

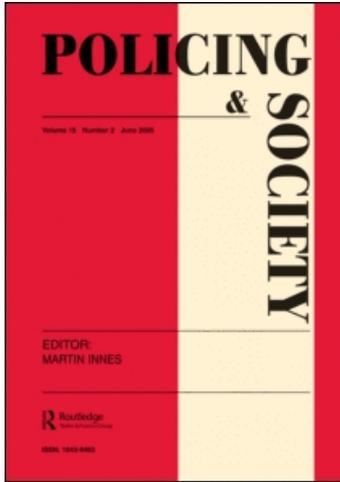
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## Riot management and community relations: policing public disturbances in a Dutch neighbourhood

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This paper presents a case study of the riots in the Dutch neighbourhood of Ondiep (Utrecht) that took place after a police officer shot a local resident with fatal consequences on 11 March 2007. It is based on a study carried out by the Police Academy of The Netherlands and the Tilburg School of Politics and Public Administration (University of Tilburg) and its resulting publication: 'Riots in Ondiep: the onset and engagement of large-scale public disturbances in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Utrecht'. The research group aimed to establish a reconstruction of the events and circumstances of those riots as experienced by the different parties to the events. This paper gives a brief overview of the events as they occurred with a particular focus on the actions of the Utrecht police department and their safety partners. It is argued that a combination of repressive measures and an emphasis on police–community relations prevented the riots from spreading to the general population of Ondiep, by looking at some of the short and long-term actions, tactics and strategies of the Utrecht police.

**Keywords:** community policing; community relations; empathy and enforcement; riot management

### Introduction

On the evening of Sunday 11 March 2007, a police officer in the neighbourhood of Ondiep, Utrecht (the Netherlands) fired a single round at a civilian wielding a knife. The shooting had fatal consequences and became the prelude to riots in the neighbourhood. These riots became a big news item in the Netherlands and received a great deal of attention from the authorities. With the riots in the French banlieues of November 2005 in mind, fear of 'French situations' developed and paved the way for extensive media speculation. However, after one hectic night, the police managed to regain control of the neighbourhood.

Police shootings have, in the past, given way to extensive public disturbances in cities such as Den Bosch (the Graafsewijk, 2000), London (Brixton, 1981), Athens (Exarchia, 2008) and many others. Inquiries following such disturbances often recommended a change from a traditional, repressive policing approach to more relational approaches that are considered legitimate by the communities concerned (e.g. Scarman 1981). The concept of community policing emphasises prevention and

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cooperation with communities (e.g. Friedman 1994, Savage 2007). These examples also illustrate how riots can be started by one group of people and picked up by others, sometimes even spreading to other neighbourhoods and cities.

The process of generalisation and escalation has been the object of numerous studies and, over the past two decades, it has become increasingly clear how the dynamics of intergroup interactions influence this process. More specifically, the Elaborated Social Identity Model (ESIM) has shed new light on the ways in which individually held social identities can come to interact with, or form an overarching group-identity (e.g. Stott and Drury 2000, Stott and Reicher 1998a, 1998b, Stott *et al.* 2008).<sup>1</sup> Stott (2009, p. 2) mentions three ways in which the perception of police legitimacy among crowds can be enhanced from the perspective of ESIM:

- (a) a strategic orientation toward the facilitation of peaceful behaviour within a crowd;
- (b) a graded and information led tactical profile which has a dynamic capacity for achieving dialogue and communication with those within crowds before, during and after the event;
- (3) avoidance of the undifferentiated threat or use of force.

Adang *et al.* (2010) present the Adang/Horowitz<sup>2</sup> escalation model for intergroup conflict that also emphasises the relationship aspect. The model consists of four factors that are necessary for the occurrence of intergroup violence: a tense relationship between two groups, an incident that gives rise to indignation and the perception of violence as a legitimate reaction accompanied by opportunities for violence and solidarisation.<sup>3</sup>

We will use these theoretical insights to analyse events in Ondiep. In this case, our research<sup>4</sup> shows that the riots were visited upon the neighbourhood by outsiders but never carried over to its own residents. This may seem surprising, given the fact that Ondiep is a neighbourhood that had almost all of the social-economic, physical and demographic characteristics of a disadvantaged neighbourhood, similar to others in the Netherlands that had experienced multi-day riots in the past (Mali and Vogel 2010). We will argue, however, that the way in which the riots were managed by the police and their partners and the role that community relations played in their strategy prevented generalisation and escalation of the riots. Although, this paper is focused on the single case study of Ondiep, some comparisons will be made with other riots that took place under similar circumstances, especially riots that took place in 2000 in Den Bosch, a city in the south of the Netherlands, because these riots served as an explicit reference point for authorities in Utrecht. By doing so, we aim to point out some of the differences between the cases to help understand the differences in outcomes.

In order to present the case as clearly as possible, we will provide a three-level frame of analysis, which is based on three different 'histories': a structural history, which consists mainly of long-term developments in the structural aspects of the neighbourhood; a relational history, which concerns the development of relations between the various parties involved in the mid to long-term; and an operational history, which deals with the day-to-day interactions in the short-term. This framework helps to identify the way in which actions, tactics and strategies used by the authorities, and especially the police, have influenced developments and prevented further escalation of the public disturbances in Ondiep. In our analysis we will focus specifically on five situations that had the potential for escalation and that represented clear tests of police community relations.

The narratives provided by the respondents, the 'histories', are not restricted to the events themselves and may encompass periods of time lasting from days to months, or even years. We believe it is important to rely on the interpretations of the respondents to establish which events are actually and currently relevant rather than restricting ourselves to events immediately preceding the shooting that might provide the most obvious link.

