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## **MEDIA, MIGRATION AND TERRORISM – SOME CORRELATIONS\*\*\***

### **Abstract**

How do contemporary media approach the phenomena of migration and terrorism and their correlation? What factors contribute to the increased media attention given to news related to terrorism and migration? What are the experiences of the academic community studying these phenomena in the United States, Europe, and more specifically, in the Mediterranean gateway countries of Europe – Italy, Spain, and Greece? How does the rise in irregular entries into Europe truly impact the number of terrorist attacks affecting European countries, as well as their intensity and the number of casualties resulting from such incidents? These are some of the research questions this paper seeks to address. Drawing on available literature concerning media and academic treatments of terrorism and migration, as well as insights into their similarities and differences, contradictions and paradoxes, this study concludes that, despite media portrayals often marked by sensationalism and spectacle, academic analyses of these phenomena and their correlation do not provide unambiguous confirmation that a greater influx of irregular migration

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into Europe directly leads to a higher number of terrorist attacks and/or an increased number of casualties on European soil.

**Keywords:** terrorism, migration, media, reporting, radicalization, correlation

*“Half a truth is often a great lie.”*

*Benjamin Franklin*

## INTRODUCTION

The media play a central role in informing the public about what is happening worldwide, especially in areas where the audience lacks direct knowledge or experience, which opens space for shaping public opinion.

One of the most significant ways the media shapes public opinion is through agenda-setting. This is the process in which the media decide which topics and issues to cover and how to present them to the public, significantly influencing opinions among media consumers (Semakula et al., 2015). Another way the media can shape public opinion is through selective reporting, where the press chooses which aspects of a given “big issue” to report on while ignoring others (Finegan, 2015). Framing or stereotyping is how the media, through patterned reporting on specific processes, phenomena, individuals, or groups, significantly influences how people interpret them (Cacciatore, Scheufele, and Iyengar, 2016).

When we apply these ways the media shape social reality to frequently discussed terms, such as terrorism and migration, we notice that from agenda-setting, through selective reporting, to framing attitudes about these phenomena, the role of the media in (dis)informing the public is confirmed. Therefore, it is essential in this research to analyze the media activity of different types of media regarding terrorism and migration and how their interdependence is portrayed. To understand the message the media wants to convey regarding these terms, it is necessary to determine the representation and intensity of specific factors contributing to news related to terrorism and migration, gaining more significant attention from media outlets.

The paper further analyzes the academic community’s past experiences regarding the connection between migration and terrorism, using examples of research efforts in the U.S. and Europe, specifically in countries representing “gateways to Europe”: Italy, Greece, and

Spain, as well as countries often seen as migrant destinations, such as Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. There are conflicting opinions within the academic community regarding the causality between migration and terrorism, often based on the hypothesis being tested, i.e., whether the research team seeks to prove the analogy or disprove it. Therefore, in this review paper, the authors will refer to already published works from both research areas to answer the question: Does the increase in irregular entries into Europe affect the number of terrorist actions, their intensity, and the number of casualties in those attacks? Additionally, a comparative analysis of the number of irregular migrant entries into Europe (Frontex 2024), as well as the number of terrorist actions and fatalities (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024) in the last three years, will provide a significant framework for understanding the relationship between these phenomena in Europe.

## **TERRORISM AND MIGRATION IN THE MEDIA SPACE**

As two of the most prominent phenomena of today, terrorism and migration attract perhaps a disproportionate amount of attention when it comes to the media and their reporting, even if we take the “facilitating circumstance” of the press to be the corporate competition in which they fight at all costs for circulation and the number of views on electronic platforms, what the academic community must react to is the frequent occurrence of elements of spectacle, unverified news, and ultimately poor scientific treatment of these phenomena in academic writing.

Therefore, it is essential to reconsider the approaches to studying terrorism and increasingly securitized migration, which (over)emphasize their communicative dimension. The conceptual gaps in this area contribute to the fact that much of the literature related to reporting on terrorism in mass media is often speculative in nature, where: “broad statements are made without any scientifically acceptable evidence to support such arguments” (Alexander and Picard, 1991, 49). Referring to the critical stance of Jeffrey Ross (Ross, 2007, 215–216), Cristina Archetti points out that “there is a striking similarity among the available publications on this topic, where many of the same topics are covered and previously cited journal articles are repeatedly paraphrased, providing very little new information” (Archetti, 2013, 33). Of course, the aspiration of this review paper is not to conclude the correlation between the media, migration, and terrorism but to highlight the difficulties researchers

face when trying to innovate existing academic efforts with the latest quantitative indicators relevant to the research.

