



POLICY INSTRUMENTS AND EXTREMIST WORLDVIEWS

An Exploratory Report - Summary

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Summary

Introduction

This research was carried out on behalf of the *Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatie Centrum* (Research and Documentation Centre, WODC) of the Ministry of Justice and Security. By examining policy instruments and extremist worldviews, the government wishes to gain insight into the intended functioning of policy instruments for religiously motivated terrorists, compared to other extremist groups. The government also wishes to understand how extremist groups perceive such policy instruments and the impact these instruments have on these groups. In this summary, we discuss the background, methodology, and findings of the research.

Background and defining the research problem

This policy research focusses on how different extremist groups or individuals perceive government policy instruments, how they respond to them, and how government policies relate to their self-identification. In doing so, it explores the paradox of modern democracy: How does a democratic society deal with the undemocratic elements in its midst? Whether it is the use of repressive means against demonstrations, or the reintegration programmes for repatriating the Dutch foreign fighters in Syria, the government is involved in the 'governance' of possibly undemocratic elements. Conversely, extremist groups react to government policies; a key aspect of political activism, whether extremist or not, is to challenge the status quo. In this report, we analyse the interaction between the Dutch authorities and groups and individuals designated as extremist or radicals in relation to the various policy instruments aimed at those involved. To investigate this interaction, the following question was formulated in consultation with the WODC:

What does the government aim to effectuate with policy instrument directed at religiously motivated extremists as such compared to other extremist groups? How do these groups perceive such policy instruments and how does that relate to their actions and self-identification?

This takes into account the idea that the groups concerned may use different labels and concepts, or the same labels and concepts differently, as the government does. We thereby also consider that the labels used reflect policy choices and political debates, and are thus a substantive part of the policy (Fadil, De Koning, & Ragazzi, 2019; Lakoff, 2010). This research also focuses on an analysis of the experiences of religiously motivated

terrorists, but the term 'extremist' is used here because it considers the fact that in government policy it is rarely about tackling violence alone, but also about prevention and a broader approach.

A common three-parting of policy instruments has been found relevant: sticks, carrots and sermons (Bemelmans-Videc, Rist, & Vedung, 1998; Lascoumes & LeGales, 2007). Sticks are forms of repression, carrots refer to positive activating means such as grants and training, and sermons are forms of moral encouragement for good citizenship through public campaigns and counter-narratives. This research is about a mix of sticks, carrots and sermons that are used against terrorists and others. The last part of the problem statement was added from the observation that the WODC's tender request gave a great deal of weight to possible forms of self-identification, motivations, and perceptions of government policy among the groups concerned, which also reflects the scientific debate on the 'sticks, carrots and sermons' approach (Hacking, 2004; Sayer, 2005).

Questions and operationalisation

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, this study focuses on the following questions:

- *Scientific insights and debates*
What are the scientific insights in the field of proven, as well as unproven but potentially effective policy instruments concerning religiously or ideologically motivated extremists?
- *Experiences with policy*
What are the experiences in the Netherlands and abroad with what works in terms of *sticks, carrots* and *sermons* for ideologically or religiously motivated extremists and under what conditions, in what way, to what extent, in what time frame, and for what term? What desires, capacities, and opportunities require the effective and efficient application of these instruments? What is the legal basis for it?
- *Interaction with the groups concerned*
How does policy relate to self-identification as well as material and immaterial motivations and perceptions on government policies of the groups concerned?
- *How do the findings* of research question 1, 2 and 3 about the different groups relate to each other?

The starting points for the analysis of public policy are the experiences and perceptions of the stakeholders themselves regarding the policy instruments they face. More specifically, the interaction between extremist groups and government policies aimed at them is examined. This report also considers how these groups relate to the labels and policy frameworks aimed at them (such as extremist, radical, fundamentalist, etc.).

