

**Justifying military intervention:
Does military intervention reduce the public's sense of
vulnerability from Islamic terrorism?**



Figure 1: The fear of terrorism (Ditchburn 2002)

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1. The actual threat of terrorism in the West	5
1.2. Conceptual framework of key variables	8
1.2.1. Feeling of vulnerability.....	8
1.2.2. Military intervention	8
1.2.3. Terrorism.....	8
1.3. Research outline.....	9
2. Historical background	9
2.1. The Syrian conflict.....	9
2.2. Intervention in Syria	10
2.3. Terrorism in the West between 2010-2015.....	11
2.3.1. Foiled attacks versus actual attacks	11
2.3.2. The rhetoric of terrorist organizations	13
3. Literature review	13
3.1. Feeling vulnerable and the 'politics of fear'	13
3.1.1. Feeling vulnerable.....	14
3.1.2. Politics of fear	15
3.2. Military intervention	17
3.2.1. Collective self-defense.....	19
3.3. Terrorism.....	19
4. Research design, data and method	21
4.1. Research design	21
4.2. Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project	23
4.3. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD).....	24
4.4. Missing data and limits to the research.....	25
5. Data analysis	26
5.1. Results on feeling vulnerable of Islamic extremism.....	27
5.2. Results on support for military intervention	30
5.3. Support for military intervention and changes in feeling of vulnerability.....	31
6. Conclusion	34

1. Introduction

Several arguments have been made by leaders to justify military intervention: retaliation and national security to counter or prevent a threat or attack, humanitarian reasons such as the protection of civilians of another state from atrocities in the event that their own government is unable or unwilling to do so, to maintain global order and to spread democracy. However, since military action to fight Islamic extremism began, the main justification for intervention amongst Western leaders has been a collective defense motivation of fighting the terrorist threat posed by ISIL. In the recent conflict in Syria, the military intervention led by the United States (US), first implemented in August 2014, was justified by former US President Obama through the motivation that terrorists were threatening the citizens of the homeland: "...my highest priority is the security of the American people...thanks to our military and counterterrorism professionals, America is safer... our own safety -- our own security -- depends upon our willingness to do what it takes to defend this nation, and uphold the values that we stand for" (CNN 2014a). This military intervention is now mainly targeted against ISIL in Syria.

With this US-led military intervention, other Western leaders that joined took similar positions. Former Prime Minister Cameron of the UK for example, said: "The question is this: do we work with our allies to degrade and destroy this threat and do we go after these terrorists in their heartlands, from where they are plotting to kill British people? Or do we sit back and wait for them to attack us?" (The Guardian 2015). Former Prime Minister Hollande of France, following the November 13, 2015 terrorist attacks, declared: "So ladies and gentlemen, the faces of the dead, the wounded, the bereaved families, weigh heavily on my mind. This memory fuels an unwavering determination, which I know you share, to combat terrorism ... They will never prevent us from living, from living the way we want to, freely and fully, and we must demonstrate that with cool heads" (France Diplomatie 2015). German Chancellor Angela Merkel took a similar position when she talked about the threat of terrorism in Germany, she mentioned: "It is particularly bitter and sickening when terror attacks are committed by people who claim to seek protection in our country... As we go about our lives and our work, we are saying to the terrorists: 'You are hate-filled murderers, but you do not determine how we live and want to live. We are free, considerate and open.'... All this is reflected in our democracy, rule of law and values. They are the opposite of the hate-filled world of terrorism and will prove stronger than it. Together we are stronger..." (Independent 2017).

JUSTIFYING MILITARY INTERVENTION: DOES MILITARY INTERVENTION REDUCE THE PUBLIC'S SENSE OF VULNERABILITY FROM ISLAMIC TERRORISM?

By presenting terrorism as a threat to their citizens, these leaders intended to generate support from the public for military intervention abroad. This rhetoric was used often with regard to the terrorist organization ISIL, both in states that had already experienced a terrorist attack by ISIL and also by those who had not but strongly identify with the norms and values of their allies, and therefore felt indirectly threatened as well. These leaders used a rhetoric that promoted a feeling of vulnerability amongst the public, thereby justifying the need for intervening militarily abroad in order to decrease this threat. However, it remains unclear whether or not citizens of the homeland actually do feel less vulnerable from a terror attack in the event that their government involves itself militarily abroad.

Although some research has been done on how fear, concern or vulnerability influences support for policy objectives such as military intervention, it has thus far been confined to a few case studies, the most prominent being 9/11, and mostly has focused only on the US and its public support for certain actions (Altheide 2006; Clarke & Chenoweth 2006; Huddy, Feldman, Taber & Lahav 2005; Huddy, Feldman & Weber 2007). Little research has been done on whether the feeling of vulnerability amongst the public influenced the support for military intervention in the same way as other intervening states that felt threatened by terrorism. The Syrian case is especially interesting for this analysis since a multitude of actors are involved militarily in the conflict, among which there are several states who justify their actions through a retaliation to or prevention from a terrorist threat.

This research focusses on this issue and investigates as to whether interventionist actions actually have the desired result of decreasing the feeling of vulnerability for citizens of the homeland from terror attacks. The research question reads 'Does military intervention reduce the public's sense of vulnerability from Islamic terrorism?' This will be investigated by analyzing whether and how military intervention abroad against a terrorist threat (y) influences the feeling of vulnerability for citizens of the homeland (x), taking into account whether or not the nations involved have experienced a terror attack on home soil (control variable a), and whether or not the citizens were in favor of intervening before the actions started (control variable b). The following sub questions will aid in the answering of the research question: (1) 'Is there a change in support for military intervention prior to in comparison with after the intervention started taking place?' and (2) 'Is there a difference in the public's feeling of vulnerability when a terror attack has occurred in that state? For the scope of this research, the focus will be on four Western foreign state actors that are actively intervening militarily in the current Syrian conflict: the US, the UK, France and Germany.

1.1. The actual threat of terrorism in the West

Although Western leaders often choose to present terrorism as a 'threat against the West' and a threat to 'Western norms and values' it seems that this is not actually the case. The numbers regarding the 'real threat' of dying of a terror attack in the West are not suggestive of any reason for increased concern in comparison to other possibilities of dying. Even so, the public is showing increased concern for Islamic extremism and terrorism (Pew Research Center 2015b). A possible reason for the public's increased concern with terrorism and Islamic extremism is that their political leaders have invoked the 'politics of fear' by presenting the terrorist threat as a major concern for public safety within the nation thereby creating an increased feeling of vulnerability.

Looking at the numbers, the chances of dying of a terror attack are quite low in Western states. The CATO institute (2017), using all available data on deaths due to terrorism from GTD between 1975 and 2015, investigated what the odds are to die in a terror attack in their home state. They found that in the UK the annual chance of dying due to a terrorist attack was the highest of all European countries with a chance of one in 964,531. In the US this chance was already much lower, with a one in 3,241,363 chance. In France (one in 4,984,301) and Germany (one in 23,234,378) the chance of dying due to a terrorist attack was even more minimal (CATO Institute 2017). To put this in perspective: the Insurance Information Institute measured the odds of dying based on the occurrences of dying in the US in 2014 and concluded that the odds of dying by drowning in a swimming pool was one in 454,860 and the odds of dying in a car accident was one in 645 (Insurance Information Institute 2014). These occurrences are thus tremendously more likely. Yet, these threats are not of such significant concern to the public that they support the closure of swimming pools or stop taking the car because they might get killed. The reason that there is a concern to such a disproportionate extent in western states, is based on the motivation of the attacker and not the likelihood of an attack. If there were swimming pools being made by people designed specifically to kill the people who own them, then there would likely be a considerable attention paid by the government, even if that attention would be disproportionate from the metric of human casualties.

Furthermore, world-wide deaths due to terrorism in recent years, including the attacks on Western soil in 2015 and 2016 (as shown in figure 2), illustrate that it is substantially more likely to die from terrorism in any other continent than Europe and the Americas put together.

Looking at the terrorist groups that are actively involved in the Syrian conflict, ISIL affiliated groups have killed nearly 30,000 people world-wide due to terror attacks between 2012 and 2015, of whom only 141 people died from an ISIL claimed terrorist attacks in Europe and the Americas in that time period (deaths due to ISIL related terrorism in the West only occurred in France and Belgium in this timeframe) (GTD 2016a).

The states that have suffered the greatest burden from terrorism as measured by the IEP (2016: 3) are Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria. 72 per cent of all deaths from terrorism in 2015 occurred in these five states. In 2015, four terrorist groups together were responsible for 74 per cent of all terrorist related deaths worldwide (IEP 2016: 3). These were: ISIL, Boko Haram, the Taliban and al-Qaida (ibid). The countries where the public suffered most from terrorism, are not located in 'the West' at all. Between 2014 and 2015, the highest number of deaths due to terrorism, occurred in Iraq and Nigeria. These two countries comprise about half the total worldwide deaths due to terrorism that were recorded in 2014 and 2015: 29,356 out of a total of 62,141 deaths due to terrorism worldwide in those two years. (IEP 2016:14).

