

# Perception of Terrorism and Security and the Role of Media

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## *Abstract*

The paper tackles important questions related to organized crime and terrorism by focusing on perception of terrorism across and outside the European Union using a variety of empirical resources. The paper first offers general overview of citizens' perceptions and attitudes toward terrorism and security, conditionality of these, as well as attitudes to the various trade-offs, as demonstrated on the tensions between freedom and privacy on one hand and security on the other. Second, it concentrates on the key role of media in transmitting information and shaping opinions on key security issues (case studies include cyber terrorism as an example of risk and 3D scanner as an example of security measure). Thirdly, and lastly, the paper looks at the role of online media, which have in recent years profoundly changed the media landscape – information provision and impact of information on public opinion, as well as use of social media for public mobilization shows, that online media, including social media have created new virtual sphere, which is transnational and whose functioning and impact on perception of terrorism and attitudes has been so far not the focus of academic research. The paper aims to fill the gap and answer the following questions: How do media actually frame terrorism and organized crime? Has the media coverage of terrorism and organized crime made the public more sensitive to the issue of security? And, if so, how are the (security) threats perceived and discussed by the media?

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The safety and happiness of society are the objects at which all political institutions aim, and to which all such institutions must be sacrificed  
James Madison

### ***Introduction***

In the quote, James Madison stresses two features important to modern democracy – security and satisfaction. In the recent month, however, it became more evident than ever before that these concepts are closely tied together. The publication of information about wide-reaching surveillance in many Western countries, the reaction of the public to the information, the reaction of governments and the actions taken by these governments to prosecute severely whistleblowers on grounds of “threatening national security”, all demonstrate that more security does not have to make society happier. The main reason is that happiness is not connected only to absence of fear, and feeling of safety, it is also connected to absence of far reaching security measures infringing privacy, and to feeling of freedom. In addition to pointing to tension between security and freedom, and the costs of security in terms of privacy, the recent whistleblower cases (Manning, Snowden) also highlighted the role of the media, in providing outlet for whistleblowers and acting as watchdogs of freedom, privacy and civil liberties.

The dilemma of our times, for governments, for media and for individual citizens is thus the question, how much safety do we want and at what price. The answers to this question differ sharply according to the political orientation of the speaker. However, since Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, it is evident that safety and security, two essential features of the social contract have their price; that freedom, both personal and that of a society is a defining feature of legitimate government; and that governments are seen as legitimate, if they resolve the tension between safety and freedom to the general satisfaction of the people. In this dilemma, the media play a critical role as an arena in which information are made available to the public, multiple claims and justifications are presented and discussed, and essentially opinions are being formed.

In the *Leviathan* [1651 (1960)], Thomas Hobbes made aware, that danger and insecurity were always an essential part of human existence. The existential security in contemporary Western societies is unprecedented, yet the scale of the risks (in terms of their consequences), such as nuclear radiation, global warming and terrorism, is also unparalleled, this is why security risks and safety are of such a large concern in today’s societies and brings around profound changes of the political order, shaping perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of people, political leaders and of governments (Beck 2002; Inglehart 1997).

The differences, found among contemporary Western societies, are caused by cultural differences, as well as by the varying degree of medialization. Hence, analyzing media became crucial not only for understanding political communication defined by Denton and Woodward as a “pure discussion about the allocation of public resources (revenues), official authority (who is given the power to make legal, legislative and executive decision), and official sanctions (what the state rewards or punishes)” (ibid. 1990: 14); but also to

understand, which questions and topics play dominant role in the political arena of contemporary Western societies.

The following paper tackles important questions related to organized crime and terrorism by focusing on perception of various security and terrorism related threads across and outside the European Union. The paper first briefly outlines theoretical framework of this research, which rests on two pillars – risk perception, dilemma between freedom and security and political communication including the role of media in communicating the dilemmas between security, safety, privacy and freedom. In the second part of the paper, general comparative overview of citizens' perceptions and attitudes toward terrorism and security, conditionality of these, as well as attitudes to the various trade-offs is presented using comparative analysis of existing quantitative surveys (ISSP, Eurobarometer, etc.). After the strength and weaknesses of the secondary data analysis, especially regarding time, country and issue selection constraints are made evident, qualitative comparative analysis is proposed as an alternative for comparative research of political communication and perception of threats. The third part of the paper introduces unique SECONOMICS research on the key role of media in transmitting information and shaping opinions on key security issues (case studies include cyber terrorism – i.e. Stuxnet as an example of risk and 3D scanner and CCTV cameras as an example of security measure). The first results regarding the saliency of elected security issues in media of ten countries between 2010 and 2013, and some first findings are presented in the fourth part of the paper.

The paper offers interesting and topical insights into the ways in which media within and outside of the European Union frame terrorism and organized crime, as well as into the main debates taking place transnationally. In the first part the theoretical framework of the paper is established by defining risk perception and the role of political communication. In the second part, cross-national quantitative analysis of survey and public opinion data on perception of terrorism and security risk is presented. In the third part the quantitative analysis is complemented by qualitative comparative analysis of media salience of terrorism and security measures in printed media of ten countries over the period of 2010 to 2013. In the last part we summarize our first findings and present several preliminary concluding remarks.

## ***1. Theoretical Framework***

In the theoretical framework we will first concentrate on defining the risk perception followed by political communication. This framework allows us to understand both public opinion and media reporting as a form of political communication and to combine these in an analysis of public perceptions on terrorism and counter-terrorism measures.

### ***1.1. Defining Risk Perception***

As stated above, advanced modern societies are in many respects experiencing an unprecedented existential security compared to previous times, they are at the same time increasingly concerned about security risks and safety threats which are beyond the reach of individuals as well as of individual states (Beck 1992 and 2002, Giddens 1999, Inglehart

1997). In contrast to old types of risks whose scope was limited, the effects of the modern risk are not temporally, spatially and socially circumscribed, not respecting boundaries of nation-states, having a long latency period, identification and prosecution of those responsible is difficult (Beck 2002).

Risk perception is studied in various disciplines – sociology risk assessment analysis, social psychology and political science. While risk perception and sociological approaches have a long tradition (evolving strongly especially in 1960s and 1990s respectively), political science is only recently becoming more engaged in the study of terrorism. Thus the study of risk perception, which until the 9/11 terrorist attack was rather minor issue in political psychology and public opinion research became the focus of many studies.

In general, risk can be defined as the “likelihood that an individual will experience the effect of danger” (Short 1984). In social science, the operational definition is that of “perceived risk/threat”, and is understood as the subjective assessment of the probability of this danger and how much people are concerned about potential consequences (Sjöberg et al. 2004: 8). The following three components of risk perception are important: first, subjective assessment that individual people make; second, (un)certainty that is intrinsic to this assessment; and third, something that will have a negative outcome (ibid.). Risk perception is studied as a targeted attitude to specific types of risks, such as terrorism, but also to the social world (Taylor 1998, Oliver and Mendelberg 2000).

There are two basic types of risks: personal and collective/national/general (Huddy et al. 2002, Sjöberg 2005, 2000 and 2003). The personal risk represents a personal threat to the individual or the immediate family and is often related to feelings of personal insecurity and fear of physical harm (Huddy et al. 2002). The general, national and collective threat is a threat understood as a risk for the country or society as a whole, and does not have to entail a personal physical risk to an individual. Similarly, they also differ in their consequences. The risk literature has widely studied individual sources of threat perception.

There are two main classical theories used for explanation of perceived risk: the psychometric paradigm and cultural theory (Sjöberg 2000, Sjöberg et al. 2004). Furthermore, some authors point out the influence of gender on threat perception (Huddy et al. 2002). The basic assumption of the psychometric approach is that threats and risks are in reality interpreted or perceived by individuals. In other words, individual threats are considered to be stimuli to which individuals respond (Slovic 1987, Sjöberg 2000, Sjöberg et al. 2004). Based on this perspective, various characteristics of the possible threats and risks are considered to be the principal factors determining how much people feel threatened or at risk. Unlike the psychometric paradigm, the cultural theory focuses on individual attitudes and values that can influence the levels of perceived risk (Sjöberg 2000, Peters and Slovic 1996).

The vast majority of traditional risk perception scholars limit their analysis to individual characteristics of citizens. It is done either by psychometric modeling or by treating culture as a set of individual values and attitudes. Increasingly, wider context as well as contextual

differences is also being taken into account by risk perception analyses (Mazur 2006, Sjöberg 2005, Sjöberg and Drottz 1991, Silver et al 2002).

Various consequences of threat perception have been widely documented in the literature. Huddy et al. summarize observed outcomes of threat perception in general: higher risk perception increases political intolerance, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and prejudices. Threat perception also reduces cognitive abilities, leads to closed-mindedness and intolerance to challenging opinions (2002: 486). Viscusi and Zeckhauser (2003) analyze how people are willing to sacrifice civil liberties to reduce the risk of terrorism on the case of airport checks of passengers. Their analysis supports opinions that the discussion about liberties and terrorism is not about extreme views, i.e. sacrifice all liberties or none of them in the effort to lower the terrorism risk. On the contrary, the individual attitudes have seemed to be rather conciliatory and a result of a series of trade-offs.

