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Mini-Crises and Local Leadership

*The influence of Crisis Communication Strategies of Dutch Mayors on the political outcome of
mini-crises*



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Preface

This thesis constitutes the last part of my study Crisis & Security Management at Leiden University. I would like to express my genuine gratitude towards my thesis supervisor, Dr. Ruth Prins. Throughout this Capstone project, Crisis and Local Leadership, she provided proper guidance to my Capstone Fellows and me. I very much appreciated the structure of this cooperation, since the iterative character enabled me to get a full understanding of the subject in question. This would not have been possible without my Capstone Fellows: thank you. I sincerely hope that this thesis is of added value for the body of academic knowledge on crisis management and I wish you a pleasant reading!

Bruno Molenaar

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Summary

This thesis looked into the crisis communications strategies of Dutch Mayors during mini-crises. In the event of a mini-crisis, the public expects the Mayor to manage the crisis and reassure the public. Therefore, crisis communication is of crucial importance. However, these strategies can also be used as a tool in a political game. Through framing and exploiting a crisis, different actors can try to use the crisis in their favor. The objective of this research is to assess how the crisis communication strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises influenced the political outcome of these events. This leads to the following central research question: How do crisis communication strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises influence the political outcome of these events?

A theoretical framework based on the combination of the models by Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998) has been applied to explain how crisis communication strategies by Dutch Mayors influence the political outcome of mini-crises. As a result, enough insights have been found to answer the overall research question. Through the deductive approach, this explorative qualitative research design allowed this research to perform an in-depth analysis of three mini-crises that occurred in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2014. The crises took place in Utrecht, Leiden, and The Hague. Ultimately, this study found no relationship between the chosen crisis communication strategy of Dutch Mayors during a mini-crisis, and the political outcome. The analysis has shown that in all three mini-crises, a different mix of crisis communication strategies were applied. However, the political outcomes of these strategies were the same in each case, as they all involved escape. Even though all cases showed an outcome of escape, the degree of escape differed in each case. Besides the chosen communication strategy and framing type some other factors were found that could explain the differences in the level of escape. This study concluded that a consistent and pro-active communication strategy can enhance the chance for the Mayor in question to suffer less political damage in the event of a mini-crisis.

This research applied a new framework to conduct research into framing and communication strategies of Mayors during a mini-crisis. The framework has proven to have a potential to be of use during the analysis of other mini-crises. However, more research should be conducted into the applicability of this framework to consolidate its theoretical foundation and practical feasibility. The findings that are elaborated upon in the academic implications section should be taken into consideration when deciding to develop the framework any further.

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1 Introduction

A crisis can occur at any place at any time. Beck (1992) famously argued that in our modern society potential danger and risks permanently exist. In today's risk society, thinking in risks is inevitable. Potential hazards and crises lure everywhere. There is a demand from society to prevent risks and to be safe at all times. The public just does not accept anymore that something has happened. Furthermore, in the case that an unfortunate incident occurs, someone has to be responsible for it. Nowadays, societies face a lot of different crises, during the last decade alone, economic, environmental, and migration crises dominated the news. A crisis can be described as an event that suddenly and unexpectedly disrupts the daily routine of the society that is affected by it (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). The victims can suffer from emotional and material damage. A crisis can have long-term consequences; these consequences do not stop when a crisis is solved. After the occurrence of a crisis, the public always questions who is responsible for it, and what could cause such a tragedy (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). Inquiries are set up to investigate the origin of the crisis, and lesson-learned reports and recommendations advice on how to prevent such a crisis of happening again. Big disasters usually have a lot of casualties and extensive material damage whereby the society is disrupted (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). But besides these physical aspects, there is also a social aspect. A crisis can cause social unrest; people want to know if they are in danger, and demand that the people in charge share every detail of the ongoing crisis. These major crises, however, do not happen very frequently. What makes a crisis hard to deal with is the fact that a crisis is impossible to predict. During the development of a crisis, no exact moment or factor can be pinpointed as the base of it (Boin et al., 2005). Because a crisis happens unexpectedly and demands adequate and decisive leadership, they are hard to manage. Crises are a threat to the status quo. This unpredictability makes crises challenging for public leaders and institutions; it is hard to stand behind the status quo during a crisis because it can damage the (political) reputation of the persons in power (Boin & 't Hart, 2003).

In contrast to major crises, so-called 'mini-crises' happen to occur more frequently. A mini-crisis lacks the physical aspect of a major crisis; they can happen without the casualties and material damage of 'normal' crises. An incident can turn into a mini-crisis when it causes a certain amount of social unrest among the society (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). However, this does not mean that these events have a small impact on the people that are directly involved in these crises. Effective crisis leadership is of critical importance to control and solve a crisis.

During a mini-crisis, it is usually the Mayor that takes a role as the crisis manager. The function of Mayor comes with great responsibility and can be very demanding. In the case of an unexpected event, the capabilities of Mayors are being tested to their limits. Their reaction to a mini-crisis can be decisive for their political faith. The handling of an unexpected event can make or break their careers. During a mini-crisis, it is often expected from the local Mayor to take a pro-active role in managing the crisis and to reassure the public that is affected by it, he or she has to show confident leadership. Furthermore, a Mayor is legally responsible for the administrative and the operational coordination during a crisis. He or she is the responsible actor in charge during a crisis on a local level. If a crisis occurs, there is no precise moment where the Mayor declares an incident a 'crisis' (Regtvoort & Siepel, 2011). But when it occurs, all the emergency services will act accordingly; they do not wait until they get the permission of the Mayor to do so. Depending on the seriousness of the situation the Mayor can decide to upscale the situation.

One of the most important factors within crisis leadership is the crisis communication strategy of the officials managing the crisis. The public needs to be informed and reassured. However, crisis communication is not only necessary to inform and reassure the public. Crisis communication strategies can also be used as a tool in a political game between government officials and their opponents. Both parties can use the crisis in such a way that it favors their interest. These crisis exploitation efforts mean that a crisis does not only have consequences for its victims. The aftermath of a crisis is often used as a window of opportunity to push through desired policy or political change ideas (Kingdon, 1984 in: Howlett et al. 2009: 104).

Strategic crisis communication is used to frame a crisis in such a way that they favor the actions of the actor carrying out the framing efforts. The way the public perceives the crisis are dominant in these strategic communication efforts. With these framing efforts, the actors in the crisis anticipate on a particular outcome of the crisis (Boin & 't Hart, 2003). During a crisis, both the Mayor together with his staff and oppositional forces can use the crisis for political gain. The party in power will most probably frame the crisis in such a way that it looks like they are in control and make the right decisions during the crisis. They want to show that their leadership during the crisis is effective. The opposition, in favor of political or policy change, may try to attack the officeholders and gain more influence by framing the crisis in such a way that it looks like the officeholders cannot manage the crisis in an efficient manner, or that the current policies are not sufficient enough. Boin, 't Hart and McConnell (2009) saw the

importance of these framing and blaming strategies and conceptualized the political and policy impacts of these crises exploitations. This study will use this framework to assess framing strategies of Dutch Mayors, since, at this moment, it is unclear what framing strategies Dutch Mayors use during a mini-crisis and what impact these strategies have on the political level.

1.1 Research objective

The objective of this research is to assess how the crisis communication strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises influenced the political outcome of these events.

1.2 Research question

How do crisis communication strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises influence the political outcome of these events?

1.2.1 Sub research questions

- What is known in the scientific literature about framing strategies in relation to political outcomes?
- What crisis communication strategies were adopted by the Mayors during the mini-crises?
- What political outcome did the mini-crises have for the Mayors?

1.3 Academic relevance

Findings of this research can add relevant information to the body of knowledge of crisis management in general, and more specifically crisis framing strategies and crisis leadership during local crises. The acquired knowledge from framing strategies applied by Dutch Mayors could give a better insight into the relationship between framing strategies and the resulting political outcomes. At this moment, the primary focus of scientific research into crisis management is focused on larger crises and its subsequent crisis communication. The concept of a mini-crisis is relatively new, and there are no extensive studies on crisis framing efforts of Mayors during a mini-crisis and the political outcomes of these strategies after these happenings. Moreover, the application of the framework of Boin et al. (2009) in combination with the crisis communication strategies of Coombs (1998) can offer new insights and a more in-depth analysis of crisis framing efforts. The framework Coombs (1998) is originally intended for the private domain. However, this research aims to test its applicability in the public sphere. Furthermore, findings on the applied frame types and their resulting political outcomes for, in

this case, a Mayor in The Netherlands, can offer new insights into the mechanism between chosen framing strategies and political outcomes. The new understandings derived from this research can help to fill the gap of knowledge in the academic literature that now exists on framing strategies of Dutch Mayors during mini-crises in the Netherlands.

1.4 Societal relevance

Since mini-crises occur more often than major crises, the information obtained in this study can offer compelling insights and practical implications for office-holders and communication officers practitioners that are responsible for crisis communication during a mini-crisis. In today's modern society, the spreading of news and information is getting faster and easier due to social media and other new media channels. Public figures are more and more in the spotlight during a mini-crisis. Every choice they make is extensively analyzed and judged by the public, making it harder for the office-holders to communicate a crisis frame successfully. The practical implications that could derive from this study could thus be crucial for these office-holders to protect their reputation during the crisis exploitation efforts in the aftermath of a mini-crisis. This study can reveal what choices could be made to protect the political status quo of the office-holders during a mini-crisis. Public leaders should be aware of these options and apply them in practice if necessary. The outcomes of this study could reveal which crucial factors and choices should be taken into account when a positive political outcome is a goal to achieve when conducting the framing strategies during a mini-crisis.

1.5 Background information

In The Netherlands the Mayor, together with the aldermen, form the Executive Board of a municipality. Moreover, the Mayor presides the City Council; he is not a part of it. A Mayor is recommended by the City Council and is appointed for six years (Rijksoverheid.nl, n.d.a). As stated in the 'Gemeentewet' (Municipality Laws) the Mayor is responsible for maintaining the public order in his city (art. 172). In this role, he also has the command over the police, and he can issue emergency ordinances when the public order is at stake (NGB, nd.a). In the case of a local emergency or a mini-crisis, the Mayor has some powers and duties. These powers and obligations are stated in the 'Wet Veiligheidsregio's' (Law on Safety Regions). This law describes, among other things, that the Mayor is responsible for the information provision (crisis communication) during a disaster or crisis towards the public and emergency services (NGB, nd.b). However, sometimes a mini-crisis can be out of the control and responsibility of a Mayor, but due to his function as Mayor people still look up to him and expect him to reassure

the public and show decisive leadership. They demand him or her to undertake action to solve the crisis. Besides the public demanding the Mayor to act, it can also occur that the Mayor takes a leading role because other organizations that are responsible for solving the crisis do not solve it, or do so in an ineffective way (Duin et al. 2013: 16).

The City Council is the highest governing body of a municipality. Council members have the duty to monitor if the Mayor and his aldermen carry out the policies as the Council intended. The Council has the right to investigate the directorship of the Mayor and his aldermen; these rights are embedded in the ‘Wet Dualisering Gemeentebestuur’ (Law Dualism Municipality Governance) (Rijksoverheid.nl n.d.c). Furthermore, the Council has the right to dismiss the Mayor if they deem it necessary. Council members are elected for four years by the inhabitants of the municipality (Rijksoverheid.nl, n.d.b). The number of Council members in a city depends on the number of residents a municipality has. The smallest municipalities have nine Council members; the largest have 45.

1.6 Content of the research

This research is divided into five chapters. The first section elaborates on the theoretical framework of this study. Relevant theories regarding framing strategies and crisis communication are explained, and the conceptual model is presented. The second chapter provides the operationalization scheme in which the concepts of the conceptual model are operationalized. In chapter three, the choices regarding the type of research and the way the data is collected are justified. Chapter four entails the analysis of the gathered data. Finally, the conclusion gives an answer to the research questions, and attention is paid to the scientific and practical implications are discussed. Moreover, the limitations and suggestions for further research are briefly mentioned.

2 Theoretical framework

This section starts with a description of the relevant theories that support this research. First, a broader explanation of crisis leadership and crisis communication is given. These concepts are then narrowed down, leading to the theories that are relevant for this research. After these theories are elaborated upon, they are bundled together into one conceptual model. This conceptual model offers a concrete visualization of the concepts central to both theories and constitutes the starting point for the analysis of this research. The last section of this chapter shows the operationalization scheme that allows for the analysis of this research. By making concepts measurable by assigning indicators to them, the research question can ultimately be provided with a concrete answer.

In order to explain how crisis communication strategies by Dutch Mayors influence the political outcomes of mini-crisis, this research applies the model Boin et al. (2009). Their model made an attempt to conceptualize the political and policy impacts of ‘crisis exploitation’ and ‘framing contests’. However, their model only offers a rather basic framework. Therefore, the seven communication strategies by Coombs (1998) are added to the model of Boin et al. (2009). The model by Coombs (1998) provides a scale from defensiveness to accommodativeness that enables to give direction to the three different framing strategies of Boin et al. (2009). The combination of both theories provides this research with enough insights to answer the overall research question. However, before the theories are further elaborated upon, two crucial elements of crisis management need some clarification first. These two elements include crisis leadership and crisis communication. Both elements need to be provided with an explanation in order for this research to become realizable.

2.1 Crisis leadership

Crisis leadership is one of the most important parts of crisis management. During a crisis, the public expects to see someone in charge and take the lead in the crisis management. They expect from their leader that he or she takes control and demonstrates decisive crisis leadership. Their leader has to show that he or she is in control, knows what is going on, and makes the right decisions to overcome the crisis and limit the damage (Boin & ‘t Hart, 2003). However, these expectations are often not realistic. This is why crisis leadership is a difficult task for office-holders. Boin and ‘t Hart (2003) show that leadership can cause tensions between the realities of crisis leadership, and the expectations outsiders have of a leader. The public expects crisis

leaders and policymakers to be prepared for a crisis and suppose that they can protect the public and limit the damage with practical actions. If the undertaken actions during a crisis differ from this expectation, the public will most probably be critical towards the political leaders and institutions managing the crisis (Boin & 't Hart, 2003). During the whole crisis event, it is expected from crisis leaders that they handle the crisis and turn the situation back to 'normal.'

Five critical leadership tasks

In order to handle the crisis and turn the situation back to normal leaders at the strategic level face different important tasks, they have to handle and complete in order to control and manage the situation. It should be kept in mind that since this research concentrates on the communication strategies of the Mayor (strategic command), the leadership at the operational level of crisis management is not taken into account. Boin et al. (2005) defined five critical leadership tasks a crisis manager encounters during the different phases of a crisis; these tasks are; sense-making, decision-making, meaning-making, the terminating phase, and learning. Of these tasks, the meaning-making phase is the most crucial for the political outcome of a crisis. During this period office-holders or oppositional forces will communicate their frames to make their 'meaning' of the crisis the dominant narrative. All five critical leadership tasks are briefly explained below.

The first task, *sense-making*, includes that a public leader has to make 'sense' of a crisis (Boin et al., 2005). Is an incident severe enough to be a crisis? Since most of the time, a crisis does not suddenly emerge, policymakers and public leaders have to be capable of recognizing the signals that lay at the base of the crisis and 'make sense' of those signals. Slowly the sense-making phase passes over to the *decision-making* stage; this is the moment when policymakers and public leaders have figured out what has happened, which values are at stake, and subsequently label the situation as a (possible) crisis (Boin et al., 2005). Critical decisions have to be made to control and manage the situation. Due to the urgency and uncertainty that a crisis involves, these are exceptional decisions which could have (political) consequences for the people in charge. For public leaders and policymakers, it is their task to present the available information in such a way that people can make meaning of the situation. During the crisis, the public, and the media want to know what is happening, they wonder if they are threatened by the crisis, and they want to protect their interests. The (unregulated) flow of information about the situation is most of the times hard to handle (Boin et al., 2005). Citizens expect public leaders to reduce their concerns and inform them about the ongoing situation. During this

meaning-making phase, public leaders and policymakers use frames, rituals, and masking strategies to stay in control of the situation and exploit it in their interest (Boin et al. 2005). Eventually at some point, a crisis ends. The situation returns to normal, back to the routine. During this *terminating phase*, it is sometimes hard to decide what the right moment is for terminating the crisis. On the strategic level, it requires rendering an account of what happened and the decisions that were made. Political accountability is one of the most important aspects of terminating a crisis. Discussion about who is responsible can quickly turn into ‘blame games’ (Boin et al., 2005). These discussions ultimately lead to the last critical task for leadership: *learning*, both organizationally and politically. The whole crisis offers a source for lessons. In practice, however, it appears that learning is an underdeveloped aspect of crisis leadership because the aftermath of a crisis mostly focusses on the blame of who is responsible for the crisis (Boin et al., 2005). Now that the five critical leadership tasks are evident, the focus needs to be shifted towards the communication strategies that managers adopt in times of crisis. This is the subject of the following section.

2.2 Crisis communication

The crisis communication strategy a crisis manager adopts to fulfill the five tasks in an efficient manner is of crucial importance. One of the most important aspects the public expects from a leader is clear communication. During the whole duration of the crisis communication is essential. To keep everyone up to date during the crisis, a constant flow of information is crucial. Directly from the onset of a crisis, when nobody knows what is going on, it is the task of the crisis leader to communicate consistently about the cause of the incident and the actions that are undertaken to solve the crisis. The uncertainty that makes something a crisis is an essential communication challenge during crisis management (Ulmer et al. 2007). Providing accurate information is almost impossible. If information on the crisis has been gathered, the crisis leader can reduce uncertainty by responding to the crisis. A clear response to the crisis is of particular importance in the meaning-making phase. During this phase, the crisis communication strategies are the most prominent. During this phase, government actors, as well as their critics, have the opportunity to secure or enlarge their political capital and stand behind their policy ideas. The level of control the actors in power have on the crisis, is, among other things, determined by the given crisis handling devices they deploy.

Ritualization, masking, and framing

By communicating their story of what happened and what should be done, public leaders, policy workers, and other stakeholders try to decrease the political and public uncertainty at the time of a crisis and strengthen their political capital (Boin et al., 2005). As was already mentioned, these efforts mostly take place in the meaning-making phase of the crisis. It is during this phase strategic crisis communication strategies are used by all actors that have an interest in the crisis. Different (strategic) crisis communication techniques exist that office-holders can adopt to communicate their message to the public. 't Hart (1993) defined three 'crisis handling devices' that can be used in the meaning-making and terminating phase of a crisis. These devices can be regarded as 'symbolic actions' to favor crisis managers. They include ritualization, masking, and framing. Ways in which the actors in power try to control the crisis and steer it in such a way that they can stay in control. Ritualization is part of the symbolic perspective during crisis management. Rituals which are communicated during crises are socially consistent messages that are repeatedly advertised to the public. Ritualization as such can be described as communication by doing, it is more about actions towards the public than it is about words. Rituals related to crises can be rituals of reassurance and purification, rituals of solidarity, and rituals of animosity ('t Hart, 1993). On the other hand, masking encompasses the strategy of denying to the public that the event is a crisis. In this case, the crisis management is focused on the status quo and tries to minimize the impact of the crisis. By masking the severity of the situation, the crisis managers try to convince to public nothing is going on and no crisis exists. The third handling device is framing. Framing encompasses a communication strategy that attempts to make some parts of a crisis more salient than other parts to emphasize a certain problem definition or interpretation of the crisis to the public. Or as Eriksson (2001: 10) states: "*Framing is largely about competing problem definitions.*" These actions can also help to favor ideas on how the crisis should be resolved to the public and media (Entman, 1993). Thus, as these three devices imply, communication strategies can comprise a symbolic element. This is what Coombs (1998) also emphasizes in his research as he introduces seven symbolic communication approaches.

2.3 Crisis Communication Strategies by Coombs (1998)

In order to figure out what communication strategies were applied by the Dutch Mayors, the theory of Coombs (1998) is used in the analysis. Coombs defined a framework in which he elaborates on seven symbolic communication approaches that can benefit crisis managers to prevent damage to the organization's image or reputation during the aftermath of a crisis. The framework of Coombs, however, specifically focusses on corporate organizations. The seven crisis communication strategies are primarily focused on the protection, or the reparation, of the reputation of the organization; they are a symbolic resource. This approach differs from Boin et al.'s framework, which is explained in the next paragraph, which primarily focusses on the individual office-holders. To choose the appropriate communication strategy, crisis leaders should be familiar with the available strategies and have a method of analyzing the situation.

In his framework, displayed in figure 1, Coombs (1998) developed a scale concerning the level of defensiveness and accommodativeness during a crisis, with on the one end the denial of a crisis and on the other end accepting the responsibility for the crisis. When determining which communication strategy to use, the extent to which the stakeholders (public/media/opposition) blame the organization, and hold them responsible for the crisis, should be taken into account. In between both ends, different forms of taking responsibility are placed. Coombs (1998) defined seven communication strategies that can be used, depending on the crisis situation. The threat of damage to the reputation of the organization could increase if the public's perception of responsibility for the crisis grows. Organizations should adapt to these attitudes and adopt more accommodative communicating strategies. These strategies are then focused on repairing the (damaged) reputation. If organizations take a defensive strategy towards the crisis at the moment the public regards the organization responsible, these strategies will be less effective, and the reputation is likely to be damaged.

It is important to note that this model serves for the protection of organizational reputations, rather than the reputation of individuals, as is the case in the model of Boin et al. (2009). The seven crisis communication strategies of Coombs (1998) are of added value to the model of Boin et al. (2009), as it allows for a further subdivision of the frames based on the gradation from defensive to accommodative. In the next section, the three frames are further explained.

