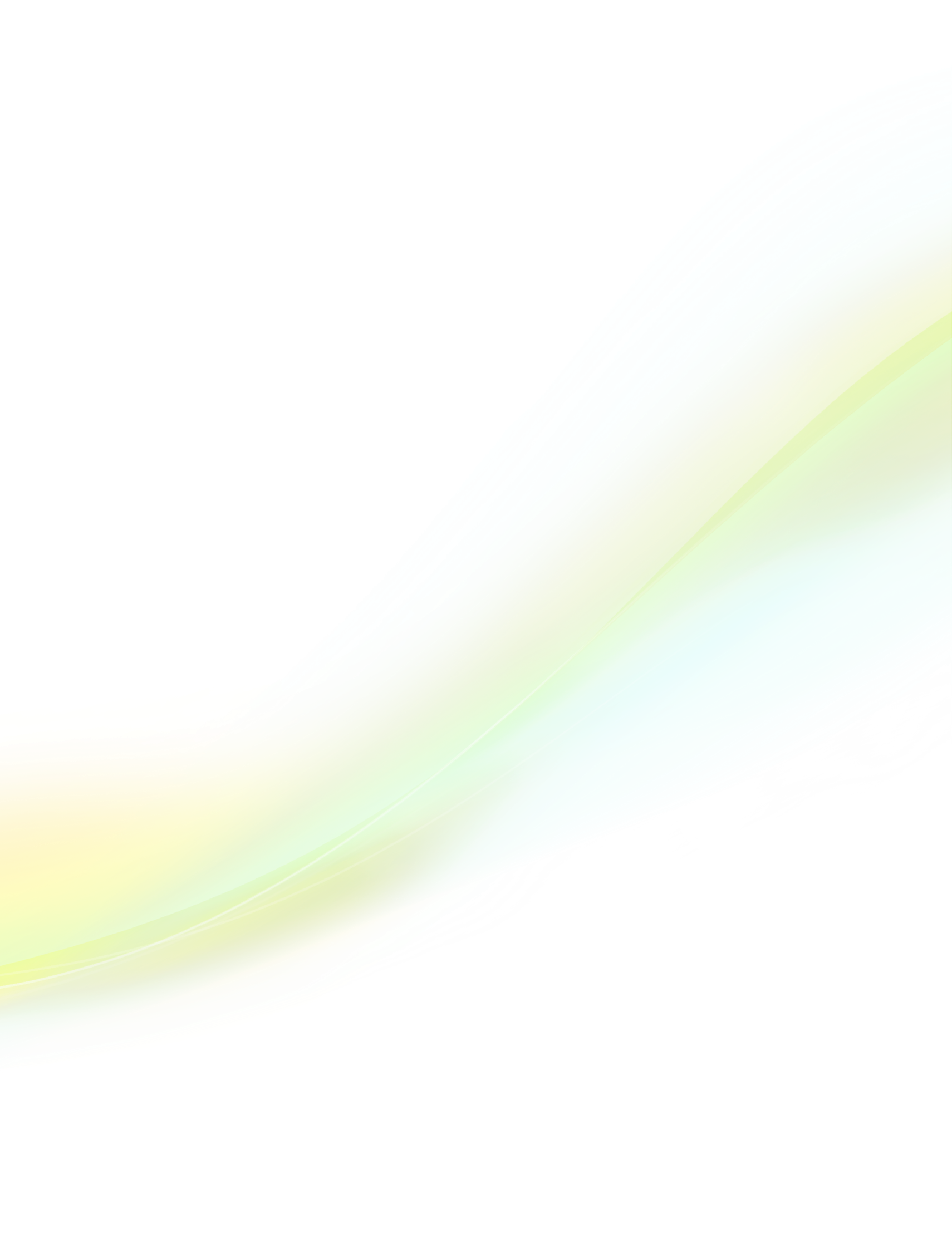
**Countering Radicalization: A Comparative Study of Policies in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom**



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**Date: 13th June 2016**

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# Executive Summary

Terrorism and the threat of terrorist attacks is not a new phenomenon to Western Europe. The United Kingdom and its approach in confronting radical Islam heavily influences the approach of other EU countries, such as the Netherlands, take towards terrorism. Given the significant link between these two countries, the research question of this paper, “*How are the governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands countering Islamist radicalization? And what are the similarities and differences between the approaches taken by the countries?”,* aims to find out how the governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are countering Islamist radicalization with the. Furthermore, it desires to know the similarities and differences between the approaches taken by the countries. “Prevent” is one of the more controversial aspects of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy program in order to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Its Dutch counterpart, The Information House, encourages teachers, police officers, social workers, local activists, parole officers, and others to notice and report signs of “radicalization”.

There are far more similarities, than differences between UK and Dutch counter-radicalization policies. Both the United Kingdom and the Netherlands view themselves as increasingly under threat from Islamist radicalization, which they trace, in part to an unwillingness or inability on the part of the Muslims in their communities to integrate and to the acceptance of extreme ideology which reject so called “British values” or “Dutch values” of equality, freedom of religion, speech, etc. I believe one of the main problems with both Dutch and UK radicalization strategies is that they are being undergirded by the flawed theory of radicalization and by overly broad generalizations of what constitutes extremism. While both Dutch and UK authorities claim to understand that radicalization is not a linear process and that the reasons people are drawn to terrorism and terrorist groups are varied, in practice, they demonstrate an understanding of radicalization that implies that if an individual experiences certain negative outcomes and expresses certain points of views, then this is definitive proof that they are on the path to radicalization. Current Dutch and UK counter-terrorism measures paint terrorism as a predominately “Muslim” problem, although in speeches politicians and security and intelligence leaders are quick to point out that terrorism is not a uniquely Muslim problem The amount of resources spent on dealing with Islamist radicalization, however, seems to contradict such assurances.

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# Introduction

Terrorism or the threat of terrorist attacks is not a new phenomenon to Western Europe. For example, the Provisional Irish Republican Army used terrorism in an attempt to expel the British and create a united and independent Ireland. In the 1970s, the Red Youth Party in Norway advocated the use of terrorism and guerrilla warfare in order to overthrow the capitalist system. However, terrorist threats tied to Islamic radicalization only became a major concern for Western Europe after the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Subsequent attacks in Europe such as the 2004 Madrid train bombings, the 7/7 2005 central London bombings and more recently the November 2015 Paris attacks and the 2016 Brussels’ bombings, combined with the massive influx of refugees from Syria and other parts of the Middle East, have forced Western European governments to take proactive measures to root out Islamic radicalization ("Syrian Refugee Flows: Security Risks and Counterterrorism Challenges", 2015, p. 2).

This paper centers around the following question: How are the governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands countering Islamist radicalization? And what are the similarities and differences between the approaches taken by the countries? This paper will focus on legislative action, government-community partnerships, and law enforcement policies taken to counter Islamic radicalization.

Why these two specific countries?

The United Kingdom and its approach to confronting radical Islam heavily influences the approach other EU countries take towards terrorism (Bigo & Bonelli, 2016, p.18). Moreover, even though official figures are impossible to come by, at least 800 people have travelled to Iraq or Syria to join Jihadist organizations, with about half returning thus far to the UK (BBC, 2016, “Who are Britain’s jihadists?” p.1). Finally, like other Western European countries, the United Kingdom has witnessed a rise in anti-immigration and anti-Islamic sentiment in both the political and public sphere (Smale, 2015). Similarly the Netherlands has seen an increase in Islamic radicalization with 220 citizens (as of 2015) leaving to join jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria ("The Netherlands: Extremism & Counter-Extremism", 2015). The Netherlands also struggles with an influx of refugees and a rise in anti-Islamic and ant-refugee sentiment, which can contribute to the rise of Islamic radicalization (Bahceli, 2016).

Several sub-questions that will be addressed in this paper:

**What is Islamist radicalization?**

In order to understand how the UK and the Netherlands are combating radicalization it is first important to define what it is. The term, “radicalization,” in particular, has been controversial as governments, media pundits, and politicians struggle between deciding what is protected speech and what is evidence of “radicalization” and an intent to do harm (Edwards, 2015). This includes how academic and intelligence experts define and measure Islamic radicalization. For example, are there measurable “steps” that one takes that demonstrates that one is heading down a path towards Islamic radicalization? And how does the definition(s) of Islamic radicalization influence UK and the Netherlands’ governments polices geared towards countering radicalization? Are these definitions helpful or do they hinder attempts at countering radicalization?