### *A three-level frame of analysis*

Before we move on to other issues, a somewhat more elaborate explanation of the three-level frame of analysis may be warranted. As was stated above, to describe the situation in Ondiep, we distinguish between three different 'histories': a long-term history with an emphasis on the structural aspects of the neighbourhood, i.e. aspects that define a neighbourhood in terms of social-economic, physical and demographic terms; a middle to long (mid-long) term history that emphasises the development of social relationships in a neighbourhood; and a short-term history concerning day-to-day (inter)actions and events, i.e. the operational level.<sup>5</sup> These histories can vary in time span from days to decades, however, the latter is mainly related to the structural developments in the neighbourhood. A quantitative analysis by Mali and Vogel (2010) of the structural factors showed that the social-economic, physical and demographic variables of the neighbourhood were highly congruent with those of other Dutch neighbourhoods that had previously been affected by riots lasting several days, suggesting that Ondiep does show considerable potential for conflict on a structural level. This is an important comparison and one of the main reasons why we became interested to find out why such potential did not translate to more severe riots. However, in this paper the structural level will function mostly as a setting for our further analysis. We will, in fact, focus mainly on the management of the riot itself, and on the short and mid-long-term histories, since the police have very limited to no influence over the long-term structural factors. These are matters that are more reliant on larger, political or societal movements, which go beyond the grasp of police-action and, consequently, this paper. Nonetheless, we do not wish to disregard the structural level because it does affect the context of the situation and the social relations between the various groups. With regard to the relational and operational perspectives, the latter is most clearly represented in the analysis of the events that follows. However, the fact that we create these distinctions does not mean that the different levels of analysis are entirely separated in practice. In fact, a large measure of complexity in the analysis of riots is due to the very interaction between these levels. The operational (short-term) level of analysis is most directly relevant to an analysis of the way in which riots are managed. This does not mean, however, that actions at the operational level are without a relational effect. Even in the short-term, actions and events carry meaning depending on their context, (manner of) execution and the actors involved.

As stated before, the way in which we interpret events is in line with the views of the ESIM. This model, which suggests that the identities of individual crowd members are affected by the interaction with an out-group (Stott and Reicher 1998a, 1998b), shows that the way in which actions are interpreted during a riot-situation can have serious implications for the continued interaction. Drury *et al.* (2003, p. 1481) propose that,

Since the out-group in question is typically the police, any adequate explanation of crowd conflict must include not only the actions of crowd participants themselves, but also those of the police.

They go on to stress that where out-group actions are perceived to be indiscriminate by the in-group, such an in-group can come to see itself as being increasingly homogeneous. The consequences of this mechanism are fairly obvious where it comes to crowd-formation during riots. Repressive action by riot-police can, after all, be most indiscriminate, but so can more common measures such as random stop and searches. Waddington *et al.* (2009, p. 18) warn against the effects of such indiscriminate 'dragnet' approaches, which they identify as one of the causes of the Brixton riots. Nevertheless, the workings of this mechanism can be avoided when actions are directed with a certain precision and carried out within a well-defined (and well communicated) strategy. Reicher *et al.* (2007, p. 410) point out that even those actions taken for the interest of the crowd will be ineffective or counter-productive unless such intentions are well communicated, thus influencing the perception of the actions among the crowd. This will be illustrated by highlighting certain actions of the Utrecht police during the course of events. In the remainder of this paper we will first detail the methodology employed in the study. Our three-level analysis will start by examining the impact of the structural aspects of riots. Next, the relational aspects will be dealt with by looking at the way in which the police and civilians evaluate, approach and interpret their relationship. Both anecdotes and police statistics are used to exemplify the nature and strength of this relationship. The actual test of the relationship takes place at the third level, in which the management of the riots through operational actions is examined. The events will be described and five moments will be highlighted that represent as many tests of the relational strength between the parties. In other words, we will analyse the management of the riots from a relational perspective. The paper ends with our conclusions.

## Methodology

The qualitative study at hand can most aptly be described as a single case study (e.g. Yin 2009). The case study method was considered to be most suitable approach for the social-historical approach that was adopted to analyse the events, using the process of triangulation to gather the relevant data and achieve a thick description of the way in which various parties had experienced the disturbances and of the relations between the neighbourhood and the authorities. In this case, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were held with various parties to the events, official documents and media-reports were analysed and quantitative and observational analyses of the neighbourhood were carried out.

Bagguley and Hussain (2008, p. 31) point out that: '[riots]' very character as essentially contested events should be the object of analysis, rather than trying to impose some objective consensus about what really happened'. Stott and Drury (2000, p. 250) seemingly concur in the sense that disagreement regarding the context of crowd events may be inherent to conflict itself, as are attempts to define the context. Their own notion of consensus, 'operationalised in terms of agreement between different sources' (2000, p. 252) corresponds with the way in which this research was approached. Diverging accounts will therefore clearly be presented as such, including appropriate references.

Respondents were selected on the basis of the role they played in the neighbourhood in general and specifically during the week of the riots. With respect to the residents of Ondiep this initially meant that the respondents were representatives of the neighbourhood committee that cooperated with the authorities. Using the snowball effect, other respondents were interviewed, including local business owners, who were assumed to have a more permanent and (socially) central position in the neighbourhood than most residents. Non-resident respondents, or professionals, included police officers, employees of the municipality, a youth worker and a representative of the local housing corporation. Following the advice of the youth worker, a number of youths were also approached on the street to ask for their opinions. It should, nonetheless, be noted that one party to the events, namely the people who actively participated in the riots, was not included in this study. Nor did we have the opportunity to conduct a fully representative number of interviews with the residents of Ondiep. However, we do feel that this drawback is balanced by the choice to interview respondents who held central positions in the neighbourhood and were actively engaged with and connected to its residents. As such, they were able to give a fair representation of the various sub-groups that make up the neighbourhood of Ondiep. In total, approximately<sup>6</sup> 30 different people were interviewed, some of whom on more than one occasion. Additionally, five former district chiefs of police were interviewed to gain some insight into the development of policing in the neighbourhood from a police perspective. All researchers were given a list of six topics<sup>7</sup> that were to be explored during the interviews to be able to compare and contrast the answers across the different groups of respondents. These topics provided guidelines for the interviews but were not intended as an exhaustive list of questions, nor was there a strict order to the way in which the topics were supposed to be addressed. The list was mainly intended to ensure a possibility for comparison and coordination between the researchers that covered a large range of potentially important variables.

Documents by the police, including incident reports of the neighbourhood over the past years, and the municipal file on the riots, were also analysed. Furthermore, a media-analysis was performed by Van Hulst and Siesling (2010), which contributed to a more representative picture of the overall response to the events of the riots. The analysis was based on a substantial selection of local, regional and national newspapers and showed both the quantity of news-items related to the riots, as well as the way in which such reports were framed.

### **Ondiep: structural aspects of the neighbourhood**

Ondiep is one of the 14 neighbourhoods<sup>8</sup> in the larger area of Utrecht-Northwest, home to over 42,000 residents. Ondiep itself is inhabited by more than 6500 people, living mainly in low-end housing and consisting mostly of family residences. The neighbourhood was largely constructed between 1900 and 1940. From the start it was home to groups of relatively low social-economic standing. From the end of the 1960's onwards, Ondiep featured (to varying extents) certain criteria that identify it as a transitional zone with a highly dynamic demographic make-up. To many people the neighbourhood has become a stepping stone to better accommodations.