### ***1.2. Political communication***

While the classical definition of political communication (Denton and Woodward 1990: 14), McNair (2011) includes symbolic communication. Graber (1981) also adds paralinguistic signs such as body language and political acts such as boycotts and protests. In this paper, following McNair (ibid.), we recognize intentionality as the most important element of political communication and define political communication as purposeful communication about politics (McNair 2012:4). As such, political communication incorporates first, all forms of communication undertaken by politicians and other political actors for the purpose of achieving specific objectives; second communication addressed to these actors by non-politicians such as voters and newspaper columnists; and third, communication about these actors and their activities, as contained in news reports, editorials, and other forms of media discussion of politics (ibid.).

There are three main elements, between which the process of political communication is conceived and realized: first, political organizations – political parties, public organizations, pressure groups, terrorist organizations, governments; second, media; and third, citizens. Political organizations appeal to media, participate in programs, advertising, and media represents part of their PR. Media reports, comments and analysis actions of political organizations to citizens. The citizens through media – express their opinion in polls, letters, blogs, citizen journalism, etc.

Terrorist organizations / acts of violence, even random violence directed against civilians may be viewed as a form of political communication, intended to send message to particular constituency, and capable of being decoded as such. The purpose of all political communication is to persuade, and the target of this persuasion – the audience is the second key element in the political communication process without which, no political message can have any relevance. Whatever the size and nature of audience, all political communication is intended to achieve an effect on the receivers of the message. From electoral campaigns to the lobbying of individual MPs, the communicator hopes that there will be some positive (from his/her point of view) impact on the political behaviour of the recipient (ibid.).

In democratic political systems media function both as transmitters of political communication which originates outside the media organization itself, and as senders of political messages constructed by journalist and other producers such as bloggers. Political actors must use media in order to have their messages communicated to the desired audiences. Consequently, all political communicators must gain access to the media by some means, whether legislative, as in the rules of political balance and impartiality, or by an appreciation of the workings of the media sufficient to ensure that a message is reported.

The media of course, do not simply report, in a neutral and impartial way – media accounts of political events are laden with value judgments, subjectivities and biases. Political ‘reality’ comprises of three categories: first, objective political reality – comprising political events as they actually occur; second, subjective reality – the ‘reality’ of political events as they are perceived by actors and citizens; and third, constructed reality - critical to the subjective reality – refers to the events as they are covered by media.

While arguments about the precise efficacy of the media’s output continue, there is no disagreement about their central role in the political process, relaying and interpreting objective happenings in the political sphere, and facilitating subjective perceptions of them in the wider public sphere. For this media ‘biases’ are of a key political importance - the extent and direction of media bias varies in a modern democracy, the fact that it exist entitles us to view the media organizations as important actors in political process.

Media are important to the political process in more direct ways – all newspapers take pride in their ‘public voice’ / the editorials in which they articulate political opinions. Sometimes these are presented as the voice of the reader, and directed at policy-makers. Alternatively, they may be constructed as the calm, authoritative voice of the editor viewing the political scene from a detached distance. In both cases, the editorial is intended as a political intervention, and is often read as such by a government or a party. The media are important in the political process, finally as transmitters of messages from citizens to their political leaders.

In their coverage of opinion polls, for example, the media may claim to represent ‘public opinion’, which takes on the status of a real thing by which to understand or evaluate the political situation, often in terms critical of or admonitory to individual politicians. In recent decades, political arena becomes more international, as the media have extended their reach, geographically and temporally. Political organizations and audiences are no longer only domestic, but often transnational and international.

In ‘ideal-type’ democratic societies media communication fulfills the following five functions of the: first, media informs citizens of what is happening around them (monitoring function of the media); second, it educates the public to the meaning and significance of the ‘facts’ (the importance of this function explains seriousness with which journalists protect their objectivity, since their value as educators presumes a professional detachment from the issues being analyzed); third, media provides platform for public political discourse, facilitating the

formation of ‘public opinion’, and feeding that opinion back to the public from whence it came; this must include the provision of space for the expression of dissent, without which the notion of democratic consensus would be meaningless; fourth, media’s function is to give publicity to governmental and political institutions – the ‘watchdog’ role of journalism; and fifth media in democratic societies also serve as a channel for advocacy of political viewpoints – this function may be also viewed as persuasion (McNair 2011).

For the persuasion to be performed adequately, and thus the ‘public sphere’ to exist, a number of conditions have to be met. For Habermas, the political discourse circulated by the media must be: first, comprehensible to citizen; second, truthful in so far as it reflects the genuine and sincere intentions of speakers; third, means for transmitting information must be accessible to those, who can be influenced by it; and fourth there must be institutional guarantee for the public sphere to exist. In short, democracy presumes an open state in which people are allowed to participate in decision-making, and are given access to the media, and other information networks through which advocacy occurs (Habermas 1996, McNair 2011).

The criticism of media revolves around the question of manufacturing consent. The legitimacy of liberal democratic government is founded on the consent of the governed, but consent, as Walter Lippmann observed can be ‘manufactured’ (1946); it is defined as a ‘self-conscious’ art in which politicians combine the techniques of social psychology with the immense reach of mass media. The distinction between ‘persuasion’, which is a universally recognized function of political actors in a democracy and manipulation, which carries with it the negative connotation of propaganda and deceit, is not always an easy one to draw. Manipulation of opinion and concealment (or suppression) of inconvenient information are strategies emanating from political actors themselves, and pursued through media institutions (McNair 2011). Further criticisms of media include: the limitations of objectivity, absence of choice and the failure of education.

To summarize, the theoretical framework of this paper, is set by combining two strands of literature - risk perception and political communication. In this paper, public opinion presented in surveys and media reporting are both forms of political communication which can yield important insights on the two guiding questions of our research: 1. How do media actually frame terrorism and organized crime? 2. Has the media coverage of terrorism and organized crime made the public more sensitive to the issue of security? And, if so, how are the (security) threats perceived and discussed by the media? In the following section, we briefly introduce existing cross-national data on risk attitudes and perceptions.

## ***2. Risk and Security Perception in Quantitative Surveys***

The second part presents an overview of questions on perceptions of risks and threats covered by a number of cross-national surveys. First survey included in this overview is the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) – a continuing annual programme of cross-national collaboration on surveys covering topics important for social science research. It is the largest continuous international program of attitudes survey in the world. Since 1984, ISSP encompasses over 48 countries and periodically covers crucial issues such as Role of

Government, Social Networks, Social Inequality, Environment, etc. For our research the waves of the ISSP 2006 on the Role of the Government is relevant. From a theoretical perspective ISSP 2006 Role of Government, is of particular interest as it included question on how much a government should be allowed to reduce peoples' rights and liberties in a risk of terrorist attack.

The ISSP data will be combined with the Eurobarometers (EB) – public opinion analysis surveys conducted by the European Commission since 1973. Eurobarometer monitors the evolution of public opinion in the EU member states in order to aid decision-makers in policy formulation and policy preparation phases.

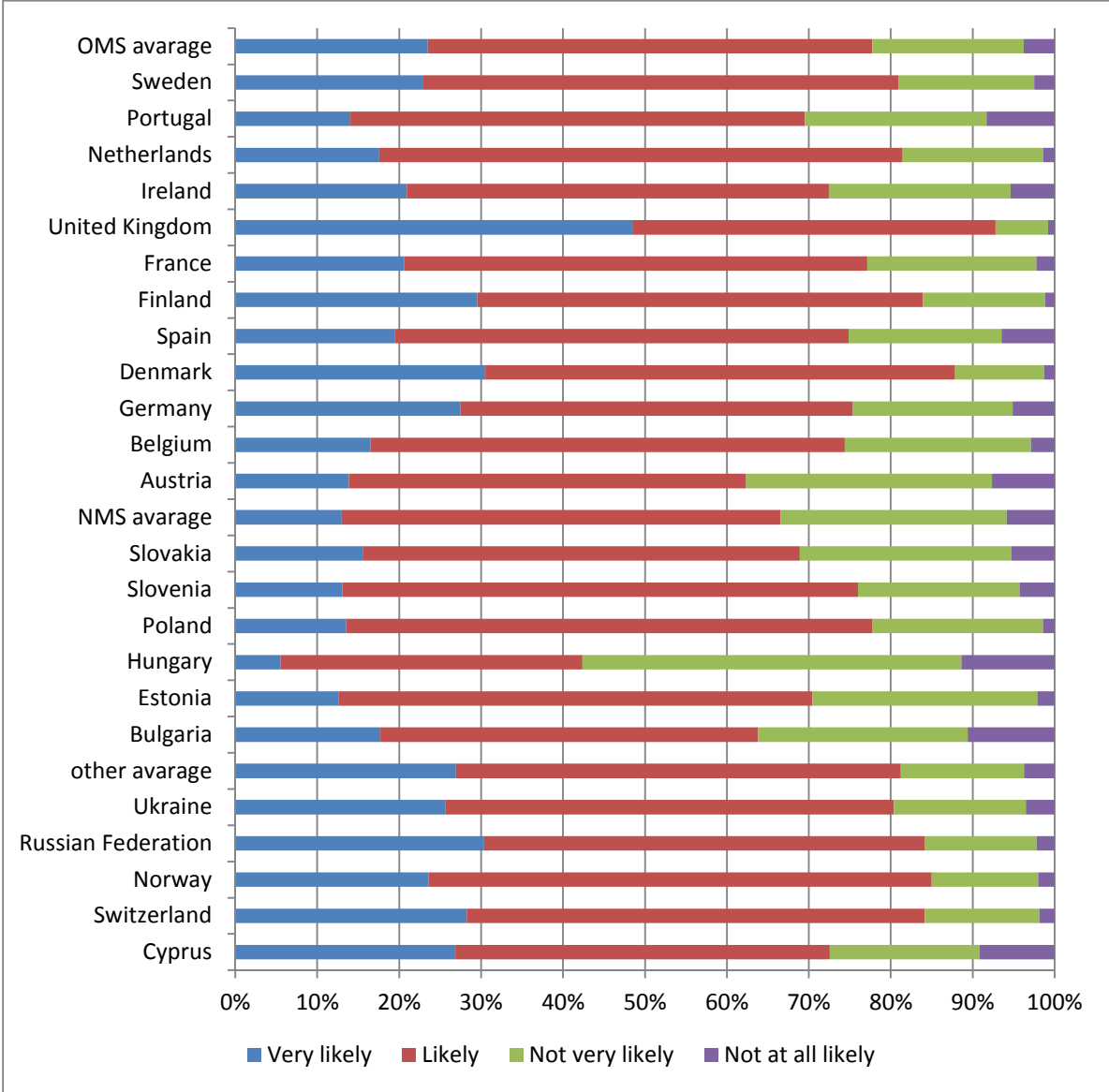
In the following analysis, in order to bring various countries in various surveys systematically together, the authors have chosen to analyse the data from the perspective of the old, the new and non-EU member states. In these categories, various countries appear, yet, we can observe patterns emerging over time. We also see systematic difference between the old and the new member states over time. This is a result of the fact, that some issues (nuclear energy safety, terrorist threat) have entered the public discourse in the NMS with certain time delay. Moving beyond various limitations outlined above, the survey data available offer an interesting view of number of issues connected with perceptions of risks and threats by the citizens of multiple countries within and beyond Europe.