Defensive	Attack the accuser	Crisis manager confronts the person or group who claims that a crisis exists. This may include a threat to use “force: (e.g., a lawsuit) against the accuser.
	Denial	Crisis manager states that no crisis exists. This may include explaining why there is no crisis.
	Excuse	Crisis manager tries to minimize the organization’s responsibility for the crisis. This can include denying any intention to do harm, claiming the organization had no control of the events that led to the crisis, or both.
	Justification	Crisis manager tries to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis. This can include stating there was no serious damage or injuries or claiming that the victims deserved what they received.
	Ingratiation	Actions are designed to make stakeholders like the organization.
	Corrective action	Crisis managers seek to repair the damage from the crisis, take steps to prevent a repeat of the crisis, or both.
	Full apology	Crisis manager publicly states that the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks forgiveness for the crisis. Some compensation (e.g. money or aid) may be included with the apology.
Accommodative		

Figure 1: Crisis Communication Strategies (Coombs, 1998: 180-181)

2.4 Framing strategies and crisis exploitation by Boin, ‘t Hart and McConnell (2009)

In contrast to the model of Coombs (1998), the model of Boin et al. (2009) focusses primarily on the individual office-holders of public organizations. During the aftermath of a crisis, an exploitation game between office-holders and oppositional forces will most likely arise, and result in a contest of frames and counter-frames to exploit the window of opportunity the crises created. During this exploitation game, the different actors use framing strategies to influence the (public) opinion on the origin and severity of the crisis, what caused the crisis, and who is responsible for its happening. The goal of these efforts is to have a particular frame recognized as the dominant narrative of the crisis (Boin et al., 2009). Oppositional forces and office-holders will try to use the crisis, which disrupted the ‘business as usual’, in their favor. The goal of the various actors can differ; they can strengthen or defend their position, draw public attention or divert it, support existing policies or propose new ones. Boin et al. describe crisis exploitation as: *“The purposeful utilization of crisis-type rhetoric to significantly alter levels of political support for public office-holders and public policies.”* (Boin et al., 2009: 83). Within the crisis exploitation, contest framing strategies play a paramount role.

The framework described by Boin, 't Hart and McConnell (2009), distinguishes three framing types public leaders could use to frame and exploit a crisis. These crisis frames form the basis in the analysis chapter in order to find an answer to the research question. The frames are: framing the incident as no crisis, framing the crisis as threat, and framing the crisis as opportunity. What crisis frame is adopted depends on the outcome of two framing contests between the office-holders and their opposition. The first framing contests, which is fought in the first moments after the event occurred is whether the incident is a 'ripple' or a crisis (Boin et al. 2009). The choice between one of these outcomes depends on the 'agenda status' of the issues that come with the event. Are they regarded as a top priority to solve, or is it safe to ignore the raised concerns and address them in a normal way? It is, however, impossible to pinpoint the turning point between the two outcomes, because too many factors influence this outcome. The second framing contest is whether the crisis is just an incident or a symptom (Boin et al. 2009). This framing contest becomes relevant if it is impossible to deny that the situation is not a crisis. The political and policy outcome are at stake in this contest. Frames can focus to 'endogenize' accountability of the crisis or frames can 'exogenize' accountability. The blame for the crisis is either focused or diffused, and policies are defended or criticized (Boin et al. 2009). Figure 2 visualizes these framing strategies and their outcomes.

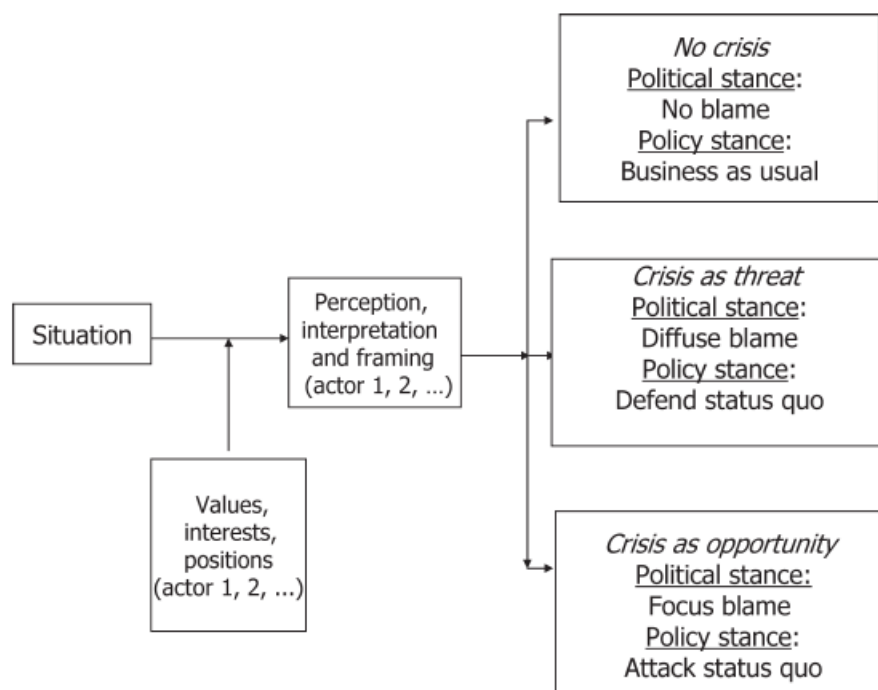


Figure 2: Crises as framing contests (Boin et al. 2009: 85)

Framing type 1: no crisis entails that the public leader and his policy officers will deny that the situation that has occurred is more than just an incident. The situation is not labeled as a crisis, and the idea that there is a need for any policy or political measures is actively downplayed and denied. The office-holder will try to minimize the significance of the event (Boin, et al. 2009). The political stance during the framing of the incident will be that there is nobody to blame for the incident, and the policy stance would be that business should continue as usual. In short, there is no need for any change or blame because it is out of the question the event is a crisis. However, if a crisis is framed as frame type 2, a crisis is regarded as a threat. The framing strategy will focus on framing the crisis as an event which is a critical threat to the collective good (Boin, et al. 2009). In addition, the office-holder will probably acknowledge the significance of the happening. Thus, the office-holder will take a defensive stance and defend their policies. Simply put, the status quo has to be defended against criticism. The political position will be to diffuse the blame; the office-holders do not want to be held accountable for the crisis. The first two framing strategies are the strategies that are, in general, mostly used by public leaders during crisis situations (Boin et al. 2009). However, when adapting the last framing strategy, frame type 3, public leaders will probably use the crisis as an opportunity in order to expose the imperfections of the status quo as it was at the moment the crisis occurred. During this crisis frame, the office-holder will most probably maximize the significance of the event. The actors in favor of the status quo and the 'failing' policies will be blamed to gain support for the removal of those actors or adjustment of the policies (Boin, et al. 2009).

2.5 Crisis as threat to the (political) reputation

So far this chapter discussed the challenges and difficulties public leaders face during a crisis and the means they can use to control and make use of the crisis. The theories of Coombs (1998) and Boin et al. (2009) offered the first step to a conceptual model. However, the political outcome of a crisis needs more clarification. It was already mentioned that crises pose a threat to the (political) reputation of public leaders and their institutions (Coombs, 2007). If the status of the public leader and his institutions change, it affects how outside actors perceive and interact with them, and in the most unfortunate case even stand negative against them. So it is evident that the protection of the reputation is crucial during the aftermath of a crisis.

Considering the political effect of crisis exploitation Boin et al. (2009) distinguished three political outcomes for office-holders in the aftermath of a crisis:

- **Damage**, in which the blame was focused on the office-holder and the careers and reputation of the political office-holder(s) was damaged.
- **Escape**, in which the blame is successfully diffused or displaced.
- **Rejuvenation**, instead of being blamed for the crisis the office-holders receive praise and support for his or her performance.

Figure 3 depicts the possible outcomes of crisis exploitations, both from the critics (opposition) point of view as of the incumbents (office-holders). The acceptance of responsibility by the office-holders in combination with a focused blame or being absolved from blame by their opponents can predict the possible political outcome of the crisis. During the political game, the opposition or the critics have to decide if they are going to blame the office-holder for the crisis, and if they just want to damage their reputation or opt for the removal of the office-holder. The office-holders themselves can choose to reject, deflect or diffuse responsibility for the crisis, or they can partially or wholly accept the responsibility (Boin et al., 2009).

Critics	Absolve blame	Focus blame
Incumbents		
Accept responsibility	<i>I. Blame minimization:</i> Elite escape likely	<i>II. Blame acceptance:</i> Elite damage likely
Deny responsibility	<i>III. Blame avoidance:</i> Elite escape likely	<i>IV. Blame showdown:</i> Elite damage, escape, rejuvenation all possible

Figure 3: Crisis exploitation: the political game (Boin et al. 2009: 89)

Overall figure 3 depicts four different outcomes of the political game. Each outcome depends on the political stance of both the critics and the incumbent office-holders. Box I states that the office-holder accepts responsibility for the crisis and that the oppositional forces absolve them from blame. This blame minimization will then result in an elite escape. Since it is not likely incumbents will accept responsibility for a crisis and be absolved from blame by their critics, box I is probably the least likely outcome of this political game. Box II is the preferred outcome for the opposition in the political game, but the chance an office-holder will just accept responsibility for the crisis is rather small. In reality, they should thus consider focusing on the lower half of the matrix where the office-holder denies responsibility. For the incumbent office-holders, box III is without any doubt the preferred outcome. When the oppositional forces do

not want the all-in removal of the office-holders and seek for a tactical victory, box III is a likely outcome. However, when they choose this strategy, the chance that box I could be the eventual outcome, an outcome that is least attractive to oppositional forces, is present. Overall, Boin et al. (2009) suggest that the result in box IV, blame showdown, is the most likely outcome the political exploitation game will take. The result of this box is impossible to predict but entails a (politicized) course of action in the aftermath to reach the preferred result of the political game.

During the political exploitation game, office-holders have to assess what path they will take to minimize the potential damage to their reputation. They can ‘fight’ to protect their political reputation or even improve it by showing a very decisive and heroic crisis response. Or they can accept or partially accept responsibility for the crisis. Office-holders favor boxes I and III since they most probably want to politically survive the crisis. They have an option to proactively take responsibility for the crisis to look strong and self-reflective (Boin et al., 2009). This option is only successful if the oppositional forces are not determined to inflict damage to the reputation of the office-holder and absolve him from blame. However, it is probably more likely that oppositional forces will focus their blame on the office-holders. If office-holders then choose to deny responsibility, a blame showdown, in which every outcome is possible, will probably occur. However, other factors could influence the political outcome of a framing contests; these factors are discussed in the next section.

2.6 Other influential factors

Even though crisis managers have an influence on the outcome of a crisis because they can communicate a strategic crisis frame that can benefit them, a well thought out crisis communication strategy is not a guarantee of a successful political outcome for office-holders. Both Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998) notice that other influential or critical factors can impact the political results of a crisis communication strategy. Both their factors are to a substantive extent the same. Boin et al. (2009) indicate five critical factors that help to explain the positive political outcome of a crisis. Firstly, positive political capital with the most relevant media actors plays an important role. Secondly, it is the key for crisis frames to be adequately and proactively communicated. Thirdly, public leaders should be relatively short in office. Fourthly, the public regards the cause of the crisis as exogenous, and finally, the investigation of an ‘expert’ commission is considered as the principal actor in the official inquiry.

Moreover, Coombs (1998) elaborates on three aspects that could affect the attitude of the crisis responsibility. According to Coombs (1998) crisis attributions, organizational performance, and severity of the crisis are influential factors. Firstly, crisis attribution is about who or what is responsible for the crisis. When the public has the perception of an external cause, it lowers the crisis responsibility since the perception is that the organization could not do much to prevent the crisis. Secondly, organizational performance entails the performance before the crisis erupted. When the performance before the crisis was 'good', the organization is more likely to conserve its positive image. Finally, the more severe a crisis is, the greater the damage to the reputation will be.

2.7 Conceptual Model

This final part of this theoretical framework offers the conceptual model that is used to analyze the gathered data. This data will ultimately be the basis for the analysis and answering the research question. The frameworks of both Coombs (1998) and Boin et al. (2009) are now defined, and the possible political outcomes of crisis exploitation are described. Both these theories and the political outcomes are merged into one conceptual model which is depicted in figure 4.

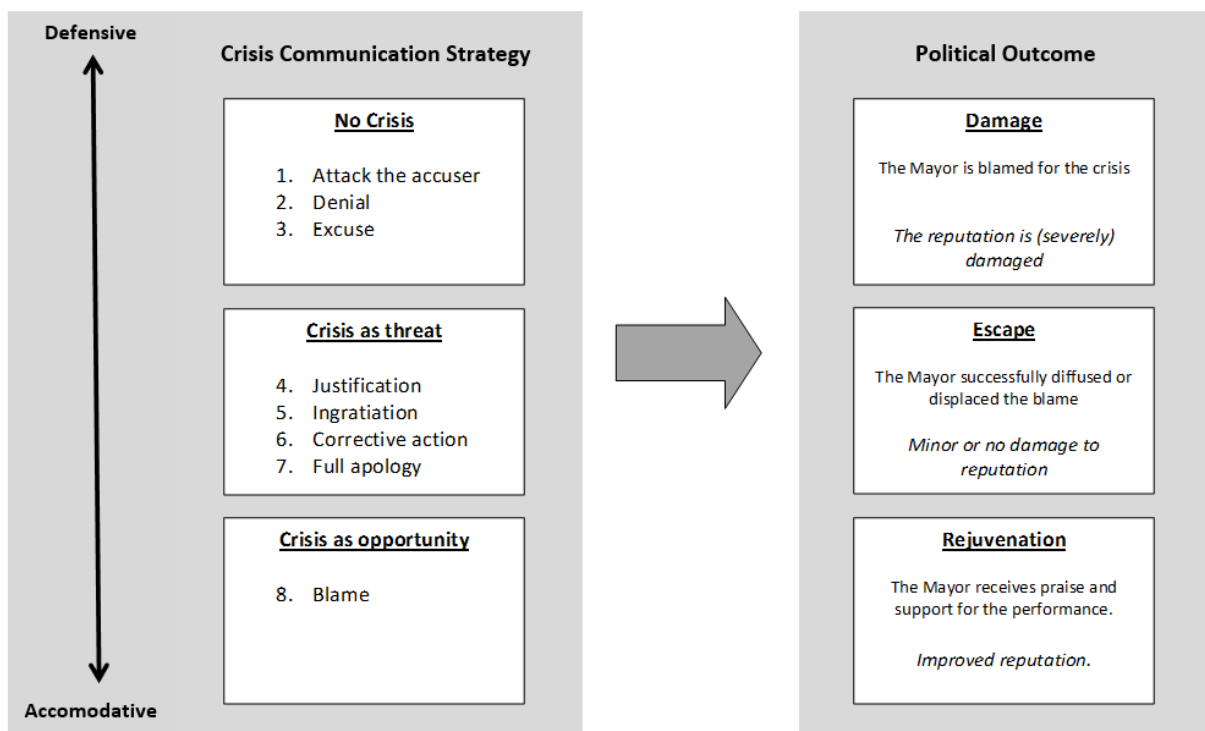


Figure 4: Conceptual Model

The box on the left of the model shows the seven communication strategies of Coombs (1998). Each one of these communication strategies is classified into one of the framing types of Boin et al. (2009), depending on the degree of its defensiveness/accommodativeness. Communication strategy number eight 'blame' is added by the author of this study, since Coombs did not offer any communication strategy that could be appointed to the crisis as an opportunity strategy as defined by Boin et al. (2009). The 'blame' strategy as applied in the conceptual framework of Boin et al. (2009) focusses the blame regarding the crisis on supporters of the status quo, and it's failing policies to gain support for their removal or fundamental change.

The box on the right displays the three political outcomes that could be a result of the crisis communication strategies. The political outcomes are based on the political outcome of crisis exploitation efforts as described by Boin et al. (2009). Each political outcome shows the result of the crisis communication efforts of the Mayor during the mini-crisis, and the consequences for his reputation. To be able to measure the political outcome, the attitude of the oppositional actors towards the crisis communication efforts of the Mayor are examined. In this research, the media, and the City Council of each city in which the mini-crisis occurred are regarded as the oppositional forces. It should be kept in mind that this study does not suggest that any causal relationship exists between the chosen crisis communication strategy and the subsequent political outcome, as too many factors can influence the political outcome for a Mayor during a mini-crisis.

This theoretical framework contains many concepts that need further identification and structural elaboration. Therefore, the operationalization scheme in the subsequent paragraph focuses on the explanation of these concepts in light of the applied theories and constitutes the solid foundation for the data analysis in chapter 4.

2.8 Operationalization Scheme

Framing strategy	Concept	Definition	Indicators	Source	Code
	Crisis Communication Strategy	The crisis communication strategy is the communication strategy a Mayor performs on the strategic level during the aftermath of a mini-crisis. With the goal to enlarge or secure the political capital.			
No Crisis <i>Frame 1</i>	Attack the accuser	The Mayor confronts the person or group who claims that a crisis exists.	Indicators include a threat to use “force”: (e.g., a lawsuit) against the accuser. Or outspoken blame towards a certain actor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F1A
	Denial	The Mayor states that no crisis exists.	Indicators include explaining why there is no crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F1D
	Excuse	The Mayor tries to minimize the organization’s responsibility for the crisis.	Indicators include denying any intention to do harm, claiming the organization had no control of the events that led to the crisis, or both. F.e. ‘It is not only our problem, but everyone’s.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F1E
Crisis as threat <i>Frame 2</i>	Justification	The Mayor tries to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis.	Indicators include stating there was no serious damage or injuries, claiming that the victims deserved what they received or justify why the event happened. F.e. ‘We did what we had to do’, ‘These actions are well thought out.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F2J
	Ingratiation	Actions are designed to make stakeholders like the organization.	Indicators include organizing silent marches, commemorations, and meetings. And praising and reassuring the public. F.e. ‘We have productive conversations with the people’, ‘We understand their worries.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F2I

	Corrective action	The Mayor seeks to repair the damage from the crisis, take steps to prevent a repeat of the crisis, or both.	Indicators include announcements of policy change. F.e. ‘Things will be done different in the future’, ‘A new approach is vital.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F2C
	Full apology	The Mayor publicly states that the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks forgiveness for the crisis. Some compensation (e.g. money or aid) may be included with the apology.	Indicators include public apologies, taking responsibility, asking for forgiveness, announcing compensation. F.e. ‘We could have done things differently.’, ‘We are sorry.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F2F
Crisis as opportunity <i>Frame 3</i>	Blame	The Mayor focusses the blame of the event in order to expose the imperfections of the status quo as it was at the moment the crisis occurred to change it in his favor.	Indicators include a focused blame on the actors in favor of the status quo or focused blame on the status quo itself, and the ‘failing’ policies. F.e. ‘We need a discussion about this problem.’, ‘Existing policy failed, causing this crisis.’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements • Statements in Council meetings • Statements in the media 	F3B
	Political Outcome	The political outcome entails the results of the debate about accountability and blame which follows from the particular crisis communication strategies.			
	Damage	The Mayor is blamed for the crisis. The reputation is (severely) damaged.	Indicators include a focused blame on the Mayor by majority of the City Council and the media and/or the resignation of the Mayor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements by the opposition • Statements by the opposition during Council meetings • Media 	POD
	Escape	The Mayor successfully diffused or displaced the blame. Minor or no damage to the reputation.	Indicators include minor blame or being absolved from blame by the majority of the City Council and the media and/or the Mayor remaining in power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements by opposition • Statements by the opposition during Council meetings • Media 	POE
	Rejuvenation	The Mayor receives praise and support for the performance. Improved reputation.	Indicators include praise and support for the complete approach of the Mayor by the majority of the City Council and the media and/or the Mayor remaining in power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Statements by opposition • Statements by the opposition during Council meetings • Media 	POR

3 Research Design

This chapter of the study elaborates on the chosen research design and the methods that were used to gather and analyze the collected data. The objective of this study is to assess how the framing strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises contributed to the political outcome of the mini-crisis. A qualitative multiple-case study was conducted to find an answer to the research question. The starting point for this study is based on already existing theories which are analyzed in practice (Babbie, 2010). Through this deductive approach, the explorative qualitative research design allows this research to perform an in-depth study of the crisis communication strategies during mini-crises and the subsequent political outcomes of these efforts. The case study design offers to apply an intensive approach to this research, this makes it possible to study the crisis communication efforts and the political outcome during the aftermath of a mini-crisis in-depth and in its particular context (Swanborn, 2010). Because every mini-crisis was analyzed in its context, a more detailed study is possible than is achievable with a quantitative approach (Swanborn, 2010). The explorative aspect of this research helps to create a better understanding of the mechanism of the chosen crisis communication strategy and the political outcomes of mini-crises (Babbie, 2010). The holistic multiple-case approach offers the best chance explore the research question since the crisis communication strategies and the political outcome are constructed through a complex set of elements (Swanborn, 2010). To strengthen the results of this research, and to emphasize the exploratory aspect of this study, the multiple-case approach combines the within case analysis with a cross-case analysis to enhance the outcome of the study.

To unravel the crisis communication strategies and assess their political outcome this study concentrated on three mini-crises that occurred in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2014. The first case took place in in the summer of 2012 when the municipality of Utrecht decided to evacuate several houses after an extensive amount of asbestos was found in flats that were being renovated. The second mini-crisis occurred in February of 2014 in the municipality of Leiden. This mini-crisis arose due to the housing of a convicted pedophile in a Leiden neighborhood. The third mini-crisis occurred during the summer of 2014 in The Hague when several pro-IS demonstrations caused a social unrest.

3.1 Case selection

This research applied a most similar case design to gather the necessary data. The cases are kept most similar to unravel the mechanisms of the chosen crisis communication strategy and the political outcome of these efforts. The choice of the most similar case design is based on the state of the art of the relevant theory. The combination of both frameworks, the framing strategies by Boin et al. (2009) together with the crisis communication strategies of Coombs (1998), constitute a rather new construction. It is, therefore that a most similar case design is most appropriate (Swanborn, 2010: 54). However, with regards to the case selection, it is important to clarify this research' motivation. Whereas it could be regarded a logical choice to select the cases on the similar type of crises, this research adopts a different line of reasoning. This research argues that the similarities of internal characteristics between mini-crises are of greater importance than simply the type of the mini-crisis. Simply put, fires can be regarded as the same type of mini-crisis and thus constitute the rationale for the case selection. However, the characteristics of these mini-crises involving fires can be rather different. Rather than disregarding these crucial characteristics, this study aims to discern the importance of these factors. Hence, the cases in this study are not selected on the same type, but rather on the same characteristics the certain events share. These characteristics in this research include the environment in which the mini-crisis occurred; the duration of the mini-crisis; the role the Mayor plays in the mini-crisis; public outrage; media coverage; and small physical damage. The major similarities of these characteristics thus account for the most similar design in this research. When keeping these variables constant, the chance of these variables influencing the outcome is contained. So even though the type of the crises is not necessarily the very same, the substantial elements harmonize with each other. This, according to this research, outweighs the other selection criterion; which is based on similar crisis types.