When asked to describe Ondiep as a neighbourhood, almost every respondent mentions its working-class background, which some believe to be 'dying'.

Media-analysis by Hulst and Siesling (2010) shows similar reporting and makes mention of the fact that a large part of the old neighbourhood is being renovated, which means that more affordable, traditional housing is being replaced by apartments mostly intended for a starter's market. Many inhabitants of Ondiep have family ties in the neighbourhood and are reported to (prefer to) live there 'from the cradle to the grave'. More recently, however, students, starters and (second/third generation) immigrants have also started moving into the neighbourhood. Such developments do not sit well with some of the 'original' residents, who report feeling that they are slowly being forced out of their own neighbourhood. The numbers concerning the social-economic background of the residents in Ondiep matches the '(dying) working-class' description in the sense that a large number of people are on welfare or earn wages below the national average income (Mali and Vogel 2010). Both residents and professionals do, however, indicate that inhabitants of Ondiep are generally proud of their own neighbourhood and community and that they object to the largely negative media reporting on the riots and their neighbourhood in general.

In their quantitative comparison of Ondiep with other Dutch neighbourhoods that were scene to multi-day riots, Mali and Vogel (2010) analysed the neighbourhood both as a geographical location and a social network of its inhabitants. This analysis of the structural factors of the neighbourhood was based on a sizeable database that was constructed for the Police Academy of The Netherlands in 2006 from several different pre-existing databases<sup>9</sup> (also see: Van den Brink and Mali 2007). In terms of the geographical location, they evaluated the neighbourhood on the basis of residents' satisfaction with their physical surroundings, residences, neighbourhood provisions, mobility and safety. The social network was analysed in terms of economic, social and cultural capital. On the basis of these classifications Ondiep falls into the same category as the other 'riot neighbourhoods' in all classifications except for economic capital. However, they also note that such characteristics are present to an equal or even greater (i.e. worse) extent in other neighbourhoods, which do not have a history of large scale public disorder. The main focus of this paper, however, is not on such structural factors, but on the management of the riot and on how and why it did not escalate any further than it did. To do so, we will first take a look at the relation between the authorities and the residents of Ondiep.

### **Ondiep and the authorities: relational aspects**

Over the past three decades Ondiep has, at best, had a tenuous relationship with the authorities and, more specifically, the police. While a civilian 'neighbourhood watch' in the late '80s showed a preference for the enforcement of rules, their applied methods were not always in accordance with Dutch law. Baseball bats and dogs were used to 'uphold the peace' on the streets. Behind closed doors, police, neighbourhood professionals and residents report, there was – and still is – a large measure of domestic violence and substance abuse. Generally speaking, the neighbourhood shows mostly minor crime on the streets and larger problems remain indoors, out of sight from the authorities. In February 2005, the municipality and their safety partners (including an electricity provider) signed a covenant against hemp growth, which was seen to be a considerable problem in the neighbourhood. Residents who were caught growing hemp were forced to vacate their houses. This

enforcement-strategy caused tensions within the neighbourhood, with people 'snitching' on each other and police becoming (even) less popular. Youth workers and residents mention that it is mainly the youths in Ondiep that show a loathing for police. A local youth worker claims that the youths' contempt for the authorities is spoon-fed to them by their parents. However, considering the fact that 'loitering youths' is also the most frequently reported problem by residents, and police act on these complaints, this goes to show that such contempt is not one-dimensional and only directed towards the police. Over the past year local youths had been a source of nuisance and petty crime. The police encouraged the residents to keep reporting these incidents, despite the low impact police interventions appeared to have on the problem. Many residents indicated that they would have preferred more repressive and harsher tactics from the police with regard to these problems.

Although these types of problems give an indication of the relationship between (parts of) the neighbourhood and the authorities, there are also signs pointing to a more constructive attitude between parties. During 2004 and 2005 there had not been a steady neighbourhood officer in Ondiep. The previous neighbourhood officer had not had a particularly good relationship with the local youth and the more repression-focused Team Asterix<sup>10</sup> was established to pick up the pieces. An old chief of this team points out that this approach was eventually balanced with a more dialogue-based approach between youths and police, a 'two-track policy' which was then also applied to Ondiep.

The lack of a neighbourhood officer in 2004/2005 was bemoaned and criticised by residents, and even led to an official complaint by a number of residents at the police station and a written request for a (more) permanent neighbourhood officer. In 2006, both a new chief of the district and neighbourhood officer had indeed been appointed and both are said to have had a better connection with the residents of Ondiep. Certain residents attribute this improvement to their individual characteristics, being more 'authentically from Utrecht'. However, as the district chief points out:

When there isn't a neighbourhood officer people think it's bad. When there is a neighbourhood officer, people think he is doing badly. And when there is a good neighbourhood officer, they don't see enough of him.

This same tendency to complain – rightly or wrongly – about police (in)action also applied to their alleged unresponsiveness to calls concerning the loitering youths. In reaction, to show their concern to the neighbourhood and the specific problem, it became policy to give high priority to such calls. First responders were sent within five minutes and extra care was given to make sure that follow-ups were properly conducted. Two comments by a local police officer illustrate the importance of perceptions in this respect<sup>11</sup>:

Those [rumours about crime] are oftentimes word-of-mouth things. [...] As a police-organisation we have an accurate picture of the current problems and we act on it, but when I talk to a resident, they'll look at things from their own experience.

Referring to a story of police incompetence by a resident of Ondiep he comments:

'I wasn't even with the police back then and so much has changed', that's the only thing I can say at that point. But those kinds of stories are terrible, and I'm thinking they haven't been drawn from thin air.

Although interviews with various parties showed a great dedication among officers to a professional and approachable way of policing the neighbourhood, police figures showed that there had been quite a wave of incoming calls concerning all kinds of nuisance, mostly related to local youths. In the months before the riots police had put a fair effort into controlling and diminishing this phenomenon with a measure of success: police figures of complaints related to nuisance and minor crime did show a slight improvement in the months leading up to the riots. Moreover, there appeared to be widespread consent among the police in the district of Utrecht-North that their work had taken a turn for the better over the past years. Especially the cooperation between agencies had improved, but the move away from a singular focus on zero-tolerance policing was also well-received by the neighbourhood, according to the police. Consequently, a number of officers reported being quite surprised by the riots since they believed they had just turned a corner in a positive way.

