist political parties (as described by for example Canovan (1999), Mudde (2012) and Wodak and KhrosraviNik (2013)). It goes beyond this thesis to explore this phenomenon here, but it is important to note that even though there is a clear correlation between the rising Euroscepticism in Europe and the popularity of (right-wing) populist parties, the increase in populist attitudes in European societies is not the cause of Euroscepticism, but rather a consequence. Most of the issues that (right-wing) populist parties stand for are not at all new and have been – and continue to be – part of the program of many non-populist parties, as well as the decision-making of governments (Mudde, 12-13). Populism can then be regarded as an extreme expression of already existing, and historically recurring, sentiments in society.

¹⁴ There is also a third strategy for increasing legitimization that Bovens describes, that does not involve spreading democracy, namely legitimization by results. This comes down to the principle that as long as the output of political decision-making is of good quality, people will recognize the process via which political decisions are made functions well enough.

generate revenue in the form of advertisement placement or sponsored campaigns for activist organisations (as is the case with *change.org*), or by non-profit organisations who work with subsidies, donations and volunteers (as is the case with *petities.nl*). Next to these websites, petitioners can also use platforms provided by a government (as is possible in for example Great Britain), or create their own mechanism of signature collection, as the initiators of Geenpeil have done.

Like most activist initiatives, petitions are all about demonstrating the support of civil society – the anonymous ‘political public’ that is the sum of all individuals in a society, and is historically regarded as a third sphere that forms a counterbalance to the state and market (Chandhoke 2001, 3).¹⁵ Unlike many other activist initiatives though, the goal of a petition is usually very concrete and straightforward. The primary objective is a concise request or demand voiced in the petition itself – if you want this to happen, sign here –, that needs to be executed by a certain authority – governmental, commercial or otherwise. Through a petition, political interest gets quantified, as a certain collective opinion becomes expressed in a measurable manner: the amount of signatures collected, compared to the total population of people. The more signatures are collected, the more likely it is that the request that is made will be granted by the authority that is addressed – power is drawn from relative quantity, just as is the case with democracy itself.

But petitions are not just a demonstration of agreement amongst individuals; they are also a mechanism that builds democratic political subjects, as they allow for individual political influence as well as the demonstration of ‘the people’ as a collective democratic force (Thimsen 2015, 222-223). This demonstration can be both actual and virtual: by publicly listing and counting signatures and allowing comments and other forms of interaction, the *feeling* that the petition has democratic power is created (230). Next to this, a petition can also be an *actual* democratic event, where a person can potentially influence political decision making at a certain level – local, state or international –, and become part of a movement that works together for the (perceived) sake of society. Yet, such a movement is never completely autonomous, and signatures alone are never enough to allow for political influence. Every petition takes place within a framework of regulations and values that determines what forms of activism are acceptable, and the petitioned issue must also be taken seriously by the authority that is appealed at.

This is especially true for petitions aimed at governments. Many states have institutionalised mechanisms in place that allow for opportunities for direct civil influence outside of democratic elections, but also strict regulations that determine under what conditions a government is required to take civil initiatives seriously.¹⁶ These regulations concern both the quantity and quality of a proposal. To take the Dutch referendum law as an example: every Dutch citizen has the right to appeal for an advisory national referendum, but the referendum will only take place when at least 300.000 citizens support it. On top of this, the petitioned request must be something that the government considers a legitimate issue, as they need to act upon the interests of an entire population and not just the people who petitioned. For this same reason referenda that are the result of a civil initiative are always advisory in the Netherlands, which means that the government can choose to decline the request if they think that

¹⁵ Despite the popularity of the ‘third sphere’ metaphor, civil society is in fact by no means unaffected by the logistics, language and regulatory influence of both the state and the market, as it is marked by the same competition and discussion over resources and power that characterizes economics and professional politics, as well as restricted by laws that determine what kinds of influence civilians can have on policy (Chandhoke, 6, 9).

¹⁶ The first governmental e-petition structure was launched by the Scottish Assembly in 2004 (Wright, 418). Petitions in themselves however have been around for ages – in Great Britain evidence of civil petitions dates back to the fourteenth century, and in the Netherlands the right to appeal to the government via a petition has been institutionalized since 1798 (*Public Petitions*; Article five of the Dutch constitution).

is best for the country (though this will surely cause a backlash in the form of discontent amongst those who supported the petition).

Still, a petition doesn't have to be successful to have impact – even without reaching the goal stated in the petition, a petition campaign can draw a lot of public attention and through this influence people's opinions and actions. In other words: a petition can affect politics or society regardless of whether or not a certain predetermined goal is reached; it can have impact without being successful per se. A petition held to pressure a certain company into adopting more environmentally friendly business practices for example, may fail to convince the company to change its ways, while succeeding in changing people's view of the company and making them aware of the problems with the business practice in question. The exact details of the political and societal impact of activism are always dependent on a complex interplay of factors, contextual or otherwise, amongst which the characteristics of the (media) technologies that play a facilitating role in the campaign process.

This is where social media come into play. Most petitions nowadays are available online and promoted via social media, making them a form of digitally mediated activism. When using social media and other openly available and widely used online platforms, activists have the possibility to reach a large and diverse audience, the general public, without the aid of professional media actors – and at a very high speed, as social media constantly provide users with new content, the moment it is created (Poell and Van Dijck 2015, 528-529).¹⁷ This also has an effect on the dynamics and specific impact of the campaign, as they become influenced by the affordances of digital technologies and the logics of online social platforms – effects that make digitally mediated movements inherently different from movements that do not make use of these technologies, however entangled with offline activist practices they may be. The next subchapter will detail popular recent research into the logics of social media and their position in the wider media landscape, as well as research into the effects of this for digitally mediated activism. This framework of literature provides the theoretical tools that will be used to analyse the Geenpeil movement and interpret the results of this analysis.

2.2 The logics of social media and their role in activism

Connectivity and popularity on social media

It is widely established within media theory that the use of digital technologies such as social media – web-based applications for sharing and creating (personal) content for social purposes – affects the kinds of interactions that people have, and through this the nature of the discourse that is constituted by these interactions (Scolari 2009; Van Dijck and Poell 2013). As an ecosystem of online platforms that are the result of code and human-machine interactions, social media “influence human interaction on an individual and community level, as well as on a larger societal level, while the worlds of online and offline are increasingly interpenetrating”, as the media scholar Van Dijck has put it (2013, 1.1). This influence flows partly from the affordances of the platforms; the way their interfaces enable certain kinds of (inter)actions while constraining others (Norman 1999). The other part of the influence is less direct, and due to the logic that underpins the dynamics on the platforms; the mechanisms or principles through which information and communication is processed, channelled and presented (Van Dijck and Poell 2013, 2, 5).

¹⁷ Social media have, as both a counterbalance to and extension of big professional media actors such as new broadcasters (they too have social media channels), become the dominant media, next to large professional media, as Poell and Van Dijck rightly observe (535).

According to Van Dijck and Poell, the logic of social media comes down to four distinct principles: programmability, popularity, connectivity, and datafication.¹⁸ Though all four of these principles are inherent and thus indispensable characteristics of social media and their role in society, only the principles of popularity and connectivity are of particular interest for this thesis, as they help explain how an activist movement can spread via social media and break into public discourse – and are thus useful theoretical tools for analysing digitally mediated activism. Moreover, they are expected to be of particular relevance for a movement like Geenpeil, that was initiated by civil actors affiliated with a popular weblog.

The first principle of interest is the connectivity principle – or more specifically, the personalization and customization affordances of social media. This dimension of connectivity (the way algorithms connect users, content, platforms and advertisers in social media environments) specifically concerns the way users can connect *themselves* to other users and specific content providers such as professional media, while the way the platform is built connects them to actors and content they did not directly choose for (8). Examples of such direct, self-chosen connections are friends on Facebook and the accounts one follows on Twitter, whose messages you will receive in a stream of content. Indirect connections on the other hand are for example the friends that your Facebook friends interact with; people that ‘attend’ a certain event on Facebook that you attend as well; or people who just like you used a certain hashtag in a Twitter message. Thus, the content one is exposed to on social media is personalized to great extent – both where social messages, entertainment and news are concerned –, while users may at the same time get exposed to content they did not choose to see via indirect links. As a consequence of this personalization, social media environments have been observed to generally function as ‘filter bubbles’ of information that readily fits a user’s interests, viewpoints and beliefs, following the natural cognitive preference of humans for such information in most situations (an issue that will be further explored in subchapter 3.1, specifically in the context of the Twitter platform) (Liao and Fu 2013, 2359).

The second important principle is the popularity principle: the privileging of that which is understood as popular in social media environments. Social media platforms rarely show people all content they can receive via their direct and indirect links, but rather content that an algorithm deems most important to a certain user on the basis of personal data and quantitative popularity. On Facebook for example, algorithms are trained to show a user content that they are likely to appreciate on the basis of past user behaviour and the amount of likes and reactions a particular piece of content has received – which strengthens the filter-bubble effect –, and Twitter’s algorithms give priority to promoted tweets and tweets by users with many followers (Van Dijck and Poell 2013, 6-7). Moreover, both platforms have been observed to privilege ‘breaking’ news and viral content – messages that display a sudden peak in measured popularity (Poell and Van Dijck 2015, 531). This popular content will consequently get even more popular, as it is seen by even more people, which leads to a sort of ‘long tail’ of content, where the top few pieces of content are vastly more popular than the middle few, and the middle are much more popular than the smaller majority (Dean 2008, 108).¹⁹ Thus, the popularity logic of social media

¹⁸ These principles both influence and exist next to the older, mass media logics which have since the beginning of the twentieth century guided public discourse and influenced the organisation of society as a whole. These logics entail, to summarise observations by Altheide and Snow, Williams, and Van Dijck and Poel, presenting the world as a stream of events; misleadingly presenting information gatekeepers as neutral platforms; the commercialisation of culture; and strategies to mask the blurring lines between “news and advertisements, facts and opinion, public service and commerce” in media (Van Dijck and Poel, 3-4).

¹⁹ This is also apparent in the internet as a whole, as the most visited websites account for a disproportionately high percentage of all page views. For example, according to *Statistica.com*, the top ten most visited domains in the US accounted for about 24 percent of all web US traffic in 2016.

makes it easy for relatively popular content to become even more popular, while it structurally disadvantages less popular content.

Important here is that the popularity logic of social media is in effect not all that different from the mass media logic of popularity, where people that know how to ‘play’ the media and crowds become influential media personalities that have disproportionate power to get attention for certain topics and influence public opinion. Moreover, these two logics are not separate but rather in a relation of mutual complementary influence – what is popular on social media may receive mass media attention and thus get even more exposure, and online content created or shared by media personalities is more likely to become popular on social media than that of a regular user (Van Dijck and Poell 2013, 6-7). This creates a sort of a feedback-loop between mass and social media, that enforces the long-tail tendency of online content and platforms; social media popularity and mass media popularity strengthen each other, and thus create an even greater distance between online content that is highly popular and the far more numerous pieces of content that are not.

The principles of connectivity and popularity carry within them several implications for how content about Geenpeil could spread outside the confines of the direct public of Geenstijl into new, relevant publics. The first implication is that the initiators of the movement were in a privileged position to start a campaign: being known media personalities and fellow journalists, they were more likely to receive attention by mass media than other actors. Moreover, having the popular social media accounts of Geenstijl at their disposal, content published via these channels will have had a privileged position in the social media ecosystem. The second implication is that as content about the Geenpeil movement got increasingly popular, the chances grew that the algorithms of a certain platform would favour that message compared to other messages – which will have further enlarged the audience and upped the chances that mass media actors would be alerted of the existence or progress of the movement.

Social media and professional media in activism

It is clear then that by using social media in activism, the logics and affordances of social media don’t just come to affect the way activist content spreads and the kinds of interactions people can have with the content; these characteristics of the environments in which activism is promoted, spread, encountered, talked about and organised are also accompanied by expectations of what kinds of movements are at an advantage where impact is concerned. Moreover, all these various consequences of the use of social media make (partially) online campaigns inherently different from more traditional campaigns where the dynamics of the movement are concerned.

One of the most influential and well-rounded theories that describes this difference, as well as its implications for the impact of activism, is Bennet and Segerberg’s theory of connective action (2012). According to this theory, there are two types of activism: the collective and connective kind. Collective action is the traditional type of activism, with top-down organisation and leadership by a formal activist organisation with many resources, that offers civil society an established, exclusive ‘we’ to join in favour of a certain public good (748-750).²⁰ Movements of connective activist action on the other hand are characterized by informality, fluidity and leaderless-ness. Here, it is not so much actors as technologies that organise the spread of the activist message and the growth of the network, as ‘networking agents’ (753). A connective activist movement spreads in the same manner as all other content in social media environments, namely through weak-tie links between users, characterised by self-motivated sharing and co-production (752-753). The connectivity principle of social media here determines the way the

²⁰ With ‘resources’ I mean things like money, staff, educational and promotional content and events, connections with significant actors, et cetera.

movement spreads, via direct and indirect connections between users, while the popularity principle allows for activism to receive mass media attention when there is sufficient online user engagement.

Where discourse is concerned, connective action is accompanied by personal action frames that allow people to “develop flexible political identifications based on personal lifestyles”, rather than exclusive narratives about a group or ideology – which require more methods of persuasion and ritualization to appeal to a diverse audience (744, 747). Due to the ongoing trend of individualization in societies, in which “formal organizations are losing their grip on individuals” and audiences are fragmented and hard to reach, Bennet and Segerberg infer that personal action frames – especially when spread via social media – are a more likely to attract the involvement of civil society than collective action frames, which are less inclusive and ask people to align themselves with a potentially self-changing social identity (743, 748). However, this does not mean that collective frames of action are obsolete, nor that the lines between collective and connective action are set in stone. As Bennet and Segerberg stress, there are hybrid movements that have characteristics of both modes of activism. Movements of connective action can be (loosely) organised by a formal organisation that desires an informal campaign with a ‘grassroots’ feel, and collective action frames can be used alongside personal action frames (754, 756).

Indeed, the logic of connective action cannot explain all activist movements that are (for the greatest part) facilitated by digital communication technologies. A quantitative content analysis by the political communications scholar Wright of more than 33.000 British e-petitions showed the importance of established organisations and the mass media in promoting e-petitions (2015, 424).²¹ Petitions started by individuals affiliated with a certain group or organisation – especially a media company – were much more likely to reach the signature threshold than petitions started by unaffiliated persons, as they had a pre-existing professional network to draw upon next to their personal network. At the same time, 87 percent of all petitions were started by unaffiliated individuals, as were 19 of the 20 most signed petitions – but these were promoted by a range of formal organisations independent from the petitioner, especially media organisations (421-424). Attention by media actors characterised all relatively popular petitions in Wright’s analysis, and the petitioners he interviewed considered the professional media as crucial for generating public awareness of their case (they often contacted them themselves as well).

Drawing upon Bennet and Segerberg’s theory of connective action, Wright concludes that what characterizes his research corpus as a whole is a “messiness of distinctions among individual, affiliated, and group organized petitions”, and a hybridity between collective and connection action; between top-down organisation and the ‘natural’ logics of online social networks (424). He explains the relative lack of connective action by the fact that the design of the Downing Street platform was not very suitable for connective action, as there were no widgets with which the petitions could be easily shared via social media. Moreover, he observes that petitions in general are usually not very suitable for varying interpretations and personal frames of action, as they often feature a highly specific topic of concern of which the details were determined in the petition itself (425).