THE GEOGRAPHY OF TERRORISM

Terrorist attacks with at least five non-militant deaths since Jan. 1, 2015

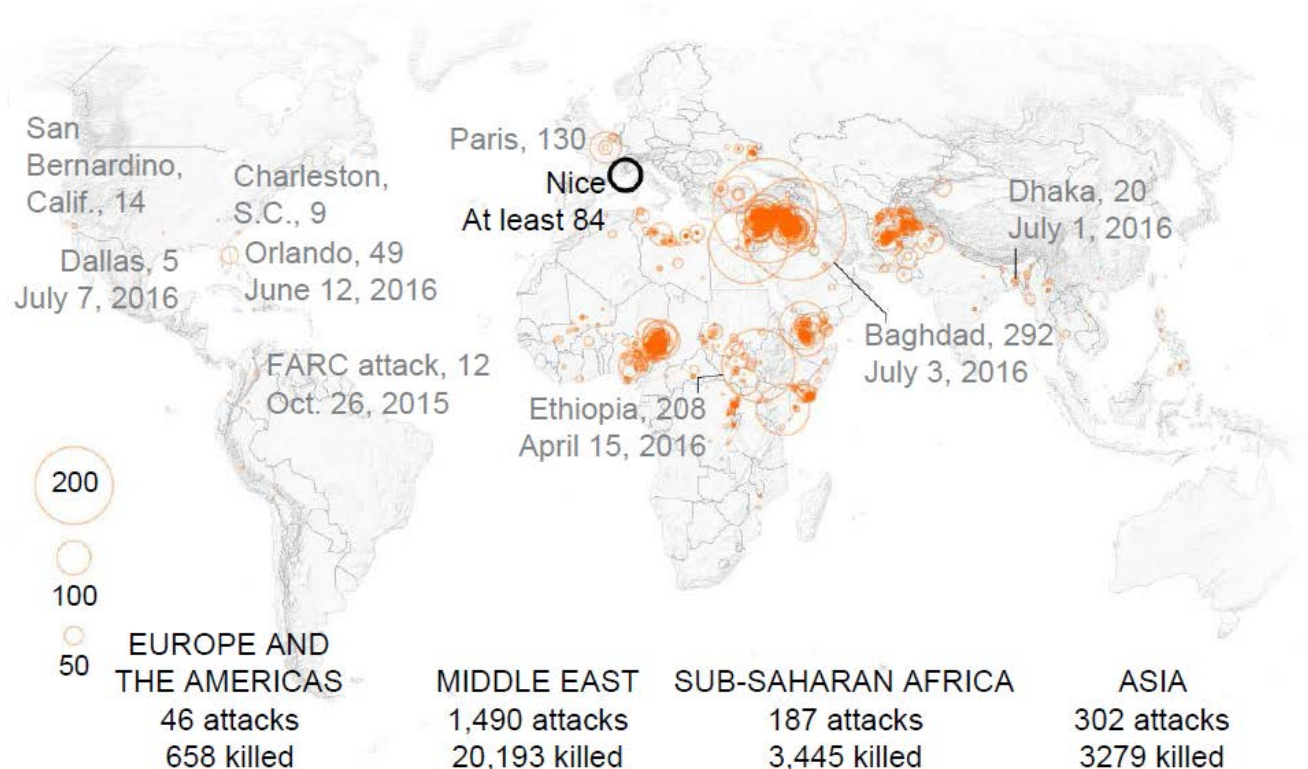


Figure 2: Geographic visual of occurrences of terror attacks since 2015 (Washington Post 2016).

Figure 2 shows that out of the number of attacks that occurred, Iraq: 2,415 incidents between 2000-2015 (IEP 2016: 25), Afghanistan: 1,715 incidents between 2000-2015 (IEP 2016: 26), Pakistan: 1,008 incidents between 2000-2015 (IEP 2016: 28) and India: 797 incidents between 2000-2015 (IEP 2016: 31), were the countries targeted most often (IEP 2016: 19). Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan were the worst hit countries in 2015. Afghanistan with 22,730 deaths due to terrorism between 2000 and 2015, Nigeria, with 17,097 deaths, Pakistan with 14,953 deaths between 2000 and 2015 (IEP 2016: 26-28). All of these attacks and deaths due to terrorism thus occurred on other continents than Europe and the Americas. In fact, compared to the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, the occurrences and number of deaths due to terrorism in the West are negligible. Based on the occurrences and deaths from figure 2, it becomes apparent that in the occurrence of a terror attack, there is a 74% chance that it will occur in the Middle East, compared to a probability of only 2% of occurrence in Europe or the Americas. This is the lowest of all the globe, since in Asia (15% probability) and sub-Saharan Africa (9% probability) the odds of a terror attack occurring are also higher than in Western states. The likelihood of dying from a terror attack is equally low in Europe and the Americas compared to the rest of the world, with a probability of 2% of death due to terrorism occurring on European or American soil compared to a 73% probability on Middle Eastern soil.

Although Europe did experience a large increase in terrorism in 2015, with 487 more deaths than the previous year, the total number of terror attacks and deaths due to terrorism were still significantly lower in Europe and the Americas than any other continent (IEP 2016: 22). This increase in Europe was essentially due to the three terror attacks that occurred in France (Toulouse, 19 March 2012; Paris, 7 January and 13 November 2015). In the US, two Islamic extremist related terror attacks occurred (Boston, 15 April 2013; San Bernardino 2 December 2015). This development does make the claim of a terrorist threat made by European and American national leaders somewhat more credible. Nonetheless, for countries other than France and the US there was no direct reason for feeling an increase in vulnerability when looking solely at the probabilities of an actual occurrence. However, this does not necessarily mean that the government's concern for terrorism is misplaced, as the number of deaths due to terrorism could also be this low because much attention is paid to it for national security purposes.

1.2. Conceptual framework of key variables

1.2.1. Feeling of vulnerability

In the literature, many different names were used to conceptualize the feeling of vulnerability, such as anxiety, sense of safety, feeling secure, perception of threat, sense of danger and feeling at risk. All of these were concepts used to describe the same issue: how the public responds to a threat (Altheide 2006; Clarke & Chenoweth 2006; Freedman 2005; Furedi 2002, 2008; Huddy et al. 2005; Huddy et al. 2007; Sheppard, Rubin, Wardman & Wessely 2006). In this research, the feeling of vulnerability will be conceptualized using Furedi's (2008: 651) argument of a vulnerability-led view of society as it "tends to regard society one-sided as a target and people as victims" with a "focus on the task of avoiding losses rather than looking for opportunities for managing uncertainty". Furedi (2008: 651) points out that the defining trait with this conceptualization is "a powerful sense of vulnerability to risk and an inflated assessment to the threat it faces". Different views and interpretations on this concept will be further discussed in the literature review.

1.2.2. Military intervention

Military intervention as it is referred to in this research is best described by Bull (1984: 1), who defines intervention as: "dictatorial or coercive interference by an outside party or parties, in the sphere of jurisdiction of a sovereign state, or more broadly of an independent political community"(Bull 1984: 1). Through this definition the intervention can still be either by force or non-forcible, either direct or indirect and open or clandestine, and the outside party can be a state, a group of states, an international organization, a political party or a business corporation; and the interference of jurisdiction can be a state's territorial jurisdiction, a state's jurisdiction over its citizens or its right for a state to conduct its external affairs or determine its internal relations (Bull 1984:1). This will be the working definition used to define military intervention as it is referred to in this research. There are many other views on military intervention which will be discussed in the literature review.

1.2.3. Terrorism

Terrorism is a widely debated concept which holds many different interpretations and definitions. In the interest of this research, the description that fits well with the concept of terrorism as it is used is as follows: "the use or threat of use of violence in order to create extreme anxiety and/ or fear-inducing effects in a target group larger than the immediate

victims with the purpose of coercing that group...” (Wardlaw 1982: 16). Crenshaw (2000: 411) points out that a distinction can be made between ‘old terrorism’ and what she refers to as ‘new terrorism’, which is “motivated by religious beliefs” that is “more fanatical, deadly and pervasive.” Whereas old forms of terrorism sought short-term political power, these ‘new’ terrorists “seek to transform the world” (Crenshaw 2000: 411). This definition of terrorism supplemented with Crenshaw’s explanation of ‘new terrorism’ best describes the type of terrorism that is focused on in this research, because Islamic terrorism is fear-inducing and violent but also religiously motivated and has the aim of global transformation. Alternative interpretations and definitions of the concept of terrorism will be further discussed in the literature review.

1.3. Research outline

To investigate whether or not military intervention reduces the public’s sense of vulnerability from Islamic terrorism, this research will start off by providing a short historical background of the Syrian conflict and the commencement of military intervention by the relevant Western states. The occurrences of terrorism as well as foiled attacks in these states will be outlined and terrorist rhetoric will be discussed shortly in this chapter, which will be followed by the literature review, where different views on the three main concepts are discussed. Subsequently, the research design, data and method will be explained followed by the analysis of the data and ending with a short conclusion of the most important findings.

2. Historical background

2.1. The Syrian conflict

In February-March of 2011, a popular uprising was initiated in Syria (Gill 2016: 354). This resulted in a civil war, which in turn continuously escalated into a complex multi-layered conflict with many different state and non-state actors involved. The Syrian government of Bashar al Assad has remained in power of the capital until now. The Syrian government is supported by actors actively involved in the conflict such as the pro-government militia known as the National Defense Forces (NDF), the Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah and Iraqi and Afghan Shiite fighters (Gill 2016: 355-356). Additionally, two states also have

military forces actively involved in the conflict in support of the Syrian government: Iran and the Russian Federation (Gill 2016: 356).

The opposition to the Syrian government is comprised of a vast quantity of diverse armed groups and local militias and can be more or less divided into two main coalitions, without including ISIL and Kurdish fighters (Gill 2016: 357). The first is an unconfined coalition known as the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the second is the mainstream Islamic opposition known as the Islamic Front (Gill 2016: 357). These two main coalitions collaborate to a certain extent although some subgroups within them have clashed with each other (ibid). Many of these opposition groups have joined in supporting, or in some cases even represented, the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) (ibid). The Syrian National Coalition has been recognized by about 80 states amongst which also the Arab League and the Western states that are the topic of focus in this research (The Economist 2013).

The terrorist group ISIL emerged from affiliates of the Al Qaida movement, which was active as a terrorist cell countering the US and Iraqi government between 2003 and 2013 (Gill 2016: 359). ISIL rapidly expanded from just being active in Iraq where it emerged, to also actively involve itself in the Syrian conflict starting 2013 where it, benefitting from the chaos and decay of the civil war, gained control over a large area of territory including Raqqa, which has become ISIL's operational headquarters (ibid).

Since August 2014, when the Iraqi government requested assistance in the fight against ISIL, a US-led anti-ISIL coalition started actively engaging by conducting airstrikes against ISIL from within Iraq, but also in Syria. The coalition members have justified their use of force in Syria by the right of either collective or individual self-defense in response to actual terror attacks. in a number of the coalition states as well as announced threats to several other of the coalition states (Gill 2016: 361).

2.2. Intervention in Syria

The US started forming a global coalition for military combat against ISIL in Syria on 8 August 2014, with an operation which is referred to as 'Operation Inherent Resolve.' This has the main focus of eliminating ISIL primarily through the use of airstrikes (US department of Defense 2017). This coalition was established as a coalition for multilateral intervention by 71 states in September 2014. The UK joined and immediately assisted the US in their leading role with these military efforts. (UK Government 2017). 23 of the 71 coalition states are directly involved militarily in Syria (Global Coalition 2017). However, because of the scope

of this research, we will only highlight 4 of these states: the US, the UK, France and Germany. France joined the intervention on 13 November 2014 after the intervention was approved in the French congress on 4 November 2014 (Gouvernement de la France 2017). The coalition was also joined by the German marine and air force on 4 December 2015 (Bundeswehr 2016). This decision was made after the terror attacks of 13 November 2015 in Paris, which was continuously decried by German leaders as an attack on 'all Europeans' (ibid). Before starting these airstrikes on Syrian territory, Germany had only been active in Iraq with training operations and supporting the Iraqi government troops with artillery and weapons, but not directly targeting ISIL themselves (Bundeswehr 2017).