### **The events**

The following constitutes a brief account of the events as they occurred in Ondiep from the moment of the shooting on 11 March 2007 onwards. Although we could not verify this account with the civilians who were actively engaged in the public disturbances, it is based on a triangulation of reports and data from the various other sources that were mentioned before. Unless indicated otherwise this represents a consensual account shared between the different respondents and sources.

### ***The shooting***

On the evening of Sunday 11 March 2007, a woman called the police regarding a fight that had started between a group of youths and her husband (Rinie Mulder, a 54-year-old inhabitant of the neighbourhood) and his friends. Several minutes later, two officers on motorcycles arrived on the scene. The officer who was first to arrive later described the situation as follows:

On the corner of the [street] I heard a man yell something along the lines of 'bastards, we'll get you'. This is something you hear fairly frequently in Ondiep, especially on a Sunday afternoon when people come back from watching football and drinking. Normally, I would get off my motorcycle to address this type of behaviour, but in this case I thought stopping the fight was more important, so I kept driving. Only when I got further down the street, after turning a corner, did I see the man. It was getting dark, but he was standing under a streetlight. His face was covered in blood. He came towards me.

His colleague, standing only a few feet away from him, described how the bloodied man was surrounded by a couple of youths and was waving a knife. After the youths had dispersed, the man, still wielding the knife, approached the first officer. While getting off his motorcycle, this officer noticed the knife. Fearing for his life and not seeing any other option (as he would later declare), he fired a single round into the man's chest. Despite attempts at resuscitation, Rinie Mulder died on the spot.

Moments after the shooting, back-up arrived on the scene and the officers carried out established procedures, keeping spectators at a distance. The officer who had used his firearm was immediately taken away from the scene.

Two officers attempted to talk to the family of the victim and were evicted from the premises rather roughly. A second attempt, a little later, involving a trained police negotiator and an officer from the National Police Internal Investigations Office (Rijksrecherche) was more successful. The negotiator, who was familiar with the neighbourhood and was known on a first-name basis by friends of the family, explained to the family what would happen procedurally, and convinced them it would be better to leave the neighbourhood for the time being. The family agreed to this in anticipation of the commotion that would certainly arise around the scene of the shooting and under the condition that they were brought to a neutral setting, in this case, a local fire station.

Police officers indicated that while tension was definitely palpable in the neighbourhood, the scene remained relatively quiet. Although reactions in the neighbourhood ranged from emotional to nearly hysterical, they also reported that no further physical violence ensued that evening. Additional police officers were deployed preventatively in the neighbourhood. They were ignored or subjected to blame and insults from a number of civilians with whom they tried to reason. An hour after midnight, most people had returned to their homes. At four in the morning the remaining police decided to return to their stations.

### *The morning after*

The morning after the incident, representatives of the police and municipality held a meeting to discuss the events of the previous night and their expectations for the following days. They decided to prioritise communication with the residents of the neighbourhood and the local neighbourhood-committee to get a better feel for their reactions and to allow them to express their opinions.

These measures were taken in recognition of the volatility of the situation, according to several respondents, first among whom was the chief public prosecutor, who happened to have experience with a similar situation in another city.<sup>12</sup> In the 'strategic triangle'<sup>13</sup> consultation early that afternoon he shared his experiences and worries. As there was no indication of a development towards public disorder at this stage, no additional measures were taken, apart from establishing a semi-active command post at district level<sup>14</sup> and a call for heightened attention concerning the activities of known football hooligans.

Taking the previous experience of the chief public prosecutor regarding the role that football hooligans played in the riots of 2000 in Den Bosch into consideration, the police officers and sources who are knowledgeable about these groups were consulted. Although there was no information available to give specific reasons for concern, these professionals were asked to be alert to any information that might be relevant to the situation at hand. In addition, two local officers on duty entered the neighbourhood to talk to residents and family members of the victim. They felt safe enough to do so in regular uniform and on their bicycles and later explained that:

It wouldn't have been smart to paint the whole neighbourhood blue, so we entered it together. We talked with family of Mulder's and some residents and that went relatively well. People were sad and a little angry, but they know us of course, so we could talk to them quite normally. Until 05:30 pm it was rather quiet in the neighbourhood, so we went to get a bite to eat.

### ***The turning point***

Around 06:00 pm one of the local officers was contacted by a number of residents, warning him that ‘something is about to happen’. An hour later this information had been confirmed through various channels, and it became clear that a group of around 100–150 people was heading towards Ondiep. According to the Regional Intelligence Service (RID) these people were linked to known football hooligans. Upon receiving this notification, officers and detectives involved in the investigation of the shooting were withdrawn from the neighbourhood, but the two neighbourhood officers were not and they were surprised by the sudden arrival of the group. Initially they were told by the rioters that they would not be targeted because of their connection to the neighbourhood, but soon projectiles were flying and they felt they had to run for their lives.

The rioters started ‘marching’ through the neighbourhood and vandalised cars and buildings using bricks and Molotov cocktails. The police responded by sending in the riot squad, which had yet to garner full strength. Due to the intensity and scale of the violence by the group of rioters the riot squad decided to restrict its activities to guarding possible targets such as a local mosque and a school with a flammable straw roof. Meanwhile, the rioters targeted and set fire to a former police post and an undercover police car. Fire fighters attempting to extinguish the fire had to be protected from various projectiles by the riot squad.

Only after midnight did the riots subside and, subsequently, the riot squad slowly pulled out of the neighbourhood. Three local officers and their commander went back into the neighbourhood to talk to remaining groups of residents in the streets. The police did keep a close eye on possible developments in the centre of Utrecht, specifically around bars known to be frequented by football fans. During the evening, two arrests were made for participation in the riots. Both arrestees came from outside of Utrecht, but had friends in the neighbourhood (Grootenboer 2007).

### ***Regaining control***

In response to the riots, the strategic triangle decided on a shared communications strategy involving police, municipality and public prosecution. The strategy aimed to communicate directly with the residents of Ondiep, rather than indirectly via the media, and to convey clearly that their efforts would be targeted at protecting Ondiep against rioters from outside of the neighbourhood.

Due to persistent signals of a continuing threat to the neighbourhood throughout the night and the following morning, the strategic triangle also decided to fence off part of the neighbourhood and to decree the zone a ‘safety-risk area’. A similar decree was announced for most train stations in the city of Utrecht. The decrees allowed preventative searches of incoming individuals and groups (characterised as ‘riot-tourists’) for weapons; forbade gatherings of four (or more) people around Ondiep and introduced a system of ‘cumulative fines’ if the rules were disobeyed.<sup>15</sup> Residents of Ondiep were informed of these measures by a letter from the municipality that was delivered by hand because the postal service had stopped delivering mail inside the fenced off area of Ondiep.