What neither Bennett and Segerberg nor Wright have sufficiently explored in my opinion is the question of effectivity. It is one thing to observe that many activist movements nowadays operate via the logic of (hybrid) connective action, or that formal organisations and mass media almost always play some

²¹ These 33.000 petitions were issued via an official platform hosted by the British government, the Downing Street platform, and accepted by the government review board. Only 3,258 of these gathered more than 500 signatures though – the threshold to receive an official government reply. This accords with the findings by Junherr and Jürgens, who analysed more than eight hundred German petitions and found that only a handful of petitions accounted for the majority of the collected signatures (2010). It appears thus that e-petitions know a long tail-like distribution as well, as highly impactful petitions are relatively rare.

accelerating or organising role in relatively popular e-petitions. But what characterizes those rare movements that were actually successful in reaching the goal they petitioned for?

The media scholar Lim has attempted to answer such a question through an analysis of two successful and two unsuccessful Indonesian cases of digitally mediated activism (2013). According to Lim, the potential for political change through activist use of social media is not at all automatic or inherent to social media technologies; this potential, as well as the realization of it, emerges in interaction with the specific cultural context of a campaign. Her most important findings about the difference between the successful and unsuccessful campaigns are that the successful movements were characterised by a simple ‘innocent hero versus powerful villain’-narrative that lend itself for short and catchy content and sensationalist victimization framing, and was in accordance with dominant meta-narratives in Indonesian society, such as religiosity and nationalism. This led her to conclude that online activism is “most successful when their narratives, icons and symbolic representations mimic those that dominate the contemporary popular culture”, which means that digitally mediated activism is “limited in its capacity to mobilise complex political issues” (653). However, the fact that the cases Lim analysed are embedded in Indonesian cultural context, means that the findings may not generalize to cases in other cultures. Moreover, she did not analyse any petition movements.

There is thus more room still for enhancing the understanding of the conditions that amplify the impact of digitally mediated activism. This thesis will do this by analysing how connectivity and collectivity function in a specific case of highly impactful digitally mediated activism. This translates to the following research question: *What characteristics of connective and collective action did Geenpeil display, and to what extent can these be considered a positive or negative influence on the impact of the movement?*

In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions will need to be answered: What kinds of actors were most influential on the organisation and discourse of the campaign? Are the frames of action that were used rather personal or collective? And what is the likely relation between these characteristics of Geenpeil and the societal and political consequences of the activism (or in other words: its impact)?

Following the research results by Wright, Geenpeil can be expected to display signs of hybridity, considering the affiliation of the actors that started the campaign and the specificity of the petition subject. At the same time, the movement can be expected to be more connective than the average petition on Downing Street, as the petition could be easily shared via social media. Moreover, in light of Lim’s research results, Geenpeil can be expected to make use of simple narratives with a victimization framing, that do not go in against dominant meta-narratives of Dutch culture.

3. Following actors and media

To answer the questions formulated in the previous paragraph, I will reconstruct the protest ecology of Geenpeil on the basis of the retweet network and a corpus of promotional content that was published and spread by supporters of the movement. The next subchapter will further detail the methodology behind this project of reconstruction, drawing upon theory by Latour and Rogers. Moreover, the characteristics of Twitter as a medium will be discussed. This subchapter will be followed by one detailing the exact research corpus and the digital tools and processes I will use for the analyses.

3.1 Reconstructing the protest ecology

Textual and procedural traces

The central exercise of this thesis is the reconstruction of the protest ecology of Geenpeil. This is a quite challenging, if not impossible task, as every protest ecology is a unique, dynamic and complex network of actors, technologies, practices and discourse without clear boundaries, of which no neat summary is available. Moreover, it is a historical network, which means that its reconstruction is a retrospective, almost archaeological exercise, as the material and discursive traces of the protest ecology need to be uncovered from the vast body of somehow and somewhere recorded text, data and personal accounts that contains such traces.²² As taking into account all possible traces of the Geenpeil movement is much too great a challenge to be executed in the limited space of this thesis, I will in fact only approximately or partially reconstruct the protest ecology, going by those traces that are accessible to me and sufficient to gain a grounded understanding of the dynamics of the movement.

This exercise may be best understood through the lens of Latour's sociology of associations: an approach to socio-analytical network (re)construction that regards networks as assemblages of associations between human and non-human actors, who both have agency in the sense that they change things for each other. (For analytical purposes as well as consistency's sake I will continue to only use the term 'actor' to refer to individuals, groups and organisations, though the autonomous influence of objects in the protest ecology of Geenpeil is noted). According to Latour, the best way to (re)construct a network, is to (re)trace the associations between the relevant nodes – a process that he calls 'following the actors' (2005, 8-12). Applying this to protest ecologies, the task is to identify the actors and objects that have influenced the ecology by the traces they left, and use these traces to uncover associations between various human actors (affiliated and unaffiliated, individuals and organisations), and between actors, objects and concepts of meaning (words and images that signal ideologies, norms and interests).

The types of traces I will retrieve are textual and procedural – they are blogs and tweets about Geenpeil published by certain actors, and meta-data that describe a relation between relevant actors ('this person retweeted that person on the topic of Geenpeil, at this moment in time'), and which are the effect of the use of a specific digital technology, namely Twitter. The blogs and tweets will be informative for the discourse within the protest ecology, while the Twitter meta-data will be used to visualise the retweet network of tweets in which Geenpeil was mentioned. This second category of associational traces will then be uncovered not so much by following people as actors (for example: looking up blogs written by

²² The archeological dimension of this thesis overlaps with a branch of humanities research called 'media archeology': a methodological approach that is concerned with the construction of alternative or overlooked non-teleological histories of media, by studying discursive and material instances of culture in a hermeneutic manner (Huhtamo and Parikka 2011, 1-2). Though this thesis is not concerned with the history of a media phenomenon, it does concern the study of discursive and material traces of a phenomenon in hindsight. Thus, the process of analysis corresponds with that of media archaeology, even if the goal differs and the methods are not just hermeneutical. As such, it is also subject to one of the prime critiques of Huhtamo and Parikka on popular histories of media culture, namely the limitations of the accuracy of such accounts, that result from the ideological biases and negligence of authors (3).

the journalists of *Geenstijl*), but by following a specific digital technology that was used to talk about *Geenpeil* and spread the campaign.

As the web epistemologist Rogers has argued, digital technologies are not just an object of study but also a method to make grounded claims about social and cultural change, in a way that transcends artificial boundaries between the online and offline. By capturing and analysing the dynamics of a digital technology – or ‘following the medium’, as he put it –, one can use the ontological specificity of that technology to get access to unique information about people; both their opinions, actions and motivations, and both individuals, groups and society as a whole (Rogers 2009, 3-6). In other words, and specifically regarding activist movements: what people do with digital technologies in relation to a certain activist movement is also informative for the movement as whole, and possibly even for (a certain kind of) activism in general. Or, as Segerberg and Bennett put it: online activist networks may reflect the larger dynamics of those activist networks, as a sort of ‘window’ into the protest ecology, as well as a networking agent that shapes the structure of the movement (2011, 200).

Thus, the structure and composition of the *Geenpeil* retweet network – who the nodes are, what the relation is between them, and what their position is relative to each other – can be expected to be meaningful for understanding the movement in general – and the same accounts for the discourse within this network. However, in order to do right by the autonomous influence of the affordances and logics of the Twitter platform on the dynamics of the online network, and understand the *Geenpeil* movement as a whole in its rightful socio-technological context, the ontological specificity of Twitter needs to be explored as well.

The characteristics of Twitter

Twitter is a social medium on which social relations are articulated as ‘sender-audience’ connections (Schmidt 2014, 6). On the Twitter platform, users can publish messages of 140 characters (tweets), and receive messages published by certain other users on their homepage (timeline) by ‘following’ them. Next to sending and receiving short messages, the platform affords various interactions between users, predominantly via ‘mentioning’ and ‘retweeting’ people. By adding the @ sign in front of a username, one can directly address another and through this establish a sort of public conversation. Furthermore, by clicking on the retweet-button underneath another person’s tweet, a user can rebroadcast the tweet, hereby making it appear on the timelines of their own followers. Retweeting can generally be regarded as a sign of agreement or appreciation, but by adding critical commentary to the tweet people can also use retweeting to show disagreement or disapproval.²³

Getting retweeted is a somewhat of a goal inside the Twitter-sphere. After all, if you get retweeted, your message – which may be part of a conversation – will spread to an audience beyond your own list of followers, raising awareness of the content you (re)tweeted, and possibly motivating new people to contribute to the conversation or even follow you. Moreover, they too may retweet you, further spreading your message and enhancing your audience. The practice of retweeting thus leads to what the media scholars Boyd, Golder and Lotan describe as a “conversational ecology in which conversations are composed of a public interplay of voices that give rise to an emotional sense of shared conversational context” (2010, 1). When some tweets get retweeted a lot, this content spreads through various social

²³ Retweeting did not always exist as a formal, build-in function of the Twitter platform (and might not exist anymore at some point in the future). The principle of retweeting was originally developed by users; it was a non-formal convention where people added ‘RT’ or ‘retweet’ in front of quotes taken from other people’s tweets in order to rebroadcast certain content (or add commentary to it). As the practice grew more and more popular, Twitter decided to develop the retweet-button (Gerlitz and Rieder 2013). This made it easier for users to engage in already existing retweeting-practices, while at the same time structuring this ‘organic’ practice and stimulating quoting and publicly commenting on tweets as a mode of communication.

networks, which means that many people will be exposed to – and consequently start thinking or talking about – the same topics and specific opinions and conversations.

Of course, the ‘extra’ audience that one receives when getting retweeted is not at all random: they are the followers of users that follow you, in accordance with the personalization dimension of the connectivity logic of social media. By following some users and not others, Twitter users choose which sources of information they get exposed to, while at the same time getting exposed to content by accounts retweeted by those sources. This choice is based on both ties of personal connection (friends follow friends) and personal relevance (people follow accounts that will provide them with content they are likely to find interesting).

Indeed, according to the homophily principle, which states that people’s personal network tends to correspond with their own sociodemographic and behavioural characteristics, it is likely that Twitter users will mostly choose to follow people that have ideas, values and preferences that overlap with their own (Passman, Boeschoten and Schäfer 2014, 336). Consequently, it is that kind of information they are most exposed to – and that kind of tweets that they tend to retweet. People experience Twitter then not so much as ‘public sphere’ in which one can dialogically interact with highly diverse opinions and information, but rather as an ‘echo chamber’: an environment in which people interact with a relatively homogenous group of people where (political) views and interests are concerned (Colleoni, Rozza and Arvidsson 2014).²⁴ This coincides with the segregation logic of the internet as whole, where different websites and pages form bubbles of views and opinions that are mostly visited by people who agree with them (Dean 2008, 117).²⁵

By reconstructing the retweet network of Geenpeil by means of data-visualisation it will become apparent which Twitter users have been retweeted most, and were thus most important for spreading word on the initiative and convincing people to sign the petition. To this end, tweets in which Geenpeil was mentioned in a positive or neutral manner will be separated from the negative ones, in order to distinguish between supporters and critics of Geenpeil (as will be further elaborated on in paragraph 3.2). Though the structure of the retweet network need not be representative for the Geenpeil networks on other social media platforms, it is likely that the most important actors in this network were also important for the promotion of the campaign in general. Moreover, following the homophily principle, actors that were retweeted a lot are not just significant for the campaign because they were the source of a message that may have convinced a lot of people to sign the petition, but also because their ideas, values and preferences are likely telling for those of the users that retweeted them.

3.2 Corpus and methods of analysis for the data visualisation

For this thesis, two kinds of research corpora were created: one for the content analysis (blogs and the content of retweets), and one for the data visualisation of retweets (meta-data about retweets). The blogs could easily be found using the search function of the Geenstijl website; for the retweets I contacted the data-collection company Buzzcapture, which has high-volume access to (historical) data.²⁶ They

²⁴ Colleoni, Rozza and Arvidsson’s analysis of the Twitter networks of 2009 Democrats and Republicans in the US showed that this effect is especially strong where networks of social ties are concerned, but not so much for information ties (the research subjects tended to follow likeminded individuals for social purposes, but various, heterogeneous sources for news).

²⁵ It must be noted though that the bubble metaphor is rather drastic: despite the homophile principle, people don’t just have friends that have completely overlapping interests and beliefs, and don’t just make direct connections but also indirect connections, with people they will likely have less in common.

²⁶ Getting the right data for research can be quite challenging when the data you need is in possession of a private company. Short of direct co-operation with Twitter, the only way for researchers to get data is either by making use of the limited open data-retrieval functions made available by Twitter – Twitter’s publicly accessible application programming interfaces (API’s) – or by making use of third-party data-collection services or data-capturing tools (which can be either free

provided me with a list of 232.495 tweets that contained the word ‘geenpeil’ and were sent in July, August or September 2015. There is no telling how representative this corpus is for all tweets that mentioned Geenpeil in this time period, but a spokesperson of Buzzcapture guessed the list consisted of about ninety percent of all tweets.

To make the corpus suitable for the visualisation task, I narrowed the list of tweets down in Excel to the 43.778 tweets that started with the symbols ‘RT @’, and thus signalled a retweet. This excludes all tweets in which users added commentary to their retweets, where the symbols ‘RT @’ are stated after the commentary. However, as this commentary is likely to be negative about the movement, most of these tweets do not promote Geenpeil, which means that the authors of these tweets cannot be considered important for the impact of the campaign.

Of course, the retweets without commentary may also be negative about Geenpeil. Thus, in order to separate these retweets from the others, I looked at each tweet individually and tagged it as either positive or negative about Geenpeil. Only tweets that were explicitly critical of the goals of the Geenpeil campaign or the actors or ideals associated with it were considered negative, as well as tweets in which people merely said they would not sign the petition or recommended people to not sign it. This means that tweets that were a news-like observation about the state of the campaign (for example: ‘Geenpeil now has 50.000 signatures’) were also considered positive, as were tweets of which it was impossible to tell whether the author was supportive or unsupportive of the petition (for example: ‘Geenpeil generates a lot of discussion in my household’). All in all, 2127 tweets were deemed negative, and 41651 were deemed positive.

It must be acknowledged here that the process of deciding which tweets were positive and which were negative is highly subjective and that some errors may have been made – especially considering the fact that for some tweets it was very hard to tell whether it was meant to be positive or negative about Geenpeil. Yet, making this admittedly artificial distinction was a necessary thing to do, as only positive tweets are likely to have contributed to the impact of Geenpeil (though some do say that there is no such thing as bad publicity). Thus, in order to leave the retweet network as a whole unimpaired, both the negative and the positive tweets will be included in the visualisation.