**Why is Islamist radicalization a concern?**

After defining what Islamist radicalization is, then it is time to examine why it is viewed to be such a grave concern. In addition to specific terrorist events that have convinced government, law enforcement, intelligent officials and a segment of the populations in the UK and in the Netherlands that Islamist radicalization is a concern, cultural views towards assimilation and immigration have also shaped the discussion surrounding Islamist radicalization. Members of the far right, in both countries, have framed the issue in terms of threats to cultural identity. In other words, members of the far right view Islamist radicalization and the influx of refugees and immigrants from Muslim majority countries as a core threat to what UK or Dutch identity.

**To what extent has radicalization affected the Netherlands and the UK?**

This can be measured in terms of the estimates made by government agencies as to how many people or the percentage of the population that are believed to be radicalized or in danger of being radicalized. But it can also be measured by examining the proliferation of laws, programs, etc. that have been put in place in order to address the perceived influence of radicalization in the Netherlands and the UK.

**How do the British and Dutch authorities monitor the rise of radicalization and the proliferation of terrorism?**

What are the specific ways that the authorities keep track of the rise of radicalization and proliferation of terrorism and are these methods useful? For instance, one major concern for authorities is the return of fighters from Iraq and Syria. Such returnees are believed to pose a threat by plotting violent action or radicalizing others, how do the authorities deal with such a threat?

**What are the policies in the UK and the Netherlands for countering radicalization?**

After defining Islamist radicalization, the reasons why the UK and the Netherlands considers it to be a threat, and exploring how British and Dutch authorities keep track of this threat, this paper will then examine policies that the UK and the Netherlands have for countering radicalization. Case Studies will provide specific examples of policies that the UK and Netherlands have implemented and the consequences that said policies have had on the respective governments’ attempts at countering radicalization.

**What are the differences and similarities in how the British and Dutch authorities respond to radicalization in their respective countries?**

Finally, this paper will examine the similarities and differences between British and Dutch responses to radicalization. Questions surrounding the effectiveness of particular policies will be explored.

# Literature Review

This literature review seeks to examine whether the amount of resources spent on countering Islamist radicalization is in line with the actual threat towards the UK and the Netherlands and whether such measures are in fact effective.

## Threats to national security

Both the United Kingdom and the Netherlands claim that Islamist extremism and terrorism are serious threats to national security. The National Coordinator for Security and Counter-terrorism (NCTV) labels current threats to Dutch security on a four-point scale: minimal, limited, substantial, and critical. The current threat level is substantial meaning that the NCTV believes that an attack on the Netherlands is not only possible but likely ("Current Threat Level National Coordinator For Security And Counterterrorism,” 2016). Although the NCTV admits that there are, “currently no specific indications that attacks are being prepared in or against the Netherlands” ("Current threat level National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism", 2016).

M15, the UK’s security service has also developed a rating system to indicate the likelihood of an attack in the UK: Low, moderate, substantial, severe, and critical. The current threat level for the UK is severe, meaning “an attack is highly likely” ("Threat Levels MI5 - The Security Service," 2016).

Moreover, both the UK and the Netherlands spend a substantial amount of money on counter terrorism measures or on national defense. The UK spends over $2 billion on combating counter-terrorism, which includes international and domestic measures ("Spending Review And Autumn Statement 2015 - GOV.UK," 2015). While the Netherlands has committed to increasing its defense spending to 9.27 billion dollars for the 2016 fiscal year ("Dutch Government Plans To Bolster Defense Spending In 2016," 2016).

## Problematic definitions

The UK defines extremism as: “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of the armed forces (Bailey, 2015, p.3). While radicalization is defined as: the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate on terrorist activity (Bailey, 2015, p.3).

This definition of extremism and radicalization means that the UK believes that it must not only prevent violent terrorist attacks or citizen from joining terrorist groups abroad, but that it must also combat what it considers to be “extremist” ideology, even if such ideology is peaceful. UK Prime Minister David Cameron, in a 2015 speech outlining a new bill to combat extremism stated:

*“You don’t have to believe in barbaric violence to be drawn to the ideology. No one becomes a terrorist from a standing start. It starts with a process of radicalisation. When you look in detail at the backgrounds of those convicted of terrorist offences, it is clear that many of them were first influenced by what some would call non-violent extremists” (Dearden, 2015).*

Cameron then goes on to list nonviolent ideological beliefs that he considers to be extreme and that should be challenged. Including critiques of the Security Services and UK counter terrorism measures. He claims: “our new Prevent duty for schools is not about criminalizing or spying on Muslim children. This is paranoia in the extreme” (Dearden, 2015).

The Dutch government also incorporates a broad view of what constitutes extremism and radicalization. The Dutch government defines extremism as: “the designation of the phenomenon that involves people or groups breaking the law and executing (violent) illegal actions to influence political decision- making in an extra parliamentary manner”("Dutch government strengthens actions to combat jihadism and radicalisation | National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism", 2014, p.17). While radicalization is defined as: “an attitude that shows a person is willing to accept the ultimate consequence of a mind-set and to turn them into actions. These actions can result in the escalation of generally manageable oppositions up to a level they destabilize society due to the use of violence, in conduct that deeply hurts people or affects their freedom or in groups turning away from society” ("Dutch government strengthens actions to combat jihadism and radicalisation | National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism", 2014, p.18).

The Netherland’s definition of extremism differs from the UK in that it focuses on illegal actions, while the UK encompasses both violent and nonviolent ideology in its definition. However, the Netherlands also takes a “broad approach” to countering radicalization and terrorism which includes countering beliefs that are considered antithetical to Dutch values. For instance, an early counter terrorism experiment, the Information House in Amsterdam, sought not only to provide social services such as employment and fostering social relationships that authorities believed would help integrate those vulnerable to radicalization, but they also wanted to counter what they considered extremist ideology (Rabasa, 2011, p.178).

The issue in both UK and Dutch contexts is how does the government determine which ideologies pose a genuine threat to domestic security and which ideologies, although unsavory, are protected under notions of freedom of thought and expression? For example, is there a difference between those calling for the deaths of British and Dutch citizens based on their narrow interpretation of Islam and some Qur’anic texts, and those who although they do not advocate for violence, believe that Islam should be the rule of law in all societies? Salafism is a Sunni movement that believes in, “in the timeless “fundamental” truths of a holy script that is taken literally and seen as blueprint for the organization of a society pleasing to God” (Schmid, 2014, p.17). Yet they are not a monolithic group. Some are apolitical, others reformists, and at the more extreme end, there are militant Salafists. But as Dr. Schmid explains,

*“Even in their non-jihadist variant, their fundamentalist value system is extreme by the prevailing norms of West European societies and widely considered incompatible with core principles of modern liberal-democratic societies such as the separation of state and religion, popular sovereignty, gender equality, respect for minority rights and acceptance of laws decided upon by a majority of people”* (Schmid, 2014, p.17).

Are those who adhere to Salafist ideology, even in its non-militant form, to be viewed as perpetrators of a dangerous ideology that need to be combated by the government? At what point does the government’s desire to counter extremist ideology begin to infringe on an individual’s right to hold beliefs that are unsavory to dominant society? At what point does government attempts to counter extremist ideology result in the government making decisions on what forms of Islam are acceptable and what forms are unacceptable?

Additionally, non-government produced literature suggests that the whole notion of radicalization is problematic. The term itself rose to prominence after the September 11th attacks. Even in the early 2000s, the term was rarely used. Peter Neumann explains that in the few instances when it was used, it was used casually and not with the intent to study the “process’ that leads some individuals to embrace violent extremism (Neumann, 2008, p.3). Andrew Hoskins and Ben O’Loughlin, argue that radicalization is used by the news media and security apparatus to justify policies that are meant to mitigate the danger of radicalization. They state: “For security policymakers and journalists alike, ‘radicalization’ can anchor a news agenda, offering a cast of radicalizers and the vulnerable radicalized, and legitimating a policy response to such anger” (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2009, p.2). Hoskins and Loughlin view radicalization as a construct created and abused by journalists and policy makers to justify the very policies that were created to deal with the danger of radicalization. A feedback loop is created where the fear of radicalization influences policies to combat radicalization, which can only be justified by continuing to hype the danger of radicalization.

