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Examining Dutch government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Right-wing terrorism in Europe and the Netherlands

The Christchurch attacks, which occurred in New Zealand on the 15th of March 2019, shocked many people across the world. Apart from the brutality (targeting Muslim worshippers during Friday prayer) and lethality of the attack (51 dead), and the fact that it was broadcasted live on Facebook, it represented the first major right-wing terrorist attack outside of the United States since the 2011 bombings and shooting spree of Anders Breivik in Norway (killing 77). Against this backdrop, journalists and terrorism scholars alike interpreted the Christchurch terrorist attacks as representative of a new or fifth wave of right-wing terrorism, competing with the current wave of Jihadist terrorism and potentially even surpassing it (Rapoport, 2004; Burke, 2019; Neumann, 2019, Koehler, 2019).

Despite the fact that there does not appear to be a consensus on the magnitude of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, some academics seem to support the perception of a recent increase of the right-wing terrorist threat, both in Europe and the United States (U.S.) (Koehler 2016; Stevenson, 2019). For the U.S., Jonathan Stevenson points to statistics showing that between 2008 and 2017, far-right or white-supremacist movements were responsible for 387 extremist related fatalities, or 71% of the total; far higher than the 100 fatalities, or 26%, attributed to Islamist extremists. Stevenson's statistics thus imply that the threat posed by right-wing extremists in the U.S. is greater than the threat originating from Islamist extremists (Stevenson, 2019). While this assertion may be true for the U.S., a different picture emerges from Europe.

The alleged increase of the right-wing terrorist threat in Europe is not substantiated by the terrorism statistics contained in Europol's *EU Terrorism Situation & Trend Reports* (TE-SATs). The terrorism statistics presented in Europol's TE-SATs are based on information supplied by the European Union's member states and published annually in order to inform law enforcement officials, policy makers and the general public on terrorism in the EU. In 2018, Europol reported 18 fatalities and 53 injuries as a result of terrorist attacks in the EU (Europol, 2019). However, all of the fatalities and the vast majority of injuries (46) caused by terrorist attacks in the EU in 2018 were attributed to Jihadist terrorism. When using the number of fatalities and injuries caused by terrorism in the EU as a reference point, earlier TE-SATs show a similar picture (see figure 1). Based on Europol's TE-SATs, we can thus

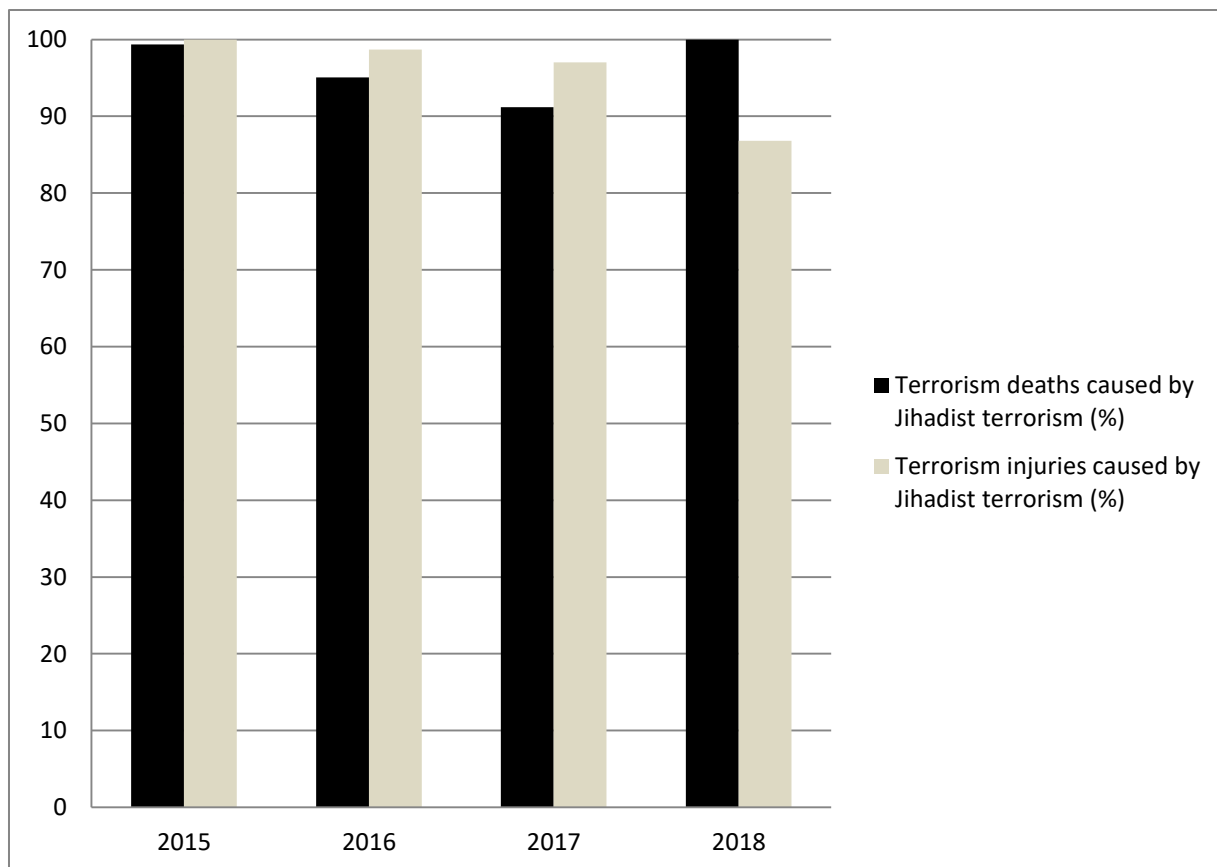


Figure 1. The percentage of terrorism deaths and injuries caused by Jihadist terrorism in the EU (Europol, 2016-2019). Because Europol has not yet published TE-SAT 2020, data for 2019 is missing.

conclude that, in terms of fatalities and injuries, the right-wing terrorist threat in the EU is not nearly as severe as the threat posed by Jihadist terrorism¹.

Even when looking at attack frequencies rather than fatalities or injuries, we can conclude that the right-wing terrorist threat in the EU is relatively limited compared to other types of terrorism (see figure 2). In 2018 for instance, Europol registered only 1 failed, foiled, or completed right-wing terrorist attack in the EU (Europol, 2019). In comparison, this number is dwarfed by the number of attacks attributed to other types of terrorism; in 2018, Europol registered 83, 24, and 19 attacks committed by separatist, jihadist and left-wing terrorists respectively. Again, roughly the same picture emerges when examining earlier TE-SATs (Europol, 2016-2019).

¹ However, it should be cautioned that Europol has not yet published its terrorism statistics for 2019.

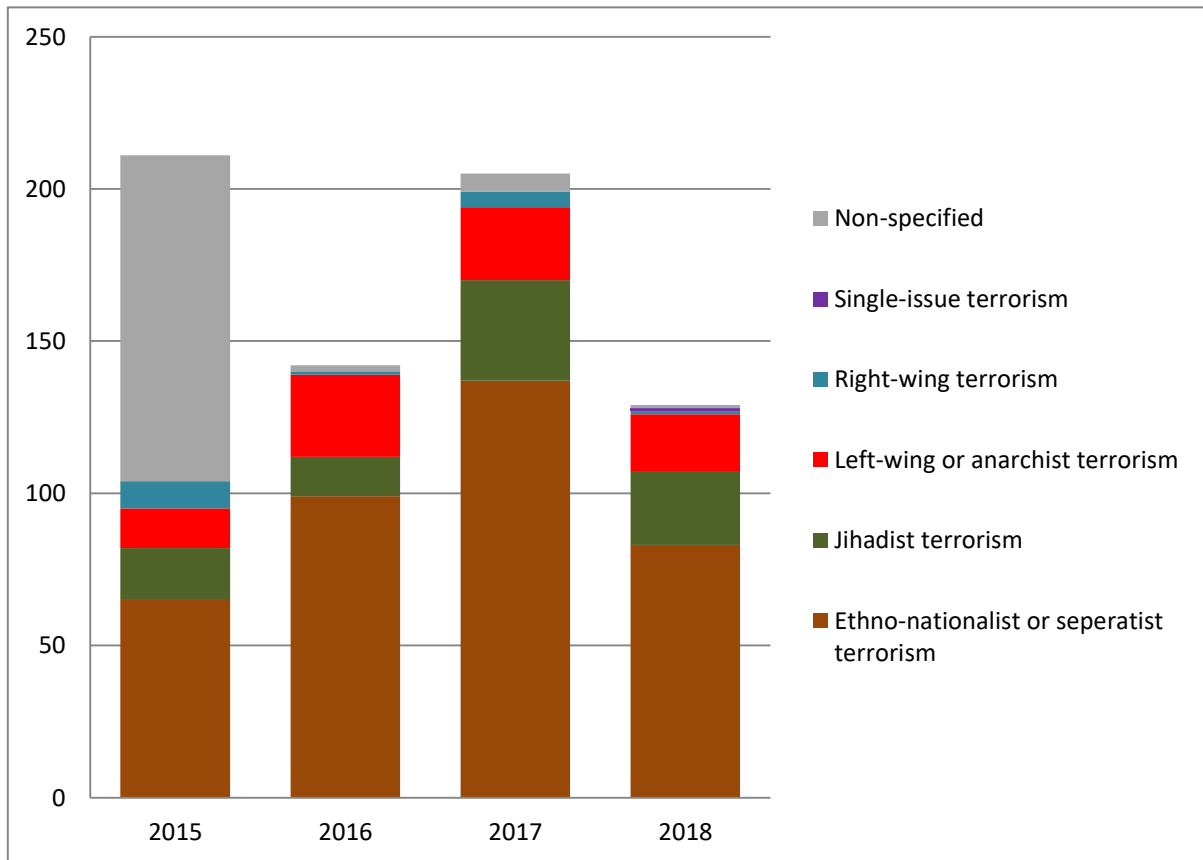


Figure 2. The number of foiled, failed and completed terrorist attacks in the EU by affiliation (Europol, 2016-2019). Because Europol has not yet published TE-SAT 2020, data for 2019 is missing.

However, some academics argue that the terrorism statistics provided by Europol are problematic. According to Wilhelm Heitmeyer, different EU member states use different legal definitions for registering right-wing terrorist and extremist incidents, rendering it nearly impossible to come up with accurate aggregated statistics for right-wing extremist violence and terrorism on the European level (Heitmeyer, 2003). Another problem with gauging the extent of right-wing terrorist and extremist violence concerns the discrepancy between government institutions and NGOs regarding the registration of incidents. While governments systematically underestimate the extent of the violence committed by right-wing terrorists and extremists, NGOs tend to publish statistics that are grossly exaggerated (Heitmeyer, 2003; Aasland Ravndal, 2016). Compounding this effect further is the accusation by some scholars that right-wing terrorist attacks remain below governments' radars because they are registered as hate crimes rather than terrorism or because they are never registered at all (Koehler, 2016; Abbas, 2017).

In an effort to come up with data that more accurately reflects the extent of right-wing extremism and terrorism in Western-Europe, Jacob Aasland Ravndal (2016) has compiled his own right-wing extremism and terrorism (RTV) dataset. The RTV dataset is based on a

systematic analysis of incident data for Western Europe in the period 1990-2015. Similarly to the terrorism statistics produced by Europol, the RTV dataset takes into account the political profile of an attack's perpetrator(s), making it possible to group incidents along ideological lines.

Despite the fact that the RTV dataset does not distinguish between genuine terrorist violence and other types of severe violence committed by right wing extremists (e.g. hate crimes), Ravndal discovered that the number of deadly incidents in Western Europe caused by right-wing extremist and terrorist violence declined considerably in the period 1990-2015. Although Ravndal's study is limited to Western Europe and does not take into account violent incidents that occurred after 2015, it does not contradict the core message that can be inferred from the aforementioned Europol statistics: while right-wing terrorism is certainly not non-existent, it cannot be put on the same footing with its Jihadist counterpart.

For the Netherlands, a similar picture emerges. Amidst growing concern about right-wing extremism and terrorism in Europe and North-America (allegedly fueled by the European 2015 refugee crisis and Donald Trump's 2016 election), the Netherlands has witnessed a decrease rather than an increase in right-wing extremist and terrorist violence since the early 1990s (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid [NCTV], 2018a). One incident serves as an exception: in February 2016, four men were arrested after throwing incendiary devices to a mosque in the Dutch city of Enschede. Although the attack did not result in any fatalities or injuries, the men were arrested and subsequently imprisoned on terrorism charges (Nederlandse Omroep Stichting [NOS], 2018). The arson attack on the mosque in Enschede is generally regarded as the first and only right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands so far.

Despite the recent increase in media attention for right-wing extremism and terrorism, the Dutch authorities still perceive Jihadist terrorism as the biggest terrorism threat to the Netherlands; since 2001, at least four jihadist terrorist attacks have been conducted on Dutch soil (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst [AIVD], 2019). With the violent threat mainly emanating from Jihadist terrorists, it is important for the Dutch media to contextualize the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. However, in the wake of the Christchurch terrorist attacks, much has been said and written about right-wing terrorist violence in the Dutch media (Slager, 2019; Houthuijs, 2019). In this recent discourse, right-wing terrorism is frequently presented as a threat equal in proportion to that of Jihadist terrorism. While this image is not supported by the latest terrorism statistics for Europe and the Netherlands, it is interesting to trace the origin of this discourse.

For instance, one may interpret the recent spike in media attention for right-wing terrorism as symptomatic of the media's tendency to inflate real and perceived threats. Partly, this tendency to inflate real and perceived threats can be ascribed to the very nature of media coverage, which seeks to emphasize the unusual and sensational instead of the profane and ordinary (Carrabine, 2008)².

However, the overexaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat by the media may also reflect a larger moral panic surrounding right-wing terrorism. The concept of the moral panic originates from the writings of influential sociologist Jock Young, who first coined the term to illustrate the mass media's role in the construction and amplification of social problems (Young, 1971). The concept was further developed by Stanley Cohen (1987) and Erich Goode & Nachman Ben-Yehuda (1994), producing a moral panic theoretical framework that can be applied to contemporary representations of deviant or criminal behavior. Using the moral panic theoretical framework enables me to provide clarity on the question of whether the recent spike in media attention for right-wing terrorism reflects a moral panic surrounding right-wing terrorism, or whether it is truly representative of a new trend in the field of terrorism.

1.2. Research question

For the purpose of this study, I have therefore come up with one central research question:

- ❖ To what extent can a potential difference in reporting between the Dutch government and Dutch media on right-wing terrorism be explained by moral panic theory?

In turn, this central research question is subdivided into three sub questions:

1. How does the Dutch government report on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands?

² There is an extensive body of literature that focuses on the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media, which are often termed 'strange bedfellows in a marriage of convenience' (Nacos, 2010, p.263). It points to the fact that the mass-media is eager to sell stories and extend its readership by covering 'terrorist spectacles', while terrorists in turn depend on the publicity generated by the media for the achievement of their objectives. Both actors thus seem to feed off each other, creating a negative feedback loop that is said to increase the frequency and brutality of terrorist attacks over the long run (sometimes also referred to as the 'contagion effect') (Nacos, 2000; Norris, Kern & Just, 2003). Although I will not dwell upon this body of literature any further, it bears many similarities with the concepts and mechanisms discussed in the academic literature on moral panics and terrorism.

2. How do the Dutch media report on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands?
3. Is there a difference between the Dutch government and media's representation of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands, and can this difference be explained by moral panic theory?