The software I used to visualize the data is the Gephi program. Like any computational process of data visualisation, this software allows for reducing discrete data to spatially organized graphical primitives such as lines and points, through which an informative visual representation can be made of specific relations, patterns, quantities and qualities inside the data (Manovich 2011, 37-39). I selected the algorithm Force Atlas Two to generate the visualisations, as this algorithm is very well suited for large networks. The algorithm determines that nodes repulse each other and connections (‘edges’) attract nodes, meaning that it shows clusters of nodes and pushes nodes that do not have a lot of connections with other nodes to the margins of the network (Jacomy et al. 2014). Thus, the result of this particular method of visualisation is a network in which actors are distinguishable from each other where centrality in the network is concerned, and in which different clusters of connected nodes (‘communities’) can be distinguished.

Lastly, for the explorative content analysis I collected all Geenstijl blogs in which Geenpeil was mentioned, published in the period from the tenth of July to the twenty-seventh of September 2015 (a selection of which can be found Appendix B). This corpus was combined with a selection of retweets from the visualisation corpus (Appendix C). To avoid any bias, the process of selection was randomized,

or for pay, and either make use of Twitter’s open data-retrieval functions or have their own agreement with Twitter) (Borra and Rieder 2014, 264-265). No matter which method you go by, you will never have unlimited access to all tweets.

using a Microsoft Excel function that allows one to select every hundredth row in a table (or any other number). This came down to 210 tweets in total. In order to increase the representativeness of the corpus, I did not select the tweets out of the full research corpus, but out of a list of all tweets that were published by accounts that were retweeted more than a hundred times, and could thus be considered popular actors in the retweet network.

4. The connective and collective action of the Geenpeil movement

The research part of this thesis consists of two sections. In the first subchapter, the structure of the retweet network and the implications of this for the network dynamics will be discussed, making use of various concepts discussed in the theoretical and methodological chapters. In the second subchapter the question of whether the frames of action of Geenpeil were rather personal or collective will be answered on the basis of an explorative content analysis, taking into account the eventual societal and political impact of the movement.

4.1 The retweet network as a window into the Geenpeil protest ecology

Figure 2 shows the network of all retweets in which Geenpeil is mentioned. Nodes are bigger the more often they were retweeted. The green lines represent a positive tweet that connects a source (the one who retweeted) and a target (the one who is retweeted). The red lines represent a negative tweet. If the point from which the line departs curves clockwise the node is retweeting the node on the other side, and if the line hits a note in a counterclockwise manner, this node is being retweeted. There are 9319 nodes and 43778 retweets in total.

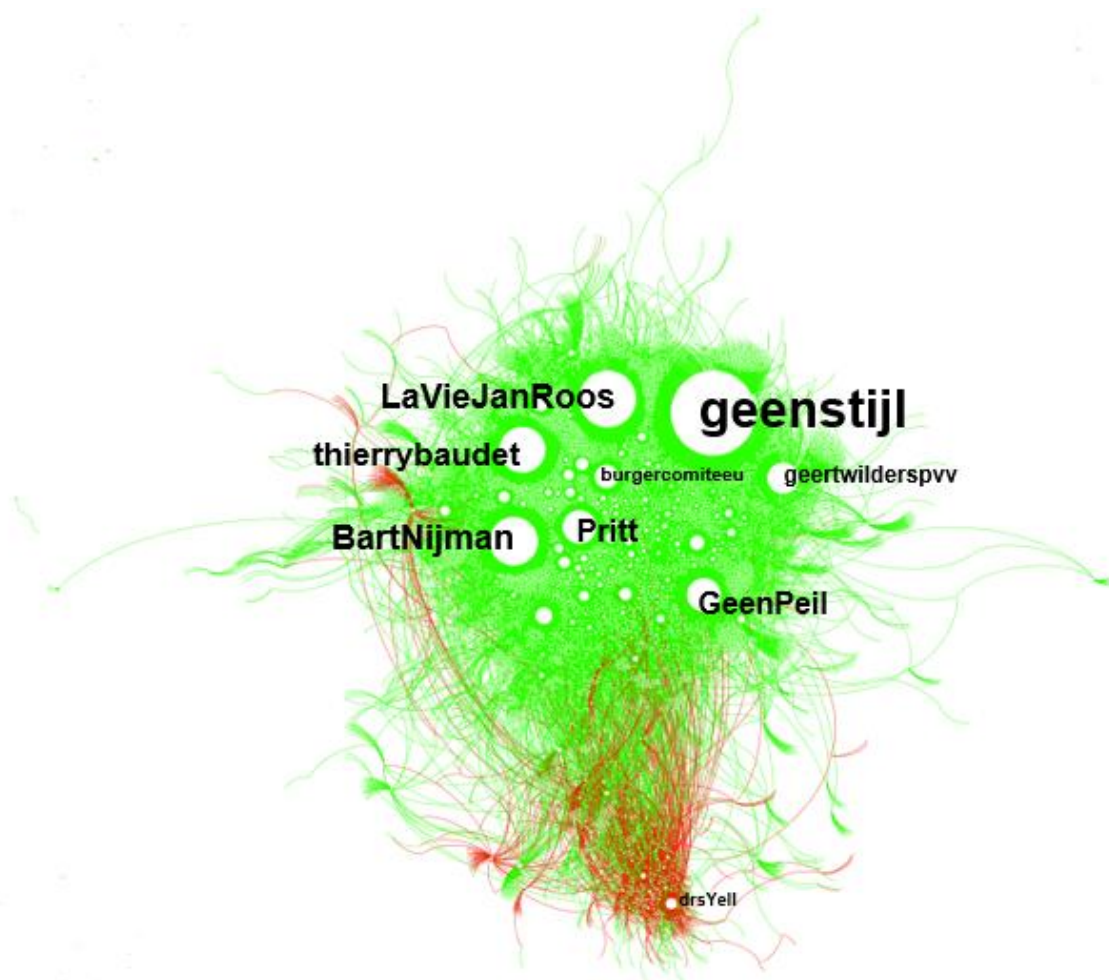


Figure 2: A visualization of all retweets mentioning Geenpeil.

The first thing that is apparent in this visualisation is the relatively small number of negative tweets, and the fact that the nodes that are either the source or target of a negative tweet are much more spread out. Some are concentrated around one relatively large node ('drsYell', an unaffiliated civil actor); others form small separate clusters. There are several possible ways in which the lack of negative retweets can

be explained: first of all, it is possible that in many negative retweets there was commentary added at the beginning of the tweet, which means they did not begin with ‘RT@’ and were therefore not included in the corpus. Secondly, negative opinions did not have as much time to emerge to as positive ones, as it took some time before the larger public became aware of the Geenpeil campaign. Thirdly, there was no such thing as a counter-movement to Geenpeil, so there was little reason for people critical of Geenpeil to spread word about the movement.

The Geenpeil-positive part of the network on the other hand, appears a lot denser. There are no very big nodes at the faraway edges of the network, which means that all of the most retweeted actors are connected via direct or indirect retweets: they regularly retweeted each other and were retweeted a lot by the same persons. It is unsurprising then that Gephi’s algorithms could not detect any separate communities inside the retweet network – most people in the network retweeted a number of different users that either retweeted a lot about Geenpeil, or were retweeted a lot about the movement, resulting in a very closely connected network.

Indeed, Gephi’s algorithms also showed that the average path length between any two users in the positive retweet network is only 3.85, meaning that there are on average only about four actors separating one person who has retweeted positively about Geenpeil from another. Thus, most users have either retweeted one of the central nodes in the retweet network, or retweeted someone who retweeted one of the central nodes, which again points to a dense, highly interconnected network.

The implication of this kind of network is that there was a high sense of shared conversational context inside the Geenpeil protest ecology (or at least on Twitter). Many people will have seen the same tweets, and thus thought about the same information. The high sense of shared conversational context is also apparent in the fact that a small number of accounts was the target of a relatively large number of retweets. The top eight most retweeted accounts were the target of 11845 retweets, which is thirty percent of the total amount of retweets sent. The most popular of these accounts was Geenstijl, which received 3150 retweets. This account was followed by that of the journalist Jan Roos (‘LavieJanRoos’, 2086 retweets), who wrote for Geenstijl and was one of the campaign leaders of Geenpeil. The third most popular account was that of the journalist Bart Nijman (1776 retweets), who also wrote for Geenstijl and describes himself on his Twitter-account as the ‘architect’ of Geenpeil. Other relatively large nodes represent the journalist Thierry Baudet, who is the founder of the non-profit organization Forum voor de Democratie (1672 retweets); the Geenstijl-journalist Marck Burema (‘Pritt’, 1215 retweets); the leader of the populist political party PVV, Geert Wilders (‘geertwilderspvv’, 1120 retweets); and Burgercomité (826 retweets).²⁷

These eight actors were vastly more popular than the other users: the difference between the eight most retweeted user and the ninth most retweeted user is more than three hundred tweets. Moreover, there are only 44 users that were retweeted more than a hundred times (of which just one was only or predominantly the target of negative tweets, namely ‘drsYell’). Together, the 43 most retweeted Geenpeil-positive users were the target of 18.697 retweets, meaning that 1,4 percent of all retweeted users was the target of 42,7 percent of all retweets. This strengthens the shared conversational context-effect, as the network wasn’t just highly interconnected but also disproportionately influenced by a small amount of highly popular actors. (Which may also have to do with the popularity-logic of social media as defined by Van Dijck: popular accounts get a privileged treatment by the algorithms that decide what people see on their account on the platform).

²⁷ These are the roles of the actors during the campaign; some actors have since changed their occupation. Roos for example has joined the small, right-wing liberal party VNL, and the non-profit organisation Forum voor de Democratie turned into a party in September 2016, of which Baudet became the leader.

Though there's quite a number of relatively popular unaffiliated civil actors in the network, the majority of the 43 most popular Geenpeil-positive accounts belong to affiliated or non-civil actors, as can be seen in the username-cloud below (Figure 3). Many of these accounts belong to media actors: they are the private accounts of journalists or the official accounts of media organisations – actors that likely have a relative high number of followers and know how to ‘play the crowd’. (Taken together, all media actors (twenty in total) were the target of 12226 retweets, which is 28,9 percent of the entire corpus). Moreover, none of the eight most retweeted – and thus most influential – actors are unaffiliated, and they were often directly connected to the initiators of the e-petition – all of which indicates that Geenpeil was not a self-organising type of movement. The actors who started the campaign are not only very central to the network, but also highly influential where the frames of action are concerned, together with other supportive public figures. (Of course, that an account was retweeted a lot on the topic of Geenpeil compared to other actors, does not necessarily mean they were active promoters of Geenpeil; merely that they said something positive about Geenpeil, or that their tweets could somehow be used to send a positive message about Geenpeil, as will be further discussed in subchapter 4.2)



Figure 3: A username-cloud of all actors that were retweeted more than a hundred times. The usernames are distinguished by a) the kind of actor they represent (see the colours in the caption), and b) how popular they were relative to the other users (the size of the nodes). Though the position of the names in the network quite accurately reflects their position in the actual retweet network, the differences in size between the various names has been diminished for the sake the readability of the cloud. In reality, the biggest names are far bigger than the smallest.

Another interesting detail in the username-cloud is the presence of politicians – both politicians that are known for being Eurosceptic (‘geertwilderspvv’ in particular) and one politician that is not (‘Apechtold’). Politicians who were retweeted a lot about Geenpeil may have used the movement to demonstrate their own ideals and plans, and appeal to the supporters of the movement, who may belong their own voter base. Indeed, as many supporters of Geenpeil retweeted both politicians and accounts directly connected to Geenstijl of Burgercomité, there are good reasons to suspect that many Geenpeil supporters have been following one or more of these politicians since before Geenpeil. In light of the homophily principle, this means that many of the nodes in the retweet-network will have overlapping ideas, values and preferences beyond the mere fact that they supported Geenpeil, which are be connected

to the political standings of the politicians in the retweet-network. The exception to this is the politician Alexander Pechtold ('Apechtold'), who was retweeted quite often by supporters of Geenpeil, but also criticized and ridiculed in the content of a much larger amount of tweets, as will be demonstrated in the next subchapter.

4.2 Frames of action and the implications of discourse

As the previous subchapter has shown, the structure of the retweet network of Geenpeil implies a movement that was not very self-organising, and that was as much collective as connective where organisation is concerned. As the movement was for a great part facilitated by social media, it was inherently connective in the sense that the structural logics of these online platforms determined the way messages about Geenpeil spread (via weak-tie social networks and predetermined mechanisms of interaction such as retweeting). By sharing and engaging, the audience spread positive word on the movement beyond just the people that the journalists of Geenstijl could reach themselves via their weblog. At the same time though, the centrality of Geenstijl – and to a lesser extent Burgercomité – shows that people who supported the movement via retweets were often directly or indirectly connected to these actors, which means that they were very effective in raising engagement with their messages and fulfilled a leadership role in the movement – all of which implies a significant degree of strategy and planning by Geenstijl and Burgercomité. But what about the discourse inside the protest movement? To what extent do the frames of action embedded in promotional tweets and blogs fit with the characteristics of either collective or connective action?

On the basis of random samples of tweets and the 165 blog posts about Geenpeil that Geenstijl has published during the campaign, there are roughly three (oftentimes overlapping) categories of promotional texts that can be distinguished. There are updates on the progress of the campaign; attacks or criticism on (perceived) enemies of the movement; and calls for support for the campaign, with or without argumentation. Inside these categories both connective and collective frames of action are present.

Updates on the campaign on Twitter mostly originate from actors affiliated with Geenstijl or Burgercomité and usually concern the total amount of signatures collected; the amount of signatures that is still needed; or a report on a big haul of new signatures (“RT @GeenPeil: Yet another 600+ analogue signatures in. Amazing!”). Sometimes, there are mentions of media appearances or opinion articles by public figures arguing in favour of Geenpeil, or other forms of public attention for Geenpeil (“RT @pauwnl: Tonight figurehead @laviejanroos of @GeenPeil tells us why we should sign for the referendum”). Another kind of update are examples of successful campaigning provided by supporters, and personal claims of having signed the petition (“RT @l_ruigrok: 4 signatures sent, on different forms to be on the safe side @geenpeil @burgercomiteeu”). Lastly, there were messages of gratitude to people who supported Geenpeil by the leaders of the campaign (“RT @Pritt: #GeenPeil is on its way to volunteers with beer and cheese. A videoclip will follow tonight!”).

On Twitter there were also many retweets in which (perceived) enemies of the movement were mocked or criticized – not just by actors affiliated with Geenstijl but also by unaffiliated civil actors. Criticism was either aimed at well-known Dutch political actors, the media, a certain EU official or policy, or simply the EU and its adherents in general (“RT @MarcvdLinden: The bizarre speech by Juncker yesterday convinced me: we should have more to say about Europa. That’s why I am in favour of a referendum #geenpeil ”) (RT@pieterkleinrtl: I’d like that referendum: “Can our country be saved from Europe?” #geenpeil #eu Column). Some of the specific actors that were criticized also occur in username-cloud, which is an indication of the level engagement there was with these actors within the Geenpeil protest ecology. The news broadcasters NOS and RTL Nieuws for example, were not just

retweeted as a source of news about Geenpeil’s progress, but were also accused by supporters of Geenpeil of unjustly ignoring the petition during the first two months of the campaign (“RT @TPOnl: BREAKING NEWS RTL Nieuws is no longer ignoring #geenpeil. <http://t.co/cjery3bB4> Now the NOS”). The politician Alexander Pechtold of the D66 party, who was also retweeted more than a hundred times, was mocked and criticized in a lot of retweets as his party is both one of the most active supporters of the EU-project in the Dutch political sphere, as well as in favour of more direct democracy in the Dutch political system. Though Pechtold did send tweets in which he applauded the Geenpeil initiative, he was also explicitly in favour of the association agreement with Ukraine and once said that many European policy issues are too complex to be decided via referendum. This led supporters of Geenpeil to accuse him of hoping Geenpeil would fail and his party of not truly upholding the democratic ideal (“RT @BartNijman: LOL, @APechtold is having more and more trouble hiding his dissatisfaction about #GeenPeil”).