Seawright and Gerring (2008) acknowledge that, in its purest form, cases should be similar on all the measured variables except for the variable of interest. However since this research focusses on mini-crises, this is nearly impossible to accomplish. The very nature of mini-crises is that they are unexpected events. These facts make it hard to find cases which are similar on all the measured variables. Thus, the chosen cases are not identical but most similar. The three cases are purposively selected on the basis of several criteria to make sure they were representative for this research (Babbie, 2010). The criteria for selecting these cases, together with their score per selected case, are listed on the next page in table 1. However, it should be noted that the most similar cases are not selected on the political outcome, as this would create

a risk of bias for the results of this research. Yet, the case selection of this research is based on the cross-case characteristics of a mini-crisis (Seawright and Gerring, 2008).

Selection criteria:	Mini-crisis Leiden	Mini-crisis Utrecht	Mini-crisis Den Haag
1. The Mayor played a central role in the crisis communication and crisis handling.	x	x	x
2. Extensive media reporting, both on a national as on a local level, on the event.	x	x	x
3. Public outrage or unrest as a result of the ‘mini-crisis.’	x	x	x
4. Small physical damage.	x	x	x
5. The triggering event that started the mini-crisis originated from a decision made by the municipality.	x	x	x
6. Number of inhabitants of the municipality on the 1 st of January 2014 (CBS, 2014).	121 163	328 164	508 940
7. Council members in City Council (Gemeente Leiden, 2016b; Gemeente Utrecht, 2016; Gemeente Den Haag, 2016b).	39	45	45
8. The duration of the mini-crisis covered several days.	x	x	x
9. Years in office Mayor when crisis occurred (Gemeente Leiden, 2016a; Parlement & Politiek, 2016; Gemeente Den Haag, 2016a).	11	5	6

Table 1: Case selection criteria

The first four selection criteria in table 1 are based on the characteristics of a mini-crisis as defined by Duin and Wijkhuijs (2014: 11). With these selection criteria, this study tried to make sure the chosen cases were the same within the meaning of a mini-crisis. Furthermore, the fifth selection criterion was added to match the three cases even more. With all the three cases having an exogenous cause, all the Mayors have to defend their decisions which triggered the mini-crisis. As clarified in the previous section, these five selection criteria are kept the same to make sure the chosen mini-crises are maintained most similar, despite the already mentioned fact that the crisis types of each case are not the same.

Selection criteria six up to, and including, nine were added to keep the environment wherein the mini-crises occurred equally. All three municipalities in which the mini-crises occurred are regarded as major cities within the Netherlands. This increases the chance for their organizational structure to be the same. Since the municipalities have a relatively large

population, the amount of Council members within the City Council is almost equal. Because the City Council is considered as an oppositional force in this study, their size is kept nearly the same to prevent any bias in the political game in the aftermath of the mini-crises. Moreover, the Mayors were all in office for a reasonable amount of years. Therefore their managerial experience in their profession should be somewhat similar.

Unit of analysis and unit of observation

The unit of analysis in this study is the aftermath of the crises in which the crisis communication efforts by the Mayor are performed. The units of observation are the crisis communication strategies (independent variable) carried out by the Mayors in question, and the political outcome of the crisis communication efforts (dependent variable), based on the judgment of the opposition; in this case the City Councils of the selected cities.

3.2 Data collection methods

Desk research was conducted to unravel the crisis communication strategies performed by the Mayors and the political outcomes during the three mini-crises. With the desk research, all the necessary and relevant information for the media and document analysis was gathered. A mix of media analysis (newspapers, websites) and document analysis (press statements, minutes of Council meetings) was conducted.

Crisis communication strategies

To unravel the crisis communication strategies the document analysis was used to find both primary and secondary sources concerning statements the Mayor made during the aftermath of the mini-crisis. Direct quotes or descriptions of statements and public statements derived from these sources. The media analysis was conducted to find secondary sources on statements the Mayor made in news reports. However, primary sources such as interviews with the press also derived from this collection method. The following sources were used to unfold the crisis communication efforts by the Mayors:

- Public Statements made by the Mayor concerning the mini-crisis;
- Press Statements/interviews in which the Mayor elaborates on the mini-crisis;
- Minutes of Council meetings in which the Mayor made statements about the mini-crisis.

Political outcome

To determine the political outcome, the oppositional and the media stance was examined. In the Netherlands, all Mayors operate under the same circumstances regarding their responsibilities during a crisis and political environment. This is why the political outcome is measured by the judgment of the City Council of the municipality where the mini-crisis occurred. The City Council has the duty to review and control the Mayor. Moreover, the City Council is the only body that can dismiss a Mayor unless it is a voluntary decision. Furthermore, the general opinion of the selected media is assessed to strengthen the judgment on the political outcome. The judgments of the Council and media were collected in the same way the crisis communication strategies of the Mayors were. The relevant sources to measure the political outcome are:

- Public Statements by opposition in which they elaborate on the performance of the Mayor concerning the mini-crisis;
- Press Statements/interviews by opposition in which they elaborate on the performance of the Mayor concerning the mini-crisis;
- Minutes of Council meetings in which the opposition makes statements about the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis;
- Media articles in which the news agency shows a strong opinion on the performance of the Mayor.

It is acknowledged that the public opinion also forms an important part of the political outcome. However, the public opinion is left out of this study. People who are disappointed or angry tend to be more pro-active in sharing their opinion than people who are satisfied with the situation (Pol & Swankhuisen, 2013). This means that a social media analysis would not be representative. It would have been necessary to conduct a survey amongst all inhabitants of the municipalities to map the public opinion. However, this would have been too time-consuming.

Collection of the data sources

The websites of the municipalities where the mini-crisis occurred were used to retrieve the relevant minutes of the Council meetings. Other documents such as official press statements were also retrieved from these websites. The reporting of various news agencies on the mini-crises formed the source to collect the relevant media content. A distinction was made between the national and the local level. It was expected that national news agencies will have a less

extensive reporting on the event due to other interests these news agencies may have. On the other hand, local news agencies have a more direct interest and are closely connected to the events. This will probably result in a more extensive coverage of the events. On the national level, the news content of NRC Handelsblad, Algemeen Dagblad, De Telegraaf, Trouw and De Volkskrant were assessed. These newspapers are the five major newspaper in The Netherlands and probably provide most information on a national level. It should be kept in mind that these news agencies sometimes used the same statements and interviews of both the Mayor and Council members for their news reports. If this was the case, only one news agency's source was used to analyze the data, due to practical reasons this mostly was the NRC Handelsblad. On a local level, three different news agencies are used to gather data. These news agencies are:

- Leidsch Dagblad regarding the event in Leiden
- Omroep West regarding the event in The Hague
- RTV Utrecht regarding the event in Utrecht

3.3 Data exploitation and assessment

In this section, the way in which the gathered data was exploited and assessed is explained. In the operationalization scheme in paragraph 2.8, each concept is given a code. A qualitative content analysis was performed to code all the obtained data. The aim of this analysis is to assess which crisis communication strategy was conducted by the Mayors, and what the political outcome of these strategies was. The collected data was first sorted by actor and time to keep an oversight, and subsequently, codes were labeled to it. It should be kept in mind that the gathered data was originally in Dutch and is translated into English for the purpose of this research. Therefore, a small chance might exist that the original intention of the data was somewhat deviated from. However, the presented quotes were translated with the utmost caution, in order for the bias to be kept as low as possible. Per case, all the coded statements, including their corresponding sources, both for the crisis communication strategy and the political outcome can be found in the coded dataset document that is provided as an additional document to this research. These quotes are stated in their original language.

Crisis communication strategies

To unravel the crisis communication efforts of the Mayor, public statements, minutes of the Council meetings, and interviews that were given to the media were the primary data sources. This information can be obtained from primary sources, and are thus the most reliable. Indirect quotes from secondary sources were also taken into consideration. Attention is paid to the

possibility that different news agencies use the same interviews or statements in their reporting. First of all, all data was coded based on the indicators explained in the operationalization scheme. This way it was easier to determine which crisis communication strategy was the most dominant. However, it can occur that a combination of several communication strategies was used by the Mayor or that strategies shifted during the aftermath of the crisis. Whenever this was the case, a mix of communication strategies was labeled as the primary communication strategy. Moreover, the associated framing type was also analyzed and determined per case. The findings are presented in chronological order to see whether the communication strategy changed over time.

Political outcome

The political outcome is based on the judgments of the City Council and the media, with the view of the City Council as the primary source. The stance of the City Council and the media is explored to determine what the political outcome of the communication strategies performed by the Mayor was. It is expected that the City Council would have an outspoken opinion on the performance of the Mayor during the aftermath of the mini-crisis. Concerning the view of the City Council, the minutes of the Council meetings are the most significant source. Moreover, news items and interviews were analyzed to determine the political judgment of Council members. To assess the opinion of the selected media agencies, their opinion articles and columns on the mini-crisis in which the performance of the Mayor is mentioned are the most important. The general judgment of the City Council and media are labeled with the indicators explained in the operationalization scheme; damage, escape or rejuvenation. If it was the case that more than one Council meeting related to the event was held, a chronological order was also applied to assess whether the oppositional stance changed over time.

Cross case analysis

In chapter 4, each case is separately analyzed by means of a within-case analysis. When all three cases were examined, a cross-case comparison was conducted to examine the overall findings of the cases. These outcomes of the cross-case analysis were ultimately used in the discussion to answer the research question of how crisis communication efforts by Dutch Mayors during a mini-crisis influence the political outcome of such a mini-crisis.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Every research comes with issues of validity and reliability. In this part of the research design, an explanation is given of how the different types of validity and reliability related to this study are relevant and what is done to enhance them. In general qualitative research improves the internal validity of a research (Bryman, 2012). However, proving a causal relationship in this study is rather impossible. The most similar case design tries to exclude other influential factors of interfering with the studied mechanism. However, it is impossible to exclude other factors from being influential to the political outcome. Moreover, besides the small number of cases, the presumed influence of other variables than the crisis communication strategy makes it impossible to prove a causal relationship. Triangulation of data sources is applied, for both the crisis communication strategy analysis as the political outcome analysis, to enhance the internal validity of this study (Swanborn, 2010).

To improve the reliability of this study, every step taken in this study is carefully described in this chapter. The detailed case selection criteria and the extensive description of the process of obtaining and processing the gathered data enhance the reliability of this study. Furthermore, to a certain extent, it cannot be ruled out that the coding of the collected material was done on subjective judgment (Bryman, 2012). In Appendix I, II, and III, all the results of the coding analysis are presented to enhance the transparency of this study.

Due to the character of a qualitative multiple-case design, the overall external validity is low. As only a few cases are analyzed, case studies endure problems of generalization (Yin, 1994, 2010). Since the cases are unique happenings, it is impossible to generalize the findings of this research to a broader population. However, a distinction can be made between statistical generalization and analytical generalization (Yin, 1994, 2010). The results of this study cannot be generalized statistically to the entire population. However, they can be analytically generalized back to the theory. Each case in this study is used as an ‘experiment’ to test the combination of the theories of Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998) (Yin, 1994, 2010). Thus, the results of this research can be used to generalize analytically; statistical generalization is, however, impossible.

4 Analysis

This chapter constitutes the analysis of the data of this research. The gathered data is analyzed in light of the theoretical framework central to this research. The objective of the analysis is to empirically test the implications of the combination of theories by Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998) in three cases of a mini-crisis. First, each case is provided with an in-depth analysis, while later on, the cases are cross-analyzed. The data collection and analysis provided the necessary information to answer the research question.

4.1 Case 1: Asbestos in Kanaleneiland Utrecht

During the morning of Sunday, the 22nd of July, housing corporation Mitros contacted, the municipality of Utrecht with the notice that they found asbestos during renovation activities in the district of Kanaleneiland in Utrecht (Duin et al., 2013). In accordance with the agreements, Mitros called their contact person in the municipality. However, the person they needed to contact was not available. Mitros was advised to call 112 (the emergency number) to ask the right telephone number to contact the person who had standby service that day. When the emergency services heard of the problem, they immediately scaled up the situation. The whole neighborhood was closed down, and residents were not allowed in their homes anymore (Duin et al., 2013). The moment the crisis emerged Mayor Wolfsen was on holiday. The Deputy Mayor took over and led the municipality's crisis response team. (Duin et al., 2013). A total of 43 houses were evacuated. Residents of the neighborhood were angry because there was, in their opinion, not enough communication from the municipality.

On the 23rd of July, more tests were performed, and more houses were evacuated. Mayor Wolfsen remained at his holiday location because he only heard reassuring information from the municipality. (Duin et al., 2013) On the 24th of July, Wolfsen returned because the situation took more time than expected (RTVUtrecht.nl, 2012). On the 26th of July, Wolfsen announced that an official inquiry would investigate what happened (nrc.nl, 2012). During these days, the first residents were allowed to return to their homes (Duin et al., 2013). On the 3rd of August, a Friday, the mini-crisis ended for the crisis response teams. However, for Mayor Wolfsen, the mini-crisis would continue until the official inquiry presented its report. On the next page, figure 5 shows the chronological order of the most important happenings during the mini-crisis.

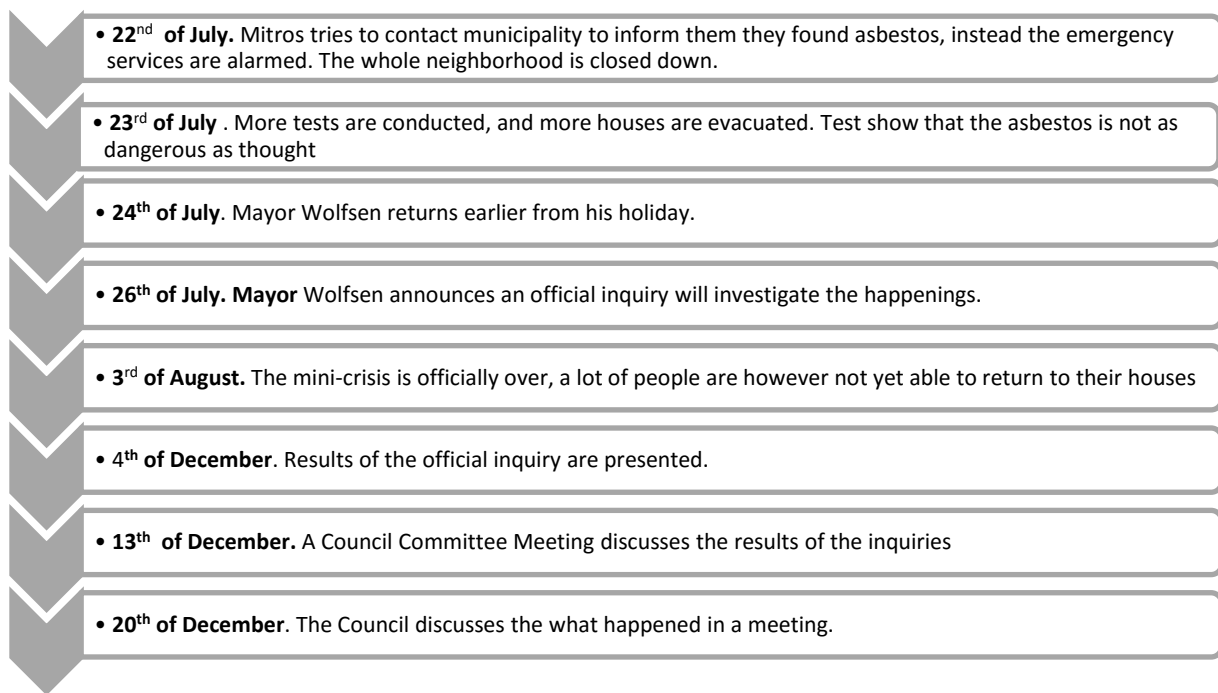


Figure 5: Chronological order of events Case 1

4.1.1 Crisis Communication Strategy used by Mayor Wolfsen

The analysis of the gathered data from the crisis communication strategy of Mayor Wolfsen during the mini-crisis in Utrecht shows that Wolfsen viewed the overall crisis as a threat. Most of the coded data can be classified to frame type 2: crisis as threat. Table 2 shows the outcome of the analysis. In Appendix I, the data sources with its corresponding codes can be found. The communication strategy of Wolfsen can be roughly divided into two parts. The first part concerns the period the mini-crisis was still ongoing. The second part entails the time where Wolfsen had to defend himself in front of the special committee meeting and the regular Council meeting after an official inquiry presented its outcomes. Overall, the communication strategy can be seen as a mix of promising corrective action to prevent the repeat of the crisis and apology, during the second period of the case, when the report came out, the communication strategy of Wolfsen mainly focused on making an apology for what happened and the way the crisis was handled. The first period was characterized by ingratiation and announcements that an independent inquiry would investigate the matter, which can be labeled as corrective action. During the second period, a few months later, the ingratiation was no longer part of the strategy and Wolfsen mainly focused on making an apology in combination with announcing corrective measures, emphasizing he would take over the recommendations of the research commission, and apologize to all the affected persons. The indicators of excuse, minimizing the organization's responsibility for the crisis, were mostly measured in the first days of the mini-crisis. During the last Council meeting, no indicators of 'excuse' were found.

Framing Strategy	Crisis Communication Strategy	Amount of statements per indicator	Total amount of statements per framing type
Frame 1: No crisis	Attack the accuser	1	6
	Denial	0	
	Excuse	5	
Frame 2: Crisis as threat	Justification	3	30
	Ingratiation	8	
	Corrective Action	14	
	Full Apology	5	
Frame 3: Crisis as opportunity	Blame	0	0

Table 2: Outcome communication strategy case 1

During the first public statements, most indicators show Mayor Wolfsen adopts a communication strategy of ingratiation and corrective action. These crisis communication strategies are both classified to framing type 2: Crises as threat. By explaining he understands the feelings of the residents and by stating he spoke to them on several occasions to see how they are doing, Wolfsen primarily tries to show that he is concerned with the people that were affected by the crisis. These actions clearly show a communication strategy of ingratiation. Wolfsen, for example, stated that: *"Very basic [Regarding the reason to come back], to ask how things are going with the people, as simple as that really (...) it's good to ask the people; how are you?"* (Wolfsen, 26-07-2012a). Moreover, Wolfsen states he wants to be to stay informed by the people that were affected, which is also classified as an indicator of ingratiation. *"It takes longer than planned. Initially, it looked like they could perhaps go back earlier, now it will last longer, so it is good to inform yourself here."* (Wolfsen, 26-07-2012a). Furthermore, statements in which he seeks to repair the damage caused by the crisis, and the announcement of an inquiry to prevent a repeat of the crisis, and to find out what exactly has happened, show that Wolfsen also applies a strategy of corrective action. Wolfsen stated: *"We think it is good and wise if a group of people stands next to the policy team and look at everything that has to do with asbestos. From the stocktaking prior to the refurbishment of the flats up to the moment that all the residents are back home."* (Wolfsen, 26-07-2012b).

During the following days, the Mayor gave two interviews for two different newspapers. In these statements, Wolfsen remains with his communication strategy of ingratiation. He, for example, emphasizes that he understands how tough it is for the citizens of Kanaleneiland to cope with the crisis. *“Tuesday, I realized that it was going to take more time than was expected, and that there was a lot of uncertainty. That was my reason to return, to be there for the residents. Of course, since Sunday, I could not stop thinking about what was happening. As Mayor you never have one hundred percent of holiday, it is part of the job. My wife knows that. If something is going on in the city, you hope that you are in the area. If you are not, then, that is too bad, and you have to create a balance.”* (Wolfsen, 27-07-2012). However, there were also indicators of excuse, which can be classified to crisis frame 1: No crisis. On his reason to come back, Wolfsen explains how hard it is for a Mayor to do ‘the right thing.’ By minimizing his responsibility, he downplays the idea the organization can be blamed for the crisis. Wolfsen stated that; *“If there is a disaster or crisis and the reaction is too late, people say 'jeminee, the Deputy is not properly trained.' If you return right away, then it's 'boy, is it so serious?'. If you are abroad, you practically always do it wrong in the eyes of critics. Of course, things go wrong. These personal stories affect me a lot.”* (Wolfsen, 27-07-2012).

Stressing the fact that an official, independent, inquiry will look at what happened is paramount for Mayor Wolfsen communication strategy. Indicators of corrective action are found in almost every statement he makes; *“We set up an independent investigation; has the municipality rightly granted a permit for the renovation project, how is the work conducted, where is the source of the asbestos? Lawyers of residents can use the report to decide whether any person is liable or not. That may also be the municipality. We'll have to wait and see.”* (Wolfsen, 28-07-2012). Additionally, in his messages, there are sometimes indicators that Wolfsen tries to diffuse the blame and minimize the municipalities’ responsibility for the mini-crisis. When, for example, Wolfsen mentions Mitros is responsible for the houses and not the municipality; *“The houses are of housing corporation Mitros. People can address Mitros.”* (Wolfsen, 28-07-2012). Sometimes he tries to minimize the perceived damage, an indicator of justification, by stating the situation is not that special; *“No definitely not [interviewer insinuates Wolfsen downplays the situation]. I just want to point out that it is more common. Now I must say that the asbestos in Kanaleneiland is of a different order. We closed off a large area; it is a lot of homes. And it's still holiday time. People spend a day off, come back and cannot enter their homes. That, of course, leads to great commotion”* (Wolfsen, 28-07-2012). Despite some indicators show signs of other crisis communication strategies, Wolfsen his action of ingratiation stay fundamental in

his approach. He keeps mentioning the people of Kanaleneiland in his communication strategy and takes as a Mayor his responsibility to support them. On the 30th of July, Wolfsen writes on his blog; *"We all want the residents to pick up their lives as soon as possible - in their own, secure home in a safe environment."* (Wolfsen, 30-07-2012). Furthermore, he shows his sympathy for the residents of Kanaleneiland and that he understands their reaction; *"Imagine it will happen, in the middle of the holidays: you leave your house because a research concerning asbestos is conducted. For a moment, your whole life is upside down (...) I understand the doubts, and sometimes the frustration of the people."* (Wolfsen, 30-07-2012).

