

Terrorism and Attitudes Toward Out-groups: A Political Perspective

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Chapter 1

A political perspective

Introduction

Terrorism returned to the top of the international agenda with the attacks on September 11, 2001. In the following years, repeated attacks in multiple countries have kept terrorism a salient threat, and it has challenged both social cohesion and democratic governance of liberal democracies. A crucial question is how terrorism affects the relationship between the majority population and different out-groups. As terrorism is seen as highly illegitimate and as there is widespread contempt for terrorists in democracies, terrorist attacks may challenge the status and inclusion of groups that the public associate with terrorism. This is a central problem for democracies as protection of minority rights and tolerance of political disagreement are hallmarks of democratic society.

This thesis studies the effects of terrorism on three types of attitudes toward out-groups. The first involves attitudes toward day-to-day interactions with out-groups, specifically the necessity of taking precautionary measures in these interactions. The second concerns attitudes toward the state's domestic policies and the extent to which the state should use counterterrorism measures to avoid terrorist attacks. Finally, terrorism may affect support for the precautionary measures that the state may direct toward allowing out-groups entry inside the borders, i.e. increase support for immigration control. All three lead to the overall research question of this thesis: *"How does terrorism affect attitudes toward out-groups?"*

This thesis proposes an analytical framework to understand how terrorism affects attitudes — a framework that goes beyond the extant literature and its focus on fear and threat levels. Research on terrorism's effects on attitudes started in earnest after the attacks on September 11, 2001, on New York City and Washington, D.C. These attacks and subsequent Islamic terrorist attacks in the West have been characterized by their high levels of brutality relative to other types of terrorism (Piazza 2009). Extant literature on the effects of terrorism on attitudes has focused on how the terrorist threat is perceived and the effects from fear that terrorist attacks create. While this research has provided important insights into the consequences of terrorism in general and on attitudes toward out-groups more specifically, there is reason to believe that the effects from terrorism may be contingent on political factors that has so far received scarce attention. Three political factors that affect the public's interpretation of attacks are central in the framework developed in this thesis: the terrorist group's ideology and background, the public reaction and framing of the attacks, and the public's prior political attitudes. This framework is used to broaden our understanding of how terrorism affects a central characteristic

of Western democracies: the protection of minorities and out-groups.

The three papers jointly illuminate the research question. The first examines the reaction to the right-wing extremist terrorist attacks in Norway on July 22, 2011. Norwegians responded to the attacks with increased trust in out-groups, and the analyses indicate that this was a reaction to the political response to the attacks, and not solely to the right-wing extremist ideology itself. Importantly, the reaction was moderated by individuals' prior political views, and the effect was smaller among those who already held negative views toward immigration or were affiliated with the anti-immigrant Progress Party. The second paper follows up on the findings of an effect from the political response by comparing the French reaction to the *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper Cacher attacks with the public's reactions in six other European countries. While people became more negative toward immigration outside of France, this was not the case in France itself. This is interpreted to be an effect stemming from the French political and societal response to the attacks — a response underlining the French Republic's central (tolerant) values, such as *laïcité*. The third paper delves deeper into the importance of group ideology and background. It examines both the importance of terrorists' ideology and that of the groups targeted by policies and immigration attitudes in terms of support for security measures. In general, people support targeting threatening groups relative to others and being reminded of a terrorist threat increases support for counterterrorism measures toward even unrelated groups. Dovetailing with the first paper's findings, this paper looks at how immigration attitudes moderate the effects from terrorism news on support for security measures that target different groups. People who are negative towards immigration are found to not distinguish between targeting Muslims and Islamists in their support for counterterrorism measures.

The three papers investigate the effects from terrorism through survey data with state of the art methods. Moving beyond the use of cross-sectional post-attack surveys, this thesis combines three different methodological designs and datasets. The first uses a unique panel fielded on both sides of the July 22, 2011 attacks in Norway. The second exploits the random timing of a terrorist attack under the seventh round of the European Social Survey, and combines this with a comparison of different effects in different countries to find the effect of the domestic framing. The third paper uses a comparative survey experiment which is developed to give new information on the effects from the threat of terrorism. Overall, the papers demonstrate the importance of taking a broader set of factors into account when studying terrorism. These factors and the analytical framework presented here give

a more nuanced understanding of the effects of terrorism.

This thesis studies terrorism's effects on attitudes in Europe and in the U.S. This part of the world has a relatively homogeneous relationship with terrorism and immigration. In the past decades, the countries have mainly experienced Islamic and right-wing extremist terror attacks and immigration has emerged as a central political cleavage. Most extant research so far has studied the consequences of Islamic terrorist attacks. As will be discussed below, there is reason to believe that the effects of Islamic terrorism may be different from other types of terrorism, and that the findings in extant research may have overlooked differences between terrorism's effects in general and Islamic terrorism's effects more specifically. The inclusion of right-wing extremist terrorism in this study facilitates important comparisons between terrorism's general effects and the effects of terrorism with different political motivations.

It is terrorism's effects in the short term that is studied in this thesis. While the effects examined here may be short-lived, this study is motivated by the belief that terrorist attacks and their attitudinal consequences may elicit important, broader consequences for societies and policies. Following Kingdon (2014, p. 96), a terrorist attack may serve as a focusing event, after which "even inaction is a decision" and after which policy changes are highly likely. Terrorist attacks affect both the "problems stream" by putting terrorism on the political agenda and the "politics stream" by changing the public mood. This may, in turn, lead to windows of opportunity that political entrepreneurs can exploit to create policies that last much longer than any attitudinal changes.

The following chapter starts with a discussion of the definition of terrorism used in this thesis, then the principal findings from extant research are presented and this research's emphasis on threat and fear is discussed. Following this, the political framework is presented with its three factors: the terrorists' background, the framing of attacks, and the public's prior attitudes. The three research questions are presented and discussed in the context of extant research in the next section, before the cases and methodology of the different papers are discussed. The papers are then presented followed by the principal findings of this thesis. Limitations of this study, as well as proposals for further research, are discussed, before the conclusion.

Defining terrorism

A longstanding lack of consensus has existed on one clear definition of *terrorism*. As a pejorative term, terrorism has been used politically to describe enemies, but not friends (Schmid 2011, p. 40). There has been a broad academic debate leading to different meta-theoretical works that discuss different definitions applied in the research (Schmid 2004, 2011; Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004).¹ For the purposes of this thesis, a definition should set criteria that clearly distinguish terrorist cases from other types of social phenomena, such as crime and political activism. However, the debate on the definition of *terrorism* has led to the development of maximalist definitions that have prioritized describing all important characteristics of terrorism, rather than setting criteria for what types of actions that can be understood as terrorism. Thus, these definitions include characteristics that either are not necessary for an event to be characterized as terrorism (i.e., that terrorism is *often* part of a campaign), or that do not exclude any events from being terrorism (i.e., that terrorism is perpetrated by both groups and individuals). They are accordingly not very useful in the selection of cases.

In this thesis, the minimal definition by Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler (2004) is used and expanded to include the characteristic of targeting civilians. These authors compare the results from a review of 24 years of journal articles with Alex Schmid's "consensus definition" from 1984, which was created through the use of an expert survey (Schmid 1984). Their minimal definition is as follows: "Terrorism is a politically motivated tactic involving the threat or use of force or violence in which the pursuit of publicity plays a significant role." (Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004, p. 786). This definition includes three central traits that distinguish terrorism from related phenomena.² Political motivation distinguish terrorism from crime, and the use of violence or threats distinguish it from more legitimate political actions. The pursuit of media coverage is an important third trait, as it distinguishes terrorism from other types of political violence, such as political purges or politicides. While these three criteria delineate the phenomenon in important ways, it is also necessary to include the targeting

¹ One debate not relevant here is if terrorism can be perpetrated by states or not, and for the purposes of this thesis, state terrorism is excluded. See Schmid (2011, p. 69), Hoffman (2006), and Wilkinson (2006) for different views.

² This definition defines terrorism as a *tactic* and thus does not give a definition of who are "terrorists" or not. In the following, I use the word terrorists for people (or groups) who either carry out terrorist attacks or who adhere to the terrorism as a doctrine (for more on terrorism as a doctrine, see Schmid 2011, p. 86).

of civilians to distinguish terrorism from guerrilla attacks (Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004, p. 787). Guerrilla attacks do, at times, fulfill the three criteria: They are politically motivated, use violence, and sometimes pursue media coverage in their choices of targets, but they particularly differ from terrorism in that they target the opposing military rather than civilians.³ The definition also excludes other characteristics that are usually included in definitions of terrorism, the most important of which is the goal of creating fear.⁴ Next, I will discuss why the goal of creating fear is excluded from the definition used here.

The goal of creating fear often is included in definitions of terrorism. Indeed, the Latin etymology of the word *terror* includes fear. However, this goal is not included here for two reasons.⁵ On the one hand, there is reason to doubt that this is a goal in all terrorist attacks. Most terrorist groups have a constituency, a (sometimes imagined) group that the terrorist group perceives as approving its use of violence (Crenshaw 1991). Terrorists seek to inspire these groups (or the masses) through their attacks via the “Propaganda by the Deed”, rather than immobilize the public through fear (Crenshaw 1986). Thus, fear may not be the primary goal of an attack. Kurtulus (2017), in a study of multiple terrorist ideologues’ writings, finds no mention of any goal of creating fear. Rather, fear is perceived as debilitating, reducing the mobilization of the public. A second problem with defining terrorism

³ Guerrillas are often dependent on the tacit or active support from civilians and this may be achieved both peacefully and through repression. Weinstein (2007, pp. 8-9) argues that this choice is dependent on the starting conditions of the guerrillas and the members they recruit. Under conditions of resource abundance they use pay-offs to motivate rebellion, but when there are less resources they have to rely on recruiting members motivated to the cause of the organization.

⁴ Schmid (2011), Wilkinson (2006), and Hoffman (2006) include further characteristics in their definitions. Wilkinson (2006, p. 1) includes the premeditated character of attacks, Hoffman (2006, p. 40) includes the perpetrators’ connection to a group and Schmid (2011, p. 86) that attacks often are part in a broader campaign of some sort. These characteristics are not included here in the definition for different reasons. That attacks often are parts of campaigns is not included because some attacks are not, and this thus does not exclude attacks from being terrorism. That campaigns and the repetition of attacks have a stronger effect, both on attitudes and policy is another matter (Peffley, Hutchison, and Shamir 2015). Most terrorists, and even “lone wolves”, have a connection to a group, but there are examples of attacks that while they are clearly terrorist attacks had no such group connection (Schuurman et al. 2018). One can question whether terrorist attacks that were not premeditated should be excluded from being terrorism given that they were politically motivated and pursuing media attention.

⁵ Rapin (2011) goes to the opposite extreme and argues that we should abandon the term terrorism altogether and rather use “terror” for acts that actually create terror or fear in the population. In his view, the interesting part of terrorism is not its motivation, but rather how the terror it creates may have different effects. Here however, the argument is that it is interesting to study the effects of terrorist attacks also when they are not successful in creating terror in the population, that is, the effects of using terrorism as a tactic may be interesting in themselves.

as a strategy to create fear is that it is difficult to establish terrorists' intentions. Evaluating the extent to which terrorist attacks are designed to create fear may depend on the consequences of an attack, rather than on the actual intentions behind the attack. While certain groups may view the creation of fear as a goal, the emphasis on fear in definitions of terrorism may be a consequence of the "pursuit of publicity" and that the same mechanisms (i.e., novelty and scale) may lead to both media coverage and, thus, fear within the public. Considering that the attitudinal consequences of terrorism are the focus of the present study, basing the definition of terrorism on its effects may amount to selection on the dependent variable.

The current wave of Islamic terrorism in the West may be creating more fear than earlier types of terrorism. These terrorists have smaller (domestic) constituencies and more universalist goals, leading to less discriminate violence and more casualties (Hemmingby 2017; Piazza 2009). Indeed, killing civilians in Europe and in the U.S. may be perceived as a goal in itself, as they are viewed as the enemy and a legitimate target in what the terrorists perceive as a war between Muslims and the West. As outlined in the next section, current extant research has emphasized the role of fear in creating terrorism's attitudinal effects.

Terrorism and attitudes toward out-groups

The attitudinal consequences of terrorism received little attention before 9/11.⁶ These attacks and the continued threat from Islamic terrorism in the following years led to research on the consequences of terrorism on political attitudes. A central finding in this research is terrorism's negative effect on attitudes toward out-groups. This effect has been found across different types of out-group attitudes and on attitudes toward both groups connected and unconnected to terrorism. The literature since 9/11 has been preoccupied with the consequences of the threat of terrorism and fear. Terrorism and terrorist attacks are thought to heighten perceptions of threat in the public, and these perceptions, in turn, are thought to have consequences for other attitudes, especially through different types of anxiety and fear. This research has examined the consequences of two different threat types. Some of this research has examined the consequences of sociotropic threats, i.e., threats to society or the national community, while other research has emphasized

⁶ Among the few early studies, Hewitt (1990) finds that new-left terrorism in Europe did not change support for the cause of the terrorists and C. W. Lewis (2000) finds that the Oklahoma bombing did not affect Americans' attitudes.

the consequences of egotropic threats, i.e., threats to oneself, and especially the effects of being reminded of death.

Perceptions of sociotropic (societal) threats from terrorism lead to prejudice and support for stereotypes toward groups related to terrorism, mainly toward Arabs or Muslims in the current situation in the West (Huddy, Feldman, Capelos, et al. 2002; Huddy, Feldman, and Weber 2007; Traugott et al. 2002). This mechanism has been proposed to help explain findings of increased negativity toward immigrants after terrorist attacks as well (Legewie 2013; Schüller 2016). Threat is thought to work through anxiety, and anxiety motivates people to seek protection from the anxiety's causes (e.g., the threat of terrorism) (Albertson and Gadarian 2015, pp. 5,12,120). Thus, anxiety may explain the increase in support for security measures (Bozzoli and Müller 2011; Davis and Silver 2004; Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Al-Baghal 2006; Huddy, Feldman, Taber, et al. 2005; Lahav and Courtemanche 2012; Malhotra and Popp 2012) and restrictions on immigration (Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam 2011; Lahav and Courtemanche 2012; Merolla and Zechmeister 2009; Noelle-Neumann 2002) after terrorist attacks.

A second strand of research has examined the effects of threat to the individual, rather than on society. While attitudes on immigration primarily are determined by perceptions of sociotropic threat (Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner 2016; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014, 2015),⁷ research on terrorism also has found evidence of effects from egotropic threat, i.e., the threat to oneself.⁸ Drawing on Terror management theory and related theories (Greenberg et al. 1990; Pyszczynski, Solomon, and Greenberg 2003), this line of research emphasizes the effects of death reminders and existential anxiety (Das et al. 2009; Echebarria-Echabe and Fernández-Guede 2006; Nugier et al. 2016). Terror management theory takes its starting point in the fact that humans understand that they are mortal, and argues that anxiety over one's mortality leads to different coping strategies. One way in which humans cope with death anxiety is through adherence to world views and religions that usually promise some form of immortality. Only one such world

⁷ This could be explained by the low prevalence of egotropic threats from immigration as for example the competition over jobs may affect small groups of people (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013). Finseraas, Røed, and Schøne (2017) argue that it is problems with measuring the effects correctly that leads to the null-findings. They find indications of a polarizing rather than a unidirectional effect.