There was a strong police presence in and around the neighbourhood. The police had decided on the morning after the riots that it would be better to start strong and opt for a decreased presence if things went well, rather than the other way around. To gather and maintain a police presence of this magnitude help was asked and offered from 23 different police districts. Some of these reinforcements were also used to patrol the other safety-risk areas such as the stations, and the National Police Services Agency lent assistance in the effort to check for possibly incoming groups of riot-tourists on the highways. The chief of police commented:

Look, you know you've had riots during one evening, but we shouldn't have them on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday as well. So, it was about winning something back too. This meant that we had to make a strong impact, with the necessary professionalism of course, but you had to make your presence known.

The measures resulted in 136 arrests on the first day they were implemented (13 March), five on 14 March and two on 15 March. Arrest records by the Utrecht police showed that 84 (59%) of those detained were known to the police and had a shared total of 542 previous convictions, while 13 detainees (9%) were known to the Central Information Point for Football Hooliganism (CIV). The detainees (58%) were aged between 16 and 26 years old.<sup>16</sup> The measures and arrests were an attempt to regain control over the neighbourhood and appear to have been effective. Nevertheless, in the remainder of the week, several events took place that were seen to pose an increased risk for renewed public order problems. These events included the following:

- the visit by the mayor and chief of police to the family and to the neighbourhood (13 March 2007);
- a silent march to commemorate Rinie Mulder and (for some) to protest the police shooting (15 March 2007);
- Rinie Mulder's funeral (17 March 2007);
- the football match between FC Utrecht and Vitesse Arnhem (18 March 2007).

However, all of these events unfolded in relative peace and quiet. The following sections of this paper will be used to analyse why this was the case.

### **Managing the riots: operations in a relational perspective**

We identified five situations or moments where crucial operational decisions were taken concerning events that could have escalated quite rapidly. They represent clear tests of police community relations and will be analysed more closely in the following section:

- Contact of police with family of victim.
- Presence of officers in neighbourhood and response to first incidents.
- Implementation of repressive measures.
- Visits of authorities to neighbourhood.
- The silent march.

### *Contact of police with family of victim*

Minutes after the shooting, the first test of police–community relations presented itself as officers tried to contact the family of the victim. The initial response of the family to the authorities was clearly negative, and two officers, unknown to the family were forced out of the Mulder residence. After the police negotiator had re-established contact, however, the ties between the police and the family were maintained in the following days. Of course the family did not come to appreciate the fact that police had shot their relative, but despite a certain animosity, direct communication remained possible and the family explicitly called on the neighbourhood to respond in a peaceful manner.<sup>17</sup> One (of two) operational commander's comments:

The attention that was paid to the family of the victim turned out to be a good investment. Sometimes the family act as a catalyst to conflicts. This time they turned out to be a pacifying factor.

This contact did have a significant effect on the events that followed. Previous cases have made clear that the role of the family in cases such as this can be of pivotal importance. Adang (2005, p. 43) comments on the role of the family during riots in Den Bosch (2000):

In Den Bosch communications between police, or other government officials, and the civilians that were involved temporarily broke down. Only after a full day, a dialogue was initiated with the family of the victim and the supporters of FC Den Bosch [the local football team, fans of which had been involved in the riots], whereas establishing communications concerning the banning of the football match and the lack of support for the family to grieve publicly could have been very useful.

Another example is provided by the Brixton disorders of 1985, triggered by a police shooting of a woman in her own home. While the victim, Mrs. Groce, survived the incident, the repercussions in terms of public disturbances were severe. A consultative group (Community/Police Consultative Group for Lambeth 1986 cited Marshall 1992, p. 54) later wrote the following:

As the Groce family later made several statements deploring a violent response to the shooting, it ought also to have been possible to have arranged, perhaps through community representatives, the issue of a statement from the family when anger was clearly mounting amidst rumours of Mrs Groce's death. The media, for their part, should have acted to facilitate and support such moves, rather than concentrating on speculation as to possible disorder in a way that must certainly have drawn trouble-makers to Brixton.

Although the communication with the Mulder family in Ondiep may not be classifiable as direct communication from authorities with the crowd/community, it did serve to prevent more negative scenarios. The family was, of course, free to communicate with the media. They agreed to inform the authorities if they intended to do so, thus avoiding 'surprises' for the authorities. Initially, the family chose not to communicate with the media and in this way an emphasis on victimhood was avoided. When the family eventually did communicate with the media, they expressed their wish for people to pay their respects to Rinie Mulder in a peaceful manner. Crowd communication, in that sense, is not only about police entering into dialogue with crowd/community members directly but also about discouraging or

preventing communication by others that could agitate (potential) crowd members. Nevertheless, many residents complained about the role the media played in reporting the incidents. Granström (2002 cited Holgersson and Knutsson 2011) argues that the police should be sensitive in dealing with the media, avoiding negative stereotyping to prevent worsening intergroup relations. In this case, however, residents came to see the media as actively involved actors rather than passive observers, suggesting that the media provoked youths into performing actions that reflected negatively on the neighbourhood. Furthermore, they later reported that certain interviews with residents featured people whom they did not recognise as actual residents of Ondiep. These events made the residents critical of the media and, if anything, made them more inclined to rely on the information offered by the authorities.

### *Presence of officers in the neighbourhood and response to first incidents*

A second test of police–community relations was provided in relation to the presence of officers in the neighbourhood. They reported that their initial reaction was to withdraw and steer clear of the scene of the shooting. Despite their inclination to leave, two neighbourhood officers stayed in the area and tried to talk to people. They were confronted with strong verbal abuse, but no physical violence ensued that evening or night. The following day the neighbourhood officers returned to speak to people and see what kind of reactions the shooting invoked among residents and later reported that the residents ‘were sad and a little angry, but they know us of course, so we could talk to them quite normally’.