2.3. Terrorism in the West between 2010 and 2015

Between 2010 and 2015 there were deaths due to Islamic terrorism in France and the US. In France, a total of 156 people died due to an Islamic motivated terror attack in this timeframe, of which four died on March 19, 2012 when a Jewish school was under attack in Toulouse, 12 died during the Charlie Hebdo attacks on 7 January 2015 and 140 people died during the Paris attacks on 13 November 2015 (GTD 2016a). In the US, a total of 18 people died from a terror attack that was Islamic extremist motivated in this time period, two of which died in the Boston Marathon attacks on 15 April 2013 and 16 of which died in the San Bernardino shootings on 2 December 2015. Another 149 were also injured in these attacks (GTD 2016a). In this same time period no deaths due to Islamic terrorism occurred in the UK and Germany. Shortly thereafter there was an increment in occurrences of terror attacks on western soil. However, several media outlets reported an even larger increase of terrorist activity when they reported on foiled attacks that were apparently planned to be executed on Western soil. The information on these foiled attacks could provide further insight into the actual threat these states are facing.

2.3.1. Foiled attacks versus actual attacks

According to Homeland Security (2017), there have been a minimum of 199 ISIL-linked plots and attacks against the West or western targets since 2013. In the US over 50 terrorist plots were foiled between 2001 (post 9/11) and 2013 according to the National Security Agency (NSA) (Washington Post 2013). Since that time, two Islamic extremist related terrorist attacks resulting in casualties occurred in the US, in San Bernardino on 2 December

2015, where 16 were killed and in Orlando on 12 June 2016, where 49 people died (LA times 2017). Both attacks were claimed by ISIL.

In the UK, it was reported that 13 potential terrorist attacks were prevented between June 2013 and March 2017 (BBC 2017). In that same time period, only one Islamic extremist related terrorist attack did take place, in London on 22 March 2017, where five died and 50 were injured (Telegraph 2017a). However, shortly thereafter, two other attacks occurred, one in Manchester on 22 May 2017 where 22 people were killed and another in London on 3 June 2017, resulting in seven deaths and 48 injured (Telegraph 2017b). All three attacks were claimed by ISIL.

Before 2015, between 2010 and 2014, the biggest terror incident related to Islamic extremism in France was an attack on a Jewish school in Toulouse where four people died. This was the only occurrence of an Islamic extremist related terror threat prior to 2015 in France. France experienced a significant increment in Islamic extremist related terrorist attacks since 2015, a trend that continued on in 2016. A total of 253 people were killed due to Islamic extremist terrorism in France between 2015 and 2016, the most significant occurrences were the 13 November 2015 attacks on Paris and Saint Denis, in Paris 93 people died and 217 were injured that day and in Saint Denis two died and 34 were injured (GTD 2017a). On November 21 2016, the French security services foiled a terrorist plot by arresting seven people who were planning an attack (Reuters 2016). Between 1 January and 21 March 2017, France foiled another five terror attacks, arresting 36 people in the process (L'Express 2017).

According to Federal Security Chief Münch of Germany, 11 terror attacks have been foiled in Germany between 2000 and the beginning of 2016 (Welt 2016). There were no major terrorist incidents in Germany between 2010 and 2015, and it was not until the final month of 2016 when an attack on a Christmas market in Berlin occurred killing 12 and injuring 16, that Germany experienced the direct effects of terrorism.(GTD 2017a).

Reporting on foiled attacks differs a lot between the four investigated states. In the US, the UK and Germany a longer timeframe of foiled attacks is presented in retrospect, while in France only recent occurrences of foiled attacks are reported on. It is unclear whether this is because more attacks are planned and foiled in the other two states, or whether this has perhaps more to do with choices of public officials and the decisions of nation leaders on what to make public and what not.

2.3.2. The rhetoric of terrorist organizations

One possible reason why the public in Western states feels increased vulnerability from Islamic terrorism is the means through which the threat to them is expressed. Two of the four deadliest terrorist groups worldwide in recent years: Al-Qaida and ISIL, have frequently expressed hostility and threats towards 'the West' in innovative and troublesome ways.

This rhetoric was already used by Bin Laden in the 90's, where the threats were mainly focused on the United States. In February 1998, Bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri, representing the terrorist group Al-Qaida, announced a fatwa that stated Muslims should kill all Americans, including civilians (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States 2004). This rhetoric of Al-Qaida was later acted upon by attacking several American embassies simultaneously on 7 August 1998 and by hijacking airplanes and attacking the World Trade Center and Pentagon on 11 September 2001 (9/11) (Constitutional Rights Foundation 2017).

In recent years, ISIL has increasingly called on aspiring jihadists to join their cause through 'lone wolf' attacks in the West (Daily Mail 2016). More than once have ISIL leaders announced they wish to "kill all the infidel" with their Jihad to create a Caliphate (BBC 2016). In September 2014, ISIL-leader Abu Muhammad al-Adnani released the first statement after declaring the establishment of a caliphate in June 2014, in which he called on ISIL fighters to "kill all disbelieving American or European – especially the spiteful and filthy French... or any disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war... then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be" (The Guardian 2014). More statements similar to this followed, calling for deaths in the US and France: "The best thing you can do is to strive to your best and kill any disbeliever, whether he be French, American or from any of their allies" (CNN 2014b).

3. Literature review

3.1. Feeling vulnerable and the 'politics of fear'

Several scholars have researched the relationship between feeling vulnerable or anxious and fear invoked decision-making, sometimes referred to as the 'politics of fear' (Altheide 2006; Clarke & Chenoweth 2006; Freedman 2005; Furedi 2002, 2008; Huddy et al. 2005; Huddy et al. 2007; Sheppard, Rubin, Wardman & Wessely 2006). Most of these scholars focused their case study on the 9/11 attacks and the various policies it gave rise to in the US. (Altheide

2006; Clarke & Chenoweth 2006; Huddy et al. 2005; Huddy et al. 2007). The exception here are Freedman (2005) who focused on both the Bali attacks of 2002 in Indonesia as well as 9/11, and Furedi (2008) & Sheppard et al (2006) who focused also on the 2005 London attacks. The popularity of this case study is rooted in the seminal nature of 9/11 and the clear shift in public opinion it gave rise to. It was the first large scale instance of Islamic terror in the US and had significant impact due to the hegemonic character of the US as a global actor with extensive foreign policy goals. However, the threat of terrorism and how it is presented by national leaders, has changed in recent years, especially in Europe. The threat of an Islamic extremist related terror attack was previously mostly expected to occur in the US, but is now also considered a real threat in (Western) European states. These European states such as the UK, France and Germany have also become increasingly involved militarily in foreign affairs.

3.1.1. Feeling vulnerable

A sense of security is the basic human necessity that concerns all forms of society, and is the primary underpinning component of the social contract between citizen and government. (Fraleigh, Garner & Shaver 2000, Mikulincer & Shaver 2003). The anticipation of a terrorist threat can render the people of a state feeling vulnerable, thus threatening this dynamic (Furedi 2008: 649-650). A preconceived threat of terror can thus influence a public's sense of security by leaving them feeling vulnerable and unsafe, causing them to feel less secure and diminishing their 'feeling of security'. Huddy, Feldman and Weber (2007: 136) argued that it is important to distinguish perceived threat from anxiety, even though the two are strongly related and that feeling anxious can lead to experiencing a higher level of perceived threat. In the research of Huddy, Feldman, Taber and Lahav (2005: 598), both anxiety and perceived threats are classified as distinct reactions to a terrorist threat. Those who endured a terrorist attack experienced high levels of anxiety and increased perception of levels of risk, resulting in them being less supportive of military intervention. This is in contrast to those who only perceived of a high threat for future terrorism who had a vast desire for retaliatory action (Huddy et al. 2005: 595). The latter is in accordance with the common governmental directive when affected by a terrorist threat: retaliation and hostility toward this threatening enemy (Huddy et al. 2005: 593). From their conclusions the expectation arises that the public's support for military action will grow when they feel vulnerable from a threat of terrorism and will decline when an actual attack has occurred.

Furedi (2008: 649) opposes this expectation, when he argues that a heightened sense of vulnerability, when the threat has become real, or when a terror attack actually occurred, can lead to cause for immediate action, especially taking into account the assumptions policy makers tend to make with regard to terrorism. According to Furedi (2008: 649), this “reigning paradigm” of vulnerability has constituted a tendency where terrorism is presented as what Tony Blair described as an ‘existential threat’. This is a vulnerability-led view of society as it “tends to regard society one-sided as a target and people as victims” with a “focus on the task of avoiding losses rather than looking for opportunities for managing uncertainty” (Furedi 2008: 651). When this tendency occurs, a state may likely consider military action more easily due to a probable increment of support for action due to the people’s heightened feelings of vulnerability (ibid). This argument presents the expectation that policy makers start considering military action after the public experienced an imminent threat or an actual terror attack and felt more vulnerable because of it. This expectation suggests that the decision of policy makers to consider military intervention is influenced by the public’s desire for action.

3.1.2. Politics of fear

An alternative view to Furedi’s expectation that the public’s desire for action influences the policy makers’ decision-making process, is Altheide’s (2006: 433) theory of the “politics of fear”. He defines the politics of fear as: “The decision makers’ promotion and use of audience beliefs and assumptions about danger, risk and fear to achieve certain goals” (ibid). He asserts that through politics of fear, attacking a target is promoted and further victimization is thus anticipated (ibid). Altheide (2006: 420) argues that “the major impact of the discourse of fear is to promote a sense of disorder and belief that things are out of control”. He identifies the notions of terrorism, victimization and crime as part of this discourse (Altheide 2006: 431). Furedi (2008: 658) does concur that this inclination of institutionalizing disaster may unintentionally reinforce a sense of helplessness and passivity, and thereby deprive a community of the opportunity to develop its resilience itself (Furedi 2008: 658). These ideas regarding how the public is presumed to respond to a terrorist attack can have an important influence on the way the threat is presented; if mass panic is expected, policy recommendations will be adjusted to that expectation (Furedi 2008: 649). The latter assumptions significantly influence policy maker’s decisions on how to respond to a terrorist threat. Because government officials dominate much of the mass media, what they discuss on the necessity of for example a military campaign or for information about the security of the

country, is “symbolically cultivated” to plant more reports and symbols about the “politics of fear” (Altheide 2006: 432). The aim of this research is to test whether this reasoning that policy makers present to the public regarding the necessity of military intervention to reduce the threat of terrorism, is actually presenting the desired result of reducing the public’s feeling of vulnerability.

Kaperson, Renn, Slovic, Brown, Emel, Goble, Kaspersen and Ratick (1988: 181-182) present a theoretical framework of “social amplification of risk.” They argue that social interactions such as those between government officials, the mass media and the public, may aggrandize psychological, social or physical effects of an incident as part of an ongoing risk communication within society. Sheppard et al. (2006: 220) build from this theory by pointing out that assumptions of panic may be counterproductive because the public will more likely change their attitudes and behavior through “internal logic” which makes them amenable to change and not prone to mass panic. They likewise argue that it is possible that the public is not likely to panic due to the terrorist threat in itself, but that policy makers, aided by media, influenced the public’s attitudes and behavior by addressing their worries in an amplified manner, as such magnifying the public’s concerns (Sheppard et al. 2006: 222). This theory on magnifying the public’s concerns does seem to hold on the topic of terrorism at least to some extent given that there is a certain disproportionality with regard to the fear of attack. This drawn in well with the problem of proportionality outlined in section one.