⁸ It is possible that this difference is primarily caused by differences in the types of threat. While research on immigration attitudes has primarily studied cultural and economic threats, terrorism also poses a threat to individuals' security (Boomgaarden and de Vreese 2007; Canetti-Nisim, Ariely, and Halperin 2008) and it is indeed being reminded of death that is hypothesized as causing the effects on attitudes toward out-groups.

view may be correct at the same time, so other people's world views threaten the promise of immortality within our own world view. Being reminded of one's own mortality (through terrorism) may lead to different coping strategies, one of which, the so-called world view defense, bolsters one's own world view while disparaging others' world views. Thus, increased prejudice and affiliation with an in-group may be consequences of terrorism reminding people of their own mortality

These findings show that terrorism may affect out-groups defined by two different characteristics. On the one hand, the findings indicate that terrorism affect attitudes toward minority groups defined by their ethnoreligious background in general. There have as mentioned been found effects on attitudes toward both Muslims and Jews. The three studies here thus study both attitudes toward specific out-groups and more general attitudes toward people of a different religion or different nationality. On the other hand, the effects of terrorism on attitudes toward Muslims could however indicate that the effects are caused by the group's relationship to terrorism. In other words, terrorism may affect attitudes toward groups that are believed to be connected to the terrorist threat. Sniderman et al. (2014) show that people in general tolerate groups that are considered "transgressive" to a lower extent than other groups. People are for example more supportive of the rights of Muslims than those of Islamists. Terrorism could thus both affect the attitudes toward transgressive groups, and change the views of which groups are transgressive. The third paper studies how terrorism affects attitudes toward both transgressive and more democratically inclined groups.

There is reason to believe that the political characteristics of both terrorist attacks and the societal reaction to them may affect the consequences of terrorism. So far, this has not been studied in extant research on terrorism's attitudinal effects. Recent Islamic attacks in the West have been relatively violent (see e.g., Hemmingby 2017; Piazza 2009), and the "War on Terror" seems to have become a macro frame for understanding the terrorist threat (Norris, Kern, and Just 2003). Simultaneously, little variation has been seen in political reactions to terrorism and the terrorists' ideological background, and the lethality of attacks may have made threat and fear more relevant than after more discriminate terrorist attacks. In the following section, I outline a political framework for understanding the consequences of terrorist attacks. This framework considers a broader set of factors than just the direct affective response to the atrocities themselves.

A political perspective

Factors outside of the terrorists' control are central to the political consequences of terrorism. Terrorists seek to reach their goals through the media coverage of attacks (Hoffman 2006, p. 40; Schmid 2011, p. 86; Wilkinson 2006, p. 1; Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004, p. 786), and terrorist attacks may be able to set the political agenda. However, the media coverage of terrorism seldom focuses on the terrorists' political goals (McDonald and Lawrence 2004), and to the extent that extremists and terrorist attacks do get media attention, this attention is not focused on their causes or ideology (Kelly and Mitchell 1981; Larsen 2018; Schmid 1989). The public is accordingly often unable to interpret the terrorists' goals from an attack (Moghaddam 2006, p. 19), and it is prone to infer extremist goals from the terrorists' extreme tactics (Abrahms 2012). Because terrorism is a blunt method of communicating a political message, terrorists often are unable to influence the framing of their attacks.⁹ The consequences of an attack may thus be dependent on other factors that affect the public's interpretation of it — factors such as the terrorist group's background, the dominant framing of an attack, and the public's prior attitudes. In the following section, I outline an analytical framework for how terrorist attacks affect the public. This framework takes its starting point in the information available to the public after a terrorist attack. I begin with the importance of the terrorists' ideology and background, before I discuss the effects from the framing of attacks and prior political attitudes.

Ideology and background of terrorist groups

Little information is available to the public after terrorist attacks, as they are not very informative in themselves. Terrorists are however, by definition, motivated by a political ideology and even most “lone wolfs” subscribe to a terrorist group (Schuurman et al. 2018).¹⁰ The media coverage in the immediate aftermath of an

⁹ Even terrorist groups themselves know they are unable to anticipate the effects of their attacks and they often await the public response before they decide to take credit or not for attacks (Abrahms and Conrad 2017). The choice of target and amount of casualties are also central in the terrorists' planning as they are the only means available to the terrorists to affect the interpretation of an attack (Hemmingby 2017; Hemmingby and Bjørge 2016). Hemmingby and Bjørge (2016, p. 38) show how the right-wing extremist terrorist that perpetrated the July 22, 2011 attacks in Norway, contemplated the effects of different types of targets. Targeting Muslims or immigrants was dismissed because he believed it would create a backlash against his cause.

¹⁰ The political goals are central to the definition of an attack as terrorism and not crime (Hoffman 2006; Schmid 2011; Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler 2004; Wilkinson 2006). While two

attack often is dominated by the question of whether terrorists were responsible, and in recent years, this often has been a question tied to terrorists' religious background (Huff and Kertzer 2018; Powell 2011). Terrorist groups do not always take responsibility for attacks (Abrahms and Conrad 2017), but the perpetrators' background usually is revealed during the investigation. Thus, the terrorists' political affiliation generally becomes known relatively quickly after an attack.

Because most studies on the attitudinal effects of terrorism were done after the 9/11 attacks, few studies have been done concerning attacks perpetrated by other groups than Islamic terrorists. Thus, the findings of increased out-group derogation and more negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration (see above) may reflect a connection between Islamic terrorism and immigration. The reaction to the attacks on July 22, 2011 in Norway could support such a conclusion. In the early hours after the attacks, the media speculated that the bombing in the city center was carried out by Islamic terrorists, and it took some time before the right-wing extremist motivation of the attacks became publicly known. During this period, there were multiple attacks on people perceived to be Muslim (as documented by Haarr and Partapuoli 2012). When the true background of the terrorist was known however, the public response became one that emphasized tolerance (Jenssen and Bye 2013). Thus, while the negative effects toward out-groups have been interpreted in the context of the threat of terrorism, they may be a consequence of the specific type of terrorism that has been studied.

Framing and societal reaction

“We condemn actions that disrupt public security and disturb the peace of the people and sow terror [...] I hope that people remain calm because it is all controllable.” (Indonesian President, Joko Widodo on January 14, 2016, in a speech after the Islamic terrorist attacks in Jakarta that killed four and injured 20 cited in Friedman (2016).)

Terrorists often set the political agenda through their actions, but while terrorism may be atop the political agenda, the consequences of this depend on the interpretation of the attacks. This interpretation and its policy implications often depend on how political leaders, the media and the public itself frame the attack. Following Entman (1993), the function of frames is to diagnose, evaluate and prescribe. Frames *diagnose* the problems and their causes, leading to *evaluations* of

events may have very similar characteristics, the definition of an event as terrorism seems to have important consequences for both the media coverage and the attitudinal consequences.

the different causal agents. Finally, frames *prescribe* certain solutions and treatments for the diagnosed problem. The media frames dominating media coverage and those that politicians employ may be important. As I discuss below, the combination of a monopoly on information, a rally effect, and a less-critical media strengthen the government's ability to set the dominant framing after an attack.

Political leadership plays a central role in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. Through speeches and other public appearances, the prime minister or president becomes a central leader for the public, and that leader's framing of an attack may affect the public's interpretation. The government controls information from the investigation, and this information may be crucial to understanding (i.e., the diagnosis of) the events. The 2004 attacks in Madrid serve as an example. The government blamed the terrorist group ETA from the start without any decisive evidence and decided to continue blaming ETA even when the official investigation was following leads suggesting that Al Qaeda was behind the attacks, something that proved to be the case (Fominaya 2011). This incorrect diagnosis led to a framing that connected the attacks to the ongoing political conflict between the government and Spain's regional independence movements, which had nothing to do with the motivation for the attacks.¹¹

The government's monopoly on information from investigations suggests it plays an important role in the frame's *diagnosis* of events, and the rally effect may make it easier for political leaders to frame terrorist attacks successfully. *The rally effect*, characterized by increased support for political leadership, occurs when political leaders (especially presidents and prime ministers) become symbols of the national community (Hetherington and Nelson 2003) and when anxious people look to leaders for reassurance (Chanley 2002; Landau et al. 2004; Sinclair and LoCicero 2010).¹² Indeed, while the rally effect originally was thought to occur only after international events, domestic terrorist attacks without international connections also seem to create rallies (Stapley 2012; Wollebæk, Steen-Johnsen, et al. 2013).¹³ Public rallies are marked by little political dissent, and the frames

¹¹ The main motto of the demonstrations after the attacks was "With the victims, with the constitution and for the defeat of terrorism". Since regional movements want to change the Spanish constitution so that it devolves more rights to the regions, the reference to the constitution meant support for the central government. The demonstrations however partly turned on the government with large groups chanting "Who did it?"

¹² The rally effect seems to differ between groups, and studies have found that it is those that were least critical of the government that rallied (Edwards and Swenson 1997), that people with high political awareness are less likely to rally (Ladd 2007) and that there might be differences based on race in the U.S. (Perrin and Smolek 2009).

¹³ Randahl (2018) finds that this is only the case after especially large attacks in the U.S. How-

that political leaders employ often are left unopposed by the political opposition (Chowanietz 2010). This is possibly both a cause and a consequence of the rally effect itself, as the rally may make it difficult to criticize the government, while a lack of criticism may increase support for the government (Hetherington and Nelson 2003).

Journalists change their role after terrorism, and become preoccupied with recreating the national community and with assigning meaning to suffering after terrorist attacks (Alexander 2004; Kitch 2003; Schudson 2003). During the aftermath of terrorist attacks, the media take a less-critical role and contribute to the rallying around the political leadership (Olsson, Söderlund, and Falkheimer 2015). Journalists even have been observed following governmental framing when they criticize the government (S. C. Lewis and Reese 2009). This “suspension of suspicion” (Zandberg and Neiger 2005) may be reinforced by the lack of criticism from the political opposition. Media have a tendency to index the debates in the political elites, and when there is a lack of debate, the media becomes one-sided (Bennett 1990; Entman 2003; Jamieson and Waldman 2003, p. 14; Norris, Kern, and Just 2003, p. 12). The lack of criticism from the opposition may be a consequence of more or less deliberate media gatekeeping, i.e., not allowing critical voices and perspectives to be heard (Figenschou and Beyer 2014; Thorbjørnsrud and Figenschou 2018).

While the media become less critical of the government, journalists are often among the first people at the scene of an attack. Thus, the first frames of an attack are created through media broadcasts before the government can provide any clear framing. Central parts of what became the “War on Terror” frame already were parts of the immediate media coverage after 9/11 (Nacos, Bloch-Elkon, and Shapiro 2011, ch. 1). While President Bush’s speeches were crucial in setting a coherent frame, on the day of the attacks, media used a war metaphor, discussed possible restrictions on civil liberties, and drew a connection between the attacks and Afghanistan, as well as Iraq. This indicates that the media may set the stage for what kinds of frames that are possible after an attack.

A lack of dissent from the opposition and media may increase governmental frames’ effectiveness. Extant research shows that frames’ effects are strongest when no counter-frames are present (Chong and Druckman 2010, 2013; Gershkoff and Kushner 2005; Lecheler and de Vreese 2016), and that conversely, counter-frames reduce a frame’s effectiveness. Thus, the aftermaths of terrorist attacks are

ever, he studies all terrorist attacks with U.S. citizens among the casualties, also attacks in countries far away.

periods when the dominant frames may be especially effective. As long as the political leadership chooses a frame that the public accepts, it is probable that this framing will affect the interpretation of the attacks and prescribe its political consequences. Of course, some limits exist as to which frames the public and media will accept. The framing that the Spanish government chose after the Madrid 2004 attacks again may serve as an example. Although the government's monopoly on information lasted for some time, pointing to the wrong perpetrators (ETA instead of Al Qaeda) and trying to exploit the attacks for political goals (anti-separatism) ended in failure (Canel and Sanders 2010; Fominaya 2011; Sinkkonen 2016). Indeed, Montalvo (2011, 2012) uses results from early voting in the elections to show that support for the government's ruling party shifted negatively during the final week before elections, leading up to the party's defeat. Moreover, the governmental framing in Spain was problematic on many different levels, and it is difficult to generalize from this case.

While the framing of an attack may depend on a combination of political responses and media coverage, the public also may influence frames (see e.g., Døving 2018). The public often mobilizes after terrorist attacks through demonstrations in which the populace "reclaims" the city and shows its opposition to the terrorists (Cronin 2009, p. 109; Enjolras, Steen-Johnsen, and Wollebæk 2012; Ross 1995). These mobilizations may give prescriptions for the correct behavior when facing the threat. In recent years, these expressions also have proliferated on social media (Innes et al. 2016). For example, the French public showed its defiance and courage after the November 2015 terrorist attacks by returning to Parisian cafés and publishing photos on social media (Browning 2018). Social media and public manifestations may influence the emotional consequences of an attack. At the scenes of attacks and at other symbolic public spaces, spontaneous shrines often are created (Grønstad 2013; Jorgensen-Earp and Lanzilotti 1998; Santino 2003). These shrines after attacks may be important as a public coping mechanism, as they facilitate the expression of different types of emotions.

The framing and public reaction may be important to the hypothesized positive effects on social trust from national crises. Extant literature on social trust and social capital emphasizes the positive effects from experiencing national crises (Putnam 2000, ch. 24; Sander and Putnam 2009, p. 408; Uslaner 2002, p. 189). There seems to be an expectation that sharing experiences creates a feeling of being in "the same boat," thereby making us feel more like other people. Similarity enhances trust, and accordingly trust increases as strangers become less "strange". However, Uslaner (2002) also describes how some events may be "divisive", but

does not go into detail as to why some events are galvanizing and some are not. His use of the Vietnam War as an example of an event that is divisive may indicate that periods with high levels of debate and disagreement are not galvanizing to the same extent as periods where there is less discord. This leads to a possible expectation of terrorism as a type of galvanizing event because of the lack of opposition to the dominant framing (see above).

Prior political attitudes

“One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.”