With a call for a national debate on the 2nd of August Wolfsen, his calls for corrective action also show signs of trying to exogenize the responsibility for the crisis. In an appeal to the City Council, he stated: *"The condition of the flats in the Utrecht 'asbestos district' Kanaleneiland is not unique. It is therefore for the Netherlands important to draw lessons from the crisis, which erupted when during the renovation of an apartment in the district of asbestos was released. A special committee will put all the events in a row to prevent new asbestos crises in Utrecht and the rest of the country"* (Wolfsen, 02-08-2012).

The next few weeks the mini-crisis calms down and the 'first period' of the mini-crisis ends. The inquiry is set in motion, and the City Council awaits the outcomes. In the meantime, no remarkable events occur concerning the mini-crisis. On the 4th of December 2012, the commission-Jansen presents its report (Jansen et al., 2012). The same day Mayor Wolfsen comes up with a response regarding the conclusion of the report; *"Your health was for us always the guiding criterion. That is why we preferred to be better safe than sorry. We realize that the events have been very drastic for you and we regret that great unrest arose during the evacuation. We are truly sorry."* (Wolfsen, 04-12-2012). This statement made by the Mayor is a clear indicator of apology. From now on the focus of the communication strategy of Mayor Wolfsen lays on making apologies for what happened and announcing the recommendations of the report will be taken over to prevent such events from happening again. Despite the shifted communication type, which now focuses on apology and corrective action, the framing remains the same, namely, frame 2: crisis as threat. On the 7th of December Wolfsen and the Aldermen of the city send an official letter to the City Council concerning the results of the research committee. An important component in this report is the promise of corrective action; *"The report of the inquiry commission gives a reconstruction of what happened leading up to, during and in the aftermath of the discovery of asbestos in the Kanaleneiland district. It also provides*

research insights into the complex interaction of decision-making, execution, and supervision of asbestos removal. Our college shares the conclusions of the report and thinks the recommendations are very valuable. We will examine the key findings and recommendations of the inquiry. We adopt the recommendations and implement, where possible, all recommendations right now.” (Wolfsen, 07-12-2012).

On the 13th of December, a special Council commission debates on the results of the inquiry. The emphasis of Wolfsen his communication strategy during this meeting was almost entirely focused on corrective action. In his statement at the beginning of the meeting the Mayor almost immediately makes an apology for what happened, he states to be *“well aware that the measures taken are very drastic for the inhabitants. (...) In retrospect, it could have been done less quickly, and it would have been less radically. For this, the Mayor, on behalf of the college, sincerely apologizes to the residents.”* (Wolfsen, 13-12-2012). During the rest of the meeting, Wolfsen remained his promises of corrective action by continuing to emphasize that the recommendations of the report would be followed; *“The college agrees with the conclusion of the commission Jansen that the crisis organization has functioned insufficient and that the measures taken were unnecessarily burdensome for residents. Therefore, the recommendations of the report are implemented with urgency.”* (Wolfsen, 13-12-2012). Moreover, by stating he did not agree that the municipality itself was not prepared for unforeseen crises situations, Wolfsen made more efforts to exogenize the responsibility for the crisis; *[Whether the municipality is sufficiently prepared for a potential crisis the Mayor answered affirmatively, with the remark that you always exert a previous crisis. A new crisis that has not occurred and which has not been practiced before, always has a chance with it that things are not running as it should happen.]* (Wolfsen, 13-12-2012). In response to a question from the Council asking what the Mayor and his college are going to do with all the recommendations, Mayor Wolfsen said that *“the municipality goes in full to work with the entire report.”* (Wolfsen, 13-12-2012). These statements show that the communication strategy which Wolfsen adopted in the first part of the mini-crisis shifted towards a more accommodative stance by almost entirely adopting communication strategies of corrective action and full apology.

This strategy was reconfirmed in the Council meeting on the 20th of December 2012. The meeting covered the outcome of the inquiries and the performance of the crisis team of the municipality during the mini-crisis. During the meeting, Mayor Wolfsen gave an account of his role during the mini-crisis. Both apology and corrective action were the narratives of his story. *“The crisis organization has not worked sufficiently. That's wrong. The crisis organization should always be in order. We regret the turmoil and uncertainty in which the people Kanaleneiland have to suffer from until this day. Nescience and uncertainty are often worse than disruptions and bad luck.”* (Wolfsen, 20-12-2012). During the meeting Wolfsen, his statement explained for the greatest part that he was sorry for what had happened and that he would take appropriate measures to prevent a repeat of the crisis. *“I have spoken with many residents and heard their stories. That's why I know how drastically it has been. That highly affects me and the staff who have worked during the crisis. I speak on their behalf when I say that we have learned from this, and it really should go better in the future. I also speak on behalf of these employees [of the municipality] when I say that they did everything they could, but it was not enough. It was insufficient. This and the findings of the commission Jansen and the impact for the residents are reasons for us to offer the residents our sincere apologies immediately. Their health has always been our priority. They are the most affected by what has happened, even though we are relieved about the fact that there has never been an acute threat to public health, but even then preparedness and alertness is necessary.”* (Wolfsen, 20-12-2012).

By not only stating the recommendations would be followed up in the future, but also by emphasizing he already changed things to prevent the same situation of happening again, Wolfsen strengthened his display of corrective action; *“After the summer, we have immediately looked at what we must do better and different. With all the responsible persons of the municipal processes, we conducted evaluative discussions, with a number of people from the crisis organization in particular, because a few places within the organization performed less well than expected. It's as easy as that.”* (Wolfsen, 20-12-2012). By concluding the statement with the notion that he wants the municipality to function in a proper way and that it is open for change, if it benefits the city the Mayor shows a rather accommodative communication strategy, and certainly less defensive than the communication strategy in the first part of the mini-crisis; *“We need to analyze properly what went well and what went wrong. Only in this way we can improve the civil service and our own administrative function. That's what we want to see. We have kept nothing away from the commission Jansen. We have encouraged it to focus, to*

properly analyze and to observe and help us to improve our performance. That's what drives us. Only in this way we create an administrative organization that is up to serve our people.” (Wolfsen, 20-12-2012). In contrast to the more defensive stance within framing type 2 in the beginning of the mini-crisis, this final statement shows a rather accommodative stance within frame type 2.

4.1.2 Political outcome

The political outcome for Mayor Wolfsen is the sum of the judgment of the City Council and opinion pieces in the media, from which the judgment of the City Council is regarded as the most important one. The political outcome of case 1 is depicted in table 3. During the mini-crisis in Utrecht, there were only a few occasions where the City Council elaborated on the political faith of Mayor Wolfsen. The two moments where most parties showed their judgment was during the committee meeting on the 13th of December and the Council meeting on the 20th of December. During the latter, most parties shared their opinion on the political performance of Mayor Wolfsen. Four factions in the Council openly blamed the Mayor for the mini-crisis and the performance of the crisis team. VVD and Stadspartij Leefbaar both explained that they already lost their faith in the Mayor during other occasions. None of the parties praised the Mayor for his performance. All the factions agreed that the communication from the municipality to the residents was lacking. However, quite a few factions accepted the apologies of the Mayor and his promise to undertake corrective actions. In the media arena, most judgments were not too hard for the Mayor. Most articles were focused on the, in their opinion, late decision of the Mayor to return and the failing communication strategies. Overall, the Mayor successfully diffused and displaced the blame. The damage to his reputation was reasonable, but he eventually escaped severe damage.

Political judgment City Council:	Absolved from blame
Political judgment Media	Absolved from blame
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 3: Political outcome case 1

City Council

Since at the beginning of the mini-crisis, the Deputy Mayor was in a leading role, not many politicians from the Council made a political judgment about Mayor Wolfsen when the mini-crisis started. In general, most of their criticism was pointed towards housing association Mitros. However, some critical comments were made concerning the communication of the municipality towards the residents of Kanaleneiland. Specifically, the VVD faction made some statements in which clear indicators of blame were found; [Member of VVD party] *“The problem is clearly not resolved. For example, there is still an abundance of communication advisors. On Wednesday, someone apparently figured the website needed maintenance, for it has since been offline. Bit weird when there is a crisis.”* (Buunk, 27-07-2012). However, the moment the Mayor announced that an official inquiry would take place, no more judgments on the performance of the Mayor were made. The Council probably awaited the results of the investigation before expressing their political opinion on the performance of the Mayor.

In the Council commission meeting on the 13th of December, the focus of the debate was primarily on the outcomes of the inquiry and not about a political judgment on the performance of Mayor Wolfsen. However, some Council factions elaborated to some extent on their political judgment. The critique mainly focused on the communication strategy of the municipality towards the residents of Kanaleneiland. Some of these statements can be linked to the political outcome of ‘damage.’ This link with the political outcome ‘damage’ is reinforced by the following statement; [Member of PvdA party] *“A lot of things went wrong with the communication, both internally and towards the residents, despite the fact that there were more than 87 communication professionals involved in the case.”* (Haage, 13-12-2012). Some factions also mentioned that the reaction of the Mayor on the outcomes of the inquiry was not sufficient; [Members of CDA party] *“The faction believes the reaction of the college is rather meager; this should have been done earlier and should be more comprehensive, including concerning the aftercare process.”* (Van Waveren, 13-12-2012). On the other hand, the apologies of the Mayor were well received by the City Council. In the end, most factions absolved the Mayor from blame; [Member of ChristenUnie] *“The apology from the Mayor is a good step to regain the trust of citizens and especially later it will have to become more concrete.”* (Bikker, 13-12-2012). In light of the theoretical reasoning of this research, this absolvment from blame implies that the political outcome, for this given meeting, is escape.

During the regular Council meeting on the 20th of December most factions elaborated on their opinion regarding the actions of the Mayor, some were quite outspoken and clearly focused blame on the Mayor. [Member of GroenLinks party] *“In addition, the excuses offered by the Mayor over the course of events are appreciated, including by the GroenLinks-faction. Yet I spoke harsh words towards the college last week (...) that gives the GroenLinks-faction the impression that the college is not sufficiently aware of the urgency of the matter. That feeling is not gone after the committee meeting last week.”* (De Vries, 20-12-2012). However Mr. De Vries refused to give a definite political judgment on the Mayor; *“I stick to a substantive judgment. If there is reason to do so in the second term, it will be a political judgment”* (De Vries, 20-12-2012). This political judgment never came, ultimately resulting in an escape for the Mayor. For some factions the apologies made by Mayor Wolfsen were sufficient to diffuse the blame. Those statements mainly showed indicators which absolved the Mayor from blame or blamed him to a lesser extent; [Member of PvdA party] *“The college has, on behalf of the Mayor, done what is had to do after the publication of the report: apologize for the mistakes. (...) We are pleased with the response from the Mayor and ask him about the current state of affairs.”* (Haage, 20-12-2012). The promise and intend of corrective action by Mayor Wolfsen was also well-received. [Member of CDA party] *“We feel the functioning is, as it has been, inadequate. We are happy with the response we have received tonight from the college. Which reflects the conviction that something must be done. That is firmer than it was in the committee meeting. This makes us happy. Insufficient, but up to the sufficient. Let us keep it to that.”* (Van Waveren, 20-12-2012).

Despite the efforts of Mayor Wolfsen to diffuse and displace the blame, there are some examples of statements in which indicators of factions focusing their blame on the Mayor were found; [Member of VVD party] *“On a previous occasion we have stated to have lost confidence in the Mayor. One can imagine that this matter has not changed anything. We continue with the then pronounced judgment.”* (Buunk, 20-12-2012). Not only the VVD, which already before the incident lost their faith in the Mayor focused their blame on Wolfsen, but others also agreed with Mr. Buunk’s judgment; [Member of Stadspartij Leefbaar Utrecht party] *“Those are the things I think that citizens should be able to count on. However, it was not taken care of. I fully concur with the last paragraph of Mr. Buunk. I have already indicated that the confidence is gone. These are not times when this confidence returns.”* (Oldenburg, 20-12-2012). Furthermore, the SP faction was also disappointed by the performances of Mayor Wolfsen; *Is "sorry" enough if someone has to leave his home for five months? Residents have*

said so. They did accept this "sorry." I think that's a great gesture. (...) Is "sorry" enough as once again it shows that those who control and direct are not adequately performing? Where do the coalition parties draw the line? Where does the Mayor draw the line?" (Schipper, 20-12-2012). Ultimately, the Mayor received a lot of criticism on his performance and the approach of the municipality. Table 4 shows the overall political judgment per party. In the end, the analysis shows that his reputation in the Council was damaged to some degree. However, most parties accepted his apologies and his promise of corrective action. Ultimately the crisis communication approach of Mayor Wolfsen resulted in a political escape in the City Council.

Political Party	Seat Distribution	Political judgment
GroenLinks	10	Absolved from blame
PvdA	9	Absolved from blame
D66	9	Absolved from blame
VVD	7	Blame
CDA	4	Absolved from blame
SP	3	Blame
Stadspartij Leefbaar Utrecht	1	Blame
Groep Kuijper	1	<i>Not Found</i>
ChristenUnie	1	Blame

Table 4: Political judgement City Council case 1

Media

In most columns and opinion pieces, Mayor Wolfsen escaped any severe damage to his reputation. In table 5 the results of the analysis regarding the political outcome in the media are depicted. The focus of the articles was mostly on the Mayor's (late) decision to return from his holiday and the failing communication strategy of the municipality towards the inhabitants of Kanaleneiland. A clear example of such a statement, which absolves the Mayor from blame was written in Trouw; *"Here's the dilemma. A Mayor who lets a crisis to his replacement shows that he has confidence in his people. Utrecht Deputy Mayor Isabella had daily contact with Wolfsen, who swore that he did not have to come back. But Wolfsen was accused of lack of commitment and was certainly not visible. The longer it lasts, the harder it is to return. And then a Mayor, with all the other issues, must also explain why his presence was not necessary first, but now it is."* (Trouw, 26-07-2012), is a clear example of an article absolving blame towards the Mayor. In general, most items showed understanding for the rapid decision to evacuate Kanaleneiland, but were questioning the actual threat of asbestos; they, however, acknowledged that it was tough to handle such situations since people have strong emotions towards such incidents. These statements were also qualified as having the political outcome of

‘escape’ for Mayor Wolfsen; *“The communication of the city of Utrecht towards its citizens could have been better, as Deputy Mayor Isabella admitted. However, the municipality had to act quickly when new measurements showed unexpectedly high concentrations of asbestos. In such cases, authorities can hardly do any good. Who rapidly takes the decision to evacuate, can quickly get accused of sowing panic. Who waits, is blamed for bringing the health of citizens at risk.”* (Volkskrant, 27-07-2012).

	Blame	Absolved from Blame	Praise and Support
Volkskrant	1	2	-
NRC Handelsblad	-	4	-
Trouw	-	2	-
De Telegraaf	-	-	-
Algemeen Dagblad	-	-	-

Table 5: Political judgment Media case 1

4.1.3 Conclusion

With his crisis communication strategy Mayor Wolfsen acknowledged the significance of the event. This stance, according to Boin et al. (2009) deems the event to be a critical threat. Wolfsen defended the agents and existing policies of the status quo against criticism. With his communication strategy of corrective action and apology Wolfsen tried to make the City Council absolve him of blame for the crisis. By adopting this communication strategy he made use of frame type 2: crisis as threat. When the inquiry report was presented, Wolfsen proactively accepted partial responsibility for the crisis with his apology. According to Boin et al. (2009) elite escape is likely when the incumbents accept responsibility and critics absolved the officeholder of blame. Wolfsen successfully dissolved the blame with his promise of corrective action. Although the City Council was divided on their political judgment he escaped any severe damage. In the media most articles did not severely damage the reputation of the Mayor, the political outcome concerning the media is also escape.

Crisis Communication Strategy:	Mix of corrective action and apology
Crisis Frame:	Frame 2: Crisis as threat
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 6: Outcome of mini-crisis case 1

4.2 Case 2: The housing of Benno L. in Leiden

In January 2014, the Mayor of Leiden, Henri Lenferink, decided to help the public prosecution service with honoring their request to find a residence for Benno L., a known sex offender in the Netherlands (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2015: 47). Due to the sensitivity of the topic; the relocation of sex offenders that served their sentence, Mayor Lenferink decided only to inform a small group of public servants working at the municipality of Leiden about the operation.

On the 14th of February, two journalists asked for an interview with Mayor Lenferink; they knew Benno L. lived in Leiden. The Mayor decided to explain his side of the story and cooperated with the reporters, giving them an interview. The meeting would form the basis of the article that was published the next day (Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2015: 49). The next day, Saturday the 15th of February, NRC Handelsblad revealed that Benno L. lived in Leiden (nrc.nl, 2014a). This revelation was immediately big news, residents of the city of Leiden are outraged, and even people from outside the municipality interfere with the situation. Both the people of Leiden and the City Council were indignant that they were not informed about the housing of Benno L. The housing of the convicted sex offender created a mini-crisis for the Mayor of Leiden. A mini-crisis that emerged due to his decision to help Benno L. Below, figure 6 shows an overall course of the mini-crisis.

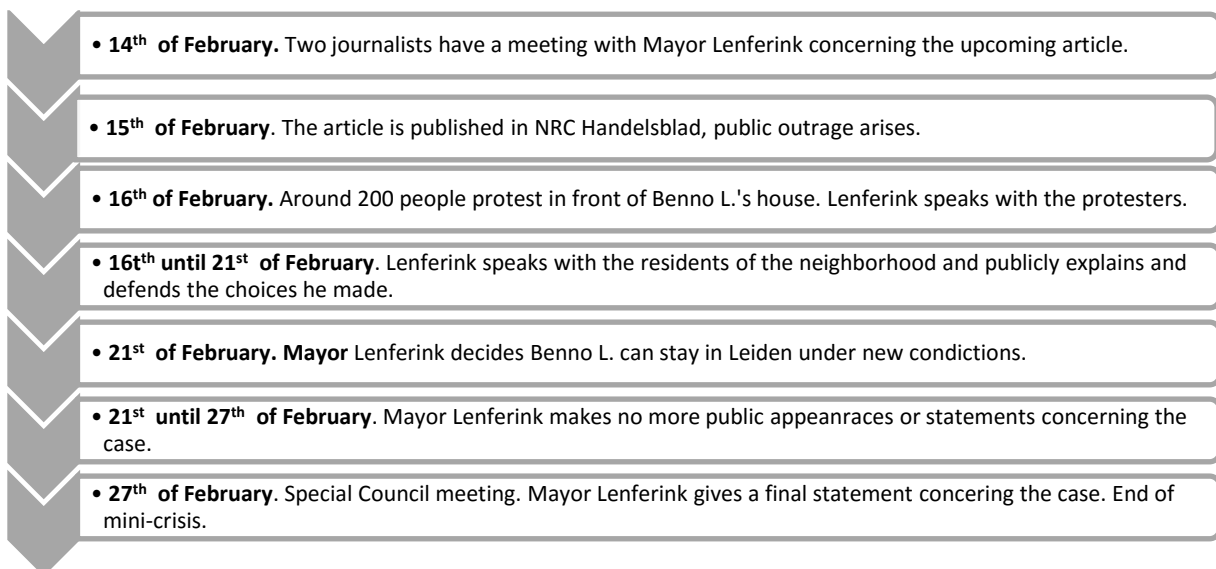


Figure 6: Chronological order of events Case 2

4.2.1 Crisis Communication Strategy used by Mayor Lenferink

Throughout the whole mini-crisis, Mayor Lenferink used a crisis communication strategy which remained the same for almost the entire mini-crisis. Table 7 shows the strong representation of justification and ingratiation in the coded data. In the beginning, there were some small signs he framed the situation as no-crisis, using the argument Leiden did not have a choice to house Benno L. due to the difficult issue of housing convicted sex offenders, which can be indicated as 'excuse', trying to minimize the organization's responsibility for the crisis. But throughout the whole mini-crisis the strategy of justification and ingratiation was most abundant. From the start of the mini-crisis the communication towards the Council and the residents of the neighborhood in particular, and the other inhabitants of Leiden was about explaining why the choice was made minimizing the perceived damage associated with the crisis. Lenferink's communication strategy showed a lot of ingratiation, directly from the beginning. In combination with showing his understanding towards the residents and organizing a lot of meetings with people in which Lenferink emphasized the fact he understood their problems and that he was willing to talk about what happened. During the Council debate and the interviews on the 27th of February some statements could be seen as an apology for certain aspects in his approach, but Lenferink never made an apology concerning the housing of Benno L. in Leiden or keeping it a secret. Addressing the problem to be a nation-wide issue and calling for a national discussion was an attack of the status quo. However, this communication strategy was only propagated to the national media, not the city of Leiden itself and was in the end not predominant. With this call he could also have tried to exogenize the cause of the crisis by making it a national problem instead of a problem of the city of Leiden. The conclusion can be drawn that the framing strategy clearly saw the crisis as a threat and that the crisis communication strategy acted accordingly; with the main communication efforts being justification and ingratiation.

