

# Codebook

## The Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) dataset, 1990–2015

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### Background

The Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) dataset was built following the 22 July 2011 terrorist attacks in Norway and the discovery of the German terrorist cell *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* in the same year. These two events exposed a critical need for more updated and systematic events data on right-wing terrorism and violence in post-1990 Western Europe. As the number of violent events motivated by right-wing beliefs or by minority biases is far too large to be dealt with rigorously and systematically, the RTV dataset includes only the most severe types of events: such events are fewer in number and less likely to go unnoticed.

### Sources

All RTV events have been registered manually by the same person, using information from a wide range of different sources, most of which can be accessed online from hyperlinks embedded in the full version of the dataset, available to researchers upon demand. Most of the information on events comes from online newspaper articles. Other key sources include activist interviews and autobiographies, official and unofficial RTV chronologies and datasets, personal communication with RTV experts, anti-fascist blogs and bulletins, court documents, online videos, and some secondary literature. All events have been coded along a range of variables, including time and location, perpetrator and victim characteristics,

organizational affiliations, weapon types, and number of casualties. The information for most events comes from multiple sources.

### **Representativeness**

Given the clandestine nature of RTV and the limited amount of available and reliable information sources, it is unrealistic to think that all relevant RTV events that occurred between 1990 and 2015 are covered by the dataset. The dataset should, however, include all relevant events with a deadly outcome. It can therefore be used to compare frequencies of such deadly events across time and space, and to make causal inferences from such patterns with reasonable confidence.

### **Inclusion criteria**

The RTV dataset includes only events whose target selection – minority groups, political adversaries, or the government – is premised on right-wing beliefs. Events resulting from physical confrontations initiated by the victim, and violence caused by internal disputes within or between right-wing groups, are not included. As a general rule, poorly documented attacks whose motivation remains vague are not included.

Furthermore, the dataset only includes violent events of a certain severity or terroristic quality. More specifically, the dataset covers (1) attacks with a mortal or near mortal outcome, (2) attacks involving offensive and active use of potentially deadly weapons, such as knives, firearms, and bombs, (3) major attack plots involving use of deadly weapons, (4) preparations for armed struggle, such as gathering and storing bomb-making materials or holding major arms repositories, and (5) other violent events that unmistakably qualify as terrorism.

Vandalism and other attacks causing material damage only, such as fire bombs targeting empty buildings at night, are not included.

## **Coding units**

Almost every coding unit in the dataset represents a single event. A handful of coding units (events) do however include multiple attacks, either because they happened consecutively and were carried out by the same perpetrator, or because they form part of a chain of events in which each independent attack would be considered too small to be included in the dataset.

## **VARIABLES**

### **Variable 1: CaseID**

Each event has been given a specific identification number based on the year, month, and day when the event occurred (only available in the full version). For example, 1 January 1990 becomes 1990-1-1. When several events occurred on the same date, a letter is added, beginning with 'a', to distinguish between each event (e.g. 1990-1-1-a). Some events lack information about day or month. In such cases, numbers are replaced with the letters 'm' for month and 'd' for day (1990-m-d).

### **Variable 2: Year**

Numerical (1990–2015).

### **Variable 3: Month**

Numerical (1–12).

### **Variable 4: Day**

Numerical (1–31).

## **Variable 5: Country**

10 – Austria

11 – Belgium

12 – Denmark

13 – Finland

14 – France

15 – Germany

16 – Greece

17 – Iceland

18 – Ireland

19 – Italy

20 – Luxemburg

21 – Netherlands

22 – Norway

23 – Portugal

24 – Spain

25 – Sweden

26 – Switzerland

27 – United Kingdom.

### **Variable 6: City/village/location**

Text variable.

### **Variable 7: Incident type**

1. *Premeditated attack* – attacks in which perpetrators have actively pursued a predefined person or target group
2. *Spontaneous attack* – attacks triggered by random confrontations between perpetrator(s) and victim(s) associated with some predefined target group
3. *Attack plot* – planned attack by an identifiable group or individual involving use of deadly weapons
4. *Preparation for armed struggle* – discoveries of bomb-making materials or major arms repositories belonging to right-wing activists.

### **Variable 8: Perpetrator type**

1. *Organized groups* – known entities with five or more members whose association primarily relies on a strong commitment to right-wing politics
2. *Affiliated members* of organised groups acting on their own
3. *Autonomous cells* – clandestine entity of two to four members whose association primarily relies on a strong commitment to right-wing politics
4. *Gangs* – informal constellations of three or more acquaintances with a general right-wing commitment, but whose loose association primarily relies on social bonds
5. *Unorganized* – two or more perpetrators with no known association to any specific right-wing group, cell, or gang

6. *Lone actor* – single perpetrators who prepare and sometimes also carry out attacks without anyone else knowing about it beforehand
7. *Shadow groups* – unresolved attacks claimed by formerly unknown groups
99. Missing information.

**Variable 9: Organizational affiliation**

Text variable. Variables 9 and 10 list organizational affiliation(s) the perpetrator(s) may have had to known groups, movements, or parties on the far right. Note that such organizational affiliations do not imply that listed organizations are directly involved in the event.

**Variable 10: Secondary organizational affiliation**

Text variable – cases with single perpetrators with multiple organizational affiliations or multiple perpetrators with different organizational affiliations.

**Variable 11: Lone actor no.**

Numerical variable (0–78) used to group events committed by the same lone actor.

**Variable 12: Target group**

1. Jews
2. Muslims
3. Immigrant/foreigner/asylum seeker/refugee
4. Left-wing
5. Government
6. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)
7. Gypsy/Roma
8. Pro-immigration activists

9. Black
10. Police
11. Homeless/low social status
12. Physically or mentally disabled
13. Deserters
14. Media
15. Separatist
16. Other
99. Unknown.

**Variable 13: Weapon**

1. Explosives
2. Petrol bomb/fire bomb/Molotov cocktail
3. Handgun
4. Shotgun/rifle
5. Automatic firearm
6. Knife
7. Letter bomb
8. Beating/kicking (no weapons used)
9. Tear gas
10. Pepper spray
11. Blunt instruments
12. Chemical/biological weapon
13. Arson
14. Rocket launcher/grenade
15. Other

99. Unknown.

**Variable 14: Secondary weapon**

Same values as variable 14.

**Variable 15: Weapons**

Text variable – short description of weapon type.

**Variable 16: Number of persons killed**

Numerical variable ('m' = missing data).

**Variable 17: Number of persons wounded**

Numerical variable ('m' = missing data).

**Variable 18: Comments/description**

Text variable (only available in the full version) – brief comment or description of event (more detailed descriptions are found in the corresponding source material available).

**Variables 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24**

Sources – each variable/column represents a unique source (online sources are embedded as hyperlinks).