Terrorist ideologies often have been connected to the principal political debates in society, and this is the case for both Islamic and right-wing extremist terrorism. These two types of terrorism, in different ways, are connected to the debate on immigration and to the related debate on the role of Muslims in the West. The debate on immigration is highly salient in both Europe and the U.S., and one could expect that individuals’ prior attitudes and exposure to this debate may influence their reactions to terrorism. While much research has investigated the question of how terrorism affects attitudes toward immigration and immigrants, few have studied how the effects of terrorism are contingent on this political debate and people’s prior attitudes.¹⁴

Terrorism often creates backlashes against the terrorist groups. These backlashes may in addition make people develop negative attitudes toward the terrorist ideology (Jakobsson and Blom 2014). However, people (and governments) who support the terrorists’ cause often view terrorist groups as legitimate actors, as expressed in the quote that introduced this section (Moghaddam 2006, p. 9; Schmid 2011, p. 40). At least tacit support for terrorism often exists among what has been called the terrorist “constituency” (Crenshaw 1991), i.e., those who are most in agreement with the terrorists and whom terrorists aim to mobilize into action (Brown 2018; Wilkinson 2006, p. 149). However, these (sometimes imagined) constituencies do not have an unlimited tolerance for violence (Crenshaw 1991), and attacks that are especially egregious may lead to a loss of support for the terrorist groups (Cronin 2009; Malkki 2010). It is unclear whether such attacks reduce support for the cause, as some continuation of the political struggle by more peaceful means usually exists (Ross 1995; Wheatley and McCauley 2008), and it

¹⁴ To a certain extent this has to do with difficulties in studying events such as terrorism and the related lack of data (see more below).

is possible that terrorism may affect the constituency less than other groups. Extant research on attitudes generally shows that people are biased in how they receive new information, i.e., information that goes against prior attitudes is discounted (Karlsen et al. 2017; Taber, Cann, and Kucsova 2008; Taber and Lodge 2006). Any possible negative effects from terrorism on support for the ideology may affect the constituency's attitudes the least.

Research questions

Using the framework outlined above, this thesis explores three research questions, each of which concerns a different dependent variable that may be expected to be connected to terrorism. While all have been studied before in the context of terrorism, they vary widely in the numbers of extant studies that have examined them, with very few studies having examined terrorism's effects on out-group trust and many having studied counterterrorism and immigration attitudes. This leads to different levels of specificity in expectations. In this section, the three research questions are presented and discussed in the context of the framework and extant research.

The first research question is:

Research question 1. *How do terrorist attacks affect out-group trust?*

Out-group trust is intrinsically connected to terrorists' group background. Trust involves some form of vulnerability to the trustee's actions. Following Hardin (2006), it depends on the belief that the trustee has encapsulated our interest, i.e., that the trustee considers our interests when he or she makes decisions. Terrorism demonstrates the opposite of trustworthiness, as the terrorists try to inflict harm. Thus, there is reason to believe that trust in terrorism-related groups may decline after terrorist attacks (Hardin 2006, p. 127). However trust seems to be affected by more than just the expectation of trustworthiness. Uslaner (2002) argues that trust is better understood as a moral obligation. People believe they have a moral obligation to expect the best of each other and trust others, even when one has no knowledge of another person's trustworthiness. To support this claim, Uslaner points to extant research that finds social trust to be very stable over time, and that it correlates with values that our parents instill in us during early childhood (e.g. Algan and Cahuc 2010, on the inheritability of trust). These two perspectives on trust each hark back to one part of the framework. On one hand, terrorism may

affect trust in the group that is perceived to be creating the threat, as this group is not deemed trustworthy. On the other hand, the framing of an attack may affect the perceptions of trust as a moral obligation.

Extant research on trust after terrorist attacks primarily has been concerned with generalized trust, and some evidence exists of higher generalized trust after terrorist attacks (Geys and Qari 2017; Traugott et al. 2002). As for trust in out-groups, less research is available, but using data from the right-wing extremist attacks on July 22, 2011 in Norway, (Wollebæk, Enjolras, et al. 2012; Wollebæk, Steen-Johnsen, et al. 2013) show that Norwegians increased both their generalized trust and their trust in people with a different religion and nationality. Huddy, Feldman, and Weber (2007) use an index based on questions about Arabs' characteristics, including one on their trustworthiness, and find that after 9/11, Americans who perceived a terrorist threat showed higher support for negative stereotypes of Arabs. The group background of the terrorists thus seems to be important for the change in trust.

As discussed however, the effects of egotropic threats seem to be indiscriminate and even affect attitudes toward unrelated out-groups. Following Terror-management theory (Pyszczynski, Solomon, and Greenberg 2003), being reminded of one's mortality increases out-group derogation and in-group bolstering. Thus, death reminders may increase negativity toward all types of out-groups and are not dependent on the out-group in question creating the threat, nor on the terrorism being done by an out-group at all.¹⁵ One example of these effects can be seen in the findings of increased support for stereotypes about Jews after the Islamic terrorist attacks in Madrid (Echebarria-Echabe and Fernández-Guede 2006), and another is the finding of less sympathy toward gays by people experiencing terrorism as a threat in the U.S. (Merolla and Zechmeister 2009, ch. 3). The effects of egotropic threats are less connected to the group perpetrating terrorism, and it is possible that terrorism affects trust in out-groups in general, rather than specifically trust in the out-group that created the threat.

The importance of group background also may be dependent on the framing of an attack. The group membership of terrorists can be framed both in general (e.g., Muslims) and more specific (e.g., Islamic fundamentalist) terms. This fram-

¹⁵ In democratic societies it may be difficult to imagine a terrorist group that is not considered an out-group at the very least because of their violent methods. Accordingly, even terrorist groups that have legitimate political goals are probably seen as out-groups. In situations where the government is considered illegitimate by large groups of the population such as in some autocracies or in times of occupation, terrorist groups may be seen as part of a broader resistance and thus not to be an out-group to the same extent.

ing may, in turn, elicit consequences for social groups perceived as untrustworthy. Hajer and Uitermark (2008) study local politicians' reactions to the 2004 murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam and show how the murderer's group membership was a central point of contention. While politicians framed the general Muslim population as being on the inside, a group connected to the victim emphasized the connection between the murderer and Muslims in general.¹⁶ The specification of the group background in the dominant frames after attacks may be important in shaping out-group trust.

The framing of attacks also may affect trust by underlining the importance of trust as a moral obligation. As mentioned above, there is often an emphasis on returning to normal and defying fear after terrorism. Maintaining the moral obligation to trust, even toward out-groups related to terrorism, may be part of this defiance. After right-wing extremist attacks, this also may be the case, as distrust in out-groups is central to right-wing extremist ideology and conspiracy theories (Fekete 2012).¹⁷ Thus, increasing trust in out-groups may be a way of rejecting the terrorist ideology and as mentioned, Wollebæk, Enjolras, et al. (2012) and Wollebæk, Steen-Johnsen, et al. (2013) find increased trust in out-groups after the July 22, 2011 attacks in Norway.

The second research question concerns the effects on support for immigration policy:

Research question 2. *How do terrorist attacks affect immigration policy preferences?*

Much research has been devoted to terrorism's effects on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, and a central finding in extant literature on terrorism is the negative effect on attitudes toward minorities, with more ethnocentrism and prejudice observed after terrorist attacks (Davis 2007, pp. 215-217; Kam and Kinder 2007). Such attacks increase both negativity toward immigrants and perceptions of a threat from immigration (Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam 2011; Legewie 2013; Schüller 2016). However, evidence of an effect on immigration-policy preferences is more mixed, with some previous studies finding effects and

¹⁶ The lack of finding of an effect of the murder on immigration policy preferences in the Netherlands by Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam (2011) may be a consequence of the first of these frames.

¹⁷ Right-wing extremist ideology is often intolerant of all types of deviance from what the extremists view as "normal", reflected in hatred for the LGBT-community and people with disabilities.

others finding no effects from terrorism on support for immigration policy (Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam 2011; Lahav and Courtemanche 2012; Merolla and Zechmeister 2009). This is puzzling, as support for immigration policy generally has been found to be determined by perceptions of threats to society from immigration (Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner 2016; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014, 2015), so one would expect policy support to follow changes in attitudes toward immigrants.

Heightened perceptions of a threat do not automatically lead to changes in policy preferences. Extant research on anxiety shows that while anxious individuals support security policies to a higher extent than others, this support depends on the policies being interpreted as creating security (Albertson and Gadarian 2015, p. 5). Thus, the effects of terrorism on immigration policy preferences should be dependent on the framing of these policies. Research by Lahav and Courtemanche (2012), which found that reading about terrorism in a survey experiment increased support for strict immigration measures may support such a mechanism. Their experiment explicitly mentions the possible immigration of terrorists, thereby framing the terrorist threat as one connected to immigration. The effects of terrorism on attitudes toward immigration policy may be dependent on the framing of the relevant policy and the prescriptions offered in the dominant framing of the attacks.

As policies need to be relevant to receive increased support, it is probably necessary for the group perpetrating the attacks to be connected to immigration. Finseraas and Listhaug (2013) find increased perceptions of a threat from terrorism after the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, but do not find increased support for restricting immigration. This may be explained by a lack of relevance of immigration policy to creating security after the attacks, as the attacks were both far away and part of the ongoing conflict between Pakistan and India. The criteria are not necessarily very strict, as immigration policy may be framed successfully as relevant, even when the terrorist groups are only loosely connected to immigration, but this was not the case in the Mumbai example. Nevertheless, the threat of right-wing extremist terrorism should not be expected to increase support for restrictions on immigration.

Prior attitudes toward immigration may moderate the effects of terrorist attacks on immigration attitudes. People often are biased in their reception of new information, and certain groups may be motivated to disregard terrorist attacks (Karlsen et al. 2017; Taber, Cann, and Kucsova 2008; Taber and Lodge 2006). For example, Gadarian (2010) finds that threatening news makes U.S. Democrats less afraid

of terrorism when they perceive the news as partisan, i.e., following the framing of the rival Republican Party. The group background may be one such point of contention. People may differ in their views of which group the terrorists belong to. Thus, people who support a liberal immigration policy may be motivated to view Islamic terrorist attacks as being unrelated to immigration. People with a negative attitude toward immigration may be motivated to disregard the political motivation of right-wing extremist terrorism. Since framing and interpretation of terrorist attacks are not provided by the attacks themselves, different frames may be available, and even when they are not dominant, they may be influential for different sub-groups (e.g. the discussion of Hajer and Uitermark 2008, above). It may even be that when the dominant frames prescribe a correct line of action, it may strengthen such biases because of reactance from political pressure (S. S. Brehm and J. W. Brehm 1981; Gadarian 2010).

The effects of prior attitudes may depend on the emotional effects of terrorism. Emotional reactions may interact with prior attitudes, and anger and anxiety exert very different effects on reasoning (Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000). People who become anxious are prone to reconsider their prior attitudes and reduce their reliance on heuristics (Joslyn and Haider-Markel 2018). However, people who become angry double down on their prior attitudes and feel more secure in their beliefs (Vasilopoulos, Marcus, and Foucault 2018). Thus, it is possible that terrorism creates different types of reactions based on the emotions people experience after terrorist attacks. This, again, may underline the effects of the terrorist framing, as the framing may reduce and increase these emotional reactions (Iyer et al. 2014).

The third research question concerns support for counterterrorism measures:

Research question 3. *How do terrorist attacks affect support for counterterrorism measures?*

Terrorism has been found to increase support for counterterrorism measures. Extant research has found that the support for counterterrorism measures increases under the threat from terrorism and after real-world attacks (Bozzoli and Müller 2011; Huddy, Feldman, Taber, et al. 2005; Huddy, Feldman, and Weber 2007).¹⁸ This may possibly reflect an increase in support for counterterrorism measures in themselves, and also reflect reduced support for civil liberties under threat (Davis and Silver 2004; Marcus, Sullivan, et al. 1995).

¹⁸ Mondak and Hurwitz (2012) find that the effects of terrorism are similar to the effects of crime in general, and while there is higher support for security measures under the threat of terrorism, the difference from crime is not substantial.

Similar to immigration-policy preferences, support for security measures seems to be dependent on framing (Brinson and Stohl 2012), especially that the measures are framed as protection from the threat. Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Al-Baghal (2006) find that reminding people of different types of terrorist threats increases support for counterterrorism measures, but only for policies that are relevant to the specific threats. The effect of threat on counterterrorism measures does not seem to be a general preference for security measures, but rather an effect on support for measures to provide protection from the threat (e.g. the null finding of the far away terrorist attack in Mumbai in Finseraas and Listhaug 2013). The effects from actual terrorist attacks on counterterrorism measures also seem to be dependent on the framing of the attacks. Bozzoli and Müller (2011) find increased support for security measures in Great Britain after the 7/7 London attacks. This increase was not immediate, but developed over time and this could point to an effect on the political debate after the attacks. In Norway, evidence points to less support for security measures after the 2011 attacks, possibly caused by the emphasis on “openness” and “democracy” in the dominant frame of the attacks (Fimreite et al. 2013). Thus, the effects of terrorist attacks on attitudes may be dependent on the framing of policies in the aftermath of the attacks.

Support for counterterrorism measures may be dependent on the groups that are targeted. If the increase in support is dependent on the measures being perceived as protective, the effect may be strongest for measures either targeting the terrorist group or for more general security measures. Support for civil liberties has been found to vary by group background. Groups that are threatening (Marcus, Sullivan, et al. 1995), or are perceived as not supporting democracy (Sniderman et al. 2014) are tolerated to a lesser degree than others. Thus, support for targeting groups that perpetrate terrorism may be higher because these groups are threatening and because it may be perceived as an effective protective measure.

Few studies have looked directly at the importance of the target group. Christensen and Aars (2017) find, in a survey experiment, that people distinguish between different groups and that measures targeting groups that are threatening (e.g., Islamic fundamentalists and right-wing extremists) are supported more than measures targeting more democratic groups (e.g., Muslims). Piazza (2015) asks people about what the police should do with the perpetrators of an attack in a survey experiment and does not find a difference in support for jailing Muslims relative to Islamic fundamentalist perpetrators. In this case, both the Muslims and Islamic fundamentalists are described as having already perpetrated a terrorist attack, possibly reducing the perceived difference between the groups. He does find

higher support for prolonged imprisonment of Muslim and Islamic fundamentalist perpetrators relative to right-wing extremist perpetrators something that could reflect the general finding of lower support for measures that target oneself (Best, Krueger, and Pearson-Merkowitz 2011; Sun, Wu, and Poteyeva 2011; Viscusi and Zeckhauser 2003). Thus, it remains unclear how terrorist attacks change the relative support between targeting different groups. People may be expected to show greater support for targeting the group perpetrating the attacks, for targeting out-groups, and for targeting threatening groups relative to democratic groups, but a central question is whether terrorist attacks reduce the difference between Muslims and Islamic fundamentalists, as could be expected from the findings by Piazza (2015).

Finally, prior attitudes have been found to influence the effect of the threat of terrorism on attitudes toward counterterrorism measures, but this research has found different effects from the same attitudes, both arguing that terrorism affects more liberal and more conservative groups the most. One strand of research has followed Stenner (2005), and studied how threat mobilizes authoritarians or makes non-authoritarian people more authoritarian. While Cohrs et al. (2005) and Kosowska et al. (2011) find that threat reinforces the effects of authoritarianism, Hetherington and Suhay (2011) find that threat reduces the differences between the groups and that non-authoritarians become more similar to authoritarians under threat. Lahav and Courtemanche (2012) and Malhotra and Popp (2012) similarly find that threat affects Democrats and liberals more than Republicans and conservatives. According to Vasilopoulos, Marcus, and Foucault (2018) however, both of these mechanisms may be in play at the same time. While threat mobilized right-wing respondents' authoritarianism through anger, anxiety make left-wing respondents reevaluate their views and become more authoritarian.