### ***2.1. Individual and Cross-cultural Differences in Risk Perception - Terrorist Attack***

The possibility of terrorist attack and feeling of being personally threaten, surely point to individual differences, however, from our perspective - risk prevention, influencing public opinion and communication between policy makers and citizens – it is important to evaluate cross-country differences. The following analysis (graphs 1. and 2.) shows no significant differences among the old and the new member states of the EU (with some outliers both within the old member states which tend to perceive the terrorist attack as more likely, such as the UK and Denmark, while selected new member states, such as Hungary and Bulgaria, which tend to perceive terrorist attack in their country as rather unlikely). Furthermore, we do not detect any significant change over time.



**Graph 1. Cross-country comparison of subjective likelihood of terrorist attack in Europe in next twelve months (in 2006)**

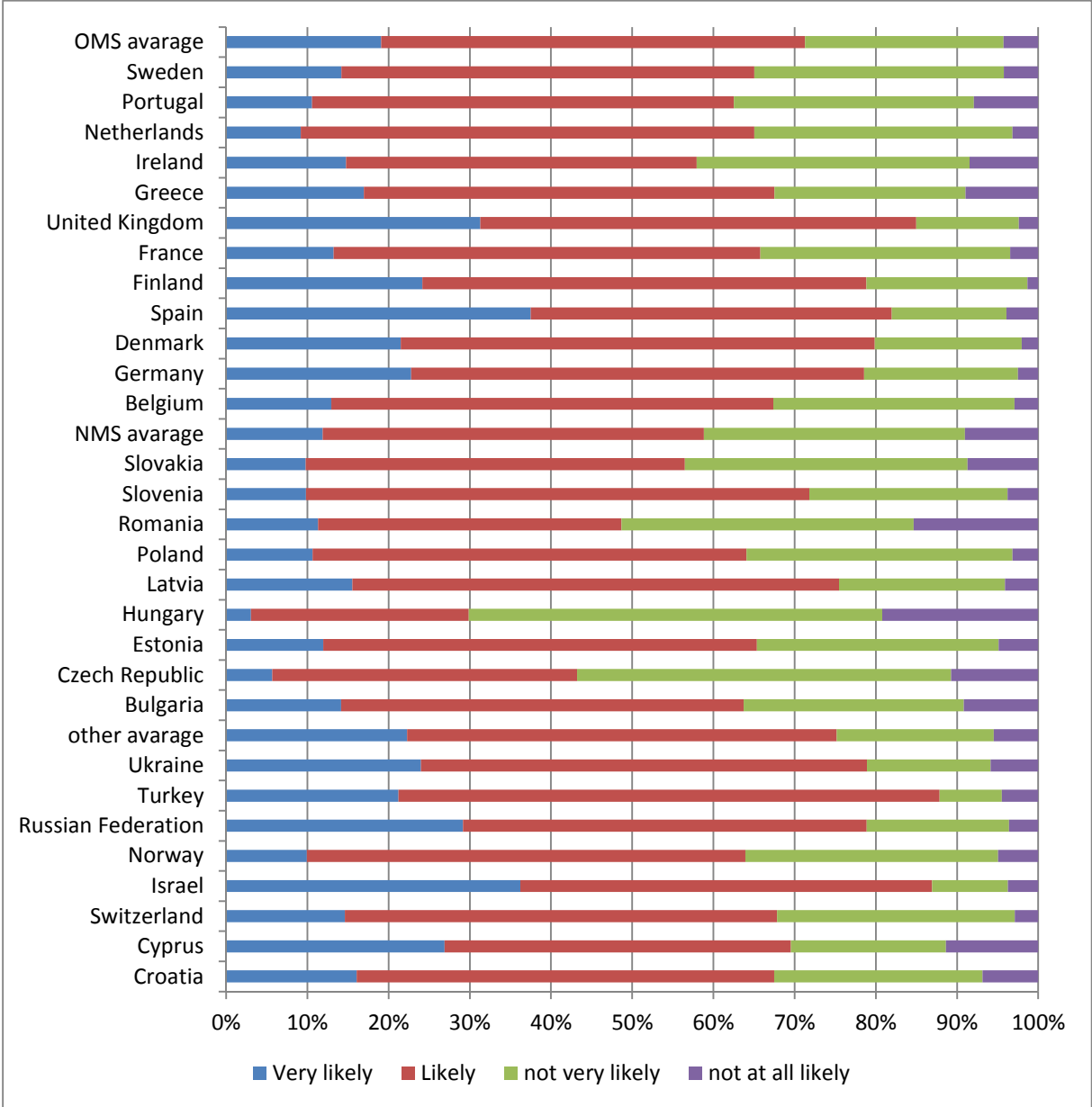


Note: Survey ESS3, the question C11 “Do you think that a terrorist attack somewhere in Europe during the next twelve months is ... Select answer: very likely, likely, not very likely, not at all likely.”

Source: European Value Survey 2006

The analysis also points out the fact, that past experience with terrorist attacks in respondent’s country significantly influences the subjective feeling of threat. The EU countries such as Spain and the United Kingdom therefore show higher subjective feeling of threat among respondents. The presence of countries with past terrorist experience among the old member states (OMS) and their absence among the new member states (NMS) at the time of the survey also explains the difference between these two groups (in particular Spain being an important outlier).

**Graph 2. Cross-country comparison of subjective likelihood of terrorist attack in Europe in next twelve months (in 2008)**



Note: Survey ESS4, Question C11 “Do you think that a terrorist attack somewhere in Europe during the next twelve months is ... Select answer: very likely, likely, not very likely, not at all likely.”

Source: European Value Survey 2008

Among the countries covered by the survey we do not see significant regional differences between the old and the new member states. The subjective risk perception on the aggregate level outlines different country-level patterns, which tend to stay relatively stable over time (important outlier being Spain, where likelihood of terrorist attack grew significantly between 2006 and 2008 survey, both surveys after the terrorist attacks in 2004 case of Spain more attention should be paid to media coverage of these issues in the time between 2006 and 2008 as well as to any important events). Among the EU member states there are countries which exhibit higher terrorist threat perceptions such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, but also Finland, France and Slovenia, and countries who show low terrorist threat perceptions Ireland,

Portugal, Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic. Among the non-EU countries the risk perception is higher (this can be due to selection bias, here we cannot generalize for the non-EU states, also because different countries are included in 2006 and 2008 data) than in the OMS and EU in general. In particular Russian federation, Norway and Switzerland were strongly aware of the terrorist risk in 2006, followed by Israel and Turkey in 2008.

After the terrorist attacks in the USA, Spain and the UK, a number of countries adopted measures for better terrorist threat monitoring and improved the security vis-à-vis terrorism. However, the counter-terrorist measures are not necessarily positively acknowledged by the citizens. We can observe both national and regional differences. Furthermore, in some instances counter-terrorist measures are perceived as threats themselves, in particular in relationship to possible negative effects on personal freedoms.

As stated above, the results presented in graphs 1. and 2. show, that the key factor contributing to threat perception is the past experience of terrorist attack in the respondent's country (in particular in the case of Spain and the UK, outside of the EU Russia represents similar pattern). In these countries, terrorism is seen as more important threat for the country (see table 1). However, the more time passes after a terrorist attack, the less salient the terrorist threats are (we see for example significant drop in Spain from 2005 onwards if compared with 2003 and 2004 data). Comparing the old and the new EU member states, we see that the citizens of the old member states are more sensitive to terrorist threat.