To be able to analyse both the multi-instrumental policies that the groups and individuals concerned come into contact with and the groups themselves, and in doing so, operationalise the sub-questions, the analytical framework derived from Dean's 'Analytics of Government' (Dean, 1999) and Death's 'Analytics of Counter-Conduct' (Death, 2010) is used. These five aspects of this framework deliberately do not exactly follow the above questions but indicate the different operational dimensions of the individual questions relevant to answering the problem statement.

1. What is the purpose of the current policy (chapter 2)? What is this policy aimed at and what does it respond to? In other words, how does the government make certain phenomena an object of recent policy? Policy does not come out of the blue. There are always one or more drivers for developing policy instruments, in which certain aspects are therefore magnified and others remain un- or underexposed. Against what and against who are the different policies directed and how does the purpose of the policy translate into sticks, carrots and sermons? Moreover, if the government problematises specific views, actions or manifestations of the groups involved, what alternative ideals and views are presented?
2. What action repertoires are used by the government and relevant groups (chapter 3)? What concrete policies are being implemented? What reactions does this repertoire evoke and from whom? How do the groups concerned react to this and vice versa?
3. What knowledge regimes are applied by the government and groups involved (chapter 4)? How do the government and concerned groups substantiate their claims? What are their knowledge channels? We mainly look at the substance of the claims being made and investigate the type of knowledge as well as how it is rationalised and legitimised in relation to the policy aimed at the groups involved. What are the reactions of the groups involved and how does the government respond to them?
4. What forms of categorisation and (self-) identification are constructed (chapter 5)? How does the government categorise and label the groups involved ('radical', 'extremist', 'terrorist', 'fundamentalist', etc.), and how do the groups concerned relate to this? What ideas about self and identity lie behind the different aspects of the policies that have been discussed and how do these policies bring about new identities and subjectivity among the groups involved? How do people give meaning – either explicitly in their views or implicitly – to categories imposed on them, such as 'radical' and 'terrorist'.
5. How does the operation of government policy aimed at so-called extremist groups relate to the aims, views, and practices of the groups concerned (conclusion)? This is partly based on the answers to the above questions in an evaluative sense about the interaction between government, government policy, and the groups involved.

During the course of this research, efforts were made to speak to policymakers in addition to the people from the different groups, in order to develop a balanced view of the parties involved and to gain insight into how different policy instruments are employed. The dialogue with policy makers was not established, therefore, the focus is predominantly on the policy as perceived by the groups themselves, in addition to the various policy documents themselves.

Extremism as a field

This report conceptualises extremism as a field. Instead of using categories which label groups as ideologically or legally extremist, considering extremism as a field makes it possible to analyse extremism as a so-called 'zone of activity', see also Klandermans et al. (2016). Groups, but especially individuals and views, can then be considered fluid rather than as static in the form of a particular ideological movement or by a violation of the law.

Dutch public policy on extremism is largely concerned with security, an approach which has specific characteristics. Several researchers have shown how in recent European history more and more social issues have become part of debates and policies on security, and how the term 'security' has acquired an increasingly broader meaning (Cesari, 2012; De Graaf, 2011). In the 1990s, the security issues discussed by the *Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst* (Domestic Security Service – BVD) no longer only related to the threat of clandestine political violence. Anti-integration and anti-democratic tendencies and social cohesion were also included more prominently than before in the annual reports of the BVD (Fadil et al., 2019). So-called securitisation theories play an important role in the analyses and explanations of this process.

In academic research, extremism quite broadly is considered a collective term for movements that seek to homogenise society based on dogmatic principles, suppressing all opposition, and to subjugate minorities (Mudde, 2007; Schmid, 2013). Extremists are groups and individuals who want to achieve their goals irregularly (i.e., not according to liberal democratic principles and ways) or where those goals themselves are contrary to the principles of the liberal democratic rule of law. It is difficult to find characteristics that are specific and exclusive to extremist groups. Some elements are reflected in previous research, such as the rejection of the rule of law and a preference or legitimisation of the use of clandestine violence (Olsson, 2020; Schmid, 2013, 2014), as well as forms of meaning-making about the world in which monocausal relationships are central and often directed against religious, ethnic, and sexual minorities (Coolsaet, 2015; Lowe, 2017; Schmid, 2013) who are labelled 'outgroup' (Berger, 2018).