Research design

Cases

The three papers study three different cases. The first two use two different terrorist attacks as starting points, while the last study is based on a survey experiment. The first paper studies the July 22, 2011, attacks in Norway. These attacks were, in many ways extraordinary. They were very lethal relative to other right-wing attacks (Ravndal 2017) and were perpetrated by a lone terrorist who, unlike the usual "lone

wolf’, did not have any contact with other groups while he planned the attacks (Schoorman et al. 2018).

With the current dearth of studies looking into the effects of non-Islamic terrorist attacks, these attacks may be useful as a comparison case for the effects of terrorism. Indeed, if the terrorists’ backgrounds were irrelevant, the July 22 attacks could have been assumed to have the same types of effects as Islamic terrorism based on the number of casualties. The July 22 attacks provide an interesting case for studying the importance of the group background of terrorists, as well as for studying the effects of the political response. The Norwegian reaction seemed different from other political reactions to terrorism, and the dominant framing used by the prime minister, in the media and in the public demonstrations, was very different from the “War on Terror”-frame. Finally, the attacks also were directly connected to Norwegian politics through both the terrorist’s political ideas and his former membership in the youth wing of one of the main political parties and may give important insight into how prior attitudes moderate the effects of terrorist attacks.

The second paper studies the case of the *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper Cacher attacks in Paris in January 2015. These terrorists had a clear Islamic motivation for attacking the *Charlie Hebdo* headquarters, namely the “blasphemy” of the paper’s cartoons, although the attacks were on a smaller scale than some other Islamic attacks. The attacks are interesting here because of the following political and societal response. The political elites, media, and public framed the attacks as attacks on the French Republic and republican values. The emphasis on the value of “laïcité”, the special form of French secularism that encompasses a tolerance for different religions, could have led to a more tolerant reaction to the attacks in France. Using data on France and six other European countries, it is possible to compare the reactions to the same attacks in France and the other countries. This is crucial, as comparing the effects of the framing of two different terrorist attacks is difficult because other possible differences between the attacks may affect the attacks’ consequences.

The third paper uses a survey experiment that was fielded in four countries. These countries – the US, France, Norway, and Finland – differ in their history of terrorist violence and in the nature of certain recent attacks. While France and the US have a recent history of large-scale Islamic terrorism, Norway has only experienced right-wing extremist terrorism, and Finland primarily has experienced school shootings. These differing experiences are especially relevant, as the experiment tests differences in the support for targeting different social groups with

counterterrorism measures. The four countries also differ on other characteristics that may affect support for counterterrorism measures. While the two Nordic countries have high levels of both social and political trust, such trust levels in the other two countries are lower. While social trust reduces support for counterterrorism, political trust increases such support. Thus, including countries with both high and low levels of support may be important for the findings' generalizability.

The three papers study both Islamic and right-wing extremist terrorism, but the third paper explicitly compares the effects of the two types of terrorism. By comparing the effects of different types of terrorism, it is possible to separate the general effects of terrorism from the effects of specific subtypes. This comparison facilitates testing the applicability of the proposed framework concerning the importance of terrorists' group background and ideology. Through this comparison, the thesis also explores the generalizability of the inferences already found from the case of Islamic terrorism. This is a timely contribution to a field of research that has been preoccupied with Islamic terrorism, and in many ways, started with the ascendancy of Islamic terrorism to the top of the international agenda after 9/11.

Method and data

The three papers use three different surveys. The first paper is based on the panel of social media users from the project "Social Media and the New Public Sphere — Consequences for Democracy and Citizenship." This panel was fielded in the spring of 2011 and then contacted again in August 2011, one month after the July 22 attacks. The second paper uses the seventh round of the European Social Survey (ESS 2014). This is a large comparative survey and the seventh round was fielded in 21 European countries. The third paper uses a survey experiment developed in collaboration with other members of the Disruptive Events Project. The resulting survey was fielded in five countries, Finland, France, Norway, Spain and the U.S.

Studying terrorist attacks with survey data is difficult, as the timing of attacks is unknown beforehand. Therefore, to study the effects of attacks, researchers often have relied on surveys fielded in the aftermath of attacks. These surveys may provide important information about the aftermaths of terrorism, but correlational studies after events may suffer from reverse causality or omitted variable bias and are, therefore, unable to distinguish the consequences of attacks from more

general correlations. The study by Merolla and Zechmeister (2009) exemplifies this problem. They find a correlation between threat perception and immigration attitudes in their cross-sectional data after 9/11, but they also use panel data and find that changes in threat perception over time do not predict changes in immigration attitudes. Thus, the correlation between threat and immigration attitudes does not reflect a causal relationship between the two attitudes, which could have been their assumption without the panel-data component of their analysis. This thesis uses three different methodological approaches to establish the causal effects of terrorist attacks and threats.

The first paper uses panel data, in which the first round ended approximately three months before the attacks on July 22, 2011, and the second round was fielded about a month after the attacks.¹⁹ This panel can be used to examine how prior attitudes determine reactions to attacks, something that is impossible with cross-sectional data in which everyone has been “treated” by an attack. In this paper, the panel data are complemented with questions from the second round (after the attacks). These questions concern the perceived effect of the attacks on ethnic tensions, free speech, and togetherness. Using these questions means that parts of the analysis may be exposed to some of the problems cited above. The results from the study of prior attitudes are possibly more robust than the results using questions concerning evaluations of the political and societal response to the attacks. While the results from this part of the study should be treated with some caution, they reflect a central problem in studying the effects of the societal and political responses to terrorism. In studying how the response affected attitudes and what parts of the response were important, it is difficult not to use “post-treatment” measures. Without controlling the treatment and exposure to the political response (see Paper 2), it is difficult to establish a causal relationship between the political response and the individual’s changes in attitudes

The second paper comes closer to identifying the causal effect of the political response. This paper combines two different strategies for causal inference. First, it studies the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks through a modified regression-discontinuity design, which relies on the random timing of interviews in large-scale surveys and has been used extensively in studies on terrorism (see e.g., Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam 2011; Finseraas and Listhaug 2013; Jakobsson and Blom 2014; Legewie 2013). The paper also goes further than prior studies in that it follows Cattaneo, Frandsen, and Titiunik (2015), explicitly testing the balance of the before

¹⁹ This round was fielded to gauge the effects of the attacks and contained several questions concerning the perceived effects of the attacks.

and after groups in the different regions and only include balanced regions. This is done in smaller regional areas (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics or NUTS). In the balanced regions, the effect of the attacks is estimated based on a comparison of means, then aggregated to the nation level (Gerber and Green 2012, pp. 72-73). This method differs from earlier studies that primarily relied on parametric modeling of time trends in the data, rather than excluding areas in which balance does not hold.

The second strategy for causal inference is used to distinguish the effect of the French societal response. As the French political framing of the attacks probably affected the French public more strongly than people in other countries, the difference between the estimated effects in France and six other countries is used to show the effect of the French framing and response to the attacks. This method has its strength in that it estimates the causal effect of the French response, but because other attitudes may have been affected by the attacks, it is not possible to use these attitudes to study what part of the French framing and political response created this separate effect, as is done in the first paper.²⁰ The ESS includes questions on both Muslim immigration and other types of immigration, such as Jewish and Roma immigration. It is accordingly possible to use the data to compare the effects on attitudes toward the immigration by different groups. Thus, the second paper provides insight into the importance of the group background of the terrorist as well.

The general importance of group background is difficult to test using surveys after real attacks, which are perpetrated by one type of group, and using a comparison of two different attacks to compare the effect of group background is difficult because attacks usually vary in characteristics other than the group background, e.g., political reaction. Thus, it is difficult to establish the specific effect of different group backgrounds. To study the effects of group background, the third paper uses a survey experiment. In the experiment, the respondents read a threatening news story and answer questions about security measures targeting one group. Both the groups perpetrating terrorism in the news stories and the groups targeted by security measures are randomized. This opens up analyses on the importance of both the group background of terrorists and the group targeted by security measures,

²⁰ See Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres (2018) for a discussion of the problems of conditioning on post-treatment variables. The difference between the findings in paper 2 and those by Castanho Silva (2018) could to a certain extent be a consequence of his inclusion of self-placement on the left-right axis as an independent variable. As research has found that terrorism affects self-placement on this scale (Berrebi and Klor 2008), something that seems to be the case in table 1 of his paper as well, including this independent variable may under-estimate the effects of the attacks.

as well as whether it is important that these two groups are the same or not. In addition, as it is possible to ask about attitudes before the treatment starts, the experiment facilitates testing on the moderating effects of prior attitudes. Compared with other papers, the use of experimental treatment increases internal validity, as the researcher completely controls the treatment. External validity, i.e., the generalizability of the findings, is less clear. The central question concerns what can be compared with the treatment. In this case, the treatment is reading a news story concerning an imminent terrorist threat. In the current situation, this should not be a very uncommon experience, but it remains unclear how the effects of reading these stories relate to the effects of a terrorist attack, and while one can assume them to be weaker, they also could be qualitatively different.

Each of the three different methodological designs has strengths and weaknesses. The panel design in the first paper has two important strengths. On the one hand, it is possible to measure the moderating effects of prior attitudes. On the other, it measures respondents' interpretations of the attacks and at the same time has information on attitudes before the attacks. However, the longer time between the measurements may lead to omitted variable bias, and one such problem could be the start of the political campaigns before the Norwegian local elections in the autumn of the same year. While the electoral campaigns usually do not start this early in Norway, it is not possible to eliminate the possibility of an effect from such parallel events. The second paper reduces the time span significantly, so this is less of a problem, but the comparison of the effects in the different countries may suffer from a similar problem, as there could be parallel events that affect only respondents in one country. In addition, while the study's method makes causal inferences possible, it is unable to gauge people's perceptions of the attacks directly. Finally, the third study, a survey experiment, comes closest to measuring a valid causal effect, but it is harder to establish the generalizability of the findings. It's not entirely clear what phenomena can be compared with the newspaper stories. In addition, while the effects of the newspaper stories lasted through some other survey questions, it is impossible to know the long-term effects of such a treatment. The short time span is a major limitation of these studies, as it is impossible to study whether the effects are long-lasting or just short-term changes in opinions. Thus, identifying the long-term effects of terrorism falls outside the scope of this thesis. As will be described below, the consequences of short-term changes in opinion also may elicit important long-term consequences if they lead to changes in policy.

Structure of the thesis

Paper 1: Øyvind Bugge Solheim (2018). “Right-Wing Terrorism and Out-Group Trust” In: *Terrorism and Political Violence*

The first paper uses the Norwegian reaction to the July 22, 2011, attacks to study the effects of terrorism on out-group trust. A right-wing extremist carried out the attacks. He had once been a member of the youth wing of the Progress Party — the party most strongly opposed to immigration of the mainstream Norwegian parties. Thus, the attacks had a direct connection to both the political cleavage on immigration and to this political party, making it an interesting case for studying how prior attitudes affect reactions to terrorism. Moreover, following the attacks, the main frame that political leaders, the media, and public commemorations employed emphasized democratic values such as “openness,” “democracy,” and “tolerance.” Greater public support for immigration (Jakobsson and Blom 2014)) and stronger out-group trust (Wollebæk, Enjolras, et al. 2012; Wollebæk, Steen-Johnsen, et al. 2013) also were reported. The paper explores how both prior attitudes and perceptions of public reactions affected out-group trust.

People reported more trust in people with a different religion and those with different nationalities after the attacks.²¹ Earlier studies suggested that similar changes in other attitudes may have been caused by people with attitudes in line with those of the terrorist experiencing cognitive dissonance (Jakobsson and Blom 2014). Because of such dissonance, these groups, in turn, changed attitudes so that they veered away from the terrorist’s attitudes. Paper 1’s findings do not support such a mechanism. Ideological similarity is inversely related to change in trust, and the group that could be labeled the terrorist’s “imagined constituency” experienced a smaller trust increase than others.

Drawing on the framework outlined above, there seems to be an effect of both prior attitudes and of the framing of the attacks.²² Beginning with the effects of framing, the increase in out-group trust was connected to perceptions of the political consequences of the attacks. People who perceived the aftermath of the attacks as being characterized by lower levels of ethnic differences experienced

²¹ Even after the right-wing extremist attacks, perceptions of threat from terrorism after the attacks was however connected to lower trust in out-groups. This could be interpreted both as reflecting the salient connection between Muslims and terrorism and reflecting a negative effect of threat in general on trust.

²² One could have seen it as only an effect of the ideological background of the terrorist, but the analyses reveals that the attacks had different effects on different people .

a bigger increase in trust than others. Interestingly, more general experiences of increased “togetherness” were not connected to the increase. The interpretation of this as an effect from the framing of the attacks is supported by the finding of a negative effect of not being able to express one’s own opinions. People who were not in agreement with the general framing after the attacks and who experienced fewer opportunities to express their opinions experienced a smaller trust increase than others. Secondly, those with the most positive attitudes toward immigration before the attacks experienced the largest increase in trust. People who had negative attitudes toward immigration or who identified with the Progress Party experienced a smaller trust increase than the others. This may reflect both motivated reasoning in the interpretation of the attacks and “reactance” to the political framing after the attacks (S. S. Brehm and J. W. Brehm 1981).

Paper 2: Øyvind Bugge Solheim - “Are we all Charlie? The international and domestic effects of terrorism.” Manuscript

The second paper follows up on the findings of a positive effect from the framing of the attacks in Norway. While the first paper found a positive effect from framing on out-group trust, this could have been contingent on the right-wing extremist background of the terrorist perpetrating that attack. The second paper studies how the *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper Cacher attacks affected immigration preferences in France and in six other countries. It asks whether the French framing of the attacks led to a different reaction in France than in the other countries. This may be viewed as a least-likely case because the framing offered by central French politicians, elites, and the public broke with the dominant the “War on terror” frame. The framing of the attacks emphasized French “republican values” such as “*laïcité*”, the French value of inclusive secularism. While these values resonated in France, they were relatively unknown outside of France before the attacks, and in addition the media coverage of an attack tends to be stronger inside the country attacked. Thus, the framing of the attacks probably affected French people more than people in other countries.

The results show that the attacks had no impact on immigration preferences in France. This could have been interpreted as a consequence of the attacks being too discriminate in their target or too small to affect the French public, but the massive demonstrations across France after the attacks indicate that French people, indeed, were affected. The paper also finds that the attacks led to an increase in support for restrictions on immigration outside France. The data allow for a

comparison of the attacks' effects on attitudes toward different groups. Thus, it is possible to test whether the terrorist's Islamic background led to a more specific effect from the attacks. The attack on the Hyper Cacher, a kosher supermarket in Paris, directly targeted Jews, something that could have increased sympathy toward this group. Distinguishing from among different types of immigration shows how the attacks had a negative impact on attitudes toward both Muslims and Jewish immigration outside of France, but not inside the country. This could be interpreted as a consequence of out-group denigration caused by the increased mortality salience after terrorism, but a possible second interpretation is that the attacks reduced support for immigration in general and that this spilled over into attitudes toward Jewish immigration as well.