**Table 1. EU Citizens' Perceptions of the Salience of the Terrorist Threat (2003–2007) <sup>1</sup>**

	<i>BE</i>	<i>CZ</i>	<i>DK</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>EE</i>	<i>EL</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>IR</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>CY</i>	<i>LV</i>	<i>LT</i>	<i>HU</i>	<i>LU</i>
2003	4	NA	12	3	NA	4	51	9	2	9	NA	NA	NA	NA	7
2004	6	4	20	4	2	2	59	10	6	17	3	2	3	5	10
2005	5	3	32	4	3	1	31	10	6	11	1	2	1	2	4
2006	6	1	28	2	2	3	36	4	5	9	7	0	1	2	4
2007	4	3	17	11	1	2	37	6	4	7	2	0	1	1	3
Avg. <sup>2</sup>	5	3	21	5	2	2	43	8	5	11	3	1	2	3	6
	<i>MT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>PT</i>	<i>SL</i>	<i>SK</i>	<i>FI</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>BG</i>	<i>RO</i>	<i>EU15</i>	<i>MNS<sup>3</sup></i>	<i>EU25<sup>4</sup></i>
2003	NA	4	4	NA	3	NA	NA	2	3	17	NA	NA	12	NA	NA
2004	2	12	5	6	4	3	4	5	6	28	5	4	18	5	16
2005	2	40	3	3	1	2	5	5	6	34	5	4	16	3	14
2006	1	19	2	3	2	2	2	3	5	17	5	4	11	2	10
2007	1	9	9	2	2	1	5	1	2	17	1	2	9	2	7
Avg.	2	17	5	4	2	2	4	3	4	23	4	4	13	3	12

Notes: The numbers are per cent. Sources: Eurobarometer surveys no. 60 (2003), no. 62 (2004), no. 64 (2005), no. 66 (2006), no. 68 (2007). Quoted after Bureš 2010: 77.

<sup>1</sup> For 2003–2007 periods, the exact question was: “What do you think are the two most important issues facing (OUR COUNTRY) at the moment?” The answers indicate the percentage of people who named “terrorism” as one of the two most important issues facing their country (from ten items).

<sup>2</sup> Five/four years average

<sup>3</sup> Only the 2007 data includes figures for Rumania and Bulgaria in EU and New Members States (NMSs) totals.

<sup>4</sup> EU27 data for 2007.

An important question also remains; to what extent does media attention and coverage to this topic affect feeling of threat. Authors, such as Bureš point out to the evolution of emergency discourse after the 9/11 attacks. According to this discourse, the majority of counterterrorism measures adopted after 9/11 in the context of the Action Plan are in fact multi-purpose legislation, which failed to gather sufficient support among

European citizens before 9/11, several scholars have argued that the terrorist threat has been exaggerated for instrumental and strategic reasons (Bureš 2010). Hence, the subsequent research on the link between media and risk perception will contribute to better understanding of the development of risk perception and the impact of various measures and of their communication by decision-makers to the citizen's via media on the levels of subjective risk perception.

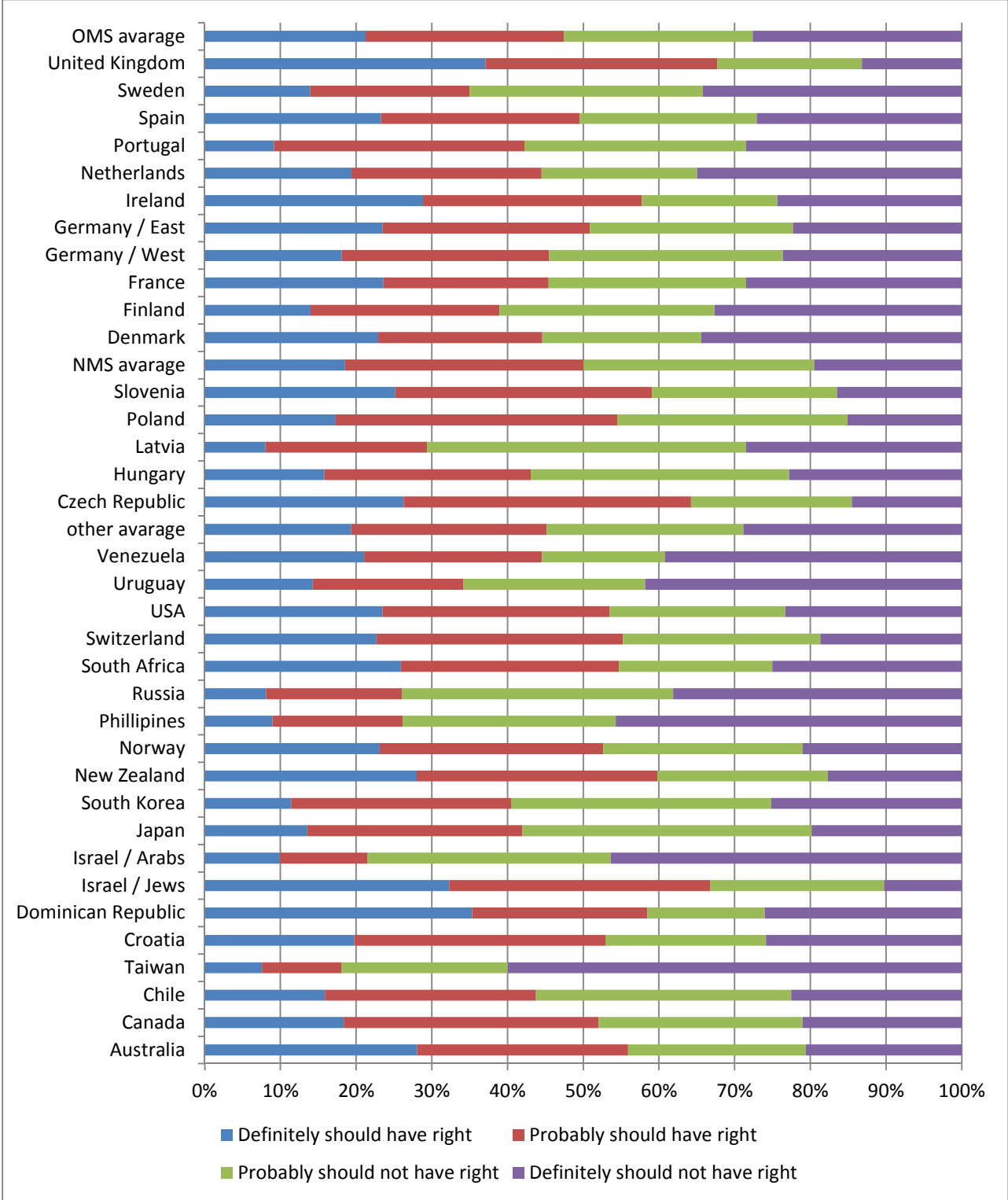
There is little doubt that since 9/11 some politicians and in particular Justice and Home Affairs ministers have reacted, and in part also contributed, whether deliberately or unintentionally, to public anxiety about terrorism through their public communication and legislative initiatives. The creation of an emergency discourse at home and in Europe has allowed them in some instances to bend legal constraints and political opposition to measures that expand the resources and competences of law-enforcement services.

## ***2.2. Individual and Cross-cultural Differences in Attitudes to Security Measures***

After analysing attitudes and perceptions of risks related to terrorist attacks, we will now turn to attitudes towards security measures. The analyses in this part will be based on combining ISSP survey data and Eurobarometer data from the years 2003, 2005 and 2006. We will analyse cross-national differences concentrating on the old and the new EU member states as well as on non-EU states which were covered by the survey. Additionally we will also look at the gender differences within the countries included in the surveys. The goal of this part is to demonstrate, that the acceptance of the security measures varies cross-culturally.

As the graph 3 shows, there are no significant regional differences among the old and the new member states of the EU and in the non-EU states. Yet, the graph also provides evidence of cross-cultural differences across the countries under study. Countries, where more than half of the respondents support detaining people (combining answers to definitely should have right, probably should have right) are the UK, the Czech Republic, Norway, the USA, New Zealand, and the Jewish citizens of Israel. Countries where the support for the detention of people is the lowest are Sweden, Portugal, Finland, Latvia, Russia, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Gender differences exist on the country level, women are generally more strongly supporting the right of the authorities to detain people, and however, these differences are rather marginal and to a large degree copy the cross-cultural differences.