In order to answer the above research question, a content analysis was conducted on 14 reports and 176 newspaper articles published by the Dutch government and media respectively between 2015 and 2020. The results obtained from the content analysis were subsequently analyzed on the basis of the moral panic theoretical framework. The analysis shows that a difference in reporting between the Dutch government and media exists, but that it cannot be attributed to a moral panic generated by the Dutch media. Instead of overexaggerating the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, it has been found that the Dutch media systematically underestimated the right-wing terrorist threat. After 2019 however, media attention for right-wing terrorism skyrocketed. Nevertheless, developments abroad rather than in the Netherlands seem to be responsible for this significant increase in the Dutch media's attention for right-wing terrorism.

1.3. Academic relevance

By means of this study, I hope to shed new light on the relationship between moral panic theory and extraordinary forms of deviant behavior such as terrorism. So far, there have only been a handful of studies that have investigated the relationship between moral panics and terrorism (e.g. Kappeler & Kappeler, 2004; Rothe & Muzzatti, 2004). The majority of studies linking moral panics to terrorism have focused on specific terrorist attacks, and how the societal reactions to these attacks constituted moral panics. Other studies, such as conducted by Walsh (2016), point to the inherent link between moral panics and terrorism (terming terrorism a 'moral panic by design'), as terrorists have a vested interest in inflating their threatening status and inducing mass-hysteria. This study aims to test claims like these; is terrorism indeed a moral panic by design, or does the latter not necessarily flow from the former?

Another aim of this study is to test if the moral panic theoretical framework is still useful for understanding post-9/11 government and media representations of terrorism, taking into account that the moral panic theoretical framework was originally developed in the early 1970s by the well-known British sociologists Jock Young and Stanley Cohen, and operationalized in the early 1990s by Erich Goodeman and Nachman Ben-Yehuda. By applying the moral panic theoretical framework to the case of government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism in the Netherlands, it will also be tested if the moral panic theoretical framework can be applied to other contexts, considering that the majority of studies focusing on moral panics and terrorism have predominantly concentrated on representations of terrorism in the English speaking countries (most notably the U.S. and the U.K.).

1.4. Societal relevance

The existence of a moral panic with regard to right-wing terrorism could have important implications for public policy and social reality in the Netherlands. For instance, if it turns out that the Dutch government or media are either intentionally or unintentionally inflating the right-wing terrorist threat, this could have serious consequences for overall security in the Netherlands. Whether media-informed or not, state overreaction may well accelerate the process of radicalization and force right-wing extremists to go underground (Heitmeyer, 2003). Once underground, right wing extremist groups could develop more militaristic and violent attitudes (e.g. incitements for violence, procurement of weapons), paving the way for right-wing extremist violence or even terrorism.

The same goes for undervaluation of the right-wing terrorist threat by the Dutch government and media or state underreaction, which can be interpreted as encouragement by right-wing extremists and/or terrorists (Heitmeyer, 2005). Moreover, state underreaction to right-wing terrorism or extremism might give the impression that a double standard is being applied when dealing with various forms of terrorist and extremist violence, with Jihadist terrorism and extremism receiving the bulk of the attention while other forms of terrorism and extremism are virtually neglected (Koehler, 2019). Creating the impression of a double standard should be avoided at all costs, as it could potentially serve as (further) legitimization for Jihadist groups.

1.5. Reading guide

This thesis follows a fixed structure. In the next chapter, I will first review and define some of the most important concepts in the literature on right-wing terrorism in order to provide clarity on the object of study. Secondly, a detailed explanation of the theoretical framework used for this study will follow. I will briefly touch upon Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory, reviewing its core concepts and mechanisms. Moreover, I will discuss Goode & Ben-Yehuda's operationalization of the moral panic concept, which has led to the development of five indicators that can be used for verifying the existence of a moral panic. I will conclude the chapter by presenting my main hypothesis, which is grounded in the moral panic theoretical framework.

In the methodology chapter, I will discuss the data and methods used in order to obtain an answer to the research question. In order to answer the first and second sub question of this study, a content analysis was conducted on 14 reports and 176 newspaper articles published by the Dutch government and media respectively between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019. Additionally, the chapter contains a discussion of the codebooks and measures used. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the research's reliability and validity.

In the results & analysis chapter, I will present my main findings and provide an answer to each of the study's three sub questions. For clarity's sake, each sub question is dealt with in a separate section of the chapter and followed by a brief summary of that section's main findings. The matter covered in the results & analysis chapter will form the basis for answering the study's main research question.

In the conclusion, I will answer the study's main research question. It will be revealed if a difference exists between government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism, and if it can be explained by moral panic theory. I will then discuss the implications of the study's results for the link between terrorism and moral panics and our understanding of the right-wing terrorist threat.

2. Theoretical framework

Chapter overview

In this chapter, I will first review and define some of the most important concepts originating from the academic literature on right-wing terrorism, and compare them with the definitions used by the Dutch government. Although no universally accepted definition of right-wing terrorism exists, it is important to provide clarity on what is meant by right-wing terrorism in the context of this study. Secondly, I will present the theoretical framework that will be used for providing an answer to the study's main research question. We will cover Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory by reviewing core concepts and mechanisms such as the folk devil and deviancy amplification. Subsequently, attention will be paid to Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda's operationalization of Cohen's moral panic theory, which has led to the development of five criteria that can be used for determining whether a moral panic has taken hold in a society at a particular point in time. The chapter ends with a discussion of the study's main hypothesis, which presupposes that there is a difference between government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism, and that it is due to a moral panic raging in the Dutch media.

2.1. Defining right-wing terrorism

Although the field of terrorism studies already started to emerge in the 1960s, it remained a niche within the larger discipline of political science until the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. After 9/11, a tremendous increase was observed in the amount of research devoted to the topic. Already in 2008, it was established that roughly 90% of the publications on terrorism involved post-9/11 work (Silke, 2008).

Another effect of 9/11 has been the field's excessive preoccupation with Jihadist terrorism. Unsurprisingly, the field's predominant focus on Jihadist terrorism is openly criticized by various terrorism scholars (Koehler 2016; Abbas, 2017; Stevenson, 2019). These scholars argue that the current focus on Jihadist terrorism has overshadowed other forms of terrorism, most notably right-wing terrorism.

However, one of the difficulties researchers face when trying to establish an accurate picture of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism concerns its definition. As with the concept of terrorism, no universally accepted definition exists for right-wing terrorism (Schmid 2004; Aasland Ravndal, 2015). Existing scholarship on right-wing terrorism thus remains ambiguous concerning precisely what and who the objects of study are.

For instance, disagreement about the definition of right-wing terrorism has led some researchers to incorporate so-called hate-crimes in their analysis, which causes them to structurally report higher numbers of right-wing terrorism in their respective countries. To justify this choice, these scholars point to the similarities between hate crimes and (right-wing) terrorist attacks, as both involve acts of violence directed at persons because of their perceived group identity (e.g. black, Jewish, homosexual) (Krueger & Maleckova, 2003; Koehler 2019). These scholars further argue that hate crimes and terrorist attacks have an impact that far exceeds the direct victim of the attack. As such, hate crimes are sometimes also classified as 'message crimes', instilling fear and psychological harm amongst a larger community as well as leading to modification of individual behavior (Mills, Freilich & Chermak, 2017).

Conversely, it is also possible to argue that both types of crime are fundamentally different. For instance, hate crimes frequently occur spontaneously, and therefore lack the sophisticated planning that is required for most terrorist attacks. Secondly, perpetrators of hate crimes often do not claim responsibility for the attack or seek publicity like terrorists (Mills et al., 2017). A significant proportion of the academics focusing on right-wing terrorism therefore choose to treat the two concepts as separate phenomena.

Despite the difficulty (or perhaps impossibility) of finding a suitable and generally accepted definition of right-wing terrorism, it is necessary to first clarify some of the most important concepts underlying the term. This discussion is important, as it will enable readers to better appreciate the subtle differences between various concepts found in the academic literature on the far right. The ‘far right’ for instance, should be understood as an umbrella term comprising both right-wing radicals and right-wing extremists (Castelli Gattinara & Pirro, 2018; Aasland Ravndal & Bjorgo 2018). The fundamental distinction between these two ideological strands concerns their respect for the rules of parliamentary democracy, or lack thereof. As such, scholars differentiate between those who comply by the minimal procedures of parliamentary democracy (i.e. right-wing radicals) and explicitly anti-democratic actors (i.e. right-wing extremists). The above distinction thus renders right-wing extremists by definition anti-democratic.

However, another important feature of right-wing extremists is that they condone the use of physical violence in order to achieve their political goals. Jacob Aasland Ravndal has therefore defined right-wing extremism as “the support of using illegal violence to promote right-wing policies” (Aasland Ravndal, 2015, p.15). Right-wing policies are in turn defined as policies that are based on the assumption that social inequality is unavoidable, natural or even desired. Right-wing extremists thus accept the use of violence to promote social inequality.

However, the endorsement of illegal violence in order to advance a right-wing agenda does not necessarily result in right-wing extremist violence or terrorism. In fact, the majority of extremists will never engage in physical violence (Borum, 2011; Aasland Ravndal, 2015). Aasland Ravndal and Tore Bjorgo (2018) therefore introduce two additional concepts: right-wing extremist violence and right-wing terrorism. According to both scholars, one may speak of right-wing terrorism if “the target selection is (1) premised on extreme right ideas, (2) the attack is premeditated, and (3) the violence is intended to trigger psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target” (Aasland Ravndal & Bjorgo, 2018, p. 7). Right-wing extremist violence, on the other hand, differs from right-wing terrorism because it is not premeditated and primarily targets the immediate victim or object of the attack.

While the academic definitions presented above are fairly elaborate, I will instead use the definitions issued by the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) for this study. In the first place, it has to be noted that the aforementioned academic definitions and those issued by the NCTV are remarkably similar. However, there appears to be some added value in resorting to more context-specific definitions of right-wing extremism and terrorism. The Dutch media, for instance, generally treats the NCTV as a major authority

when it comes to information about right-wing extremism and terrorism in the Netherlands. Consequently, they frequently publish reports issued by the NCTV and copy its definitions when reporting on both phenomena. Taking into consideration that this study exclusively focuses on the Netherlands, it makes sense to avoid becoming entangled in an effort to pick the ‘right’ definition from a multitude of scholarly definitions and rather use one tailored to the Dutch context.

In its latest reports, the NCTV defines right-wing extremism as “a form of extremism focusing on one or more of the following concepts: xenophobia, a hatred of foreign cultural elements and ultranationalism” (NCTV, 2018, p. 6). However, because of the general consensus within academia that extremist ideologies do not necessarily result in terrorist violence, the NCTV makes use of two additional concepts: right-wing extremist violence and terrorism. According to the NCTV, right-wing extremist violence is defined as “physical violence against human beings or objects (including vandalism or destruction) motivated by xenophobia, a hatred of foreign cultural elements or ultranationalism” (NCTV, 2018, p. 9). Conversely, the NCTV defines terrorism as “(...) the use of serious violence against human beings or against material property in an attempt to destabilize society, to strike fear into the hearts of the population or influence political decision-making” (NCTV, 2018, p. 9). At a first glance, the above definitions appear very similar. However, the crucial difference between right-wing extremist violence and terrorism concerns the primary target. In the former instance, the individual or object that is attacked serves as the primary target whereas with terrorism, the primary target is the wider population or government.

In sum, it appears that both the academic as well as the particularistic definition of right-wing terrorism excludes hate crimes, albeit on different grounds. In the first case, the distinction hinges on the element of premeditation, which is said to be generally lacking in hate crimes. In the second, the difference appears to be dependent on the primary target of the attack, and as such, the intentions of the attacker(s).

Having reviewed and defined some of the most important concepts surrounding right-wing terrorism, I will now turn to Stanley Cohen’s moral panic theory and Erich Goode & Nachman Ben-Yehuda’s criteria for recognizing moral panics. Combining the work of the above authors yields a theoretical framework that can be used to answer this study’s main research question.

2.2. Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory

The term 'moral panic' originates from the early 1970s, when Jock Young (1971) first coined the term in his classic sociological account *The Drugtakers*. As part of an ethnography of drug-use in 1960s London, Young observed how the mass-media contributed to the construction of social problems and, consequently, the amplification of those problems. In an oft quoted passage, Young noticed that the "media (...) can create social problems and present them dramatically and overwhelmingly (...)" (Young, 1971, p. 182). He concluded that "it is possible for them [the media] to engineer rapidly what one might call a 'moral panic' about a certain type of deviancy" (Young, 1971, p. 182).

Although Young was the first to coin the term moral panic, it was Stanley Cohen who further developed the concept in his vivid account of the clashes between the Mods and Rockers youth cultures in 1960s Britain (Cohen, 1987). In his 1972 book *Folk Devils & Moral Panics*, he used the term to characterize the disproportionate reactions of the British media, police, politicians, action groups and public to the relatively minor disturbances caused by the Mods and Rockers. Cohen noticed that "in a moral panic, a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests (...)" (Cohen, 1987, p. 9). In Cohen's work, the group of persons held responsible for the threat are termed 'folk devils', and are subsequently stereotyped and classified as deviants.

An important concept connected to that of the folk devil is deviancy amplification, whereby relatively marginal problems are blown up into serious threats to law and order (Cohen, 1987). In this regard, Cohen specifically stresses the importance of the mass-media, noting that one "cannot but pay attention to the role of the mass media in defining and shaping social problems" (Cohen, 1987, p. 16). The 'serious' threat subsequently warrants punitive action from the agents of social control (e.g. the police, prosecutors, judiciary), which represent the 'thin blue line' preventing society from plunging into chaos and social disorder. Harsh policies and punitive action in turn exacerbate the deviant behavior of the folk devils, as they are segregated and isolated from conventional society and seek to find others in a similar position, leading to more deviance and ultimately, more punitive action. In sum, the above process represents a deviancy amplification spiral or negative feedback loop, in which both the folk devils and social control agents feed of each other.

Another important concept developed by Cohen is that of sensitization (Cohen, 1987). It concerns the process whereby otherwise unconnected events are linked together by various moral entrepreneurs (i.e. those championing the dominant norms and values within society,

such as politicians, NGOs and action groups) and understood as symptomatic of a broader societal threat. These moral entrepreneurs subsequently call for harsh repressive action, which will lead to further marginalization and stigmatization in a deviancy amplification spiral.

Having discussed some of the most important concepts of Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory (i.e. folk devils, deviancy amplification, moral entrepreneurs), it should be stressed that, in more recent usage, moral panics are defined as episodes of intense concern that are typically short-lived. They are characterized by increased levels of societal concern about a problem or threat which a sober assessment of the evidence suggests is either marginal or non-existent (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). By resorting to this more practical definition, the concept of moral panic can be applied to various forms of deviant, even criminal behavior. Since Cohen's seminal 1971 book, various studies have been published linking moral panics to all sorts of deviant and delinquent behavior, such as marihuana consumption (Himmelstein, 1983), pedophilia (Jenkins, 1989), and more recently, terrorism (Kappeler & Kappeler, 2004; Rothe & Muzzatti, 2004, Walsh, 2016).

2.3. Goode & Ben-Yehuda's moral panic criteria

However, the question remains how to identify a moral panic; how do we know if a moral panic has taken hold in a society at a specific point in time? In an effort to operationalize the concept, Goode & Ben-Yehuda have come up with five criteria for recognizing moral panics (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

The first criterion developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda is concern. In order for a moral panic to be present, there has to be a heightened level of concern over the behavior of a certain group. This heightened level of concern should be measurable; public opinion polls, proposed legislation, social movement activity or the level of media attention devoted to a problem can all be used as indicators.

The second criterion advanced by Goode & Ben-Yehuda is hostility. During a moral panic, one can observe increased levels of hostility towards the group that is perceived to be threatening the values, interests and way of life of the majority in society. Increased levels of hostility go hand in hand with the emergence of an us vs. them dichotomization. Society is increasingly seen as divided between those responsible for the threat (the so-called folk devils) and those representing the forces of good (moral entrepreneurs or folk heroes).