These comments by the neighbourhood officers indicate that, after news of the shooting had spread to the general population of Ondiep, the officers’ presence in the neighbourhood was still accepted by its residents. Because of this, contact and communication with the neighbourhood could be maintained at street-level. The benefits of a community policing approach, in that sense, are also visible in the study by Holgersson and Knutsson (2011), offering both a way to gather and spread information. If tensions in the neighbourhood should rise this would become clear much sooner, but it also gives the police the option for crowd mediation and explanation of their own actions or inactions. Moreover, these officers had known the neighbourhood and its residents long before, making it easier for them to interpret the residents’ actions and comments (Holgersson and Knutsson 2011, p. 19). This strategy by the authorities was further cemented by contacting the neighbourhood committee and organising a neighbourhood meeting to communicate the latest information and answer any questions the residents might have had.

The police did not go into the details of the shooting, either to the neighbourhood or the press, due to the investigation that had been launched. Rumours concerning the shooting could, therefore, not be negated. This was a source of frustration for some of the police officers, and a possible source of tension for the neighbourhood. Although the press was told there would be an independent investigation, a journalist from a prominent newspaper later commented (at a police seminar concerning the riots) that such news might only be effective if the chief of police communicates it directly on television. Otherwise such a message will often be discarded as ‘non-news’ by the media.

While the situation in the neighbourhood remained calm throughout that following day, it quickly took a turn towards violence with the arrival of a large group of people from outside of Ondiep in the evening. Since the only police presence at hand was that of the neighbourhood officers, the group was able to take control over the neighbourhood quite rapidly. It took several hours to re-establish control by the police, and in the early stages of the riots all the riot police could manage, was to guard possible targets as well as the fire fighters who were doing their job. It should be noted that the neighbourhood officers were able to go back into the neighbourhood after the riots had been suppressed for the night. They talked to small groups of people on the street and communicated their disapproval of the disturbances.

In hindsight, the minimal police presence in the neighbourhood before the riots started, seems questionable, in spite of the fact that the situation was calm during the day. On the other hand, Hundley (1968 cited Waddington 2007, p. 43) points out that both a large and a small police presence may have an effect on riot formation, depending on the perceived legitimacy of their presence and behaviour. The district chief later indicated he felt it might have been better to have had an active and more sizeable group of riot police at the ready, if out of sight. A large police presence always draws attention, but while aiming for de-escalation and preventing possible provocations is a commendable goal, trying to regain control over a neighbourhood is not an easy thing to accomplish. Adang (2005, p. 41) describes such a situation in Den Bosch:

The following evenings, after darkness set in, riots burst out all over again: on these nights, however, the motivation of the rioters did not appear to be that of anger or indignation, but rather a longing for entertainment. There was no longer a direct link to the shooting; rioters came from Den Bosch and its surroundings with the specific goal of challenging the police and taking full advantage of the opportunity to partake in the riots. Only on the fourth evening, when the police were present in very large numbers before any new riots could be started, did they put a stop to it.

One of the advantages the Utrecht police had over the officers who were active in Den Bosch in 2000, was their colleagues' previous experience. Not only did the public prosecutor from Utrecht work in Den Bosch at the time, police colleagues who were active during those riots also offered their advice.

### *Implementation of repressive measures*

A third test of police–community relations was related to the decision to implement a variety of repressive measures; especially the decision to put up fences around the 'hot zone' in Ondiep, the establishment of 'safety-risk areas' (where preventive searches were carried out and gatherings of four or more people were forbidden) and the 'cumulative fine system'. These repressive measures appear to have worked effectively given that further rioting did not occur and many arrests were made. They obviously affected residents as well as non-resident 'others'. Furthermore, the fences had a big symbolic impact. There is a thin line between 'fencing off' an area from outsiders and 'boxing in' a neighbourhood, confining its residents. Such a measure is open to interpretation, especially when intentions are not properly explained. The Utrecht police and municipality chose to communicate their strategy and intentions very clearly, agreeing on a single line of communications, clarifying that the fences

were put up to protect the residents of Ondiep against so-called ‘riot-tourists’ from outside of the area. This message was communicated via the media, but also more directly. As mentioned before, employees of the municipality took it upon themselves to deliver a letter with the message by hand, even before it was broadcast via the media. They later indicated that this was an intentional move to show the residents their commitment to the neighbourhood. One of the residents later indicated that the way in which the authorities communicated their strategy and other information was much appreciated. She believed that the way people looked at the situation in Ondiep from inside the fences was more informed as a result. Reicher *et al.* (2007, p. 410) warn against the danger of the misperception of even those actions that are well-intentioned when a comprehensive communication strategy is missing. In this case, the overall communication strategy of the local authorities prevented the wrong impression from being created.

Leiden *et al.* (2009) suggest that the rumours of an influx of riot-tourists into Ondiep were false. While arrest records certainly do not substantiate the rumours – very few people from outside of Utrecht were, in fact, arrested – police and public prosecution protested this finding, indicating that incoming riot-tourists had been sent back preventively at various infrastructural nodes before actually reaching Utrecht and breaking the law. Whatever the case may be and whether or not riot-tourists were in fact on their way to Utrecht, the mere suggestion of their coming does seem to have had the effect of shifting the attention of the public and the media towards this out-group. One journalist indicated to the researchers that previous efforts to understand and report the events by likening them to the riots in France (2005) were discarded and supplanted by articles concerning riot-tourism. Although, as some police officers suggested, the message that rioters from outside of the city were heading towards Ondiep may have garnered unwanted attention from (other) outsiders,<sup>18</sup> it also served to strengthen the perception of the police and the residents of Ondiep uniting against a common outside threat.

Even though the presence of the riot squad brought to mind some rather unpleasant connotations for some of the elderly residents of the neighbourhood – the sound of boots marching through the streets reminded them of the German occupation during the Second World War – respondents also showed sympathy and admiration for the way in which the officers performed their duties. One resident remarks:

On Monday evening there was a real cat-and-mouse game going on between the police and the rioters [...]. The riot squad held out for a very long time, considering all the stuff that was being thrown at their heads.

Others portray the rioters as ‘rats creeping out of their holes’ and express their explicit support for the use of force by the riot squad against the rioters, calling it their ‘just deserts’. Meanwhile, a number of residents were said to have served members of the riot squad cups of coffee against the cold. Such signs suggest that the residents of Ondiep definitely did have some appreciation for the repressive actions by the riot squad, which may well be tied to their disapproval of the actions by the rioters.