Peter Neumann, unlike Hoskins and O’ Loughlin believes that radicalization is a process that does exist and that it can be used to explain why some individuals are drawn to violence, but he takes issues with how broad and ambiguous the term is (Neumann, 2013, p.1). Neumann argues instead of discarding the concept as nonexistent, policy makers and academics need to try harder to understand and grasp the complexity of the subject. He points out that radicalization is contextual and that it is important to recognize that how a society defines radicalization is based on notions of what a society at a particular time considers to be normal (Neumann, 2013, p.4).

John Hogan, meanwhile rejects the notion that there is a “unilateral link” between extremist belief and violence ("Lessons Learned Since the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001", 2011). Randy Borum agrees, asserting:

“A focus on radicalization, however, risks implying that radical beliefs are a proxy—or at least a necessary precursor—for terrorism. We know this not to be true. Most people who hold radical ideas do not engage in terrorism, and many terrorists—even those who lay claim to a "cause"—are not deeply ideological and may not "radicalize" in any traditional sense” (Borum, 2011, p.8).

Neumann, disagrees with Hogan and Borum. While he is careful to explicate that ideology cannot fully explain why some choose to engage in violence, he also believes that Hogan and Borum, take their critiques too far by implying that there is no correlation between ideology and violent actions (Neumann, 2013, p.8). RAND, an American nonprofit think tank, seems to agree. In a 2010 report, RAND praises UK and Dutch counter terrorism measures. It disregards criticism of Prevent as part of “a campaign by Islamists to discredit the program” (Rabasa, 2011, p.137). The report believes that, “it is appropriate to target the extremist ideology” ((Rabasa, 2011, p.138). In discussing and criticizing Dutch counter-terrorism policies, the report focuses on the supposed link between labour politician Ahmed Marcouch (Rabasa, 2011, p.150). The report does not criticize specific Dutch counter-terrorism measures but instead focuses on whether or not Marcouch is using his position to promote an “an Islamization agenda” (Rabasa, 2011, p.150).

## The Effectiveness of UK and Dutch Counter-terrorism Measures

In addition to criticizing UK and Dutch government definitions of terms such as “extremism” and “radicalization,” current literature also calls into question the effectiveness of UK and Dutch Counter-terrorism measures by arguing that such measures narrowly focus on Muslims and therefore alienate Muslims and foster distrust between Muslim communities and government agencies. Anthony Richards explains that Prevent has been accused of spying on Muslim communities and that the focus on preventing “radicalization.’ He quotes the findings of The CLG Select Committee, which claimed: “The strategy has contributed to a sense of frustration and alienation amongst Muslims which may increase the risk of making some individuals more vulnerable to radicalization” (Richards, 2011, p.150).

CAGE, a UK advocacy group asserts that the Prevent program’s targeting of Muslims based on dress, political opinions, or beliefs: “are likely to create or perpetrate existing grievances and are very like to make individuals feel demonized, targeted, and victimized” ("Failing Our Communities: A case study approach to understanding PREVENT", 2015, p.14) which in turn may cause some individuals to become radicalized” ("Failing Our Communities: A case study approach to understanding PREVENT", 2015, p.14). A 2008 report by, the commissioner for human rights recounting Thomas Hammarberg’s 2008 visit to the Netherlands, expressed concerns that Dutch counter-terrorism policies target and discriminate against Muslims and deny individual civil liberties (Hammarberg, 2008, p.37).

## Conclusion

Current literature focuses on critiquing the broad definitions that the UK and Dutch government employ to describe “extremism” and “radicalization.” For example, when UK Minister David Cameron criticizes extremist ideology, is he referring simply to calls to use violence to enforce a specific interpretation of Islam on western countries, or he is also conflating opposition to UK foreign policy and more conservative and fundamentalist streams of Islamic thought in his definition of extremism? If so, does that mean that all Salafists, even nonmilitant ones need to have their ideology challenged? At what point is this desire to combat extreme ideology infringing on freedom of belief and how far should the state go in endorsing or rejecting certain forms of Islam?

Moreover, the literature suggests that current counter-terrorism measures alienate and isolate Muslim communities in the UK and Netherlands by targeting and attempting to differentiate between “acceptable” Islamic beliefs and “unacceptable” Islamic beliefs.

# Methodology

This paper focuses on comparing and contrasting UK policies towards Islamist radicalization with those of the Netherlands and the impact that radicalization has had on the Netherlands and the UK. As a result this paper will be utilizing the following approaches (i.e. methods) towards gathering the data necessary to answer the central question and the numerous, relevant sub question: qualitative research in the form of secondary resources and comparative research.

Nigel Gilbert Counter terrorism policies. For example, David Anderson Q.C argues for an independent review of the UK Prevent strategy arguing that it is viewed by members of the Muslim community as being ineffective, and contributing to alienation and hostility amongst the British Muslim community (Anderson, 2013). Qualitative data will help to examine whether there is a connection between government policies towards radicalization and isolation and alienation amongst the Muslim population, which would in turn, have a negative impact on government attempts to stop radicalization. Most “often describes scenes, gathers data, through interviews, or analyses the meaning of documents” (Gilbert, 2008, p.35). One specific advantage that qualitative research has over other research methods, such as quantitative research, is that qualitative data “makes it easier to follow cause and effect…” (Gilbert, 2008, p. 35). Qualitative data will help to examine the effectiveness of UK and Dutch This is not to say that quantitative data is not important for this study, some of the research sources, such as government reports use quantitative descriptions. In fact, quantitative data “can be used to discover associations…”(Gilbert, 2008, p.35) describes qualitative research as research that.

Nevertheless, qualitative data is what enables one to determine, for example, whether government policies in the UK/Netherlands contribute to Islamist radicalization or help counter it. A disadvantage to qualitative research that is not found in quantitative research is that qualitative research is much more ambiguous. If one wanted to ask, for instance, what percentage of the UK Muslim population is at risk for radicalization rather than what are the causes and effects of said radicalization, one would use quantitative research methods in the hopes of providing a clear and precise numerical data (Gilbert, 2008, p. 38).

The type of qualitative method used is desk research. The desk research will be conducted by consulting various secondary sources from books, news articles, journal articles, video footage and media interviews. Desk research provides a plethora of resources that enables one to examine questions surrounding government policies and Islamist radicalization from differing viewpoints. For example, law enforcement officials and academics working with government organizations might have a particular understanding of the causes and dangers of Islamist radicalization that a researcher outside of those institutions might not be aware of, and vice versa. A researcher using secondary sources will be able to pinpoint these differences in perspective.

This plethora of research is also vital in utilizing the comparative research method. Comparative research provides a guard against simplifying a research question that by the nature of its complexity necessitates a multi-faceted response. Take for instance, the hypothesis that Islamist radicalization is simply an inherent feature of Islam. Comparative research forces one to examine the possibility that such a hypothesis is based more on stereotypical and orientalist views of Islam, rather than concrete data. Moreover, while such a response to Islamist radicalization is tidy and unambiguous, government authorities who base their policies around such a narrow understanding of radicalization might find themselves marginalizing members of the Muslim communities in their country and aiding in radicalization, rather than in countering it. Additionally, the effectiveness of government counter terrorism strategies are subject to debate as a dearth of data available systematically examining the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of specific counter terrorism strategies (Romaniuk & Chowdhury Fink, 2012, p.7). As a result, this paper will also utilize literature examining the effectiveness of public policy.

# Findings: Counter Terrorism strategies in the UK and the Netherlands

## Introduction

Authorities in both the UK and the Netherlands believe that Islamist radicalization and terrorism pose a serious threat. As a result, in the years since 9/11, they have attempted to find ways to thwart terrorism attacks by impeding the radicalization process that they believe some Dutch and British Muslims are susceptible too.