The above aspects apply to the far right, the far left, and jihadism. These can be considered different manifestations within an extremist field, defined from a normative and dominant political centre that considers itself predominantly liberal and 'mainstream'. Moreover, within that dominant centre, there are several parties such as politicians, columnists, and scientists who deal with labelling, which means it is not a homogeneous centre. This is also evidenced by the fact that groups involved also may utilise such labels. With labels such as extreme, jihadist, radical or ultra, political activists are named as oppositional in word or deed and are generally considered potentially dangerous, deviant, and subversive. On this basis, policies are formed to defend the liberal democratic order, claimed by politicians and public institutions (Mondon & Winter, 2020, pp. 58-60). It should be noted that different groups and individuals who are

considered 'extreme' are not equal when it comes to structural positions in Dutch history and society.

The cases: Definition and placement in the extremist field

To arrive at a concrete answer to the research question, three cases have been selected that are present in the extremist field. For this selection, comprehensive research has been conducted on the far right, the far left, and jihadism, including on the definitions used by the government (in particular *Algemene Inlichtingen en Veiligheidsdienst* – General Intelligence and Security Service, AIVD and Nationale Coördinator voor Terrorisme en Veiligheid – *National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism and Security*, NCTV). On this basis, three case studies have been placed within the outlined field.

Right-wing extremism

This report conceptualises right-wing extremism in the Netherlands in the extremist field as follows:

1. The following definition, which focuses on ideology, is used. Right-wing Extremism is: "An ideology that includes authoritarianism, anti-democracy and exclusive and/or holistic nationalism" (Carter 2018).
2. We recognise the AIVD's approach: there must be a willingness to act and violations of the law have to occur.
3. In the field, there are more ideas but fewer organisations observable.
4. Right-wing extremism is becoming more mainstream. Views find political representation.
5. There is less offline activism, but more online activity and recruitment.

Pegida Netherlands is presented as a case for the far right. In the autumn of 2015, the Dutch movement organised a demonstration in Utrecht that attracted 400 people, according to Pegida Netherlands website. Nowadays, Pegida Netherlands attracts fewer supporters to its demonstrations. Ideologically, Pegida Netherlands mainly targets Islam and immigration of Muslims and criticises the political establishment as well as the so-called 'mainstream media'. They accuse them of either remaining silent about the 'Islamisation' and 'repopulation' ('omvolking') of Europe, or of actively facilitating it. Although Pegida Netherlands is viewed by many as 'marginal' within the extremist field, on the basis of an analysis of the ideology and views, as well as the observability of the interaction of Pegida Netherlands and the various government agencies, this group was chosen as a case study for this research.

Left-wing extremism

This report conceptualises left-wing extremism in the Netherlands in the extremist field as follows:

- 1 It is aimed at social homogeneity beyond the boundaries of the democratic state.
- 2 It is anti-pluralistic – dogmatic absolutism of one's own viewpoints.
- 3 Shift from anti-capitalism to counter-demonstrations and anti-fascism/anti-racism.
- 4 Fewer organisations, more opportunistic supporters.
- 5 Manifests itself, publicly visible.

The Anti-Fascist Action Netherlands (AFA) was chosen as a case study. The Anti-Fascist Action Netherlands originated in its current form in 1992 from various squatter and anarchist groups (Bray 2017). Today, the organisation consists mainly of several local and international 'departments'. According to several media reports, these departments consist of a small organisation with an often significant constituency (L'Ami 2018). They claim to have different goals, as many anti-fascists are also activists for purposes other than anti-fascism such as anarchism, climate, anti-capitalism, and so on. In the Netherlands, the AFA focuses mainly on the far-right, discrimination, and racism. Among the various strategies used by the AFA are to disrupt demonstrations which they consider to be 'fascist', such as those of Identitair Verzet (Identitarian Resistance) or Pegida Netherlands. Internationally, the AFA does not shy away from committing violence. Although this is less prevalent in the Netherlands, occasional street violence during demonstrations to keep 'the far-right' off the streets does occur.