The actions and words that were proffered by the police during the week of the riots sent out one single message: ‘we are with you and against them’. As such, police and authorities were quick to identify themselves as part of the ‘Ondiep in-group’, as opposed to the out-group of possible riot-tourists. In this way, they defined events and

the repressive measures taken by them in their own favour (and in their own terms). Riots are messy and their interpretation is generally ‘up for grabs’, allowing for different ways of framing the events by the media. There is, after all, no single way to perceive riots, if only due to the involvement of so many different actors. Reicher *et al.* (2007, p. 407) suggest that due to the fact that crowds do not generally have a structure that aids the process of decision-making, ‘the process of defining appropriate group action becomes more volatile and more fraught than elsewhere’. They go on to propose that the balance between groupings within a crowd is therefore ‘critically dependent upon the interaction between the crowd and outsiders’. As such, it is not a peculiar suggestion from Otten *et al.* (2001) that failing to communicate a proper explanation for (police) actions often has a strong impact on the escalation of a riot. In other words, it is unlikely that crowds share the same exact goals and interpretations of events – and generally they do not have any option for plenary discussion – but when the people that make up a potential crowd are offered a reasonable (and reasonably acceptable) explanation of events which matches the actions of the defining party, they are less likely to perceive well-intended action in a negative manner.

### *Visits of the authorities to the neighbourhood*

A fourth test of police–community relation was provided by visits to the neighbourhood by authorities. The police were extremely (and perhaps overly) cautious in this respect. When the mayor inquired into the safety of a visit to the neighbourhood, the police initially advised against it. Only when she insisted did they give in and start preparations for her visit to Ondiep. Similarly, her wish to leave a local church through the front door was not welcomed by the police, who later explained that they feared the visit would become a rallying point for rioters and wanted to minimise the opportunity for such a confrontation. At that time, they were not certain that they could guarantee her safety. Nevertheless, her visit, as well as another with the chief of police to the family of the victim, was reportedly well-received by the residents, with respondents showing an appreciation for her ‘bravery’ in coming to the neighbourhood during this time. It further served to send a message of commitment to the neighbourhood. In that respect, Waddington (2007, p. 49) states that

Latent social conflict is more likely to become manifest where the state appears indifferent to such grievances, forcing the relevant section of society to conclude that they have no real stake in the existing social order.

Reactions to media reports on their neighbourhood clearly indicate that residents felt they had been ignored and it had taken riots in their neighbourhood for them to be noticed by the authorities. While this can hardly be seen as an indication of positive relations with the community, it does point out that the way in which the authorities responded to the riots (with increased attention for the neighbourhood) was seen as a positive turn of events. In any case, most of the residents that were interviewed were positive about the decisive way in which the rioters were dealt with. Stott (2009, p. 13) suggests that if such use of force is evidence-led and accurately targeted, the majority of the crowd would not perceive it to be illegitimate. He goes on to say that, once the issues threatening public disorder are dealt with, it should be followed by a de-escalation policy to restore a normal level of policing. This appears to be exactly

what the Utrecht police proceeded to do throughout the rest of the week until the fences could be removed.

### *The silent march*

Before this was the case, however, there was still the silent march that was organised by family, friends and acquaintances of the victim, which constituted a fifth test of police community relations. As was mentioned in the preceding account of events, the silent march did not lead to further violence and unfolded mostly peacefully.<sup>19</sup> Once again, family and friends of the victim played a part in this by asking participants to remain calm. This does not mean, however, that the march did not have an impact on the relation between police and community. Given the fact that the march was going to take place in Ondiep itself, was to end at the location of the shooting and would be attended by 1500–2000 people, the potential for conflict was far from insignificant. Consistent with earlier strategies the police opted for a low-profile presence while keeping reinforcements at a ‘respectful distance’. As such, they gave people a chance to show their dissatisfaction and to grieve publicly. It can be argued that this was a way to deal with the situation that did indeed facilitate peaceful behaviour. Stott *et al.* (2008, p. 278), analysing the behaviour of football crowds, advise that police tactics should ‘reflect a strategy of [...] the fans’ legitimate intentions’ and, in the case of Ondiep, this does appear to have happened to positive effect.

Showing, however, that such interaction does indeed affect both parties, a number of police officers indicated feeling hurt at the sight of a banner that was carried at the head of the marching crowd. It said: ‘Needless violence at 5 meters. Why?’ The following day, the chief of police gave voice to these sentiments among officers by addressing the public criticism internally and in the media. Due to the ongoing investigation, he was not allowed to speak about the facts of the shooting, but he stressed that allegations of police wrongdoing were not based on fact either. He later indicated that this was a gesture of solidarity to his officers. It should be noted, however, that the public display of animosity towards the police was not necessarily shared by all or even most participants of the march. Certain participants of the march who worked for the municipality even explained that they were unaware at the time that such a message was being displayed.

### **Conclusions**

Our three-level analysis of the situation in Ondiep and the events as they occurred shows some of the ways in which short to long-term factors eventually come to overlap and coincide. Although the actions by the authorities occurred in a relatively short timeframe, they relied on a much longer tradition of community policing through which a network had been established in the form of the neighbourhood committee as well as a more general tradition of interaction, which had been both positive and negative but certainly allowed for open communication. It is not clear from our data whether the Utrecht police adopted such a strategy intuitively or entirely intentionally, but the lessons are important. A combination of repressive action combined with a relational approach in the management of riots can pay-off when relations have been properly nurtured.

The neighbourhood of Ondiep is not an easy one to police. It has a history of tentative and conflicting relations with the authorities and its residents do not always have a perspective on norms and laws equal to that of the authorities. Nonetheless, as could be witnessed in the position of the neighbourhood officers during the week of the riots, the authoritative yet empathic way in which the police performed their duties in the neighbourhood led to a strengthening of relationships, even after the riots had passed.

While the fatal shooting of a neighbourhood resident clearly put the Utrecht police in a precarious position that strained their relationship with the residents further than before, the people of the neighbourhood were prepared to listen to their arguments, even when riots did come to their doorstep. Actively communicating and presenting events in a way that emphasised their mutual relation in a positive way helped to establish an in-group of police and residents, a partnership that precluded a conflict between the police and the neighbourhood of Ondiep. In line with the ESIM and the Adang/Horowitz escalation model (Adang *et al.* 2010), we argue that the actions by the authorities came to be perceived as legitimate by most of the residents in Ondiep. However, we should be wary of overemphasising the positive and focusing only on recent history. Points of view between groups differ as much as they do between individuals and (police) policy and (community) history are often constructed on different grounds. Being conscious of this fact is, therefore, almost as important as being conscious of the relational implications of one's actions, whether that action is emphatic or repressive, 'soft' or 'hard'.