Framing Strategy	Crisis Communication Strategy	Amount of statements per indicator	Total amount of statements per framing type
Frame 1: No crisis	Attack the accuser	0	7
	Denial	0	
	Excuse	7	
Frame 2: Crisis as threat	Justification	21	41
	Ingratiation	14	
	Corrective Action	0	
	Full Apology	6	
Frame 3: Crisis as opportunity	Blame	3	3

Table 7: Outcome communication strategy case 2

The course of this mini-crisis and the corresponding crisis communication strategy carried out by Mayor Lenferink can be divided into three different periods. The mini-crisis arises the moment Mayor Lenferink is informed by journalists that they were going to publish the story. The same day the article was published Lenferink took steps to limit the possible damage. The first thing Lenferink did was to inform the City Council with a letter about the upcoming news article and to explain the dilemma. The letter was sent on the evening of February the 14th. The content of the message had to stay confidential until the next morning. In his first statement the communication Mayor clearly included some indicators of ‘excuse’. With his letter to the Council he tried to downplay the responsibility for the crisis. Mayor Lenferink stated: *“When all Mayors would say no, we would have an unsolvable problem. I find that unacceptable. Therefore, I believe that all municipalities in the Netherlands should contribute to the solution of this issue.”* (Lenferink, 14-02-2014). By extending the range of the case not just to the municipality of Leiden, but insinuating the problem is nation-wide and municipalities have to contribute to a solution, he partially minimizes the organization’s responsibility for the upcoming mini-crisis and he tries to exogenize the cause of the mini-crisis. With his statement he tries to lift the problem to the national level, insinuating someone has to do it, which is a clear indicator of ‘excuse’. Furthermore, he takes direct action to justify his choices to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis, which can be coded as ‘justification’. The first days the crisis communication strategy of Lenferink balanced on the line between no crisis and crisis as threat, with a mix of the strategies of excuse and justification.

The next day, on Saturday the 15th of February, NRC Handelsblad publishes the news article (nrc.nl, 2014a). Public unrest and outrage immediately broke out. Not only residents of the neighborhood and the city of Leiden voiced their opinion, but the news causes everyone in The Netherlands to have a view on the matter. This immediately put a lot of pressure on Mayor Lenferink to act decisively.

The same day, during a meeting with residents of the neighborhood, the Mayor listens to the people and explains the reasons of why he made his choice. Afterward, Lenferink gave several interviews to press agencies to explain what was spoken about during the meeting. Besides excuse and justification, ingratiation shows to be an important element in the crisis communication strategy during the start of the mini-crisis. By showing his affection to the public, clear examples of ingratiation could be classified; *“We immediately sent a letter to residents in which they were invited to a meeting so that they could speak with me and so that they could hear why I did this, what the background is, and where they can ask questions how we should deal with it. And that is what we think is needed for this.”* (Lenferink, 15-02-2014a). By stating *“That commotion we expected, of course, that was one of the reasons to do it as we have done.”* (Lenferink, 15-02-2014a), Lenferink tries to justify the decision he made to house Benno L. This statement is a clear indicator of justification. Moreover, by also stating; *“I find Leiden has a responsibility, (...) and now we have taken our responsibility”* (Lenferink, 15-02-2014a), Lenferink puts an emphasis on the responsibility the city has; as a result he strengthens his efforts of justification even more. With this strategy, Mayor Lenferink probably tries to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis. An obvious example of minimizing the perceived damage is his explanation on the reason to keep the housing a secret; *“We thought it was better for the neighborhood, and the person itself, to make everything run smoothly, that this would not be known.”* (Lenferink, 15-02-2014a). Moreover, by publicly bringing the matter to a national level Lenferink seized the opportunity to start a national discussion about the problem. *“Furthermore, I hope this prompts the opening of a debate at the national level; how do we deal with these issues? Surely we cannot forbid access everywhere because then we do not solve anything.”* (Lenferink, 15-02-2014a). With his call for a nation-wide discussion on the problem, Lenferink blames the status quo, an indicator of frame type 3: crisis as opportunity. Overall the statement Mayor Lenferink made to the public is about the same as the letter he wrote to the Council, with the only difference that towards the public he clearly communicates his concern and willingness for discussion. Tending more towards a strategy of ingratiation than excuse.

However, despite the efforts of containing the social unrest that arose on Saturday, the following day about 200 people protested against the presence of Benno L. in front of his house (nrc.nl, 2014b). Towards the residents of Leiden and particularly of the neighborhood where Benno L. lives the primary focus of the communication strategy of ingratiation and justification remains. All residents residing in the area received a letter of the municipality in which Mayor Lenferink stated he understood the feelings of the people. The statement showed several indicators of ingratiation; *“I understand the concerns and anger of people and have been on site to speak to them.”* (Lenferink 16-02-2014a). Lenferink explained what he also had told in his letter to the Council and what he had explained during the meeting with the neighborhood the day before, namely that Leiden had the responsibility to offer housing to Benno L. and the reasons why he did not inform the neighborhood about his presence. Besides indicators of ingratiation, justification was also the narrative of his story. Justifying his decision he stated; *“There is a taboo on the housing of sex offenders, and that is the reason that I have not informed the community in advance.”* (Lenferink 16-02-2014a). In a second letter that was sent to the City Council that day, the strategy of excuse and justification are predominant. Attacking the status quo to start a discussion about what to do with convicted sex-offenders takes a less dominant role in the overall communication strategy. The content of this letter was to a great extent the same as the letter that was sent to the residents in the neighborhood of Benno L. The letter explained the decision to house Benno L. was well-considered and that the risks were small, justifying his decision; *“I have been very well informed about the conditions attached to his parole by the probation service and the public prosecutor, and about the risks that might be associated with it.”* (Lenferink 16-02-2014b). Furthermore, Lenferink emphasizes that communicating with the residents of Leiden, an indicator of ingratiation, is one of his top priorities; *“I understand that the news about Mr. L. evokes strong emotions in the city. That is inevitable, and I am very aware. I find it necessary to talk personally with as many people as possible.”* (Lenferink 16-02-2014b). From the beginning of the mini-crisis the crisis communication strategies remained consistent.

The rest of the week Lenferink appeared on several television shows and continued to organize meetings with residents. His communication strategy remained the same as it was since the 14th of February, namely a mix of justification and ingratiation. During a television performance on the 17th of February, Lenferink stated: *“When Benno L. would make a mistake here, I can no longer be Mayor.”* (Lenferink, 17-02-2014a). With this decision, he linked his political fate to the approach he chose to solve the mini-crisis. During a talk show, later that day, Lenferink

used the opportunity to focus on the problem as a national matter. *“The problem in the Netherlands is quite significant, and not only in the Netherlands but the whole world”* (Lenferink, 17-02-2014b). With this statement, he emphasized his attack on the status quo. But by showing that this was not only the responsibility and problem of the municipality of Leiden, his statement can be categorized as justification.

In another interview, the next day on the 18th of February, Lenferink announced that on the 21st of February a final decision would be made whether Benno L. could stay in Leiden. This statement was almost entirely focused on ingratiation of the public; *“This week we had a lot of conversations with citizens, individually but also with groups, with parents of children who attend schools. At the end of the week, we look at what factors have played a role, and we go to work with them to see if we can find a good package with which he can continue to live here or if that's not the case. At the end of the week, we will draw a conclusion from this.”* (Lenferink, 18-02-2014). Moreover, he said; *“We stand for our safety, we stand for the safety of our people, and that is our primary task.”* (Lenferink, 18-02-2014). In the meanwhile social unrest still went on. A resident of Leiden, during a talk show, issued an ultimatum to Mayor Lenferink, stating that Benno L. had to leave Leiden by Saturday 08:00; otherwise they would do it ‘in their own way’ (Leidsch Dagblad, 2014). Lenferink stated not to respond to such statements.

Finally, on the 21st of February, after an extensive consultation with the probation service, police, and the public prosecutor, Mayor Lenferink decided to let Benno L. stay in Leiden under new conditions (nrc.nl, 2014c). Justification and ingratiation remained at the foundation of the crisis communication strategy. In several interviews, directly after the meeting, Lenferink stated that; *“It's a type of risk assessment that I have to make more, and this is justified.”* (Lenferink, 21-02-2014a), sticking to justifying his choice. Overall, ingratiation was the most important aspect of his communication strategy in these days; *“I can easefully tell you; with this man it will not go wrong”* (Lenferink, 21-02-2014b). By showing he made an effort to incorporate the concerns of the community in his plan of action and stating that security is the most important aspect of this new approach he tried to make the public ‘like’ his approach. To inform the residents in the neighborhood, Lenferink wrote a letter. In his message, he lays emphasis on the fact that he put an effort in talking with the community and that he understood the concerns they had, these statements contained several indicators of ingratiation; *“In the past few days, I had a lot of conversations with inhabitants of Leiden, especially with parents of children and direct neighbors. I understand what concerns them about the safety of their children and on*

security in the neighborhood and the entire city.” (Lenferink, 21-02-2014d). Furthermore, he remained to his decision that housing Benno L. was correct; *“I remain convinced that the housing of Mr. L. in Leiden is justified and that the security due to his presence is not compromised. Moreover, to send him away from Leiden is in my opinion not a good answer to this social issue.”* (Lenferink, 21-02-2014d). After this statement Mayor Lenferink and the municipality decided not to issue any more statements to the press until the special Council meeting.

On the 27th of February, a special Council meeting was issued to have a debate regarding the actions of Mayor Lenferink to house Benno L. in Leiden. In this session justification and ingratiation were dominant. Lenferink started the Council meeting with a statement in which he gave an explanation and defended the decisions he made. He began his statement with a very clear example of justification; *“Of course, I immediately knew that this would be a severe issue. And that is why I asked some time to reflect. The estimation that the chance for recidivism with L. was not great, as I was told and as I have seen, together with the strict conditions that were imposed on him, convinced me that his housing here was safe. And so I decided to accept it.”* (Lenferink, 27-02-2014a). Lenferink kept on emphasizing that this problem was not a problem of Leiden alone but a broader issue, minimizing the organization’s responsibility for the crisis; *“I felt that as Mayor I had a responsibility for solving this national problem”* (Lenferink, 27-02-2014a). Lenferink also mentioned the decision not to make the housing of Benno L. public; he explained that he did not regret the choice itself, but that he could have done things differently; *“In retrospect I think I have taken some issues insufficiently into account when making this choice (...) I had to do that differently”*. (Lenferink, 27-02-2014a). This statement was the only indicator of apology found in the gathered data.

Furthermore, the ingratiation aspect of his communication strategy was an important part of this statement, emphasizing he remained in close contact with the community and that he understood their emotions, and was open to their ideas was one of the core parts of the speech. Lenferink explained how his approach of listening and explaining, in his opinion, was successful. *“However, I noticed, bit by bit, that my belief that the safety was not at stake, convinced, that the reasonableness prevailed. I was happy with that; I was also very proud of it.”* (Lenferink, 27-02-2014a). Finally, Lenferink concludes his speech with pointing out that he is proud of the way the city of Leiden coped with the mini-crisis. *“But I am most proud of the people of the neighborhood where L. now lives, and the rest of our good city of Leiden. That*

once again has shown that it is a city where justice and compassion are paramount. I am thankful that I can be Mayor of this city." (Lenferink, 27-02-2014a). This compliment he gives to the inhabitants of Leiden is also an example of the ingratiation aspect of his communication strategy.

After the meeting Lenferink gave an interview to the press, several statements he made during these interviews showed the ingratiation strategy was dominant. The central message of these statements was that he was proud on how the residents of Leiden coped with the situation. Lenferink stated that he was disappointed that the public anger was always ascribed to the residents, the Mayor did not agree with this and said the he felt a lot of understanding amongst them. *"What I've always found a pity is that this great anger always has been filed with the local people, but that is where I have found a relatively large understanding."* (Lenferink, 27-02-2014b). He even stated that if the situation were not kept secret, everything would have probably gone well. *"We could have made the decision public straight away, and directly inform the people about it. That had probably gone well too."* (Lenferink 27-02-2014b). Furthermore, he once again admitted he could have informed more people within the organization. *"Yeah I think when you look back it would have been wiser to make the group of people who had knowledge of the case within the municipality slightly larger. (..) I'd like to admit that."* (Lenferink, 27-02-2014c).

4.2.2 Political outcome

The political outcome for Mayor Lenferink is the sum of the judgment of the City Council and opinion pieces in the media, from which the outcome of the City Council is regarded as the most important one. The political outcome of case 2 is depicted in table 8. The days leading up to the special Council meeting on the 27th of February, and the special Council meeting itself, were assessed to determine the political outcome to Mayor Lenferink. Most judgments on the performance of the Mayor were given during the special Council meeting on the 27th of February. Concerning the City Council, most parties were satisfied with the explanation of the Mayor and the actions he undertook during the mini-crisis. Most critiques focused on the communication and the secrecy of the housing of Benno L. The actions of the Mayor during the mini-crisis itself were even praised. This praise was however not enough to classify the outcome as rejuvenation. The only faction that consistently and firmly blamed the Mayor from the beginning to the end of the mini-crisis was Leefbaar Leiden. Moreover, the political outcome in the Council was confirmed by the motion of distrust which was rejected by a majority of the Council. The media arena showed a comparable outcome. Especially his stance not to give in to the (emotional) protesters, but to uphold the values of the rule of law were well received. With his chosen crisis communication strategy Mayor Lenferink successfully diffused and displaced the blame for the mini-crisis, with no or minor damage to his reputation. Taking into account both outcomes, the eventual political outcome for Mayor Lenferink concerning the mini-crisis in Leiden is escape.

Political judgment City Council:	Absolved from blame
Political judgment Media	Absolved from blame
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 8: Political outcome case 2

Council

The day the news of Benno L. was made public, several Council members voiced their opinion on the actions of Mayor Lenferink. Critique on the secrecy of the housing within the Council and towards the neighborhood had the upper hand. The critique by most parties that gave their opinion was, however, not severe enough to classify it as focused blame; [Member of SP party] *“The Mayor could have informed us better, if needed confidentially. Nowadays you cannot keep something like that secret.”* (Van der Kraats, 15-02-2014). Other politicians showed their opinion with more emotions, and clearly focused their blame on the Mayor; [Member of Leefbaar Leiden party] *“We are very angry (...) Lenferink takes the risks something will happen to Benno L. Benno L. can live somewhere in the countryside, where there are no children.”*(Kok, 15-02-2014). However, the majority of the Councilors did not publicly voice their opinion on the matter that day. Mr. Kok of Leefbaar Leiden openly focuses blame on the Mayor for the mini-crisis. None of the other Council members publicly blamed Lenferink for the situation; they only expressed their displeasure about the course of action.

The days following the announcement the City Council did not actively voice their opinion concerning the performance of Mayor Lenferink, probably because they were awaiting the special Council meeting where they could directly debate the issue with the Mayor and elaborate on their political opinion concerning his performance. The only political party that gave several comments on the ongoing situation was Leefbaar Leiden, several members of this party publicly proclaimed their views on the case. Their statements primarily included a focused blame on the Mayor; *“That Mayor is too cowardly to simply refuse that pedo while other municipalities just did that. Subsequently, he is too cowardly to tell that to the Council and the residents. And now he is too cowardly to take responsibility for the unrest that has arisen and to just kick him out.”* (Kok, 17-02-2014). Leefbaar Leiden continued to focus blame on Mayor Lenferink during several other occasions; *“The Mayor had, without warning the neighbors or anyone else, put this dangerous predator in the middle of a neighborhood with many children. Citizens of Leiden were deliberately not informed by Mayor Lenferink about the arrival of an ardent pedophile. Allowing kids to be in great danger.”* (Sloos, 19-02-2014).

Two days before the special Council meeting would take place, on the 25th of February, De Volkskrant published an article with quotations of several Council members regarding the upcoming debate (Volkskrant.nl, 2014). The article shows that D66, PvdA, VVD, GroenLinks, SP, Stadspartij Leiden, and the Partij voor de Dieren supported Lenferink in his approach, they all absolved the Mayor of blame. Some statements even tended to go in the direction of rejuvenation; *“A brave decision”* (Keereweer, 25-02-2014) according to the PvdA faction of the Council. However, Lenferink was also criticized for his approach. Most parties agreed that the secrecy which surrounded the housing of Benno L. could have been done differently. [Member of GroenLinks party] *“It is an illusion that this can be kept secret in these times.”* (Kos, 25-02-2014). Several Councilors agreed that Lenferink should have consulted with the Council before taking this decision. [Member of Partij voor de Dieren party] *“It is a bit sneaky now.”* (De Vos, 25-02-2014). Although they were not praising the actions Lenferink initially took, they accepted how he handled the situation and did not blame him for the mini-crisis. However, not all Council factions stood beside the Mayor. Leefbaar Leiden continued to focus blame on the Mayor, they stated in the article; *“We are not interested in what the others think of it (...) it is downright dangerous, I blame him for that.”* (Sloos, 25-02-2014). The CDA faction stated they would wait until the debate to decide on what they thought about the events, *“The Mayor has acted very soloistic. I await his response on Thursday.”* (Meijer, 25-02-2014).

At the time of the special Council meeting on the 27th of February the opinions of all factions about the performance of Mayor, Lenferink remained the same as they had demonstrated a few days before. The only party which fully focused its blame on Mayor Lenferink was Leefbaar Leiden. Besides showing their disapproval in a verbal way, they also filed a motion of distrust to send Mayor Lenferink away. Mr. Sloos of Leefbaar Leiden stated; *“Mayor Lenferink of Leiden has serious problems with prioritization. Instead of making an effort as a Mayor to guarantee the safety of Leiden’s citizens, especially young and disabled children and the institutions where these children get the care they deserve, he solves the problems of Haagse Regents, at the expense of the Leidenaar.”* (Sloos, 27-02-2014). Mr. Sloos was the only Councilor supporting the motion of distrust; it was revoked without any voting. (Motion of distrust, 27-02-2014). The only party that had its doubts regarding the political faith of Mayor Lenferink, the CDA faction, stated during the Council meeting that; *“The CDA appreciates the tireless efforts of the Mayor to explain his decision after the news became known. The CDA continues to believe that this was the wrong order. (...) Yet the CDA believes that the Mayor has wronged the neighborhood and the city. (...). His mysterious and soloistic performance was*

also a risk. That should really have been done differently.” (Meijer, 27-02-2014). However, despite focusing blame on the Mayor, they did not support Leefbaar Leiden in their effort to send the Mayor away. During the whole debate, there were some minor words of praise, however within the context of the broader statements the Councilors made, there was no actual rejuvenation. [Member of SP party] *“We must not run away from the responsibility to protect all children. The Mayor did not run away for that. That is commendable.”* (Van der Kraats, 27-02-2014). The overarching message during the debate was that Mayor Lenferink should have communicated about the issue beforehand, instead of keeping it a secret, but that his strategy of containing and solving the crisis after the incident had happened was praiseworthy. The political judgments of all the parties are depicted below in table 9. Mayor Lenferink escaped any damage to his reputation, except from Leefbaar Leiden and to some degree the CDA, and slightly improved his standing by the acts he deployed to solve the mini-crisis. However, this improvement was not so significant that the political outcome can be categorized as rejuvenation.

Political Party	Seat Distribution	Political judgment
D66	10	Absolved from blame
PvdA	6	Absolved from blame
VVD	6	Absolved from blame
CDA	4	Blame
GroenLinks	4	Absolved from blame
SP	4	Absolved from blame
Stadspartij Leiden	2	Praise and support
Ontzet		
ChristenUnie	1	Absolved from blame
Leefbaar Leiden	1	Blame
Partij voor de Dieren	1	Absolved from blame
Motion of distrust	This motion was rejected without a roll call vote with the notion that Leefbaar Leiden voted in favor.	Escape

Table 9: Political judgement City Council case 2

Media

In general, Mayor Lenferink received quite some praise and support in the media for his performance as is displayed in table 10. Especially his stance not to give in to the (emotional) protesters was well received. *“Dutch society has completely lost it with her response to the trend, some thirty years ago, to open up the discussion about pedosexuality. And the worst is that hateful citizens consider themselves to embody a higher moral order than that of a Mayor who does not want to exclude any residents. It is feared that they will draw the longest straw. They pose as underdogs but can make someone like L. create completely lawless.”* (Volkskrant, 18-02-2014a). Furthermore, there was understanding for his choice to house Benno L.; *“Mayor Henri Lenferink has shown great managerial courage with his iron logic: if every municipality refuses pedophiles, they have nowhere to go. And that cannot be the intention in a constitutional state like the Netherlands.”* (Trouw, 20-02-2014). Moreover, his stance to act rationally and follow the rule of law instead of giving in to the emotions of citizens was also one of the things Lenferink got praised for. *“The conclusion must be that Lenferink has given a face to the impersonal law that other officials and politicians can use for an example: to bend with blazing passions is easy, to stand up for the principles of law and governance is difficult, but essential.”* (Trouw, 22-02-2014). Despite the substantive amount of articles that praised and supported the performance of the Mayor the political judgment by the media for Mayor Lenferink is ultimately that he is absolved from blame concerning his performance during the mini-crisis.

	Blame	Absolved from Blame	Praise and Support
Volkskrant	-	4	1
NRC Handelsblad	-	2	1
Trouw	-	1	2
De Telegraaf	-	-	-
Algemeen Dagblad	-	-	-

Table 10: Political judgment Media case 2

4.2.3 Conclusion

During the mini-crisis in Leiden, Mayor Lenferink used a mix of justification and ingratiation as his dominant crisis communication strategy, resulting in a use of framing type 2: crisis as threat. During the whole duration, Lenferink proactively and consistently applied his crisis communication strategy. Lenferink acknowledged the significance of the event and deemed the mini-crisis to be a critical threat. With his strategy of justification he openly defended the status quo against criticism and tried to create understanding for the choices he made. In combination with the ingratiation, he managed to let his critics absolve him for the blame of the mini-crisis. Boin et al. (2009) mention that if the incumbents deny responsibility and manage to be absolved from blame by their critics successfully, elite escape is likely. With his approach Mayor Lenferink successfully diffused the blame, both in the City Council as in the media, there was minor to no damage to his reputation. There were even some indicators of rejuvenation, this praise did, however, not exceed the concerns almost the whole Council had about the reason the mini-crisis occurred. In the media arena these indicators were more present, escape, however, prevailed.