Jihadism NL

This report conceptualises jihadism in the Netherlands in the extremist field as follows:

1. In policy and some scientific studies, they are considered the most extreme.
2. Transnational solidarity and fundamental change of the world are paramount in the jihadi ideology.
3. There is a willingness to act inside and outside the boundaries of the law.
4. It is anti-pluralistic and holds dogmatic absolutism.
5. Networks are the main organisational relationships.
6. They are on the margins of society and have no political or religious representation.

What jihadism in the Netherlands looks like and how it manifests itself is dynamic. Currently, there are no longer organisations in the Netherlands such as Sharia4Holland and BehindBars that openly subscribe to the ideologies of Al Qaeda or Islamic State. This means that the public visibility of jihadists based on their own channels, networks and partnerships is much less than with the far-right or the far-left: there is no organisation with a clear identity and no 'secretariat' for 'Jihadist Netherlands'. The analyses of the jihadist field are therefore not, as in the case of the left and right extremist field, focused on specific organisational links, but on individuals and themes (such as global solidarity

and struggle) and also includes previously collected research material that relates to the above-mentioned organisations.

Methodology

Given the short course of this research, an open-source study was initially chosen, in which social media analysis was undertaken. Data collection began on 17 February 2020. The starting point was to analyse all available posts from 1 January 2018 to 11 September 2020 for the groups Pegida Netherlands, AFA Netherlands and 'Jihadism NL'.

In addition to an analysis of policy documents and social media channels of the groups involved, this research also carried out interviews with various individuals. Conducting these interviews was made more difficult because of the restrictive measures imposed in connection with COVID-19. Moreover, not everyone was willing to take part in an investigation on 'extremism'. In the end, 8 interviews were conducted with those involved, 2 with (former) members of Pegida Netherlands, and 6 with those involved in 'Jihadism NL'. Jihadism NL also uses research material from project Islamic Mission's long-term research (De Koning, Becker, & Roex, 2020) with, for the most part, previously unpublished material. Although several attempts have been made to get in touch with AFA Netherlands, they have shown no interest in participating in this research.

Policies against radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism

This chapter summarises the definitions of radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism. Based on a thematic analysis of CVE and PVE reviews, an overview is given of various policy instruments and their evaluations.

The literature review shows that almost all the evaluations of recent years are about evaluating the anti-radicalisation approach to religious extremism, particularly among Muslims. The involvement of 'communities', counter-narratives, issues of identity and development, almost all relate to Muslim youth (see also: Stephens et al. 2019). This means that the question of how the policy is perceived by the different groups in this report will be approached differently. For left- and right-wing extremism, the emphasis is on law enforcement, while for jihadist groups the normative framework 'Problematic Behaviour', and the extensive and widely implemented CVE and PVE measures are applied with a great deal of attention to the prevention of possible future clandestine political violence. This makes extremist violence by definition a matter of deviance, but in left- and right-wing extremism it is considered a form of delinquent behaviour, whereas jihadism is viewed as a social phenomenon within and of Muslim communities (see: Shoshan, 2016).

The evaluations and other discussions also show that the government's position is complicated. While there are examples that forms of repression and prevention may be useful, (in the case of jihadists), perceptions of the state as oppressors and foreign policy of Western countries also contribute to radicalisation. For right-wing extremism, a military background plays a role; this could also apply to jihadists (based on anecdotal evidence on the Dutch foreign fighters in Syria). The complicated (moral) position of the government is also illustrated by the fact that policy development and implementation take place in a grey area. Koehler (2017) notes that the distinction in deradicalisation and disengagement automatically sends policy into a grey area: methods aimed at these processes take hold in the 'pre-criminal' field – is this desirable? Is it morally and legally acceptable to change an individual's political or religious beliefs? Also, governments run the risk of placing non-violent and legal activism under the heading of 'countering violent extremism', depending on what the state defines as 'extreme' or 'moderate'. This trade-off is rarely discussed in policy papers or political discussions.