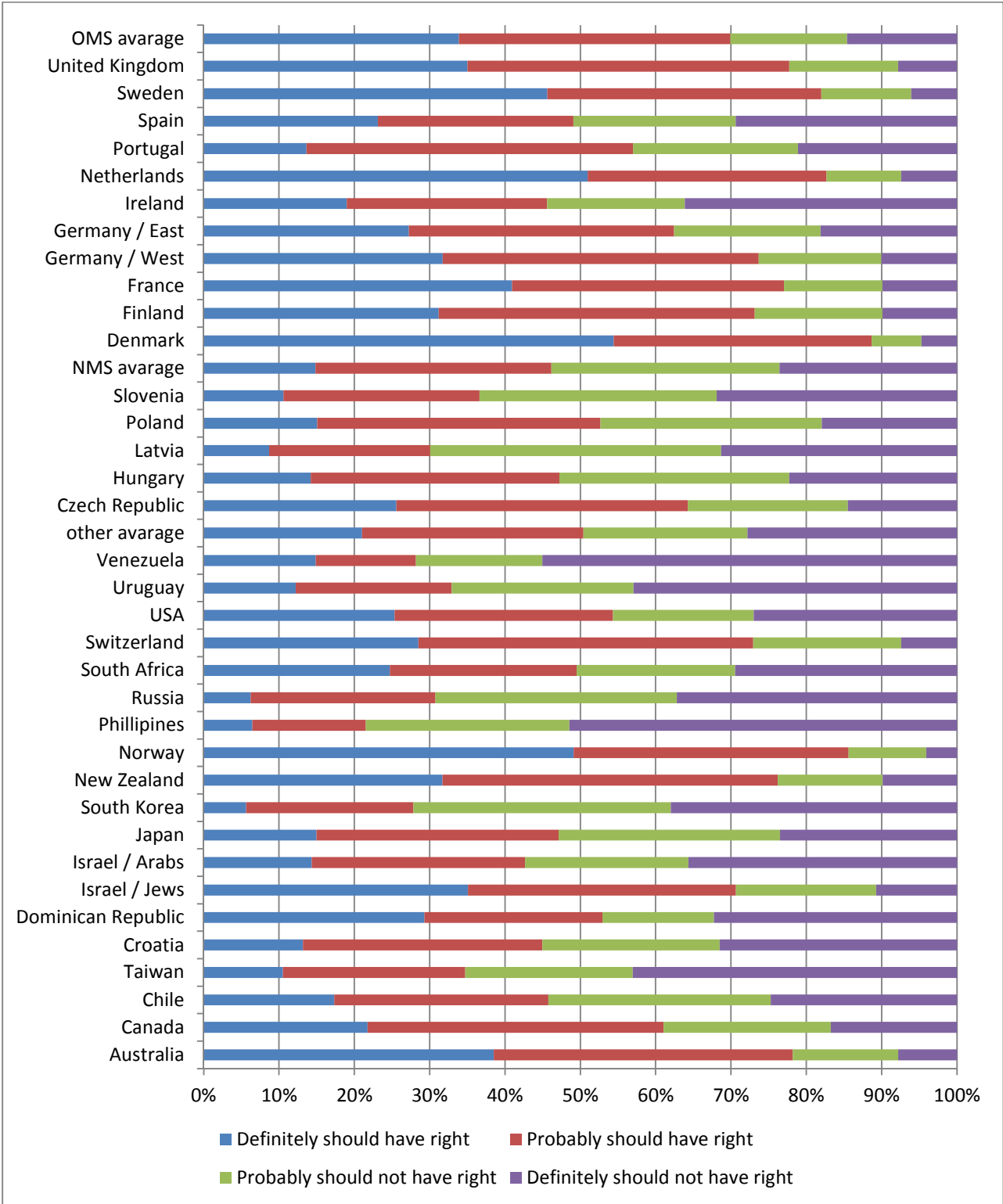
**Graph 3. Authorities should have the right to detain people for as long as they want**



Note: Question 9a “Suppose the government suspected that a terrorist act was about to happen. Do you think the authorities should have the right to...detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial? Select answer: Definitely should have right, Probably should have right, Probably should not have right, Definitely should not have right.”

Source: ISSP 2006

**Graph 4. Authorities should have the right to tap people’s phone conversations**

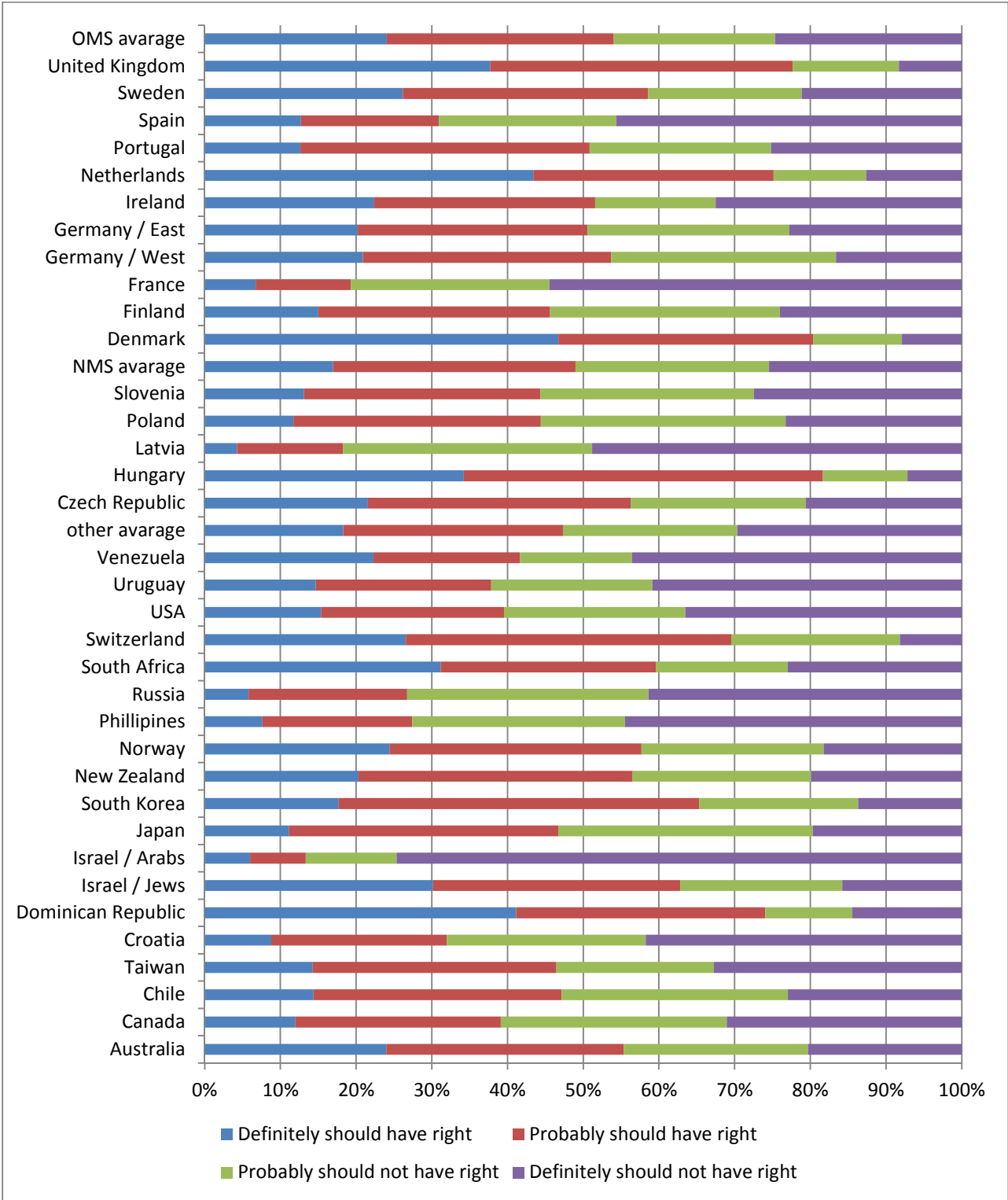


Note: Question 9b “Suppose the government suspected that a terrorist act was about to happen. Do you think the authorities should have the right to...tap people’s telephone conversations? Select answer: Definitely should have right, Probably should have right, Probably should not have right, Definitely should not have right.”  
 Source: ISSP 2006

In terms of the right of authorities to tap people's phone, we see significant differences between the old and the new EU member states, while the old member states average reaches approximately 70 per cent, the average for the new EU member states lies by 46 per cent. Among the old member states, the publics in the Netherlands and Sweden are most strongly supporting the right of the authorities to use this measure, while the publics in Ireland and Spain support this measure the least. Among the new member states, the strongest positive pattern is found in the Czech Republic and Poland, while the weakest can be detected among the Slovenian population. The support for this measure among the population of the non-EU countries varies; the regional average is at 50 per cent. The most positive pattern is found among the population of Australia and Norway as well as among the Jewish population of Israel. The weakest support for the measure is among the populations of the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan. The analyses of the gender differences did not uncover any significant differences among the analysed countries.

The analysis of the next question, regarding the right of the authorities to stop and search people at random on the streets, no significant differences are detected among the old and the new member states, nor among the EU and non-EU countries. The outlier from the general pattern are the United Kingdom, Denmark, the Netherlands, Hungary and the Dominican Republic, whose populations are more prone to support the right of the authorities to stop and search people in the street under terrorist suspicion. On the contrary, the populations of Spain, France, Latvia and Israeli Arabs show strong opposition to this measure. No significant differences have been detected among man and women in the countries covered by the survey.

**Graph 5. Authorities should have the right to stop and search people in the street at random**



Note: Question 9c “Suppose the government suspected that a terrorist act was about to happen. Do you think the authorities should have the right to...stop and search people in the street at random? Select answer: Definitely should have right, Probably should have right, Probably should not have right, Definitely should not have right.”

Source: ISSP 2006



To summarize the analysis of the ISSP data (graphs 3, 4 and 5) we see, that within the EU the general acceptance of detention as well as monitoring is rather high (answers definitely should have and probably should have). The cross cultural differences between the old and the new EU member states are rather not significant. We find more sizable difference among the old and the new member state in the attitudes to personal searches. However, without further insight these are hard to be interpreted at this point. As Pavone points out, „the problem wasn't about being monitored but about being interpreted“ (Pavone 2008). These data present an interesting basis for future more in-depth analysis which will concentrate on alternative socio-demographic factors as well as on the underlining cross-cultural differences.