The uncertainty that terrorism holds due to imperfect intelligence creates a problem with risk communication that Freedman (2005: 379) refers to as “a tendency to focus on the vulnerabilities of a society rather than the intent of terrorists”. Lipschutz (1999: 17) indicates that this “paradox of unknowability” leads to a “worst case analysis” and thereby further strengthens the various “narratives of fear” through terrorism. Mueller (2006: 8), concurs with this notion, he presents the uncertainty of future terrorist threats presented by policy makers to the public as ‘overblown’ and ‘greatly exaggerated’ thereby generating support for retaliation against ‘an enemy that scarcely exists’.

Huddy, Feldman and Weber (2007: 132) argue that besides promoting protective behaviors, threats also motivate support for protective government policy. In the fabricated ‘culture of fear’, decisions are made on what Furedi calls “possibilistic thinking”, with which he means inviting speculation on what could possibly go wrong. He identifies a clear link between this magnification of threat and fear and “possibilistic thinking”(Furedi 2008: 654). Furedi argues that “what could possibly go wrong is often confused with what is likely to happen” (Furedi 2008: 653). These vulnerability-emphasizing policies harvest a sense of

powerlessness as part of the “normal state of being” (Furedi 2008: 654). The future is increasingly presented as “an unknown world of hidden terror” (ibid).

3.2. Military intervention

There is a multitude of definitions on intervention in scholarly debate, some forms of which are not considered militaristic, but non-violent persuasive measures such as diplomacy, economic sanctions and humanitarian intervention in the sense of providing aid and assistance. For example, in the form of medical aid and food supplies as a first response in times of disaster done via military means. Hoffmann (1984: 7) contends that intervention is essentially the same as international politics in general. This could be an explanation for the large variety of classifications that exist on the subject of intervention.

Finnemore (2004: 460), argues that it is important to view the interpretations of interest and meaning of action through the normative context that shapes the rights and duties of states, the goals they value, the means they believe are effective and legitimate and the political costs and benefits related to the choices they make. In this research the focus will be on intervention that is militaristic, because to achieve the desired goals forceful and coercive measures are used. This can be identified under the banner of military intervention, where the use of force is applied to intervene in a foreign state. Using Bull's definition as mentioned in the introduction, which argued that military intervention is coercive or forceful action by an actor in another state's jurisdiction (Bull 1984: 1).

According to Bull (1984: 2) intervention in general is believed to be legally and morally wrong, arguing through the realist principle that sovereignty should be respected since sovereign states and independent political communities have the right to demand respect for their jurisdiction without any dictatorial interference. On the other hand he does identify certain exceptions on the rule of non-intervention, for situations of intervention when it is justifiable using the liberal motivations for legitimizing intervention such as “at the invitation of the incumbent government”, “to defend the rights of foreign subjects of an oppressive ruler”, “on the grounds of self-defense” or “when it is collectively authorized by the international community itself through an international organization” (Bull 1984: 2).

Hoffmann (1984: 11-12) distinguishes contradictions between the rule of non-intervention and the rule of a state's right to self-determination, the rule of maintaining state sovereignty by self-help, and the rule that state governments should comply with a principle of legitimacy. Building on Mill (1869) and Waltzer's (1995) attempts to find middle ground

regarding the justification of intervention, Hoffmann (1995: 35) identifies three main arguments in this liberal debate: (1) "sovereignty is not an absolute good", as in sovereignty should be respected as long as it protects the basic rights of a state's citizens; (2) the moral good of sovereignty must be pitted against the "central moral issue" of "global humanity"; meaning human beings should be protected from violations of their fundamental rights to life and security, to guarantee this protection the sovereignty principle is superseded by this 'global humanity' principle; and (3) intervention is sometimes necessary to keep order; when there is a risk of spreading of violence, to prevent chaos in the world (ibid). Using Hoffmann's argumentation, a justification could be made that military intervention in the Syrian case, whether it be unilateral or collective, is legitimate because the threat of terrorism is a threat to 'global humanity' in the sense that a state's citizens are threatened in their basic rights and security by an actor (ISIL) that resides of foreign land.

The resort to the use of violence with foreign intervention poses various problems; the most obvious of which is the inevitable creation of civilian casualties. This often leads to resentment from the very population that was supposed to be protected (Hoffmann 1995: 43). Timing is essential, in some cases a quick and early use of force could be the best method to prevent further escalation of the crisis. Hoffmann (1995: 44) argues this is the best method in cases where massive violations of rights are being committed. In the case of Syria, the fact that the conflict started out as a civil war could be why intervention did not happen immediately in 2011, because it is generally ill-advised to intervene in another sovereign nation during such circumstances. Initially, the western states joined forces for collective intervention with the motivation of humanitarian reasons: to help the Syrian civilian population by providing them with aid after experiencing atrocities. The use of force through collective intervention did not start until many states were collectively experiencing a similar level of threat from ISIL in 2014.

Interventions can vary between unilateral, where one state actor intervenes alone, and multilateral / collective intervention, where multiple (state) actors collectively decide to intervene. Multilateral intervention is more easily justifiable in international society. Its collective nature is designed to be authorized by some international body or group and requires that multiple state actors are in agreement to intervene, thereby creating a widespread legitimacy (Luard 1984: 157). Those who are confident that multilateral interventionist action will solve problems rely on shared norms and social purpose to overcome these problems (Krasner 1983; Ruggie 1993).

Given the scope of this research, the focus is centered on the sentiment of citizens and the effect of military intervention in a foreign nation on public sentiments of vulnerability and fear. Differentiation between unilateral and multilateral intervention is not applicable here as all investigated states are joint in a multilateral intervention coalition.

3.2.1. Collective self-defense

The escalation into the use of force after being threatened by the terrorist group can be seen as a collective self-defense strategy. According to Delahunty (2006: 871), there are two interpretations to collective self-defense that are in opposition to one another. The first interpretation is an argument for a broader understanding of the right to 'self-defense'. This includes a range of circumstances where "an armed attack has neither occurred nor is imminent", and is mainly argued by the US government. The second interpretation, a more restrictive notion where it is constructed in a way that prohibits self-defense against "attacks that do not reach a certain level of gravity or whose source is not identified by convincing evidence". This interpretation is primarily argued by the international court of justice (ICJ) (Delahunty 2006: 871). Delahunty (2006: 872) argues that article 51, which created the legality to implement self-defense, was introduced due to the failure of the 'collective security' principle of the UN Charter. He argues that mechanisms such as the UN Charter, regional alliances such as NATO and so-called 'coalitions of the willing', often led by the US, are fundamentally defective (Delahunty 2006: 872).

3.3. Terrorism

Another factor that might be of influence to the public's feeling of vulnerability is whether or not a terrorist attack occurred within their homeland. Therefore the occurrence of terrorist attacks will also be analyzed in comparison with people's concern for terrorism and Islamic extremism. Crenshaw (1986: 400) has stated that: "The political effectiveness of terrorism is importantly determined by the psychological effects of violence on audiences". Terrorism is more than a narrative, it is the definition of a situation that extends beyond the present, and contains a great power of 'uncertainty', which enables policy makers to victimize the public (Altheide 2006: 432).

The overall message that different definitions of terrorism concur is that it has the intention to have an effect on a larger audience than just the group that is directly targeted and that it works through fear (Rogers 2013; Altheide 2006; Crenshaw 1981, 1986, 2000;

Wardlaw 1982; LaFree & Freilich 2016). This is argued through various definitions that hold this same notion. The original definition of terrorism that Crenshaw (1981: 380) introduces as it was defined during the French Revolution seems applicable for defining the use of terrorism as it has been experienced according to the data of this research: “the systematic inducement of fear and anxiety to control and direct a civilian population... and a challenge to the authority of the state”. This is because the terrorist attacks that occurred were most definitely aimed at the civilian population, and challenges the authority of the state by emphasizing its weaknesses in carrying out its primary role within the social contract. Wardlaw (1982: 16) described terrorism as “the use or threat of use of violence in order to create extreme anxiety and/ or fear-inducing effects in a target group larger than the immediate victims with the purpose of coercing that group...”. Rosenfeld (2004: 20) defines terrorism as: “moralistic or justice-oriented violence accomplished by predatory or ‘criminal’ means”.

The US code 18UScode§2331 identifies two types of terrorism: international terrorism and domestic terrorism. International terrorism in this definition means violent or dangerous acts to human life that are in violation with criminal law, that appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce civilians or to affect government conduct by means of mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping. They occur transnationally, transcending national boundaries by reaching other states (LaFree & Freilich 2016: 134). Domestic terrorism also involves acts that are dangerous to human life and are a violation of criminal law. They are also intended to intimidate or coerce civilians and affect government conduct by means of destruction, assassination or kidnapping. However in this case the occurrence will be nationally, within the boundaries of the state (ibid). In recent times, especially with terrorist groups such as Al Qaida and to a larger extent ISIL, these definitions have become blurred, as although the terrorist attacks that occur are claimed by a transnational terrorist organization, it is increasingly more often the case that the actual execution of the attack was carried out by local citizens that affiliate with these groups. Although Rosenfeld’s theory on terrorism is imprecise and broad, its vagueness may prove it more applicable this line of research.

Terrorists are often motivated by a certain ideology, which generally can be either politically or religiously motivated (LaFree & Freilich 2016: 134). Crenshaw (1981: 380) contends terrorism can be identified as “a form of political behavior resulting from the deliberate choice of a basically rational actor, the terrorist organization”. She also points out that the environment in which the terrorism takes place should be taken into account in order to determine the relevant context regarding political, social and economic conditions that

made it more likely to occur (ibid). There is no 'one' way to frame the motives that drives terrorists to their actions, but in all cases it is qualified as a 'crime' (LaFree & Freilich 2016: 162).

Schmid (1983: 41) argues that "terrorism is a strategy for the weak". Berry (1987: 8) argues that over-reaction is a common response when an actor is subject to either regime or insurgent terrorism. He argues that loss of public support is inevitable in such a situation, because the use of force against others will be seen as a threat to one's personal vulnerability and even to those not directly affected. As such it will be seen as a violation of the 'legitimate rules of politics'. According to Berry (1987: 17) the target's (in this research being: citizens of a state and indirectly the state actor itself) behavior is critical to understanding why terrorism works, since its purpose is to elicit a certain type of behavior that weakens this very target. He adds to this that a powerful target can best be made to over-react because it will not likely show any other weakness such as to be moderated, intimidated or deflated of its power (Berry 1987: 18). From this argument one would expect western states, which are considered 'powerful' to be more prone to overreact by unnecessary uses of force, than to show any other type of response.