These criticisms can be regarded as implicit calls for support of Geenpeil. For example, where the criticism on the D66 party and its top candidate Pechtold is concerned, Geenpeil is often made synonymous to good democracy and D66 to false democracy (“RT @burgercomiteeu: D66 shows her true face, she loves strong men and technocracy and not civillians and democracy #geenpeil <https://t.co/zZHEVK9qG6>”) (“RT @Pritt collect more signatures in one day with @Geenpeil than the (former) referendum party D66 has members. Mission accomplished”). This kind of messages appears aimed the existing base of supporters, as it is not explained what Geenpeil is exactly and what it’s for – it is assumed people already know of Geenpeil, and why D66 is being singled out.

Next to these implicit instances of e-petition promotion, there were also explicit calls for support, sometimes aimed at a specific audience. For example, the official Geenpeil account sent several tweets aimed at members of specific political parties, asking them to spread word about the petition, accompanied by a quote of the top candidate of that party (see Figure 4). Other tweets explicitly appealed to people who are in favour of the association agreement – here, the referendum was presented as something that is desirable in itself, as it is a form of direct democracy and thus of civil political influence (“RT @AlptekinAkdogan: If you’re in favour of the EU-association agreement a referendum is a good way to show that. Sign #GeenPeil”) (“RT @burgercomiteeu: GeenStijl: BNR: 'GeenPeil is the recipe for a democratic revolution”). Lastly, there are also explicit calls to people who have already signed the petition to ask their friends of family to sign (“RT @geenstijl: If everyone who signed #GeenPeil convinces 2 more people to sign, the referendum will be a fact. RT and <http://t.co/j2ZVMFSfSf>”)

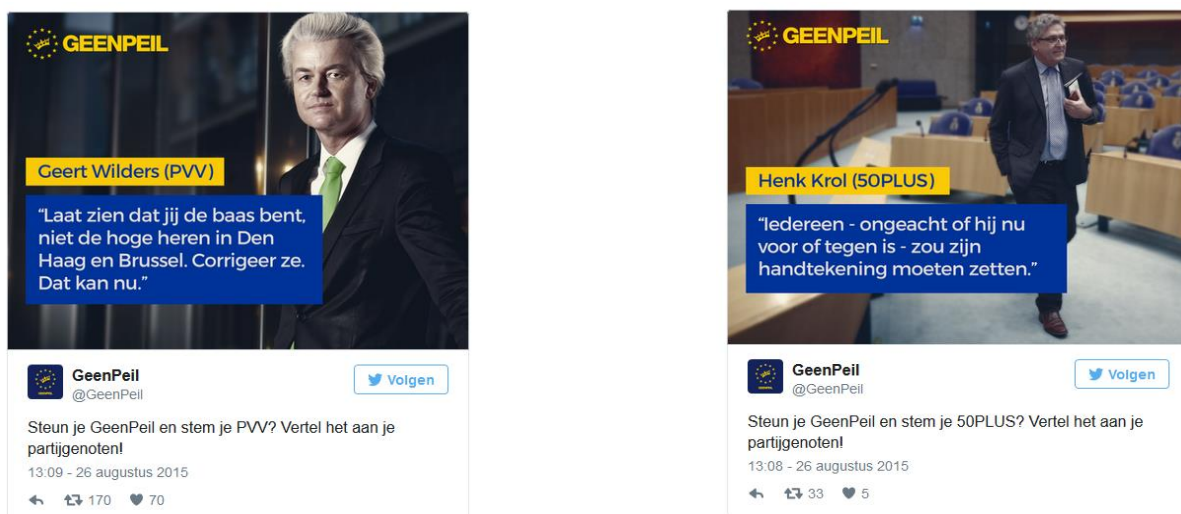


Figure 4: Two examples of retweeted tweets aimed at members of a certain party.

Where the blogs on Geenstijl are concerned, all these different categories of messages overlap a lot more (which is not strange, considering the 140-character limit on Twitter greatly restricts the amount of different messages that can be put into one piece of content). Just as on Twitter, there were regular updates on Geenstijl about the progress of the petition, especially in the last week of the campaign, when Geenpeil needed at least another 80.000 signatures to reach the 300.000 signatures threshold. These blogs typically emphasized the democratic potential of Geenpeil, combined with Eurosceptic statements. For example, when after the e-petition was launched 30.000 signatures were collected in 24 hours (at least allegedly), Geenstijl said The Hague and Brussels were shaking, and that their web application was a democratic “game changer” (Quid 2015a). Next to blogs that were solely devoted to Geenpeil, the movement was also regularly mentioned in blogs critiquing the political establishment, for example in articles on the migrant crisis and the TTIP trade agreement – which again illustrates how the petition was about showing dissatisfaction with the EU rather than the association agreement in particular.²⁸

The content of the blogs on Geenstijl also reveals that Geenstijl organised several campaign activities, and also reported on initiatives by supporters. On the official website of Geenpeil people could print various posters with a promotional message about Geenpeil, as well as the logo of the ‘Leger des Peils’ (The Army of Polling) – the name Geenstijl coined for the ‘army’ of people actively supporting Geenpeil. They also started a crowdfund, put up a billboard, started a Thunderclap,²⁹ and called for people to spread around flyers, which could be ordered via email. According to a blog post published on the twelfth of September, by that time already a thousand different people had ordered flyers (Quid 2015b). Where initiatives by independent supporters are concerned, there was a blog on Geenstijl written by a person who created Geenpeil car-stickers that people could order and put on their car, and one by someone who had a list of campaign tips for people who handed out flyers on the street. These were organising initiatives initiated by civil society actors themselves, rather than top-down planning by actors affiliated with Geenstijl and Burgercomité – though there do not appear to have been a lot this kind of initiatives. It is also impossible to say to what extent all these different actors, activities and events actually contributed to the impact of the movement. It is at any rate apparent that Geenstijl did not just function as a leadership figure in the way that they were a source of promotional content, but also in the way they created opportunities for other people to contribute to the movement.

Overall, the Geenpeil-positive discourse on Twitter and Geenstijl consists of both personal and collective frames of action. Where personal action frames are concerned, there were retweets by civil actors in which personal feelings of dissatisfaction with certain politicians or the EU are connected to the Geenpeil movement – feelings which other people may recognize, and thus have a low sharing-threshold. Moreover, the interests, values and sentiments of civil society as a whole were often addressed in promotional tweets and blogs, especially values of democracy and sentiments of dissatisfaction with perceived intransparent and technocratic politics, which are all very common, relatable and open to interpretation, and thus characteristic of connective action. By presenting Geenpeil as an initiative that is inherently beneficial to all Dutch people because of its democratic nature, the movement got a highly inclusive edge. Moreover, by aiming promotional messages at all citizens – “RT @Vakanov: Are you Dutch, older than 18 and have you not signed Geenpeil yet? Go do it now!” – the movement sidestepped fragmentation inside civil society along political-ideological lines.

²⁸ This is not to say the journalists of Geenstijl didn’t publish anything at all about the association agreement itself: they also published some blogs about what the agreement could mean for the future, stating that Ukraine is corrupt and that The Netherlands would have to provide them with guns and capital (Spartacus 2015b; Spartacus 2015c).

²⁹ Thunderclap is an online platform for crowdsourcing. But instead of backing an initiative with money, people donate publicity by sharing a message about the initiative on one or several of their social media accounts.

Still, the connectiveness of the Geenpeil-positive discourse is only partial. Despite the connective characteristics of many tweets and blogs, there are also promotional texts that rather fit the profile of collective frames of action, as they were aimed at a very specific and exclusive group of people, such as the supporters of certain political parties. These groups were connected to various ideologies and policy ideas that one would implicitly align themselves with by showing support to the movement. Moreover, the tweets in which D66 is mocked can also be considered exclusive, as these will have alienated the supporters of this party.

Lastly, the leadership role of Geenstijl itself also contributed to the exclusiveness of the Geenpeil movement, as this medium is highly well known across the Netherlands. The mere fact that Geenstijl started the petition may have people who dislike the medium put off signing it – something which will have been strengthened by the continuing strong involvement of the journalists of Geenstijl in the organisation and discourse of the campaign (in particular Jan Roos, who was the main spokesperson of the movement and appeared in a number of media). Moreover, tweets aimed at the supporters of Geenpeil often implied an exclusive collective of people with not just a shared goal but also shared ideals and principles (the ‘Leger des Peils’). These tweets also often had a strongly conversational tone and required background knowledge of the conversations and conventions within the Geenpeil-positive discourse to be meaningful, which contributed to collectiveness of the movement. All these effects likely got stronger over time: as the petition received more and more signatures and media attention, the movement got increasingly clearly defined and thus exclusive.

5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Hybrid activism in a social media world

This thesis is centred around the following research question: *What characteristics of connective and collective action did Geenpeil display, and to what extent can these be considered a positive or negative influence on the impact of the movement?*

As the analyses of the structure of the retweet network and the content of the Geenpeil-positive discourse have shown, Geenpeil was a hybrid movement, both where organisation and language are concerned. The organisation of the movement was connective in the sense that digital media played an essential role in the success of the movement, as the connectivity and popularity logics of social media, combined with the ease of signing an e-petition, afforded a fast spread of positive messages about Geenpeil to relevant audiences, and a rapid collection of signatures. Where discourse is concerned, the connectiveness of Geenpeil was apparent in the Eurosceptic and pro-democratic sentiments that were addressed in promotional messages, as these are very inclusive frames of action, especially considering the current political climate. The movement was often portrayed as a sort of David that is fighting against a Goliath (the EU) that is supported by certain Dutch politicians and the national, mass news media, which made the movement easy to understand and suitable for personalisation, and made it transcend Geenstijl and the highly specific and complex, and thus exclusive, Ukraine-issue.

At the same time, the organisation of the movement also displayed some characteristics of collective action, as Geenstijl and media actors affiliated with the weblog fulfilled a clear leadership role in the movement. They were the centre of the highly interconnected retweet network, and together with the leader of the political party PVV they published a third of all shared content in this network. Moreover, there were also many messages in the protest ecology that were collective rather than connective in nature, as they were aimed at an exclusive audience such as the supporters of a certain party, or the reader base of Geenstijl. There were also many messages with a strong conversational tone, that appeared to be aimed at the existing supporters rather than a ‘new’ audience of potential supporters.

The centrality of Geenstijl can be considered both a positive and negative influence on the impact of the campaign – the political and societal results of the activist movement. Being a highly popular, politically subjective medium, they had a ready audience of potential supporters to draw upon, and their significance in the Dutch media landscape will have also quickly drawn the attention of other media to the movement. Moreover, the popularity logics of social media predict that the messages of a popular account like Geenpeil have an advantage over those by less popular accounts, which will have benefitted the spread of promotional content. Another helpful factor here are the echo-chamber quality of online social networks and the way people use social media to perform their own identity, that will have ascertained the quick spread of content tied to shared ideals and interests within the personal networks of the regular reader base of Geenstijl, and will have attributed to the connective, self-organising dimension of the Geenpeil protest ecology as a whole.

Yet, at the same time the explicit leadership role of Geenstijl also made the Geenpeil movement exclusive in a way, as supporting it implied affinity with Geenstijl. For fans of Geenstijl this will likely not have been a problem, but for people that are unfamiliar with the weblog or do not have positive associations with it, the centrality of Geenstijl is likely to have put them off signing the petition. Thus, though the connectiveness of the pro-Geenpeil language helped move the movement beyond the confines of Geenstijl’s existing reader base, enough for the petition to eventually become successful, the centrality of actors affiliated with Geenstijl prevented the movement from becoming true connective action that is highly open to interpretation, personalizable to all and a truly bottom-up civil movement.

These results have implications for the existing research discussed in this thesis. First of all, concerning Bennet and Segerberg's implied hypothesis that connective action has a better chance of being politically effective than collective action, the case of Geenpeil shows that collectiveness can still play a valuable role in digitally mediated action – though it is a constraining as well as enabling feature, depending on the goal, initial audience and political context of the activism.

Secondly, this research supports Lim's observation of how successful online activist movements fall in line with the dominant meta-narratives of the society they take place in. The rhetoric of the supporters of Geenpeil often accorded with dominant Dutch values, specifically the value of democratic processes – though it needs to be noted that this was not the prime focus of this research. Another characteristic of Lim's successful activist cases that applied to Geenpeil is the presence of simplified 'innocent hero versus powerful villain'-narratives (predominantly in the form of 'the people versus the EU'). Thus, this research also supports Lim's observation that effective online activism follows the conventions of popular consumption culture, by providing easily understandable and often sensationalist stories. However, it can also be argued that all stories that are promotional in nature are designed to be 'catchy' and easy to understand – especially when spread on a platform for publishing messages of only 140 characters –, which means that this a characteristic of successful (contemporary) promotion rather than digitally mediated activism in particular. Moreover, many of the tweets analysed in this thesis are implicitly or explicitly part of a conversation and thus not easy to understand at all, as they either demand certain background knowledge or require one to browse to content published on another platform – though this is likely a consequence of the affordances of Twitter rather than something that characterises the discourse of the Geenpeil movement as a whole, as Twitter is particularly centred around conversational modes of interaction, and no content taken from other social media platforms was analysed in this thesis (Boyd, Golder and Lotan 2010).

Furthermore, the centrality of Geenpeil in the retweet network supports Wright's observation of the importance of the involvement of established organisations such as the media in the promotion of e-petitions. Though Bennet and Segerberg observed that formal organisations have a hard time reaching and motivating an audience in the present day and age, this clearly does not account for all such organisations. A popular and politically subjective medium like Geenstijl, that is native to the internet and has a stable audience at its disposal, can be very effective in motivating this audience and their (likeminded) weak-link social connections to undertake a certain action – especially when the ideological underpinnings of this action are characteristic of those of the medium, and especially when it's a relatively effortless, 'slacktivist' action where the political efficacy is guaranteed by governmental regulations.³⁰

Next to this, the fact that almost a third of all retweets were targeted at media actors – be they individual journalists, mass news media or weblogs – implies that the professional media in general continue to be valuable platforms for providing political information and promoting activism. At the same time, the fact that there were only four mass news media amongst the 44 accounts that were retweeted more than a hundred times – amongst which two that were heavily critiqued by various supporters of Geenpeil –, combined with the fact that Geenpeil was by far the most influential medium, also signals a declining role of mass news media on this respect. This fits the general rising presence, popularity and perceived

³⁰ Thinking back to Dean's definition of the functions of petitions, feelings of community amongst the targeted audience may have also played a role in the success of Geenpeil, as the community building function of petitions – the feeling that one is part of a movement that is working together to exercise political power – will obviously benefit from existing communities. Though this research has not focussed on feelings of community amongst the readers of Geenpeil, these feelings are likely to present, as a typical Geenstijl blog has a couple of hundred comments in which people also react to each other and refer to themselves as 'reaguurders' (a slang term for people who comment on something).

reliability of politically subjective (professional) weblogs in the media landscape (Johnson and Kaye 2004; Gilbert 2009).³¹

To conclude, the hybridity of Geenpeil also hints at the rarity of completely collective or completely connective activist movements. In societies where digital technologies are inherently intertwined with daily life and many people receive their news (partly) via social media, there can be no activist movements that are not to some extent affected by the logics of social media and the internet in general. Moreover, in a complex, fast-paced and dynamic media landscape that is shaped by mass media as well as weblogs; amateur content as well as content created by media professionals; personal communications as well as news; and unaffiliated individuals and media personalities, activist movements are bound to be noticed and influenced by many different kinds of actors – and it depends on the exact goal and political and cultural context of the movement which actors will be most valuable for reaching and convincing people that may support the movement, and what kind of frames of action will be most effective.