Paper 3: Øyvind Bugge Solheim - "All or None? A Four-Country Experiment on How the Threat of Terrorism Affects Support for Counterterrorism Measures." Manuscript

The third paper delves further into the importance of terrorists' group background and ideology, as well as the public's prior attitudes. A survey experiment covering the US, France, Norway and Finland is used to study these effects from the terrorist threat on attitudes toward counterterrorism measures. Extant studies have found that terrorist attacks increase support for stricter security measures and reduce the defense of civil liberties, but it is unclear whether the changes in support are dependent on the target of the measures or the group in question. In the experiment, the respondents read either a fictional news story that described a terrorism threat or a control story. Three terrorism stories were used where only the terrorist group varied – either Islamic or right-wing extremists. Afterward, respondents answered questions about counterterrorism measures where the target group varied across the terrorism stories.

The analyses show that people distinguish from among different groups, and that support for targeting threatening or undemocratic groups is higher than the support for targeting other groups (this dovetails with the findings by Christensen and Aars 2017; Marcus, Sullivan, et al. 1995; Sniderman et al. 2014). Accordingly, the respondents were more supportive of targeting right-wing extremists and Islamists than they were of targeting Muslims. As was also hypothesized, the threatening news stories increased support for counterterrorism measures. How Islamic terrorism would affect support for targeting Muslims relative to Islamists and right-wing extremists was not clear beforehand. On one hand, support for

civil liberties, which may serve as a bulwark against illegitimate counterterrorism measures, generally decreases under the threat of terrorism. On the other, anxiety increases support for more specific measures that create protection from the cause of the anxiety. The results show that the threatening news stories increased support for targeting people in general, right-wing extremists, and Muslims regardless of the terrorist group's background in the story. Interestingly, only the Islamic news story seemed to increase support for targeting Islamists. Norway also differed from this general effect, with no effect and a negative estimate of the right-wing extremist news story on support for targeting Muslims. This could be a consequence of the country's experience with right-wing extremist terrorism and may indicate lingering effects from the tolerant response to the 2011 attacks (see Paper 1).

Finally, support for immigration was negatively correlated with support for counterterrorism efforts targeting Muslims, Islamists, and "people," but not with support for targeting right-wing extremists. Respondents who were very negative toward immigration did not distinguish between Muslims and Islamists, and they supported targeting both groups to a large extent. In addition, this group did not become more supportive of targeting right-wing extremists after reading about right-wing extremist terrorism. However, this news story did both increase the group's support for targeting "people" and increase the support for targeting right-wing extremists among people with more moderate attitudes toward immigration. People negative toward immigration thus seems to have reacted differently to the experiment than others, possibly reflecting a reaction to being asked twice about right-wing extremists.

Findings

This thesis examined the consequences of terrorism for three types of attitudes related to out-groups. These attitudes may be viewed as connected to the threat from terrorism. Terrorism may affect day-to-day interactions with other people as taking precautionary measures toward groups connected with the threat may be one way of creating protection from the threat. Out-group trust may decrease as a consequence of the threat from terrorism. The state also may counter the threat at the domestic level, and public support for domestic counterterrorism measures may increase. Finally, the terrorist threat also may be perceived as increasing because of immigration, leading to reductions in support for immigration after an attack.

The results of the three papers show that the generally negative effect of terror-

ism on attitudes toward out-groups is contingent on other factors. This thesis has proposed and tested the applicability of a political framework for understanding these consequences from terrorist attacks. The framework diverges from most recent research on the effects of terrorism by arguing that such effects are dependent on factors other than the attacks themselves. Three papers illuminate this proposition from different angles, showing both where the results support the expectations from the framework and where further development is needed.

The terrorist group

The first dimension of this framework is the importance of the group that perpetrates an attack. One could expect that the group background would affect terrorism's effects on both attitudes toward the group and toward the group's ideology. The results are more mixed than expected. The first paper's findings indicate a reaction that considers both ethno-religious and political backgrounds. Thus, the attacks, perpetrated by a white right-wing extremist, did not affect out-group attitudes negatively, but rather increased trust in out-groups. While it is difficult to establish the possible effects from the counter-factual situation of an Islamic terrorist attack, the multiple cases of harassment of people thought to be Muslims in the hours after the attacks seem to indicate that a tolerant reaction would not necessarily have occurred (see Haarr and Partapuoli 2012).

The two other papers find mechanisms that are not as clear-cut. In the second paper, a negative change in preferences toward Muslim immigration is found outside France, but the attacks also affected attitudes toward Jewish immigration negatively, even though Jews were a direct target during the attacks. This indicates that terrorist attacks do not only affect attitudes toward groups connected to the terrorists perpetrating the attacks, but also to other groups. Similarly, in the survey experiment in Paper 3, the terrorist threat increases support for counterterrorism measures, but it does so regardless of a connection between the group behind the threat and the group that the measures target. Thus, support for counterterrorism measures seems to increase even when people are reminded of a threat from a different group.

One possible explanation is that the terrorist attacks and threatening news stories affected people's general policy preferences. People generally may have become more negative toward immigration and more positive toward counterterrorism measures, which may have led to changes in preferences for policies targeting specific groups. Thus, terrorist attacks could affect unrelated groups

through their effects on policy measures in general. It is still unclear whether this is generalizable to every type of group. Particularly in the experiment on support for counterterrorism measures, one could argue that the “Muslims” group does have a certain connection to terrorism. It is possible that the effects on support would have been different had the respondents been asked about a group without a clear terrorist connection.

Finally, some evidence indicates that a country’s prior experience with terrorism may affect reactions toward renewed threats. A red line exists between the findings in the analyses of the Norwegian respondents in Papers 1 and 3. In Paper 1, the July 22, 2011, attacks in Norway by a right-wing extremist are found to lead to higher out-group trust. In the third paper, while the right-wing-extremist news story made people more supportive of counterterrorism measures against both right-wing extremists and Muslims in three other countries, this was not the case in Norway. The news story did not increase support for targeting Muslims, and the estimated direction of the insignificant effect is negative. This may indicate that being reminded of right-wing extremist terrorism in Norway had a different effect than in the other countries because Norwegians had experience with framing right-wing extremist terrorism as connected to a prescription for tolerance. These results are still early indications, but such effects, and creation of “collective memories” about terrorism, may be an interesting avenue to explore further (Rothstein 2000).

Framing

The effects of terrorism also seem to be dependent on the political framing. Paper 1 contains clear indications that perceptions of the 2011 attacks’ aftermath affected the effects from the attacks. People who experienced society as characterized by less ethnic antagonism strengthened their trust in out-groups after the attacks more than others. Since this finding was based on a case of right-wing extremist terrorism, inferences made from the case were possibly not generalizable to Islamic terrorist attacks. The second paper finds no change in preferences on immigration policy in France after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks. The finding of a negative effect in other European countries indicates that nothing was inherent in the attacks that made the reaction become more tolerant. Rather, the framing that dominated the political reaction and broad mobilization of French society after the attacks seem to have affected attitudinal consequences as well.

The findings here show some of the limits to the effects of framing. First, the

framing of an attack may be constrained to the country suffering the attack (e.g. Brinson and Stohl 2009). The French reaction to the *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper attacks was not copied outside of France. The reactions in the other countries seem to have followed the negative reaction toward out-groups that has been found in many other cases. With the “War on terror” as an international macro frame, it may be difficult to frame attacks differently. For political entrepreneurs to be successful in such attempts at framing, it may be that they need the special context of an aftermath of domestic terrorist attacks. As discussed above, in the aftermaths of terrorist attacks, the behavior of the media, opposition, and public changes in directions that are conducive to framing by central politicians

The finding of an effect from framing on trust in out-groups was somewhat unexpected. The principal proposed mechanism through which framings of terrorist attacks were thought to affect attitudes was through the effects from anxiety on support for protective policies and not on trust. That the framing in Norway led to increased levels of out-group trust seems to reflect a moral commitment to trust that could be activated by a dominant frame after attacks. This mechanism differs from the proposed mechanism behind increases in generalized social trust under galvanizing crises or collective experiences (Putnam 2000, ch. 24; Sander and Putnam 2009, p. 408; Uslaner 2002, p. 189). While Putnam (2000, ch. 24) views these crises as creating opportunities for collective action, which, in turn, fosters trust, Uslaner (2002, p. 189) writes about the effects from heightened perceptions of community sentiment and similarity with others. However, no correlation between experienced togetherness and out-group trust is apparent in Norway, indicating low support for an effect based on heightened perceptions of community and similarity. The findings here may implicate another mechanism, one in which trust can be activated through framing. This effect could on the one hand be seen in light of Uslaner’s (2002) view of generalized trust as a moral obligation and that this moral obligation became activated by the framing of the attacks. A second possibility is more group specific. Large groups in the West both have prejudiced attitudes toward out-groups and have internalized a social norm against prejudice (Blinder, Ford, and Ivarsflaten 2013). One possible interpretation is thus that the framing of the attacks increased the salience of these anti-prejudice norms and reduced the expressed prejudice. Accordingly, the framing of the attacks may have increased Norwegians’ motivation to control prejudice.

Prior attitudes

Prior attitudes seem to moderate the effects of terrorism, but this effect is closely connected to the two other parts of the framework. It is in the reception of frames and in the evaluation of terrorist groups that prior attitudes seem to have the strongest effects. This follows from the discussion of the effects of terrorism and the lack of information available to the public after an attack. If prior attitudes primarily affect the reception of information (e.g., through motivated reasoning), there is reason to expect that it would moderate the effects of the information available to the public, namely the framing and the group background.

The importance of terrorist groups seems to vary with prior attitudes. In the third paper, when people read news stories about terrorism, both about right-wing extremist and Islamist terrorism, their support for targeting right-wing extremists with counterterrorism measures increased. This was not the case for people with negative attitudes toward immigration when they were asked about right-wing extremists and read the right-wing extremist news story. The right-wing extremist news story decreased this group's support for counterterrorism measures that targeted right-wing extremists. People with negative attitudes toward immigration seem to have rejected the experimental treatment. While this could be attributed to the experimental setting, it is also possible that the strength of the treatment, i.e., being exposed to right-wing extremists twice, made the respondents who were ideologically close to this group reject the treatment. This resembles the findings from the effects of framing above.

The effects of frames also are dependent on prior attitudes. Not everyone seems to be affected to the same extent (and maybe in the same way) by the frames. These findings follow the research on politically motivated reasoning and the biased reception of new information (Karlsen et al. 2017; Taber, Cann, and Kucsova 2008; Taber and Lodge 2006). The extreme coverage of terrorism in the media and the broad mobilizations in the public may be expected to lead to a strong, dominant frame on groups that are positively inclined to the frame's message and at the same time, as well as to "reactance" by some groups (S. S. Brehm and J. W. Brehm 1981). Generally, when people feel that their freedom is threatened, they are prone to try to protect it. This reaction may be induced by experiences of pressure to conform after terrorist attacks. People who disagree with the prescriptions of the dominant frame may react to the pressure to conform by trying to reestablish their freedom (e.g., findings by Gadarian 2013). In the Norwegian case, while the majority followed the increase in tolerance, this was

not the case for certain sub-groups and varied with prior attitudes.

Limitations and future research

The effects found here are studied in a short time period after the terrorist attacks, and the papers are unable to capture how long these effects last. It is thus possible that the effects of terrorism found in the three papers are short-term effects that do not last over longer periods of time. This is an important limitation to this study. As has been argued above however, even short-term effects of terrorist attacks on attitudes may make policy changes possible by changing the “politics stream” (Kingdon 2014, p. 96). This argument is strengthened by the findings of an effect of political framing as political leaders are crucial in setting the dominant frames. Accordingly, political leaders seem to have greater leeway in implementing reforms in the aftermath of terrorism than in other settings. Whether there are effects on policy is an empirical question that should be studied further (see also Epifanio 2011, 2016). This could also lead to interesting studies of feedback loops between policies and attitudes, and Brooks and Manza (2013, pp. 132-138) do find that people become more positive toward surveillance measures when reminded that the policies are legal.

While the papers have indicated that there may be a separate effect of the framing of terrorist attacks, this still leaves the question of why a certain frame was chosen. To what extent were the frames that were chosen after the attacks in France and Norway dependent on specifics of the attacks themselves? The French attacks were for example more discriminate in their targeting and had fewer casualties than some of the other attacks that followed in France, and the reaction by the same political leadership to the later attacks seemed very different and more belligerent. The choices of framing made by the political leaders in face of an attack are thus an interesting topic for further research.

A related limitation is that the effects of framing are not studied directly. While the findings in the first two papers indicate an effect of the framing of the attacks, further research is needed to establish the effects of framing of attacks on attitudes. The two studies by Brinson and Stohl (2009, 2012) are one interesting approach. These authors first found two different types of terrorism frames and then tested the effects of the two frames in a survey experiment finding effects of only one of the frames on support for counterterrorism measures. Further testing both of different frames and of the possibility of recreating effects by reminding people of earlier

frames could yield interesting results. In the third paper, people increased support for targeting Muslims after reading about right-wing extremist terrorism in three of the countries, but not in Norway. This could indicate an effect of being reminded of the framing of the July 22, 2011 attacks something that could be interesting to test further in experiments.

The thesis' focus on attitudes and not behavior is also a limitation. The harassment of "Muslims" in Norway after the July 22 attacks shows that attacks may lead to changes in behavior as well (Haarr and Partapuoli 2012) and Gautier, Siegmann, and Van Vuuren (2009) found that the Theo van Gogh murder in Amsterdam in 2004 changed behavior in the housing market of the city, even though Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam (2011) found no effect on attitudes toward immigration policy in the Netherlands. While attitudinal changes could be expected to lead to changes in behavior, this is not given. The positive effects on out-group trust in Norway were for example not reflected in reduced discrimination in the Norwegian labor market (Birkelund et al. 2018). The relationship between changes in attitudes and changes in behavior after terrorist attacks is thus an interesting topic of study.

Conclusion

In the beginning of this chapter, negative effects from terrorism on democracy were outlined. Through their actions, terrorists were hypothesized to create reactions toward related groups that breaks with central democratic values. The threat from terrorism on democracy has been a red thread through much of the research since 9/11. The problematic effects from these attacks on out-group attitudes have set a standard for how terrorism is thought to affect attitudes, and terrorism has been found to affect a broad set of out-group attitudes.