Third, there has to be a certain level of minimal agreement in society, or segments of society, that the threat is real, serious and caused by the wrongdoings of a certain group of people. This sentiment must be fairly widespread; however, the proportion of people within society who share this sentiment does not have to constitute the majority. The reason for this is that some moral panics only apply to certain segments of society, while others cause great concern amongst the majority.

Fourth, there has to be an element of disproportionality to the moral panic. In other words, the societal reaction to the adverse condition is not in proportion to the size of the threat from an objective point of view. In order to establish whether the attention paid to a given issue is disproportional, Goode and Ben-Yehuda developed 4 sub-indicators. If any of these sub-indicators are met, one may speak of a disproportionate societal reaction. As such, the criterion of disproportionality is met if:

1. The numbers or statistics associated with the condition or threat are grossly exaggerated.
2. The perceived condition or threat is non-existent.
3. The attention paid to a condition or threat is vastly greater than that paid to another, despite the fact that the threat or damage caused by the other threat is of an equal or greater proportion.
4. The attention paid to a specific condition or threat is greater than the attention paid to it earlier given that there has been no corresponding increase in the severity of the threat.

Fifth, moral panics are volatile. They emerge relatively suddenly and disappear nearly as suddenly. However, some moral panics may become routinized, meaning that they may reappear on the stage after a specific amount of time. Regardless of whether moral panics reappear or not, a defining characteristic of the moral panic is the feverish environment that it shapes and the fact the levels of fear, hostility and concern generated by this environment are not sustainable over a longer period of time.

In sum, when coupling Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory with Goode & Ben Yehuda's criteria, it is possible to construct a solid theoretical framework that can be used to ascertain whether the Dutch government and/or media's reporting on the right wing terrorist threat is part of a potentially broader moral panic surrounding the phenomenon.

2.4. Hypothesis

In this study, I expect to find a difference in reporting between the Dutch government and Dutch media about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. I have derived this hypothesis partly from an observable difference between Dutch terrorism statistics (only one right-wing terrorist attack has occurred in the Netherlands so far) and recent reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media. It is expected that the Dutch media play an important role in the over-exaggeration of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. Partly, this tendency to inflate real and perceived threats can be attributed to the very nature of media coverage, which seeks to emphasize the unusual and sensational instead of the profane and ordinary.

Nevertheless, a potential difference in reporting between the Dutch government and Dutch media can perhaps be best explained by resorting to Stanley Cohen's moral panic theory, which stipulates that different societal actors contribute to the exaggeration of relatively minor threats, creating a so-called moral panic. While moral panic theory also identifies other actors to be held responsible for the creation of a moral panic, it places special emphasis on the role of the mass-media in constructing social meanings and amplifying certain forms of deviance and crime.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study poses the question whether a difference in reporting exists between the Dutch government and media on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, and to what extent a potential difference in reporting can be explained by moral panic theory. In order to apply structure to this endeavor, the main research question has been divided into three sub questions, with each of these sub questions being answered in a separate chapter of the thesis.

In order to determine the Dutch government's position on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, I have collected 14 reports published by the NCTV. The NCTV serves as the Dutch government's main center of expertise when it comes to right-wing terrorism and extremism and regularly produces detailed threat assessments about both phenomena³. Reports were selected over a 5-year-period, starting from January 1, 2015 until December 31, 2019. The year 2015 was used as a starting point because it marked the beginning of the European refugee crisis, an event that is perceived by many as having revitalized various right-wing extremist movements across the European continent (Koehler, 2016; Gattinara & Pirro, 2018). December 31, 2019 was used as the end point of data collection. This decision was primarily motivated by the availability of data; when data collection was carried out, no NCTV reports had been published for 2020 yet.

After collection, the NCTV reports were read, coded and analyzed based on the guidelines issued for the investigative method of content analysis, which concerns “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18). The operationalization of the concepts discussed in the theoretical framework led to the construction of two codebooks (see the appendix). I developed the first codebook to measure the attention paid to various types of terrorism and extremism by both the NCTV and Dutch media, and more specifically, the attention paid to right-wing terrorism compared to other forms of terrorism and extremism. Measuring the relative attention paid to right-wing terrorism is important from a theoretical point of view, as Goode and Ben-Yehuda's disproportionality indicator partly focuses on the (relative) attention paid to a threat by various societal actors. To that end, the codebook contains a list of five types of terrorism, which originates from Europol's annual TE-SAT. The list makes a distinction between

³ NCTV reports are compiled on the basis of information provided by various security actors (amongst others, the Dutch police and the Dutch intelligence and security services) and generally published three times a year. Nevertheless, the year 2018 proved to be an exception in this regard as only two reports were published that year.

Jihadist terrorism, right-wing terrorism, left-wing terrorism, ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorism and single-issue terrorism (Europol, 2019, p. 79). The division between these five categories is based on ideology and reflects the current situation in the EU as reported by its member states. Moreover, a distinction is made between terrorism and extremism per category so as not to distort the results of this study⁴. Sections that contain discussions of, for instance, right-wing extremism would otherwise not be coded, or coded incorrectly as discussions pertaining to right-wing terrorism. Finally, the codebook contains a ‘garbage bin’ or ‘other’ category for material that could not be put into one of the five terrorism categories.

⁴ The different types of terrorism and extremism referred to in this study are defined as follows (for more elaborate definitions, see codebook 1): (1) Islamist extremism: Islamist extremists support a political ideology that is grounded in Islam and characterized by strong anti-western and anti-democratic ideas. Islamist extremists strive to create a state or remodel society on the basis of Islamic principles and are willing to resort to undemocratic means in order to achieve their goals. (2) Jihadist terrorism: Jihadist terrorists share Islamists extremists' aspirations to establish a state on the basis of Islamic principles and are prepared to resort to terrorism in order to achieve this. (3) Right-wing terrorism: Terrorism motivated by a right-wing extremist ideology. Groups or individuals falling within this category resort to terrorism in order to bring about a political, economic and/or social system based on a right-wing extremist model. Racism, authoritarianism, xenophobia and hostility to immigration are commonly found attitudes within right-wing terrorist and extremist groups. (4) Right-wing extremism: Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by a right-wing extremist ideology. The activities of right-wing extremists are not necessarily violent, they can also include unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior in both the physical (e.g. a high-way blockade in order to prevent political opponents to participate in a demonstration) and online environment (e.g. intimidation, hate speech). (5) Left-wing or anarchist terrorism: Groups or individuals falling within this category are motivated by socialist, communist or anarchist beliefs. They employ terrorist tactics in order to replace the current (capitalist) system with a system that is either socialist, communist or anarchist (or a mix thereof). (6) Left-wing or anarchist extremism: Groups or individuals falling within this category pursue the same goals as their terrorist counterparts but do not resort to terrorism in order to achieve them. Still, left-wing or anarchist extremists may occasionally engage in ‘regular’ violence against perceived right-wing extremists. As is the case with the other extremist typologies, left-wing extremists may also engage in unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior (e.g. illegal occupation of oil rigs and/or universities). (7) Ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorism: Ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorists employ terrorist tactics with the aim of establishing an autonomous or independent state by seeking secession from a larger political entity (e.g. country) or unification of previously separate territories. Although ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorists often embrace left or right-wing ideologies, their use of terrorist tactics is primarily motivated by secessionist or irredentist objectives. (8) Ethno-nationalist or separatist extremism: Although ethno-nationalist or separatist extremists pursue the same secessionist or irredentist objectives as their terrorist counterparts, they do not resort to terrorism as a method. They may, however, still engage in regular violence or other unlawful or undemocratic behavior (e.g. manipulation of regional elections). (9) Single-issue terrorism: The groups or individuals falling under this category are not concerned with replacing one political, economic or social system with another. Rather, they resort to terrorist tactics in order to press for change in a specific policy field. (10) Single issue extremism: Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by a desire to change a specific policy or practice. Single-issue extremists are usually concerned with animal rights protection, environmental protection or anti-abortion campaigns.

I developed the second codebook to measure the perception held by both the NCTV and Dutch media of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. In order to be able to accurately document the threat perception of these actors, the codebook contains five different threat levels. These threat levels were developed by the NCTV in 2005 and have been in use by the Dutch government since. The threat levels range from ‘minimal’ to ‘critical’ and tell something about the likelihood that a terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands (NCTV, n.d.). Apart from these five threat levels, the second code book also contains the categories ‘focusing event’ and ‘hostility’. These categories originate from the moral panic theoretical framework and are used as criteria for determining the existence of a moral panic.

In order to determine the Dutch media’s position on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, I searched for Dutch newspaper articles about right-wing terrorism issued by three Dutch national newspapers: *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, and *De Telegraaf*. These newspapers respectively cater to leftist, rightist, and populist audiences (Resodihardjo, Carroll, Van Eijk & Maris, 2016). By selecting these three newspapers, I was able to build a sample of newspaper articles from across the political spectrum. Newspaper articles were selected by using the following search query in the Uni Nexis database (formerly known as LexisNexis): ‘(title)*Terrorisme* OR (title) *Extremisme*’. This means that newspaper articles issued by the three aforementioned newspapers and containing the Dutch words ‘*terrorisme*’ or ‘*extremisme*’ in their title were selected for analysis⁵. In order to enable comparison between the NCTV and media data, the selection of newspaper articles was confined to the same five-year-period as used for the NCTV reports (i.e. 01/01/2015 - 31/12/2019).

Applying these criteria produced a dataset containing 194 newspaper articles (see table 1). Of these 194 newspaper articles, 18 were ultimately excluded from the analysis because they reviewed pieces of art, books, films or theater plays. Again, a content analysis was performed on the remaining 176 newspaper articles, which were grouped based on their year of publication and subsequently coded on the basis of the two codebooks that were used for coding the NCTV data.

⁵ A previous search in the UniNexis database using the search query ‘*Terrorisme*’ OR ‘*Extremisme*’ yielded 5000+ newspaper stories. Although all of the obtained newspaper stories contained at least one of these keywords in their text, I found that a significant percentage was not about terrorism or extremism at all. In order to avoid having to read a large proportion of irrelevant material, I subsequently chose to add the Boolean operator (title) to the search query, resulting in more focused and relevant results.

Table 1. Dutch newspaper articles about terrorism or extremism retrieved via UniNexis.

Year of publication	No. of articles contained in database	No. of articles coded	Words per article (average)
2015	42	39	353
2016	45	40	508
2017	41	31	320
2018	28	28	400
2019	38	38	560
Total	194	176	434

The third sub question of this study is answered by simply comparing the results obtained from the two previous analyses. First, it will be established whether a difference exists between the Dutch government and media's reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. Secondly, it has to be ascertained whether this difference can be explained by the moral panic theoretical framework. To this end, I will compare the data obtained from the content analyses to Goode & Ben-Yehuda's five criteria for recognizing moral panics. Following these steps enables me to test this study's main hypothesis (i.e. a difference in reporting between the Dutch government and media exists, and can be attributed to a moral panic raging in the Dutch media) against the available evidence. In case the data contradicts the main hypothesis, alternative explanations will have to be sought in support of the study's outcomes.

3.2. Reliability and validity

Content analysis offers researchers specific reliability and validity measures in order to improve the credibility and quality of a study (Holsti, 1969; Neuendorf, 2016). For instance, in content analysis, an important reliability measure is replicability: the ability of other researchers to replicate a study at a different point in time, using the same data and measuring instrument. In order to ensure replicability, the researcher should be as transparent as possible about the choices he made in coding the data and, later, the inferences drawn from the data (Neuendorf, 2016). In practice, this means that content analysts are expected to grant others

access to their codebook (containing the coding categories and coding rules), coding sheets (containing the actual codes) and source material (the documents or texts that have been analyzed). In order to enable other researchers to replicate this study, I have therefore included the codebooks in the appendix. Because of their sheer size, the coding sheets and source material have not been included in the appendix (they will be shared with individual readers upon request).

Another important reliability measure for content analysis concerns so-called inter-coder reliability: “the extent to which two or more independent coders agree on the coding of the content of interest with an application of the same coding scheme” (Neuendorf, 2004, p. 33). However, due to the nature of this study (master thesis) and the limited time and resources available for conducting it, it was not possible to resort to such a reliability measure. In order to compensate for this shortcoming, I have resorted to intra-coder reliability as an alternative reliability measure. Intra-coder reliability concerns the degree of consistency with which the individual researcher has coded the data. In order to enhance intra-coder reliability, I have executed an intra-coder reliability test, whereby a sample of the data is recoded after a specific point in time, using the same measuring instrument (i.e. code books) on the same collection of data (Neuendorf, 2016). The extent of intra-coder reliability is then expressed in percentages, with a high percentage (85%-100%) indicating a high degree of consistency between the initial and second round of coding. When the percentage falls under the 85% threshold, the researcher is advised to reconsider his coding categories and adapt them in order to boost their validity.

Table 2. Results of the intra-coder reliability test on the data.

Codebooks	NCTV data	Media data
Codebook 1	92.5%	95%
Codebook 2	89.4%	88.3%

In order to obtain the degree of intra-coder reliability, I recoded a 10% sample of both the NCTV and media data one month after the initial round of coding. Because two codebooks were used for coding two sets of data (i.e. 14 NCTV reports and 176 news stories), this procedure resulted in four intra-coder reliability rates. Eventually, all four intra-coder reliability rates ranged between 85%-100%, making further revisions of the coding categories unnecessary (see table 2).

4. Results & Analysis

Chapter overview

In this chapter, I will discuss the most important findings related to each of the three sub questions of this thesis. The chapter is structured into three sections, with each section covering a different sub question. Section one focuses on reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch government. It reveals that the Dutch government had already been paying attention to right-wing terrorism from the beginning of 2015, and that it started to assess the right-wing terrorist threat as significant from March 2016 onwards. Section two assesses reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media. It is found that the Dutch media only started to pay attention to right-wing terrorism in 2019, when events such as the Christchurch attacks drastically altered the Dutch media's perception of the right-wing terrorist threat. Section three contains both a comparison between government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism and an analysis of the results based on Goode & Ben-Yehuda's five criteria. The comparison shows that a difference exists between the Dutch government and media in terms of how each has been reporting on right-wing terrorism. Nevertheless, despite meeting three of Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators, media reporting on right-wing terrorism cannot be classified as a moral panic.

4.1. Results sub question 1

Based on the data obtained from a content analysis of 14 NCTV reports that were published over a five-year-period, I will attempt to answer the first sub question of this study.

- ❖ *How does the Dutch government report on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands?*

Because the NCTV serves as the Dutch government's main center of expertise with regard to terrorism and extremism (including right-wing terrorism) and regularly produces detailed threat assessments about both phenomena, I will treat the threat perception emerging from the NCTV reports as representative for the Dutch government's position on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands.

This threat perception held by the NCTV was measured both by (1) looking at the degree of attention paid to right-wing terrorism compared to other types of terrorism and extremism and (2) by looking at the wordings used to describe the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. The decision to incorporate both elements in the content analysis is motivated by Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators for determining the existence of a moral panic, which emphasize the attention paid to a given issue as well as the way it is discussed by various societal actors (in this case, the Dutch government).

4.1.1. Attention paid to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch government

With the use of a codebook based on Europol's five terrorism typologies, I was able to code nearly all paragraphs contained in the 14 NCTV reports examined for this study⁶. The decision to work with individual paragraphs as the recording unit rather than words, sentences or even whole documents was largely based on the length of the NCTV reports and the way they were organized⁷. Paragraphs contained in the reports were separated by a line or indentation and commonly focused on a particular type of terrorism or extremism,

⁶ In order to avoid duplication, I chose to exclude paragraphs belonging to introductions and/or conclusions from the analysis because they frequently contained references to more than one type of terrorism and were repetitive in nature (i.e. signaling or summarizing content already discussed in the body of the text).