5.2 Suggestions for further research

There were some limitations to this research that may inspire further research. Firstly, the analysis of the promotional discourse of Geenpeil was merely explorative, which means the corpus may not be wholly representative of the Geenpeil-positive discourse as a whole. Moreover, conclusions drawn about the dynamics of the movement were solely made on the basis of the structure of the retweet network, while the Facebook platform may have been more influential on the movement as a whole, as this platform is about four times as popular in the Netherlands than Twitter.³² The offline dimension of the protest ecology was also barely touched upon, only going by information extracted from tweets and blogs. Interviews with the actors that initiated Geenpeil would have provided more extensive information about events that took place of which there are no digital traces, as well as information about the thoughts, motivations and actions of the initiators of the movement, which would have allowed for making more strongly supported observations about the protest ecology as a whole. Moreover, a more elaborate analysis of the protest ecology across platforms, supplemented with interviews and other non-digital traces of the movement, would have also allowed for empirically determining the extent to which a single online network reflects the dynamics of a protest ecology as a whole. This is a question that in my view needs to be addressed more, as many studies of digitally mediated activism appear disproportionately focussed on one online platform or type of digital content alone.

Another potential area of further research implied in this thesis is the relation between feelings of community amongst the audience of an online medium and the impact of activist initiatives promoted by this medium. Considering that Geenstijl kicked off the movement, it is the initial support by the regular reader base of the weblog that will have accelerated it. As mentioned in the footnote at the bottom of the previous page, the reader base of Geenstijl contains a core of active commenters amongst which feelings of community are likely to be present. This raises questions about the effects of community feelings amongst an online audience and their willingness to become part of an activist movement, and the nature of the distinction between unaffiliated and affiliated actors. When does a person become part of an organisation? To what extent is online activist involvement a social exercise and to what extent an ideological one?

³¹ This is not at all to say that mass news media cannot have a political bias, but in The Netherlands these tend to focus on bringing news rather than interpreting it, and are thus generally more neutral than non-news media – in the very least in the style of reporting if not in the choice of topics. In Geenpeil's blogs on the other hand, the personal opinion of the journalists is almost always explicitly present.

³² According to survey research by the commercial research agency Newcom (*Nationale Social Media Onderzoek 2016*).

Lastly, there is also the question of the distinction between the roles of mass news media and other professional media, especially weblogs – which may also be non-professional, and can have a great variety of different content –, and the reasons why people engage with them. According to the influential theory of ‘internal political efficacy’, the media are a place people actively seek out to learn about political events, processes and actors, in order to enhance their perception of their own ability to effectively participate in the democratic process (Moeller et al. 2013, 2-3). The dominance of the Geenstijl weblog in the Geenpeil movement signals that professional media continue to be an important source of political information, yet also signals a diminishing role of mass media for people’s internal political efficacy. The question to what extent this is the case and why; what the differences between these types of media are exactly; what role social media plays in their respective popularity; and what this all looks like from a historical perspective, would be interesting topics of further research – research that will be highly relevant for understanding the changeable and hybrid (social) media landscape in the context of both individualisation, digitalisation and globalisation and all their effects.

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Appendix A: extra figures

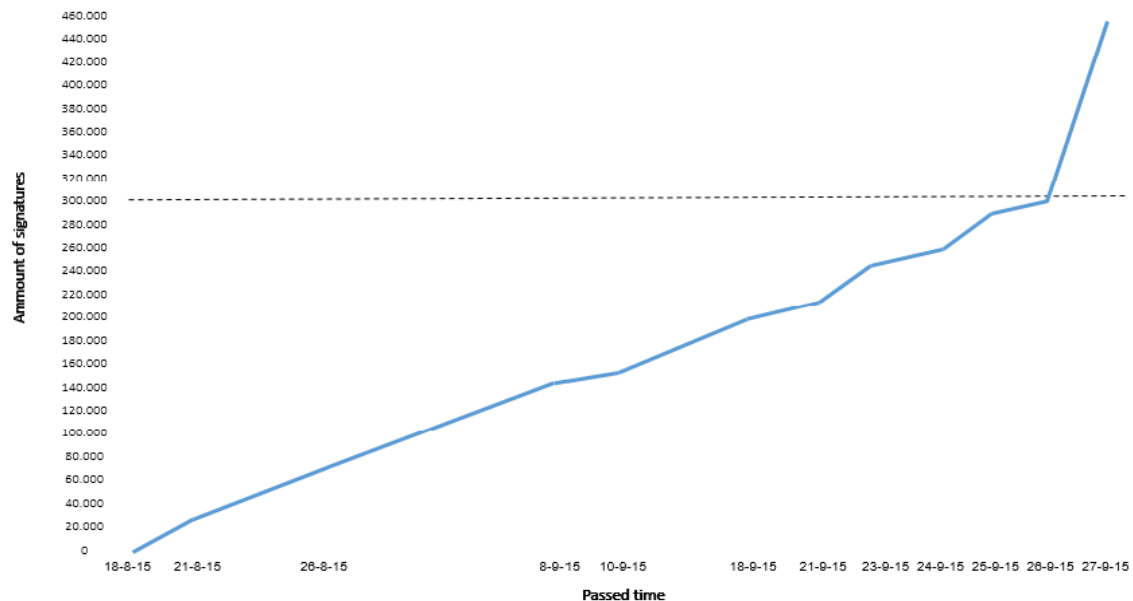


Figure 1: The amount of collected Geenpeil-signatures at a certain point in time, as reported by Geenstijl. Considering the extremity of the peak in signatures on the last day of the campaign, it must be noted that it is possible that Geenstijl hasn't been completely honest in its reporting on the amount of signatures collected, perhaps to make it seem more urgent to the supporters of Geenpeil to actively promote the petition – or that technical issues made it impossible to know the exact amount of collected signatures.

Appendix B: referenced Geenstijl blogs

Quid, Johnny. "EPISCH! Online tekenen #GeenPeil: 30k in 24 uur!" *Geenstijl.nl*, August 21, 2015a.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/08/episch_online_tekenen_geenpeil.html

Quid, Johnny. "Al 1000 vrijwilligers flyereren voor #Geenpeil." *Geenstijl.nl*, September 12, 2015b.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/al_1000_vrijwilligers_flyeren.html

Quid, Johnny. "#TTIPalarm: EU nu nog minder transparant." *Geenstijl.nl*, August 25, 2015c.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/08/ttip_2.html

Spartacus. "Dobberdossier bewijst: de EU werkt niet." *Geenstijl.nl*, July 21, 2015a.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/07/eulanden_verdelen_na_verhit_de.html

Spartacus. "#GeenPeil, want Oekraïne wil dat EU wapens levert." *Geenstijl.nl*, September 14, 2015b.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/geenpeil_want_oekraïne_wil_dat.html

Spartacus. "Het grote #GeenPeil-essay. Als dit lukt schrijven jullie geschiedenis. Zo niet, vergaat de

democratie." *Geenstijl.nl*, September 18, 2015c. http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/het_is_nu_of_nooit.html

Spartacus. "Gratis #Geenpeil-autostickers voor reaguurders!" *Geenstijl.nl*, September 13, 2015d.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/gratis_geenpeilautostickers_vo.html

Van Rossem. "Geenpeil is terug! We gaan voor een EU referendum." *Geenstijl.nl*, July 10, 2015a.

http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/07/geenstijl_en_burgercomite_kapen_kroonjuwele_n_d66.html

Van Rossem. "GeenPeil mailt alle Kamerleden over referendum EU." *Geenstijl.nl*, July 15,

2015b. http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/07/geenpeil_mailt_alle_kamerleden.html
 Van Rossem. "Superhandige campagnetips voor het Leger des Peils." *Geenstijl.nl*, September 14,
 2015c. http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/superhandige_campagnetips_voor.html
 Van Rossem. "EINDSPRINT! GeenPeil pakt 22.000 krabbels in 24u." *Geenstijl.nl*, September 22,
 2015d. http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2015/09/het_leger_des_peils_schreeuwt_geenpeil_naar_de_eindstreep.html

Appendix C: random list of popular retweets

5,67E+09	0	tombalfoort	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Het is feest voor je democratie: GeenPeil is terug! En we gaan voor een EU referendum - http://t.co/0UI1Xb8VrZ http://t.co/tw2uF18fey http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CJnJ53UcAAuHIS.jpg:thumb RT @geenstijl: Nog even over die EU Naheffing van @J_Dijsselbloem.. #GeenPeil http://t.co/hwCEzB7sON
5,69E+09	0	0	SaintMichel18 geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CKnDRqaWcAA5dPL.png:thumb RT @burgercomiteeu: Damn! Een spelfout. Opnieuw! Met dank aan @GeenPeil gaan we de
5,68E+09	0	wytze8	burgercomiteeu	10.000 wel halen. De grote opgave wordt dan 300.000. Steun ons! RT @geertwilderspvv: Steun #geenpeil en stuur dat formulier naar de Kiesraad in Heerlen voor
5,68E+09	0	WDille	geertwilderspvv	een Referendum! http://t.co/odFUs6ExJW https://t.co/3nh6jxFLc6 RT @geertwilderspvv: Steun een referendum! #geenpeil http://t.co/mpNTnujv2o
5,69E+09	0	Marieke28	geertwilderspvv	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CKiULBrWIAEKokk.jpg:thumb RT @geertwilderspvv: Steun #geenpeil en stuur dat formulier naar de Kiesraad in Heerlen voor
5,68E+09	0	Tikolores	geertwilderspvv	een Referendum! http://t.co/odFUs6ExJW https://t.co/3nh6jxFLc6 RT @fvdemocratie: Geenpeil Den Haag heeft
5,73E+09	0	ronlambalk	fvdemocratie	een contract met de burger en niet met Brussel http://t.co/gHwha3g1bT via @TPOnl RT @FeyeNody: Hey Alexandertje @APEchtold al aan het zweten Mr.Referendum? https://t.co/rXb2SaOSQ2 #GeenPeil http://t.co/Tflp3MdY7T
5,73E+09	0	casjus1	FeyeNody	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNMTXP3UkAAiPfK.jpg:thumb
5,72E+09	0	Clemanje	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Zes anti zwarte piet-gekkies domineren maandenlang het nationaal debat.

5,8E+09	0	wimbro	wierdduk	Grootste burgerbeweging sinds einde WO2 wordt genegeerd. #GeenPeil RT @wierdduk: Dat NLers ineens weten dat er een omstreden associatieverdrag met UKR bestaat, is al een democratische verdienste van #geenpeil.
5,72E+09	0	SaintJoris	Pritt	RT @Pritt: Tering. Het gaat nog steeds hard. Gewoon +10K #GeenPeil op een vrijdag. https://t.co/rws3lhOknb
5,72E+09	0	Jaaptweets	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Zes anti zwarte piet-gekkies domineren maandenlang het nationaal debat. Grootste burgerbeweging sinds einde WO2 wordt genegeerd. #GeenPeil RT @GeenPeil: Steun je GeenPeil en stem je PVV? Vertel het aan je partijgenoten! http://t.co/iINuxJ3sVa
5,73E+09	0	ingrid_kok	GeenPeil	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNVJiHSVEAE-kC9.png:thumb
5,73E+09	0	pvvforever	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Krijg nou wat! @NOS aan de lijn over #GeenPeil MSM is wakker. Let's do this. http://t.co/5b8Q6l6O5V
5,73E+09	0	IngeGem	ChrisAalberts	RT @ChrisAalberts: Het komt natuurlijk niet door mij, maar de NOS geeft #GeenPeil nu ook aandacht. http://t.co/oN3aj01wTE
5,72E+09	0	remcoromeo	Pritt	RT @Pritt: geenpeil.nl moet 300.000 handtekeningen behalen, in een politiek systeem waarin de gezamenlijke partijen nog niet eens 300.000 leden hebben. RT @geenstijl: Kijk @APechtold. Je kwoot op een loeigroot digitaal billboard op een hele drukke A-locatie. #GeenPeil gaat guerrilla! http://t.co/g5yU4HHtqf
5,69E+09	0	petersiebelt	geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CLeaotcWUAAc84I.jpg:thumb RT @LavieJanRoos: Woensdag komt Tweede Kamer samen hoe om te gaan met #geenpeil. Ja jongens, burgerparticipatie wilden jullie toch?
5,74E+09	0	ReneScholts	LavieJanRoos	http://t.co/v3cTgmNLOW RT @thierrybaudet: Zes anti zwarte piet-gekkies domineren maandenlang het nationaal debat.
5,73E+09	0	DickKraaij	thierrybaudet	Grootste burgerbeweging sinds einde WO2 wordt genegeerd. #GeenPeil RT @thierrybaudet: Weet u het nog? Tien jaar geleden zei 61% NEE tegen verdergaande machtsuitbreiding van Brussel. Daarom #GeenPeil https://t.co/oj3NHNuWU9
5,72E+09	0	JohnGalt0582	thierrybaudet	RT @geenstijl: Nog even over die EU Naheffing van @J_Dijsselbloem.. #GeenPeil http://t.co/hwCEzB7sON
5,73E+09	0	H4rry_D	geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CKnDRqaWcAA5dPL.png:thumb

