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**Published in:**  
Sociological Review

**Publication status and date:**  
Published: 11/11/2013

**DOI (link to publisher):**  
[10.1111/1467-954X.12115](https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12115)

**Document Version**  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

**Citation for the published version (APA):**  
van Houdt, F., & Schinkel, W. (2013). Crime, citizenship and community: neoliberal communitarian images of governmentality. *Sociological Review*, 62(1), 47-67. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12115>

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# Crime, citizenship and community: neoliberal communitarian images of governmentality

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## Abstract

This article discusses the emergence, in the field of crime and safety, of a formula of government that can be called *neoliberal communitarianism*. This is a paradoxical governmental strategy that combines a focus on ‘individual responsibility’, ‘community’ and a ‘selectively tough state’. The discussion is based on the Foucaultian triangle of strategy, political programmes and techniques. The substance of this application consists of a discussion of recent Dutch political programmes and techniques in crime and safety policies. The discussion includes the local case of Rotterdam, a city at times regarded as a ‘policy laboratory’. Specifically, the role that notions of citizenship and community play in crime and safety policies is analysed. We hereby point at two different manifestations of responsabilization – *repressive responsabilization* and *facilitative responsabilization* – aimed at two governmentally differentiated populations. In addition, we describe how neoliberal communitarianism entails the selective exclusion of subjects imagined as ‘high risk’. Because the government of crime tells us much about the government of ‘society’, neoliberal communitarianism is a useful concept to grasp contemporary changes in government in the Netherlands and in other European countries.

**Keywords:** governmentality, neoliberalism, communitarianism, crime, citizenship, responsabilization

## The government of crime and safety and governmentality

This article circumscribes what we call the rise of *neoliberal communitarianism*: a paradoxical combination of neoliberalism with certain communitarian values. We specifically describe the architecture of this new governmental strategy in relation to the management of crime. We illustrate how the current strategy of the new Dutch government is in many respects a ‘tougher’ articulation of elements from a historical configuration underway since the 1980s. Taking the Dutch contemporary policy field of crime as an example, we illustrate how neoliberal communitarianism appears as a combined focus on both ‘individual responsibility’, ‘community’ and a ‘selectively

tough state'. We do so by highlighting the images of citizenship that undergird a variety of policies on crime and safety and that are promoted by these policies.

Our analysis is in line with arguments claiming that the government of 'crime' tells much about the government of 'society' and vice versa (Cohen, 1985; Garland, 1985, 2001; Simon, 2007; Wacquant, 2009). For example, in the period of 'welfarism' (Rose and Miller, 1992) citizenship was extended with a social dimension (Marshall, 1963) and the corresponding management of crime is called 'penal welfarism' (Garland, 1985, 2001). As such it can be argued that both citizenship and the management of crime are given substance based on the leading political rationalities (Rose, 1999; Dean, 1999). We argue that welfarism is 're-inscribed' in neoliberal communitarianism (cf. Rose and Miller, 1992; Garland, 2001; Wacquant, 2009). Neoliberal communitarianism might be described as a main European road 'to the penal treatment of poverty and inequality, characterized by the *conjoint* intensification of *both social-welfare and penal interventions* (rather than the replacement of one by the other as in America)' (Wacquant, 2009: 4; italics in original). We propose to analyse the connections made in policies between crime, citizenship and community in terms of governmentality, and we start by indicating how we deploy that concept here.

#### *Governmentality: a Foucaultian interpretation*

In his lectures entitled *Security, Territory, Population* Foucault introduced the concept of governmentality (Foucault, 2008). By governmentality Foucault denoted, among other things, 'the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security' (Foucault, 1991: 102). This has been expounded by scholars working in 'governmentality studies' (eg Burchell *et al.*, 1991; O'Malley, 1992; Dean, 1999; Rose, 1999; Miller and Rose, 2008; Donzelot and Gordon, 2008). The field of 'governmentality studies' has given rise to various debates and critiques that we largely ignore here, particularly because we are less interested in the *actual effects* of governmentality than in the *mentalities of government* that can be discerned as active in governing. While some authors focus largely on what Lippert and Stenson (2010) have called 'realist governmentality', we give precedence to a conception of governmentality more closely related to Foucault's concerns than to those active in governmentality studies. For Foucault, the 'art of government' did not refer to actual practices of government, but rather to *governmental reflection* on government itself. As he says in *The Birth of Biopolitics*:

by 'art of government' I did not mean the way in which governors really governed. I have not studied and do not want to study the development of

real governmental practice by determining the particular situations it deals with . . . I wanted to study the art of governing, that is to say, the reasoned way of governing best and, at the same time, reflection on the best possible way of governing. (Foucault, 2008: 2)

Foucault was thus interested less in the *effects* of ‘real’ government action and in the possible *reactions* to or *conflicts* and problems of *implementation* engendered by government on the ground than in the *reflection* that accompanied such action. As he says, he ‘tried to grasp the level of reflection in the practice of government and on the practice of government’. He wanted to study what he called ‘government’s consciousness of itself’ (Foucault, 2008: 2).