Action repertoires

The literature review shows, among other things, that a large part of the policy on extremism is aimed at 'jihadism'. The formulation of that policy and its associated elaboration are closely related to the performative power of the government. This performative power can also be observed by those referred to as extremists and terrorists.

This chapter specifically looks at different policy instruments that are perceived by different groups. The analysis takes the collected data as a starting-point. This means that only the policy tools observed or experienced by Pegida Netherlands, AFA Netherlands or Jihadists NL in the social media posts, blogs, interviews, and media coverage, are discussed. This is the policy observed, perceived, and responded to by those involved.

With regard to right-wing extremism, no explicit policy exists which is aimed at them. However, Pegida Netherlands refers to policies that focus on disturbing public order, possible violence, the possibility of hate speech or group insult, and the curtailment of the right to demonstrate. Based on an analysis of the events in Eindhoven around the Al Fourqaan mosque in the summer of 2019 and interviews conducted with those involved, it can be concluded that in formulating their action repertoire, Pegida Netherlands has expectations how different parties such as the government but also social antagonists such as Muslims or counter-protesters can react. This influences how Pegida Netherlands design their actions: they want to use the anticipated reactions of opponents to reinforce their own message. When they see policy as unjust or anti-democratic, they want to

demonstrate this perceived injustice precisely by provoking reactions. Action repertoires are thus carefully adapted according to how public policy is perceived.

Policy instrument	Perception	Response
Right to demonstrate and control of disturbance of public order/violence	Inconsistent Unfair Antidemocratic Confirmation of current unjust policies Double standards	Provoke counter-demonstrations of antagonists Lawsuits against municipalities/mayor
Prosecution for group insult and hate speech	Inconsistent Double standards	Appeal Adjustments in wording
Intimidation by the police during demonstrations such as brief arrests, recordings, and threat of prosecution	Unfair	Some cease activities
Searches, arrests	Breach of privacy Harassment	Some stop participating demonstrations.
Removal of social media accounts	Extreme measure Unfair	No adjustments Adaptation of wording 'Start over'
Delayed response to public information requests	Confirmation/symptom of current policy	

There is no explicit government policy aimed at left-wing extremism. On the basis of an analysis of the social media channels of AFA-Netherlands and related groups and an explanation of the cases of the 'Paf-girl' and the trial of activist Joke Kaviaar, it becomes clear that the policy instruments used by the government are mainly seen as confirmation of one's own viewpoints. The curtailment of the right to demonstrate, CTER measures, increasing control on the streets and legal persecution for incitement, are all so-called

'symptoms of the police state'. The action repertoires are therefore hardly adapted by AFA-Netherlands.

Policy instrument	Perception	Response
Curtailment of the right to demonstrate	Undemocratic Confirmation of existing problems Symptom of 'police state'	Rallies explaining protesters' rights Ignoring legislation by not registering (counter)demonstrations
CTER measures/registration	Symptom of 'police state' Curtailing democratic freedoms	
Increasing control on the street	Symptom of 'police state'	Demonstrations/noise demo Rallies explaining protesters' rights 'Other action methods' (not specified)
Prosecution for incitement or threat	Unjust/inconsistent policies Confirmation of existing relationships	Appeal No adjustment in behaviour Adjustment in wording
Intimidation by police	Harassment Invasion of privacy	Suing officials for harassment 'Aggression is answered with aggression'

In the case of the jihadists, there is a wide range of instruments implemented by the government and a multitude of so-called 'chain partners', who are all at liberty to implement their own instruments as they see fit. Risk politics and care politics are intermittently implemented by the different actors. Risk policies focus on precautions, criminal or not, and care policies relate to the welfare and well-being of (alleged) jihadists. In both cases, safety concerns and the detection of potential threats are leading, and people's personal affairs are thus scrutinised.