Crisis Communication Strategy:	Mix of justification and ingratiation
Crisis Frame:	Frame 2: Crisis as threat
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 11: Outcome of mini-crisis 2

4.3 Case 3 Riots in the Schilderswijk

The second mini-crisis that is analyzed occurred in the summer of 2014 in The Hague. During the months of July and August, several demonstrations take place. The protests are a result of the situation in the Middle-East regarding the Palestine-Israel and the Islamic State conflict. The events took place in the city center and the Schilderswijk, a neighborhood with a lot of social problems. On the 24th of July, a demonstration was held where anti-Semitic chants were called (OmroepWest, 2014a). At the moment of the unrest, the Mayor of The Hague, Jozias van Aartsen, is on a holiday in France.

When a spokesman for the municipality allegedly states ‘no lines were crossed’ (OmroepWest, 2014a) during the protests. Because in the same article, a journalist of the weblog Geenstijl reported that she was attacked, and proclaimed lines were crossed, public outrage emerged. It turned out that during the protests anti-Semitic chants were called and journalists were harassed, however, the spokesman said no arrests were made (OmroepWest, 2014a). Almost immediately after the incident parliamentary questions were asked and the media covered the happenings extensively; openly questioning why Mayor van Aartsen let this happen and wondering if he could stay in office. The statement that ‘no lines were crossed’ was the start of a mini-crisis for Mayor Jozias van Aartsen. Below, figure 7 depicts the chronological order of events during this mini-crisis.

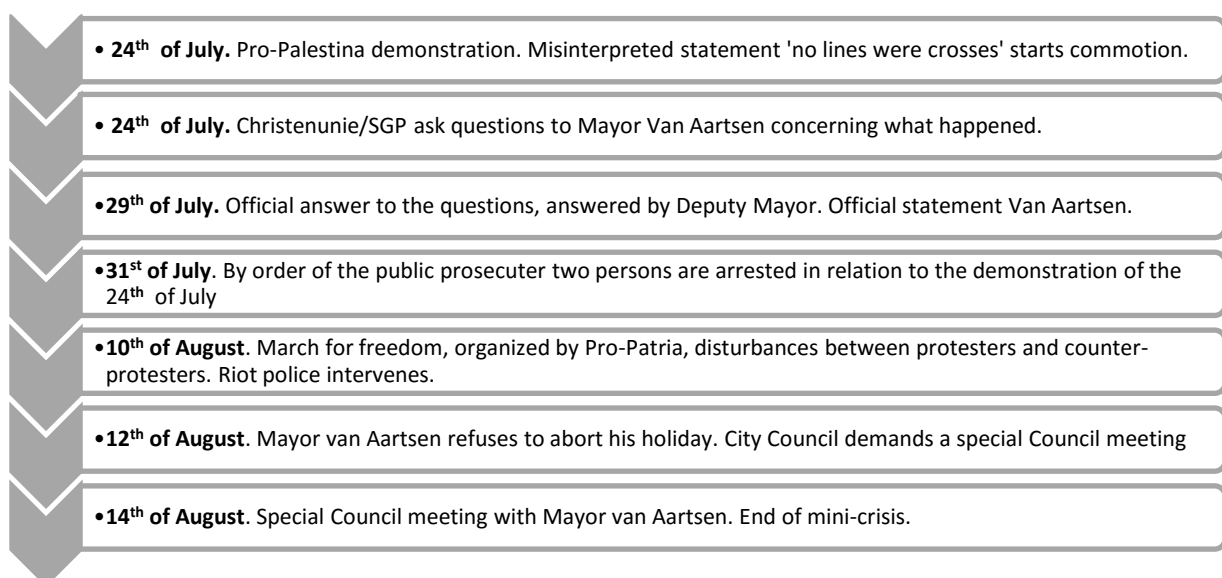


Figure 7: Chronological order of events Case 3

4.3.1 Crisis Communication Strategy used by Mayor Van Aartsen

Throughout the mini-crisis in The Hague Mayor van Aartsen denied any responsibility for the crisis. The analysis of case 3 shows a clear outcome of Mayor Van Aartsen' crisis communication strategy during the mini-crisis. Table 12 demonstrates that the combination of denial and excuse have the upper hand throughout the whole mini-crisis. During the entire mini-crisis, from the beginning until the end, Van Aartsen applied crisis frame 1: no crisis, Van Aartsen denied any responsibility for the crisis. During the entire event, Van Aartsen barely sends out any statements concerning the matter. The only moments when the indicators of justification were found was in answer to the Council questions of the SP, in which he tried to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis. Indicators of ingratiation were only found during the special Council meeting. The narrative of Van Aartsen' story was stating that there was no crisis (denial) and minimizing the organization's responsibility for the crisis (excuse). In most of his statements, the Mayor referred to the freedom of speech and the freedom to demonstrate. Continuously, he explained that it is not in the power of a Mayor or a municipality to forbid a protest only because the message of it is not well-received by others. With his applied communication strategy, the conclusion can be drawn that Van Aartsen tried to convince the public that there was no crisis.

Framing Strategy	Crisis Communication Strategy	Amount of statements per indicator	Total amount of statements per framing type
Frame 1: No crisis	Attack the accuser	1	32
	Denial	18	
	Excuse	13	
Frame 2: Crisis as threat	Justification	2	6
	Ingratiation	4	
	Corrective Action	0	
	Full Apology	0	
Frame 3: Crisis as opportunity	Blame	0	0

Table 12: Outcome communication strategy case 3

The day after the pro-Gaza protest, on the 25th of July, Mayor van Aartsen issued an official statement, he tried to downplay the situation and applied a strategy of denial. In this statement, he explained he never said ‘no lines were crossed,’ that he was misunderstood. Furthermore, he explained that freedom of speech allows people to protest, even if the message is not what you want to hear. *“The fundamental right to be able to demonstrate is so fundamental that all Dutch Mayors should ensure that people with a controversial opinion should also be able to hold a demonstration. Even if that is found offensive by others. (...) Several media have reported that hateful slogans were called during the protest. Whether that was the case, is currently under investigation by the public prosecutor.”* (Van Aartsen, 25-07-2014). Mayor Van Aartsen explains that no crisis exists by pointing to the freedom of speech and the fact that possible misconducts are already under investigation by the prosecution service. From the very first beginning frame type 1: no crisis, is applied.

The day the protest occurred the faction of ChristenUnie/SGP asked questions to the Mayor concerning what had happened. On the 29th of July, these questions were answered by the Deputy Mayor, under the supervision of Mayor Van Aartsen. Van Aartsen himself released a press statement, which was almost entirely focused on denying the event. An example of an indicator of denial is that he stated to be *“deeply moved to the unjust and unjustified accusations.”* (Van Aartsen, 29-07-2014a). The Mayor explained he never spoke about moral lines. *“Some media have wrongly given the impression that the Mayor stated that no limits were exceeded. He never did, or did someone on his authority said, that during the protests on July 24th no moral boundaries were crossed.”* (Van Aartsen, 29-07-2014b). However, despite his attempts to downplay the idea any crisis existed, the message that ‘no lines were crossed’ was picked up by the mainstream media. To the question why the police did not intervene during the protest, the response was; *“The Mayor can intervene before or during a demonstration when there is (a fear of) disorder, danger to health or a safety hazard to the traffic. During the event, there was no question of disorder and the Deputy Mayor, therefore, had no reason to intervene.”* (Van Aartsen, 29-07-2014b). *“The public order was not threatened.”* (Van Aartsen, 29-07-2014b). Again the statement of the Mayor shows he is convinced he followed the rules and that he is not to blame for any misconduct. Van Aartsen minimizes the municipalities’ responsibility for the crisis and explains why there is no crisis.

On the 10th of August, a Sunday, the organization Pro Patria organized a demonstration against Muslim extremism in De Schilderswijk. Around 200 people walked the ‘march of freedom’. During this protest disorder broke out when Muslims-youth started to throw rocks to protesters during a counter-demonstration. The riot police had to intervene to prevent the situation of escalating. It was not until the 12th of August when Van Aartsen stated he refused to comment on the protests and the disturbances and declared he would not return from his holiday (OmroepWest, 2014b). However, the Council demanded he should come back and issued a special Council meeting to take place on the 14th of August (AD.nl, 2014).

On the 14th of August, the special Council meeting took place. Mayor Van Aartsen opened this debate with a statement regarding the protests on the 24th of July and the 10th of August and all the commotion that arose around it. By asking attention for the average inhabitant of De Schilderswijk, and the impact the commotions had on their lives Van Aartsen communication strategy showed the first indicators of ingratiating; *“In this neighborhood, which has, despite everything so much potential, live more than 30,000 people. The vast majority of them are trying with all their might and with admirable resilience to make the best of it. A small portion of them causes problems, and an even smaller portion causes serious problems. I take that very serious, as you know, just like you. They are closely monitored. In that regard, we never step down.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014). Van Aartsen continued to show indicators of ingratiating with his continued support to the neighborhood, that, as he saw it, was also a victim of the situation. *“I do not want to abandon the vast majority of the well-intentioned Schilderswijkers. To their sadness, they had to see that their neighborhood was again put into a bad light in the media. They are the victims when radicals from different sides want to fight each other. I want to protect these people from this. Therefore, I have decided not to allow any demonstration in the Schilderswijk of any organization. To my delight, the public prosecutor supports me in this decision.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014). The ingratiating of the inhabitants of the Schilderswijk and the people of The Hague in a broader perspective formed the opening of the speech of Van Aartsen. Subsequently, Van Aartsen focused his statement on his performance and the accusations that during, and after, the demonstration on the 24th of July, not enough had been done. In this part of the speech, he kept to a strategy of denial by stating; *“As far as it would have been possible, this evening I probably had to say, after the defense of the applied policy; I have done it wrong, I resign. But that situation is and was not there. I’m really challenging the image that is created, on behalf of the college, on behalf of the city administration and, as I know, also on behalf of many citizens of Hageaars, Hageezen, and Scheveningers.”* (Van

Aartsen, 14-08-2014). The Mayor refuses to acknowledge any blame and keeps stating no crisis exists. He explained that action was undertaken but asked for understanding to the situation the police is in during a demonstration, minimizing its responsibility for the crisis during the protests. *“There has been action. However, during that demonstration, the conclusion that something criminal had happened was not drawn. If that would have been the case, then the police would have acted accordingly. I ask you some understanding for the situation in which the police are in this type of demonstrations. There is noise, there is traffic noise, and something is shouted. An interpreter is trying to absorb as much as possible, but then something is missed. For that, we have the video car, and we have the images.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014). Throughout his argument the Mayor continued to insist that no mistakes were made. *“Tonight you will not hear from me that a mistake has been made. If you find that an error has been made, then you should address that to me. Knowing everything about this case, I find that no error has been made.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014). Finally concluding his opening statement of the meeting with another example of an indication of denial, sticking to frame 1: no crisis.

In an answer to questions from Council members concerning the Pro Patria demonstration and the disturbances on the 10th of August the Mayor also diffused any blame. By stating that everything was taken care of beforehand and that there no signs things would get out of control, these statements were classified as ‘excuse,’ downplaying the responsibility of the organization. He stated for example; *“They did not count on any problems in advance. That was all based on information from police officers and other information that we had.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014). The Mayor emphasized the fact that clear agreements were made with the organization of the protest but that he could not forbid a demonstration based on the message they want to spread. *“Again, there were good agreements with the protesters. I mentioned them. You do see which people demonstrate, but can you say, based on the type of demonstrators: this is not allowed? You touch the principle of the freedom of expression there, no matter how reprehensible the opinion is.”* (Van Aartsen, 14-08-2014).

Two days after the special Council meeting Mayor Van Aartsen reflected on the situation in an interview with the NRC Handelsblad. The narrative of his story was that he did the right thing and that he was very displeased with the wrong media coverage. By doing so, he continued with his recent crisis communication strategy of denial and excuse. He emphasized that there are certain laws and rules which limit the powers of a Mayor when certain people want to protest against a case, and he stressed that everyone should be familiar with those standards. An

obvious example of a statement that indicated excuse was; *“Because we are getting messier in the Netherlands in knowing the rules. That bothers me immensely. We live in a democratic state in which everyone’s responsibilities are defined. So I can only prohibit demonstrations if there is a demonstrable risk for a disorder, public health or traffic safety. The right to demonstrate, no matter what unsavory types participate in them and how displeasing their message is, is a fundamental right. You have to want to immerse yourself in that, especially as a journalist. It is too often about something other than the facts. Take the editorial of the Volkskrant in which blandly was written that the silly Mayor says no limits are exceeded. Barre nonsense.”* (Van Aartsen, 16-08-2014a). Regarding his choice not to return from his holiday when the second demonstration on the 10th of August also caused a lot of fuss, Mayor Van Aartsen stated: *“It goes wrong when a public administrator succumbs for every hype or smear. I decided to let the storm rage and show accountability where it belongs: in the City Council of The Hague.”* (Van Aartsen, 16-08-2014b). By stating so, he diffused any blame for the crises by denying responsibility.

A few weeks after the end of the mini-crisis, Mayor Van Aartsen gave an interview during a talk show. The narrative of his story was the same as during the mini-crisis, a strategy of denial and excuse. He explained what his powers are during a demonstration and what he can do to contain the situation when it gets out of hand. An example of an indicator of excuse, downplaying the responsibility of the organization was the statement; *“The Mayor does not do the work of the public prosecutor but can say; please, do something. That is what I have done.”* (Van Aartsen, 01-09-2014). Furthermore, Van Aartsen focused on his role in the crisis and the witch hunt in which, he stated, he was a victim. *“But what came all over me, and I said that was more or less a smear campaign, mainly based on words I had never spoken or were spoken on my behalf, I said; I will not return.”* (Van Aartsen, 01-09-2014). Additionally, he stated: *“A public administrator should eventually respond calm, wise and with ratio on the matter. If that does not happen, then the governing in the Netherlands would become very complicated.”* (Van Aartsen, 01-09-2014). During the whole interview, Van Aartsen remained consistent in explaining why there was no crisis and kept on minimizing the municipality’s responsibility for the crisis with a communication strategy of excuse and denial.

4.3.2 Political outcome

The political outcome, in this case, is based on the judgments of the political factions in the City Council of The Hague and the media coverage in the newspapers. The days leading up to the special Council meeting, starting directly after the 24th of July when the mini-crisis started, and the special Council meeting itself on the 14th of August were analyzed to determine the political outcome. As table 13 shows, the political judgment of both the City Council and the media is that they absolve the Mayor from blame concerning his performance. However, not all political parties clearly expressed their opinion on the performance of the Mayor. The ‘Partij van de Eenheid’ did not make any statements during or before the Council meeting, and neither did the PvdA mention their political opinion regarding Mayor Van Aartsen. Regarding the newspapers, Trouw did not publish any opinion articles about the case. Overall the political outcome for Van Aartsen is escape since the political judgments of both the City Council and the media are that Van Aartsen is absolved from blame. During the Council meetings most Council members acknowledged the importance of freedom of speech and the right to demonstrate and understood the Mayor’s arguments. However, Van Aartsen also received a lot of criticism on the lack of communication and the location of the demonstrations. The PVV, SP, Groep de Mos/Ouderen Partij and ChristenUnie/SGP were openly blaming the Mayor for the mini-crisis. In the media, it was especially the Telegraaf that was focusing blame for the mini-crisis towards the Mayor, also based on the misinterpreted statement about the ‘moral lines’. Most other newspapers absolved blame towards the Mayor.

Political judgment City Council:	Absolved from blame
Political judgment Media	Absolved from blame
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 13: Political outcome case 3

Council

The day after the first protests on the 24th of July only Groep de Mos gave a reaction regarding the role of the Mayor and the ‘no lines were crossed’ statement. In their response they focus their blame on the Mayor, indicating damage; *“It’s really shocking that Van Aartsen Mayor states that no lines were crossed if several journalists reported on the internet that they could not do their work because of threats and were even transported to the police station to ensure their safety. Such ostrich behavior is unworthy to a Mayor”* (De Mos, 25-07-2014). A few days later Mr. De Jong of the PVV faction gave a statement in the media concerning the Mayor and the protests. In this statement he also focused his blame on the Mayor; *“A Mayor who is not*

acting against anti-Semitism and threats to journalists has what the PVV is concerned no business in the city of peace and justice. The Hague deserves better. There must be hard action against the ticking time bombs which pose a danger to our beautiful city. Van Aartsen does not do that.” (De Jong, 29-07-2014). Besides the two statements which focused blame on the Mayor, no other political parties in The Hague publicly elaborated on their opinion on the performance of the Mayor.

It was not until the protests of the 10th of August that the special Council meeting was organized to debate the Mayor about the issue. Lack of leadership during these tumultuous events was something that bothered the Council, and more harsh words were spoken. Other Council parties also directly blamed the Mayor for his lack of action; [Member of the SP party] *“The Mayor must act now. Otherwise, he'd better resign. That's our opinion (...) Right now a Mayor should take the lead.”* (Van Kent, 12-08-2014).

Finally, on the 14th of August, the special Council meeting was held. All the factions had different judgments on how the Mayor performed during the mini-crisis. Most of them had critique on the communication during the mini-crisis but did not openly blame the Mayor for what had happened. The PVV and Groep De Mos/Ouderen Partij were the most rigorous in their judgment and kept focusing their blame towards the Mayor. Mr. De Mos stated; *“Because of the ostrich politics, conducted from the first pro-ISIS demonstration, the situation in the Schilderswijk has escalated to an explosive powder keg. Instead of direct intervention after the first reprehensible demonstration of July 4 this year, the motto was ‘put your head in the sand’! Only now, many demonstrations more, it looks like the College of B and W slightly regains its common sense.”* (De Mos, 14-08-2014). The PVV faction was also very clear on its position regarding Van Aartsen; *“Mr. Van Aartsen is a Mayor who has lost his authority. A long time already he lost the support of the Hagenaar, the Hagenees, and Scheveningers. Walk the streets and hear what people think of the failure of the Mayor.”* (De Jong, 14-08-2014). The communication of the municipality and Mayor van Aartsen during both protests was also a point of annoyance; [Member of the SP party] *“The city, the residents of the Schilderswijk, journalists, politicians; everyone wanted to know why there was acted as was acted. Nowhere was it quiet in the city, except in the Town Hall. The violence was not rejected, there was no clear position, there were no precise measures announced; the Mayor was missed. After two demonstrations it remained silent. From Sunday to today, we have heard nothing from the college: information officers who would not react for the camera, no one with a clear story*

where the city could get hope from and in the first instance the Mayor announced that he would not return. (...) Therefore, the severe critique was justified. I ask the Mayor to reflect thereon.” (Van Kent, 14-08-2014). All the statements made by these three Council factions were classified as blame since the statement clearly show indicators of a focused blame towards the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis.

However, not all political factions were focusing blame on Van Aartsen for what happened, most of them only showed their dissatisfaction about the communication that was done by the city during both crises, and showed indicators of absolving blame. For example; *“Not only had the demonstrations themselves provided the necessary commotion. Unfortunately, the communication from the City Hall also contributed to this. Wherein the beginning quick explanations were given as “no criminal lines have been exceeded” when later suspects were still arrested, we heard no response from the City Hall after the last demonstration on August 10th. Although D66 finds the manhunt for our Mayor in the media and social media heavily exaggerated, we would be happy to hear a response from the City Hall.*” (Dander, 14-08-2014). Moreover, the Mayor got some support. A few parties disapproved of the way the Mayor was attacked in the media and by others. However, these statements were coded as escape, since no praise and support was coded in these statements; [Member of the VVD party] *“Then remains the negative imagery, whereas in our eyes there has been a tough approach. For us, the good thing about today's debate is that in his statement, prior to the debate, the Mayor has clearly expressed its views. Since the city was in need of this. We welcome the statement.*” (Wörsdörfer, 14-08-2014).

In the end, the Mayor escaped severe reputation. However, the factions requested him to use another approach in the future. Although these statements were classified as absolving blame; [Member of Groep van der Helm part] *“The witch hunt that has been caused through the weeks towards the Mayor and also for the police, are, therefore, I think, not rightly. Could it have been done better? Yes, it could have been done better. I think the communication occasionally could have been better. I hope that lessons will be learned from that. People inside and outside the city ask the Council and the college clarity. That is why this debate is quite good, and the statement in advance as well.*” (Van der Helm, 14-08-2014).

During the Council meeting the motion of distrust, requested by the PVV faction, was rejected with 29 votes against six votes (Motion of distrust, 14-08-2014). The outcome meant Mayor van Aartsen avoided severe damage to his reputation, with a subsequent political outcome of escape. All the political judgements of the factions are depicted below in table 15.

Political Party	Seat Distribution	Political judgment
D66	8	Absolved from blame
PvdA	6	<i>Not Found</i>
Haagse Stadspartij	5	Absolved from blame
VVD	4	Absolved from blame
CDA	3	Absolved from blame
PVV	6	Blame
Groep de Mos / Ouderen Partij	3	Blame
SP	2	Blame
Islam Democraten	2	Absolved from blame
GroenLinks	2	Absolved from blame
Partij van de Eenheid	1	<i>Not found</i>
ChristenUnie/SGP	1	Blame
Partij voor de Dieren	1	Absolved from blame
Groep van der Helm	1	Absolved from blame
Motion of distrust	In favor: 6 Against: 29	Escape

Table 14: Political judgement City Council case 3

Political outcome Media

During the mini-crisis, Mayor Van Aartsen suffered a lot of critique by the media on the misinterpreted statement that no moral lines were crossed. Not only the Telegraaf but also other newspaper had firm opinions which are clear examples of focused blame towards the Mayor; *“Protesters covered their face, waving black flags as support to the terrorists of IS and chanted “Death to the Jews.” Initially, silly Mayor Van Aartsen saw no harm in it, but the prosecution service, based on camera images, ended up prosecuting some offenders.”* (Volkskrant, 12-08-2014). On the next page, in table 15 the political judgment of the media is displayed. Of all the newspapers, the Telegraaf has been particularly hard in its criticism towards the Mayor. In all of their articles indicators of focusing blame towards the Mayor were found; *“The list of incidents in the “international city of peace and justice” gets longer every week: bullied psychiatric patients, fans of terror organization ISIS, who dream of a caliphate in the Schilderswijk, overt anti-Semitism, violence against journalists and protesters, with the icing on the cake extreme-right slogans. The City Council was totally invisible for weeks in the ever-*

increasing chaos. Only once a brief statement was issued.” (De Telegraaf, 12-08-2014a). The newspaper even suggested that it would be better if the Mayor resigned; *“It’s been tragic that what should be the standard practice in a liberal democracy in the city that is governed by the checkmate Van Aartsen, seems an unattainable ideal. His only chance at dignity - resignation - he has lost.”* (De Telegraaf, 15-08-2014). However, Van Aartsen his decision to forbid all protests in the Schilderswijk after the special Council meeting were well received, and some articles which absolved blame were found; *“Mayor Van Aartsen has taken a correct decision in the case of the Schilderswijk. The right to freedom of demonstration there turned into a weapon for a fight for their territory. This changes the Schilderswijk in a stage for their opinion into a battlefield for confrontations between supporters and opponents of the extremist Islamic State (IS) in the Middle East.”* (Algemeen Dagblad, 14-08-2014). Van Aartsen received harsh criticism for his performance, but since most of it came from only one newspaper he escapes damage to his reputation. Eventually, the political judgment by the media for Mayor van Aartsen is that he is absolved from blame.