For this reason, what we describe below as taking place in the Netherlands can be seen in terms of governmentality not when it is taken as a description of actual practice. Rather, what such conceptions illustrate is the way government reflects on itself and on its possible and most desirable ways of governing. They illustrate, moreover, how specific relations such as those between state and citizens are conceived. When citizens are depicted as an intricate part of governing crime and safety, and when concomitant conceptions of citizenship are put forward in governing texts, that doesn’t tell us something directly about what happens to citizens, but it does illustrate governmental reflection on the elements of good government. We therefore deliberately forego questions of effectiveness of and resistance to governmental practices, as they fall beyond the scope both of this analysis and of Foucault’s own ambitions in deploying the concept of governmentality. However, studying rationalities of government is important in its own right because it is around the imagined objects and subjects of government that real practices of government are developed (cf. Lippert and Stenson, 2010). It makes it possible to understand how objects and subjects of government are invented and transformed and in the end it makes it understandable how common notions and ideas were constructed (Foucault, 2000).

Our aim is to understand the mentalities of Dutch government of crime. For analytical purposes we distinguish between four aspects of government: rationalities (such as welfarism, conservatism, neoliberalism or communitarianism), strategies (non-subjective formulae of government, consisting of a combination of rationalities; cf. Feeley and Simon, 1992), political programmes (for instance on crime) and techniques of government (such as social security, risk, active citizenship) (Donzelot, 1979a; Garland, 1985; O’Malley, 1992).

To set the stage we start with the political programmes on crime that have been published at the national level since the 1980s. We analyse how problems are constructed, who is made responsible and what techniques are developed. Because the local government of crime (‘decentralization’) is an important technique, we include a discussion of the local case of Rotterdam. From the programmes analysed we distil rationalities of government. We illustrate that two such rationalities are dominant in the Dutch local and national programmes of crime: neoliberalism and communitarianism. It is along these lines

that the state is ideally conceived and that different types of citizen-subjects are imagined.

## **Political programmes on crime since the 1980s on the national plane**

The first thirty years of the post-war period can be characterized as the heyday of Dutch (penal) welfarism (Downes, 2007). Welfarism enriched citizenship with a social dimension (Marshall, 1963) and the regulation of the penal field is based on the fundamental axioms of general social reform and welfare combined with specific care and punishment of offenders both under sole responsibility of the central state, which would eventually reduce recidivism and crime rates (Garland, 2001). Starting in the 1970s, however, this strategy was attacked from two different sides. Elements of a *neoliberal rationality* (cf. Foucault, 2008) combined with elements of a *communitarian rationality* (Van Houdt and Schinkel, 2013; cf. Mulhall and Swift, 1992; De Haan, 1993). To analyse their coming together we take as our main empirical material the major – that is, agenda setting – crime policy documents in the last thirty years indicating historical changes regarding presuppositions, definitions of problems and of objects of policy, resources and policy practices to describe the major transformations of Dutch penal regulation. It is precisely in policy statements that depictions of best ways of governing become most explicitly manifest (Dean, 2002).

The issue of crime in the Netherlands has been increasingly problematized since the middle of the 1970s (Brants, 1986; cf. Cavadino and Dignan, 2006). This can be contextualized by looking, for instance, at the budget of the Dutch Ministry of Justice, which rose from €1,711 million in 1990 to €5,788 million in 2008 (CBS, 2011). More in general, the expenditures on ‘safety and crime’ rose from €7.5 billion in 2002 to €10.5 billion in 2008 (CBS, 2011). In this period, the rate of incarceration rose from 18 per 100,000 in 1973 to 110 per 100,000 in 2007. Significant is the rise between 1995 and 2007, which involves a near doubling from 66 per 100,000 to 110 per 100,000, while crime figures did not show a significant rise during that period (Downes and Van Swaaningen, 2007; cf. Lacey, 2010). Since the 1980s the issue of crime gained increasing attention in politics, policy-making, science (eg philosophy of law), public discourse and media as a consequence of public anxiety of rising crime rates and statistics pointing at a rise of crime (Committee Roethof, 1984). Here, we are concerned not so much with what these figures say about actual practices or about the relative prevalence of crime, but with the rationalities and the legitimations that accompany them.

In the 1980s it was argued that a new approach towards crime was needed (Brizée, 1985). Two documents written during that period are highly relevant to an understanding of the present. The first document was written in 1984 by a special committee (Committee Roethof) set up to investigate the causes of the rising crime rates and to advise on the adequate reactions towards crime.

This led to the formulation of another important document: the 1985 policy paper called *Society and Crime* (*SAC: Samenleving en Criminaliteit*) drafted by the Ministry of Justice. One commentary, referring to the famous Dutch water management system (*Deltawerken*), famously coined SAC as the Dutch 'Deltaworks against crime' (Van Ruller, 1999: 18) because it set up an agenda for crime prevention and crime fighting that still dominates the policy field of crime (cf. Van de Bunt and Van Swaaningen, 2004; Blad, 2007).

In SAC the Dutch government made a distinction between 'petty crime' and 'tough crime' (Ministry of Justice, 1985: 8–9). Regarding 'petty crime' an important change took place. While before the 1980s crime was seen exclusively as a central government responsibility, with SAC the government for the first time acknowledged that it was not able to cope with crime by itself. As was the case in the UK and the USA, the Netherlands faced a 'crime predicament' that Garland (2001: 105–6) discusses: late modern societies are faced with high levels of crime and acknowledge that the state lacks the resources to deal with it. In SAC the government argued for the mobilization of 'individual citizens and civil society, including local governments and the private sector, to fight the mass manifestation of crime' (1985: 37). This 'mobilization of society' (Donzelot, 1991) meant a 'responsibilization' (Burchell, 1993; cf. Garland, 1997, 2001; Ericson and Haggerty, 1997) of other actors, like private parties and 'society' in general. Repeatedly it was argued that a 'reconfiguration of responsibilities' was needed with a focus on the 'prime role of local governments' (Ministry of Justice, 1985: 43), an 'active civil society' (1985: 40) and the 'responsibility of citizens themselves to prevent crime' (1985: 40).