This section is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on the UK’s Prevent strategy and gives examples of individuals and organizations that have been targeted through the program in order to demonstrate that instead of preventing radicalization, Prevent alienates and isolates British Muslims. The second part focusing on the Netherlands, takes a different approach to examining the effects of Dutch counter-terrorism policy. Instead of telling the stories of those who have been isolated and marginalized by counter-terrorism policies, this section provides three examples of Dutch counter terrorism policies and legislation. This is due to the fact that unlike British counter-terrorism policies, Dutch counter-terrorism policies have not gone through a systematic evaluation of their effectiveness. In fact, there seems to be little concern within the Netherlands to the potential impact counter-terrorism measures might have on Dutch Muslims (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p.1).

## Radicalization in the UK

After the United States and parts of Europe were rocked by terrorist attacks, the UK sought to implement legislation and policies that sought not only to prevent terrorist attacks, but to discourage citizens from embarking on the path to radicalization. Prevent, is one of the more controversial aspects of the UK’s CONTEST (counter-terrorism strategy) program. The CONTEST strategy has four strands – Pursue, Prevent, Prepare and Protect (Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent, 2015). The purpose of Prevent is, to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism” ("The Prevent Agenda / Safe Campus Communities", 2016). One way Prevent seeks to discourage radicalization and terrorism is by working in conjunction with schools and universities to identify students that are in danger of radicalization. However, the following examples demonstrate that instead of discouraging radicalization, prevent instead isolates and alienates British Muslims by encourage authorities, teachers, social workers, etc. to engage in ethnic and religious profiling.

### Example #1 Farooq

Mohammed Umar Farooq’s experience with Prevent captured headlines throughout the world and bought into the fore questions of Islamophobia and racism within the Prevent Program. In March 2015, Farooq a student in Stafford University’s Terrorism, Crime, and Global Security master’s program was in the college library reading a book entitled, “Terrorism Studies” when he was spotted by a school official. The official then proceeded to question Farooq about his views on homosexuality, Al Qaeda and the Islamic State. Although Farooq stressed that he condemned extremist views and he was enrolled in a program where studying terrorist organization and ideology was part of the curriculum, the University official proceeded to report him to security guards at the school ("The Prevent Agenda / Safe Campus Communities", 2016).

Farooq, unsettled by the encounter dropped out of the course, but as he explained to the *The Guardian*, he felt he needed to speak out against his treatment: “The implications if I did not challenge this could be serious for me. I could go on a police list; I could be investigated without my knowledge. This could happen to any young Muslim lad. I had to fight back” (Ramesh & Halliday, 2015). In a June 2015 letter, the University apologized to Farooq. The writer of the letter (Whose identity in the scans released by the group CAGE UK, is redacted) states: “…*On behalf of the University, I very much regret the distress that has been caused to you*.” The letter then goes on to explicate,

*“As you know the Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015 imposes a duty on the University to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is a very broad duty…but is underpinned by statutory guidance which must be taken into account in interpreting how the University should discharge its duty. While the guidance is more extensive than the statutory duty, it contains insufficient detail to provide clear, practical direction in an environment such as the University’s” ("CAGE releases exclusive video interview with student accused of terrorism, CAGE", 2015).*

### Example #2 CAGE UK

CAGE UK is a London-based advocacy group seeking to “to empower communities impacted by the War on Terror.” The group works closely with individuals who have been abused and/or mistreated under the auspices of the war on terror, it documents and researches “the abuse of due process and the erosion of the rule of law in the context of the War on Terror,” challenges narratives that paint certain communities as suspect and perceived as being prone to acts of terror, and it empowers communities via workshops, “events and seminars highlighting and campaigning against state policies” ("Who we are, CAGE", 2016).

CAGE asserts in their report, *Failing Our Communities* that on 26, July 2010 they were contacted by the centre manager for the Water Lilly venue in East London. They were told that their reservation would have to be canceled because Prevent officers did not approve of some of the speakers selected to speak at the event. The manager did not reveal the name(s) of said speakers. The manager then claimed that the event could only continue if the police were allowed to vet the speaker list. CAGE refused this proposition and viewed it infringing on their rights of freedom of expression and speech. Furthermore, the police officer who had been in contact with the venue reportedly claimed that the venue would see its reputation damaged if it allowed the event to continue. CAGE interpreted such a statement as a threat. Furthermore, the venue insisted that, “whilst they supported CAGE’s important contribution to human rights work, they did not want to damage their reputation”. They would allow the event to continue only if the organization paid more money “in order to compensate and mitigate for potential financial and reputational damage” (*Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent*, 2015, p. 5).

On 18 October 2012, an officer by the name of Ian Kershaw contacted the venue manager of the Karibu Centre in Brixton encouraging the venue to cancel a CAGE event that was to take place that later that day (Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent, 2015, p. 5). According to the venue manager the officer claimed: “Do you know if you continue with this booking the relationship with the Local Authority will be effected?” and “If the media found out it will be negative publicity for the Centre” . CAGE managed to dissuade the venue from canceling the event (*Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent*, 2015, P. 5).

CAGE contacted Chief Superintendent at the Metropolitan Police about the alleged disruption. Andy Howe, Superintendent Operations for Lambeth Borough rejected any assertion that Officer Kershaw was attempting to cancel their event and instead insisted that Kershaw visited the venue to ensure that it was “fit for (that) purpose and the staff were aware of the nature of your event” (*Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent*, 2015, p. 5).

### Example #3: Prevent Watch cases

Prevent Watch is a community funded organization that works with people who have been negatively impacted by Prevent. They have a legal support line for those impacted by Prevent, they investigate cases to ensure due process is being followed, they publish reports and briefings on cases, they provide seminars in order to raise awareness about Prevent, they maintain a directory of lawyers, and they have a legal fund to support “strategic cases” that present legal challenges to Prevent (“About,” 2016).

The Prevent Watch website details the case of a student, referred to as, “SS” who during a discussion about deforestation bought up activists who used spikes to prevent chainsaws from cutting down trees. He discussed how some believed that these activists were “eco-terrorists.” Other students joined in the discussion on eco-terrorism. SS and the other students had researched eco-terrorism because they were part of the school debating society. However, SS was questioned by non-staff members at the school and asked if he had any affiliation with ISIS. ("The Eco Warrior", 2015) Prevent Watch explains why this case is troubling:

“Firstly, parents were not informed at any point by the school that SS would be questioned in such terms under the auspices of PREVENT. If this was such an issue of safeguarding, the parents would be involved at an earlier stage. Rather than involve the parents, SS was put under undue pressure to answer questions that he should not have been asked in the first place and also by non-staff members. The effect on SS was profound. He thought the misconstruing of his statements could lead him being separated from his family” ("The Eco Warrior", 2015).

There is another case, which involved a student “XX”, who gave a short presentation on the notion of the Islamic State in his secondary school. He was not addressing the terrorist group known as ISIS or the Islamic State, but was instead seeking to address from a historical perspective the notion of an Islamic state. The teacher and the class enjoyed the presentation and the teacher sent a letter home to the student’s parents praising his presentation ("Presentation on Islamic State concept", 2015).

However, a few days later the student was bought before the “head of year” who had received a complaint about the presentation. She asked the student if he knew what extremism was. She then contacted the Sutton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub which than made a request to social services. In response to this case Prevent Watch stated that it

“Establishes how teachers are monitoring student’s opinions and worldviews, but further how a climate of fear exists around the opinions of Muslim students, even where those opinions are clearly expressed. Now that the PREVENT duty is a legal obligation, it becomes questionable how many dubious referrals will be made to prevent officers” ("Presentation on Islamic State concept", 2015).

### Conclusion

Charles Farr, counter-terrorism advisor to the British government argues: “There are misconceptions surrounding the Government’s terrorist prevention program. The Purpose of Prevent is not to criminalize or spy on Muslim communities. The purpose…is to protect Muslim and other communities…” (Verkaik, 2016, p. 38). However, the aforementioned examples, contradict Farr’s optimistic assignment of the program. The Prevent Program has been used to profile individuals and groups based on their ethnicity and religious beliefs (Verkaik, 2016, p. 38).

## Radicalization in the Netherlands

This section examines the threat that the authorities and government officials believe that Islamist radicalization poses in the Netherlands. It provides three examples of how Dutch authorities have decided to monitor and counter act radicalization. The first example discussed is the Information House in Amsterdam, which during its existence, provided authorities with the means to monitor those believed to be susceptible to radicalization and attempt to prevent their radicalization via social services and by countering extremist ideology. The other two examples, the Witness Protection Act and the Act on expanding the scope for investigating and prosecuting terrorist crime, focus on legislative changes meant to broaden the investigative powers of the authorities.