Other surveys such as Eurobarometer make direct link between oversight for counter-terrorism purposes and personal freedoms, and offer a more nuanced attitudes on acceptance of security measures are provided. The 2003 Eurobarometer data show that the acceptance of internet and telephone monitoring as tools in the fight against international terrorism, and points to similar cross-national patterns as well as overarching support for both measures. In terms of internet monitoring over 73 per cent of EU respondents are in favour, and almost 80 per cent respondents demonstrate positive attitudes to telephone monitoring as counter-terrorism measure. The strongest proponents of internet monitoring are in Greece and Finland; the strongest opponents of telephone monitoring are in the Northern Ireland, Finland and Austria. The least in favour of the internet as well as telephone monitoring are respondents from the Luxembourg, Italy, Belgium and of the Western part of Germany. No significant gender differences were found on this question. The obvious weakness of these data lays in the fact, that they only cover the EU member countries at the given time.

In the 2005 Eurobarometer survey and including both the old and the new EU member states, respondents were asked about their attitudes on the right of the authorities to access private sector databases as a tool against organized crime. Unlike in the previous questions regarding the internet and telephone monitoring or the search on the streets, most respondents are not personally affected by these measures. Therefore, the acceptance of this measures ought to be seen more generally as giving the state the right to cross the boundaries of private ownership for public good (in fight against terrorism). We find no significant differences among the old and the new member states. The average for both the old and the new member states is close to or at 80 percent. The strongest proponents of this measure are the populations of Malta, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus. The least support for this tool is found among the populations of Estonia, the Czech Republic and Greece (however still at around 70 percent). No significant gender differences were found among the countries covered by this survey. Like in the previous questions, women are generally more accepting of the measures; however the cross/cultural differences are stronger than the gender differences within the countries under study.

### ***2.3. Conclusions***

In this part we have demonstrated that in general EU as well as non-EU populations are rather accepting of various counter-terrorism measures. The main intervening variable here is the trust of the citizens, that the governments are making the right decision on the topic. One of

the negative intervening issues related to acceptance of antiterrorism laws, however, is their poor implementation. Polish author Filip Jasiński mentions the European Commission Report (Jasiński 2005), which states that the laws that have been enforced are not used enough. He gives several reasons for this: there are not enough educated people who would impose the laws; people are not keen on taking advantage of new instruments provided by the EU; and, finally, there is a lack of awareness of the importance of being open to new solutions as well as obligations. The majority of these allegations actually concern 'old' Member States since the 'new' ones agreed in the accession treaty to implement framework decisions.

Another weak point in counterterrorism policy is the creation of many forums operating from within and outside the EU, which do not act in a compatible way. Even though Europol is well capable of analysing intelligence data, it has serious problems with the collection of data. Europol does not have its own independent source of intelligence information, so it must rely on access from other open sources. The main responsibility in collecting and analysing data remains within the hands of the national services. Thus, providing intelligence data for Europol is an obligation which the agencies are unwilling to fulfil.

Furthermore, Statewatch – an organization which monitors states and civil liberties in Europe, is highly critical of antiterrorist measures taken by the EU. In a report evaluating antiterrorist measures proposed after the Madrid attacks, Statewatch charges that many inappropriate laws unrelated to terrorism had been adopted. Moreover, they violate personal data protection law. And last but not least, the asymmetry in EU-US relations: The EU is suspicious of sharing information between different bodies, because the reliability of information depends on the body which provides it – on whether it is a judicature, an intelligence service, or the police. Additionally, Americans want to administer the processes of data analysis, despite the fact that the information that they provide has a personal, not a strategic character, therefore discouraging cooperation. The European role is only to gather such information. The most intensive EU-US contacts are in the field of intelligence services.

In terms of achievements, four bodies (Europol, Eurojust, Frontex, and Situation Centre) are involved in combating terrorism. Moreover, it is evident on a daily level that border infrastructures are better protected and that air security has improved in the last few years. On a global scale, it is clear that states have intensified their cooperation with the United Nations (UN).

With the formation of The Hague Program and the expansion of Europol in 2004 and 2005 came the first comprehensive attempt by the Council and Commission to develop regular reports on the threat of terrorism to Europe. Europol was charged with issuing regular reports on the threats of terrorism to the EU. In 2005, Europol had a significant impact in strengthening internal security by breaking up a European network of human smugglers (52 arrests) as well as a network of child pornographers, and was involved in 20 investigations concerning Islamist terrorism. These reports have been developed along with member-state cooperation and are based on figures of arrests, convictions and investigations within each member-state. While certain member-states have refrained from submitting all of the

information requested of them by Europol, the reports nevertheless remain an integral part in determining current trends concerning terrorism in the Union. Initial reports in 2007 and 2008 showed how the arrest rates of terrorism suspects had rapidly risen in relation to previous years. In 2007, 1,044 arrests of terrorism suspects were made, a 48% increase since 2006. 2008 also witnessed a large increase in terrorism related arrests compared to 2006 and prior years with 1,009 terror-related arrests. Interviews and surveys made by Europol in member states reported that new legislation regarding data sharing and cross-border cooperation had improved the ability of police forces to pursue leads and make arrests.

### ***3. Qualitative Comparative Study***

The analysis of quantitative data offered important insights into and general overview of citizens' perceptions and attitudes toward risk and security, conditionality of these, as well as attitudes to the various trade-offs, as demonstrated on the tensions between freedom, privacy and security. Given the limited availability of relevant current data, alternative strategy is outlined in the conclusions to obtain own data directly related to research needs of the SECONOMICS project. The reason for choosing the media analyses are that communication channels and communication patterns between policy makers, stake holders and citizens in the area of security and risk is currently under-researched, and media offer a good basis for comparative analysis on the topic. Identification of effective channels and patterns of communication and risk prevention for relevant target groups will thus provide an important scientific and practical contribution to the field.

Based on series of consultations, three current media salient themes were identified as relevant for comparative qualitative analysis (3D body scanner, Stuxnet and CCTV camera systems). Relevant articles from period between January 2010 and April 2013, i.e. 40 months were deemed satisfactory to cover the recent development in the area. Criteria for country selection included EU member states (both new and old, with priority given to countries relevant to case study partners – the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, the UK) as well as non-EU member states important in either shaping the global discussions on the selected issues (the USA) or key in providing relevant cultural diversity (Mexico and Turkey). Additionally, four English language expert security blogs were selected to supplement information on communication patterns for general population with those among and towards the security expert community.

Upon identification of relevant topics, time frame and countries, comprehensive analytical framework was prepared, structure and content of the training for country experts elaborated, relevant media for each country identified (two main quality press dailies with highest circulation, one left-leaning and one right-leaning per country), and most importantly to junior researchers were recruited and trained in using Atlas.ti program for qualitative analysis. Three coding schemes (one per each topic - 3D body scanner, Stuxnet, and CCTV cameras) were elaborated by the Prague SECONOMICS team, tested and finalized during several rounds of pre-test on all selected countries. The role of the coding scheme as a research tool is twofold – first, it provides structure and guidelines for the analysis, and second, it ensures comparability of the individual national reports.

Important measure for tool validity was intercoder reliability test; this was performed daily during the practical part of the Prague Graduate School for Qualitative Comparative Analysis<sup>5</sup>. The intercoder reliability oscillated between 80 and 90%, which from a methodological perspective is an excellent result in international and multicultural comparative research.

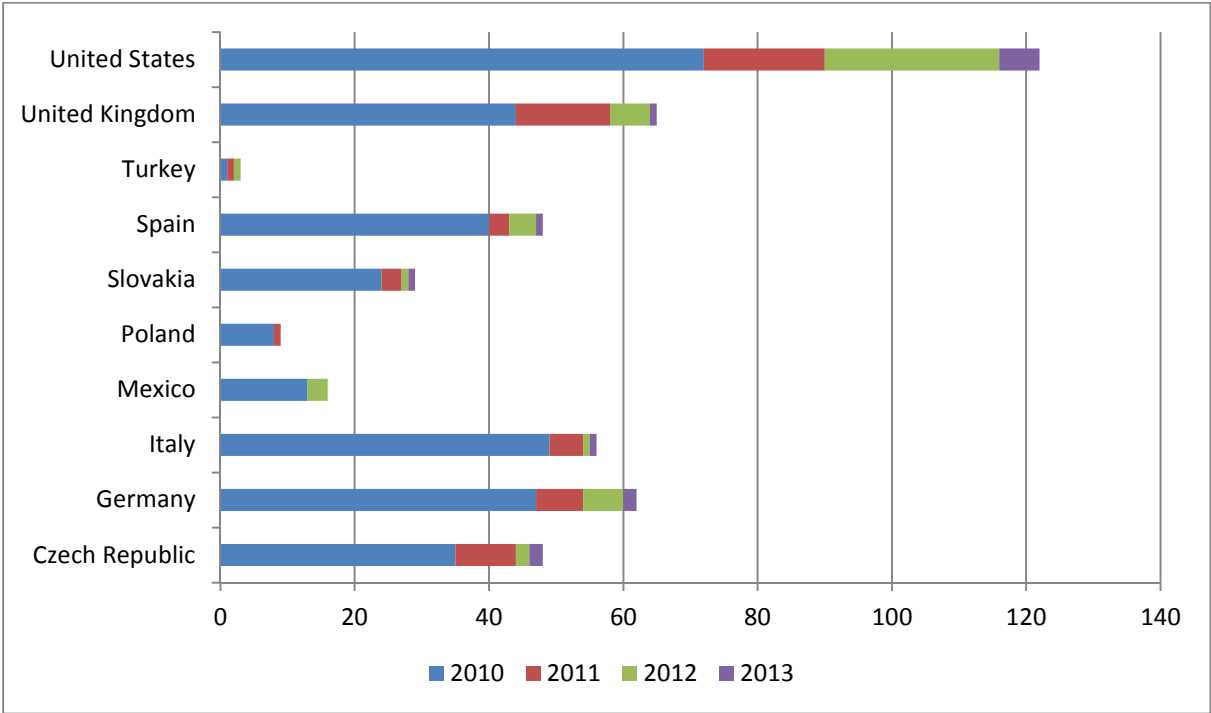
Our main task was to conceptualise security and risk as a social phenomenon and to analyse their mutual interplay in public opinion and attitudes; and to identify policy interactions between policy makers, industry (stake holders) and citizens (consumers). We have used the method of comparative qualitative analysis as a tool for obtaining qualitative data for comparative analysis of risk and security related discourses and patterns of communication. This tool enabled us to identify effective channels and patterns of communication and risk prevention for relevant target groups, but also generate unique corpus of comparative data on nine countries over the period of forty month. The interim product is a corpus of almost 3200 articles related to issues of 3D body scanner, Stuxnet, and CCTV camera systems.