In addition to the need to mobilize civil society and individual citizens, three other elements were introduced. First, prevention became a prime goal of government, including all non-Justice departments, such as the Departments of Traffic, Education, Public Health and Social Security (Ministry of Justice, 1985). Second, the field of criminal justice was restructured, based on 'managerial' principles dominating the so-called 'penal chain' (Steenhuis, 1984) of the criminal justice enterprise (Ministry of Justice, 1985). Third, based on 'social control theories' (cf. Hirschi, 1969; Committee Roethof, 1984) it was argued that both more (possibilities for) functional surveillance (eg police officers, private surveillance agencies, techno-prevention and architecture) and a stronger normative attachment (or a 'bond') of citizens were needed to prevent crime (Ministry of Justice, 1985: 40). In addition to this, an exclusively sovereign tactic was deployed as a response to 'tougher forms of crime' (eg organized crime). In SAC it was argued that 'tough crime' should be the exclusive responsibility of the central state as it has special resources (monopoly of legitimate violence), knowledge and authority to deal with it (Ministry of Justice, 1985).

This policy path continued into the 1990s. The *Law in Motion* policy paper (*LIM: Recht in Beweging*) promulgated 'network cooperation' between state departments (Ministry of Justice, 1990: 3, 29) and between state and non-state actors like citizens and 'the community' (1990: 3, 33–5, 37; cf. Van Ruller, 1999:

53). *LIM* intensified the restoration, expansion and modernization of the Criminal Justice Enterprise. However, *LIM* also articulated the more communitarian concern about the morality of citizens and their normative attachment to society and gave a strong voice to restoring public order. With *LIM* it was argued that for too long only the rights of citizens had been articulated, overlooking the obligations of citizens towards other citizens and towards 'the community' at large (Ministry of Justice, 1990: 18). It was argued that 'citizens have forgotten their duties as citizens to respect the law, as citizens now see the law as one among several other behavioural options of which they choose' (1990: 7). Therefore, in *LIM* there is a tendency to tolerate less and to punish more: 'the quota of criminal justice reaction and punishment of crime has reached a historically low level. This will be substantially increased' (1990: 23) because this 'qualitatively improved justice will remind citizens of their rights and duties as flowing from our social order' (1990: 8). The sovereign stick of punishment transformed from *ultimum remedium* into *premium remedium*.

This was further elaborated in the 1993 *Safety Report (SR: Veiligheidsrapportage)*, jointly drafted by several ministerial departments (Ministry of Internal Affairs *et al.*, 1993). Crime became semantically encapsulated in the concept of 'safety' or 'security' (*veiligheid*). As Van de Bunt and Van Swaaningen (2004) argue, this was more than just a semantic shift. Most notably, the *range* of the safety and security assemblage is much broader, and its *impact* is much deeper (cf. Piret, 2000; Blad, 2007). Moreover, 'feelings of insecurity' (concerning crime, neighbourhood decline and nuisance) became leading targets of intervention. At the same time, 'feelings of insecurity' were considered to give rise to legitimate policy targets (eg more attention given to nuisance). As a consequence it became possible to link crime, nuisance and neighbourhood decline under the umbrella of safety, and the actors in the 'safety chain' (Ministry of Internal Affairs *et al.*, 1993: 12–3) were to cooperate.<sup>1</sup> Next to this, a central focus on 'risk' was introduced in the discourse of crime and safety. However, as a technique, 'risk' is not an 'objective' phenomenon. From a governmentality perspective, 'risk' can be regarded as a context-dependent construct (cf. Ewald, 1991). All kinds of 'risky populations' were hence constructed. Especially 'ethnic youth', and more specifically the Moroccan-Dutch and Antillean-Dutch among them, were construed as important objects of attention and intervention (Ministry of Internal Affairs *et al.*, 1993). The technique of risk was thus given a 'cultural communitarian' substance. In addition to this, the 'safety issue' of crime became once more a central issue for local government and thereby for the relation between citizens, 'local community' and local government (Ministry of Internal Affairs *et al.*, 1993: 15–8; cf. Van Swaaningen, 2005).

The following decade is marked by continuity but also by the addition of new elements. The 2002 Safety programme, *Towards a Safer Society (TSS: Naar een Veiliger Samenleving)* exhibited a strong continuity in that it echoed the agenda set up in 1985, in which local governments, private actors (businesses)

and citizens are urged to cooperate (Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2002: 5). However, more attention was given to ‘law and order’ (echoing the 1993 policy document). In addition, three practical objects were introduced. First, attention was given to the so-called ‘frequent offender’ (*veelpleger*) (2002: 32–5). Second, it entailed a focus on youth at risk or ‘risk youth’ (meaning potential perpetrators, not victims of crime) (2002: 35–6). And third, more attention was given to a ‘visible government’ and to more ‘social control’, especially in so-called ‘risk spaces’ and at ‘risk times’ (2002: 55–64). The special attention and measures introduced in *TSS* should reduce crime and nuisance by 20–25 per cent in four years and should make citizens ‘feel safe again’ (2002: 10). This document also introduced the Communities that Care approach (2002: 41).