## Media and terrorism

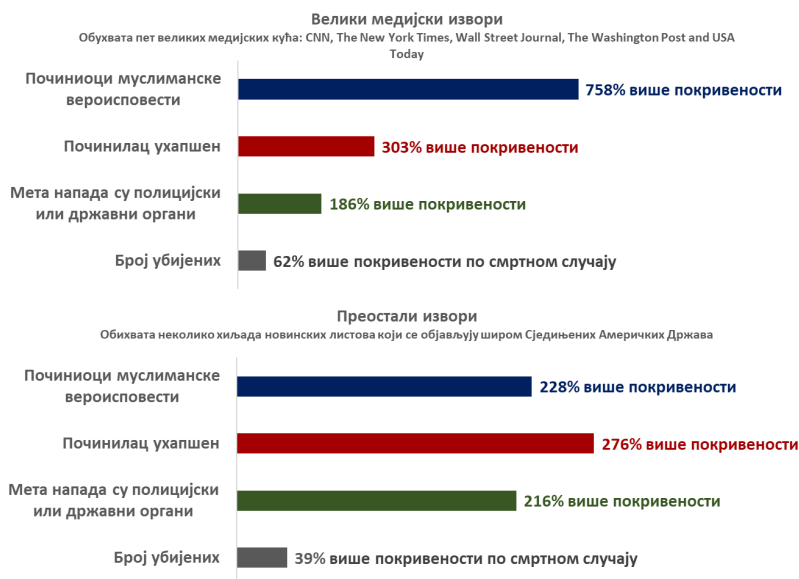
Media coverage of terrorism is highly inconsistent: some events, ranging from clear links to terrorism to terrorist attacks, receive a lot of media attention, while certain events with clear connections to terrorism receive significantly less media coverage or even go “under the radar” of media professionals, depending on the variables that accompany them. An earlier study that dealt with terrorist attacks in the United States from 1980 to 2001 showed that they gained more attention if they caused fatalities if airlines were targeted, if a hostage crisis followed the terrorist act, or if domestic terrorist groups were involved (Chermak and Gruenewald, 2006). Have these variables stood the “test of time,” and how does this relationship look after the significant watershed in understanding and studying terrorism – since September 11?<sup>1</sup>

In a study by the American Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START, 2021), researchers observed differences in media reporting on terrorist events in the U.S. from 2005 to 2017. They focused on three key characteristics: the perpetrator, the attack target, and the number of fatalities. They assessed that these factors primarily influenced the amount of reporting on attacks in U.S. media.

Figure 1. Factors Determining the Amount of Media Attention during a Terrorist Attack



<sup>1</sup> “The beginning of the 21st century will be remembered as the dramatic Manichean struggle of the forces of civilization against the dangerous forces of terrorism.” (Stanar 2020, 75).



*Source: Authors.*

In this factor analysis, in line with the more prevalent victimization of followers of the youngest monotheism, a variable was added in which the perpetrator of the terrorist act is Muslim. What is striking is that in all media sources, attacks on average received 357% more coverage if the attacker was Muslim, while this was even more pronounced in large media houses – as much as 758%. As for local media, interest in such content was significantly lower (Kearns et al. 2019). From this analysis, we also see that media coverage was more pronounced when the perpetrator was arrested (partly because an arrest in itself is an event that gets reported), when law enforcement or government officials were targeted, and when the attacks resulted in human casualties. An additional fatality meant an average increase in media coverage by 46% (Kearns et al. 2019).