⁷ The length of the reports published by the NCTV ranged from 5 to 17 pages, with the reports becoming more elaborate over time.

significantly lowering the possibility of measurement error due to misclassification (a problem often encountered when coding multiple page reports on the whole text level).

For each individual paragraph, it was determined whether it involved a discussion of one of Europol's five terrorism typologies. Moreover, for each terrorism typology, an extremism variant was added so as not to distort the results of this study. Paragraphs containing discussions of, for instance, right-wing extremism would otherwise not be coded, or coded incorrectly as discussions pertaining to right-wing terrorism. Finally, the codebook contained a garbage bin or other category for material that could not be put into one of the five terrorism and extremism typologies.

With the use of the categories contained in the codebook, it was possible to calculate the relative attention paid to every type of terrorism and extremism per NCTV report, and as such, look for variations over time (potentially signaling a moral panic). The relative attention paid to, for instance, Jihadist terrorism, was calculated by simply adding up all the individual paragraphs containing a discussion of Jihadist terrorism and dividing it by the total (i.e. all the paragraphs containing a discussion of one of the terrorist or extremist typologies listed in the codebook). For clarity's sake, the number was subsequently factored by 100 in order to obtain a percentage reflecting the relative attention paid to Jihadist terrorism within a given period. Repeating this procedure for all other terrorism and extremism typologies has yielded the following graph (figure 3).

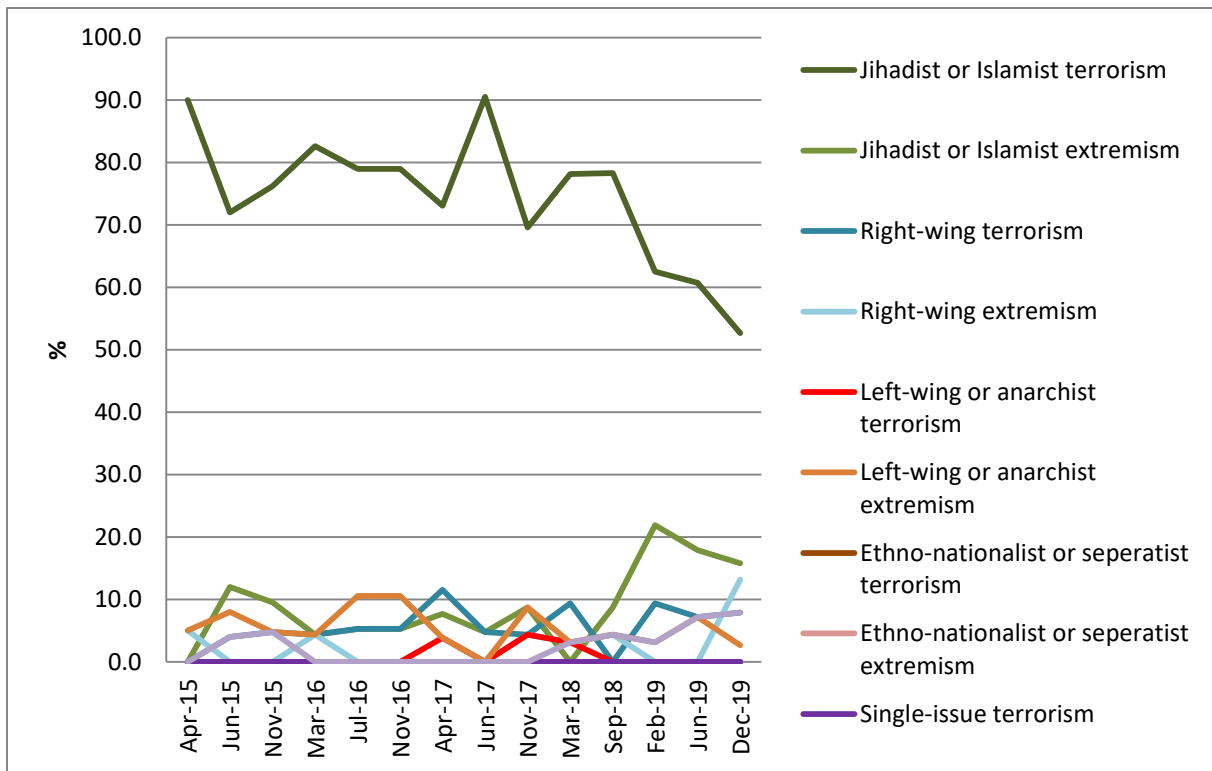


Figure 3. Relative attention paid to different types of terrorism and extremism by the NCTV, 2015-2020.

Figure 3 depicts the relative attention paid to various types of terrorism and extremism by the NCTV between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019. The graph shows that between early 2015 and September 2018, almost all attention went out to Jihadist terrorism (fluctuating between 70%-90%). Several high-profile Jihadist terrorist attacks took place in Europe and the Netherlands within this time period (e.g. Charlie Hebdo, 2015; Bataclan, 2015; Brussels/Zaventem, 2016; Nice, 2016; Manchester, 2017; The Hague, 2018; Amsterdam, 2018). However, from September 2018 onwards, the attention paid to Jihadist terrorism exhibits a steady decline. This decline parallels increasing discussion in the NCTV reports of the success of the international coalition in driving back IS in Iraq and Syria, which, according to the NCTV, negatively affected the capabilities of IS to plan and execute terrorist attacks in Europe (NCTV, 2018b).

Moreover, as we can see from the graph, the decrease in attention for Jihadist terrorism from September 2018 onwards coincides with an increase in the attention paid to Islamist extremism. When consulting the NCTV reports published within this period, we can see that the overwhelming majority of the paragraphs containing a discussion of Islamist extremism are in fact about the threat posed by Dutch political and Jihadi-Salafis. The threat posed by these groups does not in the first place revolve around the support or use of physical violence. Instead, the NCTV worries about the anti-western and anti-democratic rhetoric

employed by these groups, which can lead to further social isolation and radicalization of Muslim individuals.

In sum, while Jihadist terrorism continued to receive the bulk of attention during 2015-2020, a turning point took place from September 2018 onwards. Only due to military successes of the international coalition in the fight against IS, which negatively affected the latter’s capability to plan and execute terrorist attacks in the West, could the NCTV permit itself to shift its focus to domestic Islamist extremists, such as Dutch political and Jihadi-Salafist groups.

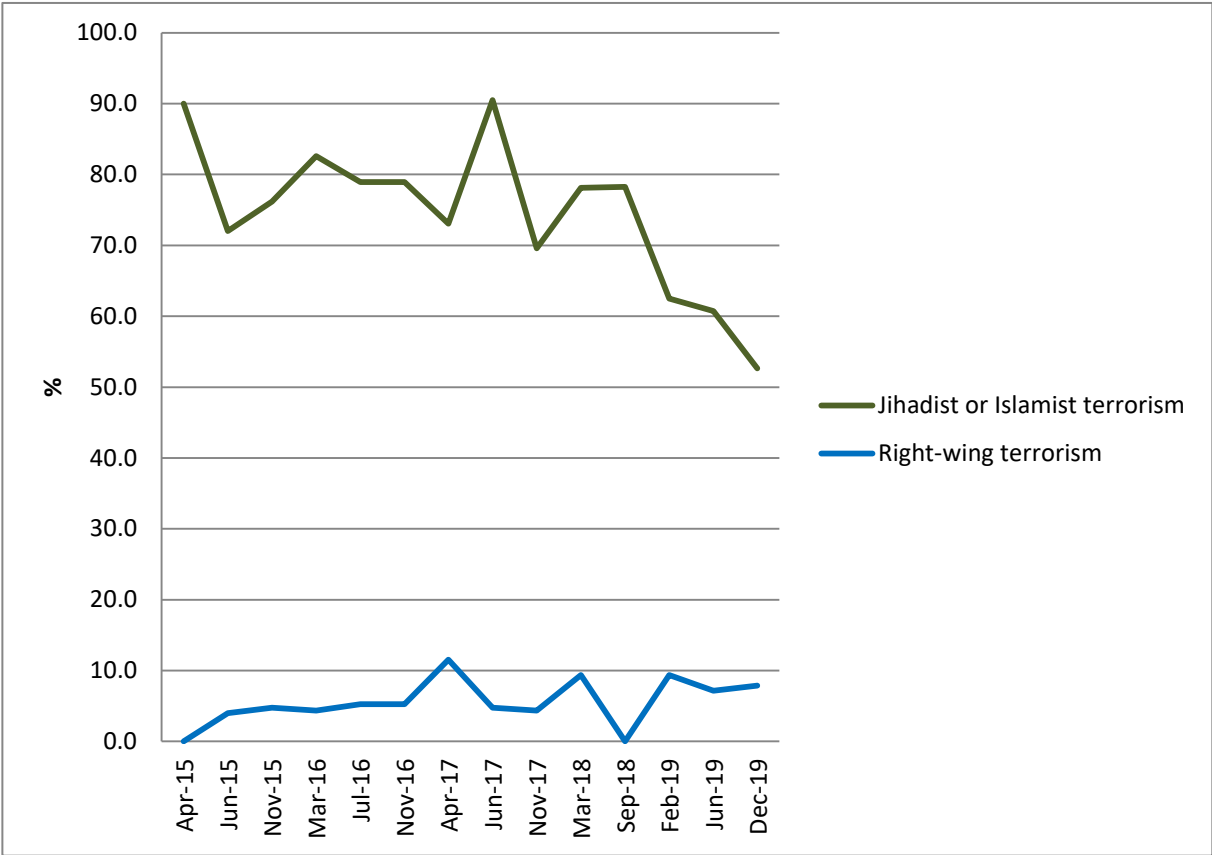


Figure 4. Relative attention paid to Islamic terrorism vs. right-wing terrorism by the NCTV, 2015-2020

In the above graph (figure 4), I have isolated the degree of attention paid to right-wing terrorism and compared it to the NCTV’s focus on Jihadist terrorism, which serves as a benchmark in this regard. In this graph, one can observe a tremendous difference regarding the (relative) attention paid to these two types of terrorism. Until April 2017, attention for right-wing terrorism slowly yet gradually increased, after which it started fluctuating. A depression can be located in September 2018; the NCTV report issued during this period contained no paragraphs focusing on right-wing terrorism (I could find no explanation for this

anomaly). However, what is perhaps most interesting about the above picture is that high-profile right-wing terrorist attacks such as Christchurch, which occurred on March 15, 2019, did not result in a surge of attention for right-wing terrorism by the NCTV. Instead, the exact opposite occurred, with the period between February 2019 and June 2019 exhibiting a slight decrease in the attention devoted to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch NCTV.

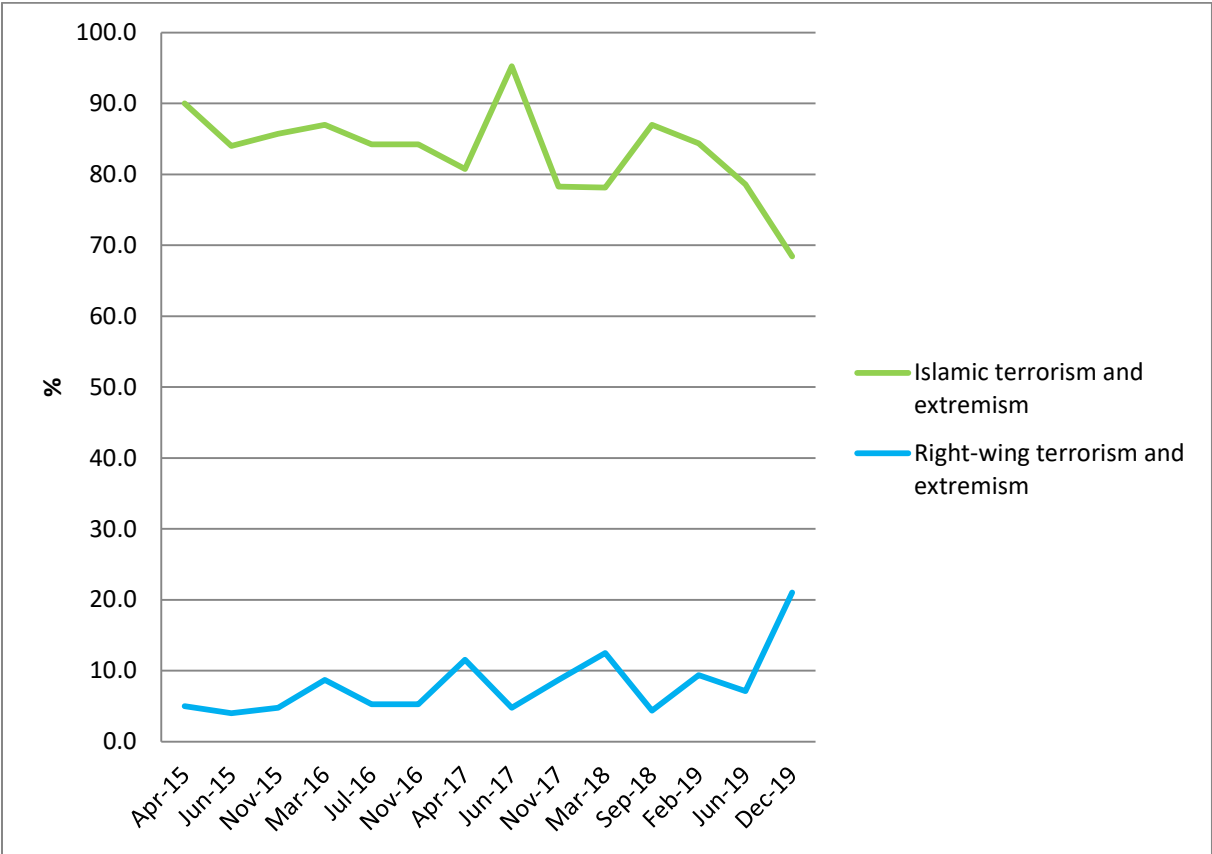


Figure 5. Relative attention paid to Islamic terrorism and extremism vs. right-wing terrorism and extremism by the NCTV, 2015-2020.

The above graph (figure 5) displays the added percentages for right-wing terrorism and extremism and those of Jihadist terrorism and Islamist extremism. First, it can be observed that the attention paid to Jihadist terrorism and Islamist extremism by the NCTV decreased over the long run (from roughly 90% in early 2015 to 68% in late 2019). Second, one can witness a gradual increase in the attention paid to right-wing terrorism and extremism over the same period, which intensifies from December 2019 onwards. It is not clear whether this sharp increase in attention can be attributed to the Christchurch attacks, since the latter already took place in March 2019. Third, the upper and lower lines contained in the graph

seem to mirror each other almost perfectly. In fact, when adding the percentages for right-wing terrorism and extremism to the percentages associated with Jihadist terrorism and extremism, one ends up with an average 91% attention rate. This means that, between 2015 and 2020, the vast majority of the NCTV's attention went out to Jihadists and the Right. Finally, when comparing figures 4 and 5, it can be concluded that the sharp increase situated in late 2019 as depicted by figure 5 is effectively caused by an increase in attention for right-wing extremism (rather than terrorism). Possibly, this tells us something about the perception held by the NCTV with regard to the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. For instance, it may very well be that the NCTV considers the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands to be relatively small, while at the same becoming increasingly concerned about the activities of right-wing extremists in The Netherlands. In the next section, we will find out whether this is true by looking at the wording used by the NCTV to describe the right-wing terrorist threat.