The riots in Ondiep remained localised and were ultimately suppressed without generalising to the residents of the neighbourhood; a fact which, as we have argued, can be attributed to the way in which the riots were managed and community relationships were engaged. Our study clearly showed tensions in the relationship between residents and authorities in Ondiep and that an incident that led to strong indignation did occur. However, violence was not perceived to be a legitimate response by residents due to the actions, tactics and strategies by police and authorities on a relational level, who thus managed to prevent further escalations and even strengthened their relationship with the residents.

Although we do not want to overgeneralise from this one case study, we do feel that events in Ondiep and their engagement by the police and authorities should be perceived as an example of riot management with an emphasis on community relations that is in line with previous observations from the ESIM and the Adang/Horowitz model (Adang *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, we would suggest that it is worthwhile to apply this relational perspective in other cases to come to a better understanding why community-based disorder does or does not escalate.

## Notes

1. See the overview of the development of crowd psychology by Stott (2009) for an enlightening summary.
2. Also see Horowitz (2001).
3. All translations in this paper have been made by us, the authors of this paper, any mistakes that may have been made are, of course, solely our responsibility.
4. For the original research publication see Van den Brink and Bruinsma (2010).
5. See Table 1 (Appendix) for a schematic representation of the three levels and their respective manifestations.

6. This number is an approximation due to the fact that a group of youths of unknown size was interviewed on the streets of Ondiep. They were selected randomly from the youths who were present in the neighbourhood at that time.
7. 1: the setting; 2: the incident; 3: the main actors; 4: relations between actors; 5: police performance; 6: lessons learnt. These topics were further illustrated and explained to the researchers by the inclusion of possible sub-themes.
8. For the purposes of this study the concept of a neighbourhood is defined as a geographical location demarcated by physical boundaries; inhabited by a group of residents that share a general conception of the neighbourhood; and identified by the municipality as a neighbourhood in administrative terms (e.g. by postal code). Due to the circumstances of the riots, however, it should be noted that there was another temporary, but clear distinction in the way respondents perceived the neighbourhood. Because of fences that were placed around the immediate area where the riots had taken place (more on this later), respondents often made reference to the area inside and outside of those fences.
9. The 'Vastgoedmonitor' ('Property Monitor'), Woonbehoefteonderzoek ('Housing Needs Research'), Politie Monitor Bevolking ('Police Population Monitor'), Herkenningsdienst-systeem ('Recognition Service System').
10. This temporary project had a 'zero-tolerance' philosophy in dealing with 'loitering youth' and was deemed a success, but lost its effectiveness in the later stages of its existence (according to police respondents).
11. Keith (1993 cited Waddington 2007, p. 48) distinguishes between *metonymic* (historical) and *syntagmatic* (relating primarily to the present) ways of viewing the world. For residents, attitudes are informed by a lived experience and folklore stretching back possibly through decades; whereas as far as the police are concerned, the histories of particular locations are of little interest, and the communities themselves are stereotyped as 'troublesome' or 'dangerous'.
12. We are referring, here, to the riots in Den Bosch (December 2000), where riots had also started after a fatal police shooting in a neighbourhood called Graafsewijk.
13. The 'strategic triangle' is a meeting of authorities over the police with the chief of police. It consists of the mayor, who is ultimately responsible for matters of public order and safety in the city, the chief public prosecutor and the chief of police. The meeting is chaired by the mayor.
14. A 'semi-active command-post at district level' denotes that the district chief of police in Utrecht Noordwest and the assigned public prosecutor are on stand-by and keep each other informed of important new developments and prepare possible (counter)measures in case the situation escalates.
15. Fines were raised by the public prosecutor by an amount of €100 per day.
16. See Table 2 (Appendix) for a complete list of the arrest records.
17. The sons of Rinie Mulder, later that week, led a silent march while holding a banner that stated 'Unnecessary violence at 5 meters, why?'
18. The police were especially concerned with drawing in (other) football hooligans.
19. Two arrests were made: the first for throwing a can of beer at the police, the second for possession of a knife.

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**Appendix**

Table 1. Analytical representation of the three levels of analysis and their respective manifestations (Van den Brink 2010, p. 212).

Level	Timeline	Scale	Manifestation
Structural	Decades	Neighbourhood	Deprivation
Relational	Years	Groups	Decay
Operational	Weeks	Individuals	Vandalism

Table 2. Overview of arrests in Ondiep, week 11 of 2007 (Bruinsma *et al.* 2010, p. 41).

Age categories (age at arrest)			
≤ 15 YO	6 (4%)		
16 ≤ 26 YO	83 (58%)		
26 ≤ 36 YO	17 (12%)		
36 ≤ 46 YO	21 (16%)		
46 ≤ 56 YO	11 (8%)		
56 ≤ 66 YO	2 (1%)		
Unknown	3 (1%)		
Known to the police. Mainly violent offenders (including threats of violence), crimes against property, vandalism and hemp growth.	84 (58.7%), total of 542 prior convictions (on average 6.5 p.p.).		
Known to the CIV	13 (9%), total of 79 prior convictions (= 14.6%)		
Number of known hooligans ('Hooligans in beeld').	2 (1%)		
Forbidden to enter football stadiums (Stadionverboden)	6 (4%)		
Hailing from (by postal code)		Known to police	Known to CIV
Fenced off part of Ondiep	0	0	0
Ondiep (remaining)	3	1	0
Ondiep total	3 (2%)	1	0
City of Utrecht (remaining)	88	55	3
City of Utrecht (remaining) total	88 (61.5%)	55	3
De Bilt	1	1	0
Bilthoven	1	1	0
Houten	3	3	0
De Meern	2	0	0
Nieuwegein	2	1	0
Ijsselstein	1	1	0
Vianen	1	0	0
Zeist	1	0	0
Province of Utrecht total	12 (8.1%)	7	0
Amsterdam	1	1	1
Breda	3	3	3
Katwijk	3	3	3
Zwolle	1	1	0
Outside of the Province of Utrecht total	8 (5.4%)	8	7
Unknown postal code	33 (23%)	13	3
Total	143	84	13

Note: This table is based on the 143 arrests that were performed between Tuesday and Thursday. Therefore, the table does not include the (3) arrests that were made on Sunday and Monday. One hundred and thirty-six arrests were made on Tuesday, 13 March between 9 pm and 12 am, five arrests were made on 14 March between 9 pm and 12 am and two arrests were made on Thursday, 15 March between 9 pm and 12 am. As far as could be determined nearly all arrests were made due to violations of the public order and limit to public gatherings, and acts of violence.