These elements have also been the vantage point of the latest safety and crime policy *Safety Begins by Prevention: Continuing to Build a Safer Society* (*SBP: Veiligheid begint bij Voorkomen: voortbouwen aan een veiliger samenleving*), formulated in 2007. It is argued there that ‘a lot has been accomplished: the Netherlands became safer and the crime rates went down. However, a general reduction of 25 per cent has not been accomplished. Therefore, the goal stays the same but new measures have to be taken’ (Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2007: 13). In addition to ‘law and order’, *SBP* articulates the dimension of prevention more strongly. Local governments, local communities demarcated by neighbourhoods, and individual citizens are urged to become active and work together in ‘preventative partnerships’ (2007: 7, 11, 13, 23). In addition, an individualized approach to offenders is developed with an obligatory after-care and with early intervention programmes deployed to act as early as possible.

In sum, the national programmes on crime of the last thirty years entail the ‘production’ of a *crime predicament*: high crime rates and high levels of (feelings) of insecurity and a (rhetorically presumed) limited capacity for the central state to deal with this. Both *Society and Crime* (1985) and *Law in Motion* (1990) can be regarded as levers that both criticize penal welfarism and propose a different programme of crime regulation that is worked out in the later policy documents. While there are some discontinuities or differences between the several programmes, this can be considered a structural change of the Dutch mentality of crime regulation (cf. Garland, 2001: 22). It is possible to ‘map’ the penal field according to two different rationalities: neoliberalism and communitarianism. Both neoliberalism and communitarianism reinforce each other in their critique of penal welfarism. However, they often touch upon wholly different aspects or domains in the regulation of crime and sometimes even seemingly contradict each other (compare, for example, the approaches of Clarke, 1980 and Etzioni, 1993).

Neoliberal governmentality is most prominent in the transformation of criminal justice into a Penal Company that must produce efficient and effective repression (valuing efficiency more than rights; Becker, 1993). It is visible in the prominence of theories based on rational choice and routine activities, the



use of ‘performance indicators’, ‘monitoring systems’, the ‘publication of outcomes’ and a focus on ‘accountability’. It also becomes apparent in a focus on *risk* that culminates in specific objects such as ‘risk youth’, ‘risk space’ and ‘risk times’ and specific priorities of intervention in terms of hot spot approach and selective incapacitation. Lastly, the neoliberal rationality is also related to network cooperation between state and non-state actors. In addition, the Dutch government of crime has been influenced by the rationality of communitarianism. While the caring dimension of communitarianism is highly valued by Dutch critical criminologists (eg Van Swaaningen, 1995: 84) it also led to a specific focus on ‘ethnicity’ (often equated to ‘culture’) and ‘integration problems’. Moreover, it led to a *concern about normative attachment and bonding*, decline of social control, community defence and the need to restore *law and order*. It also led to the development of new practices of *prevention* in relation to the mobilization of (local) communities based on techniques proposed by ‘community experts’. Table 1 summarizes the major policy documents and specifies their relation to neoliberal and communitarian rationalities.

## Safety management in Rotterdam

Above we described the political programmes on crime at the national level. However, from 1985 on, ‘decentralization’ or the local government of crime has been an important technique. While the local government of crime is made possible by the national programmes, the reverse also occurs. For example, the 2002 programme *Towards a Safer Society* introduces ‘The Rotterdam Approach’ on a national level. In this section, we therefore take a closer look at the local government of crime in Rotterdam. The city of Rotterdam is a highly interesting case of the recent changes in the management of crime and safety, and of the accompanying articulations of citizenship (Van Swaaningen, 2008; Wacquant, 2009). It can be argued that Rotterdam is, both in Mertonian and Foucaultian terms, a ‘strategic research site’. Specifically in relation to issues of safety, Rotterdam is often considered to be a ‘policy laboratory’ (Noordegraaf, 2008).

‘Crime and safety’ became the main electoral issue in the 2002 local election campaign in Rotterdam, which was crucial in further institutionalizing and ‘normalizing’ a tougher stance on crime, immigrant integration and youth problems. In the 2002 elections, won decisively by maverick populist politician Pim Fortuyn and his *Livable Rotterdam* party (*Leefbaar Rotterdam*), crime and safety were made top priority. The 2002 coalition programme focused on a servile state (meaning that primary responsibility resided with citizens), ‘vital coalitions’ and responsible citizenship (Rotterdam City Council, 2002: 1–2). Two aspects were jointly articulated: (1) responsabilizing the community and citizens; and (2) law and order. Couched in the rhetoric of the ‘broken windows’ perspective (Wilson and Kelling 1989), it was argued that citizens of Rotterdam are responsible for a safe, clean and intact public environment