All articles were selected from period between January 2010 and April 2013, from two most circulated quality dailies in the following countries: the old and the new EU member states the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, the UK; as well as non-EU member states (the USA, Turkey, Mexico). The twenty national newspapers (for details see Appendix 1.) contributed over 2800 articles for the given period, with expert blogs contributing approximately 400 articles. In all countries one left-wing and one right-wing media was selected. In Spanish case it was one national and one Catalanian daily was selected, because the case study on public transportation is provided in Barcelona. In the following figures we offer the first comparative preview into the saliency of the three selected issues in the ten countries over time.

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<sup>5</sup> Prague Graduate School in Comparative Qualitative Analysis 2013 was held in May 2013 in Prague.

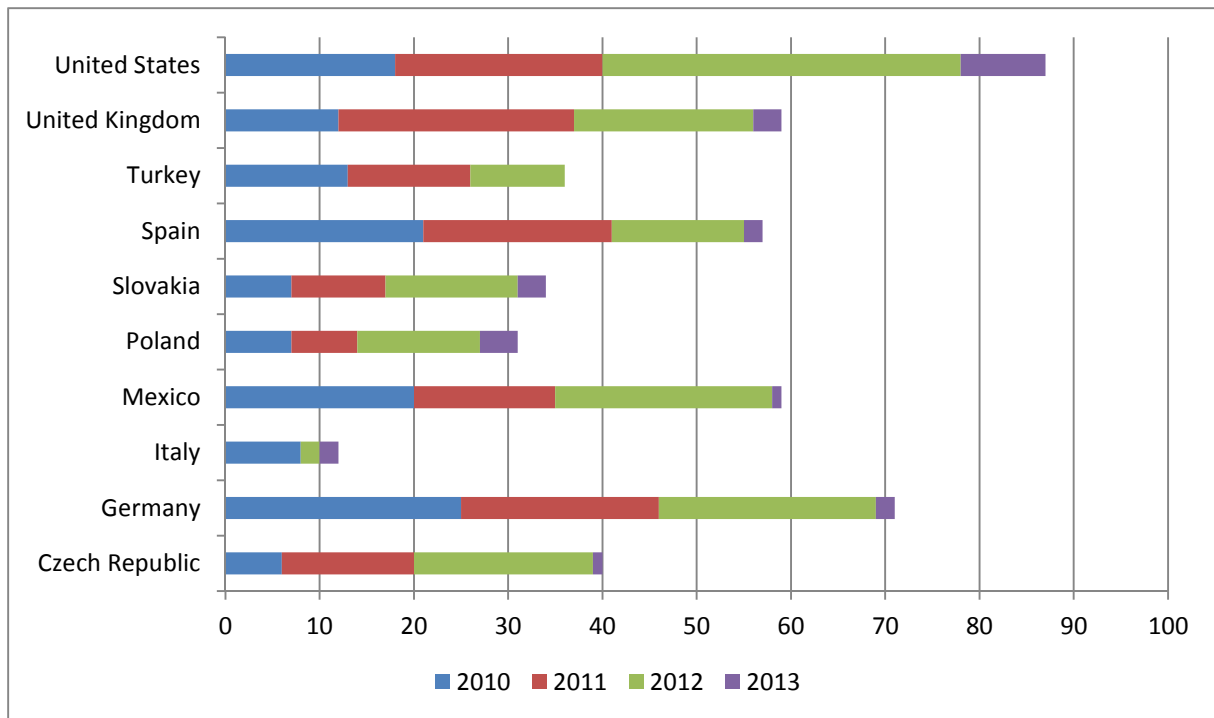
**Graph 6. The Salience of the 3D body scanner issue in the media between 2010 and 2013 (in N= number of articles)**



Source: SECONOMICS team, Prague

The corpus of articles on 3D body scanner comprises almost 500 articles. As the figure one demonstrates, most articles in this sample were identified in the US media, followed by the UK and Germany. We can say, that the issue of 3D body scanner was most salient in these three countries and least salient in Turkey, Poland and Mexico. Furthermore, the figure one also demonstrates that 3D body scanners were most salient in 2010 (333 articles), in the period when this technology started to be used for security control at the airports, and is gradually becoming less salient over time (14 articles in total for the first four months of 2013).

**Graph 7. The Salience of the Stuxnet issue in the media between 2010 and 2013 (in N= number of articles)**



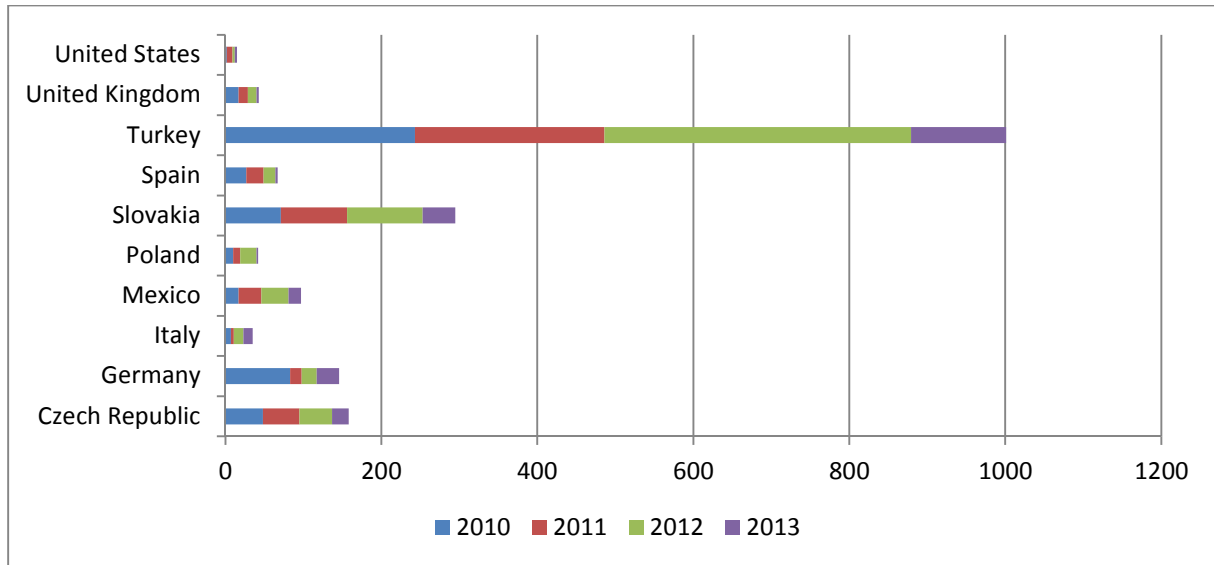
Source: SECONOMICS team, Prague

The corpus of articles on Stuxnet comprises also almost 500 articles. As the figure seven demonstrates, most articles in this sample were identified in the US media, followed by Germany, Mexico and the UK. We can say that the issue of Stuxnet was most salient in these four countries and least salient in Italy, Poland and Slovakia. Furthermore, the figure one also demonstrates that Stuxnet issue was most salient in 2012 (175 articles) and is rather stable over time, with a slight drop in salience in 2013 (27 articles in total for the first four months of 2013).

The corpus of articles on CCTV cameras (graph 8) is significantly larger than the previous two, and comprises also almost 1900 articles. Furthermore, in the figure three Turkey can be clearly identified as an outlier, as it contributes 1000 articles to the overall sample. The saliency of the CCTV cameras in Turkish media is caused by the frequent use of CCTV cameras, as well as its utilization by police during investigation. Nonetheless, excluding Turkey, CCTV cameras would still remain the most salient issues. As the figure three demonstrates, most articles in this sample were identified in Turkish media, followed by Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Germany. At this place, it is also important to note, that the selection concentrated on articles referring to the use of CCTV in public transport. This restriction was applied to eliminate possible inflation of the sample by articles related to the general use of CCTV cameras in criminal investigation. In figure three we also see, that the issue was least salient in the US, Italy, Poland and the UK. Furthermore, the figure three also demonstrates that the saliency of the CCTV camera issue is relatively stable over time with a subtle growth in 2013 (253 articles, or 131 excluding Turkey for the first four months of 2013).