4. Research design, data and method

4.1. Research design

To investigate whether military intervention has the desired effect on the feeling of vulnerability of citizens (decreasing it), a longitudinal study of comparative analysis will be made. This will analyze multiannual measurements over a variety of countries and over a timeframe of five years (2010-2015), using the survey data of the Global Attitudes & Trends research of Pew Research Center. This data is used because from the available datasets, it offered the most complete comparable information in order to determine the citizens sentiments over different years and for different states. Since the Syrian conflict started in 2011, and the civil war and military response of other nations started in 2014, the possible change in public opinion on military intervention will be measured between 2010 and the most recent available data of 2015. 2010 will be used as the baseline for the analysis, since this was prior to the start of the conflict and also prior to military intervention in Syria. To measure the change in public opinion, the results of the questions "Which comes closer to describing your view? I favor the US-led efforts to fight terrorism, OR I oppose the US-led

efforts to fight terrorism.” and “Please tell me whether you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with the following statements: b. It is sometimes necessary to use military force to maintain order in the world” (Pew Research Center 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015a), will be used to determine citizens’ opinion on military intervention; these results will then be correlated with the results following from the questions: “How concerned, if at all, are you about Islamic extremism in our country these days? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned about Islamic extremism in our country these days?”, “Please tell me how concerned you are, if at all, about the Islamic militant group in Iraq and Syria known as ISIS. Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?” and “I’d like your opinion about some possible international concerns for (survey country) to determine if citizens feel vulnerable for a possible terrorist incident.”

To answer the research question whether the feeling of public vulnerability has changed as a result of military intervention, an analysis is made of the changes in feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism and the start of military intervention. This would be in order to see if there is a significant difference between before and after the implementation of military intervention. After this, the first controlled variable, whether people were in favor of military intervention or not, prior to the intervention starting in Syria, will be investigated. Using the above mentioned questions regarding opinion on intervention to compare the results over time, with as a baseline 2010, which is the year prior to the unrest starting with the civil war in Syria (in 2011) and comparing the following years until 2015 to see if there is a significant change in the citizens’ opinion on military intervention. The second control variable: whether or not a terror attack has had influence on the citizens’ feeling of vulnerability, will be analyzed by using the above mentioned questions on vulnerability and correlating them with the registered occurrences of terrorist attacks derived from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The aforementioned states were selected, and then combined with available data on cases of terrorism with Islamic extremist motivations that occurred between 2010 and 2015. (GTD 2016a).

In the four countries that will be investigated, the total deaths due to Islamic extremism and terrorist attacks with Islamic motivation was generally not that high between 2010 and 2015. An increase in terror attacks did occur on western (European) soil since 2016. However, unfortunately there was no survey data available yet for that timeframe to be able to properly incorporate it in the research. For this reason only the data until 2016 was used. In the used timeframe there were thus only occurrences of terror attacks in the US and France,

no terror attacks had occurred in Germany and UK in the timeframe of 2010-2015. Half of the states that will be researched have thus not experienced a terror attack during the researched timeframe, and the other half has. This enables the possibility to compare whether or not the occurrence of a terror attack on home soil has influence on public opinion for supporting or opposing military intervention. A rally effect is a likely possibility as a result from this analysis, based on the theory that the 'politics of fear' did in fact have had influence on the public's support for intervention. (Jentleson & Britton 1998: 398).

4.2. Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project

The Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project is a series of worldwide public opinion surveys which includes a wide range of topics such as people's assessments of their own lives and their views on issues regarding the current state of the world and their own country. The results of these surveys are based on both telephone and face-to-face interviews and were conducted by local research organizations of each country, under the overall direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International (Pew Research Center, no date). All of the surveys used in this research (US, UK, France, Germany) are based on national samples (ibid). Error attributable to sampling or other random effects for results established through the full sample in a given country are approximately the margin of error, one can say with 95% confidence (Pew Research Center: no date). The sample size, margin of error and sample design varied a little between the different states that were researched for this investigation.

In 2010, the UK was surveyed with a sample size of 750 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.0 percentage points between 15 April and 2 May 2010; France was surveyed with a sample size of 752 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.0 percentage points between 15 April and 23 April 2010; Germany was surveyed with a sample size of 750 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 5.0 percentage points between 15 April and 30 April 2010; the US was surveyed with a sample size of 1002 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.0 percentage points between 15 April and 5 May 2010 (Pew Research Center: no date).

In 2011, the UK was surveyed with a sample size of 1,000 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.5 percentage points between 22 March and 13 April 2011; France was surveyed with a sample size of 1,004 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.5 percentage points between 21 March and 5 April 2011; Germany was surveyed with a

sample size of 1,001 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.5 percentage points between 21 March and 11 April 2011; the US was surveyed with a sample size of 1,001 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.0 percentage points between 25 March and 14 April 2011 (Pew Research Center: no date).

In 2013, the UK was surveyed with a sample size of 1,012 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.3 percentage points between 4 March and 27 March 2013; France was surveyed with a sample size of 1,004 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.6 percentage points between 4 March and 16 March 2013; Germany was surveyed with a sample size of 1,025 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.1 percentage points between 4 March and 18 March 2013; the US was surveyed with a sample size of 1,002 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.5 percentage points between 4 March and 18 March 2013 (Pew Research Center: no date).

In 2015, the UK was surveyed with a sample size of 999 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.7 percentage points between 8 and 28 April 2015; France was surveyed with a sample size of 1,001 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.4 percentage points between 7 and 20 April 2015; Germany was surveyed with a sample size of 1,000 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 4.0 percentage points between 13 and 29 April 2015; the US was surveyed with a sample size of 1,003 respondents and a margin of error of approximately 3.6 percentage points between 13 April and 3 May 2015 (Pew Research Center: no date).

There are, unfortunately, certain limits to the available data. The Pew research center did not pose exactly the same questions to citizens of the same nations annually, but adjusted these to current events. Additionally, the survey was not held in the same states every single year. Therefore, some years (2012 and 2014) are missing from the data. Due to this the comparisons that can be made are limited to certain years; however, the data is still sufficient to be able to compare the results of the data over five years using at least three different years of survey data each time, thereby providing a sufficient amount of data to make a reasonable analysis.

4.3. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD)

The GTD database offers a complete overview of all registered occurrences of terror attacks world-wide. GTD's data on cases that occurred between 2008 and October 2011 was collected and coded by the Institute for the Study of Violent Groups (ISVG) at the University

of New Haven. For cases that occurred after 2011, the data was collected and coded by START at the University of Maryland. The data collected which was used in this research was selected with the requirements to meet the following three criteria for an occurrence being identified as 'terrorism' according to the GTD: (1) "the violent act was aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal", (2) "the violent act included evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) other than the immediate victims" and (3) "the violent act was outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law" (GTD 2016b). The GTD data was coded with approximately 75 coded variables and include some relevant variables for this research such as: country, incident date, perpetrator group name (which terrorist organization/group), number of fatalities, number of injured, target type.

In this research the focus will be on occurrences with the following target types: private citizens, tourists, transportation, utilities and educational institution; all of which could be constituted as threatening to the general public, because they are either directly targeted at citizens or occurred in a public area where private citizens could have been injured, making it a direct threat to citizens (GTD 2016b). Since this research focuses on terrorist attacks related to Islamic extremism, only terrorist attacks that were claimed by terrorist groups that identify with Islamic extremism have been selected for this research. Additionally, these occurrences of terrorism were filtered to only include those attacks that resulted in either casualties, injury or both. Incidents without any injured or dead have been excluded because, according Nincic (1997: 98) the impact of this type of incident would not be as great, due to the absence of 'loss'. As Garland (2001: 17) argued, contemporary crime control is focused on prevention, loss-reduction and fear-reduction. With this in mind, one would expect the incidents that create loss and fear amongst the public would have an impact on their feeling of vulnerability and in extension could also influence their opinion on military intervention abroad.

4.4. Missing data and limits to the research

Due to the scope, budget and timeframe of this master thesis, it was not possible to conduct a new nationwide survey with national samples of these four different states. Therefore the aforementioned survey data of Pew Research Center was used. Ideally the analysis would be made with different questions; to perfectly measure analyzing whether and how military intervention abroad against a terrorist threat influences the feeling of vulnerability for citizens

of the homeland, taking into account whether or not the nations involved have experienced a terror attack on home soil and whether or not the citizens were in favor of intervening before the actions started. The perfect questions would be as follows: in order to measure support for military intervention abroad against a terrorist threat the question would be: 'My country intervening militarily in order to prevent a terror attack at home makes me feel a lot less vulnerable/ a little less vulnerable/ more vulnerable/ extremely vulnerable to a terror attack'. The question of military intervention would be: 'Are you in favor of/ opposed to your country intervening militarily abroad ?' and there would be an additional question to establish an opinion on terrorism: 'Do you feel the threat of terrorism is extensive in your country? Terrorism is a major threat/ somewhat threatening/ minor threat/ not a threat'. However, the questions that were posed are close enough to the perfect questions to derive preliminary conclusions, if the results of this research suggest significant effects, the research should be further investigated using the perfect questions in order to generate definitive conclusions.

Around the time of writing this thesis in May/June 2017, various terror attacks occurred in a short time period in the UK (London 22/03/2017, 03/06/2017 and Manchester 22/05/2017). Also, in the previous year 2016, an attack with mass casualties occurred in France (Nice 14/07/2016) and an attack occurred in Germany (Berlin 19/12/2016) and also the US (Orlando 12/06/2016). The data available for this research unfortunately does not include these occurrences because the most recent available survey data is of 2015, which means these terror attacks could not be included, only the occurrences of 2015 and before have been included in the research. Although this creates a certain limit to the data, it does also provide the advantage for the research to allow comparability between countries that have, and countries that have not (yet) experienced a terrorist attack. The lack of information on citizens sentiments after the 2016 and 2017 terror attacks could however result in different results for the UK and Germany than would be expected. Because the UK and Germany have had Islamic extremist related terror attacks occur in their homeland in 2016 and 2017, which had not yet occurred on their home soil before.