**Table 1** Key policy documents on crime and safety in the Netherlands over the last thirty years

Year	Policy document	Key concerns and diagnosis
1985	<i>Society and Crime</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rising crime: current strategy ineffective</li> <li>• Neoliberal invention of the Penal Company</li> <li>• Neoliberal focus on rationality and opportunity</li> <li>• Communitarian focus on bonding and social control</li> <li>• Responsibilization of various actors beyond the central state, eg local state, community and individual citizens</li> <li>• Dutch citizens are relatively more victimized</li> <li>• Demand for 'realist criminology': criminologists are denounced as idealists who are responsible for inadequate analysis and strategy, therefore a realism is needed</li> <li>• Communitarian and culture-pessimistic: restore moral order by norm enforcement and socialization of youth</li> <li>• Rearranging responsibilities and self-sustainability</li> <li>• Populist punitivism: surveys show that 'the public supports punitive responses'</li> <li>• Invention of risk and (safety)-chain cooperation</li> <li>• Focus on youth: youth action programme, monitoring devices and a combination of prevention and repression</li> <li>• Focus on drug-addicts: invention of selective incapacitation of drug addicts</li> <li>• Focus on safe environment: 'clean, proper and safe' (Broken Windows), active citizenship, public order maintenance</li> <li>• Communitarian focus on immigrant youth: these are seen as lacking adequate bonds to the Dutch community</li> </ul>
1990	<i>Law in Motion</i>	
1993	<i>Integral Safety Approach</i>	
1995	<i>Safety Policy (1995-1998)</i>	
1997	<i>Crime in Relation to the Integration of Ethnic Minorities Policy Paper</i> (CRIEM; Ministry of Justice, 1997)	
1999	<i>Integral Safety Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early detection and intervention: early intervention in families, 'broad school approach', monitoring, individualized trajectories</li> <li>• Communitarian diagnosis of lack of bonding and community cohesion: technique of 'integralization' of prevention-repression and governance, 'community building and communities that care'</li> <li>• Crime rates are relatively high because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of control;</li> <li>– lack of certainty and speed of punishment;</li> <li>– lack of individualized sanctions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Invention of 'career criminal': efficient technique of crime reduction should be targeting the career criminal</li> <li>• Selective intervention in space and time: 'hot spot' approach</li> <li>• Targeting crime and nuisance: national introduction of the local 'Rotterdam Approach'</li> <li>• Implementation of targeting the 'career criminal': Frequent Offender Institution</li> <li>• Targeting 'risk youth': special correction facilities and individual trajectories</li> <li>• Early intervention in families, Communities that Care</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation: contracts and measurement</li> <li>• Stimulating active involvement of local governments, neighbourhood communities and individual citizens</li> <li>• Individualized approach of offenders</li> <li>• Obligatory after-care</li> </ul>
2001	<i>Crime Control: Investing in Visible Government</i>	
2002-4	<i>Towards a Safer Society</i>	
2007	<i>Safety Begins by Prevention: Continuing to Build a Safer Society</i>	

while the state will take its responsibility to punish deviant behaviour (Rotterdam City Council, 2002). This approach combined a focus on *individual responsibility* and *normalcy* (cf. Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Wacquant, 2008; cf. Ong, 2006) with both ‘*community policing*’ (cf. Crawford, 1999) and an emphasis on the need for a *strong state* (Downes and Van Swaaningen, 2007; Schinkel, 2009). This approach has been continued since then, also after a new coalition took over in 2006. The new 2006 *Five Year Action Program Safe Rotterdam 2006–2010* made explicit that everyone needs to work together to prevent crime and maintain order (Rotterdam City Council 2006a). It was argued that next to repression *active citizenship* is crucial to fighting crime and securing order:

Structural improvements of safety in Rotterdam are impossible without the active input of its citizens. Stimulating active citizenship should render citizens much more involved in the safety approach. In citizen participation the initiative lies with (groups of) citizens. Government plays a facilitating role. (Rotterdam City Council, 2006a: 11)

In other words, in this depiction of a certain governing ideal, the majority of the population is deemed responsible and is construed as ‘eyes on the street’. Similarly, ‘community’ is described in terms of ‘preventive communities’, which means the mobilization of local neighbourhood ‘communities’ as a crime prevention strategy.

Although couched in a universalizing rhetoric, it is clear that crime and safety policy are specifically geared at ethnically deviant and/or poor populations (Noordegraaf, 2008; Wacquant, 2009). Part of recent developments is the increasing prevalence of a rhetoric of toughness. A bellicose rhetoric has taken hold of talk of crime and social problems related to urban safety. ‘Intervention teams’ make house calls in neighbourhoods scoring low on the Rotterdam Safety Index (the equivalent in the Hague is called ‘Housing Brigades’). This index, which for instance shows lower levels of safety if more ‘non-western allochtons’ live in a neighbourhood (Schinkel and van den Berg, 2011) has been called ‘the AEX-index of the Rotterdam safety climate’ (Van Ostaaijen and Tops, 2007: 23).<sup>2</sup> In addition to measuring crime it is an instrument of moral, economic and cultural mapping of space. ‘Problem neighbourhoods’ are in certain cases dubbed ‘Hot Spot Zones’, and this naming brings with it exceptional powers such as random body searches, which are otherwise prohibited in the Netherlands. In addition to this and congruent with a bellicose vocabulary, ‘city marines’ ‘operate’ in the city (Schinkel and van den Berg, 2011). ‘City Marines’ are high-level officials with exceptional powers to cut through red tape. Executive policy workers are dubbed ‘front line workers’ and a governmental agency named ‘Bureau Front Line’ has been created in order to cure social ills in ‘innovative’ ways. Its ‘tactics’ are often conceived as ‘operations’ performed on a city appearing ‘in the wrong charts’, meaning Rotterdam tops several unfavourable statistics. In the Rotterdam regulation of crime and safety,

then, 'individual responsibility' and 'community' are focal points of a local government that takes pride in its 'toughness' as it is 'sweeping the streets' (Van Swaaningen, 2008). In addition, *citizenship* is put forward as a leading concept and responsabilization as its leading technique (Van Houdt and Schinkel, 2009).

In 2002 citizenship became of special relevance for the local government. This was especially the case because citizenship, as a concept, concerns both rights and duties and the difficulty was on the one hand how to mobilize Rotterdam residents to assume responsibility and on the other hand how to deal with 'deviant citizens'. Citizenship became a technique to deal with both issues and was deliberately introduced as such (Van Schendelen, 2004). First of all individual citizens were summoned to become 'active' and 'responsible' citizens. Second, it was argued that citizens should cooperate together in a 'vital coalition' which is a 'responsible community' (Rotterdam City Council, 2009: 5, 10). These 'vital coalitions' are facilitated by the state, for example with financial means. As a consequence, at least 297 citizen participation projects took shape in 2009, more than 50 per cent of which were focused on safety and/or social cohesion (Schinkel, 2009).

