

## **Abstract**

This study explored how political journalists enact the counter-response from right-wing populist parties PVV and FvD to the securitization of COVID-19 in the Netherlands. The study conducted seven semi-structured interviews with Dutch political journalists from various media about their journalistic roles. This role decides how much and in what way the resistance from populist parties to the securitization of COVID-19 is given a platform in the media. Built upon pre-existing concepts and definitions of the journalistic role, the findings of the study show that while a clear discrepancy is visible between the two parties, the journalists predominantly enact the counter-reaction of both PVV and FvD in an educational role – in which the journalists aim to give more context to the news. Aside from this, the study found that within the gatekeeper role - next to solely opening and closing the gates -, a third stage exists within this role. While the gates closed for FvD due to denying the existence of the virus, certain exceptions still opened the gates for the party due to the opposing character of the party.

## **Keywords**

Securitization, right-wing populism, COVID-19, journalism, journalistic role, The Netherlands, Partij voor de Vrijheid [PVV], Forum voor Democratie [FvD]