Policy instrument	Perception	Response
Right to demonstrate and control of disturbance of public order/violence	No longer possible	Withdraw
Prosecution for travelling to Syria	Hypocrisy and inconsistency All jihadists treated the same	Appeal TA as a mobilising frame
Action programme	Action plan against Islam Divide and rule in relation to Muslims	Mobilizing constituencies (in the past)
Searches, arrests	Harassment and meddling	Trying to evade controls Trying not to stand out Strictly adhere to the laws and regulations
Disruption / surveillance (CTER)	Attack on Muslims	Unemployment Creative handling of rules and laws Family protection
Financial approach*	Unfair Loss of work	Bypass control Withdraw Work becomes impossible Running an organisation becomes impossible
Various youth care agencies	Siege family and partner	Withdraw Trying to be left alone
Prosecution of attacks		TA as a mobilising frame
Revoking passport of Dutch nationals with dual nationality	Confirmation of existing relationships Threat	Mobilising constituencies Ostentatiously burning passport

Policy instrument	Perception	Response
Refusal to repatriate	Confirmation of existing relationships Threat	Lawsuits
Prosecution of other terrorism-related cases*	Double standards	Withdraw TA as a mobiliser
Label*	Double standards	Attack on Muslims Withdraw Keeping records
Deradicalization monitoring	What do they want? Dissecting private life	Caution in contacts Withdraw
* Muslims who are not considered jihadists by the government also indicate that they are affected.		

Alternative sources of knowledge

To understand how people perceive the world around them, it is important to determine where they get their knowledge from and whether they identify specific sources of knowledge. The issue of trust in media and politics is especially relevant here. This chapter examines how stakeholders view the information of the government and the substantive claims that are made, as well as the type of knowledge and knowledge sources, and how these are rationalised and legitimised in relation to the policy and mix of sticks, carrots, and sermons aimed at the groups concerned.

Although trust in government and media in the Netherlands is relatively high, high levels of distrust in these institutions are observable within Pegida Netherlands and Jihadism NL. Especially in the case of Jihadism NL, the idea that the media are hostile to Muslims prominently features in their worldview. At the same time, all three case studies selectively use the mainstream media as long as it supports their own standpoints. One seems to put a lot of work into spreading alternative sources and news as part of awareness among those who would be susceptible to the, in their view, fake news from government and media. Because Dutch jihadists have largely withdrawn from public debate and public social media, their knowledge channels and sources are less visible. The information from closed groups has not been analysed in detail, but has been tracked

by the researchers. In general, it can be said that the patterns there do not differ very much.

Channels and resources	Pegida Netherlands	AFA Netherlands	Jihadism NL
Use of / perception mainstream	Distrust 'Fake news media' Selective use (negative coverage of Muslims)	Posting media reports without comment	Distrust Hostility Selective use
Direct contacts with government for public activities	At demonstrations		In the past, not at the moment (for private affairs: regular contacts with the district agent)
	Distrust and recrimination over lack of action to protect them		Distrust Blame hypocrisy
Alternative channels	Own social media page with own reports and observations Fenixx (Frontnieuws)	Own social media channels with their own observations and criticisms	Limited number of social media channels Pages of observations and calls. WhatsApp, Threema
			Archive material IS, Al Qaeda and Sharia4
	Collective and individual views	Individual views	Individual views

Identities and subjectivities

When approaching different individuals and parties to participate in this research, a common response was that people do not consider themselves to be extremist. Since the title of this study contains the term 'extremism', the response was sometimes very dismissive. Some people pointed out that they have the classification of the government on their side, for example, it would call them 'radical' and not extremist.

This chapter deals with the various forms of categorisation and self-identification that are employed. How does the government categorise and label the groups involved in the research ('radical', 'extremist', 'terrorist', 'fundamentalist', etc.), and how do the groups and individuals relate to this?

How different people view subjectivities, whether asserted or attributed, strongly influences how these groups and individuals define antagonists and perceive policies. It is striking that no one would refer to themselves as extremist, fascist, terrorist, or Nazi, but would attribute these labels to antagonists and also to the government. Other people's behaviours are also often seen as violent and therefore extremist, and the government's actions as inconsistent. One sees oneself predominantly as an activist, protester, or warrior.