### *The birth of neoliberal communitarianism*

Within a governmentality perspective, phenomena such as the state, community and citizens are regarded as an effect of overlapping and contradicting governmental rationalities (cf. Foucault, 2008). Above we described the local and national political programmes on the government of crime in the Netherlands since the 1980s. In conceptions such as those in the Rotterdam case, we believe elements of two rationalities of government can be discerned. On the one hand, *neoliberal* elements figure prominently, but on the other hand, these are almost always combined with and intricately woven into *communitarian* elements (Van Houdt and Schinkel, 2013; Schinkel and Van Houdt, 2010). Both neoliberalism (Dean, 1999; Foucault, 2004; Rose *et al.*, 2006; Brown, 2006; Miller and Rose, 2008) and communitarianism (Rose, 1999; Delanty, 2003; Dean, 2007) have been described as governmental rationalities. We argue, however, that these apparently oppositional rationalities are 'impure' in their actual existence as rationalities of reflection, and that they are often combined. This is in line with several authors that have noted an intricate connection between neoliberalism and neoconservatism (Brown, 2006). The epithets of 'neoliberalism' and 'communitarianism' never fully apply and would not do justice to the complexities of and paradoxes in images of the proper government of crime.

Neoliberalism may involve a 'zero tolerance' position, a criminalization of 'non-middle class conduct' and thus a focus on repression. A good example of the dominance of a neoliberal rationality is how criminal justice became represented and (re)modelled as a serial-chained production company focused on efficacy efficiency and output measurement (Ministry of Justice, 1985; cf. Steenhuis, 1984). The Penal Enterprise is connected to the dominance of New Public Management (NPM), and it remained the primary way of

speaking about criminal justice (eg Ministry of Justice, 1990; Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2002). NPM also influenced the local level, which is indicated by the increasing use of ‘performance indicators’, ‘monitoring systems’, the ‘publication of outcomes’ and ‘accountability’ (eg Rotterdam City Council, 2002). But neoliberalism is also perfectly compatible with an emphasis on family values, a pro-life standpoint, a support of a ‘thick’ notion of nationality and an accompanying heavy emphasis on cultural assimilationism (Dean, 1999, 2007). Yet precisely for that reason, taking as ‘general defining characteristic’ of neoliberalism the artificial character of liberty (Foucault, 2004: 167), ‘neoliberalism’ is in a sense too limited a concept to describe the rationale of governing programmes and techniques that combine such diverse elements in a joint focus on both *individual responsibility* and *community values*. In the Rotterdam case a combination was forged between individual responsibility and ‘community’, in which ‘active citizenship’ had everything to do with assuming responsibility to be part of ‘community’. This is something taking place in other countries as well. In the UK, for instance, Miller and Rose note that

within a rather short period, what began as a language of resistance and critique was transformed, no doubt for the best of motives, into an expert discourse and a professional vocation – community is now something to be programmed by Community Development Programmes, developed by Community Development Officers, policed by Community Police, guarded by Community Safety Programmes and rendered knowable by sociologists pursuing ‘community studies’. Communities became zones to be investigated, mapped, classified, documented, interpreted, their vectors explained to enlightened professionals-to-be in countless college courses and to be taken into account in numberless encounters between professionals and their clients, whose individual conduct is now to be made intelligible in terms of the beliefs and values of ‘their community’. (Miller and Rose, 2008: 89)

Similarly, Atkinson and Helms (2007) note that the context of crime and safety is one of the most prominent sites of the promotion of ‘community’. The communitarian rationality entails the idea that crime has risen in Western nation-states and that material conditions are not relevant for an analysis of crime (Etzioni, 1993). The level of crime is influenced by the total community fabric defined as the combined effort of strong families, schools and intact communities which teach values. The community needs to be defended against hard core psychopaths and criminals preferably by a strong state, and as there are too many rights and too few responsibilities, the constitutional rights need to be reconsidered from the perspective of public safety and crime fighting, so as to allow more interference in citizens’ lives (Etzioni, 1993).

We argue that the strategy that emerges out of the governmental imagination in the Dutch government of crime can be called neoliberal communitarianism. Neoliberal communitarianism can be regarded as a strategy of

governmentality that combines the main features of neoliberal governmentality with those of governmental communitarianism. It invokes a combination of New Public Management and the outsourcing of responsibility. It furthermore combines scientific measurement and treatment of social problems with the stimulation of 'active citizenship', and the rational governing of community with a rhetoric of the spontaneous work of community. Active citizenship becomes newly defined as community involvement, and the identification of lack of active citizenship is at once the identification, made scientifically measurable, of the 'risk citizen' (Van Gunsteren, 2008). This involves a renewed definition of the relation that is presupposed between state and citizen, and this is where, on the level of strategy, a shift in the relation between state and sovereignty becomes apparent. Liberty is increasingly defined as being willing to be what Jane Jacobs called 'eyes on the street', but in cooperation with state agencies, and thus is effectively depicted in terms of 'eyes of the state', as a Dutch national safety campaign made explicit in 2007.