	Blame	Absolved from Blame	Praise and Support
Volkskrant	1	2	-
NRC Handelsblad	-	2	-
Trouw	-	-	-
De Telegraaf	4	-	-
Algemeen Dagblad	-	1	-

Table 15: Political judgment Media case 3

4.3.3 Conclusion

From the beginning until the end Mayor Van Aartsen denied a crisis existed. His arguments focused on minimizing the significance of the event, by adopting a crisis communication strategy of excuse and denial. By doing so, he applied frame type 1: no crisis. Accordingly with Boin et al. (2009) Van Aartsen denied that the mini-crisis was more than an unfortunate incident. He downplayed the idea that the status quo should be changed or that he was responsible for the mini-crisis. Van Aartsen firmly rejected any responsibility for the mini-crisis. By explaining and emphasizing the right to protest, whatever the message might be, and that he has no right to forbid such actions, Van Aartsen could eventually diffuse the blame of his critics, despite denying that a crisis existed. Eventually, he escaped blame with only minor damage to his reputation in the City Council. In the media arena the damage to his reputation was more severe, especially the Telegraaf tried to damage his reputation. However, despite their focused blame, Van Aartsen also escaped blame from the media. As a result, the political outcome for Van Aartsen in the mini-crisis in The Hague is escape.

Crisis Communication Strategy:	Mix of Denial and Excuse
Crisis Frame:	Frame 1: No Crisis
Political Outcome:	Escape

Table 16: Outcome of mini-crisis 3

4.4 Cross case analysis

In this final paragraph of the analysis, the data of all the cases in this study is compared. The general outcome of the analyses of the three crises shows that every Mayor approached the crisis with a different crisis communication strategy. Below, in table 17, all the coded crisis communication strategies are displayed within their corresponding frame types. When looking at case 1, the Mayor used a mix of corrective action and apology as the primary communication strategy: indicators belonging to these communication strategies are the most evident in the overall communication approach, both of these strategies fall within frame type 2: crisis as threat. However, indicators of apology were only found in the second half of the mini-crisis, indicating a shift in the communication strategy. In case 2, the Mayor approached the crisis as threat, choosing frame 2 as his dominant framing strategy. In his communication strategy, indicators of justification and ingratiation were by far the most commonly found during the mini-crisis. In case 3 the Mayor of The Hague applied frame type 1: No Crisis. In the analysis of the data, most indicators found belonged to the communication strategies of denial and excuse.

Table 17 shows that the crisis communication strategies applied in case 1 and case 2 explicitly acknowledge the significance of the event towards the public, by using communication strategies within frame 2. However, with the crisis communication strategy in case 3, the Mayor tried to minimize, or downplay, the significance of the incidents. In the end, this turned out to be a sustainable stance for that particular situation. Boin et al. (2009) clearly state that the tipping point between frame 1 and frame 2 is not fixed or recognizable because of all the different influential factors. All three crisis show in a greater or lesser extent that the very first response to the mini-crisis is one that tends to 'excuse'. However, when the mini-crisis developed, the communication strategies were adjusted. This was most clearly visible in case 1 and case 2. By the use of the framework of Coombs (1998) it becomes visible that crisis communications strategies shift, not only between frames, but also within the frames itself. Moreover, the consistency of communication strategies becomes more visible, especially when the communication strategy is compared with the timeframe in which the mini-crisis occurred. In case 1 for example a shift from ingratiation and corrective action to corrective action and full apology is clearly visible. In the first half of the mini-crisis no apologies were made, only until the inquiry report was published it became a part of the communication strategies.

Framing Strategy	Crisis Communication Strategy	Case 1: Utrecht	Case 2: Leiden	Case 3: The Hague	Defensive	
					Accommodative	
Frame 1: No crisis	Attack the accuser	1	0	1		
	Denial	0	0	18		
	Excuse	5	7	13		
	Total	6	7	32		
Frame 2: Crisis as threat	Justification	3	21	2		
	Ingratiation	8	14	4		
	Corrective Action	14	0	0		
	Full Apology	5	6	0		
	Total	30	41	6		
Frame 3: Crisis as opportunity	Blame	0	0	0		
	Total	0	3	0		

Table 17: Outcome Communication Strategies

Another finding that emerged from the use of the frameworks based on the theories of Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998), is that an indication of the accommodativeness or defensiveness of the office-holder becomes visible within this study. Table 17 visualizes the emphasis of the crisis communication strategy per case. When looking at the conceptual model the scale, starting with defensive at the top leading to accommodative at the bottom, it is possible to classify the strategies of each Mayor to one point on this scale. With regards to case 1, it shows that a rather accommodative stance was taken, which shifted during the course of the case. Furthermore, in case 2 a more defensive position was adopted. However, it still tended to some extent towards an accommodative one. Finally, in case 3 an apparent defensive stance can be seen.

When facing the mini-crisis in case 1 and 2 both Mayors tried to some extent to exogenize the accountability of the mini-crisis by stating the problem was not only a problem of their municipality but a national problem. Both Mayors called for action on a national level during their mini-crises where in case 2 this happened with more emphasize then in case 1. As argued by Boin et al. (2009) actors using frame type 2 generally try to exogenize the cause of the crisis. However, in case 3, Mayor Van Aartsen also sought to exogenize accountability for the crisis by stating that it was not a task of the Mayor to forbid protests beforehand because the message the protesters want to propagate is not a popular one. He did this in combination with downplaying the idea there was a crisis.

The different crisis communication approaches all resulted in the same outcome, in all three cases, the political outcome was escape. Table 18 depicts the various political judgments per case regarding the City Council and the Media. The five analyzed newspapers showed the same outcomes as are found in the judgments of the City Council. Overall, the articles in the media tended to nuance the public outrage that came with the mini-crises. Only in case 3 one newspaper clearly focused its blame on the Mayor, in all the other cases no specific newspaper focused its blame on the Mayor himself. Eventually, none of the Mayors had to step down or got rejuvenated for his performance. However, the amount of blame they received differed significantly amongst the three Mayors. The Mayor of The Hague explicitly rejected any responsibility for the mini-crisis with applying frame 1: no crisis. The Mayor of Utrecht partially accepted responsibility for the crisis, and the Mayor of Leiden diffused responsibility for the crisis. Boin et al. (2009) created a matrix of possible political outcomes of the political game during exploitation strategies are depicted. This model predicts the possible outcomes concerning accountability and blame. The Mayor in Utrecht probably pragmatically accepted partial responsibility for the mistakes that were made, since the inquiry report was very clear in its judgment. The Mayor probably anticipated that the Council could inflict severe damage to his reputation. The Mayors of Leiden and particularly the Hague apparently opted for a blame avoidance strategy. Both their political outcomes resulted in a blame showdown with the consequence that they escaped any serious damage to their reputation.

		Blame	Absolved from Blame	Praise and Support	Not Found	Motion of Distrust
Case 1:	City Council	4	4	-	1	-
	Media	1	8	-	-	-
Case 2:	City Council	2	7	1	-	Escape
	Media	-	7	4	-	-
Case 3:	City Council	4	9	-	2	Escape
	Media	5	5	-	-	-

Table 18: Political judgments City Council and Media

Boin et al. (2009) conclude that there is not one particular strategy that increases the chance of political survival during a crisis. However this research shows that the two Mayors with the most consistent crisis communication strategy suffered the least damage to their reputation (case 2 and 3) in contrast to case 3 where the strategy changed over time, and more indicators of other communication strategies were found throughout the whole mini-crisis. Case 2 and 3 show that the ‘spread’ of communication strategies are relatively close to each other, indicating a consistent communication strategy. In case 1 the results are more diffused, this could be an indication of a less consistent communication strategy. In the case 2 the Mayor suffered from the least damage to his reputation, and even signs of rejuvenation was coded. What was different in the approach of the Mayor in case 2 in comparison with case 1 and 3, is that besides being very consistent in the communication, the Mayor was also very pro-active in communicating his frame.

Case 1: Utrecht	Crisis Communication Strategy: Crisis Frame: Political Outcome:	Mix of corrective action and apology Frame 2: Crisis as threat Escape
Case 2: Leiden	Crisis Communication Strategy: Crisis Frame: Political Outcome:	Mix of justification and ingratiation Frame 2: Crisis as threat Escape
Case 3: The Hague	Crisis Communication Strategy: Crisis Frame: Political Outcome:	Mix of Denial and Excuse Frame 1: No Crisis Escape

Table 19: Cross Case Analysis

The overall findings of the cross-case analysis, as depicted in table 19, show that different framing types and various levels of defensiveness or accommodativeness of the communication strategy lead to the same political outcome. Despite the fact that the framework of Boin et al. (2009) offers just three types of political outcomes; damage, escape, and rejuvenation, the analysis has shown that within the political outcome of escape differences in the degree of escape and reputation damage exist. Some other factors besides the chosen communication strategy and framing type were found that could explain the differences in this level of escape. The cross-case analysis showed that a consistent and pro-active communication strategy can enhance the chance to suffer less political damage in the event of a mini-crisis.

5 Conclusion

The objective of this research was to assess how the framing strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crisis contributed to the political outcome of the mini-crisis. To find an answer to the research question three most similar cases were assessed in a multiple case study design. This chapter first elaborates on the conclusions of each sub-question and afterwards provides an answer to the research question of this research. Furthermore, the academic and practical relevance, limitations, and recommendations for future research are explained in this chapter.

What is known in the scientific literature about framing strategies in relation to political outcomes?

The theories of both Coombs (1998) and Boin et al. (2009) provide a framework in which different crisis communication strategies are distinguished. Moreover, the framework of Boin et al. provides several political outcomes of framing efforts. The theory of Coombs (1998) makes a distinction between seven different crisis communication strategies, namely; attack the accuser, denial, excuse, justification, ingratiation, corrective action, and full apology. Each one of these communication strategies can be classified to one of the framing types of Boin et al. (2009), depending on the degree of its defensiveness/accommodativeness. Boin et al. (2009) distinguish three different positions a Mayor can adapt during a mini-crisis. A mini-crisis can be framed as an (1) unfortunate incident, (2) critical threat or a (3) critical opportunity. When adapting the frame of an unfortunate incident, the office-holders denies a crisis exists. The idea that a crisis occurred is actively downplayed. When handling the crisis as a critical threat to the status quo, the office-holder actively defends the incumbent office-holders and the tools of that same status quo against criticism of others. When a crisis is regarded as a critical opportunity, the office-holders blame to status quo and its supporters with the goal to remove the status quo defender and/or change existing policies. Boin et al. (2009) qualify three different political outcomes; elite damage, elite escape, and elite rejuvenation. Elite damage happens when the blame for a mini-crisis is focused on the incumbent office-holders. Elite escape occurs when the incumbent office-holder successfully diffuses or displaces blame. Finally, elite rejuvenation happens when an incumbent officeholder receives praise and support for its performance instead of blame.

What crisis communication strategies were adopted by the Mayors during the mini-crises?

In all three mini-crises, a different mix of crisis communication strategies was used. Two cases applied frame type 2: crisis as threat. One case applied frame type 1: No Crisis. In case 1, the Mayor of Utrecht approached the crisis as treat, making use of frame type 2. As main communication strategy, he used a mix of corrective action and full apology. As the mini-crisis progressed, a shift towards a more accommodative communication strategy (full apology) was measured. In case 2, the Mayor of Leiden approached the crisis as threat, choosing frame 2 as his dominant framing strategy. With his communication strategy, he employed a consistent mix of justification and ingratiation during the course of the entire mini-crisis. In case 3 the Mayor of The Hague applied frame type 1: No Crisis. As a communication strategy, he used a mix of denial and excuse throughout the whole duration of the mini-crisis.

What political outcome did the mini-crises have for the Mayors?

In all three cases, the Mayors successfully escaped blame in the aftermath of the mini-crises. Despite that all cases showed an outcome of escape, the degree of escape differed in each case. The Mayor in case 1 suffered the most damage to its reputation, the Mayor in case 2 the least. In all cases both the City Council and the Media showed the political outcome of escape.

How do crisis communication strategies adopted by Dutch Mayors during mini-crises influence the political outcome of these events?

This study has given several insights in the influence between the chosen crisis communication strategy and its subsequent political outcome during a mini-crisis. The findings of this study have shown that of the two cases which regarded the crisis as threat, one case approached the mini-crisis in a more defensive way with a primary communication strategy of justification and ingratiation, and the other approached the mini-crisis mainly with a communication strategy of corrective action and apology. During this mini-crisis, the communication strategy shifted from a more defensive to a more accommodative stance. The last case applied frame type 1; no crisis, with a consistent communication strategy of denial and excuse. Despite the use different communication strategies, the various levels of defensiveness or accommodativeness, and the application of different framing types, all the cases in this research showed the same political outcome of escape. Thus, this study found no relationship between the chosen crisis communication strategy by Dutch Mayors during a mini-crisis, and the political outcome. However, despite the fact that the framework of Boin et al. (2009) offers just three types of political outcomes; damage, escape, and rejuvenation, this study has shown that within the

political outcome of escape differences in the degree of escape and reputation damage exist. Moreover, some other factors besides the chosen communication strategy and framing type were found that could explain the differences in this level of escape. This study concluded that a consistent and pro-active communication strategy can enhance the chance for the Mayor in question to suffer less political damage in the event of a mini-crisis.

5.1 Academic implications

With its findings, this study tried to add relevant information to the body of knowledge of crisis management in general and crisis framing and crisis communication in specific. The outcome of this research poses several implications for the existing framework of Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998). One of the most significant findings of this research concerning the framework of Boin et al. (2009) is that the chosen framing types are not static. In their research Boin et al. (2009) explain their framing types as static, once a frame type is selected, it does not change over time. In the case of the mini-crisis in Utrecht and Leiden, a change in the framing type can be distinguished. In both cases, it appears that in the very first moments of the mini-crisis both Mayor's try to minimize the organization's responsibility for the crisis, implying no crisis exists. Only as the crisis evolves, a shift to the frame crisis as threat is measured. Although the change between the two frames only happened in a matter of days or less, it could imply that both Mayors at the beginning of the crisis tried to downplay the situation, and only when they understood it was not possible, took another stance towards the mini-crisis. Furthermore, this study has shown that a shift in the crisis communication strategy, and thus resulting in a less consistent strategy, leads to a lower level of escape.

Moreover, the addition of the seven crisis communication strategies of Coombs (1998) has proven to be valuable for the analysis during this study. The combination of the frameworks of Boin et al. and Coombs made it possible to look more precise into the framing strategies of the Mayors and make it possible to notice minor shifts in strategies and stances on responsibility. The addition made it for example possible to show that case 2 and case 3 had a rather consistent communication strategy and that case 1 had a more diffused communication strategy, which also shifted within its framing type during the aftermath of the mini-crisis. The addition of the communication strategy 'blame' based on the third frame of Boin et al. (2009) could not proof its effect in this study since none of the three cases actively applied frame type 3, crisis as an opportunity, in their crisis communication strategies. The fact that the framework of Coombs has a focus on commercial organizations did not cause any problems during this study. The

framework has shown to be applicable to a public organization, and more specifically to the crisis communication efforts of a Mayor during a mini-crisis. However, the strategy of full apology has shown to be rather difficult to apply. In two of the cases, apologies were made. However, the concept of full apology seemed to be too extensive. In practice apologies were made, however asking forgiveness or taking full responsibility did not occur. It is worth considering adding the concept of apology before the concept of full apology, or change the definition of full apology to a less severe one.

Furthermore, this research found new insights in the political outcomes as distinguished by Boin et al. (2009). Despite that all the cases showed the same political outcome, a distinction between the level of escape and the corresponding reputational damage can be made. Boin et al. (2009) distinguish only three different outcomes; damage, escape, and rejuvenation. However, within the political outcome of escape, this study has shown that rather substantial differences could be classified. Therefore, this study suggests that the outcome of escape could distinguish different levels of escape, with corresponding indicators. Furthermore, since not all political escape went with the same degree of reputation damage, some other factors have shown to be meaningful for the crisis communication efforts during a mini-crisis. Case 2 and 3 have shown a more pro-active and consistent communication strategy than case 1. Case 1 shows a greater differentiation amongst its chosen communication strategies and in the end suffered the most damage to its reputation, implying that the changing of a communication strategy during a mini-crisis could enhance the chance of larger reputational damage. Furthermore, despite the political outcome being the same, the attribution of responsibility differed in all three cases. In case 1 Mayor Wolfsen, in the end, pro-actively accepted partial responsibility for the crisis. In case 2 Mayor Lenferink diffused responsibility for the crisis. Whereas in the mini-crisis in case 3 Mayor van Aartsen denied any responsibility. Since Lenferink suffered the least reputational damage, and Mayor Wolfsen suffered the most, these findings can suggest that diffusing responsibility offers the best chance to protect the reputation of the office-holder and to have the most desirable level of escape. Pro-actively accepting partial responsibility, on the other hand, could damage the reputation and result in the least favorable outcome of escape.

Overall, this study has shown that the combined frameworks of Boin et al. (2009) and Coombs (1998) can offer a tool to better understand framing strategies of Mayors during a mini-crisis, despite the fact that a relationship between the framing efforts and the political outcome cannot be given. The addition of the seven crisis communication strategies to the framework of Boin et al. (2009) creates a framework which is better able to define the framing strategies of Mayors. Moreover, these communication strategies can show differences within the framing strategies of Boin et al. (2009) and thus give an indication of the defensiveness or accommodativeness of a framing strategy. The shift in the communication strategy over time within the mini-crisis can also add valuable information of the consistency of the communication strategy and possible of responsibility a Mayor takes for a mini-crisis. However, to develop this new framework any further, a few adjustments should be made. This study has shown that the political outcome of escape could be more nuanced, and different levels of escape would add a more valuable indicator of the outcome of the framing efforts of a Mayor. Furthermore, the communication strategy of full apology could be extended with a communication strategy of apology, which is less severe as a full apology.

5.2 Societal implications

This study expected that a better understanding of the analyzed concepts can have a positive influence on the future policy of crisis management and communication concerning public leadership. The acquired knowledge from the (successful) framing strategies can be used in other mini-crisis situations. During the analysis, some practical implications were found that could help Mayors and communication officers in the future during other mini-crisis. The most significant finding is that this research did not conclude that there is a 'most successful' strategy which leads to the desired outcomes during a mini-crisis. However, some other factors have found to be important during the crisis communication efforts. Firstly, the two cases with the least reputational damage showed a very consistent communication approach, with a limited number of different communication strategies. It is likely that if an office-holder chooses a particular framing type and actively and consistently communicates his communication strategies the eventual damage to its reputation is limited, perhaps because his credibility is considered greater. Furthermore, pro-active communication also showed to be important. Directly after the occurrence of a mini-crisis the Mayor or Deputy Mayor should actively and consistently communicate their communication frame. Moreover, in the two cases that engaged the mini-crisis as threat, ingratiation was important. As a Mayor, it is important not only to speak to the public, but also to engage actively with them to create understanding and goodwill,

and in the end limit possible damage to the reputation. And as case 1 showed, when it is clear that mistakes were made, pro-actively acknowledging to be partly responsible for the mini-crisis can help to limit further damage to the reputation. In short, this study has shown that a proactive and consistent communication strategy leads to the least political damage. In the case of public outrage, the communication strategies of justification and ingratiation have shown to be the best communication strategies to limit any reputational damage.

5.3 Limitations

When conducting this research, some limitations were found that have to be addressed. The most significant limitation of this analysis is that the outcome does not imply any causal relationship. Since the number of cases is too low, no statements on causality could be made. Moreover, besides the small number of cases, the presumed influence of situational and contextual variables on the political outcome of framing efforts made it impossible to make any statements on the causality of the investigated mechanism. Furthermore, the time constraint posed several limitations to this study. Since there was a rather short period to conduct this study, due to this particular choice to limit the study had to be made. Other limitations were the access to primary sources such as public statements and interviews which were not available anymore on the official websites of the municipalities or news agencies, wherever possible this data was then obtained through secondary sources. Furthermore, an effort was made to arrange interviews with the Mayors of the municipalities in which the mini-crises occurred. However, none of these efforts resulted in an actual interview. The goal of these interviews would have been to determine the intentions of the chosen crisis communication strategy of each Mayor and to assess to which extent these were successful.

5.4 Recommendations

This research applied a new framework to conduct research into framing and communication strategies of Mayors during a mini-crisis. The framework has proven to have a potential to be of use during the analysis of other mini-crises. However, more research should be conducted into the applicability of this framework to consolidate its theoretical foundation and practical feasibility. The findings that are elaborated upon in the academic implications section should be taken into consideration when deciding to develop the framework any further.