### The threat of Islamic Radicalization and Terrorism

After the 2011 terrorist attacks in the United States, E.S.M. Akerboom, the Director Democratic Legal Order of the General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD*)* argued that Islamic terrorism represented an international threat. Although the Netherlands faced terrorism threats before, specifically in the 1970s and 1980s, as some Moluccans blamed the Dutch for the loss of the Moluccan homeland and used violence as a form of protest (Demant & GRAAF, 2010, p.413). Akerboom claims, that the current threat of Islamic terrorism is much wider in scope and much more threatening. He writes, “We can conclude that, while in the 1980s, the Netherlands was faced with a limited threat from abroad, this threat as now substantially grown” (Akerboom, 2002, p.1). He goes on to explain the threat that radicalization and recruitment to terrorists group poses. He asserts that “recruitment for violent jihad in the West shows Islamist terrorism is not only a threat that is aimed at the west, but also a threat that is more professionally generated in the west itself” (Akerboom, 2002, p.3).

In 2011, E.S.M Akerboom reflected on ten years of counter-terrorism policies that were enacted since the 9/11 attacks and concludes reiterating the danger that Islamic terrorism presents to the world: “…one thing is clear ten years after 9/11 and after the death of Osama Bin Laden, in the years to come terrorism will continue to pose a threat to the entire western world including the Netherlands” (Akerboom, 2011, p.11).

### Discrimination and targeting of Muslims

E.S.M. Akerboom, points out that after 9/11 segments of the “native Dutch population” promoted and expressed stigmatizing and polarizing views on Muslims and Islam, which was then exploited by Islamists (Akerboom, 2011, p.6). Akerbook points out how the Muslim population, were also victims of 9/11 because terrorists attacks perpetrated in the name of Islam by a small proportion of the population negatively impacted the perceptions and social standings of the Muslim population general (Akerboom, 2011,p. 6). Yet despite the fact that Akerboom points out how discrimination against the Dutch Muslim population as a whole can contribute to radicalization and jihadist recruitment, and despite promises to prevent discrimination or the targeting of certain groups based on religion or ethnic affiliation, in practice counterterrorism efforts disproportionately affect Muslims and potentially contribute to alienating and isolating the Muslim community, which in turn may be hinder government attempts at de-radicalization (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p.18).

Dr. Quirine Eijkman and Bart Schuurman point out in their report *Preventive Counter-Terrorism and Non-Discrimination in the European Union: A Call for Systematic Evaluation,* that terrorism is a rare occurrence in European countries and “even those states that in the past have endured them on a frequent basis, such as Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK, can hardly be said to have been threatened by them on an existential level” (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p.3). Yet the discussion on terrorism and radicalization would seem to indicate that not only is terrorism in general a significant threat to Europe, including the Netherlands, but that Islamic terrorism in particularly is particularly insidious and threatening.

### Example #1 The Information House in Amsterdam

The purpose of the Information House was to collect reports of “radicalization” and decide how best to intervene. The Information House encouraged teachers, police officers, social workers, local activists, parole officers, etc. to notice and report signs of “radicalization” (Rabasa, 2011, p.147). While other forms of radicalization and extreme ideology exist, such as that of the far right or the far left, the focus of course was on Islamic radicalization. The approach to radicalization was two-pronged: 1) numerous social services were utilized in order to minimize any sense of social isolation. 2) The use of ideological intervention. A report from RAND, a nonprofit American policy think tank explicates: “A credible interlocutor who was knowledgeable about both Islamic theology and democratic ideals was used to conduct the ideological intervention, which consisted of challenging the political and social underpinnings of the radical narrative as well as its theological foundation” (Rabasa, 2011, p.178). What is important to note about those reported to this program is that they had not participated in any illegal activity or committed a crime (Rabasa, 2011, p. 147).

In other words the Information House was storing information on individuals who had not committed any crime and instead were expressing viewpoints or opinions considered to be evidence of radicalization. The Information House was closed in 2007 due to “privacy concerns” (Rabasa, 2011, p.148).

### Dutch Law

Since 9/11 changes in Dutch law have raised questions about whether or not suspects’ human rights are being violated and whether due process is being followed.

### Example #2 Protected Witnesses Act

This law allows judges to question officials about intelligence documents without having the defense at hand to witness and hear the ongoing questioning. Furthermore, the witnesses remain anonymous and the defense is only able to question the witness via the judge. Additionally, “the questioned intelligence official has a decisive say in the decision whether the official report of the investigating magistrate will become part of the case file” (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 7). This law severely limits the ability of the defense to represent their client and to question intelligence officials on the evidence they are bringing forth against their client.

### Example #3 Act on expanding the scope for investigating and prosecuting terrorist crime

This act greatly expands police investigative powers. For example, the standard of reasonable suspicion no longer need to be met in order for the police to use tactics such as wiretapping and infiltration in the course of their investigation (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 6), There just need to be “indications” that a terrorist attack is being prepared. “Such indications are deemed to exist when facts and circumstances arise that indicate that a terrorist attack is being prepared” (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 6).

This act also allows terrorists suspects to be detained even without there being “serious grounds for considering that terrorists attacks are being planned” (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 6). Furthermore suspects can be detained for up to two years from the 90 days previously allocated. The suspect can also be delayed access to his file for up to two years (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 6).

### Conclusion

After terrorist attacks in the United States and parts of Europe, the Netherlands sought to develop policies and legalization that would monitor and counter-act radicalization and terrorist actions. The creation of the Information House, the Witness Protection Act, and the Act on expanding the scope for investigating and prosecuting terrorist crime are examples of the authorities attempts to counter-act to neutralize the threat they believe Islamist radicalization poses.

# Discussion of Research Findings

This section will examine the similarities and differences between UK and Dutch counter-terrorism policies, as well as the theories that undergird radicalization:

## The United Kingdom:

The UK’s counter terrorism strategy, Prevent relies on the notion that there is a linear correlation between radicalization, extremism, and terrorism. Additionally, the ways in which radicalization and extremism are defined, and the “warning signs” used to determine when an adult or child has been radicalized are general and extremely problematic. For example, the HM Prevent Strategy defines radicalization as: “the ways in which radicalization and extremism are defined, and the “warning signs” used to determine when an adult or child has been radicalized are general and extremely problematic” (Bailey, 2015, p. 3). While extremism is defined as, “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of the armed forces” (Bailey, 2015, p.3).

Questions arise as to what exactly it means to “support terrorism.” Does it require that a person make definitive statement that a person makes, such as, “I support the Islamic State and their goals?” Or does someone who demonstrates sympathy towards the group’s stated goals that is to end foreign intervention in the Middle East, also considered on the path to radicalization? Furthermore, the definition of extremism is also pragmatic and lumps together those who actively call for the death and violence, against those who protest against “fundamental British values” (Bailey, 2015, p. 3). CAGE, the subject of the second case study, expresses a fear that Prevent inhibits lawful political activity. They state that Prevent, “…criminalizes innocent and democratic political activism and dissent, perpetrates political grievances…” (“Failing Our Communities: A Case Study Approach to Understanding Prevent,” 2015, p. 5).

On February 4, 2016, Amnesty International and fifty six other NGOs issued a joint statement raising concerns about counter terrorism and prevention initiatives. While this statement specifically refers to a Panel Discussion at the 31st session of the UN Human rights council, its general critiques of counter terrorism strategies apply to UK’s Prevent program. They point out that, “Violent extremism’ and related terminology such as ‘radicalization”’ are poorly defined concepts, which open the door to human rights and other abuses.”("Initiatives to "Counter and Prevent Violent Extremism” Raise Serious Human Rights Concerns", 2016, p. 1). They also claim that programs meant to divert or prevent people from the path of radicalization are directed mainly at Muslims, on the basis of misconceived assumptions about the ease with which individuals susceptible to acts of violence can be profiled and with little or no evidence for the efficacy of interventions that are done in cooperation with public services and law enforcement authorities. In the context of education, for example, we have observed such mechanisms being mobilized in response to protected forms of expression or religious practice, including by young children, infringing on the rights to education and expression, and further exacerbating distrust and marginalization ("Initiatives to "Counter and Prevent Violent Extremism” Raise Serious Human Rights Concerns", 2016, p. 2).