	Pegida Netherlands	AFA the Netherlands	Jihadism NL
Government-imposed labels (in particular AIVD / NCTV)	Extremist Anti-Islam Radical-right	Activists Extremists Terrorists	Extremists Terrorists Jihadists Jihadtraveller Syriatraveller Radicals
Self-identification	Anti-Islam Within the law Nonviolent Protester	Activists Resistance	Salafiyya Jihadiyya Warrior Lions Radical Soldiers Revolutionaries Syriatravellers Muslim detainees Forgotten

	Pegida Netherlands	AFA the Netherlands	Jihadism NL
			'None' Steadfast
Categorization opponents	Fascists Nazis (idiots)	(Extreme) Right Anti-Islam Fascism Nazism Muslim bashers	Khawarij Unbelievers Extremists Taghut

Findings and conclusion

The main research question was:

What does the government aim to effectuate with policy instrument directed at religiously motivated extremists as such compared to other extremist groups? How do these groups perceive such policy instruments and how does that relate to their actions and self-identification?

This report shows, based on the analysis of three case studies within the extremist field in the Netherlands, that the interaction between the government and these groups can be conceptualised as a complex web deploying a wide range of action repertoires, exploiting different knowledge channels, and attributing and owning subjectivities. The interaction between the government and the groups it identifies as extremist therefore does not follow an apparently unambiguous action-response pattern. Both the government and the extremist groups are part of a political-social context that is partly polarised, in which there are structural inequalities and systemic racism, and in which numerous civil society actors play a role in the amplification, transmission and reduction of social divisions. Groups and individuals agitate against the government, against each other, and against other civil society actors. The government uses a particular range of action and policy instruments to respond to this social phenomenon in society. This policy reaches groups and individuals through a multitude of channels. They tailor their action repertoire, relying partly on the same sources of information as government and media, and partly on their own sources. This makes the interaction between government and the extremist groups extremely erratic and hardly unambiguous. In other words, the way extremist groups perceive the government and respond to policies ranges from

antagonism, to accommodation to opportunism to evasion, and is not solely dependent on the public authorities themselves.

The literature review shows some important patterns that are relevant to an understanding of the results. There is a very wide range of policy instruments dedicated to preventing clandestine political violence and social unrest, as well as safeguarding the rule of law. Various policy papers and knowledge documents focus specifically on Salafism and jihadism. In practice, the policy is mainly aimed at countering and controlling risks of possible radicalisation among Muslims in the future. As a result, it is difficult to prevent the stigmatising effect of the policy on broader sections of the population, even if this is emphatically not the intention of the government. It is not without reason that we have seen consistent warnings from the AIVD in the past against stigmatizing effects of reducing security to a problem with Muslims. This report shows, among other things, that this focus on Muslims and Salafism is fodder for radical-right parties and indeed also for Pegida Netherlands. Government policy does not necessarily have to illicit a stigmatising effect, but can be co-generated and influenced by other civil society actors.

This report shows that the relationship between Pegida Netherlands and the government is marked by actions that provoke reactions. However, these are not simply to be captured as chronological events. These actions and reactions are also ambiguous; both the government and Pegida Netherlands exhibit ambivalent attitudes towards each other. Both parties' action repertoires are attuned to each other and interact with their subjectivities and knowledge channels. The policy tools used to limit the visibility of Pegida Netherlands may (inadvertently) create action repertoires that impact the government. The fact that the government's knowledge channels and subjectivities are instrumentalised by the group concerned reinforces Pegida's message.

In the case of AFA Netherlands, a circular movement between the action repertoires of AFA Nederland and the government is observed, which is fuelled by the various subjectivities and knowledge channels that are employed. The policy instruments AFA Netherlands faces serve as confirmation of the status quo. Again, the relationships are not straightforward: there is a certain ambivalence given that AFA Netherlands also needs the government to maintain its own subjectivity as an anarchist victim.