This thesis has proposed a more nuanced view of the effects of terrorism and the mechanisms through which terrorist attacks affect democratic societies. While both direct and indirect effects from the threat of terrorism may exist, the argument here is that the effects from attacks may be contingent on terrorists' characteristics, the framings of attacks, and people's prior attitudes. Thus, this perspective shows that limits may exist on the generalizability of extant literature to attacks that other types of groups perpetrate, that elicit other types of framings and that are connected to other types of domestic political cleavages. The findings in the extant research may set expectations on the effects of Islamic attacks in which the reaction follows

the “War on Terror” framing, but may not be applicable to other types of terrorist attacks or other types of framings.

This thesis, in many ways, paints a more optimistic picture than extant research. The effects from terrorism are not provided directly through an attack, but members of the elite frame attacks and can affect public reaction to terrorism through such framing. Through the actions of politicians, the media and the public, democracies may indeed resist some of the negative effects of threat. The papers here show that it is possible to mobilize the public around tolerant values even after terrorist attacks.

The emphasis on framing leads to a less-negative view of the media as well. Earlier research provided a view of the media similar to Thatcher’s description of publicity as “oxygen” for the terrorists, or described the media as having a symbiotic relationship with terrorism. However, this thesis argues that while the media coverage of terrorism may be problematic, the mass media also plays an important role in facilitating political leadership, something that is crucial in the aftermath of terrorism (see also Wilkinson 1997). Thus, the media serve a dual role in the aftermath of terrorism. On one hand, they cover (often extensively) terrorists’ atrocities. On the other hand, they give political leaders the opportunity to guide the public’s interpretation of attacks.

The flip side of this optimistic view is not very different from the story that extant research has told. If terrorism gives the government leeway in framing the reaction to it, no reason exists to believe that only one framing is available — one based on tolerance and love for civil liberties. Indeed, the findings in the extant research seem to confirm that this is not the case and these values were not emphasized in the “War on Terror” framing. Thus, the effects of terrorism on the status of out-groups in Western society may depend on the preferences of the political leaders and the governing parties more than on terrorism itself.

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Chapter 2

Right-wing Terrorism and Out-group Trust: The Anatomy of a Terrorist Backlash

Right-wing Terrorism and Out-group Trust: The Anatomy of a Terrorist Backlash

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ABSTRACT

Terrorist attacks often lead to public backlashes. Following the attacks on July 22, 2011 in Norway, Norwegians showed support for democratic values such as “openness,” “democracy,” and “tolerance” in the public debate and in the commemorations across the country. They also reported higher out-group trust. This paper explores two possible reasons for this increase in trust using a unique panel fielded before and right after the attacks. The first is that cognitive dissonance led people to dissociate from the terrorist and his ideology. The second is that the increase in trust was a response to the public backlash after the attacks. The increase in trust was not caused by cognitive dissonance. Rather, people who were already positive towards immigration, or who saw positive effects of the attacks, became more trusting than others did, and Progress Party supporters increased their trust less than others. These findings are interpreted as a response to the attacks and the political characteristics of the backlash. The study concludes by discussing implications for our understanding of the different consequences of attacks for the terrorists’ imagined constituencies and for the broader public.

KEYWORDS

2011 Norway attacks; framing; July 22; lone wolf; out-group trust; right-wing terrorism; terrorism

Introduction

Terrorists are often motivated by a wish to increase publicity and support for their cause. The effectiveness of this so-called “propaganda by the deed” is, however, doubtful.¹ Terrorist attacks usually lead to negative backlashes in democratic societies, both against the terrorists themselves and against accommodating their demands.² These backlashes and the following lower levels of support in the public have at times even led to the demise of terrorist groups.³ However, few have studied the effects of terrorism on the support for the terrorists’ *cause* by different groups.⁴ Using the case of the attacks on July 22, 2011 in Norway, this paper asks whether the terrorist attacks led to a negative reaction towards the ideology of the terrorists and if so, whether this varied between groups with different prior attitudes.

On July 22, 2011, a right-wing extremist perpetrated a dual terrorist attack, bombing the office of the Labor Party Prime Minister in Oslo and massacring members of the youth wing of the Labor Party at their summer camp. In total, 77 people were killed and many were wounded in the first large-scale terrorist attacks on Norwegian soil. The terrorist sent out a political manifesto to different media outlets before committing the attacks, in which

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he outlined his ideas and his belief in a grand Muslim conspiracy.⁵ In the public, the attacks were mainly seen as attacks on Norwegian democracy, but Norwegian media also reported on the Labor Party background of the victims and the terrorist's former Progress Party membership.⁶ The Norwegian response to the attacks was similar to other backlashes against terrorism, with a strong rally around the political leadership, the media preoccupied with rebuilding the national community, and large commemorations across the country. Almost one-third of the Norwegian population participated in what became known as the "Rose Marches," showing sympathy for the victims and support for democratic values.

The attacks influenced the public's attitudes and Norwegians became more positive towards out-groups after the attacks.⁷ Research has explained this change in attitudes towards out-groups as caused by the "black sheep effect" and a possible dissociation from the terrorist's extreme right-wing ideology.⁸ However, the change in attitudes may also have been a response to the political mobilization of Norwegian society during the backlash to the attacks.⁹

The attacks and the public response

In the early afternoon of July 22, 2011, the terrorist set off a car bomb in front of the Prime Minister's offices in the center of Oslo.¹⁰ Because this was during the summer vacation, there were few casualties in spite of the extensive damages to the governmental offices in the area. The public originally believed that it was Islamic terrorism, and in the immediate aftermath of the attacks there were multiple examples of harassment of people perceived to be Muslims.¹¹ However, during the hours following the bombing it first became clear that the terrorist was a white male, before the news broke of a shooting on the island of Utøya. On the island, AUF, the youth wing of the Labor Party, were having their annual summer camp. Youth from all over Norway were participating in political workshops and debates, listening to speeches by politicians, and engaging in several other non-political activities. The terrorist came armed and dressed in a police-like uniform and informed the volunteers managing the coming and going that he came to conduct a routine control on the island.¹² Upon reaching the island, he began a two-hour massacre. In the two attacks, he killed 77 people.

The terrorist harbored a strong hatred against immigrants in general and Muslims more specifically. He argued for an expulsion of all Muslims from Europe and encouraged a civil war between the "native" Europeans and the "invading" Muslims. He believed in the "Eurabia" conspiracy theory, which suggests that liberal European elites and Muslim immigrants together are trying to create an Islamic Europe. According to this theory, even Muslims who do not support any kind of extreme Islam are just "posing" as progressives and are both "camouflaged and ... dangerous."¹³ His distrust in immigrants and specifically Muslims was accordingly a central motivation for the attacks, and this was both propagated by the terrorist himself in his manifesto and highlighted in the media after the attacks.¹⁴

In July 2011, the campaigns for the municipal elections in September had not yet begun in earnest. The Labor Party (AP) led a majority coalition government together with the Socialist Left Party (SV) and the Center Party (SP). This was the first time the Labor Party had been in a coalition government, but the party had dominated

Norwegian politics through its majority and later minority governments since the Second World War. The Norwegian response to the July 22 attacks, which was a solemn celebration of Norwegian values and lacked belligerent language, was different from recent responses to terrorist attacks. In the years after 9/11, the responses to (mostly Islamic) terrorism followed the “War on Terror” framing.¹⁵ However, the in-group background and political ideology of the terrorist probably made this framing less relevant after the Norwegian attacks (although the first speech by the Prime Minister somewhat followed this framing).¹⁶ In the days after the attacks, a private initiative led to the organization of “Rose Marches” in almost a hundred municipalities across the country, where close to one-third of the Norwegian adult population participated.¹⁷ The Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg became the central exponent of the Norwegian interpretation of the attacks and he argued in his speech at the march in Oslo that the response should be “more democracy, more openness and more humanity” and “democracy, togetherness and tolerance.”¹⁸ In the aftermath of the attacks the Progress Party came under scrutiny and was criticized, both because of the terrorist’s former membership in the party and because of the party’s central role in the debate on immigration.¹⁹ While the party leadership denied any responsibility for the terrorist and his actions, both the party leader and certain local leaders were led to reflect publicly on their role in the immigration debate after the attacks.²⁰

Explaining the Norwegian response

Terrorism often leads to backlashes in democratic publics and there are multiple examples of attacks leading to the loss of public support for terrorist organizations.²¹ Crenshaw argues that while terrorists may have at least tacit support from certain groups, they may lose this support if they overstep these groups’ “tolerance limit” for violence.²² After a few especially egregious attacks, this loss of support has contributed to the decline of the terrorist groups themselves.²³ The Norwegian response mirrored these backlashes with a strong rejection of the terrorist attacks and the terrorist by the public. The change in out-group trust, which could be interpreted as a reaction to the terrorist’s ideology, is however puzzling. The only paper studying the consequences of terrorism for support for the ideology of the terrorists find no effect, neither positive nor negative, of terrorism,²⁴ and even in cases where terrorist groups cease their operations after backlashes, the political struggle often continues through other (non-violent) means and maintains its public support.²⁵ There does, accordingly, not seem to be a direct connection between public backlashes against terrorism and the rejection of the terrorist cause.

This paper studies two possible explanations for the increase in out-group trust.²⁶ On the one hand, the increase in trust could be caused by the so-called “black sheep effect,” a negative reaction towards the terrorist and as a consequence his attitudes. Aarstad, Jakobsson, and Blom²⁷ argue that because of the black sheep effect, people felt cognitive dissonance after the attacks and that this led to a dissociation from the terrorist’s attitudes. On the other hand, the increase could be a consequence of characteristics of the backlash. Rather than being a direct effect of the attacks, the public response and the emphasis on tolerance after the attacks could have led people to increase their out-group trust.

The black sheep effect and cognitive dissonance

Both Aarstad and Jakobsson and Blom find more positive attitudes towards immigrants (and implicit attitudes towards Barack Obama's middle name, Hussein) after the attacks and interpret this as caused by dissociation from the terrorist's ideology.²⁸ According to Jakobsson and Blom,²⁹ hostility toward the terrorist may have caused cognitive dissonance,³⁰ leading people to dissociate from the terrorist and his ideas. They point to "the black sheep effect," which refers to how people view misconduct by a group member more negatively than misconduct by others because it threatens the group image.³¹ People accordingly tried "to dissociate themselves from the terrorist and his ideas."³² There is reason to believe that the black sheep effect would affect some groups more than others. Eidelman and Biernat find that the black sheep effect is not only based on defense of the group image but also on a wish to keep one's *self-image* intact.³³ While the preservation of the group image could affect every member of the group, the need to preserve one's self-image varies from person to person depending on the level of similarity with the misbehaving group member. The need to dissociate from the perpetrator could accordingly be stronger for people who felt more similar to the terrorist.

Two characteristics are especially relevant for the evaluations of similarity in this case, attitudes towards immigration and support for the Progress Party. The terrorist was extremely critical of Norwegian immigration policy, possibly leading people who were negative towards immigration to experience more dissonance. One could thus expect an inverse relationship between prior attitudes towards immigration and change in out-group trust. Second, as the terrorist had been a member of the Progress Party, people affiliated with this party could have experienced more dissonance than others. In the period after the attacks, Norwegian media both highlighted the terrorist's connection with the party and the coverage of the party was more critical than before.³⁴ Thus, supporters of the Progress Party could have felt more cognitive dissonance and developed more positive attitudes towards out-groups than others did. Finally, people who had positive views of immigrants before the attacks probably did not experience cognitive dissonance, as their attitudes were not "similar" to those of the terrorist. This leads to the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: People who felt cognitive dissonance after the attacks increased their out-group trust more than others did.

The public backlash

While the attacks themselves may have caused the increase in trust, it is also possible that specifics of the backlash after the attacks led to higher trust. Similar to after other terrorist attacks, the backlash against the attacks in Norway consisted of a rally around the political leadership, media coverage concerned with rebuilding the national community, and public commemorations across the country.³⁵ This massive mobilization of Norwegian society may in itself have created a stronger feeling of community and togetherness that in turn increased trust. However, democratic values in general, and tolerance more specifically, were central in the different manifestations of the backlash and this may have influenced

people's attitudes. Finally, the political characteristics of the backlash may have led to experiences of exclusion and censorship by groups that did not agree.

Events such as the terrorist attacks may in themselves lead to increases in trust.³⁶ Experiencing what Uslaner calls “galvanizing national crises” creates the feeling of being “in the same boat” and increases the feeling of similarity between members of the stricken communities.³⁷ Feelings of similarity, in turn, increases trust. After the attacks in Norway, out-groups such as immigrants were explicitly included in the community, and some of the victims did have immigrant backgrounds. People may thus have felt more similar to out-groups and increased their trust after the attacks.

It is also possible that the specific political characteristics of the backlash influenced trust. Crucially, democratic values were central in the response by the political elite, in the media, and in the public commemorations,³⁸ and this may have affected out-group trust. Especially the emphasis on tolerance may have affected people's views of out-groups. While most Norwegians took part in the commemorations after the attacks one way or another, not everyone may have experienced the backlash in the same way.³⁹ Contrary to the emphasis on “openness,” those who had divergent views from the ones expressed in the political debate may have felt less able to participate after the attacks.⁴⁰ There is reason to believe that these groups may have reacted to the pressure and not increased their out-group trust as much as others did.

Hypothesis 2: How people perceived the public backlash against the attacks influenced their out-group trust.

Data and methodology

The analysis is based on panel data from the project “Social Media and the New Public Sphere—Consequences for Democracy and Citizenship.” Panel data from before and after the attacks are used to study different types of attitudinal change. The first round was conducted before the attacks in March and April 2011, and the second round was conducted four weeks after the attacks in August of the same year. The respondents were drawn from Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) Gallup's web panel, which comprised of 62,000 individuals. Each round consists of two parts: one cross-sectional survey which is designed to be representative of the 93 percent of Norwegians who have access to the Internet and a second part, which is a panel consisting of social media users (who use Facebook twice or more per week and/or Twitter once or more per week). The study is based on the panel component of the survey, using the first and second round with a total of 2252 respondents. There were 4183 respondents in the first round, and the response rate of the respondents who were contacted again was 66 percent.

The panel is representative of Norwegian social media users, and design weights are used. To determine the differences between the panel and the broader population, the two samples are compared through student's T-tests. Comparing the rounds of the social media panel with the cross-sectional sample conducted at the same time shows a few differences. The social media sample is younger, has higher education, is more negative towards immigration, and perceived a larger personal threat than others after the attacks. On the questions concerning the attacks they experienced a bit more togetherness,

participated to a higher extent in the Rose Marches, and felt more able to voice their opinion, but did not differ significantly on the other variables. The differences are relatively small.⁴¹ The possible problem of representativeness is in addition reduced, as the main interest here is the *change* in trust rather than the absolute levels. The panelists only need to respond similarly as the rest of the public to the attacks for the results to be valid for the broader population. The absolute levels do not need to be the same for the change to reflect a general trend.