While they don’t mention the UK’s *Prevent* by name, key parts of the program require that educational institutions and social services be on the lookout for examples of radicalization in children and report it to law enforcement. The Brennan Center in a letter to Lisa O. Monaco Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, does in fact mention the Prevent program in its critiques of counter radicalization tactics in order to explain their concern over the United States “Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) program:

*“Though ostensibly neutral with regards to religion, Prevent has been used selectively such that it polices British citizens’ behavior by two standards of legality: one for Muslims and one for everyone else. Under Prevent, a lack of government transparency and accountability, heavy focus on gathering intelligence on Muslim communities and the policing of radical dissent have all resulted in diminished youth confidence in democracy*” ("Grave Concerns Regarding “Countering Violent Extremism” Pilot Programs", 2015, p. 3).

What are the specific signs that might indict that someone is at risk for radicalization? According to *Guidance for Working with Children and Young People who are vulnerable to the messages of Radicalization and Extremism* some risk factors for radicalization include:

• family tensions

• a sense of isolation

• migration

• distance from cultural heritage

• experience of racism or discrimination

• feeling of failure etc.

The Guide is careful to point out that not all children going through these particular situations or exhibiting these behaviors are necessarily undergoing radicalization (Bailey, 2015, p. 6). However, such cautions only serve to create more confusion. On the one hand, the guide is telling educational leaders and others working with children to be on the lookout for these particular signs as they might indicate radicalization, yet on the other hand, they are quick to state:

*“It is important to be cautious in assessing these factors, to avoid inappropriately labeling or stigmatizing individuals because they possess a characteristic or fit a specific profile. It is vital that all professionals who have contact with vulnerable individuals are able to recognize those vulnerabilities and help to increase safe choices” (Bailey, 2015, p. 6).*

The guide then goes on to assert that:

*“The risk of radicalization is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that practitioners exercise their professional judgment, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified” (Bailey, 2015, p. 6).*

Other vulnerabilities/risk factors include: (Bailey, 2015, p. 9)

-Identity Crisis

-Personal Crisis

-Personal Circumstances

-Unmet Aspirations

-Criminality

Even more troubling are the “risk factors” in which individuals are exercising their rights to freedom of expression and speech:

“Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders

Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element

Possessing extremist literature

Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage

Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues” (Bailey, 2015, p. 9).

Based on the aforementioned criteria, an untold number of children and youth are at risk for radicalization. But of course, in practice, as the case studies demonstrate, the majority of those targeted by the Prevent program and other counter terrorism initiatives are Muslims.

Another problem with how “radicalization” and extremism are defined is that the definitions fail to take into account the contextual reality of what society or the government deems to be “radical.” Peter Neumann points out that what it means to be a radical or extremist changes as what is considered to be “mainstream” changes (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). He explains, “depending on what one considers mainstream or acceptable, the adoption of certain beliefs or behaviors may be seen as radicalization, ‘going progressive’, ‘becoming a born-again believer’ or ‘returning to the roots” (Neumann, 2013, p. 876). For example, in 1979, after the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan the United States and the UK discussed ways in which to help the “Mujahideen” defeat the Soviets (Bowcott, 2010). Many fighters who were part of the Mujahideen, later morphed into the Taliban ("The Taliban in Afghanistan", 2016).

Moreover, the Prevent strategies, as the case studies demonstrate, succeed in alienating members of the Muslim community. Mohammed Umar Farooq, who was reading a book entitled, “terrorism studies” in his university library, was reported to a security guard at the university. His was a student in Stafford University’s Terrorism, Crime, and Global Security master’s program, where ostensibly reading about terrorism is a necessary component of the program.

The UK strategy such as Prevent, criminalizes political discourse that although might be disagreeable to a large number of British citizens, is not technically illegal. Furthermore, it conflates expression of such opinions with violence. Prevent also targets Muslims, even though based on the very broad risk factors and behaviors identified as possible indicators of radicalization, an untold number of British citizens from numerous religious and ethnic backgrounds should be at risk. It also alienates potential allies that could help counter radicalization-such as students studying counter terrorism and organizations such as CAGE.

## The Netherlands

In 2006, a survey estimated the Muslim population to be around 857,000 people or to make up 5.2% of the Dutch population. In 2012, taking into account population growth, self-identified Muslims were estimated to make up 6% out of the Netherland’s total population of 16.2 million people (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p. 3). The Dutch Muslim population primarily consists of Dutch Turks and Dutch Moroccans, although since the 1990s Muslim minorities from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Pakistan have been granted asylum status in the Netherlands (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p. 3). Compared to the native Dutch population, Dutch Muslims tend to have lower educational attainmen, which in turn negatively influences their socio-economic status (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p. 5). For example, in 2010, 4.5% of the native Dutch population was unemployed as opposed to 14.6 of the Dutch Moroccan population and 11.3% of the Dutch Turkish population (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p. 5). Dutch Moroccan and Turkish youth are hit particularly hard, with in one in four Dutch Moroccan and one in five Dutch Turkish youths between the ages of 15-25 facing unemployment. In comparison, one in ten of the native Dutch youth population faced unemployment. Reports explicate that, “in general ethnic minorities face more obstacles to find paid work, they have less work experience, have more often been long-term unemployed, lack relevant social networks, and face discrimination in the labour market” (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p. 5). These factors, arguably contribute to a lack of social integration which according to some academics and government officials, makes some youth, vulnerable to radicalization (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p. 14).

In 2011, the government of the Netherlands released a report evaluating Dutch counter terrorism measures stating that “there are no grounds to assume they violate basic human rights standards as set by the European Convention on Human Rights” (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p. 19). However, a 2008 report by the commissioner for human rights recounting Thomas Hammarberg’s 2008 visit to the Netherlands expressed concerns on how Muslims are treated in the Netherlands and the potential for discrimination within the Netherland’s counterterrorism tactics. The report points out that hatred against Muslims comprise “one of the two largest categories of online hate speech.” (Hammarberg, 2008, p. 35). Hammarberg also took issue with the Netherland’s broad definition of terrorism and terrorist aims. If someone is found to have had a “terrorist aim” while committing a crime, he/she face stiffer penalties. Terrorist aim/terrorism is defined as,

“To aim for objectives or to take actions that are intended to arouse fear in the population or a part of the population, or to illegally force a government authority or international organisation to do something, not to do something or not to allow something, or to severely upset or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or of an international organisation. This is mostly done by (the threat of) violence against human life” (“What is meant by financing of terrorism? FIU-Netherlands", 2016).

Hammarberg argued that such a broad and general term endangers human rights and freedoms by leading to “unjustifiable restrictions” (Hammarberg, 2008, p. 37).

Furthermore, Hammarberg found the Protected Witness act, (case study #2) which often denies the defense the ability to question witnesses, and also denies the defense the ability to examine all evidence against the defendant, weakens the defense’s position and calls into question how the act honors the defendant’s right to a fair trial (Hammarberg, 2008, p. 37).

Hammarberg also found that laws extending investigative powers (case study 3), which not only lowers the threshold needed for police to instigate investigation, (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p. 11) but also allows the police to wiretap suspects without the consent of a judge, restricts the right to privacy, specifically it violates the principal of “data protection,” which the report defines as, “protection from intrusions, into one’s privacy or private life, and guards against the improper collecting, storing, sharing, and use of data” (Hammarberg, 2008, p. 38).

Moreover, while terrorism is defined broadly enough that in theory, it would encompass more than just radical militant Islam, the reality is that counter-terrorism measures are disproportionately directed at Muslims. E.S.M. Akerboom, while serving as Secretary-General at the Ministry of Defence, admits that generalizing against the whole Dutch Muslim population is problematic and provides “Islamists” with the opportunity to fuel anti-western sentiment, (Akerboom, 2012, p. 6) also equates “international terrorism” with Islamic terrorism (Akerboom, 2012, p. 9). It is not terrorism in general that represents a threat to the Netherlands but, “the threat of violence represented by Islamist terrorism has grown into a considerable and permanent exogenous and endogenous threat” (Akerboom, 2012, p. 1).