There is a strong interaction between jihadists and government agencies. To some extent, a struggle over the definition and use of terms in a shared socio-political context is observed. As a result, non-violent collective action among jihadists is now virtually non-existent, with some marginal exceptions which, among other things, express a hostile and distrustful attitude towards government agencies. As with the other groups, however, this is a relationship with the necessary ambivalence and ambiguity. Government policy is scrutinised by the jihadists through their own ideological frames of reference, with specific attention to any aspects they believe could indicate the use of double standards by the government. In addition, information from the government itself and sometimes

from its own channels and documents, such as the 'Manifesto' on so-called Muslim detainees, is sometimes used. The latter is also a good example of how views on the government as well as their own and other knowledge channels and subjectivities are interrelated. There is an ongoing interplay between the self-image and self-presentation of jihadists and their perceptions of government policy in relation to securitisation of extremism.

This study assumes that a policy tool can show the relationship between 'the governed' and 'the governing' and illustrates how important it is to include the self-identification and perceptions of the groups to which the policy is aimed, in these discussions. We can distinguish roughly four forms of interaction between the groups and the government, viewed from the groups involved.

1. *Antagonistic interaction*

Government policy constantly leads to counter-reactions of the groups concerned. This is intended to create a certain awareness or to mobilise people into action. Various actors in the extremist field view the government as untrustworthy, hypocritical, and inconsistent ('double standards'), hostile to them and as an ally of the adversaries. To this end, the groups make use of statements and measures (e.g., a ban on demonstration) and criticism in the media of these measures (e.g., when it comes to the TA), to show that the government does not abide by rules that it imposes on its citizens. In particular, court rulings that show that public authorities do not operate entirely according to the laws and regulations are then grist to the mill.

2. *Accommodative interaction*

Where the government is challenged, accommodation also occurs. One remains within the limits of the law: sometimes out of principle, sometimes because one does not want to give the government the possibility to 'catch' them. On an individual level, especially among the jihadists, we also see a certain dependence on the government when it comes to information, mediation with public authorities, and livelihoods.

3. *Opportunistic interaction*

Acts of government, such as specific problem analyses, the use of certain terms, and government campaigns which confirm a group's own analyses of social problems, are embraced. These are mainly matters relating to the ideological other, i.e., in the case of Pegida Netherlands, for example, policy papers (and the media coverage on this) on Salafism and Jihadism.

4. *Circumventive interaction*

Sometimes there are attempts to evade the government. This means that people are trying to stay within the limits of the law, avoid public attention and keep contact with public authorities to a minimum. Whereas accommodative interaction is aimed at continuing activism within the law, in this case it is aimed at self-preservation of the individual and its immediate environment and possibly also at creating the opportunity to operate under the radar of the government, media, and research.

These interactions provide a mosaic of self-perceptions, sometimes adopting the categories the government utilises for themselves and sometimes resisting them.

Based on the above, this research partially complicates the discussions about success and effectiveness of CVE and PVE policies. Previous studies have shown mixed results on the

potential for 'deradicalisation'. This research confirms this from the perspectives of the parties themselves and the meanings they attach to policy. The groups often do not distinguish between 'policy' or 'politics'. This can put policy makers in a difficult position. Whether government policy 'works' and how it works depends in part on how groups who are object of that policy, perceive the policies and government agencies. This study shows how significant this is for the actions of the groups in question. Recurring themes are trust in the government and the importance of an individual approach. More research focusing on other groups and multiple actors (and, for example, looking at the role of politics and the media) would be advisable to obtain a better view of the complex social dynamics that the groups involved, but also the public authorities, do not always have a grip on. Given the important role played by police officers in local communities, such research should also be carried out locally and with a comparative component. After all, it is there that the government is given a face in interaction with citizens and where the citizen experiences the government. At a time of escalating tensions, research is crucial to gain better understanding of the relationship between government and citizens, including in the case of so-called extremist groups. After all, how these groups act is not separate from government policy: they react to it and shape their language, action repertoires, knowledge channels and identities accordingly.

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