In neoliberal communitarianism, individual, community and state can alternately be regarded as either source or solution to social problems. For example, the individual is a 'risk citizen' endangering 'the community' or he or she is at risk due to a faltering 'community' that can be amended by individual responsibility. The 'old' way of doing things, referring to the height of the Dutch welfare state, is regarded as 'bureaucratic' on the one hand, but as 'slackness' and 'gratuitousness', and as legacy from the 1960s and 70s, on the other hand. Risky *populations* are thus opposed to *communities* and, alternatively, a lacking *sense of community* is opposed to individuals *taking their responsibility*. Governing through 'active' or 'responsible' citizenship entails a neoliberal emphasis on 'individual responsibility' (Habermas, 1996; Delanty, 1997). Second, it 'refers to an assimilationism ('Dutch norms and values') that perhaps comes closest to certain communitarian notions of citizenship but also contains traces of a conservative conceptualization (cf. Delanty, 1997). Third, it refers to community protection by the state through both mass incarceration and selective incapacitation, as the discussion below will further illustrate. Finally, it refers to an active, effective and networking state that governs both up close and at a distance.

### *Neoliberal communitarian images of government*

Images of citizenship are pivotal in neoliberal communitarianism. It becomes clear that citizenship not only functions as a technique of distinction in the international management of populations (Hindess, 2000) but citizenship can also function as a 'dividing practice' (Foucault, 2000: 326) to differentiate a population into good/bad, moral/immoral, active/passive citizens by using 'adjectives' such as 'good', 'active' and 'responsible' citizenship (cf. Dean, 2007: 119–20). In effect, this leads to a discursive differentiation between two domains: 'society' and the 'outside society'. Those who are to be rehabilitated, integrated or educated are thought to reside 'outside society' (Schinkel, 2007,

2013). They are seen as lacking in membership of ‘society’, which is characterized by active citizenship, that is, the assuming of responsibility, and the adherence to ‘society’s norms and values’ (Schinkel and van Houdt, 2010). In addition to this, using adjectives such as active citizenship or the need of responsible citizens also mobilizes and ‘responsibilizes’ citizens. What becomes visible in Rotterdam is therefore a certain Janus-faced form of government. On the one hand, citizens’ ‘activity’ is facilitated and citizens are mobilized in governing practices. On the other hand, a repressive image of government becomes visible in conceptions of ‘intervention teams’ and ‘city marines’. Two images of the citizen thus appear in the Rotterdam policy: (1) the active citizen, which is a responsible citizen and to which policy initiatives are attached; and (2) the citizen that fails to act responsibly and at which repressive initiatives are targeted.

### *Facilitative and repressive responsabilization, excluding the high-risk citizen*

Specifically in the mobilization of citizens through ‘responsibilization’, ideal images of government can be discerned. As described above, the emphasis on individual responsibility in Rotterdam has a more general background in the development of Dutch crime policies. However, returning to the Rotterdam case, it is also instructive to look at the other face of ‘responsibilization’. We described two images of the citizen emerging in Rotterdam: the active citizen and the inactive or problem citizen, at which repressive measures are geared. This can be more precisely circumscribed. What if ‘active citizenship’, responsibility, self-help and autonomy are seen as lacking? This question is explicitly asked by the Rotterdam City Council: ‘What if the context of active citizenship is not present, for example because people are dealing with social or physical problems or because an area has to be re-conquered, than other tactics are necessary (intervention teams, hot spots, city marines etc.)’ (Rotterdam City Council, 2009: 26).

The Rotterdam municipality uses several ways of dealing with ‘irresponsibility’ and working towards responsibility. One of these interventions is called the *Early Intervention Families (EIF: Vroegtijdige Interventie in Gezinnen*; Rotterdam City Council, 2006b). The *EIF* tries ‘to intervene in a multi-problem family as early as possible, based on signals out of the field, and to learn parents to take responsibility for their children and to integrate in society’ (2006b: 1). The aim of *EIF* is to educate responsibility, to prevent crime and nuisance and to better chances on the job market (2006b: 2). A ‘family coach’ is placed with the family for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and has to teach the parents ‘responsibility’, and sends parents to language courses and children (back) to school (2006b: 2).

From the Rotterdam case, it becomes clear that the technique of ‘responsibilization’ (conceptualized as ‘responsible citizenship’) is Janus-faced (Schinkel and Van Houdt, 2010). This concept of responsabilization has been used by O’Malley (1992), Burchell (1993), Barry *et al.* (1996), O’Malley and

Palmer (1996), Rose (1999) and Garland (2001) to refer to the process of making individuals, private sector and community responsible for public tasks (cf. Donzelot, 1979b). Responsibilization, as activation of community, public-private alliances and the production of active citizens is, according to Garland (2001: 124) a crucial element of a new way of ‘governing-at-a-distance’ (Garland, 2001: 127; cf. Rose, 1999). However, we further develop this concept showing how a distinction is in order between what can be called *facilitative responsabilization* and *repressive responsabilization*.

Facilitative responsabilization assumes a pre-existing autonomous citizen, a citizen already properly socialized, only to be mobilized and called into active service. Indeed, facilitative responsabilization is a crucial technique of governing-at-a-distance. On the other hand, *repressive responsabilization* is situated in the arena of ‘interventions’. These take place where ‘risky citizens’ are located, and it involves active efforts at (re)socialization into ‘responsible citizens’. This is a site where the state and other political subjects mobilize forces to ‘act-very-close’ in the homes, minds and bodies of people (for ‘early detection’ is said to begin when the baby is still in its mother’s belly). Facilitative responsabilization takes place, for instance, where communities are mobilized to counter crime because a high victimization risk exists. Repressive responsabilization occurs where it is citizens themselves who are deemed risky and ‘in need of disciplinary interventions’.