Instead of contributing to the social integration of the Muslim minority in the Netherlands, the Netherlands’ counter terrorism and counter radicalism tactics, like those of the UK, have a similar effect of targeting and alienating Muslim populations, which in turn seriously calls into question the usefulness and successes of such measures (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p.14).

### Police targeting and civil rights concerns

While Dutch authorities monitor other extremist groups such as animal rights activists, anti-Islamic groups, and right wing and left wing groups, the focus of Dutch anti-terrorism policies continues to be Islamic terrorism (Eijkman, Lettinga, & Verbossen, 2012, p.12). Even though violence and terrorism have been committed by individuals not associated with radical Islam, such as Norwegian Anders Behring Breivik, who at the time identified as a Christian (Juergensmeyer, 2012), shot and killed 77 people and specifically targeted the Norwegian Labour party for not taking a stringent anti-Islamic stand (Juergensmeyer, 2012), the threat continues to be presented as an predominantly Islamist problem. Despite the increase in anti-Islam rhetoric in the Netherlands (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2015, p. 378), there seems to be a lack of concern about the threat of violence such sentiment can encourage, with some even denying that such sentiment exists (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2015, p. 5). The rise of anti-Muslim rhetoric, as well as the use of counter terrorism laws that are targeted mainly at Muslims, simply serve to alienate the community. Even the mere perception that one is part of a group that is viewed and treated differently by governmental institutions is enough to increase distrust amongst the minority population towards government institutions (Eijkman & Schuurman, 2011, p.18).

## Comparison between Dutch and UK Counter-terrorism policies:

The similarities and differences between the counter-radicalization policies of the Netherlands and the UK answer the central question of this dissertation.

There are far more similarities, than differences between UK and Dutch counter-terrorism policies. In fact, the theories and reasoning undergirding both countries’ policies are similar, any differences in counter-terrorism policies are to be found in the specific ways in which said policies are carried out. For example, both the Netherlands and the UK have a “holistic” approach to counter-terrorism-meaning that they do not just seek to counter radicalization via the legal system and law enforcement, but government authorities also work with social programs in the hopes that it will lessen the lure of radicalization for those living in vulnerable communities.

In the UK, as mentioned previously in this report, Prevent is the most visible and controversial aspect of this approach to counter-radicalization. In the Netherlands, the government funded program streetcornerwork, provides a similar service. One employee, Salem el-Idrissi explains, “We’re targeting individuals and mapping them and seeing who they are. We’re there before something happens. Every individual we don’t think is on a good path we zoom in on. Criminalization and radicalization — we take them together” (Daragahi, 2016). Dutch programs such as streetcornerwork, create a network of social workers, community activists, and counselors who try to identify members of the local community vulnerable to radicalization and engage with them and provide them a variety of services in the hopes of minimizing the lure of radicalization (Daragahi, 2016).

Furthermore, both UK and Dutch authorities deny that there are any racial, ethnic, or religious undertones to their counter-radicalization process. For example, The *Guidance for Working with Children and Young People who are vulnerable to the messages of Radicalisation and Extremism* makes no mention of Islam and instead explains, “Examples of extremist causes that have used violence to achieve their ends include animal rights, the far right, internal terrorist and international terrorist organizations” (Bailey, 2015, p. 6). The report goes on to claim, “Over-simplified assessments based upon demographics and poverty indicators have consistently proven to increase victimization, fail to identify vulnerabilities and, in some cases, increase the ability of extremists to exploit, operate and recruit. There is no such thing as a ‘typical extremist’ and those involved in extremism come from a range of backgrounds and experiences” (Bailey, 2015, p.7).

Likewise, Dutch authorities claim to deny any simple correlation between terrorism and religious, racial/ethnic identity, or socio-economic status. Dick Schoof, the Netherlands’ National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, and distributed to local governments, asserts: “It has become clear that there is no unique social, ethnic or psychological profile of persons who radicalize, there is no direct link with social-economic, pedagogical or educational deprivation. Why someone gets convinced of the way of extremism strictly depends on personal context” (Daragahi, 2016). Yet, despite the authorities acknowledgement that terrorism and radicalization are not a problem unique to Muslims and Islam, in practice both Dutch and UK counter-radicalization and terrorism strategies target Muslim and ethnic minorities. Both the UK and Dutch authorities view non-native ethnic groups, in particular those with large numbers of Muslim, as threats to national security.

Moreover, the counter-terrorism strategies in both countries necessitate that certain group of people-those deemed by the national security apparatus in both countries to be part of communities vulnerable to radicalization-give up certain rights that are available to the native non-Muslim populations in both countries. Those who are perceived to be terrorists or vulnerable to radicalization, in the Netherlands are subject to being detained without charge for up to two years. (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p. 6). And if they are charged, the defense may not have access to witnesses that are accusing them of being a national security threat (Talsma & Ouchan, 2007, p.7).

### Radicalization and extremism

One of the main problems with both Dutch and UK counter-terrorism and radicalization strategies is that they are undergirded by the flawed theory of radicalization and by overly broad generalizations of what constitutes extremism. While both Dutch and UK authorities claim to understand that radicalization is not a linear process and that the reasons people are drawn to terrorism and terrorist groups are varied, in practice, they demonstrate an understanding of radicalization that implies that if an individual experiences certain negative outcomes and expresses certain points of views, then this is definitive proof that they are on the path to radicalization. The *Guidance for Working with Children and Young People who are vulnerable to the messages of Radicalisation and Extremism* for example lists risks factors that encompass the broad categories of “personal crisis” and “identity crisis” (Bailey, 2015, p. 7).

Anthony Richards asks, “Are people radicalized if they think that Islam is incompatible with democracy, or if they disapprove of the use of violence but strive for the application of Shari’a law in the UK, or support the idea of an Islamic caliphate?” (Bailey, 2015, p. 2). For the UK, the answer to these questions is yes. Prime minister David Cameron has made it clear via his speeches that radicalization and extremism are not just tied to concrete acts of violence but also certain ideas that the British government deems to be supportive of terrorism, even if not explicitly. For instance in a speech explaining the revised extremism bill stated: Ideas, which are hostile to basic liberal values such as democracy, freedom and sexual equality. Ideas, which actively promote discrimination, sectarianism and segregation” (Dearden, 2015). Based on Cameron’s understanding of what constitutes extremism, even just the notion of sharia’ law and an Islamic caliphate could be defined as extremist ideology. This in turn endorses and encourages counter terrorism and radicalization strategies that target and isolate Muslims based on ideas that the UK government considers to be unsavory. The issue isn’t countering radical/extremist ideology per say, but the issue lies in defining what constitutes radical and extremist ideology, especially if violence is not advocated.

Dutch counter-terrorism programs also rely on defining what types of thinking constitute extremism. In a discussion of countering extremist narratives, Max Taylor and Gilbert Ramsay advocate turning to the UK definitions of extremism as a starting point (Taylor & Ramsey, 2016, p. 97). At a certain point, government counter-terrorism/radicalization programs, especially ones focused on Islamic extremism, run the risk of making the state the arbitrator of what constitutes acceptable Islamic theology. Moreover, the focus on extremist ideology as the sole or main factor influencing Islamic radicalization ignores the ways in which UK and Dutch foreign and domestic policies contribute to the isolation and marginalization of their Muslim constituents.

## Conclusion

UK and Dutch counter-terrorism policies are extremely similar. Both rely on broad definitions of what constitutes radicalization and extremist ideology which places government authorities in the position to decide what constitutes acceptable Islamic ideology and both focus on Islamist radicalization to the exclusion of other forms of radicalization such as that presented by the far-right. Any differences are tied to specific ways in which the two governments carry out their counter-terrorism strategies, for example the UK Prevent Program and the Dutch program streetcornerwork. Both are attempts to implement counter-radicalization strategies that view certain populations as vulnerable to Islamist extremism and seek to prevent radicalization by utilizing social service programs and law enforcement.