Differentiating between events that receive significant and lesser media attention is substantial. Research shows that the media play a decisive role in changing public opinion, perceptions about the importance of specific issues, and discussions about national policy, which can significantly impact attitudes toward how the public perceives terrorism and its ideologues, inspirers, and protagonists. Significantly increased media coverage in cases when the perpetrator was Muslim points to an imbalanced review of terrorist actions in the American public. In

the dataset on which this study relies, Muslims committed 12.5% of the attacks in the U.S. but received nearly half of the coverage of all terrorism-related events (Kearns et al., 2019). The fact that the most severe terrorist attacks, which cause the most fatalities, certainly attract the most attention does not mean that only terrorism gets significant media attention – these are also rare but extreme events that are the easiest to remember, such as the most expansive migration crisis of 2015 (Ritchie and Roser 2019).

Research from the European academic community also indicates that the frequent pairing of Islam and Muslims, as a group with specific negative attributes (such as violence or even terrorism), significantly influences negative attitudes toward particular groups of news consumers, in this case, Muslims residing in Europe, but also newcomers who are also followers of the youngest monotheism (Saleem et al. 2017).

The research team led by Christian von Sikorski from the University of Kaiserslautern analyzed how the media portrayed Muslim Islamist terrorism in three European countries (Austria, Germany, and Switzerland) between 2015 and 2017. They examined 12 daily newspapers of various qualities (two quality and two tabloid newspapers in each country) through more than 1,000 individual news articles (Sikorski et al. 2018).

The fact that nearly half of the reviewed articles contained undifferentiated news reporting speaks for itself and shows that “news consumers” in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland (no significant deviations were registered) were continuously exposed to high doses of information that activate stereotypes. Exposure to news that permanently associates Muslims with highly negative connotations, such as terrorism, contributes to the rise of Islamophobia and benefits those who elevate the religious connotation of conflicts to the level of civilizational differences (Subotić 2019, 481). Almost every other text in their sample contained at least one undifferentiated news story linking Muslims to terrorism (Sikorski et al. 2022). The appeal that the authors directed to journalists and journalistic associations concerns the need to explicitly separate Muslims (immigrants of all generations) from Islamist terrorists, as undifferentiated media coverage can promote Islamophobia and negatively impact intergroup relations between Muslims and non-Muslims living in European societies.

## Media and migrations

The phenomenon of rising anti-immigrant sentiment and the rejection of migrants is highly complex and is often linked to the portrayal of these individuals in the media. This is something that academic research has been analyzing for quite some time, noticing that the representation of this social group in the media is primarily stereotypical, negative, and manipulative. The significance that the phenomenon of migration holds for media professionals coincided (not coincidentally) with the general rise of the discourse of victimization and rejection of certain social groups, polarized through social media, and closely connected with the rise of anti-immigrant right-wing movements (in some countries, even the rise to power of openly anti-immigration European parties), with prominent examples such as Vox, Santiago Abascal in Spain; Lega, Matteo Salvini, and Brothers of Italy, Giorgia Meloni in Italy; or Golden Dawn (*Λαϊκός Σύνδεσμος*), Nikolaos Michaloliakos in Greece. Research focused on Mediterranean countries is particularly significant given that these countries represent the Mediterranean “gates” of Europe, which have absorbed nearly 90 percent of irregular entries into other European Union countries through three main routes since 2014.<sup>2</sup>

A research team from the Observatory of Audiovisual Content (Observatorio de los Contenidos Audiovisuales) at the University of Salamanca led a consortium together with researchers from the University of Milan (Italy) and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece) to understand the reality of media representation of migration in these countries, with particular attention to the hate speech to which migrants and refugees are exposed. This project recently resulted in a book titled “Migrants and Refugees in Southern Europe Beyond the News: Photographs, Hate, and Journalist Perception” (Calderón and Veglis 2023). It focuses on three main issues: the photographs used by mainstream media when reporting on migration phenomena, the presence of racist and xenophobic hate speech on Twitter and YouTube, and the views of journalists specializing in migration.

<sup>2</sup> “The Central Mediterranean route with the main pressure on the shores of Italy, the Western Mediterranean route aimed at the shores of Spain, and the Eastern Mediterranean route with the Aegean as the ‘gateway to Europe’ for migrants coming from the Middle East through Turkey. The branch of the Eastern Mediterranean route that connects Greece with Central European countries is called the Western Balkan route, due to its geographical significance for Serbia and other countries of the Western Balkans.” (Subotić 2022, 180).