In addition to this, the neoliberal communitarian focus on ‘responsible citizenship’ and ‘responsible communities’ also affects the way punishment works in the Netherlands in general, which points toward a form of repression that cannot be said to entail responsabilization and which involves incarceration for a longer time as a way of protecting the larger community. This is part of the gradual growing of a general disbelief in the resocialization ideal (Garland, 2001; Downes and Van Swaaningen, 2007), and it is especially visible in the so-called ‘Frequent Offenders Institution Order’ (FOIO [Instelling Stelselmatige daders, ISD]) active since 2004. The practical object (a ‘frequent offender’) is: (1) (s)he who committed a serious crime; (2) a person convicted in the last five years for at least three other crimes; (3) a serious threat for the safety of persons and goods (Struijk, 2007: 350–4). The primary goal of measures aimed at such persons is ‘social defence’ (art. 38m sub 2 *Strafrecht* (*Sr*); cf. Struijk, 2007; Downes and Van Swaaningen, 2007). In addition to this – as a non-obligatory subsidiary goal and only in case of expected success of ‘resocialization’ – a treatment *can* be added (art. 38m sub 2 *Sr*; cf. Struijk, 2007). Under the FOIO, frequent offenders can be incarcerated for two years because of ‘their habits’ in a special facility. While in 2006 some 500 out of 844 cells in such facilities were occupied (Tollenaar, 2007), this number subsequently rose, reaching 679 in 2007 (Vollaard, 2010). In the period 2004–2007 more than 1,000 persons have been incarcerated in a Frequent Offenders Institution (Vollaard, 2010). From our perspective, these figures are mainly of interest in terms of how such measures are legitimated. First, these measures are legitimated in name of the claim that ‘society must be defended’ (compare:



Foucault, 1997). Second, these measures are ‘scientifically’ legitimated by research ‘showing’ the ‘positive effect on crime rates’ (Vollaard, 2010). However, the ‘selective incapacitation’ of certain citizens, which entails ‘rearranging the distribution of offenders in society’ (Feeley and Simon, 1992: 458) in defence of community or based on claims of effectiveness, in effect puts the membership status of such citizens on hold for a long time.

## **Conclusion: the governing of crime and conceptions of citizenship**

The ‘strategic’ field we have described consists of a configuration of neoliberal, communitarian and welfarist political rationalities. Neoliberal communitarianism is a governmental strategy which combines a focus on individual responsibility, community and a selectively tough state. It combines a vocabulary of the state as enterprise, facilitator, moralizer, with an image of the state as defender of ‘the’ community, and of the state as punisher. To shed light on this newly emerging strategy we focused sharply on the transformations occurring in the political programmes and techniques used in the government of crime. To clarify: we do not claim that political or cultural path-dependency plays no role and that the ‘old’ welfarist strategy has been defeated and disappeared. However, we do argue that welfarism is ‘reinscribed’ within this new governmental configuration (cf. Rose and Miller, 1992; Garland, 2001; Wacquant, 2009). Neoliberal communitarianism may be described as one of the European roads ‘to the penal treatment of poverty and inequality, characterised by the *conjoint* intensification of *both social-welfare and penal interventions* (rather than the replacement of one by the other as in America)’ (Wacquant, 2009: 4). But it might also be described as the *main* European road, as it seems to be at work in the UK and France also (Van Houdt *et al.*, 2011). At the same time neoliberal communitarianism seems to have broader applicability in the bureaucratic fields as it can be signalled in fields such as immigrant integration and immigration or youth and the family.

On the level of organization, both neoliberal forms of governance and communitarian holistic approaches to social problems amount to pleas for ‘institutional cooperation’ and against existing bureaucracies that are perceived as failing in the field of crime and safety. Significantly, on the aspects organization and regulation, neoliberalism and communitarianism appear most compatible. This concerns precisely the *executive* side of crime and safety policies. One might argue that in the end, rhetoric of communities, responsible citizens and contracts between citizens and the state may turn out to be just that: mere rhetoric of governing. However, it forms a powerful rhetoric that provides images of both government and of citizens that occurs in various countries (cf. Downes and Morgan, 2002; Atkinson and Helms, 2007). Most importantly, we conclude on the basis of the analysis presented that neoliberal communitarianism has emerged as a *differentiating strategy* in the articulation of *citizenship*. First, it draws new lines across the space between citizen and the

state (which, like the concept of citizen, is only one effect of a larger ensemble of government). Second, it differentiates along these new lines between good and faulty citizens. And third, it reframes both these conceptions. This leads then not to two images of the citizen but to a threefold differentiation between: (1) the active citizen; (2) the low risk citizen; (3) the high risk citizen. The latter category consists of those to whom neither facilitative nor repressive responsabilization is geared, but who are 'selectively incapacitated' and hence exempted from the larger community. This three-tiered hierarchy of governing images of citizens, we argue, signals crucial shifts in the self-reflection of government as it increasingly moves away from a rationality based on conceptions of welfare.

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## Acknowledgements

Thanks to Ad Beex and Daniel Schinkel for their valuable suggestions.

## Notes

- 1 This semantic shift can be understood as, in the words of Stanley Cohen, 'thinning the mesh and widening the net' (Cohen, 1979: 346–50). Accordingly, this opened up the possibility for criminal justice to fight nuisance (non-crime issues) and for the civic administration apparatus to deal with (little) crime (introduced ten years later in the 2002 Safety programme, *Towards a Safer Society [Naar een Veiliger Samenleving]*).
- 2 In reference to the Amsterdam stock exchange index, the Amsterdam Exchange Index (AEX).

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