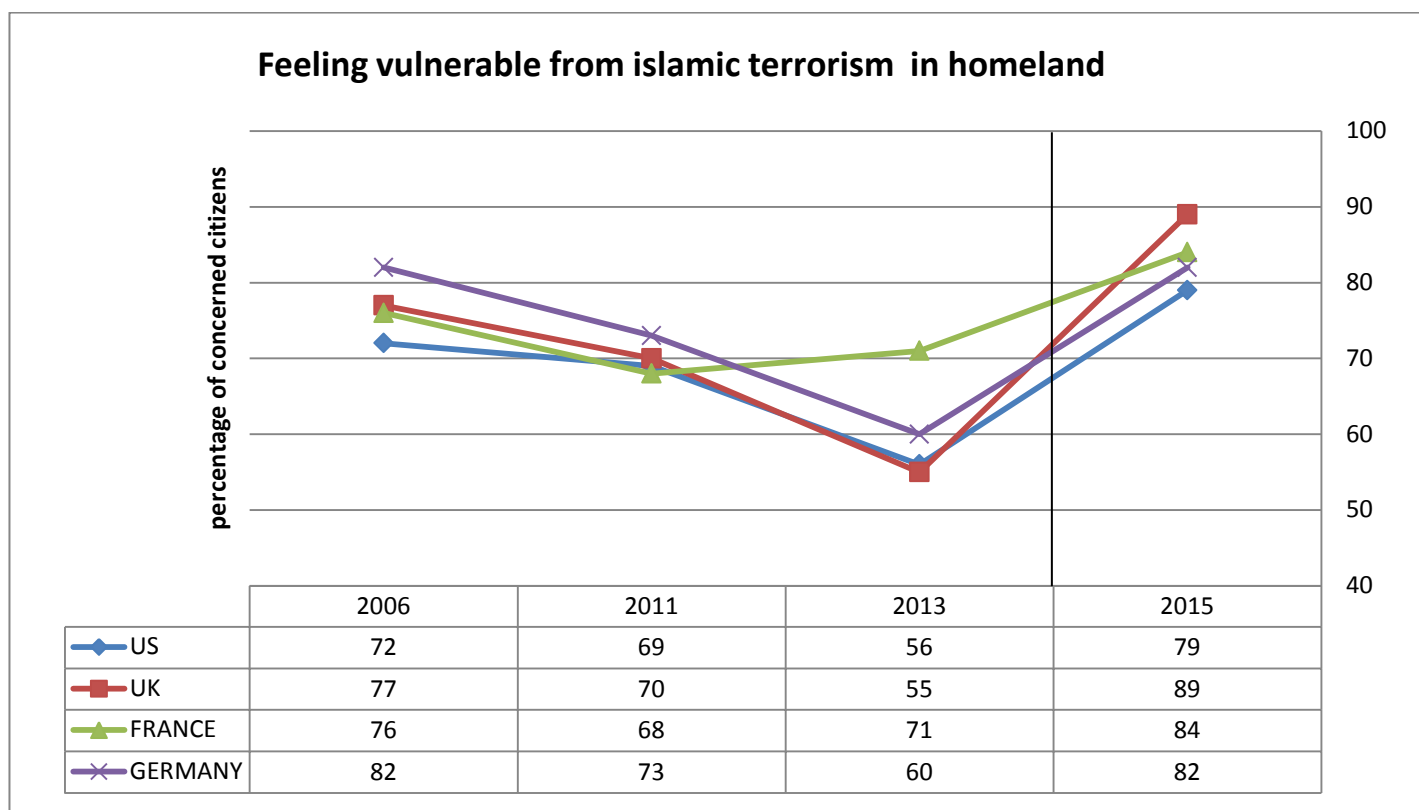
5. Data analysis

In this section the survey data will be analyzed to see if there are any correlations between military intervention and feelings of vulnerability. The variables used will be whether citizens were in favor of military intervention prior to the implementation of use of force or not and whether a terror attack occurred in that country or not. In the following paragraphs the

analyzed data will be discussed, starting with feelings of vulnerability from Islamic terrorism on the public, followed by a discussion on the changes in support for military intervention. It concludes with certain correlations regarding feelings of vulnerability and support for military intervention per country. The vertical black line which is visible in some of the graphs, represents the start of military intervention in 2014, which goes for all except Germany, a state that did not join the intervention until December 2015.

5.1. Results on feeling vulnerable of Islamic terrorism

When looking at trends on public feelings of vulnerability with regard to Islamic extremist related terrorism, it seems there was a small decline in the feeling of vulnerability until 2013 for Germany, the UK and the US, and a large trend in increased feeling of vulnerability between 2013 and 2015.



Graph 1: Feeling vulnerable from Islamic terrorism in homeland between 2006-2015 (in %).

It seems that only in France is the trend is more gradual. However, here it also increases, and on a similar level of vulnerability as the other states by 2015. Since the intervention started in 2014, it seems all four states have experienced increased sentiments of vulnerability of Islamic extremism and terrorism. This is illustrated in graph 1, where the vertical black line

represents the 2014 beginning of military intervention. In this graph the data of 2006 was used as a baseline instead of the data of 2010, because there was no data available for 2010 with regard to the variable feelings of vulnerability from Islamic extremism or terrorism since no relevant questions were posed in that year. Between 2006 and 2010 no Islamic extremist related terror attacks occurred in any of the four investigated countries. Only in the UK one attack occurred just prior to 2006, where an attack claimed by ISIL occurred in 2005. This should be taken into account when analyzing the data.

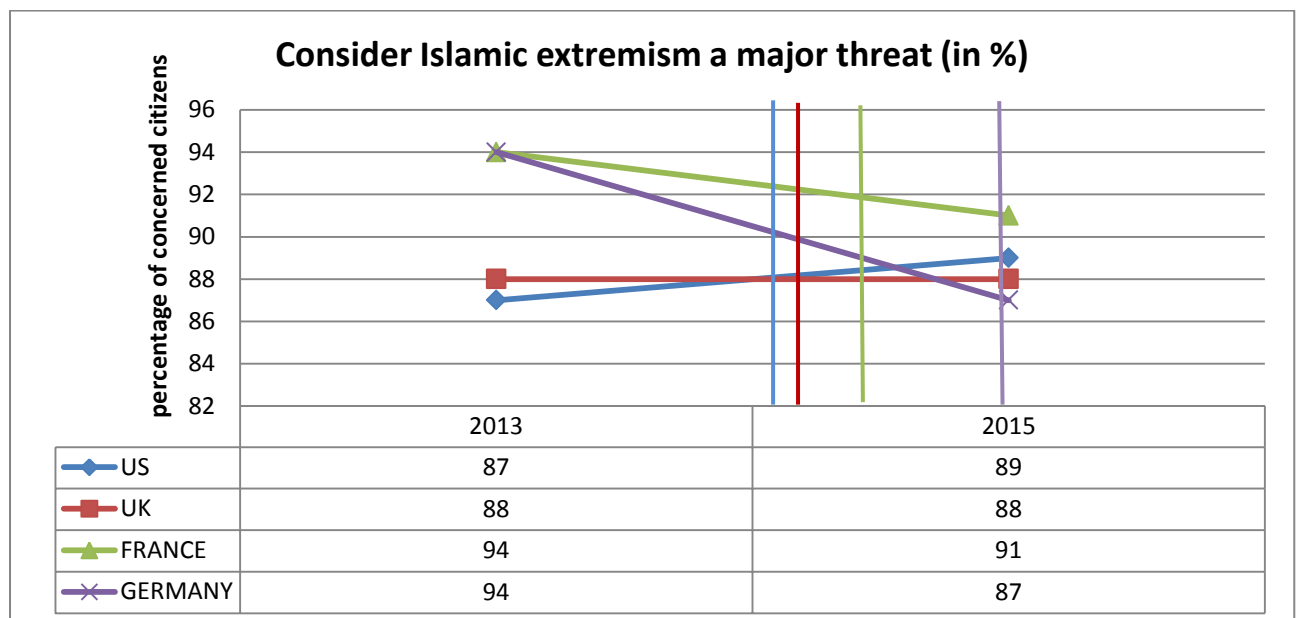
There is however, no significant deviation to be determined with the UK regarding feelings of vulnerability comparative to the other states that did not experience a terror attack in 2005. The relatively low score on feeling vulnerable from Islamic terrorism for the US seems remarkable when considering that on 15 April 2013 a high impact terrorist attack occurred at the Boston Marathon. This can be explained by the fact that the survey in 2013 was held between 4 and 18 March of 2013, thus prior to the occurrence of the terror attack. This occurrence can also help to explain the large increment in feelings of vulnerability from Islamic extremism in the US after 2013.

Between 2006 and 2015, people from the UK, Germany and the US felt least vulnerable in 2013, while the French felt least vulnerable in 2011. France had already experienced increased feelings of vulnerability in 2012 and 2013, raising more gradually toward the 2015 level of vulnerability than the other three states. A possible explanation for this deviation of the French feelings of vulnerability is that they experienced a terror attack in 2012, when none of the other states experienced one. The US experienced the first terror attack in this timeframe in 2013, which is when the increment in feeling vulnerable started . Because there is no survey data on 2014, it remains a bit unclear as to whether the feelings of vulnerability can be attributed more to the occurrence of a terror attack or to military intervention. Since military intervention in Syria started in 2014, the feeling of vulnerability also increased significantly in the UK and Germany, even though these states had not experienced any recent Islamic extremist related terror attack on home soil at that time.

This increment of feeling vulnerable to Islamic extremism could have to do with an increased use of the 'politics of fear' by the states' policy makers thereby influencing the public's concern. Another possible explanation could be that the threats announced by these terrorist groups, most apparently ISIL, are aiming their threats directly at western norms and values and how they wish to eradicate those by all means necessary. The 'culture of fear' is thus not only used by the policy makers of the threatened state in order to generate support for military intervention abroad, but also by the actual actor that imposed the danger. This

makes the threat all the more credible and can generate an even larger sense of increased vulnerability.

In the second graph, (Graph 2) the data on the public considering Islamic extremism as a major threat is illustrated, with its vertical lines the commencement of intervention of the different states. Unfortunately this variable was only surveyed in 2013 and 2015, which is why these are the only two years in the overview. The graph shows a pretty stable feeling of threat from Islamic extremism in the UK and the US. For France it shows a slight drop but still the felt threat of Islamic terrorism there remains high. In Germany on the other hand, the felt threat dropped by 7%, which was remarkable considering the year that they decided to join in the military intervention coalition (2015). One could argue that this is because the Germans feel less vulnerable from Islamic extremism now that they joined in the military intervention. However, no occurrences of terror attacks over a long period of time, decreasing the feeling of vulnerability could be an alternative explanation.

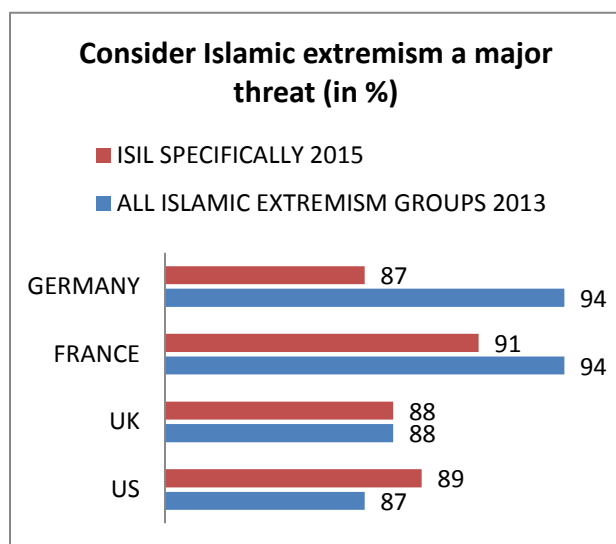


Graph 2: Public that considers Islamic extremism as a major threat between 2013 and 2015 (in %).