Variables

A conditional change model is used in which the dependent variable is change in trust (i.e., $TRUST_{T2} - TRUST_{T1}$), and the dependent variable at T1 is included to reduce the problem of regression to the mean.⁴² Ordinary least square regression (OLS) is used to ensure comparability across different models.⁴³ Because the terrorist attacks probably influenced both the dependent variable (out-group trust) and the independent variables, the independent variables that do not concern the response to the attacks are used at the first time-point.

For the measure of out-group trust, two items are used from the question, “How much do you trust different social groups?”: “People of a different religion” and “People of a different nationality.” These were used together with “People you meet for the first time” as measures of out-group trust in Delhey, Newton, and Welzel’s study of the trust radius.⁴⁴ As the terrorist was very critical of Muslims specifically, the questions about a different religion and nationality are the most relevant. Still, the respondents determine who they conceive as the object of the question. The questions are presented on a four-point scale from “Do not trust at all” to “Trust completely.” The two variables are combined in an additive index and rescaled to go from 0 to 1.

The question of party identification is used for support of the Progress Party, with 1 denoting people who consider themselves a “Progress Party-man/woman.” Attitudes towards immigration are taken from two different items. One is at a ten-point scale, which ranges going from “We should make it easier for immigrants to get access to Norway” to “We should have much stronger restrictions on the number of immigrants.” The other is a five-point scale, which ranges from “agree completely” to “disagree completely” to the statement “We have enough immigrants and asylum seekers in this country.” This first scale is inversed so that a high value indicates support for immigration, and the two scales are combined in an index through principal component analysis (Cronbach’s alpha of 0.68). High degrees of institutional trust were the primary cause of the lack of fear after the attacks.⁴⁵ To measure institutional trust, trust in the police, the courts, the municipal council, and the public administration are combined in an index. As trust in the government is closely related to partisanship, it is excluded. The question is “How much confidence do you have in the following institutions?,” and the relevant institutions are combined in an index using PCA (Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80). Originally, the scale ranged from “Very much confidence” to “No confidence,” but the scale is inversed so that a high value indicates trust. This variable is expected to have a positive relationship with the change in out-group trust as institutional trust should lead to lower levels of threat perception.

Four items are used to measure the effects of the public response to the attacks. The first is a question asking if people participated in the “Rose Marches.” The next four questions tap the respondents’ perceptions of the effects of the attacks. The introduction was “If you compare Norway today with the situation before the July 22 attacks, would you say that the society is characterized by more or less”: and the respondents answered on a five-point scale ranging from “Much less” to “Much more.” To measure the effects of the possible increased perception of community after the attacks the first item, “togetherness and community,” is used. To more directly measure the increased perception of the community with out-groups, the item “antagonisms between ethnic groups” is used. The final item is used to measure the perceptions of negative effects of the response to the attacks for the political climate. This is “possibility to voice one’s opinion” and measures experience of censoring of divergent views. All variables are recoded to range from 0 to 1.

In his attack on the AUF, the terrorist specifically targeted youth. There was a large increase in turnout in the youngest cohorts of voters in the election seven weeks after the attacks and in the public debate after the attacks, and there has been talk of an “Utøya-generation.”⁴⁶ Thus, age is included in the analysis and is divided into four groups: below 30 years old, 30 to 44 years old, 45 to 59, and 60 and up. The 45 to 59 group is the reference group. On the one hand, one could expect that the youth were more fearful and thus had less trust of out-groups after the attacks. On the other, if the general influence of the attacks is an increase in trust and the youth were the most influenced by the attacks, the youth could have increased their trust more than others. The question of political interest is included as a control. This has four values ranging from “Very interested in politics” to “Not at all interested in politics.” It is recoded to go from 0 to 1, where 1 denotes “Very interested in politics.” Gender and education are included as control variables. Education is dichotomized into 0, which denotes no higher education, and 1, which denotes higher education.

As studies of Islamic terrorism show, perceptions of threat may lead to out-group derogation.⁴⁷ The relevance of these studies for domestic right-wing extremist terrorist attacks is not clear, but it is possible that results in this analysis could reflect how groups differ in their perceptions of terrorist threat. Because the Progress Party takes a strong stance on crime, one possibility is that voters of the Progress Party are more afraid of crime in general and in this case perceive a higher threat from terrorism. Differences in threat perception could in turn create differences in out-group trust. Similarly, Wollebæk et al. show that confidence in the government’s anti-terrorism capabilities had a prophylactic effect on fear after the attacks.⁴⁸ To test for differences in levels of perceptions of threat and confidence in terrorism prevention, three items are included in the last model: “How worried are you that there will be new terrorist attacks in Norway in the near future?”; “How much confidence do you have that the government will prevent new, large scale terrorist attacks in Norway?”; and “To what extent are you worried that future terrorist attacks will harm you, your family or your friends?” This is a strong test of the validity of the results as these questions were asked in the second survey round together with the out-group trust questions. Accordingly, if political differences in change in trust are still present after controlling for fear and confidence levels, this strengthens the finding of a different mechanism than threat perception.

Results

The results are presented in the following section beginning with the descriptive statistics. Next, the different models are presented and the results from the six regression analyses are presented and discussed. The descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that there is an increase in out-group trust from the first to the second round of the survey at 0.04.⁴⁹ In the dataset, around 10 percent identify with the Progress Party. The views on immigration are relatively negative, with a mean of .39, or between 4 and 5 on the scale from 1 to 10. The institutional trust is high, at .63, or above 3 on the scale from 1 to 5. Concerning age, the largest group is the group between 45 and 59. The panelists are relatively interested in politics, and the perceptions of threat are comparatively low.⁵⁰ Confidence in the prevention of terrorism is, on the other hand, relatively high.

Table 2 reports the results from the regression analyses and change in out-group trust is the dependent variable. The first model has only an intercept and the second includes the lagged dependent variable. In the third model, control variables and the variables denoting partisanship and attitudes towards immigration are included before the interaction term is included in the fourth model. The fifth model includes the measures of attitudes towards the effects of the attacks, before the perceptions of threat and confidence variables are included in the sixth and final model.

Similar to the descriptive statistics, the first intercept-only model shows a mean change of 0.04. Including the lagged dependent variable in the second model shows that the change in trust after the attacks is negatively correlated with trust before the attacks. There is accordingly a certain regression to the mean where the most trusting people change in a less positive direction than others. The correlation between the time periods is .58 (i.e. 1-.42), and the intercept continues to be significant. The third model includes the independent variables of interest except the interaction and the measures of attitudes towards the effects of the attacks. Beginning with age and gender, the younger respondents report less positive change in trust compared with people above 45 years of age. Similarly, male respondents

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the panel.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Out-group trust (T1)	1,987	0.47	0.22	0.00	1.00
Out-group trust (T2)	2,136	0.51	0.21	0.00	1.00
Progress party identification	2,284	0.10	0.30	0	1
Attitudes towards immigration	2,274	0.002	1.02	-1.49	2.32
Institutional trust	2,279	-0.02	1.01	-3.66	2.11
Age (below 30)	2,285	0.18	0.38	0	1
Age (30-44)	2,285	0.28	0.45	0	1
Age (45-59)	2,285	0.39	0.49	0	1
Age (60+)	2,285	0.24	0.43	0	1
Higher education	2,282	0.58	0.49	0	1
Male	2,285	0.48	0.50	0	1
Political interest	2,277	0.58	0.23	0.00	1.00
Rose marches (T2)	2,285	0.34	0.48	0	1
More ethnic antagonism (T2)	2,284	0.38	0.18	0.00	1.00
More togetherness (T2)	2,278	0.75	0.17	0.00	1.00
Less able to voice opinion (T2)	2,282	0.52	0.21	0.00	1.00
National threat (T2)	2,285	0.36	0.22	0.00	1.00
Confidence in terrorism prevention (T2)	2,281	0.58	0.23	0.00	1.00
Personal threat (T2)	2,284	0.35	0.22	0.00	1.00
Attitudes towards immigration (additive index)	2,274	0.39	0.27	0.00	1.00
Institutional trust (additive index)	2,265	0.63	0.17	0.00	1.00

Table 2. Determinants of change in out-group trust.

	Change in out-group trust					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	0.037** (0.004)	0.230** (0.009)	0.331** (0.013)	0.331** (0.013)	0.395** (0.022)	0.391** (0.023)
Lagged out-group trust		-0.416** (0.017)	-0.556** (0.019)	-0.557** (0.019)	-0.563** (0.019)	-0.565** (0.019)
Age (below 30)			-0.067** (0.011)	-0.067** (0.011)	-0.068** (0.011)	-0.074** (0.011)
Age (from 30 to 45)			-0.040** (0.010)	-0.041** (0.010)	-0.037** (0.010)	-0.039** (0.010)
Age (above 60)			0.007 (0.010)	0.007 (0.010)	0.004 (0.010)	0.007 (0.010)
Male			-0.028** (0.008)	-0.027** (0.008)	-0.025** (0.008)	-0.026** (0.008)
Higher education			0.010 (0.008)	0.009 (0.008)	0.009 (0.008)	0.008 (0.008)
Progress Party identification			-0.033* (0.013)	-0.070** (0.020)	-0.063** (0.020)	-0.055** (0.020)
Attitude towards immigration			0.037** (0.004)	0.039** (0.004)	0.035** (0.004)	0.033** (0.004)
Institutional trust			0.017** (0.004)	0.017** (0.004)	0.015** (0.004)	0.010* (0.004)
Political interest			-0.002 (0.017)	-0.005 (0.017)	-0.002 (0.017)	0.0004 (0.017)
Rose marches					0.010 (0.008)	0.008 (0.008)
More ethnic antagonism					-0.079** (0.022)	-0.068** (0.022)
More togetherness					-0.040 (0.023)	-0.040 (0.024)
Less able to voice opinion					-0.068** (0.018)	-0.061** (0.018)
National threat						-0.047* (0.023)
Confidence in counter-terrorism						0.066** (0.018)
Personal threat						0.014 (0.023)
Interaction: attitude towards immigration and identification with the Progress party				-0.039* (0.016)	-0.039* (0.016)	-0.037* (0.016)
N	1,935	1,935	1,886	1,886	1,878	1,873
R ²	0.000	0.228	0.319	0.321	0.331	0.338
Adjusted R ²	0.000	0.228	0.315	0.317	0.326	0.332

.p < 0.1; *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

have a less positive change in trust than women after the attacks, but the higher education estimate is not significant. People with higher levels of institutional trust (in municipalities, courts, police, and the public sector in general) increased their trust more than others did after the attacks. The estimate for political interest is not significant.

Partisanship influences the change in trust after the attacks. People identifying with the Progress Party do not have higher out-group trust after the attacks than others. Rather, the estimate indicates that people not identifying with the Progress Party increased their trust more than Progress Party supporters, all else equal, and this is significant at the .05 level. Similarly, attitudes towards immigration are positively associated with change in trust after the attacks. People who were more positive towards immigration before the attacks

changed their views on the trustworthiness of out-groups in a more positive direction than others.

To explore the relationship between Progress Party identification and views on immigration, the fourth model includes an interaction between the two variables. This has little impact on the estimates except for Progress Party identification. Identifying with the Progress Party is now highly significant (.01) and more negative. The interaction term is negative, about the same size as the estimate for attitudes towards immigration, and significant at the .05 level. Because it is the same size as the estimate for attitudes towards immigration, the two cancel each other out for people identifying with the Progress Party. The change in trust after the attacks for the people identifying with the Progress Party was not dependent on their views on immigration before the attacks. Plotting the predicted change in out-group trust based on party identification and attitudes towards immigration in Figure 1 clearly shows the difference between the groups. Here, the x-axis denotes the attitude towards immigration before the attacks, and the y-axis denotes the change in trust after the attacks. The two different lines indicate the values for the people identifying or not identifying with the Progress Party, and the gray area indicates the 95 percent confidence intervals. While people identifying with the Progress Party are predicted to have the same level of trust after the attacks for every level of attitude towards immigration, other people are predicted to have higher levels of trust the more positive they were towards immigration.

The fifth model includes the questions on the perceived effects of the attacks and on participation in the Rose Marches. Responses to these questions are indeed correlated with changes in out-group trust. While the estimate for participation in the Rose Marches is not statistically significant, both the estimate for perceptions of ethnic antagonisms and

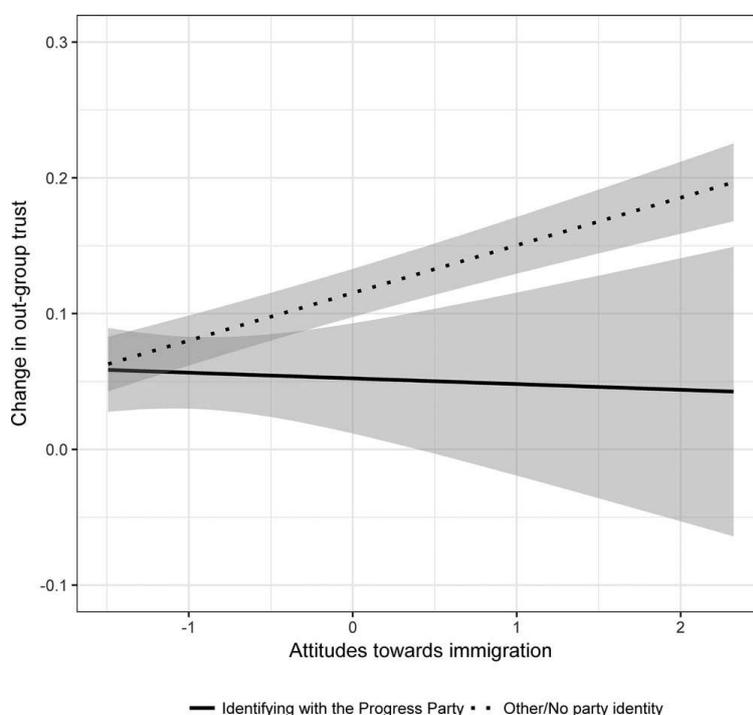


Figure 1. Predicted change in out-group trust by party affiliation and attitudes towards immigration.

the possibility to voice one's opinion are statistically significant (.01). Accordingly, people who responded that they thought there was less ethnic antagonism after the attacks, changed their trust more in a positive direction than others, and conversely, people who experienced that they were less able to voice their opinion after the attacks, changed their trust in a less positive direction after the attacks. The estimate for togetherness is unexpectedly negative although it is only significant at the .1 level. Including these variables reduces the estimates for identifying with the Progress Party and attitudes towards immigration, but not to a large extent, and both are still significant at .01. It accordingly does not seem to be the case that these estimates only covered differences in perceptions of the attacks. Rather, the change in out-group trust seems to be correlated with both perceptions of the attacks, party identity, and attitudes towards immigration.