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Appendix I Data Sources Case 1: Utrecht

Data Sources Case 1: Utrecht				
Statements Mayor Wolfsen				
Type	Date	Description	Source	Code
TV interview	26-07-2012a	Short interview with Mayor Wolfsen regarding the reasons to come back from his holiday	http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2012/07/26/wolfsen-onafhankelijk-onderzoek-naar-asbestproblemen-kanaleneiland	F2I
News article	26-07-2012b	Quote of Mayor Wolfsen declaring an independent committee will research what happened	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/onafhankelijke-onderzoek-naar-asbestzaak~a3292252/	F2C
Interview newspaper	27-07-2012	Interview Trouw with Mayor Wolfsen concerning the situation in Kanaleneiland	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4492/Nederland/article/detail/3292547/2012/07/27/Als-er-iets-gebeurt-in-de-stad-wil-je-er-zijn.dhtml	F1E, F2J, F2I
Interview newspaper	28-07-2012	Interview NRC Handelsblad with Mayor Wolfsen concerning the situation in Kanaleneiland	http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2012/07/28/er-is-wel-vaker-asbest-in-utrecht-dit-duurde-lang-1136564	F1E, F1A, F2I, F2C
News article	30-7-2012	Quotes of Mayor Wolfsen he made in a personal blog included in a news article	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/mar-12-van-89-logeerhuizen-utrecht-in-gebruik~a3293929/	F2I
News article	02-08-2012	News article with statement of Mayor Wolfsen in which he calls for a national debate concerning asbestos	http://www.volkskrant.nl/wetenschap/-utrecht-is-een-les-voor-rest-van-het-land~a3295517/	F2C
News article	04-12-2012	News article with quotes of Mayor Wolfsen regarding the results of the research report	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/rapport-acute-evacuatie-asbestwijk-utrecht-onnodig~a3357996/	F2F
Official letter	07-12-2012	Official letter of Mayor Wolfsen and the Aldermen to the City Council concerning the results of the research committee	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=41b35454-6329-4f11-b803-d7e5a6141085&ReportId=31567b82-03fd-4833-94012270e0e8ad6b&EntryId=d7d786e7-59c4-4c6d-bcf6-4beb4b425127&searchtext=	F2C
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mayor Wolfsen concerning the report	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-965502f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	F1E, F2F, F2C
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mayor Wolfsen concerning his performance during the mini-crisis pp. 18-21	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=b14b6247-aff1-4e57-97f1-9866cac20290&ReportId=ef4214d4-0179-42c7-801b-9692c7478be1&EntryId=50ea9a3e-3915-4d9f-8082-2716092f7e7e&searchtext=	F2F, F2C, F2J,

Statements City Council members

Type	Date	Description	Source	Code
New Article	27-07-2012	Reaction of Mr. Buunk (VVD) concerning the crisis and the action of Mayor Wolfsen.	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2012/07/27/onhandige-communicatie-lijkt-utrecht-aan-te-kleven-12347187	POD
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mr. De Vries (GroenLinks) pp. 3	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POE
Council Statement during Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mrs. Haage (PvdA) pp. 3-4	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD, POE
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mr. Kleuver (D66) pp. 5	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POE
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mr. Oldenburg (Stadspartij Leefbaar Utrecht) pp. 9	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mr. Van Waveren (CDA) pp. 7	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD
Statement during Council Committee meeting	13-12-2012	Discussion of the research report concerning the asbestos-incidents. Reaction of Mrs. Bikker (ChristenUnie) pp. 9	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POE
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mr. De Vries (GroenLinks) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 2-6	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD, POE

Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mrs. Haage (PvdA) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 6-9	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POE
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mr. Buunk (VVD) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 10-12	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mr. Van Waveren (CDA) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 12-13	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POE
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mr. Schipper (SP) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 14-16	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mr. Oldenburg (Stadspartij Leefbaar Utrecht) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 16-17	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD
Statement during Council meeting	20-12-2012	Statement of Mrs. Bikker (ChristenUnie) concerning the performance of the Mayor during the mini-crisis pp. 17-18	http://ibabsonline.eu/LijstDetails.aspx?site=Utrecht&ListId=20283bf6-bf36-4408-a60fd63de8b6e63&ReportId=a5446dbd-1028-422d-9655-02f151c5c7ea&EntryId=c4b95045-56ed-4e3e-a258-5c37454331b8&searchtext=	POD

Statements Media

Type	Date	Description	Source	Code
Article Volkskrant	24-07-2012	Opinion piece “Burgervader”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/archief/burgervader~a3290754/	POD
Article NRC Handelsblad	26-07-2012	Opinion piece “Zoveel communicatieadviseurs, en toch ging het opnieuw mis”	http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2012/07/26/zoveel-communicatieadviseurs-en-toch-ging-het-opnieuw-12347041	POE
Article Trouw	26-07-2012	Opinion piece “Dé goede rampenburgemeester bestaat niet”	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/5009/Archief/article/detail/3291938/2012/07/26/De-goede-rampenburgemeester-bestaat-niet.dhtml	POE

Article Volkskrant	27-07-2012	Opinion piece “Asbestaffaire Utrecht laat zien hoe moeilijk het is burgers gerust te stellen”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/opinie/-asbestaffaire-utrecht-laat-zien-hoe-moeilijk-het-is-burgers-gerust-te-stellen~a3292562/	POE
Article NRC Handelsblad	27-07-2012	Opinion piece “Onhandige communicatie lijkt aan Utrecht te kleven”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2012/07/27/onhandige-communicatie-lijkt-utrecht-aan-te-kleven-12347187	POE
Article Trouw	28-07-2012	Opinion piece “Burgemeester Wolfsen rijdt op zachte banden verder”	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/5009/Archief/article/detail/3293021/2012/07/28/Burgemeester-Wolfsen-rijdt-op-zachte-banden-verder.dhtml	POE
Article NRC Handelsblad	04-08-2012	Opinion piece “Wolfsen past niet bij het gespleten Utrecht”	http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2012/08/04/wolfsen-past-niet-bij-het-gespleten-utrecht-1138737	POE
Article NRC Handelsblad	05-12-2012	Opinion piece “De emotionele lading van asbest”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2012/12/05/de-emotionele-lading-van-asbest-12586624	POE
Article Volkskrant	05-12-2012	Opinion piece “hoe de onrust om de Utrechtse asbestflats uit de hand liep”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/archief/hoe-de-onrust-om-de-utrechtse-asbestflats-uit-de-hand-liep~a3358319/	POE

Appendix II Data Sources Case 2: Leiden

Data Sources Case 2: Leiden				
Statements Mayor Lenferink				
Type	Date	Description	Source	Codes
Letter to Council	14-02-2014	Letter directed at the Council written by Mayor Lenferink, informing the Council about the issue of Benno L.	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/document/1192412/1	F2J, F1E
Media Interview	15-02-2014a	Interview with Mayor Lenferink concerning the reasons to house Benno L. in Leiden	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zlmWCuNno8	F1E, F2I, F3B, F2J
Media Interview	15-02-2014b	News item made by Omroep Brabant, making use of interview of Omroep West, with Mayor Lenferink concerning the reasons to house Benno L. in Leiden	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vR2yMxSt_U	F1E, F2J
Information letter	16-02-2014a	Official letter to local residents concerning the situation of Benno L. written by Mayor Lenferink	http://gemeente.leiden.nl/fileadmin/files/Publicaties/Persberichten/PDF/20140216_informatiebrief_buurtbewoners.pdf	F1E, F2J, F2I
Letter to Council	16-02-2014b	Letter directed at the Council written by Mayor Lenferink, informing the Council about the current situation of Benno L. and the public unrest.	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/document/1192413/1	F1E, F2J
Media Interview	17-02-2014a	Interview with Mayor Lenferink concerning his approach. @00:00 – 00:28	http://nos.nl/video/612571-burgemeester-lenferink-staat-in-voorbinnenno-1.html	F2I, F2J, F3B
Media Interview	17-02-2014b	Discussion with Mayor Lenferink and others concerning the housing of pedophiles and specifically Benno L.	http://www.rtlx1.nl#!/rtl-late-night-301978/cdf24bd6-1b26-8afb-1dd0-08de6aaad71e	F1E
TV Interview	18-02-2014	Interview with Mayor Lenferink in talk show ‘Pauw en Witteman’ concerning Benno L. and the broader problem of relocating pedophiles @31:30-52:00	http://programma.vara.nl/pauwenwitteman/media/309555	F2I, F2J
Media Interview	21-02-2014a	Interview with Mayor Lenferink regarding the risk Benno L poses to the society	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLa9TSvzP7A	F2J
Media Interview	21-02-2014b	Interview of Mayor Lenferink by reporter of PowNews regarding Benno L @02:10	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmg4gBK1Quk	F2J
Media Interview	21-02-2014c	Interview Omroep West with Mayor Lenferink about new measures to reassure the public	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ezWvErGgPc	F2I

Information letter	21-02-2014d	Official letter to local residents concerning the further measures taken regarding Benno L. written by Mayor Lenferink	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/document/1192414/1	F2I, F2J
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014a	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mayor Lenferink @04:00-23:00	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	F2J, F2I, F2F, F3B, F1E
Media Interview	27-02-2014b	Interview with Mayor Lenferink regarding the whole mini-crisis right after the Council meeting	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvCERGT5fyU	F2J, F2I, F2F
Media Interview	27-02-2014c	Interview with Mayor Lenferink regarding the whole mini-crisis right after the Council meeting @01:38	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXpBzv_NxbQ	F2F

Statements City Council members

Type	Date	Description	Source	Codes
News Article	15-02-2014	News article with quotes of Julian van der Kraats (SP) concerning the news Benno L. lives in Leiden	http://www.leidschdagblad.nl/regionaal/leidenenregio/article26774293.ece/SP-en-Leefbaar-over-Benno-L-Lenferink-had-raad-moeten-inlichten	POE
News Article	15-02-2014	New article with quotes of Tomas Kok (Leefbaar Leiden) concerning the news Benno L. lives in Leiden	http://www.leidschdagblad.nl/regionaal/leidenenregio/article26774293.ece/SP-en-Leefbaar-over-Benno-L-Lenferink-had-raad-moeten-inlichten	POD
News Article	15-02-2014	New article with quotes of Mark Koek (D66) concerning the news Benno L. lives in Leiden	http://www.leidschdagblad.nl/regionaal/leidenenregio/article26774293.ece/SP-en-Leefbaar-over-Benno-L-Lenferink-had-raad-moeten-inlichten	POE
Media Interview	17-02-2014	Interview of Tomas Kok by reporter of PowNews regarding Benno L. @01:37	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmg4gBK1Quk	POD
News article	19-02-2014	Statement of Daan Sloos (Leefbaar Leiden) in Leidsch Dagblad concerning the decisions of Mayor Lenferink	http://www.leidschdagblad.nl/regionaal/leidenenregio/article26798183.ece/Leefbaar-Leiden-zegt-vertrouwen-in-burgemeester-op	POD
News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Henny Keereweer (PvdA) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POE
News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Patrick Meijer (CDA) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POD

News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Dick de Vos (Partij voor de Dieren) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POE
News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Pieter Kos (GroenLinks) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POE
News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Mr. Van der Kraats (SP) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POE
News Article	25-02-2014	News article asking the opinion of Mr. Sloos (Leefbaar Leiden) concerning the upcoming Council meeting	http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-raad-leiden-als-een-blok-achter-burgemeester-lenferink~a3603431/	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Keereweer (PvdA) @1:10 - 1:18	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Koek (D66) @1:25-1:32	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Kos (GroenLinks) @1:30-1:35	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POR, POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Zevenbergen (VVD) 1:35-1:140	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. De Graaf (Stadspartij Leiden Ontzet) @1:38-1:40	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Van der Kraats (SP) @ 1:43-1:49	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE, POR
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Sloos (Leefbaar Leiden) @1:49-1:51	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POD
Statement during	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Meijer (CDA) 2:00-2:05	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POD, POE

Council Meeting				
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. Keuning (ChristenUnie) 2:05-2:09	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	27-02-2014a	Extra Council Meeting concerning Benno L. statement Mr. De Vos (Partij voor de Dieren) 2:09-2:12	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/64720/Gemeenteraad%2027-02-2014	POR
Motion of distrust (motie van wantrouwen)	27-02-2014	Motion of distrust towards Mayor Lenferink on the initiative of Leefbaar Leiden	http://leiden.raadsinformatie.nl/document/1279906/1	POE
Media Interview	27-02-2014b	Interview Dick de Vos (Partij voor de Dieren) right after Council Meeting @01:00	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXpBzv_NxbQ	POE
Media Interview	27-02-2014	Interview Eli de Graaf (Stadspartij Leiden Ontzet) right after Council Meeting @03:18	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXpBzv_NxbQ	POR

Statements Media

Type	Date	Description	Source	Codes
Opinion piece NRC Handelsblad	17-02-2014	Opinion piece “Ook Benno L. moet ergens heen”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2014/02/17/ook-benno-l-moet-ergens-heen-1347379	POE
Opinion piece Trouw	17-02-2014	Opinion piece “Pedoseksuelen zijn nergens welkom”	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/3598623/2014/02/17/Pedoseksuelen-zijn-nergens-welkom.dhtml	POE
Opinion piece NRC Handelsblad	18-02-2014a	Opinion piece “Tyfushond Benno L”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2014/02/18/tyfushond-benno-l-1347500	POE
Opinion piece NRC Handelsblad	18-02-2014b	Opinion piece “Een moedig besluit van de Leidse Burgemeester”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2014/02/18/een-moedig-besluit-van-de-leidse-burgemeester-1347499	POR
Opinion piece Volkskrant	18-02-2014a	Opinion piece “Alles is gevoel geworden, vooral onderbuikgevoel”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/ opinie/-alles-is-gevoel-geworden-vooral-onderbuikgevoel~a3599368/	POR
Opinion piece Volkskrant	18-02-2014b	Opinion piece “Emotioneel pedoprotest blus je niet met zakelijk betoog vol abstracties”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/ opinie/-emotioneel-pedoprotest-blus-je-niet-met-zakelijk-betoog-vol-abstracties~a3599158/	POE
Opinion piece Volkskrant	18-02-2014c	Opinion piece “Leidse burgemeester Lenferink heeft het juist gedaan”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/ opinie/-leidse-burgemeester-lenferink-heeft-het-juiste-gedaan~a3599142/	POE
Opinion piece Volkskrant	20-02-2014	Opinion piece “Pedojagers maken het voor ons alleen maar onveiliger”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/ opinie/-pedojagers-maken-het-voor-ons-alleen-maar-onveiliger~a3600661/	POE

Opinion piece Trouw	20-02-2014	Opinion piece “Rechtsstaat kan niet zonder moedige burgemeesters als Lenferink”	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/5009/Archief/article/detail/3600448/2014/02/20/Rechtsstaat-kan-niet-zonder-moedige-burgemeesters-als-Lenferink.dhtml	POR
Opinion piece Trouw	22-02-2014	Opinion piece “Lenferink geeft de rechtsstaat smoel”	http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/5009/Archief/article/detail/3601671/2014/02/22/Lenferink-geeft-de-rechtsstaat-smoel.dhtml	POR
Opinion piece Volkskrant	25-02-2014	Opinion piece “Boze burger trekt in kwestie Benno L eens niet aan het langste eind”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/magazine/-boze-burger-trekt-in-kwestie-benno-leens-niet-aan-het-langste-eind~a3603387/	POE

Appendix III Data Sources Case 3: Den Haag

Data Sources Case 3: Den Haag				
Statements Mayor Van Aartsen				
Type	Date	Description	Source	Code
Statement municipality/news items	25-07-2014	Quote of statement made by the municipality regarding the protests on the 24 th of July	http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/07/25/politie-stelt-onderzoek-in-naar-beelden-van-pro-palestijnse-demonstratie	F1D
News item	29-07-2014a	Statement Mayor Van Aartsen wrote in a press release, original press release was no longer available	http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/2619743/Van-Aartsen-strengere-regels-vlaggen-en-leuzen-bij-demonstraties	F1D
Answer to Council questions	29-07-2014b	Answer to Council questions asked by ChristenUnie/SGP to Mayor Van Aartsen, answered by the Deputy Mayor in consultation with Mayor Van Aartsen	https://www.google.nl/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi37_Sq1_fLAhVCcg8KHZBmCJoQFghOMAg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fdenhaag.nl%2Fweb%2FwcbServlet%2Fcom.gxwebmanager.gxpublic.risbis.fileservlet%3Ffileid%3D6ce5c5af-1ab2-4959-bce3-faf5d0d9016&usg=AFQjCNGSZZQAS20R3HcdpBd7OgV8YTnQJg&sig2=fOybVg1gxd9QiPyQFZdSBQ&bvm=bv.118443451,d.ZWU	F1D,F2J
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Opening statement Mayor Van Aartsen during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 364- 365 & 400-407	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	F2I, F1A, F1E, F1D
Interview newspaper	16-08-2014a	Interview Mayor Van Aartsen with NRC Handelsblad concerning the whole mini-crisis	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2014/08/16/het-werd-een-hetze-tegen-mij-1410761	F1E, F1D
News Article	16-08-2014b	Quote of Mayor Van Aartsen concerning his reaction to the mini-crisis	http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/22972601/___Ik_overwoog_terug_te_keren___html	F1E
TV interview	1-09-2014	TV interview during PAUW with Mayor Van Aartsen concerning the mini-crisis @35:00-50:00	http://pauw.vara.nl/media/319449	F1E, F1D
Statement City Council members				
Type	Date	Description	Source	Code
News item	25-07-2014	Statement of Mr. De Mos (Groep De Mos/Ouderen Partij) to Omroep West concerning the performance of Mayor van Aartsen regarding the riots of the 24 th of July	http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/2617184/Kamer-en-raadvragen-over-pro-Gaza-demonstratie-Den-Haag	POD

News item	29-07-2014	Statement of Mr. De Jong (PVV) in news item of Omroep West concerning the performance of Mayor van Aartsen regarding the riots on the 24 th of July	http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/2619757/PVV-Van-Aartsen-moet-direct-opstappen	POD
News item	12-08-2014	Statement of Mr. Van Kent (SP) in radio interview with Omroep West concerning the performance of Mayor van Aartsen regarding the riots on the 10 th of august and the 24 th of July	http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/2628154/Haagse-SP-Van-Aartsen-moet-bij-demonstraties-de-leiding-nemen-over-de-stad	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. De Mos (Groep De Mos/Ouderen Partij) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 366-371	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. De Jong (PVV) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 373 - 379	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Van Kent (SP) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 380 – 382	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Dander (D66) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 383 384	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Grinwis (ChristenUnie/SGP) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 385- 387	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POD
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Wörsdörfer (VVD) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 388 - 389	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Okcuoglu (GroenLinks) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 392	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mrs. Koster (CDA) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 394 - 396	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE

Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mrs. Teunissen (PvdD) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 396	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. van der Helm (Groep Van der Helm) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 396-397	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Bos (HSP) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 397 - 398	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Statement during Council Meeting	14-08-2014	Statement Mr. Küçük (Islam Democraten) during the special Council meeting concerning the riots in the Schilderswijk p. 398 - 399	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE
Motion of distrust (motie van wantrouwen)	14-08-2014	Motion of distrust requested by the PVV faction	http://www.denhaag.nl/home/bewoners/gemeente/document/Notulen-van-de-raad-van-14-augustus-2014.htm	POE

Statements Media

Type	Date	Description	Source	Codes
Opinion piece NRC Handelsblad	31-07-2014	Opinion piece “Te vroege conclusie leidde tot hevige storm”	http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2014/07/31/te-vroege-conclusie-leidde-tot-hevige-storm-1405147	POE
Opinion piece Volkskrant	12-08-2014	Opinion piece “Afwachten hoe demonstraties ontsporen is geen optie meer”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/ opinie/-afwachten-hoe-demonstraties-ontsporen-is-geen-optie-meer~a3717127/	POD
Opinion piece De Telegraaf	12-08-2014a	Opinion piece “Den Haag staat in brand; Burgemeester Van Aartsen nog steeds op vakantie”	https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/results/enhdocview.do?docLinkInd=true&ersKey=23_T24026082339&format=GNBFI&startDocNo=0&resultsUrlKey=0_T24026082373&backKey=20_T24026082374&csi=168873&docNo=17	POD
Opinion piece De Telegraaf	12-08-2014b	Opinion piece “Nazi’s”	https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/results/enhdocview.do?docLinkInd=true&ersKey=23_T24026082339&format=GNBFI&startDocNo=0&resultsUrlKey=0_T24026082373&backKey=20_T24026082374&csi=168873&docNo=32	POD

Opinion piece De Telegraaf	13-08-2014	Opinion piece “Zwak”	https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/results/enhdocview.do?docLinkInd=true&ersKey=23_T24026082339&format=GNBFI&startDocNo=0&resultsUrlKey=0_T24026082373&backKey=20_T24026082374&csi=168873&docNo=50	POD
Opinion piece Algemeen Dagblad	14-08-2014	Opinion piece “Verbod op betoging is juiste beslissing”	https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/results/enhdocview.do?docLinkInd=true&ersKey=23_T24026082339&format=GNBFI&startDocNo=0&resultsUrlKey=0_T24026082373&backKey=20_T24026082374&csi=294298&docNo=31	POE
Opinion piece Volkskrant	14-08-2014a	Opinion piece “Iedere politicus weet het; sluimerstand tijdens vakantie kan je opbreken”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/politiek/iedere-politicus-weet-het-sluimerstand-tijdens-vakantie-kan-je-opbreken~a3718212/	POE
Opinion piece Volkskrant	14-08-2014b	Opinion piece “Riskante demonstratie hoort niet in volkswijk maar op het malieveld”	http://www.volkskrant.nl/opinie/-riskante-demonstratie-hoort-niet-in-volkswijk-maar-op-het-malieveld~a3718274	POE
Opinion piece De Telegraaf	15-08-2014	Opinion piece “De zelfvoldane regent blijft aan”	https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/results/enhdocview.do?docLinkInd=true&ersKey=23_T24026082339&format=GNBFI&startDocNo=0&resultsUrlKey=0_T24026082373&backKey=20_T24026082374&csi=168873&docNo=11	POD
Opinion piece NRC Handelsblad	23-08-2014	Opinion piece “Hoe zo’n kleine gebeurtenis zo groot kon worden”	http://www.nrc.nl/next/2014/08/23/hoezon-kleine-gebeurtenis-zo-groot-kon-worden-z-1414080	POE