For the states that did not experience any attacks, it seems illogical to have such a huge increment in the public's feeling of vulnerability for Islamic terrorism between 2013 and 2015. One of the most relevant factors that could have influence on this is the collective military intervention that started in Syria in 2014. People could feel more vulnerable in their homeland because of these acts of violence abroad creating a cause for retaliation for the other. This potentially caused the leaders of these states to make use of the 'politics of fear'

by amplifying the vulnerability from terror in order to generate further support for the intervention by making the public feel more fearful and vulnerable to attack.

Graph 3 shows the felt threat of Islamic terrorism in 2013 comparative to the felt threat of ISIL in 2015. The UK, US and France all show similar sentiments for ISIL as they do all Islamic extremist groups, only Germans seems to be less intimidated by ISIL specifically. Still they joined the military coalition to counter ISIL in December 2015. A decision that, when looking at this graph, might not be in complete concurrence with the actual sentiment of the German public.



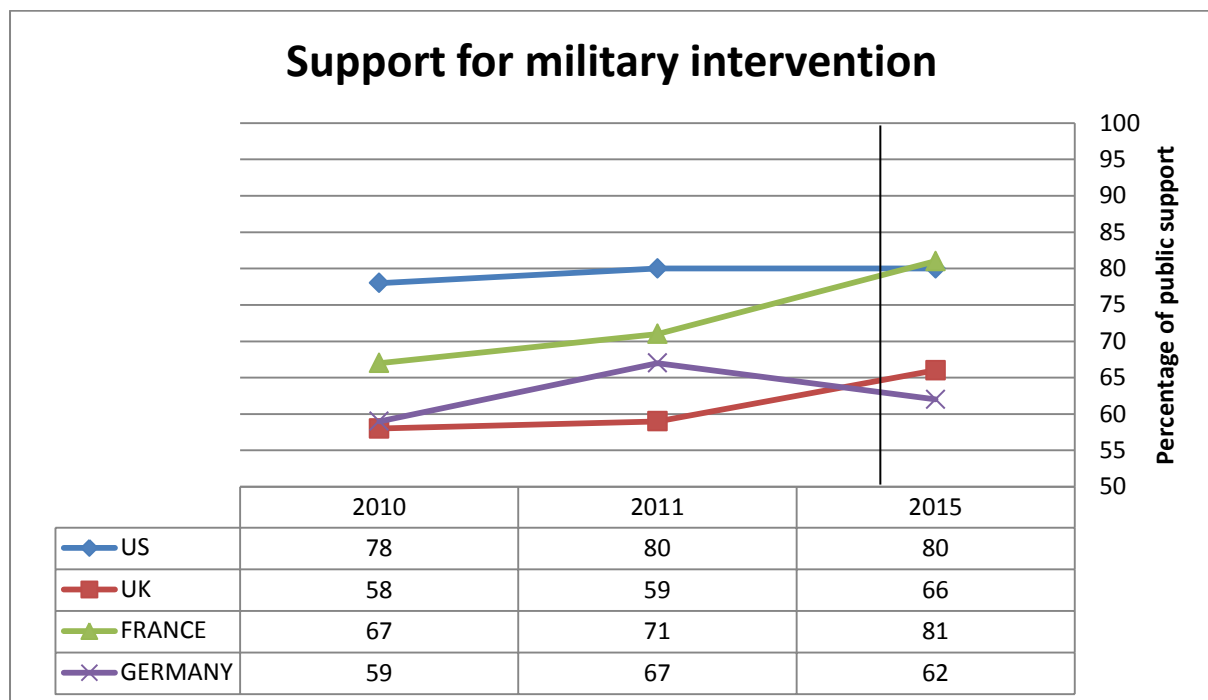
Graph 3: Islamic extremism & ISIL as major threat (in %).

5.2. Results on support for military intervention

Graph 4 shows the change in support for military intervention in Syria amongst the public within the 4 researched states, between 2010 and 2015. With a black vertical line to illustrate the start of military intervention in 2014 when the UK, US and France started the collective military intervention in Syria. In 2010, none of these countries were actively involved in the Syrian conflict yet. This is thus the baseline for comparison. Unfortunately, no data was available for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014, because the question of support for intervention was not asked in the Pew Global Attitudes & Trends survey. In 2014 the UK, US and France became militarily involved in the conflict and by 2015, all of the actors have become involved militarily in the Syrian conflict.

As you can see from the next graph (Graph 4), the US has the least fluctuation in support for military intervention. France and the UK both show a slight increase in support, and Germany a slight decrease in support for military intervention. The slight increment of

support in France could suggest that the French are more inclined to support military intervention when they feel vulnerable, since they had just experienced a terror attack when the survey of 2015 was held. In the UK there had not yet been an incident in 2015, however they were already actively involved in Syria in the same capacity as France, so the attack in France might have had an indirect influence on the feeling of vulnerability of British citizens. It seems Germany is the only state where there was a decline in support for military intervention, however, at this point no terrorist attack had occurred in Germany nor did one occur in the timeframe of this research. This might explain why the German public was not as supportive of military intervention.

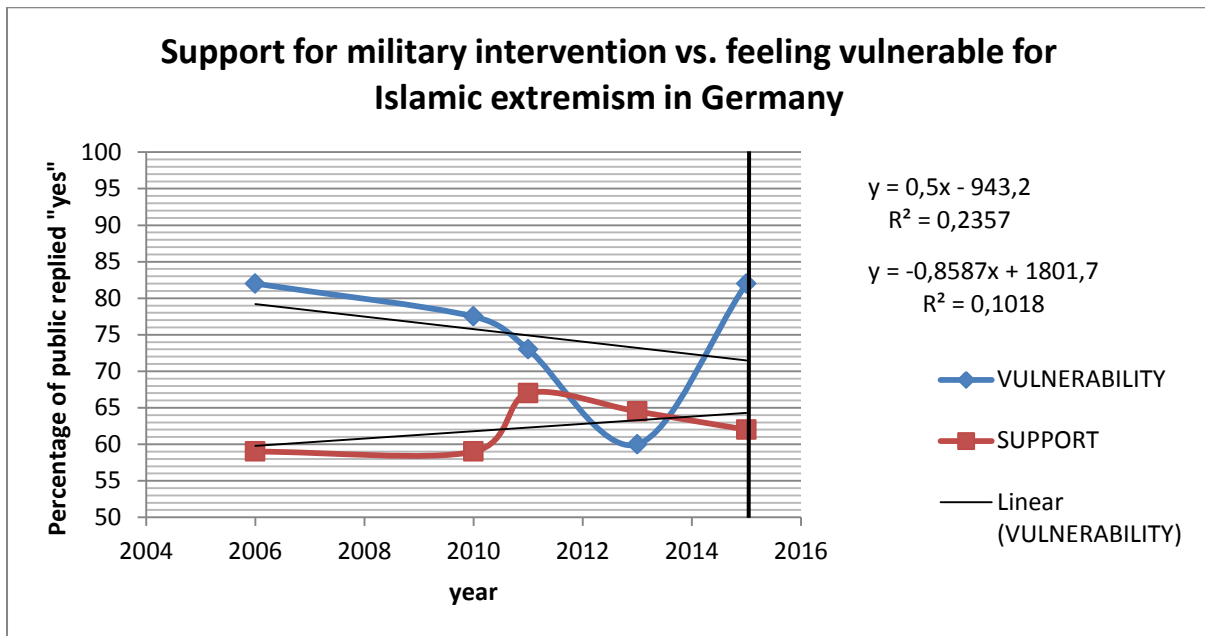


Graph 4: Support for military intervention in Syria between 2010-2015 (in %).

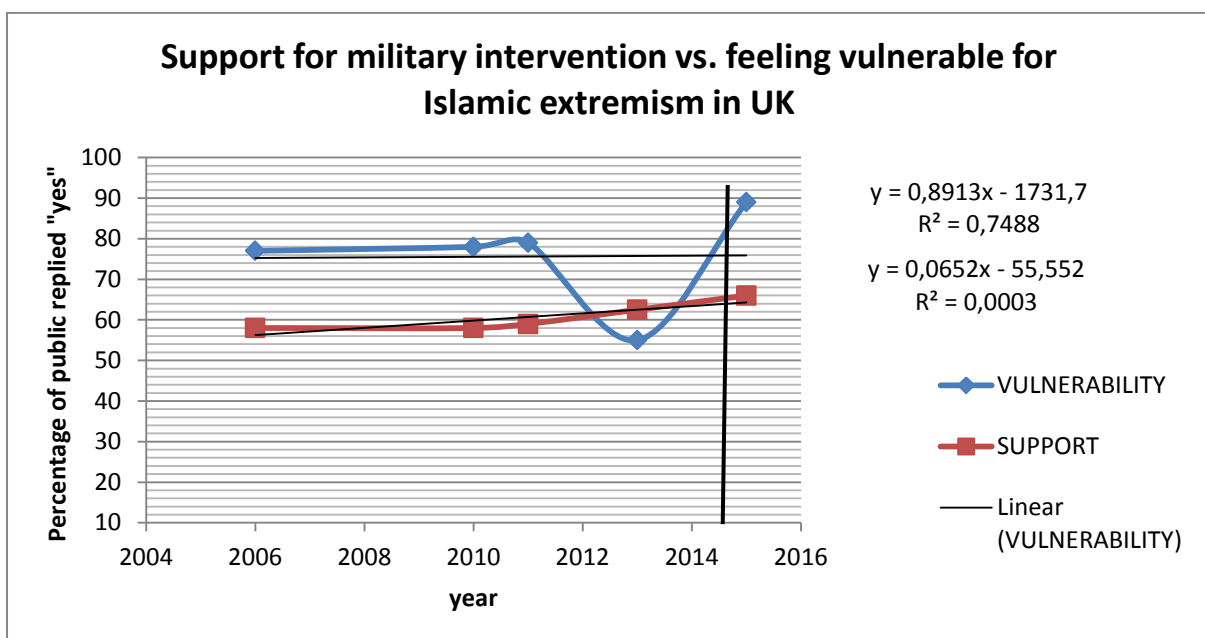
5.3. Support for military intervention and changes in feeling of vulnerability

Now that feeling vulnerable from Islamic terrorism and the support for military intervention has been analyzed, the support for military intervention and the feeling of vulnerability will be compared in a regression graph per state. This is in order to determine if there is a significant correlation between feeling vulnerable to Islamic extremism and support for military intervention. The black vertical lines in these graphs signify the start of military intervention and the red vertical lines signify occurrences of Islamic related terrorist attacks with casualties.