Finally, the sixth model includes questions on threat from terrorism for oneself and for the country and on confidence in prevention of terrorism. Replicating the findings in other studies, the estimate for national threat and not personal threat is significant,⁵¹ and perception of national threat leads to lower out-group trust after the attacks. The effects of the terrorist threat have, however, mainly been studied in the context of Islamic terrorism and it is thus interesting to find an effect of experiencing terrorist threat after a right-wing extremist attack on change in out-group trust.⁵² Similarly, the estimate for confidence in government anti-terrorism measures is positive. The changes in the other estimates are relatively small. As could be expected when including confidence in anti-terrorism measures, the estimate for institutional trust decreases. The estimate for identification with the Progress Party decreases somewhat in level but maintains direction and significance. This seems to dismiss the possibility that the estimates only mask a difference in threat perception and institutional trust between people identifying with different parties.

The first hypothesis stated that cognitive dissonance caused by the black sheep effect created the increase in out-group trust, an explanation proposed by Jakobsson, Blom, and Aarstad for their findings of more positive attitudes towards immigration after the attacks.⁵³ While some people may have increased their trust in out-groups as a consequence of cognitive dissonance, this mechanism does not explain the general increase in out-group trust in Norwegian society. People who were negative towards immigration or who identified with the Progress Party increased their trust less than others after the attacks. Thus, the general increase in out-group trust was not caused by these groups experiencing cognitive dissonance.

The fact that Progress Party identification moderates the positive relationship between views on immigration and trust could have indicated that cognitive dissonance only influenced people who were both identifying with the party *and* negative towards immigration. However, the interaction estimate is not large enough to make people identifying with the Progress Party more trusting than others, even for the people who were most negative towards immigration. Rather, party affiliation cancels out the effect of prior attitudes towards immigration, and prior attitudes thus did not affect the trust of people identifying with the Progress Party.

There is also support for parts of the second hypothesis. People who experienced the aftermath of the attacks as less characterized by ethnic antagonisms than before the attacks increased their trust more than others, and people who felt less able to voice their opinion after the attacks became less trusting compared to others. However, the estimate for togetherness and community was not in the expected direction (albeit only significant at

the .1 level). The increase in out-group trust was accordingly not caused by people feeling increased levels of togetherness and community in general. Out-group trust seems to have been affected by perceptions directly connected to out-groups and by experiences of censorship, but not by the general increase in perception of togetherness created by the attacks.

Discussion

The general increase in out-group trust was not caused by cognitive dissonance in people who were negative towards immigration or who were identifying with the Progress Party. While these groups also increased their trust in out-groups, they did so to a lower extent than others. The results show an effect of prior attitudes that is the opposite of the one hypothesized. It was people who were already positive towards immigration or who did not identify with the Progress Party who increased their trust more than others. Parts of the second hypothesis do however receive support in the analyses. There are no (or possibly negative) effect of perceptions of increased togetherness and no effect of participating in the Rose Marches in itself. Perceiving lower levels of ethnic antagonism after the attacks were related to higher increases in trust, and feelings of being less able to express one's opinions were negatively related to out-group trust. The increase in trust after the attacks depended on both perceptions of the political effects of the attacks *and* prior attitudes, albeit in the opposite way of the first hypothesis.

It is useful to revisit the cognitive dissonance hypothesis to understand why it is not supported by the data. The first condition for the hypothesis is that people must see the attacks as “misconduct” by the in-group member, and the second is that people resolve the ensuing cognitive dissonance by changing attitudes towards out-groups. It is highly likely that the public viewed the attacks as “misconduct” or that the attacks overstepped the “tolerance limit.”⁵⁴ The murdering of innocent children one by one was extremely ruthless and even violent right-wing extremists distanced themselves from the ruthlessness of the attacks.⁵⁵ Norwegian society also had little experience with terrorism, and although there had been other examples of extreme right-wing violence, there is no reason to believe that either Progress Party supporters or people with negative attitudes towards immigration should have been more supportive of terrorism.

How the possible cognitive dissonance was resolved is not as straightforward. For cognitive dissonance to cause attitude change, the connection between the attacks and the attitudes must be strong. After lone-wolf attacks by in-group members, debates on the mental health of the terrorists are not uncommon, and this was also the case in Norway.⁵⁶ Viewing the terrorist as a lunatic and the attacks as results of his insanity would break the connection between the attacks and the ideology as it is the madness rather than the ideology that caused the attacks. Together with the lack of findings from earlier research, there is little reason to expect an effect of cognitive dissonance in general after terrorist attacks.

Rather than an effect of cognitive dissonance, the increase in trust seems to have been a reaction to the political characteristics of both the attacks and the backlash. People experiencing less ethnic antagonism after the attacks increased their trust more than others did. It could seem counterintuitive that terrorist attacks motivated by hatred against different ethnic groups were perceived as causing *less* ethnic antagonism in Norwegian

society. One could have interpreted this as a consequence of the increased feeling of togetherness after the attacks, but the analyses show that this was not related to out-group trust. Rather, this should be interpreted as a reaction towards the ideas of the terrorist and a response to the core political message of the backlash. This indicates that the increase in out-group trust was indeed based on political considerations concerning the nature of the attacks and not only on the experience of being together during a crisis. The increase in trust seems to be directly connected to the political characteristics of the attacks and the backlash.

The increase in out-group trust was in addition dependent on prior political beliefs, and this holds when controlling for experiences of the effects of the attacks. The finding of an opposite effect of prior attitudes and party affiliation than hypothesized shows that politically motivated reasoning affected people's response to the attacks and the backlash. People are generally prone to accept information that confirms their prior attitudes (confirmation bias) and to disregard counter-attitudinal information (disconfirmation bias),⁵⁷ and this seems to be the case here. Those who were positive towards immigration increased their out-group trust more than others did after the attacks, and the attacks accordingly affected those who were already positive the most.⁵⁸ The effect of experiences of the debate climate after the attacks points in the same direction. People who felt that they had less opportunity to express their opinions after the attacks increased their trust less than others did. This shows reactance against the core political message of the backlash and probably against the experience of loss of freedom that the newfound consensus created.⁵⁹ This experience was inherently political, as only people with divergent opinions would feel unable to express them publicly. Thus, those who were already tolerant would probably not experience this type of self-censorship. The lower increases in trust by this group thus confirms the finding above that the attacks and the backlash affected people who were already the most tolerant.

Progress Party supporters exhibit a stronger disconfirmation bias than other groups, one that is not dependent on their prior attitudes towards immigration. As the terrorist had not been a member of the Progress Party for a number of years, the connection between the attacks and the party was relatively weak. It is thus probable that this bias was caused by more than solely by the attacks. At the very minimum, it seems to show that Progress Party supporters interpreted the media attention to the terrorist's former party membership as partisan.⁶⁰ However, the combination of the central position of Labor Party politicians, a perception of Norwegian media as left-leaning, and the direct and indirect attacks on the Progress Party may have led Progress Party supporters to interpret the core message of the backlash as partisan as well.⁶¹ For Progress Party supporters, the political message of the backlash thus seems to have been disregarded.

In sum, this shows that the specifics of both the attacks and the backlash affected attitudes. As earlier studies of the consequences of terrorism often have focused on the psychological effects and especially the increases in perceptions of threat after attacks,⁶² few have studied the political aspects of attacks and their backlashes. The results here show these characteristics are central to the effects of terrorism, at least of domestic terrorism. Some caveats are however necessary. On the one hand it is not clear to what extent the content of backlash is given by the characteristics of the attacks themselves. On the other hand, the effects of the backlash seem to be circumscribed by other contextual factors. In this case, even though the Prime Minister did not emphasize the former party affiliation of

the terrorist or the current one of the victims,⁶³ party affiliation had important consequences for the attitudinal effects of the attacks. Similarly, politically motivated reasoning led to differences in the reactions of people with different prior attitudes. The effects of both terrorist attacks and their backlashes thus seem to be dependent on the political context.

Studying the Norwegian public offers insights into a group not often studied after terrorist attacks. As most recent studies are of Islamic terrorism in non-Islamic countries, the terrorist ideology is seldom directly relevant for the political attitudes of the public (i.e., the majority population). In Norwegian society, the ideology of the terrorist was connected both to a central political cleavage, immigration policy, and to a mainstream political party, the Progress Party. Indeed, the group delineated by attitudes towards immigration and by Progress Party affiliation could be regarded as an operationalization of the terrorist's *imagined* constituency.⁶⁴ The findings here do not support an expectation that terrorism leads this constituency to moderate their views, not even when terrorists cross the "tolerance limit."⁶⁵ Rather, they show that the constituency is more resistant to change than other groups in society. Other groups, however, may change as a consequence of attacks and the following backlash, and especially groups that were the most negative towards the terrorist ideology from the start. The political views of terrorists may thus become even more marginalized than before and political polarization may increase. As Abrahms argues, people often infer extremist ideology from the use of terrorism.⁶⁶ Terrorist attacks may accordingly increase the gap between the constituency and the rest of society,⁶⁷ and make a non-violent, democratic political campaign more difficult.⁶⁸ While terrorists may try to provoke an overreaction by the security forces,⁶⁹ they may as easily succeed in creating an overreaction by society in general.

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56. The view of the terrorist as mentally ill did have some public support, and the first team of psychological experts who interviewed the terrorist before the trial the next year concluded that this was the case. However, their report was set aside by the court and a report by a second team of experts who viewed him as sane and fit for a prison sentence was used instead in the trial. See Hemmingby and Bjørgo, *The Dynamics of a Terrorist Targeting Process* (see note 5). People are also less likely to label an attack as terrorism when the perpetrator is depicted as having a history of mental problems and is a lone wolf. Connor Huff and Joshua D. Kertzer, “How the Public Defines Terrorism,” *American Journal of Political Science* (September 12, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12329>.
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58. This is similar to the findings by Edwards and Swenson that the rally effect is driven by increased support from potential supporters rather than from those who are strongly critical from before. George C. Edwards and Tami Swenson, “Who Rallies? The Anatomy of a Rally Event,” *The Journal of Politics* 59, no. 1 (1997): 200–12. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2998222>.
59. Sharon S. Brehm and Jack Williams Brehm, *Psychological Reactance: A Theory of Freedom and Control* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1981).
60. For similar findings of partisan differences, see Shana Kushner Gadarian, “Beyond the Water’s Edge,” in *The Political Psychology of Terrorism Fears*, eds. Samuel J. Sinclair and Daniel Antonius (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 67–84; Shana Kushner Gadarian, “The Politics of Threat: How Terrorism News Shapes Foreign Policy Attitudes,” *The Journal*

- of Politics* 72, no. 2 (2010): 469; Donald P. Haider-Markel and Mark R. Joslyn, “Gun Policy, Opinion, Tragedy, and Blame Attribution: The Conditional Influence of Issue Frames,” *The Journal of Politics* 63, no. 2 (2001): 520–43.
61. Haider-Markel and Joslyn similarly find partisan differences in effects of framings of blame attribution after Columbine. Framings used by Republicans affected Republican voters and those used by the Democrats affected Democratic voters. Haider-Markel and Joslyn, “Gun Policy, Opinion, Tragedy, and Blame Attribution” (see note 60).
 62. The findings here do corroborate the negative effect of the terrorist threat on out-group trust even in the context of a large-scale right-wing extremist terrorist attack.
 63. Teemu Sinkkonen, “Can Political Leaders Make a Difference? Norwegian versus Spanish Experiences in Responding to Terrorist Attacks,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 39, no. 4 (April 2, 2016): 326–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1117330>.
 64. This is not saying that these groups were positive towards the use of terrorism, nor towards all of the terrorist’s ideology, but rather that the terrorist may have imagined this group as his constituency and probable supporters. Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Rev. and expanded ed. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 22.
 65. Crenshaw, “How Terrorism Declines” (see note 3).
 66. Abrahms, “Why Terrorism Does Not Work” (see note 1).
 67. There are some indications that ostracism in turn could increase peoples’ support for terrorism, see Michaela Pfundmair, “Ostracism Promotes a Terroristic Mindset,” *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* (February 25, 2018): 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2018.1443965>.
 68. While the Progress Party suffered a setback in the municipal elections in the autumn of 2011, the party entered government only two years after the attacks for the first time. That there was a long-term negative electoral consequence for the party is accordingly not clear. Following the results here, the partisan bias may have ameliorated some of the negative effect of the attacks for the party.
 69. Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*. Cass Series: Political Violence. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 7.

Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive statistics of the cross-sectional sample.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Out-group trust (T1)	968	0.47	0.21	0.00	1.00
Out-group trust (T2)	798	0.51	0.21	0.00	1.00
Progress party identification	1,124	0.11	0.31	0	1
Progress party vote	962	0.14	0.35	0	1
Age (below 30)	1,127	0.16	0.37	0	1
Age (30–44)	1,127	0.24	0.43	0	1
Age (45–59)	1,127	0.35	0.48	0	1
Age (60+)	1,127	0.34	0.47	0	1
Higher education	1,126	0.53	0.50	0	1
Male	1,127	0.50	0.50	0	1
Political interest	1,123	0.58	0.24	0.00	1.00
Rose marches (T2)	858	0.28	0.45	0	1
More ethnic antagonism (T2)	854	0.38	0.19	0.00	1.00
More togetherness (T2)	856	0.74	0.18	0.00	1.00
Less able to voice opinion (T2)	855	0.54	0.21	0.00	1.00
National threat (T2)	858	0.35	0.23	0.00	1.00
Confidence in terrorism prevention (T2)	857	0.59	0.24	0.00	1.00
Personal threat (T2)	858	0.33	0.22	0.00	1.00
Attitudes towards immigration (additive index)	1,071	0.42	0.26	0.00	1.00
Institutional trust (additive index)	1,115	0.63	0.18	0.00	1.00

Chapter 3

Are we all Charlie?

**The international and domestic
effects of terrorist attacks**

Abstract

Terrorist attacks reduce general support for immigration and this has been attributed to heightened perceptions of threat after terrorist attacks. Such attacks however, also generate specific responses by politicians, the media and the public itself, and the effects of a terrorist attack may be conditioned by these responses. The French response to the *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper Cacher attacks in January 2015 emphasised republican values and seemed more tolerant than prior societal responses to Islamic terrorism.

This paper uses the European Social Survey to compare the effects in France of the attacks with the effects in six other European countries, using a regression-discontinuity design. While the attacks reduced the non-French respondents' support for immigration, there was no such effect in France. This is interpreted as an effect of the French political mobilisation and debate, and as support for a separate effect of the political framing of terrorist attacks.

Chapter 4

All or None? A Four-Country Experiment on How the Threat of Terrorism Affects Support for Counterterrorism Measures

Abstract

Terrorism is tightly connected to the Muslim minority in the West, and this could lead to counterterrorism measures targeting Muslims specifically. This paper uses a unique survey experiment fielded in the US, France, Finland, and Norway to study the levels of support for targeting groups that vary in both their majority versus minority status and in their connection to terrorism. Threatening news stories are used to investigate whether or not the level of support is affected by right-wing extremist and Islamist terrorism. Finally, the moderating effect of attitudes toward immigration is studied.

People support counterterrorism measures that target threatening groups (Islamists and right-wing extremists) more than those that do not (Muslims), but this is not the case for those people who are against immigration. When people read threatening news stories, there is an increase in support for counterterrorism measures in general, even measures that target groups unrelated to the stories.