5,72E+0 9	0	theunisz	JohnQuid	<p>RT @JohnQuid: Offline stromen de handtekeningen ook binnen. Dit is de krat met post van alleen vandaag. #GeenPeil http://t.co/BdLoT9thF9 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CM7EKuAU8AE2JR1.jpg:thumb</p> <p>RT @GeenPeil: Steun je GeenPeil en stem je 50PLUS? Vertel het aan je partijgenoten! http://t.co/UL6G30TW3N http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNVJUBhUYAAVxp.d.png:thumb</p>
5,73E+0 9	0	klaasgsm	GeenPeil	<p>RT @RTLnieuws: Tijd voor een referendum over Europa? @hellahueck beantwoordt vijf vragen over #geenpeil. http://t.co/NyzJ2N8fYB http://t.co/ZCNNdzT9A6 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNLWcETUwAAXhCH.jpg:thumb</p> <p>RT @Pritt: geenpeil.nl moet 300.000 handtekeningen behalen, in een politiek systeem waarin de gezamenlijke partijen nog niet eens 300.000 leden hebben.</p>
5,72E+0 9	0	rainerjacobs4 8	RTLnieuws	<p>RT @TPOnl: BREKEND RTL Nieuws negeert #geenpeil niet langer. http://t.co/cjerpy3bB4 Nu de NOS nog.</p> <p>RT @FeyeNody: Top @RenskeLeijten heeft getekend #GeenPeil http://t.co/1qeG6PSz7P http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNVWu1eXAAAPwN8.jpg:thumb</p>
5,72E+0 9	0	Stroopdoos	Pritt	<p>RT @geenstijl: Tweede Kamer BAALT van #GeenPeil http://t.co/8yRFaEjnOJ</p> <p>RT @burgercomiteeu: We gaan deze week de eerste 100.000 halen (zeker met de papieren erbij). GeenStijl: #GEENPEIL: http://t.co/eYjY74GlkY</p>
5,73E+0 9	0	A12hoven	FeyeNody	<p>RT @rodewijntjes: Gas uit Rusland of steun aan Kiev? #EU #oekraine #geenpeil http://t.co/are59kMoyo</p> <p>RT @LavieJanRoos: Woensdag komt Tweede Kamer samen hoe om te gaan met #geenpeil. Ja jongens, burgerparticipatie wilden jullie toch? http://t.co/v3cTgmNLOW</p>
5,74E+0 9	0	FrankBerkem eier	geenstijl	<p>RT @L_ruikrook: 4 handtekeningen, voor de zekerheid maar per formulier, op de bus gedaan @geenpeil @burgercomiteeu http://t.co/g11COAP4OF http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CNA9tg3UwAE38Gi.jpg:thumb</p>
5,73E+0 9	0	Francolinie	burgercomiteeu	<p>RT @geenstijl: Kijk @APechtold. Je kwoot op een loeigroot digitaal billboard op een hele drukke A-locatie. #GeenPeil gaat guerrilla! http://t.co/g5yU4HHTqf</p>
5,74E+0 9	0	ZaraW7	LavieJanRoos	
5,72E+0 9	0	AnnelienRoosj e	L_ruikrook	
5,69E+0 9	0	Kidefrian	geenstijl	

5,72E+09	0	ahtlam	geertwilders pvv	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CLeaotcWUAAc84I.jpg:thumb RT @geertwilderspvv: Handtekening gezet! #GeenPeil http://t.co/G4SCaqBcMr http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CM1DVtuW8AAhxOj.jpg:thumb RT @geenstijl: Kijk @APechtold. Je kwoot op een loeigroot digitaal billboard op een hele drukke A-locatie. #GeenPeil gaat guerrilla! http://t.co/g5yU4HHtqf
5,69E+09	0	madmaddyNL	geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CLeaotcWUAAc84I.jpg:thumb RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: GeenPeil-TV: Jan Roos wil weten waar Moldavie ligt - http://t.co/ikW7WGrc9T
5,7E+09	0	PoliticalJake	Pritt	RT @geertwilderspvv: Handtekening gezet! #GeenPeil http://t.co/G4SCaqBcMr http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CM1DVtuW8AAhxOj.jpg:thumb RT @GeenPeil: GeenPeil. Waar doen we het voor? http://t.co/1cOPkx7quA #GeenPeil RT @Pritt: Met @GeenPeil op 1 dag meer handtekeningen binnenhalen dan dat de (voorheen) referendumpartij @D66 leden heeft. Done. http://t.co/cArHOOGQQh http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CM8EienUEAUJLbO.png:thumb
5,72E+09	0	Loek_Kuipers	Pritt	RT @thierrybaudet: Als we de 300.000 handtekeningen halen MOET de Nederlandse staat binnen 3 tot 6 maanden een referendum uitschrijven. #GeenPeil RT @BartNijman: Deze man leverde meer GeenPeil-krabbels in dan @ajboekestijn voorkeursstemmen had in 2006 https://t.co/hJ9e4QsOYT https://t.co/G7Oi10j7cg
5,72E+09	0	DSuperlativo	thierrybaudet	RT @trouw: Er komt een referendum. Naderhand wordt bekend gemaakt waar het over ging. Pieter Geenen over #geenpeil http://t.co/LHQcyVXPH5 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CQD59MxW8AArV_l.jpg:thumb
5,81E+09	0	berrykoele n	BartNijman	RT @LavieJanRoos: Kijk. Het vernietigingsapparaat staat al klaar... #geenpeiltour http://t.co/lbjVyBWWya http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COjDoqsWwAAV9ve.jpg:thumb
5,81E+09	0	Karin_BG	trouw	RT @LavieJanRoos: De eerste 150.000 handtekeningen. Op naar de 300.000! #geenpeiltour http://t.co/7VJL1xWhaV http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COh_7GWCAA4FV4.jpg:thumb
5,76E+09	0	AnalPoetNL	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: De eerste 150.000 handtekeningen. Op naar de 300.000! #geenpeiltour http://t.co/7VJL1xWhaV http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COh_7GWCAA4FV4.jpg:thumb
5,76E+09	0	Dirk_Utrecht	LavieJanRoos	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COh_7GWCAA4FV4.jpg:thumb

5,81E+0 9	0	fmuets	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: http://t.co/RsLcQIBC6h en trap op de rem. Er is altijd een weg terug naar meer democratische inspraak. #GeenPeil http://t.co/462LgOVG7T http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP6HcfpWUAAAnv5w.png:thumb
5,76E+0 9	0	LoyalistNL	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: #GeenPeil. Het is nu, of helemaal nooit meer - http://t.co/Vp10reSWTZ RT @GeenPeil: Nog 90 stuks voor de 450.000 DIGITALE handtekeningen! http://t.co/wzQPNRI88E
5,81E+0 9	0	HatHooi	GeenPeil	RT @baspaternotte: GeenPeil op de helft: 150.000 handtekeningen binnen. CHECK DIE PECHTOLD-BUS DAN! http://t.co/IJbPxUANIT #GeenPeil RT @RTLnieuws: Aantal handtekeningen petitie #geenpeil dik boven de 440.000 http://t.co/CoLGcVD0GS http://t.co/2THKlivkIZ http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7NTB7W8AAZzn u.jpg:thumb
5,76E+0 9	0	BartNijman	baspaternotte	RT @pieterkleinrtl: 440.000 handtekeningen voor GeenPeil, Nederland naar de stembus http://t.co/0GevPsY5Ub
5,81E+0 9	0	ronlambalk	RTLnieuws	RT @wierdduk: Bij @tpo vindt het debat over het referendum van #geenpeil plaats dat andere media laten liggen: https://t.co/atFn8ylZqB RT @RijnPatrick: En de vlag gaat in top voor #geenpeil @GeenPeil http://t.co/JTR8c6fBGC http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7S1PdUYAAxy21.jpg:thumb
5,81E+0 9	0	NedRWB	RijnPatrick	RT @thierrybaudet: Dank aan elke ondertekenaar. Iedereen die iemand heeft verteld over wat we wilden veranderen. Dank dank dank! #geenpeil RT @JohnQuid: Nog vier uur tot Uur #GeenPeil... blijf tekenen op http://t.co/zK1uKsoPXQ . Elke stem is hard nodig
5,81E+0 9	0	joeyl_1974	thierrybaudet	RT @burgercomiteeu: Zo! Die zit! GeenPeil weerlegt democratiehaat van Rutte's roepstoeter Rob de Wijk http://t.co/tcnMgZXK30 RT @BartNijman: De campagne voor "n EU-referendum verloopt voorspoedig. Nu breekt de moeilijkste fase aan. Wat kunt u doen? http://t.co/3kd3ATmDOK #geenpeil
5,75E+0 9	0	ben_jasperse	burgercomiteeu	RT @baspaternotte: BREEK - #Geenpeil schrijft geschiedenis: 443.000 handtekeningen voor raadgevend referendum http://t.co/cMgqOQOsHq
5,74E+0 9	0	fvdemocratie	BartNijman	RT @RTLnieuws: Aantal handtekeningen petitie #geenpeil dik boven de 440.000 http://t.co/CoLGcVD0GS http://t.co/2THKlivkIZ
5,81E+0 9	0	BvdB91	baspaternotte	
5,81E+0 9	0	Harry1266	RTLnieuws	

5,75E+0 9	0	WebsiteStJaN	burgercomiteeu	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7NTB7W8AAZnu.jpg:thumb RT @burgercomiteeu: D66 toont haar ware gezicht, ze houdt van sterke mannen en de technocratie i.p.v. burgers en de democratie #geenpeil https://t.co/zZHEVK9qG6 RT @RTLnieuws: Aantal handtekeningen petitie #geenpeil dik boven de 440.000 http://t.co/CoLGcVD0GS http://t.co/2THKlivkIZ http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7NTB7W8AAZnu.jpg:thumb
5,81E+0 9	0	PLOVDW	RTLnieuws	RT @AlptekinAkdogan: Nogmaals, ben je voorstander van EU-associatieovereenkomst met Oekraïne is een referendum een mooi middel om dat kenbaar te maken. Teken #GeenPeil RT @GeenPeil: GeenPeil Noord-Brabant treft eerste voorbereidingen. http://t.co/GxZfUndOeD http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CN5jpwIWsAAQD7Z.jpg:thumb
5,77E+0 9	0	RoBra16	AlptekinAkdogan	RT @EWdeVlieger: Wat @geenstijl flikt met @GeenPeil heeft geen enkel medium in Nederland ooit klaargespeeld. Hulde RT @NOS: GeenPeil heeft 440.000 handtekeningen voor referendum http://t.co/x6r4pmVTb9
5,74E+0 9	0	JeeLeden	GeenPeil	RT @geenstijl: Wat is GeenPeil eigenlijk? https://t.co/hlCx56WSfY #GeenPeil http://t.co/RsLcQITduR http://t.co/tn8wrHQRlF http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPQ1r8nW8AAMUc6.png:thumb
5,77E+0 9	1	marnixhobbelenk	EWdeVlieger	RT @MarcvdLinden: Neem deze kans om meer te zeggen te krijgen over EU-besluiten. Al 200.000 mensen hebben getekend! #geenpeil https://t.co/VRrNrAAKLI RT @LavieJanRoos: Woensdag komt Tweede Kamer samen hoe om te gaan met #geenpeil. Ja jongens, burgerparticipatie wilden jullie toch? http://t.co/v3cTgmNLOW
5,81E+0 9	0	2mVanetten	NOS	RT @FeyeNody: http://t.co/S6yoWzBNBu aub mensen doe het #GeenPeil #Pauw @pauwnl http://t.co/8QV2ct6aze http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CN2NjUiUcAA9Ujt.jpg:thumb
5,79E+0 9	0	sanderdebors	geenstijl	RT @emileroemer: 440.000 handtekeningen. Mooi dat Nederland zich kan gaan uitspreken over EU-verdrag! #GeenPeil RT @RMieremet: @BartNijman @geenpeil wij zijn er! Met de Zeeland Rotterdam den haag scheveningen forms http://t.co/FmNbuhxP4f http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP_rC42UAAAL3BR.jpg:thumb
5,78E+0 9	0	jackfeijtel	MarcvdLinden	
5,74E+0 9	0	Adtesters	LavieJanRoos	
5,74E+0 9	0	vanhetg00r	FeyeNody	
5,81E+0 9	0	Bea_trix13	emileroemer	
5,81E+0 9	0	burgercomiteeu	RMieremet	

5,77E+0 9	0	Hans_Jansen	EWdeVlieger	RT @EWdeVlieger: Wat @geenstijl flikt met @GeenPeil heeft geen enkel medium in Nederland ooit klaargespeeld. Hulde
5,77E+0 9	0	DanEurope	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: GeenStijl: KRO Radio @DeOchtend sloop #GeenPeil en weigert wederhoor - http://t.co/Wm0rptArck
5,81E+0 9	0	DidoMichielse n	wierdduk	RT @wierdduk: Lezen jullie mijn achtergrond over associatieverdrag met UKR even alvorens #geenpeil (niet) te tekenen? http://t.co/9BaJgt8igR @TPOnl
5,76E+0 9	0	Niek1953	MarcvdLinden	RT @MarcvdLinden: Na de bizarre toespraak van Juncker gisteren ben ik om: we moeten meer zeggenschap krijgen over Europa. Ik ben dus voor referendum #geenpeil
5,76E+0 9	0	martinspire	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: De hesjtek van vandaag is #geenpeiltour http://t.co/YCnaFxWyPw http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COhht9fUEAE8wV N.jpg:thumb
5,77E+0 9	0	gklein_klein	RijnPatrick	RT @RijnPatrick: Vandaag ontzettend veel de vraag gehad of er geen referendum gehouden kon worden over een nexit uit de Eu #geenpeil #teamamersfoort
5,77E+0 9	0	fvdemocratie	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: Martijn Aslander nog een keer over #geenpeil, ditmaal in de Volkskrant http://t.co/Tq8NZwffTM http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CO32_PLW8AAMG na.png:thumb
5,81E+0 9	0	twitknitty	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Vrijwillers, sponsors, vrienden bedankt! #geenpeil
5,81E+0 9	0	alainvdhorst	wierdduk	RT @wierdduk: Tjonge, dat stuk van mij over het associatieverdrag heeft wel impact gehad: 440.000 :) #geenpeil
5,78E+0 9	0	EindhovenHolly	burgercomitee	RT @burgercomitee: Wilders zei ook "teken op http://t.co/QphowaVPxC " maar dat heeft de NPO eruit geknipt dus retweet dit #geenpeil #RT https://t.co/URoubL6ad8
5,76E+0 9	0	geenstijl	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Flyeren voor de democratie! #geenpeiltour @LavieJanRoos http://t.co/ot5YaNYknk http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COiHdxoXAAAgTc Q.jpg:thumb
5,76E+0 9	0	VeggenteRay	MarcvdLinden	RT @MarcvdLinden: Er zijn inmiddels 150.000 mensen die getekend hebben. En nog 150.000 te gaan, voor 28 sept. Als je voor democratie bent teken je #geenpeil
5,8E+09	0	HansAckerNY	I_ruigrok	RT @I_ruigrok: Ned kan dit niet omdat EU Daarom: #geenpeil Haal zeggenschap terug Zwitserland verbiedt verdachte Volkswagen-diesels http://t.co/DkHbcl1zhe
5,76E+0 9	0	AvdBruggen	LeefbaarRdam	RT @LeefbaarRdam: We zijn van start! 50 handtekeningen in nog geen n uur. Bedankt Rotterdammers! #GeenPeil