4.1.2. Dutch government's representation of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism

In order to find out more about the Dutch government's perception of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, a second codebook was developed for the purpose of a qualitative content analysis of the aforementioned 14 NCTV reports. This second codebook contains five threat levels (minimal, limited, significant, substantial and critical) used by the Dutch government for indicating the likelihood that a terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands. Coding took place on the level of individual sentences (recording unit). More specifically, statements on the risk posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands were identified, singled out and compared to the five threat levels above in order to arrive to a general threat assessment for each NCTV report⁸. By repeating this procedure for every report published between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019, it was possible to map potential changes in threat perception over the years.

Apart from the five threat levels mentioned above, the codebook also contains the categories 'focusing event' and 'hostility'. The focusing event category was developed in

⁸ In case a report contained two or more statements reflecting different threat levels (e.g. 'limited' and 'significant'), I added up the numerical values associated with each threat level and divided the number by the total in order to obtain an average number. If I was left with an average number containing the decimal .5, I rounded up the average. Taking into consideration the above example, a coding sheet containing the threat levels limited (2) and significant (3) thus yields an average threat score of 2.5, which, according to the above procedure, is rounded up to 3 (i.e. significant).

order to be able to identify salient, powerful and sudden occurrences that might prove helpful for understanding why a particular threat perception is advanced by the NCTV. As we will see later, certain focusing events are indeed mentioned in the NCTV reports in order to justify changes in threat perception (e.g. from 'significant' to 'substantial'). A focusing event can, for instance, involve a failed, foiled or completed right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands or abroad.

Secondly, I developed the hostility category in order to be able to document potential stigmatization of the actors perceived to be responsible for the threat one the one hand (the so-called ‘folk devils’), and glorification of those perceived to represent the forces of good on the other (the ‘folk heroes’). The hostility category is directly derived from the work of Goode & Ben-Yehuda, who use it as an indicator for establishing the existence of a moral panic.

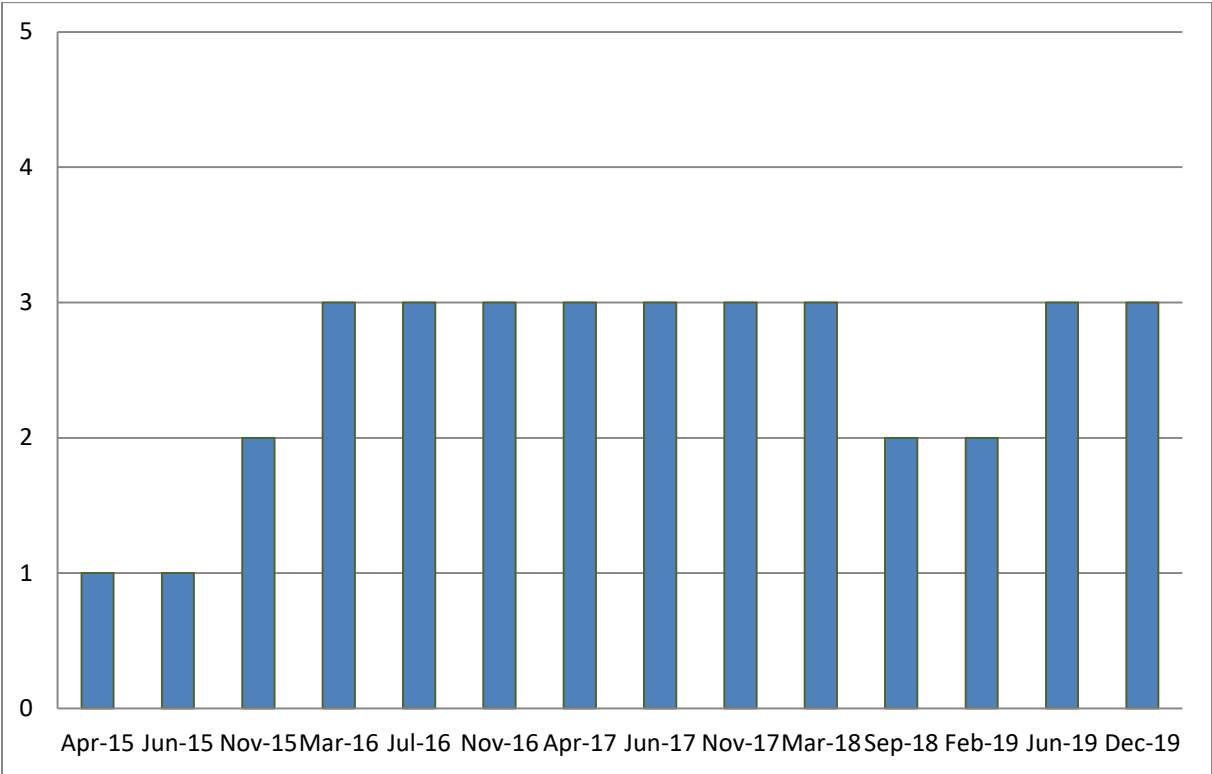


Figure 6. NCTV’s representation of the right-wing terrorist threat, 2015-2020.

The above bar chart displays the threat levels assigned to each of the 14 reports published by the NCTV between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019. The bar chart shows that the threat associated with right-wing terrorism was initially interpreted as minimal, meaning that, in the first 6 months of 2015, the Dutch NCTV considered it to be unlikely that a right-wing terrorist attack would occur in the Netherlands. However, the NCTV’s threat

perception altered in November 2015, resulting in a change of the threat level from minimal (1) to limited (2). This sudden change in threat perception can partially be explained by the October 2015 stabbing of local politician Henriette Reker by a right-wing extremist in Germany. In its November 2015 report, the NCTV not only mentioned the incident but also warned its readers that similar attacks could take place in the Netherlands, representing a departure from the idea that a right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands would be unlikely. The NCTV's threat assessment again changed in March 2016, when the threat level associated with right-wing terrorism was raised from limited (2) to significant (3). Unsurprisingly, the observed change in threat perception occurred one month after the February 2016 arson attack on a Dutch mosque in Enschede, which is generally perceived to constitute the first and only right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands so far. The NCTV first mentioned the attack in its March '16 report and warned it could not rule out the possibility that more right-wing terrorist attacks would occur in the Netherlands.

After more than two years of significant threat, the NCTV's threat perception changed to limited again in the summer of 2018. The NCTV's September 2018 report for instance, does not devote a single paragraph to the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. Moreover, while the NCTV's February 2019 report does contain paragraphs devoted to right-wing terrorism, it assesses the probability of a right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands to be unlikely, stressing the overwhelmingly non-violent nature of the Dutch right-wing extremist movement.

In June 2019, the threat level was raised from limited to significant again. Incidents abroad, such as the Christchurch attacks in New-Zealand in March 2019 and the murder of German politician Walter Lübcke in June 2019, seem to have influenced the NCTV's perception of the right-wing terrorist threat (both incidents are discussed extensively in the NCTV's June and December 2019 reports). In these reports, the NCTV warns about the possibility of copy-cat attacks committed by lone actors who have radicalized on the internet.

In sum, the above graph shows that the majority of the reports published by the NCTV between 2015 and 2020 assessed the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands as significant. Although acknowledging the predominantly non-violent character of the Dutch right-wing extremist movement, the NCTV takes into account the possibility that some individuals could radicalize on the internet and conduct right-wing terrorist attacks in the Netherlands. This perception emerged after the 2016 arson attack on a Dutch mosque, which served as a focusing event. Focusing events such as the Christchurch attacks and the

assassination of Walter Lubcke also contributed to the NCTV's classification of the right-wing terrorism threat as significant.

Apart from identifying threat perceptions and focusing events, I also compared the NCTV's statements about the right-wing terrorist in light of the hostility indicator derived from Goode & Ben-Yehuda's theoretical framework. Nevertheless, I did not find a single piece of evidence confirming the presence of hostility in the NCTV's reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. Overall, NCTV reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism appeared to be nuanced and devoid of the stigmatization and glorification typically associated with reporting about threats during a moral panic.

4.1.3. Summary

In order to identify the Dutch government's perspective on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, I performed a content analysis on 14 reports published by the NCTV between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019. To this end, two codebooks were developed.

The first codebook was used to measure the relative attention paid to right-wing terrorism by the NCTV. The results showed that, for the period under study, the majority of the NCTV's attention went out to Jihadist terrorism. However, the attention paid to Jihadist terrorism exhibits a sharp decline from September 2018 onwards. This decrease in attention paid to Jihadist terrorism from September 2018 onwards coincides with an increase in attention paid to Islamist extremism. Moreover, it parallels a slow but gradual increase in the attention paid to both right-wing terrorism and extremism, with the attention paid to right-wing extremism exhibiting a sharp increase from late 2019 onwards. It is not clear whether the Christchurch attacks were responsible for this spike, since they already occurred in early 2019.

The second codebook was used in order to document the NCTV's representation of the right-wing terrorist threat. The results show that from early 2016 onwards, the NCTV assessed the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands to be significant (the only exception being September 2018 and February 2019, when the threat level was briefly lowered to limited). Moreover, at least four focusing events were identified as relevant for understanding changes in NCTV threat perception: the October 2015 stabbing of German politician Henriette Reker, the February 2016 arson attack on a Dutch mosque, the March 2019 Christchurch attacks and the June 2019 assassination of German politician Walter Lubcke. Finally, no examples of hostile reporting by the NCTV were found in the data. Overall,

NCTV reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism appeared to be nuanced and devoid of the stigmatization and glorification that is typically associated with reporting about threats during a moral panic.

4.2. Results sub question 2

Having identified the Dutch government's perspective on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, I will now look into the Dutch media's representation of the right-wing terrorist threat. More specifically, I will examine reporting by three well-known Dutch newspapers: *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, and *De Telegraaf*. Each of these newspapers has its own political slant and caters to a different segment of the Dutch population. Collectively however, they cover almost the entire width of the political spectrum, producing a fairly balanced sample of newspaper articles. Thus, in an effort to answer the second sub question of this study, a content analysis was performed on 176 newspaper articles published by the aforementioned Dutch newspapers between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019.

- ❖ *How do the Dutch media report on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands?*

The 176 newspaper articles that were coded and analyzed in order to answer the above question were grouped based on their year of publication, making it possible to identify potential changes in reporting over time. Again, attention was paid to the volume and content of reporting. In order to enable comparison between the NCTV and media data, coding was conducted on the basis of the same two codebooks that were referred to in the previous section.

4.2.1 Attention paid to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media

In order to measure the relative attention paid to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media, articles were coded on the basis of the terrorism and extremism typologies contained in the first codebook. Instead of individual paragraphs, coding was conducted on the whole-text level. This decision was motivated by both philological and practical reasons. Because of their limited size and the fact that they are commonly focused on a single topic or theme, news stories lend themselves well for analysis on the whole-text level. Moreover, in terms of practicality, whole-text analysis enables researchers to code and subsequently analyze large volumes of news stories, an endeavor that would become more difficult when choosing individual words, sentences or paragraphs as the recording unit.

With the use of the categories contained in the first codebook, it was possible to calculate the amount of attention paid by the Dutch media to various types of terrorism and extremism per year. The graph below shows that, for the years 2015-2018, between 82% and 90% of the Dutch media’s reporting on terrorism and extremism was focused on Jihadist terrorism. However, the Dutch media’s predominant focus on Jihadist terrorism seems to fade in 2019; in that year, only 52% of newspaper articles focusing on terrorism or extremism involved stories about Jihadist terrorism. Moreover, this 38% decrease seems to coincide with an increase in media attention for right-wing terrorism and right-wing extremism.

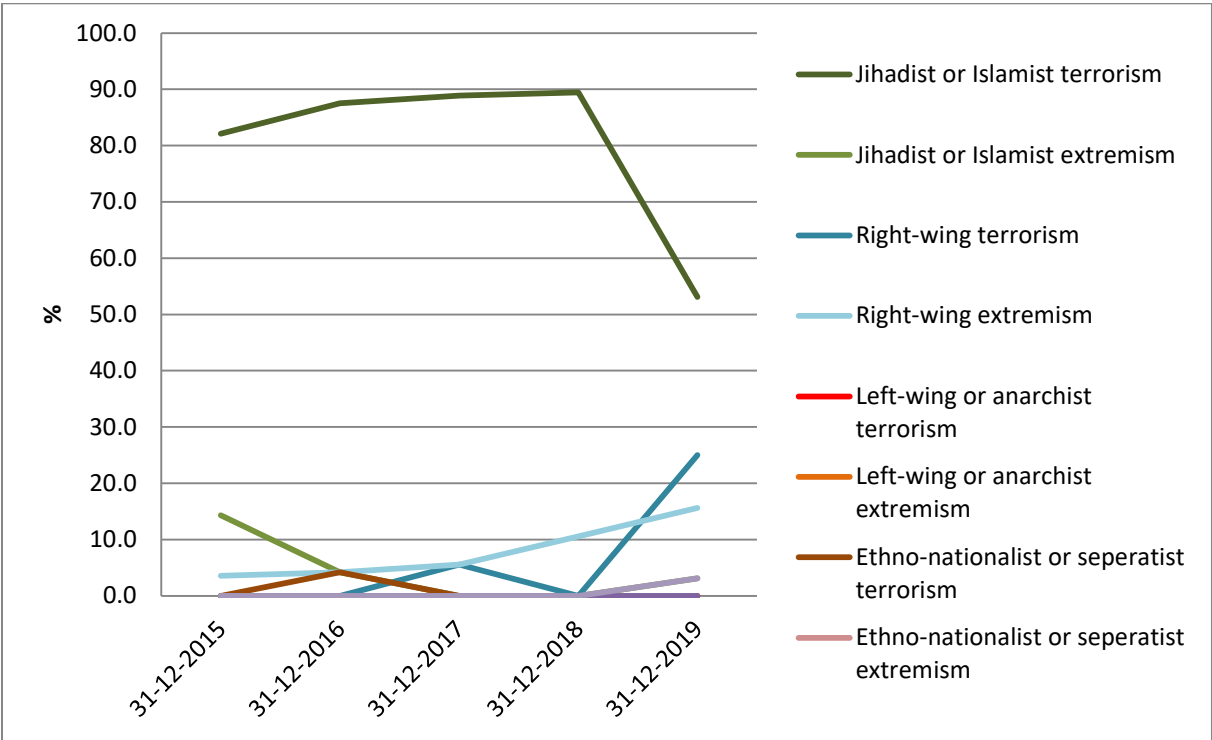


Figure 7. Relative attention paid to different types of terrorism and extremism by the Dutch media, 2015-2020.

The next graph (figure 8) depicts the attention paid to right-wing and Jihadist terrorism after removing all other types of terrorism and extremism. As can be seen from the graph, the Dutch media only started to notice the threat posed by right-wing terrorism from 2019 onwards, when focusing events such as the Christchurch attacks and the assassination of Walter Lubcke led to a 25% percent increase in media attention for right-wing terrorism. Before 2019, right-wing terrorism received almost no attention from the Dutch media, even despite the occurrence of important focusing events such as the October 2015 stabbing of Henriette Reker and the February 2016 arson attack.