**Graph 8. The Saliency of the CCTV camera issue in the media between 2010 and 2013**

(in N= number of articles)



Source: SECONOMICS team, Prague

To summarize, this initial comparative analysis provides an interesting insights into the saliency of the three selected issues over time and across the ten selected countries. For a comparison, the saliency of the three issues in expert blogs differs. Our research shows, that in the four expert blogs, for the period under study, Stuxnet is the most salient issues (274 articles, which is almost 80% of the expert media corpus), followed by 3D body scanner (48 articles) and CCTV cameras (23 articles).

More composite findings will be provided in the national reports (and the expert report<sup>6</sup>) and in the comparative report. These will allow more contextual information – explaining what was going on in the country vis-à-vis security and particularly the three selected topics during the time under study - laws, public debates, incidents, terrorist attacks including documented attempts; provide in-depth descriptive analysis of actors, topics, and justifications over time including fitting quotations; and last but not least analyse the general tendencies - outlining the main discussions on each topic, dominant themes, dominant patterns of interaction, comparing the three topics in terms of intensity, type of debate; as well as the influence of domestic and international context.

### ***3.1. Summary of first qualitative findings***

The focus of the Seconomics project is on the definition and perception of risk and security in different settings: airport security and air travel, critical infrastructure, and urban transport. The findings of our qualitative comparative analysis of media perception on terrorism threats and security measures suggest that how media portray different security risks is dependent on several factors. Past experience with a particular security threat, as well as probability of the country being targeted in the future, account for the main differences in the extent of coverage dedicated to the issue in the domestic media.

<sup>6</sup> The analysis of blogs is not national, but rather international as four English speaking blogs were selected based on their relevance among the security experts

In terms of evaluative frames, the nature of the security risk as well as of the technological measure (3D body scanner, CCTV camera, Stuxnet) play role in framing of the topics. Technologies, viewed as intrusive towards the private or intimate spheres of individuals, receive a more negative coverage even if the particular security risk is perceived as high (especially 3D body scanner). In those cases, alternative, less intrusive technological measures are deemed preferable by the media and by implication by the public, as potential terrorist threats are not perceived as satisfactory tradeoffs against imminent health risks. Thus, security measures themselves may become seen as producing further risks and evaluated negatively in the media and by the public.

The two trends present in the political communication are first presentation of the terrorism threats (in general) and need for security measures (especially 3D body scanner, CCTV cameras – Stuxnet is in part presented as a security measure against Iranian potential nuclear threat, and in part as a cyber-terrorist threat itself, especially as it seems to have been mutated and attacked companies in the US and Western Europe) as external, international issues, which have little relevance for the citizens, as terrorist attack on the country is unlikely (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, to a lesser degree Poland). Within this trend, the coverage is dominated by the actions and opinions of different foreign states, state institutions and politicians on the merits of introducing security measures and on the related rules and regulations which were to safeguard against intrusions of citizens' privacy, and potential health risks. Health, privacy and dignity concerns prevail over security risks (whose probability is seen as low). In case of countries, where the analytical quality of the media is higher (Germany, the UK) other tradeoffs such as costs vs. effectiveness and privacy/freedom vs. security are discussed.

With regards to the volume of coverage, the Stuxnet attacks were in the middle. The issue was presented as foreign or technological news. In most countries, with the exception of Mexico, the analyzed data were mostly informative. As a general rule, the coverage followed international developments and information revealed by foreign newspapers (US and UK). The overall message of the Stuxnet debate focused on three types of security risks: firstly, the extensive scope given to Iran's nuclear programme as a justification for the deployment attack may indicate that the media believed there is a real possibility of a future threat to the Western world's security in the form of Iran's development of a nuclear weapon; secondly, the deployment of new technologies in state cyber warfare; and thirdly, the coverage also indirectly suggested the potential risk of a nuclear or other environmental catastrophe, such as the Chernobyl (1986) or Fukushima (2011), if ever more modern technologies are deployed in state cyber-attacks.

The use of CCTV cameras was the most salient topic in countries, where the probability of terrorist attacks are perceived as low. The coverage was framed mainly in terms of actions and opinions of municipalities, journalists, schools and citizens in relation to the use and installation of CCTV camera systems. The evaluation of the merits of CCTV cameras and acceptance of their introduction depended primarily on the domain that was being monitored,



and did not change much with time. CCTV cameras were very often framed in terms of effective crime prevention, detection and solution, and as such accepted in countries where crime is perceived high risk (Mexico – drug-related crimes, Spain- ETA terrorist threat).

The second trend, found especially in Italy, is usually present in countries where security threat is perceived as imminent and the media debate is dominated by politicians. In the second case, the urgent need for solutions is overemphasized in order to limit (or avoid) a time for reflection. The motivations driving political actors' often emotional appeal to citizens' inherent fears, such as those of *Lega Nord* party, is political saliency of the issues and possible electoral gain. Unlike in the first trend, where terrorism is something external, not immediately threatening citizens of the country, in the second trend, the world is portrayed as full of global risks, to which only modern technology, presented as efficient solution, can provide answer. In this over-simplified portrayal of reality, the facts are less important than emotional appeals, and renouncing privacy and intimacy for security is labeled as a necessity.

The coverage of Stuxnet in Mexico can be seen as falling into the second trend, as unlike any other country in the sample, Mexican media clearly side with Iran, denounce the attackers (identified as the USA), and highlighting Iran's right to sovereignty. In an interesting twist which can be explained by the complexity of the US-Mexican relations, Mexico sees itself as a possible target of similar attacks in the future.

Another good example is the coverage of the CCTV cameras in Poland, where we observe an emerging debate on the need for a comprehensive law which would regulate the use of public and private monitoring systems. However, the debate is not framed in terms of transportation security, but rather in terms of the use of CCTV systems for public and private domain monitoring for the sake of security understood as crime prevention, detection and solution. Here, in some cases the acceptance of security measures, especially lack of complexity is linked by country studies to post-authoritarian path-dependent trends (Poland, Spain, Italy). However, this trend is quite opposite in Germany, where the past experience with totalitarian regime heightens the sensitivity to trade-offs between security and privacy, human dignity and freedom.

### ***Concluding remarks***

The main focus of this paper were citizens 'perceptions and attitudes toward terrorism and security, conditionality of these, as well as attitudes to the various trade-offs, as demonstrated on the tensions between freedom and privacy on one hand and security on the other. We have first concentrated on cross-country comparison of these attitudes in quantitative analysis of surveys related to perception of security threats and acceptance of security measures. Here, the conflict between the degrees of freedom and security, as well as obvious prioritization of security over liberty, is demonstrated in the wide acceptance of counter-terrorism tools. Furthermore, with every terrorist attack the acceptance for wide-range of privacy/liberty curbing measures grows. The problem here is that while the risks are seen as imminent and tangible, the potential threats to freedom and privacy are often too complex for the general population.

In the qualitative comparative analysis, we have concentrated on the key role of media in political communication - both transmitting information and shaping opinions on key security issues (case studies include cyber terrorism as an example of risk and 3D scanner and CCTV camera as an example of security measure, although it was pointed above, that some media framed Stuxnet as a security measure). The main factors shaping the media reporting on terrorism threats and security measures are past experience with a particular security threat, as well as probability of the country being targeted in the future. These factors account for the main differences in the extent of coverage dedicated to the issue in the domestic media.

In this paper, we aimed at filling the existing gap in study of terrorism and security risk, by concentrating on comparison of coverage of transnational issues in media outlets of ten countries. We find that the media landscape is undergoing transformation with growing importance of international context. The example of British and German media shows that the media is shifting from focus on security threats to awareness of possible trade-offs of security measures in terms of health, privacy and freedom. Terrorism and organised crime are increasingly framed as transactional and beyond the scope of nation-states. The public is becoming more sensitive not only of threats but also the costs of security. The media play key role in shaping political communication and public attitudes. The media fulfils its informative and educational functions, and increasingly provide platform for public political discourse, including provision of space for the expression of dissent. The media are also channel for advocacy of political viewpoints (need for regulation, adoption of security measures) and to a significantly lesser degree acting as a 'watchdog' or guardian of freedoms.

To conclude by addressing the dilemma between safety and happiness, posed by James Madison, based on our research, we can say, that not everything which makes us safe makes us happy, and not everything, which makes us happy, makes us safe. Hence while the balance of security and freedom is the crucial task of contemporary governments, the role of critical media as a platform for public political discourse and guardian of freedoms is gaining considerable importance.

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Appendix 1. Analyzed Media per Country

<b>Country</b>	<b>Media</b>
Czech Republic	Mladá fronta Dnes, Právo
Germany	Süddeutsche Zeitung, Franfurter Allgemeine
Great Britain	The Telegraph, The Guardian
Italy	De la Repubblica, Il Giornale
Mexico	La Jordana, La Reforma
Poland	Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita
Slovakia	SME, Pravda
Spain	El Pais, La Vanguardia
Turkey	TIME (ZAMAN), SPOKESMAN (SOZCU)
USA	The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal
Blogs	The Register, HITB, Roger-Wilco, Bemosa

Source: SECONOMICS team, Prague.

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