				http://t.co/NgqZF8MLoz
				http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COXm_fWIAASKW4.jpg:thumb
5,76E+0	leonardus586			RT @geenstijl: #GeenPeil. Het is nu, of helemaal
9	0 0	geenstijl		nooit meer http://t.co/LJscsdPUC
5,76E+0				RT @burgercomiteeu: GeenStijl: BNR: "GeenPeil
9	0 AneHarting	burgercomiteeu		recept voor democratische revolutie" -
				http://t.co/PMtxnQITk1
5,78E+0				RT @EWdeVlieger: @ton_aarts @GeenPeil
9	0 JeroenMil	EWdeVlieger		@geenstijl Niets. Geenpeil = Geenpeil. Ik wil een
				referendum. Wat heb jij daar op tegen? Bang?
5,75E+0				RT @thierrybaudet: Lukt het #geenpeil om dit
9	0 deVervecken	thierrybaudet		weekend nog de 150.000 aan te tikken? Steun
				ons! Retweet, deel, like, vertel je omgeving: red
				de democratie!
				RT @geenstijl: Voor de #vroegevogels: het
5,75E+0				belang van #GeenPeil helder uitgelegd in reactie
9	0 loekie12	geenstijl		op een slecht betoog van @robdewijk:
				http://t.co/B2ATyIrnOm
				RT @BartNijman: Mocht het iemand ontgaan
5,81E+0	FrankBerkem			zijn: GeenPeil knalde gisteren naar een historisch
9	0 eier	BartNijman		referendum. 451.666 handtekeningen...
				http://t.co/9iZTu2gpgK
				RT @BartNijman: "Zoals ook nu weer blijkt uit
5,78E+0	DeNieuwsmak			#GeenPeil is "agendasetting" vanuit de
9	0 ers	BartNijman		samenleving via media en petitie erg moeilijk"
				https://t.co/eLQ4HIQ08H
				RT @GeenPeil: Hier volgt een bericht van de
				woordvoerder Europese Zaken van de VVD.
				http://t.co/crsq4iRY1l
5,74E+0	Volledigenaa			http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CN0aMIDWIAIDAmH.png:thumb
9	0 m81	GeenPeil		RT @rodewijntjes: 30 seconden aandacht voor
				het succes van #geenpeil bij @nosnieuws Je
				verwacht het niet... http://t.co/Q6Tz9Ehjgu
5,81E+0				http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7d9bLU8AAxrUB.png:thumb
9	0 anticypera	rodewijntjes		RT @BartNijman: Tony van der Togt
				(Clingendael) is woedend dat iemand een
				democratisch wetsmiddel hanteert. #GeenPeil
				http://t.co/BtSgCSE1jS
5,81E+0				http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CQB7rZIWcAAszWF.jpg:thumb
9	0 macflagstaff	BartNijman		RT @geenstijl: GeenPeil is hard op weg naar een
				referendum over Europa - Hart van Nederland -
5,76E+0	portingaholw			http://t.co/d2LmY466g9
9	0 erd	geenstijl		RT @JohnQuid: Het is vandaag er op of er onder
5,81E+0				voor #geenpeil. http://t.co/zK1uKsoPXQ
9	0 postma	JohnQuid		RT @LavieJanRoos: Dat Pechtold mij nu
				persoonlijk aanvalt is het grootste compliment
5,74E+0				voor mijn werk. Kereltje is van slag. #geenpeil
9	0 Pieter_180	LavieJanRoos		

5,81E+0 9	0	BartNijman	GeenPeil	RT @GeenPeil: Gewoon nog even 600+ analoge krabbels erbij. Hulde! https://t.co/RpBvYCyqKN
5,78E+0 9	0	WalGerda	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Is er al een actiegroep tegen harige brievenbussen? Mijn god, lijkt de jaren "80 wel. #flyeren #geenpeil
5,78E+0 9	0	VeggenteRay	burgercomitee	RT @burgercomitee: Wilders zei ook "teken op http://t.co/QphowaVPxC " maar dat heeft de NPO eruit geknipt dus retweet dit #geenpeil #RT https://t.co/URoubL6ad8
5,8E+09	0	JooHann	Teletekst	RT @Teletekst: Referendum GeenPeil komt naderbij http://t.co/w5P7CFZFUq http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPvnbl7UsAEJj_t.png:thumb
5,75E+0 9	0	Jansen_MWH	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Als iedereen die #GeenPeil ondertekend heeft, nog 2 andere mensen laat tekenen, is het referendum een feit. RT en http://t.co/j2ZVMFSfF
5,8E+09	0	ZilteBotte	TPOnl	RT @TPOnl: Als zelfs @Sywert al vindt dat je het als politicus verkloot is GeenPeil stemmen een serieuze zaak geworden http://t.co/b71wyEunpJ http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP01QrSUKAATElp.png:thumb
5,75E+0 9	0	MichelOverwater	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Als iedereen die #GeenPeil ondertekend heeft, nog 2 andere mensen laat tekenen, is het referendum een feit. RT en http://t.co/j2ZVMFSfF
5,77E+0 9	0	BartNijman	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Nog een paar euro over van het weekend? De GeenPeil campagne crowdfund loopt nog een paar uur! http://t.co/eQimoeLx30
5,78E+0 9	0	Johses	rodewijntjes	RT @rodewijntjes: Associatie-overeenkomst met #oekraïne bevat grote politieke risico's #geenpeil http://t.co/T181ghkoe
5,8E+09	0	PsCoenders	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Update: Den Haag wordt bloednerveus van #GeenPeil! http://t.co/WmsPmHfZgP http://t.co/u1Yj8Meh1b http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPuuQYTWEAEs9Kh.jpg:thumb
5,74E+0 9	0	siepkuppens1	Pritt	RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: Gratis VVD-plaatjes voor om te delen - http://t.co/LGEarG9AvL #vriendvanpoetin http://t.co/lc23UDID4b #geenpeil #THISISSPARTA
5,81E+0 9	0	wimdubbel	Pritt	RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: LIVE. GeenPeil knalt naar historisch referendum - http://t.co/Mr2T5PwlWy http://t.co/VPlz4zwmOV http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7M6S4UsAAXcm6.jpg:thumb
5,77E+0 9	0	GGharbawy	EWdeVlieger	RT @EWdeVlieger: Onze volksvertegenwoordiger in het Europees Parlement en de wil van het volk. DAAROM TEKEN @GeenPeil !!! http://t.co/l2KQY4SK55

				http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CO4vA9RWoAAPgBd.jpg:thumb RT @pauwnl: Vanavond vertelt boegbeeld @laviejanroos van @GeenPeil waarom we moeten tekenen voor het referendum http://t.co/jdWTiEZVbL
5,74E+09	0	steen020	pauwnl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CN1XF5oWIAET55p.png:thumb RT @BartNijman: LOL, @APechtold heeft steeds meer moeite om zijn pedante chagrijn over #GeenPeil te verbergen. https://t.co/h6wC6Q0j09
5,74E+09	0	DrGertJanMulder	BartNijman	RT @l_ruigrok: Werkt! Echt! Doe nog even! Tip om handtekeningen #geenpeil te verzamelen: https://t.co/LbJ3g3IJGN
5,81E+09	0	IngeGem	l_ruigrok	RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: DE LAATSTE GEENPEIL TUSSENSTAND! - http://t.co/mojV24S4vd http://t.co/qUvQeANF4P
5,81E+09	0	ba6dae63885646a	Pritt	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPz469VWEAAmCEA.png:thumb RT @thierrybaudet: Duizendmaal dank aan de honderden vrijwilligers, harde werkers, superkrachten die hebben geflyerd en gerend voor ons initiatief! #geenpeil RT @thierrybaudet: Geen verdere machtsoverdracht aan de EU zonder referendum. Zo begon het. http://t.co/z6gaD8Vy9h #geenpeil
5,81E+09	0	gerbendeperben	thierrybaudet	RT @TPOnl: Als u toch Geenpeil tekent: lees deze longread van @wierdduk om te snappen waar het cht over gaat met Oekrane http://t.co/7fkl4xrxjX
5,81E+09	0	HelderenNuchter	thierrybaudet	RT @pauwnl: Vanavond vertelt boegbeeld @laviejanroos van @GeenPeil waarom we moeten tekenen voor het referendum http://t.co/jdWTiEZVbL
5,74E+09	0	Francolinie	pauwnl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CN1XF5oWIAET55p.png:thumb RT @geenstijl: #GeenPeil Update. Om 16:30 uur maken we de tussenstand bekend & lanceren we de spectaculaire GeenPeil Campagne Video. Stay tuned. RT @burgercomiteeu: De tussenstand is 286.223. #tussenstand #geenpeil Nu de laatste slag slaan. Het slaat harder met de overwinning in zicht! Teken ook! RT @BartNijman: Het klopt wat ik net zelf op Radio 1 zei. De #GeenPeil tikt bijna een absurde 298.000 handtekeningen aan. #DIDD RT @burgercomiteeu: We zijn er bijna maar blijf tekenen want we hebben een ruime marge nodig! #GeenPeil https://t.co/Ri482YzvE4
5,76E+09	0	MarieJoseGMH	geenstijl	
5,8E+09	0	Thejaggerkeith	burgercomiteeu	
5,8E+09	0	InfoTweepNL	BartNijman	
5,8E+09	0	fivewords12	burgercomiteeu	

5,8E+09	0	Robbertttt	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: Het klopt wat ik net zelf op Radio 1 zei. De #GeenPeil tikt bijna een absurde 298.000 handtekeningen aan. #DIDD
5,8E+09	0	widtvoet	Pritt	RT @Pritt: Mooi. #GeenPeil vrijwilliger Wim Spaans (70) in NRC vandaag. Flyerde weken op Het Plein. http://t.co/8sf6UKnlCz http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP08OHVUAAAKLu4.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	Mupje86	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: GeenPeil: Jullie doen het uit eurohaat Nee, we doen het vr meer inspraak in tekort schietende democratie Dat is niet waar OK, doe.
5,8E+09	0	TitoTitomorais	arnoldkarskens	RT @arnoldkarskens: Ik heb getekend voor #GeenPeil. U ook? Anders vandaag nog. Klein verzet maakt groot verzet. http://t.co/qWrpOSCfD0
5,8E+09	0	MichelOverwater	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Nog maar 11.000 handtekeningen nodig voor een EU-referendum! Maak het verschil! #GeenPeil http://t.co/czNMb3GRnE
5,81E+09	0	ervanbe	RTLnieuws	RT @RTLnieuws: Aantal handtekeningen petitie #geenpeil dik boven de 440.000 http://t.co/CoLGcVD0GS http://t.co/2THKlivklZ http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP7NTB7W8AAZzn u.jpg:thumb
5,75E+09	0	djStevenE	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Zo simpel kan deelnemen aan de democratie zijn! #GeenPeil https://t.co/rh6vWtPeGQ
5,74E+09	0	berrykoelewijn	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Dat Pechtold mij nu persoonlijk aanvalt is het grootste compliment voor mijn werk. Kereltje is van slag. #geenpeil
5,81E+09	0	Kidefrian	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Vrijwillers, sponsors, vrienden bedankt! #geenpeil
5,8E+09	0	FlikFluimsnor	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: GeenPeil tussenstand horen? @thierrybaudet maakt hem om 21u05 bekend bij Studio @PowNed! #spanningstweet
5,78E+09	0	FrankBerkem	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Wat is GeenPeil eigenlijk? https://t.co/hlCx57et7w #GeenPeil #EU #APB
5,78E+09	0	mennohulshoff	burgercomitee	RT @burgercomitee: Oekranse minister zegt vandaag in NRC dat onze "politieke klasse" sterk genoeg is om GeenPeil te weerstaan. Dat zullen we nog wel eens zien! RT @EWdeVlieger: Onze volksvertegenwoordiger in het Europees Parlement en de wil van het volk. DAAROM TEKEN @GeenPeil !!! http://t.co/I2KQY4SK55
5,77E+09	0	phakvoort	EWdeVlieger	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CO4vA9RWoAAPgBd.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	jaapstronks	TPOnl	RT @TPOnl: Waarom Geenpeil wat toevoegt https://t.co/BVQvWhME36
5,78E+09	0	BartNijman	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: Kijk nou. #GeenPeil spandoeken door heel Nederland! http://t.co/5whyxtKfm8

5,77E+0 9	0	Hannesz1956	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: #GeenPeil, want Oekrane wil dat EU wapens levert http://t.co/Hx292sRRBf RT @thierrybaudet: Nog maar 11.000 handtekeningen nodig voor een EU-referendum!
5,8E+09	0	JeroenMil	thierrybaudet	Maak het verschil! #GeenPeil http://t.co/czNMb3GRnE RT @geertwilderspvv: Ga naar http://t.co/NNbhlf7ALY nog maar twee dagen! Tekenen tekenen tekenen allemaal, 300.000 handtekeningen = een REFERENDUM!!!!
5,8E+09 5,77E+0 9	0	AdrianaStuijt	geertwilderspvv	#GeenPeil RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: KRO Radio sloopt GeenPeil en weigert wederhoor - http://t.co/EDS1Mqyo8d RT @MarcvdLinden: Na de bizarre toespraak van Juncker gisteren ben ik om: we moeten meer zeggenschap krijgen over Europa. Ik ben dus voor referendum #geenpeil
5,76E+0 9	0	rabredewold	MarcvdLinden	RT @geertwilderspvv: Ga naar http://t.co/NNbhlf7ALY nog maar twee dagen! Tekenen tekenen tekenen allemaal, 300.000 handtekeningen = een REFERENDUM!!!!
5,8E+09	0	Breinbrouwse Is	geertwilderspvv	#GeenPeil RT @burgercomiteeu: Wist u dat de steun voor #geenpeil werkelijk uit ALLE hoeken en gaten van de samenleving komt? https://t.co/nLIRKDgMhU
5,81E+0 9	0	I_ruigrok	burgercomiteeu	RT @geenstijl: Wat doe jij op #Burendag? Al je burens op http://t.co/nzwAhs39Ox wijzen natuurlijk! #GeenPeil http://t.co/YUGuBaiivq http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP0qqZVWUAAJHCX.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	SarankeW	geenstijl	RT @thierrybaudet: BREKEND: @APechtold nu ook op de bres voor de democratie! #geenpeil @LavieJanRoos @burgercomiteeu @fvdemocratie http://t.co/FQ0bmQj2yG
5,79E+0 9	0	Richardvv75	thierrybaudet	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPg6mg-WIAA97ID.png:thumb RT @Arnout_Maat: +220.000 handtekeningen nu voor #GeenPeil. Het 1e referendum sinds 2005 komt dichterbij, dus doe even leuk mee via https://t.co/QxgrBlqAIV !
5,79E+0 9	0	D1Mp13	Arnout_Maat	RT @geenstijl: De alternatieve Troonrede van Thierry Baudet. #GeenPeil #Prinsjesdag http://t.co/nzwAhs39Ox http://t.co/5tdU6je0BV http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CO9TgiHWgAA8jEw.png:thumb
5,78E+0 9	0	ReneScholts	geenstijl	RT @pieterkleinrtl: Doe mij maar dat referendum: "Kan ons land worden gered uit Europa?" #geenpeil #eu Column. http://t.co/lzUcheSeXG
5,8E+09	0	giroblaauw	pieterkleinrtl	RT @geenstijl: "Als iedereen die getekend heeft, er nog 1 ondertekenaar bij zoekt. Dan zijn we binnen" #GeenPeil http://t.co/u2toGlrKwe
5,77E+0 9	0	pvvforever	geenstijl	