# Conclusion

In order to answer the research question *“*How are the governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands countering Islamist radicalization? And what are the similarities and differences between the approaches taken by the countries?*”* the previous sections of this dissertation presented findings based on a compilation of relevant information concerning counter-radicalization policies in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, presented a literature review that discusses the differences of the various sources, and presented discussion that analyses the policies and conditions of both the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The counter-radicalization policies in the Netherlands and the UK are extremely similar. The authorities in both countries adhere to vague and broad definitions of what can be considered radicalization by deciding which Islamic ideology is acceptable. Both countries implemented social programs to deal with radicalization, the UK’s Prevent program and the Netherlands’ Streetcornerwork, which are intended to identify possible radicals within Muslim communities, thereby luring them away from radicalization. Both countries ignore non-Islamic radicalization within the far-right movements, but choose to only counter Islamic radicalization.

Both the United kingdom and the Netherlands view themselves as increasingly under threat from Islamist radicalization, which they trace, in part to an unwillingness or inability on the part of the Muslims in their communities to integrate and to the acceptance of extreme ideology which reject so called “British” or “Dutch values” of equality, freedom of religion, speech, etc.. For instance in 2011 speech in Munich, the UK Prime Minister David Cameron discussed the danger that Europe and Britain faces from terrorist attacks: “We need to be absolutely clear on where the origins of these terrorist attacks lie – and that is the existence of an ideology, 'Islamist extremism’ ("Full transcript David Cameron Speech on radicalization and Islamic extremism | Munich | 5 February 2011", 2016). In a 2015 speech outlying a new bill to combat Islamist radicalization Cameron again described Islamist extremism as a threat to British values and security: “It begins-it must begin-by understanding the threat we face and why we face it. What we are fighting in Islamist extremism is an ideology, an extreme ideology” (Dearden, 2015). He also goes on to explain that part of the reason why some young British Muslims might be attracted to extremist theology is their feelings of isolation and alienation from the dominant British Culture. He states: “For all our successes as multi-racial, multi-faith democracy, we have to confront a tragic truth that there are people born and raised in this country who don’t really identify with Britain and who feel little or no attachment to other people here” (Dearden, 2015).

As discussed elsewhere in this paper, former Secretary-General at the Ministry of Defense E.S.M. Akerboom, during his tenure, referred to Islamist terrorism as posing a threat not only on the international stage, but specifically to the Netherlands. Like the UK Prime Minister David Cameron, Akerboom finds Islamist ideology and the lack of integration as contributing factors to the appeal that terrorist groups and ideology has on a small but significant number of those part of the Dutch Muslim community. Ackerboom explains that “Islamist terrorism seeks to realize a society that is in accordance with a fundamentalist Islamic polity based on an extremist interpretation of the sources of Islam by means of politically motivated violence and threats of violence” (Akerboom, 2002, p. 9).

Both David Cameron and Ackerboom recognize that there is a tension between their focus on Islamist radicalization and terrorism and their insistence that they recognize that not all Muslims are terrorists, and that there are other threats to UK and Dutch security. Cameron points out: “It's important to stress that terrorism is not linked exclusively to any one religion or ethnic group. The UK still faces threats from dissident republicans. Anarchist attacks have occurred recently in Greece and Italy” ("Full transcript David Cameron Speech on radicalization and Islamic extremism, Munich, 5 February 2011", 2016).

Yet despite his remark that “it’s important to stress” the various forms of terrorism, he goes on to only speak about the threat that Islamist radicalization and terrorism presents to Europe and the UK. In his 2015 speech Cameron is careful to explicitly state that Islam itself is not a threat to the UK:

“And because the focus of my remarks today is on tackling Islamist extremism – not Islam the religion – let me say this. I know what a profound contribution Muslims from all backgrounds and denominations are making in every sphere of our society, proud to be both British and Muslim, without conflict or contradiction” (Dearden, 2015).

Ackerboom, in an eleven page reflection of Dutch counter terrorism policy has one paragraph detailing the threat that non-Islamist extremist group pose to Dutch society:

“Currently, the terrorist threat against the Netherlands mainly originates from Jihadism. On the basis of the broad approach, other forms of ideologically motivated extremism (extreme right and left, animal rights extremism) are closely monitored as well” (Ackerboom, 2012, p.10). And like Cameron, Ackerboom wants to make clear that Islam itself is not the enemy, and he insists that in order for counter terrorism measures to work, trust between the Muslim and law enforcement community must be nurtured (Ackerboom, 2012, p.5).

Yet despite the insistence on the part of UK and Dutch government officials that neither Islam nor the Muslim community in general are “enemies” or threats per say, the counter terrorism strategies that both countries have adopted target the Muslim community and arguably foster distrust amongst Muslim communities and law enforcement. Programs such as the UK’s Prevent, and Dutch modification of laws, which broaden police investigative, and surveillance powers, only contribute to the alienation and isolation of Muslims within their respective countries. Terrorism is presented as an exclusively Muslim problem and it is Muslims, particularly those from immigrant communities that are the target of such counter terrorism policies. Yet there seems to be an unwillingness amongst some politicians and government leaders that their counter terrorism measures might be unproductive. Cameron condescendingly dismisses concerns about the security services treatment of Muslims and the Prevent Program by attributing them to the delusional beliefs of extremists:

*“We should together challenge the ludicrous conspiracy theories of the extremists. The world is not conspiring against Islam; the security services aren’t behind terrorist attacks; our new Prevent duty for schools is not about criminalizing or spying on Muslim children. This is paranoia in the extreme” (Dearden, 2015).*

# Recommendations

1. **Recognize and admit that current Dutch and British counter terrorism measures are problematic and may be counterproductive**. If politicians and other government leaders dismiss concerns about counter terrorism measures as the delusions of extremists, then they see no imperative for change. In this view, it is not the counter terrorism measures themselves that are problematic, but it is those who criticize and believe that the measures are counterproductive and targeting Muslims that are the problems. This sets a dangerous precedent that ties extremism with disagreement towards government policies and it also dismisses the valid concerns and fears of the very community that political, security, and law enforcement leaders claim they want to work with.
2. **Re-elevate the risk of Islamist terrorism.** Judging by the amount of press and government resources spent on counter terrorism/radicalization measures, Islamist radicalization is presented as one of the, if not the, most pressing threat facing western civilization. Islamist radicalization is presented as a bigger threat than right wing extremism, financial down turns, and the myriad of other issues that affect the lives of average citizens. Is this fear justified? Yes, one has to admit that Islamist terrorists have killed westerners and no doubt some plan on killing more, but does the threat justify the amount of resources targeted at Muslim communities in said countries? If, so what makes Islamist terrorism unique in the danger that it poses to western society?
3. **Honest discussion about Western Values**- David Cameron repeatedly states that Islamist extremism is at odds with Western values. And he extols British values of religious tolerance, equality, and freedom of religion and speech. Yet he also seems to tie values with agreement towards governmental policies. He dismisses concerns about the way sin which western intervention may have contributed to radicalization and instead focuses on one cause: extreme Islamist theology. Cameron claims:

“We should contrast their bigotry, aggression and theocracy with our values. We have, in our country, a very clear creed and we need to promote it much more confidently. Wherever we are from, whatever our background, whatever our religion, there are things we share together. We are all British. We respect democracy and the rule of law. We believe in freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of worship, equal rights regardless of race, sex, sexuality or faith” (Dearden, 2015).

Such a statement ignores the other “western values” that have historically played a role in how religious and ethnic minorities have been treated: orientalism, racism, and Islamophobia. Is it possible that treating Muslims and immigrant communities as “dangerous others” might contribute to feelings of alienation and isolation? Is it possible that instead of being an enlightened example or “beacon” (Dearden, 2015) that the UK and Netherlands continue to grapples with how to treat and value members of minority communities?

Current Dutch and UK counter-terrorism measures paint terrorism as a predominately “Muslim” problem, although in speeches politicians and security and intelligence leaders are quick to point out that terrorism is not a uniquely Muslim problem. The amount of resources spent on dealing with Islamist radicalization, however, seems to contradict such assurances. Additionally, counter-radicalization measures focus on a broad understanding of radicalization that seems to precariously close to lumping together critiques of western policies and extremism. Finally, the hyper focus on the Muslim community as the source (and even the solution) for radicalization only contributes to any feelings of distrust and isolation some in the Muslim community may have towards Dutch authorities.

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