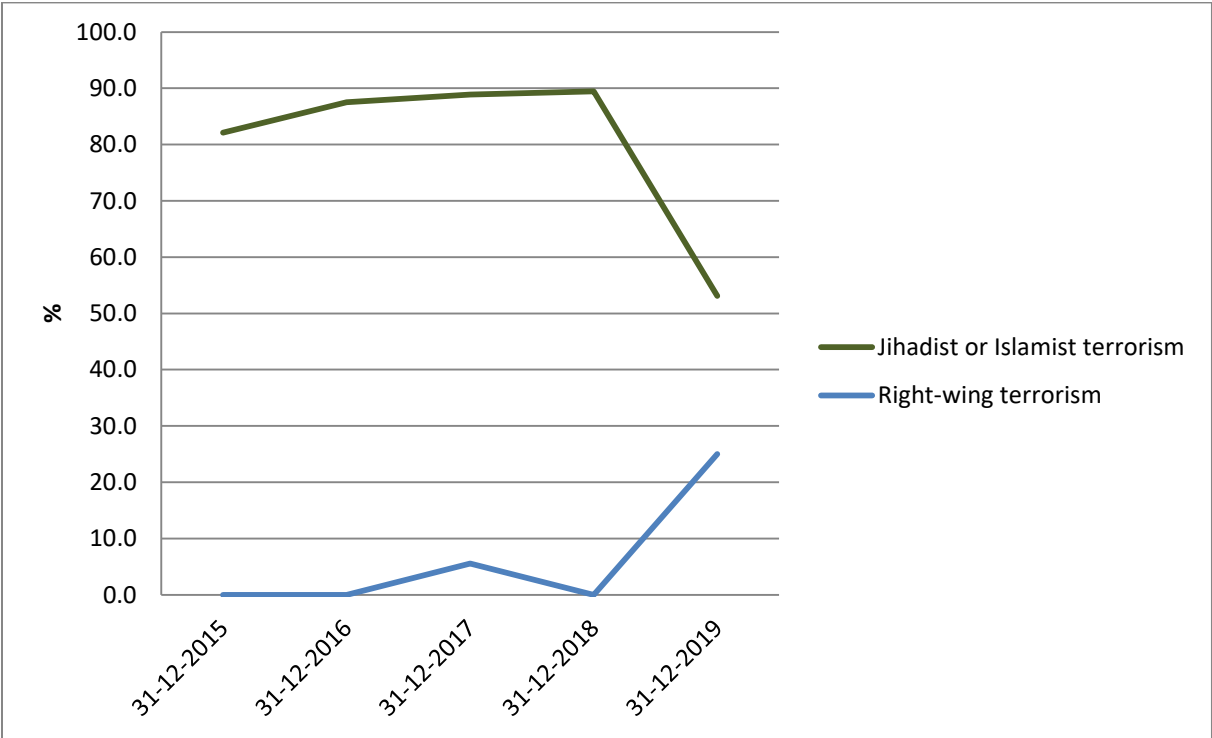


Figure 8. Relative attention paid to Islamic terrorism vs. right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media 2015-2020.

In the last graph (figure 9), I have added up the percentages for right-wing terrorism and extremism and compared their total to the total obtained by combining the percentages for Jihadist terrorism with those of Islamist extremism. First, we can observe a gradual decrease in the level of attention paid to Jihadist terrorism and Islamist extremism until 2019 (i.e. from 96% in 2015 to 89.5% in 2019). This gradual decrease in the amount of attention devoted to Jihadist terrorism and Islamist extremism exactly mirrors a gradual increase in the attention paid to right-wing terrorism and extremism over the same period (3.6% in 2015 to 10.5% in 2019). Not only do these combined categories make up for nearly 100% of the Dutch media’s reporting on terrorism and extremism for the period understudy, their trends also seem to move in opposite directions. The same holds true for the steep slopes that are situated in early 2019. The same holds true for the steep slopes that are situated in early 2019.

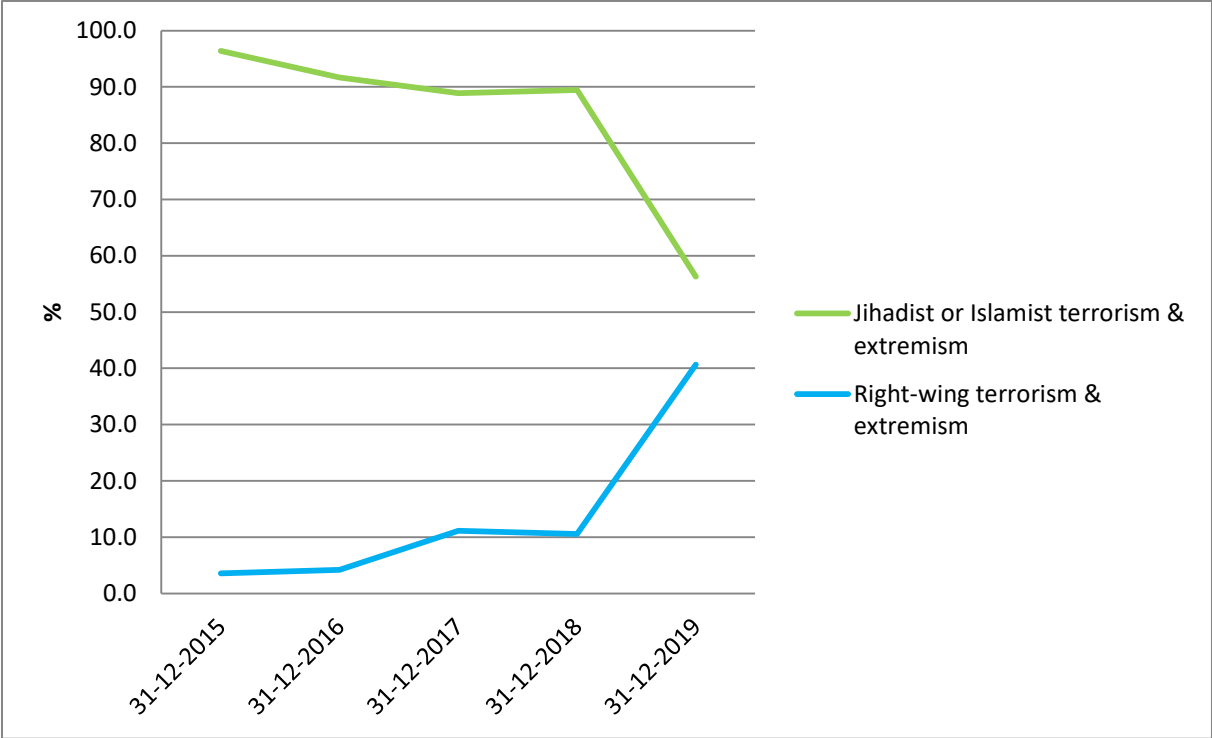


Figure 9. Relative attention paid to Islamic terrorism and extremism vs. right-wing terrorism and extremism by the Dutch media, 2015-2020.

However, despite the similarities, one difference stands out when comparing graphs 8 and 9. In the previous graph, we have seen that the Dutch media only started to pay attention to right-wing terrorism from 2019 onwards. Graph 7, on the other hand, exhibits a more gradual increase in the attention paid to right-wing terrorism and extremism between early 2015 and

late 2018. This gradual increase mostly reflects the Dutch media's limited yet systematic focus on right-wing extremism. As such, we can conclude that while right-wing terrorism remained off the radar until early 2019, this was certainly not the case for right-wing extremism, which kept receiving attention from the Dutch media from 2015 onwards.

4.2.2 Dutch government's representation of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism

Apart from looking at the volume of reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media, it is also important to examine the content of individual news stories and find out what the media is saying about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. In order to code such statements, I have used the second codebook developed for this study. Next to the focusing event and hostility categories, this codebook contains five threat levels for coding media statements about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. By following the same procedures as previously, an overall threat level was calculated for each year of media reporting, making it possible to map changes in threat perception over the years.

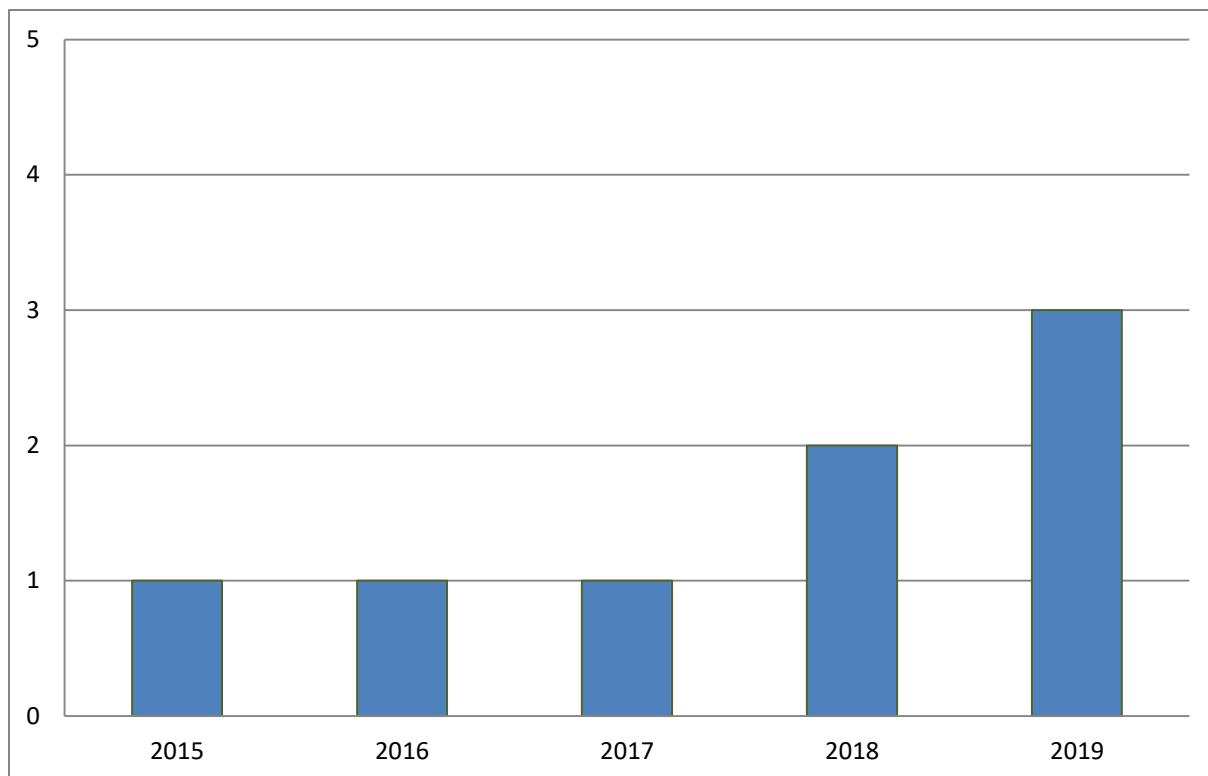


Figure 10. The Dutch media's representation of the right-wing terrorist threat, 2015-2020.

The bar chart above displays the threat level associated with right-wing terrorism for each year of reporting by the Dutch media. During the years 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Dutch media barely reported on right-wing terrorism, and the few stories that were mentioned involved examples of right-wing terrorism or extremism abroad (e.g. Germany, Poland). More importantly, the handful of stories that were published within this period lacked any discussion of the implications of the right-wing terrorist threat for the Netherlands, making it difficult to arrive to a solid threat assessment. In sum, the limited media attention coupled with the absence of a discussion about the implications of the right-wing terrorist threat for the Netherlands has caused me to interpret the threat level for 2015-2017 as 'minimal', representing the lowest of the five threat levels listed in the codebook.

In 2018, media attention for right-wing terrorism still remained fairly limited. In contrast to the previous three years however, some of the news articles published in 2018 contained explicit statements on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. For instance, in one of the news articles, the Dutch media reported on the revival of the right-wing extremist movement in the Netherlands and the increasing glorification of violence by Dutch right-wing extremists. Another news article mentioned the 2016 arson attack on a Dutch mosque by right-wing extremists. It described the arson attack as the most serious violence committed by right-wing extremists in the Netherlands so far and pointed to the

relatively limited nature of the right-wing terrorist threat to Netherlands, implying that future right-wing terrorist attacks were possible, yet unlikely. Thus, taking into consideration the tone conveyed by these newspaper articles, it was determined to set the threat level as 'limited' for 2018.

The trend observed in 2019 represents a significant departure from media reporting on right-wing terrorism during earlier years. Referring back to graph 8, we can see that attention for right-wing terrorism increased by 25% in 2019. The attacks in Christchurch of March 2019 acted as a focusing event in this regard, with more than half of the news stories about right-wing terrorism published in 2019 containing references to Brenton Tarrant's shooting spree. Other focusing events that were mentioned by the Dutch media concerned the assassination of Walter Lubcke, which featured in roughly a quarter of the new stories, and, to a lesser extent, the right-wing terrorist attacks in Halle (Germany) and Baerum (Norway). Fearing another Christchurch, the Dutch media classified the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands as significant, warning readers about the possibility of future right-wing terrorist attacks on Dutch soil. According to the Dutch media, such future right-wing terrorist attacks could be inspired by previous acts of violence, domestic and abroad, or simply be the result of the online radicalization of a handful of isolated and mentally unstable individuals.

Apart from mapping changes in the threat perception held by the Dutch media and identifying focusing events, I also examined whether I could find instances of hostile reporting by the Dutch media. Of the 176 news articles, only 1 article scored positively on the hostility indicator developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda. This particular news article criticized the ideology propagated by far-right political parties in Europe, accusing them of providing militant right-wing extremists such as Anders Breivik and Brenton Tarrant with the ideological ammunition needed to legitimize their use of violence. Although the article did not explicitly demonize or stereotype far-right political parties, it conferred direct responsibility to them for right-wing extremist violence in Europe.

4.2.3. Summary

In an effort to document the Dutch media's perception of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, a content analysis was conducted on 176 newspaper stories published by three Dutch newspapers between January 1, 2015 and December, 31, 2019.

Coding was executed on the basis of the same two codebooks that were previously used for the NCTV data.

The first codebook was used to measure the relative attention paid to various types of terrorism and extremism by the Dutch media. Again, the results showed that, between 2015 and 2019, the majority of newspaper stories on terrorism and extremism covered Jihadist terrorism. However, the percentage of newspaper articles devoted to Jihadist terrorism plunged in 2019 to just above 50%. This sudden drop in media attention for Jihadist terrorism paralleled a 25% increase in the number of newspaper stories focusing on right-wing terrorism. Before 2019 however, right-wing terrorism had hardly received any attention from the Dutch media.

With the use of the second codebook, it was possible to document changes in the Dutch media's perception of the right-wing terrorist threat. The results showed that, between 2015 and 2017, right-wing terrorism was perceived to constitute a minimal threat to the Netherlands. During these years, there was virtually no reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media, and the handful of news stories that were published, contained no discussion of the implications of the right-wing terrorist threat for the Netherlands. Although media attention for right-wing terrorism remained limited in 2018, a different threat perception emerged, leading to an increase of the threat level from minimal to limited. In 2019, reporting on right-wing terrorism skyrocketed, and the media's threat perception changed from limited to significant, partially in response to focusing events such as the Christchurch attacks and the murder on Walter Lubcke. Finally, media reporting on right-wing terrorism was found to be largely unbiased; only one instance of hostile reporting was found in the data.

4.3. Results sub question 3

In this section, I will answer the third sub question of this study by comparing the results obtained from the previous content analyses. Earlier in this thesis, it was hypothesized that a difference in reporting on right-wing terrorism exists and that it is caused by over-exaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat by the Dutch media. This over-exaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat should not only be attributed to the tendency of the media to inflate real and perceived threats as it may be symptomatic of a potentially broader moral panic generated by the Dutch media. In order to verify the existence of a moral panic, Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators will be applied to the data.

- ❖ *Is there a difference between the Dutch government and media's representation of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands, and can this difference be explained by moral panic theory?*

4.3.1. Government vs. media reporting

In the previous sections, we measured the volume and content of government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism. It was observed that government attention for right-wing terrorism remained fairly constant over the years, while it only started to appear on the media's radar from 2019 onwards, when media attention for right-wing terrorism suddenly skyrocketed. Focusing events such as the March 2019 Christchurch attacks and the June 2019 assassination of Walter Lübcke appear to be connected to the Dutch media's sudden interest for right-wing terrorism, as both events frequently featured in that year's newspaper stories on right-wing terrorism.