5,79E+0 9	0	Arjan55	Pritt	RT @Pritt: GeenStijl: EINDSPRINT! GeenPeil pakt 22.000 krabbels in 24u - http://t.co/KTvLSL1yaV TEKEN OOK & SCHRIJF GESCHIEDENIS http://t.co/Ftki2tXNXb
5,78E+0 9	0	Jorn__PoPcor n	Vakonov	RT @Vakonov: Ben jij Nederlander, 18+ en heb je nog NIET getekend voor #GeenPeil? Ga dat dan als de DONDER doen op http://t.co/ZXoZjcDN8k! RT @RMieremet: Iedereen doet mee met @GeenPeil @fvdemocratie @burgercomiteeu @BartNijman ook onverwachte hoek! http://t.co/ED3bwaPjfr
5,79E+0 9	0	burgercomite eu	RMieremet	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPWH1nYWUAA_rh9.jpg:thumb
5,81E+0 9	0	Gert_Hemsen s	JohnQuid	RT @JohnQuid: Het is vandaag er op of er onder voor #geenpeil. http://t.co/zK1uKsoPXQ RT @geenstijl: GeenPeil-referendum gaat over onze verhouding tot Vladimir Poetin http://t.co/Td13EpHS3a via @TPOnl http://t.co/luWc7ikZu4
5,81E+0 9	0	SpaceGerrit	geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CP1RVaSWgAAwYkH.png:thumb RT @maikel15177656: 140.000 handtekeningen voor #Geenpeil Op naar de 300.000 @burgercomiteeu @fvdemocratie @geenstijl http://t.co/Y20F5GkQTn
5,76E+0 9	0	ErikV002	maikel15177 656	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/COZPxftUKAArXeL.jpg:thumb RT @RCM_Doherty: @PvdA Vandaag vroeg ik uw senator Postema om een handtekening voor #geenpeil Hij noemde ons "fout". Is dat de ook de mening van uw partij?
5,79E+0 9	0	ALICEGEURTS 1	RCM_Dohert y	RT @thierrybaudet: De tijd dringt! Teken nu op http://t.co/czNMb3GRnE en win een EU-referendum! #GeenPeil http://t.co/R1iOLR1fNk
5,8E+09	0	PanCreations	thierrybaude t	RT @BartNijman: Betaalde betweter Peter R, mislukte bankier Dirk S. en dronken wachtgelder Hero B. bij #pauw. Blij dat #GeenPeil daar niet tussen zit.
5,8E+09	0	CilayO	BartNijman	RT @LavieJanRoos: Echt verschrikkelijk al die mensen die het succes van #GeenPeil claimen. Met hun grote ego's! Het succes komt gewoon allemaal door mij!
5,81E+0 9	0	burgercomite eu	LavieJanRoos	RT @Pritt: Yeah. #GeenPeil paginagroot in de Telegraaf. TEKEN OOK EN RED DE DEMOCRATIE http://t.co/wT2SBEi5lu http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPpbOEXUEAAaSwS.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	Lyn_6969	Pritt	RT @geenstijl: EINDSPRINT! GeenPeil pakt 22.000 krabbels in 24 uur - http://t.co/t024xSUTDm http://t.co/JZZsLjCJKG http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPfPjV8WcAAadumq.png:thumb
5,79E+0 9	0	lefnissewaard	geenstijl	

5,8E+09	0	wimbros	l_ruigrok	RT @l_ruigrok: Ned kan dit niet omdat EU Daarom: #geenpeil Haal zeggenschap terug Zwitserland verbiedt verdachte Volkswagen-diesels http://t.co/DkHbcl1zhe
5,81E+09	0	r_hartman	burgercomiteeu	RT @burgercomiteeu: Inderdaad. Want zij hebben de macht. https://t.co/laFPsH8mXI Quote: @onverschrokken: @burgercomiteeu @WimvandeCamp @GeenPeil De kans voor EU-voorstemmers was en is overheersend groot. Niet janken nu.
5,8E+09	0	Pim1949	rodewijntjes	RT @rodewijntjes: GeenPeil heeft al bijna 300.000 handtekeningen, met nog vier dagen te gaan #geenpeil #EU http://t.co/GYgqnN5eJa
5,8E+09	0	EvertDoornebal	geertwilderspvv	RT @geertwilderspvv: Help @GeenPeil aan de 300.000 handtekeningen en teken nog deze week voor een referendum! Doen! http://t.co/tyTBzhQoIG http://t.co/pcEb8ynxtx http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPfPI76U8AACQWc.jpg:thumb
5,78E+09	0	JadwigajmvSoular	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Heeft u al getekend? #geenpeil http://t.co/vkOfH57xCZ http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPIMPm9WwAAXAC0.jpg:thumb
5,79E+09	0	B1960Con	l_ruigrok	RT @l_ruigrok: @arnoldkarskens Zou u aub een promotie-tweet voor #geenpeil willen plaatsen? Zou geweldig zijn! We MOETEN die 300.000 halen!
5,79E+09	0	JeroenMil	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: @richardpien Uitprinten bij de burens en op de post. Kijk op geenpeil.nl
5,79E+09	0	BertBons76	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Steun GeenPeil door mee te doen aan de social-media donderslag op eh...donderdag! @ThunderclapIt // @GeenPeil http://t.co/ZjIPNWY4yL
5,79E+09	0	RoBra16	Pritt	RT @Pritt: 21 handtekeningen #GeenPeil. (En 7,95 betaald voor aangetekend verzenden.) Wie je ook bent. Dank! http://t.co/fiTkhsMNz6 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPgMPsLWUAAe-YG.jpg:thumb
5,79E+09	0	HansAckerNY	geenstijl	RT @geenstijl: NIEUWS: #GeenPeil op 220.000 handtekeningen! - http://t.co/zVUnfXJIC1 http://t.co/so77OZapT4 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPaEXXtWEAAzJMF.png:thumb
5,8E+09	0	Melissa0345	geertwilderspvv	RT @geertwilderspvv: Help @GeenPeil aan de 300.000 handtekeningen en teken nog deze week voor een referendum! Doen! http://t.co/tyTBzhQoIG http://t.co/pcEb8ynxtx http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPfPI76U8AACQWc.jpg:thumb
5,79E+09	0	KaatjeDalebot	geertwilderspvv	RT @geertwilderspvv: Help @GeenPeil aan de 300.000 handtekeningen en teken nog deze week voor een referendum! Doen!

				http://t.co/tyTBzhQoIG http://t.co/pcEb8ynxtx http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPfPI76U8AACQWc.jpg:thumb
5,77E+09	0	JacobavanW	LavieJanRoos	RT @LavieJanRoos: Wat is radio1 een trieste club. Niet eens geenpeil bellen voor commentaar, maar wel twee anti's aan het woord laten. RT @MarieHemelrijk: Dat Pechtold dan zonder het verdrag gelezen te hebben aan zijn achterban moet gaan uitleggen dat het een fantastisch verdrag is. #Geenpeil
5,8E+09	0	Iko_Nal	MarieHemelrijk	RT @RCM_Doherty: Wow. Bij het uitdelen van #geenpeil folders werkelijk super arrogant afgesnauwd door een PvdA-Senator. - We waren "fout" bezig.
5,79E+09	0	Martina_Times	RCM_Doherty	RT @I_ruigrok: @arnoldkarskens Zou u aub een promotie-tweet voor #geenpeil willen plaatsen? Zou geweldig zijn! We MOETEN die 300.000 halen!
5,79E+09	0	MariskadeHaa	I_ruigrok	RT @BartNijman: 21.000 digitale handtekeningen voor #GeenPeil er bij sinds 8 uur vanmorgen. We naderen dus het kwart miljoen.
5,79E+09	0	TonvanKester	BartNijman	RT @geenstijl: Echte democraten doen dat wl, op http://t.co/nzwAhs39Ox . #GeenPeil
5,8E+09	0	I_ruigrok	geenstijl	https://t.co/IDYujG3GL7 RT @GeenPeil: Onze campagneleider @LavieJanRoos geeft de tussenstand bij @EWdeVlieger: 200.000 digitale handtekeningen. #geenpeil
5,79E+09	0	Spa_Henri	GeenPeil	RT @geenstijl: NIEUWS: #GeenPeil op 220.000 handtekeningen! - http://t.co/zVUnfXJIC1
5,79E+09	0	TickyNoet	geenstijl	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPaEXXtWEAAzJMF.png:thumb RT @geenstijl: EINDSPRINT! GeenPeil pakt 22.000 krabbels in 24 uur - http://t.co/t024xSUTDm
5,79E+09	0	RoelofvanHolt	geenstijl	http://t.co/JZZsLjCJKG http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPfPjV8WcAAdumq.png:thumb
5,8E+09	0	RCM_Doherty	thierrybaudet	RT @thierrybaudet: Om 21.15 op @NPO3 #StudioPowNed geef ik de laatste tussenstand van onze #GeenPeil actie! @fvdemocratie @burgercomiteeu @geenstijl
5,8E+09	0	ToonHJ	EWdeVlieger	RT @EWdeVlieger: En hoppa , weer twee voor @GeenPeil Nu doorzetten mensen. Al was het maar voor smeerlappen zoals @BosmanGerard http://t.co/AzmSpWd1mo
5,8E+09	0	ErikVeltmeijer	fvdemocratie	http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPsDw4GWIAUKgk.jpg:thumb RT @fvdemocratie: RUIIM KWART MILJOEN handtekeningen binnen, nog slechts 50.000 te gaan! #geenpeil - http://t.co/CI3uKBBcL1

5,8E+09	0	mark_DenHaa g	EWdeVlieger	RT @EWdeVlieger: Vanochtend alle werknemers van mijn huurders bereiken voor @GeenPeil Ik schat 200. De eerste drie hier http://t.co/KjZWI66eCb http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPkrZPOUEAANu0q.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	MvenAa	BartNijman	RT @BartNijman: Betaalde betweter Peter R, mislukte bankier Dirk S. en dronken wachtgelder Hero B. bij #pauw. Blij dat #GeenPeil daar niet tussen zit. RT @EWdeVlieger: Vanochtend alle werknemers van mijn huurders bereiken voor @GeenPeil Ik schat 200. De eerste drie hier http://t.co/KjZWI66eCb http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPkrZPOUEAANu0q.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	edwin_koning	EWdeVlieger	RT @ADnl: Actiecomit GeenPeil bijna op benodigde 300.000 handtekeningen voor referendum http://t.co/UQRWwOyPhc http://t.co/JN4lJoSgIb http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPiFj5eWoAAQ-X9.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	AlexisEnders9 99	ADnl	RT @geenstijl: GeenStijl: GeenPeil heeft RUIM KWART MILJOEN krabbels - http://t.co/tdxNzMLlk1 http://t.co/CnPRbIM0hs http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPkaO_PW8AAWiE.png:thumb
5,8E+09	0	benadeelt	geenstijl	RT @Pritt: Yeah. #GeenPeil paginagroot in de Telegraaf. TEKEN OOK EN RED DE DEMOCRATIE http://t.co/wT2SBEi5lu http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPpbOEXUEAAaSwS.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	JohnQuid	Pritt	RT @geenstijl: Kijk nu live mee naar het tellen van de stemmen! #GeenPeil https://t.co/dbkzjnVU27
5,8E+09	0	MarcSchreurs	geenstijl	RT @ADnl: Actiecomit GeenPeil bijna op benodigde 300.000 handtekeningen voor referendum http://t.co/UQRWwOyPhc http://t.co/JN4lJoSgIb http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPiFj5eWoAAQ-X9.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	Kopernek Ron_Schipper	ADnl	RT @LavieJanRoos: Eerst nu 100% NL. #geenpeilmediatour
5,8E+09	0	s	LavieJanRoos	RT @BartNijman: GeenPeilTV. Jan Roos als een baas bij WNL - http://t.co/wggmL35ge4 http://t.co/AMvXt5Jx74 http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPpsXWbW8AEDiCl.jpg:thumb
5,8E+09	0	837Alex	BartNijman	RT @geenstijl: Dikke hartjes voor alle mensen die #GeenPeil onvermoeibaar onder de aandacht blijven brengen. We kunnen het halen..! http://t.co/y3MUxhahQq
5,8E+09	0	D5nn1z	geenstijl	

5,8E+09	0	Jordy_Schaap	GeenPeil	<p>http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPkpjPIWIAAvnqs.png:thumb</p> <p>RT @GeenPeil: Zo doen we dat gewoon. Bij de bakker. Bij de tandarts. Op verjaardagen. Op de kermis. Awesome! https://t.co/lzZfvJm8iZ</p> <p>RT @BartNijman: 273.000. Het is z hard gegaan deze week (maandag was het pas 220.000), maar er. moet. nog. meer. bij! #GeenPeil</p> <p>http://t.co/gFecbEwdbG</p>
5,8E+09	0	I	BartNijman	<p>http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPpcNaYXAAA4_3g.png:thumb</p> <p>RT @Pritt: GeenPeil bus bij Pand Noord.</p>
5,8E+09	0	umarebru	Pritt	<p>http://t.co/F8XfFgxmV6</p> <p>RT @BartNijman: 21.000 digitale</p>
5,79E+09	0	henry_veen	BartNijman	<p>handtekeningen voor #GeenPeil er bij sinds 8 uur vanmorgen. We naderen dus het kwart miljoen.</p> <p>RT @Arnout_Maat: +220.000 handtekeningen nu voor #GeenPeil. Het 1e referendum sinds 2005</p>
5,79E+09	0	markvlieland	Arnout_Maait	<p>komt dichterbij, dus doe even leuk mee via https://t.co/QxgrBlqAIV!</p> <p>RT @RTLnieuws: 255.000 handtekeningen voor petitie #geenpeil. Nog 4 dagen tot de deadline</p> <p>http://t.co/7B53eOXDaU http://t.co/hXeFiqHp0o</p> <p>http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPltqTfUcAAh8QT.jpg:thumb</p>
5,8E+09	0	Queenfransje	RTLnieuws	<p>RT @AlptekinAkdogan: Is @LavieJanRoos</p>
5,8E+09	0	polned89	AlptekinAkdogan	<p>uitgenodigd bij @dwdd en @pauwnl om over #GeenPeil te praten, nu de 300.000 in zicht is?</p> <p>RT @thierrybaudet: We staan nu op 270.000.</p>
5,8E+09	0	MarjavanCaem	thierrybaudet	<p>Steun de democratie! Laatste loodjes! #GeenPeil</p> <p>http://t.co/czNMb3pfZ4 doe het nu!!!</p> <p>RT @BartNijman: GeenPeil koopt papieren advertentie. In een dode boom. Met subsidiegeld van het Europeparlement http://t.co/UgEytUolef</p> <p>http://t.co/qYm4yEaiRA</p> <p>http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPqYXaNWgAQPYFd.jpg:thumb</p>
5,8E+09	0	Dame2010	BartNijman	<p>RT @GeenPeil: @jacnaber Bijna 298.000!</p>
5,8E+09	0	MartijnSitsen	GeenPeil	<p>RT @burgercomiteeu: Initiatief GeenPeil primeur voor Nederlandse democratie</p> <p>http://t.co/FtwE0mRzPd</p>
5,8E+09	0	JackMarsman	burgercomiteeu	<p>RT @LavieJanRoos: Echt verschrikkelijk al die mensen die het succes van #GeenPeil claimen. Met hun grote ego's! Het succes komt gewoon allemaal door mij!</p> <p>RT @Pritt: #GeenPeil is met bier/kaasplankje naar vrijwilligers in 070, 010, 040 etc. Vanavond filmpje! https://t.co/Eph1hzmzjn</p> <p>http://t.co/TzH2szy8C0</p> <p>http://pbs.twimg.com/media/CPwJwWAUcAAuTl.png:thumb</p>
5,8E+09	0	MdeJongLuneau	LavieJanRoos	
5,8E+09	0	FKraats	Pritt	