In graph 5, this comparison is made for Germany, where a weak to average positive correlation is found between feeling vulnerable for Islamic extremism and support for military intervention ($r=0,4855$). The coefficient of determination notes that 23.5% ($r^2=0.2357$) of support for military intervention can be explained by the concern for Islamic extremism and terrorism. Graph 6 presents the same comparison for the UK, where almost 75% ($r^2=0,7488$) of the support for intervention can be explained by concern for Islamic extremism and the result is a significant strong positive correlation ($r=0,8653$) between support for military intervention and feeling vulnerable to Islamic extremism.

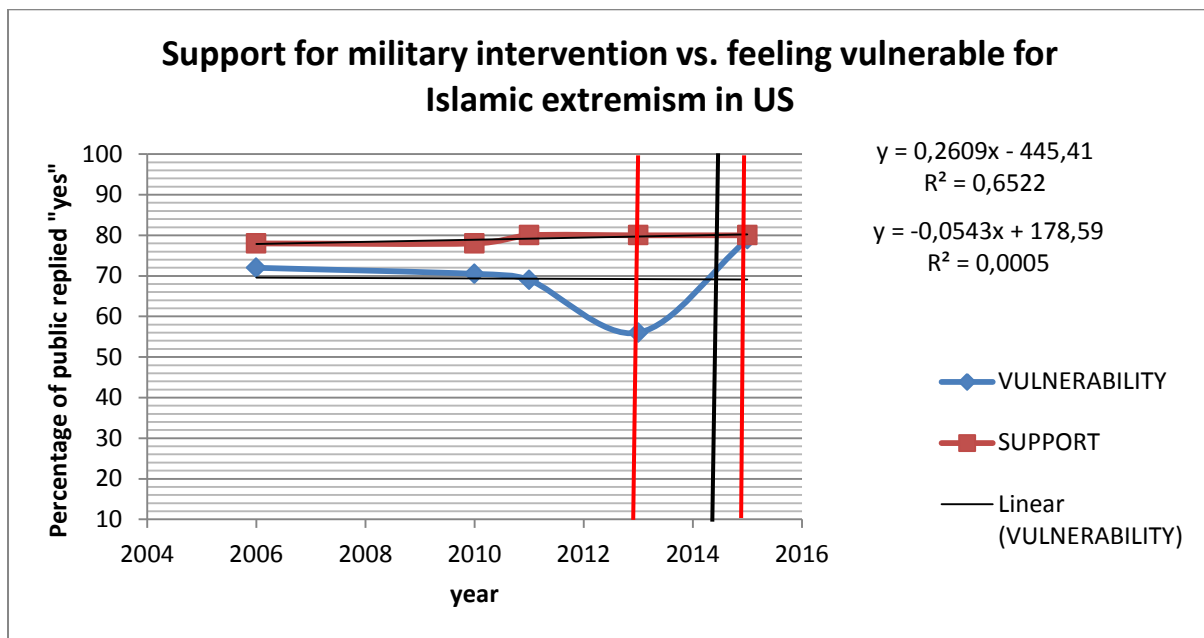


Graph 5: support for military intervention versus feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism in Germany.



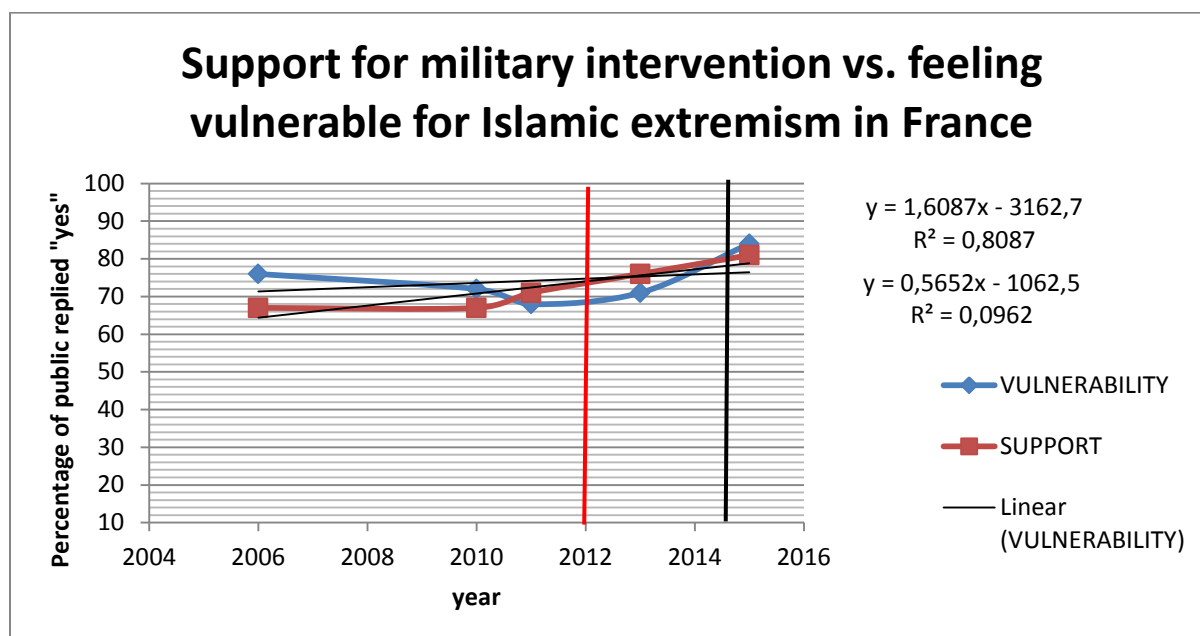
Graph 6: support for military intervention versus feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism in the UK.

This same analysis was also made for the US (graph 7). Here, over 65% ($r^2=0,6522$) of the support for intervention can be explained by feelings of vulnerability for Islamic extremism. This can explain the support for military intervention and the significance of this result a strong positive correlation ($r=0,8075$). In this graph it becomes very clearly visible that the occurrence of a terror attack changes people's feeling of vulnerability in the US, since the 2013 terror attack marks the point where the feeling of vulnerability starts to increase significantly after a larger period of steady and declined fearful feelings.



Graph 7: support for military intervention versus feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism in the US.

For France, this same comparison is made in graph 7. Here, over 80% ($r^2=0,8087$) of the support for intervention can be explained by feeling vulnerable for Islamic extremism can explain the support for military intervention and the significance of this result is a strong positive correlation ($r=0,8994$). In France, there is a steady increase in support for military intervention with a strong correlation with the feeling of vulnerability, which could mean that the French feel increasingly more vulnerable after their government started intervening. However, since there was also a terrorist attack that occurred in 2012, it could also be an aftermath result of this that results in increased feelings of vulnerability amongst the French.



Graph 7: support for military intervention versus feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism in France.

When comparing these four analyses on the public's feeling of vulnerability for Islamic extremism and how it influences the support for foreign military intervention, a few things stand out. First of all, the explanatory power (r^2) was incredibly high for France and the UK and to a slightly lesser extent also the US. For Germany it was extremely low, which means there is most likely a more probable alternative reason as to why people would support military intervention in Germany, other than feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism. Second of all, for the UK, the US, and France, a significantly strong positive correlation was found between feelings of vulnerability for Islamic extremism and support for military intervention. This suggests that it is most likely that people will show increased support for military intervention when they feel vulnerable about the terror threat of Islamic extremism.

6. Conclusion

With the exception of Germany, we can conclude that there is a general tendency of positive correlation between the concern for Islamic extremism and the support for military intervention. While the expectation was to find a positive correlation only for those states who had experienced a terrorist attack and not for those who had not; the results were different. Not only was an average or significant correlation found for the states that had experienced a terrorist attack (France and the US) a significant correlation was also found for a state that had not (yet) experienced a terrorist attack (the UK). This could be explained by Furedi's notion of heightened sense of vulnerability, which can lead to an "inflated

assessment” of threat, making it seem more real, creating cause for immediate action (Furedi 2008: 649, 651).

Apart from the expected significant correlation that was found for France and the US, The UK, where an Islamic extremist related terrorist attack had not yet occurred between 2010 and 2015, did also showed significant correlation between feelings of vulnerability for Islamic extremism and support of foreign military intervention. In this nation, referring to the quotes of David Cameron and Tony Blair presented earlier, it seems that the ‘politics of fear’ have been put to use, and assumedly in an effective capacity. Although there have not been any incidents of terror related to Islamic extremism during this time period, there is a significant correlation between the public feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism and the support for military intervention. The rhetoric used by the states’ leader does imply that they used the audience’s beliefs and assumptions about danger, risk and fear in order to achieve their goal of support for military intervention (Altheide 2006: 433). Germans do not seem to share this influence, although when conducting the research more of this rhetoric was to be found from UK political leaders than from their German counterparts, which could thus be an explanatory factor.

In the case of the US, the only case where two terrorist incidents occurred in the measured time period, it seems that the occurrence of a terror attack has significant influence on the increase of feeling vulnerable from Islamic extremism. However, to check whether this is an actual trend, the research should be done including 2016 and 2017. For more comparative cases with occurrences of Islamic extremism related terror attacks, other cases that have more occurrences of terror attacks should be used for an analysis that can generate a more generalizable conclusions.

Given the scope of this research which only encompasses four different states, only preliminary conclusions may be drawn from this research. In order to make any actual claims, further research is required to determine if the same outcomes have occurred. Additionally, given the timeframe used for this research, the results could well be very different if a timeframe including 2016 and 2017 were analyzed, since there has been a large increment in occurrences of terror attacks in western Europe in that time. This will indubitably have influence on the public’s feelings of vulnerability regarding Islamic extremism and terrorism in the states that have been targeted, and perhaps even in neighboring states. Given the increase in global media outlets and other media with a global reach such as social media, an alternative explanation for increased concern encompassing more states than just those who experienced a terror attack could be that these incidents are reported globally. If such a

JUSTIFYING MILITARY INTERVENTION: DOES MILITARY INTERVENTION REDUCE THE
PUBLIC'S SENSE OF VULNERABILITY FROM ISLAMIC TERRORISM?

terrorist incident and threat are presented in nations that share certain norms and identity traits with the own, such as is often the case with European states that collaborate within the European Union for example, this seems inherently plausible. This could lead to increased identification with the 'politics of fear' rhetoric that was intended for others, creating a spillover effect of fear. To derive actual conclusions that can be turned into general claims, further research on this topic should be done using a larger data range with more states and a longer period of time, taking several, instead of just one case of military intervention as case studies. That way, it can be tested whether increased concerns or feelings of vulnerability always lead to increased support for military intervention or not.

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JUSTIFYING MILITARY INTERVENTION: DOES MILITARY INTERVENTION REDUCE THE
PUBLIC'S SENSE OF VULNERABILITY FROM ISLAMIC TERRORISM?

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