Roughly the same picture appeared when examining the threat perceptions advanced by the Dutch government and media throughout the years. While labeling right-wing terrorism as a minimal threat in early 2015, the Dutch government quickly adapted its threat perception later that year, when the threat level associated with right-wing terrorism was increased to limited. In early 2016, the threat level was again raised, albeit from limited to significant. Focusing events such as the stabbing of German politician Henriette Reker in October 2015 and the February 2016 arson attack on a mosque in the Netherlands contributed

to these changes in threat perception. For the remainder of the period, the right-wing terrorist threat was assessed as significant by the Dutch government. In contrast, the media's threat perception remained limited until 2018, and was only assessed as significant from 2019 onwards, when several failed, foiled and completed right-wing terrorist attacks abroad started to channel the Dutch media's attention to the phenomenon of right-wing terrorism.

A comparison between the Dutch government and media's reporting on the right-wing terrorist threat thus elicits a difference in perception. Throughout the whole five-year-period under investigation, the Dutch government kept paying attention to the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, appreciating the threat as significant from early 2016 onwards. The Dutch media, on the other hand, only started to pay attention to right-wing terrorism from 2019 onwards, a finding that is supported by the way the Dutch media's assessment of the right-wing terrorist threat developed over the years.

In the following section, it will be tested whether the observed difference in reporting on right-wing terrorism between the Dutch government and media is caused by a moral panic raging in the Dutch media. In order to do this, I will compare the data obtained from the previous content analyses to each of Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators. In case the observed difference between government and media reporting cannot be explained by moral panic theory, an alternative explanation will eventually have to be sought to account for the above findings.

4.3.2. Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators

In this section, I will apply the indicators developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda to the data obtained from the previous content analyses. These indicators all represent different elements of a moral panic and are therefore helpful for determining whether a moral panic has taken hold in society at a specific point in time. However, for a moral panic to be present, each of the five indicators must be supported by the data.

i. Concern

In order for a moral panic to be present, there must be a heightened level of concern within society about the behavior of a certain group. Based on the data obtained from the previous content analyses, we saw that the Dutch government's attention for right-wing terrorism increased until April 2017, after which the degree of attention devoted to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch government started fluctuating. However, with the exception of September

2018, government attention for right-wing terrorism never returned to its original, low level of early 2015.

The same picture emerges when examining the Dutch government's assessment of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands. In the first six months of 2015, the threat level associated with right-wing terrorism was assessed as minimal. In February 2016 however, the threat level was raised to significant, and remained so for the remaining period. Equally, the Dutch government's assessment of the right-wing terrorist threat never returned to the 'minimal' level of the first half of 2015.

The Dutch media only started to pay attention to right-wing terrorism from 2019 onwards. In that year, 25% of the newspaper articles on terrorism and/or extremism focused on right-wing terrorism. In terms of threat perception, a similar image appears. For most of the period under study, the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands was interpreted as minimal; only in 2019 did the Dutch media increase the threat to substantial. This sudden change in threat perception coincided with a number of failed, foiled and completed right-wing terrorist attacks abroad, most notably Brenton Tarrant's March 2019 shooting spree in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Taking the above into consideration, it can thus be concluded that over the long run, both the Dutch government and media became more concerned about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism. However, there is a difference in the way this concern manifested itself. The results of the content analysis show that, between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2019, the Dutch government gradually became more concerned about right-wing terrorism. Conversely, the Dutch media paid virtually no attention to right-wing terrorism until 2019, when it was effectively caught by surprise by events such as the Christchurch attacks.

ii. Hostility

Another indicator used for establishing the existence of a moral panic is hostility. During a moral panic, one can witness increased levels of hostility towards the entity or group that is held responsible for the (perceived) threat. Individuals belonging to this group are increasingly stigmatized and stereotyped (transforming into so-called folk devils), while those representing the forces of good are glorified (folk heroes or moral entrepreneurs). A society-wide us vs. them dichotomization ensues, in which the majority rallies behind the folk heroes.

The 14 NCTV reports used for documenting the Dutch government's perception of the right-wing terrorist threat contained no evidence of hostile reporting by the Dutch government

on matters related to right-wing terrorism. Reporting by the Dutch government was found to be objective and nuanced, and no cases of stigmatization or glorification were documented in the data.

Of the 176 newspaper articles published by the Dutch media between January 1, 2015 and December, 31, 2019, only one article scored positively on the hostility indicator, representing a negligible 0.06% of the sample. Reporting by the Dutch media on right-wing terrorism thus remained objective and devoid of the stigmatization and glorification typically associated with media reporting during moral panics.

iii. Consensus

The third indicator developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda is consensus: there has to be a minimal level of agreement in society that the threat is real, harmful and caused by the wrongdoings of a certain group of people. This sentiment must be shared by different societal actors and/or segments of the Dutch population, although the latter do not have to make up the majority of people in society.

In the previous discussion on the applicability of the ‘concern’ indicator to the data, it was established that both the Dutch government and Dutch media (each representing a different societal actor) are concerned about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. This concern manifests itself in significant government and media attention for right-wing terrorism and the labeling of right-wing terrorism as a significant threat from early 2016 and 2019 respectively.

Moreover, when examining statements about the right-wing terrorist threat contained in the NCTV reports and Dutch media newspaper articles, there appears to be a consensus regarding the source of the threat: a handful of isolated individuals who have become radicalized on the internet and inspired by previous instances of domestic and/or foreign right-wing terrorist violence.

The Dutch government and Dutch media thus share a basic understanding that the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands is present, potentially harmful and caused by a handful of isolated and radicalized individuals who may conduct copy-cat attacks on Dutch soil. However, it is not clear whether this consensus extends to other societal actors in the

Netherlands (e.g. NGOs, the private sector) or, most importantly, to segments of the Dutch population⁹.

iv. Disproportionality

The fourth indicator developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda is disproportionality. One may speak of a disproportionate response when a society's reaction to a perceived threat is not in proportion to the actual size of the threat. In order to verify whether the element of disproportionality is present, Goode & Ben-Yehuda developed four sub-indicators (see the previous theoretical section). If any of these sub-indicators are met, one may speak of a disproportionate societal reaction.

Previously, we examined reporting by the Dutch government on various types of terrorism and extremism and concluded that, between 2015 and 2020, the majority of government attention went out to Jihadists and the Right. Although Jihadists continued to receive the bulk of the attention during the period under study, attention for the Right increased to just over 20% in late 2019. Other forms of terrorism and extremism also featured in the NCTV reports examined for this study, but were not discussed to the same extent.

The Dutch government's systematic focus on Jihadists and the Right can be explained by looking at terrorism statistics on the national level. In the post 9/11 era, the Netherlands experienced five completed terrorist attacks on Dutch soil. Four of these attacks were attributed to Jihadist terrorism, and one to right-wing terrorism. The Dutch government's emphasis on Jihadists and the Right can therefore be justified by the country's recent history with terrorism. Other types of terrorism and extremism were mentioned to a lesser extent, as they were less prevalent in the Netherlands between 2015 and 2020. For instance, no ethno-nationalist/separatist or left-wing terrorist attacks occurred in the Netherlands within this time frame, despite the fact that both types of terrorism are widespread on the EU level. In this regard, the Netherlands seems to differ from countries such as the UK, France, Spain, Italy and Greece, who each have their own ethno-nationalist/separatist and/or left-wing terrorist groups.

Until 2019, reporting on terrorism by the Dutch media was heavily geared towards Jihadist terrorism and extremism (the amount of attention devoted to this category ranged

⁹ The limited size of this master's thesis made it impossible to incorporate additional societal actors in the analysis, the most important being the general public. The general public is one of the key actors in a moral panic, and the success of governments and/or media in generating and sustaining a moral panic is heavily dependent on the participation of the public.

between 89-96%) and other types of terrorism and extremism were virtually neglected. This suddenly changed in 2019, when events such as the Christchurch attacks and the assassination of Walter Lübcke produced a spike in media attention for right-wing terrorism and extremism. In that year, roughly 41% of the newspaper articles written by the Dutch media on terrorism and extremism covered the Right, almost surpassing the amount of newspaper articles published on Jihadist terrorism and extremism (56%).

This sudden interest of the Dutch media for the threat posed by the Right in 2019 seems to have been motivated primarily by high-profile right-wing terrorist attacks such as those in Christchurch rather than by an objective appreciation of the size of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands. This image is reinforced by the data presented in figures 7-9. These graphs show that prior to 2019, almost all of the Dutch media's attention went out to Jihadist terrorism and extremism. Other types of terrorism and extremism simply did not feature in newspaper articles published by the Dutch media, despite the fact that, from an objective point of view, some of them were certainly present. For instance, various right-wing terrorist attacks had already occurred in Europe before 2019, including the February 2016 arson attack on a mosque in the Netherlands. Apparently, a 'Christchurch' was required in order for the Dutch media to start reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism, resulting in the fact that in 2019, 25% of newspaper articles published by the Dutch media focused on right-wing terrorism.

However, the question remains whether this 25% 'attention rate' for right-wing terrorism in 2019 accurately reflects the size of the threat from an objective point of view. In terms of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands, one can conclude that no right-wing terrorist attacks were conducted in the Netherlands in 2019. However, a number of right-wing terrorist attacks took place in countries such as New-Zealand, the United States, Germany and Norway. Taking into consideration that the majority of the newspaper articles published in 2019 contained references to right-wing terrorist attacks abroad, it appears convincing that that the 25% attention rate associated with right-wing terrorism in 2019 mostly reflects developments abroad rather than on the national level.

In short, there appears to be evidence of disproportional reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media. With regard to the years 2015-2018, the observed disproportionality manifested itself in an underestimation rather than an overexaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat. Before 2019, there was virtually no reporting by the Dutch media on matters related to right-wing terrorism, despite the fact that various right-wing terrorist attacks had already occurred in the EU and the Netherlands. This

situation drastically changed in 2019, when 25% of the Dutch media's reporting focused on right-wing terrorism. However, developments abroad rather than in the Netherlands seem to be responsible for this significant increase in media attention for right-wing terrorism.

v. Volatility

The last indicator developed by Goode & Ben-Yehuda concerns volatility. Moral panics are volatile by definition, as the levels of fear, hostility and concern that are experienced during a moral panic are not sustainable over a longer period of time. Consequently, moral panics erupt relatively suddenly and nearly as suddenly, they subside.

The data collected for the Dutch government does not show signs of volatility. The amount of attention devoted to right-wing terrorism by the Dutch government exhibited a gradual increase between early 2015 and September 2018, after which it started fluctuating. In December 2019, the attention rate had increased with only 8% compared to early 2015. Moreover, no sudden spike in government attention for right-wing terrorism was observed for the period under study.

The data obtained for the Dutch media, on the other hand, bears all the characteristics of a moral panic in terms of volatility. Between 2015 and 2018, there was virtually no reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media. This changed in 2019, when the Christchurch attacks in New Zealand and the assassination of German politician Walter Lübcke spurred a 25% increase in media attention for right-wing terrorism. Nevertheless, it remains the question whether the amount of attention devoted to right-wing terrorism in 2019 will be sustained throughout 2020. This is important, as evidence of a potential normalization of the curve depicted in figure 8 is required for the volatility indicator to be definitely confirmed.

4.3.3. Summary

Summarizing the above discussion, it can be concluded that, when examining reporting by the Dutch media on of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands, three of Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators were met (see table 3). Nevertheless, it has to be remarked that in terms of disproportionality, media coverage revealed an underestimation rather than an overexaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat before 2019. After 2019 however, media attention for right-wing terrorism skyrocketed. Taking into consideration that this upward trend seems to be connected to an increase in the amount of right-wing terrorist attacks abroad (no right-wing terrorist attacks occurred in the Netherlands in 2019), it cannot be simply be labeled as disproportionate reporting by the Dutch media.

Table 3. The applicability of Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators to Dutch government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism.

	Dutch government	Dutch media
Concern	+	+
Hostility	-	-
Consensus	+	+
Disproportionality	-	+
Volatility	-	+/-

The volatility indicator was partially met. The spike in media attention observed in 2019 bears all the characteristics of the short lived media circus typically experienced during a moral panic. However, a definitive evaluation of the presence of the volatility indicator requires an extension of the current study into 2020 in order to find out whether the sudden spike in media attention observed in early 2019 will normalize to its pre-2019 level. Unfortunately, time limitations render it impossible to extend the study by a year.

The hostility indicator was not met, as only one newspaper article (representing 0.6% of the sample) published by the Dutch media between 2015 and 2020 contained signs of hostile reporting by the Dutch media. In general, reporting by the Dutch media was found to be nuanced and devoid of the stigmatization and glorification typically observed in media reporting during moral panics.

Taking into consideration that only three of the five indicators were met completely, we can therefore conclude that the observed difference in reporting between the Dutch

government and media cannot be explained by moral panic theory. The hypothesis advanced earlier in this study has therefore been falsified.

5. Conclusion

Conclusion

Having covered all three sub questions in the previous chapter, it is now time to summarize the study's most important findings and provide an answer to the main research question: 'To what extent can a potential difference in reporting between the Dutch government and Dutch media on right-wing terrorism be explained by moral panic theory?'

The above research question was formulated against the background of increasing media coverage of right-wing terrorism in the aftermath of the 2019 Christchurch attacks, in which right-wing terrorism is sometimes depicted as a new or fifth wave of terrorism, competing with the latest wave of Jihadist terrorism and potentially even surpassing it. However, Dutch and EU terrorism statistics do not (yet) confirm this image. One can therefore ask oneself the question whether the recent spike in media attention for right-wing terrorism truly reflects a new trend in the field of terrorism, or rather reflects a moral panic generated by the media. Apart from carrying societal relevance (i.e. are we overreacting to right-wing terrorism?), this question also carries academic relevance, as it enables me to test the moral panic theoretical framework to the case of government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism in the Netherlands. Is terrorism indeed a moral panic by design, or does the latter not necessarily flow from the former?

In order to answer the study's main research question, a content analysis was conducted on 14 reports and 176 newspaper articles published by the Dutch government and media respectively between 2015 and 2020, making it possible to document changes in reporting over time. While conducting the content analysis, attention was paid to both the volume and content of reporting on right-wing terrorism. The results obtained from the content analysis ultimately enabled me to compare government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism and formed the basis for verifying the existence of a moral panic using Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators.

The findings illustrate a clear difference between the Dutch government and media when it comes to reporting about the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. First, a difference was observed with regard to the amount of attention devoted to the topic. While the Dutch government had already been reporting about the right-wing terrorist threat in early 2015, the Dutch media only started to pay attention to it from 2019 onwards, when media attention for right-wing terrorism skyrocketed. Focusing events such as the March 2019 Christchurch attacks and the June 2019 assassination of Walter Lubcke seem to be associated

with this sudden interest for right-wing terrorism by the Dutch media, as they frequently featured in that year's newspaper stories on right-wing terrorism. Secondly, a difference was also observed between government and media reporting in terms of content. From early 2016 onwards, the Dutch government began to systematically assess the threat posed by right-wing terrorism as significant, meaning that it considered a right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands conceivable. This threat perception emerged after the February 2016 arson attack on a mosque in the Dutch city of Enschede, which led to the arrest and subsequent imprisonment of four Dutch citizens on charges of terrorism. In contrast, the media's threat perception of right-wing terrorism remained limited until 2018, and only began to be assessed as significant from 2019 onwards, when several right-wing terrorist attacks abroad, including Christchurch, started to channel the Dutch media's attention to the phenomenon of right-wing terrorism.

The observed difference between government and media reporting on the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands cannot be explained by moral panic theory. Goode & Ben-Yehuda stipulate that, for a moral panic to be present, all of their five indicators should be met; instead, the Dutch government and media obtained positive scores for only two and three of Goode & Ben-Yehuda's indicators respectively. The results therefore partially contradict the main hypothesis that was developed for this study, namely that a difference in terms of reporting exists, and that it is caused by a moral panic raging in the Dutch media. However, no signs of overexaggeration of the right-wing terrorist threat by the Dutch media were found. Instead, the opposite occurred, as the Dutch media systematically underestimated the right-wing terrorist threat until early 2019. There was virtually no reporting by the Dutch media on matters related to right-wing terrorism before 2019, despite the fact that, during these years, right-wing terrorist attacks had already occurred in the Netherlands and the EU.

In the absence of a moral panic, it is more sensible to attribute the observed difference between government and media reporting on right-wing terrorism to the different functions fulfilled by these actors. For example, the *raison d'être* of government agencies like the NCTV is to closely monitor developments in the field of terrorism and extremism and inform society of the latest threats, even when threats are not readily visible to the rest of Dutch society. Media coverage, on the other hand, is often swayed by the issues of the day, and places emphasis on unusual and extraordinary events that easily capture the attention of audiences. Along this line of reasoning, it can be posited that the extraordinary nature of the Christchurch attacks served as an eye-opener for the Dutch media, while for the Dutch government, it only confirmed what it had already been warning for since early 2016.

The fact that the study's findings do not point to the existence of a moral panic with regard to reporting on right-wing terrorism by the Dutch government and media does not however detract from the value of the moral panic theoretical framework for understanding contemporary representations of deviance. In essence, the moral panic theoretical framework provides researchers with the opportunity to critically examine potentially subjective threat perceptions held by powerful societal actors and compare them with their size from an objective point of view. Having said this, a case can be made for updating some elements of the moral panic theoretical framework. Goode & Ben-Yehuda's hostility criterion for example, reflecting potential bias in government and media reporting, was only found once in the data. This extremely low score on the hostility indicator may be the result of differences between the Netherlands and other countries (e.g. U.S., U.K.) in terms of journalistic tradition and the tone of reporting. It will therefore be interesting to see if future studies, focusing on terrorism and moral panics in countries other than the U.S. or U.K., will also obtain low scores on the hostility indicator.

Moreover, the findings also reveal that the link between terrorism and moral panics is not as straightforward as some academics believe. The current study has illustrated that moral panics do not necessarily flow from extraordinary and high-profile terrorist attacks such as Christchurch, and that terrorism is therefore certainly not a so-called 'moral panic by design'. It may be the case that societies have become more resilient to terrorism over time, significantly reducing the risk of future moral panics. Still, this may be wishful thinking, as this study has only examined the reaction of two societal actors (Dutch government and media) to a specific type of terrorism (i.e. right-wing terrorism) in a particular country (the Netherlands) within a limited period of time (2015-2020). Further research is therefore needed to test this claim, focusing on other countries and including additional societal actors (e.g. the general population, NGOs).

Finally, the question remains whether the study's findings reflect a new trend in the field of terrorism, whereby right-wing terrorism is emerging as a fifth wave of terrorism, following the latest wave of Jihadist terrorism. So far, this trend has not been reflected by the terrorism statistics presented by Europol. However, it should be remarked that Europol's terrorism statistics go as far as 2018, with data for 2019 still missing. A possible upward trend in the amount of right-wing terrorist attacks in the EU is therefore obscured by the absence of official data. Nevertheless, a simple enumeration of some of the right-wing terrorist attacks conducted in the EU in 2019 (assassination of Walter Lübcke; shooting and bombing spree in Halle) already reveals an increase compared to 2018, when Europol only reported 1 right-

wing terrorist attack in the EU. Taking these 2019 attacks into consideration, it might well be the case that the 2019 increase in government and media attention for right-wing terrorism, coupled with their characterization of right-wing terrorism as a significant threat, is in fact symptomatic of an increasing right-wing terrorist threat in Europe. Following this line of reasoning, it is possible that we may find ourselves at the beginning of a new era when it comes to terrorism; time will tell whether the Dutch government and media were right about the right.

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Appendix

Codebook 1

Name student	Sem van Oosterhout
Research question(s)	How much attention do the Dutch government and media pay to right-wing terrorism compared with other types of terrorism and extremism?
Corresponding sections	4.1.1 & 4.2.1
Data	NCTV & Media data
Recording unit	Paragraphs & whole text
Amount of categories	16

Category	Code	Definition	Indicators
Jihadist or Islamist threat	1	Threats emanating from Jihadist terrorists and Islamist extremists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamist extremists support a political ideology that is grounded in Islam and characterized by strong anti-western and anti-democratic ideas. Islamist extremists strive to create a state or remodel society on the basis of Islamic principles and are willing to resort to undemocratic means in order to achieve their goals. • Jihadist terrorists share Islamists' aspirations to establish a state on the basis of Islamic principles and are prepared to resort to terrorism in order to achieve this.
Jihadist terrorism	1.1	Terrorism inspired by a Jihadist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category includes discussions of the activities of both home-grown Jihadist terrorist networks as well as foreign or international terrorist networks (e.g. <i>IS</i>, <i>Al-Qaeda</i>, <i>Jabhat-al-Nusra</i>, <i>Boko-Haram</i>). • It includes discussions of terrorist threats posed by both Jihadist individuals and groups. • It also includes activities that are directly supportive of Jihadist terrorism (e.g. spreading of terrorist propaganda, terrorist recruitment, target selection, intelligence gathering, terrorist

			<p>financing). Non-violent activities other than these (i.e. not directly supportive to Jihadist terrorism) should be coded under the 'Islamist extremism category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not include discussions of other types of religious terrorism (e.g. Christian, Hindu, Jewish). These are coded as pertaining to the 6th or 'other' category.
Islamist extremism	1.2	Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by an Islamist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category includes discussions of the activities of Islamist extremist individuals and groups in the Netherlands and abroad. • The activities of Islamist extremists are not necessarily violent, they can also include unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior in both the physical (e.g. pro-ISIS demonstrations, compelling muslims not to vote in elections) and online environment (e.g. intimidation, hate speech). • Paragraphs or news stories containing a discussion of political or Jihadi-Salafism are placed under this category. However, not all Salafis pursue a state based on Islamic principles and/or engage in the use of undemocratic means (e.g. intimidation, coercion, spreading of fear) or violence in order to achieve this. Non-political Salafism serves as an example in this regard, and news stories containing a discussion of non-political Salafism should therefore not be coded under this category.
Right-wing threat	2.	Threats emanating from right-wing terrorists and extremists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups or individuals falling within this category aim to bring about a political, economic and social system based on a right-wing extremist model. As such, they pursue drastic political, economic and social change. Racist

			behavior, authoritarianism, xenophobia and hostility to immigration are commonly found attitudes in right-wing terrorist and extremist groups.
Right-wing terrorism	2.1	Terrorism motivated by a right-wing extremist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups or individuals falling within this category resort to terrorism in order to bring about a system based on a right-wing extremist model. • Examples of right-wing terrorist groups are the KKK and the NSU (<i>Ku Klux Klan, National Socialist Underground</i>).
Right-wing extremism	2.2	Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by a right-wing extremist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category includes discussions of the activities of right-wing extremist individuals and groups in the Netherlands and abroad. • The activities of right-wing extremists are not necessarily violent, they can also include unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior in both the physical (e.g. a high-way blockade in order to prevent political opponents to participate in a demonstration) and online environment (e.g. intimidation, hate speech). • It includes discussions of Dutch or foreign right-wing extremist groups and movements such as the NVU, Erkenbrand, Pegida or the Identitarian Movement.
Left-wing or anarchist threat	3	Threats emanating from left-wing or anarchist terrorists and extremists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups or individuals falling within this category are motivated by socialist, communist or anarchist beliefs. They employ terrorist or extremist tactics in order to replace the current (capitalist) system with a system that is either socialist, communist or anarchist (or a mix thereof).
Left-wing or anarchist terrorism	3.1	Terrorism motivated by a left-wing extremist or anarchist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category includes discussions of the activities of left-wing terrorist individuals and groups in the Netherlands and abroad.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples are FARC, DHKP-C, etc.
Left-wing or anarchist extremism	3.2	Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by a left-wing or anarchist ideology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups or individuals falling within this category sometimes employ violent tactics against (perceived) right-wing extremists. The activities of left-wing extremists are not necessarily violent, they can also include unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior in both the physical (e.g. occupation of oil rigs, universities) and online environment (e.g. intimidation, hate speech). • Examples of Dutch left-wing extremist groups are AFA/ANTIFA (<i>Anti-Facistische Actie</i>) and the AAGU (<i>Anarchistische Anti-deportatie Groep Utrecht</i>). • Dutch pro-refugee/asylum extremists are in the Dutch context considered part of the left-wing extremist family.
Ethnonationalist or separatist threat	4	Threats emanating from ethno-nationalist/separatist terrorists and extremists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethno-nationalists or separatists aim to establish an autonomous or independent state by seeking secession from a larger political entity (e.g. country) or unification of previously separate territories.
Ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorism	4.1	Terrorism motivated by secessionist or irredentist aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorists often embrace left or right-wing ideologies, their use of terrorist tactics is primarily motivated by secessionist or irredentist objectives. • Examples of ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorist groups are the IRA, ETA, PKK, etc.
Ethno-nationalist or separatist extremism	4.2	Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by secessionist or irredentist aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities of ethno-nationalist or separatist extremists are not necessarily violent, they can also include unlawful or undemocratic, non-violent behavior in both the physical (e.g. manipulation of regional elections) and online environment (e.g.

			intimidation, discrimination).
Single- issue threat	5	Threats emanating from single-issue terrorists and extremists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groups or individuals falling under this category are not concerned with replacing one political, economic or social system with another. Rather, they resort to extremist methods or terrorist tactics in order to press for change in a specific policy field. • The individuals and groups within this category are usually concerned with animal rights protection, environmental protection, anti-abortion or anti-racism campaigns.
Single-issue terrorism	5.1	Terrorism motivated by a desire to change a specific policy or practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of single issue terrorism include assassinations or bombings by anti-abortion advocates in order to intimidate (larger segments of) the population.
Single-issue extremism	5.2	Manifestations of extremist behavior motivated by a desire to change a specific policy or practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-issue extremist groups in the Netherlands for example include the anti-racist extremist groups '<i>De Grauwe Eeuw</i>' and '<i>Kick Out Zwarte Piet</i>' or the environmental action group '<i>Extinction Rebellion</i>'.
Other	6	Other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This category has been developed in order to accommodate paragraphs or news stories that contain a discussion of a type of terrorism or extremism that is not mentioned above, or news stories that are not about terrorism or extremism at all.

Coding rules codebook 1

1. In the context of this study, a news story is considered a single piece of writing published in print by one of the three aforementioned Dutch newspapers (De Volkskrant, De Telegraaf and NRC Handelsblad). News stories generally follow a fixed structure (i.e. inverted pyramid) and focus on a single event, topic or theme.
2. A paragraph constitutes group of sentences that is usually organized around a single theme or idea. Paragraphs are often indicated by a line, indentation or numbering.
3. When coding individual paragraphs or news stories, coders are cautioned to apply a distinction between extremism and terrorism. While the former can also involve physical violence, it is of a different nature than the violence associated with terrorism (see the theoretical section for more information about the difference between extremist violence and terrorist violence).
4. In order to avoid duplication in the results, coders must make sure that individual paragraphs or news stories are assigned to one category only.
5. In case a paragraph or news story contains references to both extremism and terrorism, it should be placed under the terrorism category.
6. In cases where it is difficult to determine the subject of a paragraph or news story because its discusses two or more types of extremism or terrorism, coders are advised to return to the title of the section or story and look for clues about its main topic or theme (e.g. does it contain words such as 'Islamist' or 'Right-wing?'). If the title contains references to two or more types of terrorism or extremism, classify the paragraph or news story as 'other'.
7. In contentious cases where a named terrorist or terrorist organization can be placed in two or more categories, coders must determine the primary ideology ascribed to that individual or group. For instance: although the Official IRA employed a Marxist ideology, its main objective was to unify Ireland under a single Irish republic (hence it should be categorized as an ethno-nationalist or separatist terrorist group).
8. Short news articles on the front page of a newspaper directing readers to the full story on another page of that same newspaper are to be excluded from the analysis in order to avoid duplicates.
9. News stories that are about the same topic and that were published on the same day but by different newspapers are not to be counted as duplicates.
10. Book, film, theater and art reviews are categorized as other as they do not classify as news stories.
11. News stories containing more than 2000 words are excluded from the analysis.

Codebook 2

Name student	Sem van Oosterhout
Research question(s)	How do the Dutch government and media each assess the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands?
Corresponding sections	4.1.2 & 4.2.2
Data	NCTV & Media data
Recording unit	Sentences
Amount of categories	10

Category	Code	Definition	Indicators
Threat	1	Any indication, circumstance or event with the potential to cause loss or damage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The threat must originate from individuals or groups, bear a right-wing extremist or terrorist signature and be relevant to the Netherlands from a security perspective.
Minimal threat	1.1	It is unlikely that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no signs that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands. If a paragraph or news story about right-wing extremism or terrorism does not contain any discussion of the right-wing terrorist threat to the Netherlands, it should be coded as 1.1 (minimal).
Limited threat	1.2	There is a slight chance that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands is deemed possible, yet unlikely.
Significant threat	1.3	It is conceivable that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a possibility that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands. Examples of previous right-wing terrorist attacks in the Netherlands or abroad are presented as evidence that right-wing terrorism can also occur in the Netherlands.
Substantial threat	1.4	There is a real chance that a right-wing terrorist attack will occur in the Netherlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The terrorist threat is real and severe.
Critical threat	1.5	A right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands is imminent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A terrorist attack can materialize any moment. There are concrete signs that an individual or group is planning to execute a

			right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands.
Focusing event	2	A salient, powerful and sudden political, social or economic occurrence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event is discussed as relevant for appreciating the threat posed by right-wing terrorism to the Netherlands. Sometimes, the event is discussed in order to justify a recent change in threat perception (e.g. from 'significant' to 'substantial'). • It can for instance involve a discussion of a failed, foiled or completed right-wing terrorist attack in the Netherlands or abroad.
Hostility	3	Society is increasingly perceived as two dimensional: divided between the terrorists or folk devils (representing the forces of evil) and ordinary citizens or folk heroes (representing the forces of good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplified by phrases such as 'Either you are with us, or the terrorists'.
Folk devils	3.1	The actor(s) held responsible for the right-wing terrorist threat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actor is not only held responsible for the threat, but is also stereotyped and stigmatized. • Members belonging to the extremist/terrorist group are regarded as the enemies of respectable, law-abiding society.
Folk heroes	3.2	Those representing the forces of good and resisting against the terrorist threat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those resisting against the terrorist threat are glorified, as they are perceived as protecting society's values, interests, and way of life.

Coding rules Codebook 2

1. A sentence is a grammatically distinct unit of writing, followed by a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.
2. Nevertheless, in order to be able to fully capture the message conveyed by the author, it is permitted to code sentences up to a two sentence maximum (i.e. one code may be assigned to two successive sentences).
3. If a NCTV report or news story does not contain any discussion of the right-wing terrorist threat, code it as '1' (minimal).
4. In some cases, NCTV reports or news stories may already contain an assessment of the threat posed by right-wing terrorism (e.g. using the words 'low', 'insignificant', 'present', 'expected', etc.) When such a threat assessment is already present, directly copy the threat assessment contained in the document under review, include it in the coding sheet, and code the threat assessment on the basis of the threat levels contained in the codebook.
5. If a report or news story yields two or more threat scores with regard to right-wing terrorism (e.g. '1' or minimal and '2' or 'limited') add up the scores and obtain an average. Scores $\geq .5$ should be rounded up (e.g. the average of one score of '1' and one score of '2' is 1,5 and should be rounded up to a score of '2').