First, four dominant frameworks for representing migrants in mainstream media in Southern Europe were identified: normalization, victimization, social burden, and threat. It was found that in “mainstream media” in Mediterranean countries, the frameworks depicting migrants as victims, burdens, and/or threats dominate. It is particularly noticeable that negative frameworks (those portraying migrants as burdens and those identifying them as threats) significantly increased between 2014 and 2019. Although the research pattern is shared across all three countries, Greek media offer a somewhat more negative portrayal of migration through their media frameworks (Calderón and Veglis 2023).

A detailed analysis of media content shows that hatred towards migrants is primarily argued through their association with crime, terrorism, and social consumption.<sup>3</sup> For example, fake news or inaccurate news published (before the information is verified) claiming that the perpetrator of a crime is of foreign origin or articles suggesting that migrants are more likely to receive more social benefits than residents. These narratives are often supported by unverified information, later multiplied in the digital space, fueling unfounded yet deeply rooted fears. It is evident that extremist narratives in the media space, directly or indirectly targeting the migrant population, can lead to the acceptance and intensification of such views in broader social discourse. These views are double-edged about decision-makers – sometimes politicians fall under media propaganda, while at other times, they encourage it. What is indicative is the pronounced presence of specific terms used in journalistic texts and reports to describe migrant movements, such as ‘swarms,’ ‘floods,’ ‘waves,’ and similar, as well as the indiscriminate use of racist and xenophobic labels towards this group.

In this context, journalists specializing in this field are concerned. They recognize that some bad practices and limitations hinder more objective, accurate, and humane media coverage of migration phenomena. There is an inevitable divide between those who place journalistic practice above all else and those who defend the humanity and human rights of migrants and refugees as priority values. Journalists in many countries must adhere to an ethical code of conduct to regulate the profession. Some of them have codes specifically for the migration topic. The Roman Charter of Journalists (Consiglio Nazionale dell’Ordine dei Giornalisti

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<sup>3</sup> “The factor of hatred in the media space can be directly linked to the increase in the number of offenses classified as hate crimes in the analyzed countries, as well as more broadly in Europe.” (Rubiera 2023).



[CNOG]) is an example. Journalists, civil society organizations, and the UN Refugee Agency developed it. It is based on four key principles: adopting clear and precise terminology, using accurate and verified information, protecting sources, and verifying journalistic constructions by experts (WACC 2023).

## **DO INCREASED MIGRATIONS DIRECTLY CAUSE A RISE IN TERRORIST ATTACKS – WHAT DO THE FACTS SAY?**

The serious study of irregular (undocumented) immigration and its relationship with terrorism in contemporary literature is marked by the duality of delegated hypotheses and, consequently, the results that emerge.

From one perspective, we might expect undocumented immigration to be associated with increased terrorist activity for several reasons. First and most directly, undocumented immigrants could increase the number of potential terrorists through the “importation” of individuals with terrorist intentions. For example, Leiken and Brooke, in their analysis, identify nearly 400 global jihadist terrorists in Europe and North America between 1993 and 2004, noting that while most immigrants are not terrorists, most terrorists are immigrants (Leiken and Brooke 2006, 505). Additionally, Bove and Böhmelt, for example, found that migrants function as a means to spread terrorism. Specifically, they argue that while overall immigration reduces the risk of terrorism, immigration from countries with significant terrorist activity increases the risk of terrorist attacks for host societies (Bove and Böhmelt 2016, 574). Similarly, Milton and colleagues found that host countries face more significant dangers of terrorism due to refugee flows (Milton et al. 2013).

Furthermore, undocumented immigrants might present a particular threat compared to other types of migrants because the unregulated and secretive nature of unauthorized migration could be an ideal route for the entry of potential terrorists. In other words, individuals with extensive criminal histories or connections to terrorist organizations have a strong incentive to remain undetected, thus increasing the likelihood of attempting to enter destination countries through informal migration channels. “The criminal ‘signature’ concerning the legality of ‘merged courts’ between organized crime and potential terrorism is evident in

the example of the collusion between smugglers and Islamist extremism” (Subotić 2024, 53).

A second, less direct mechanism is the radicalization of immigrants once they have arrived in the host country. Several studies suggest that the unfavorable socio-political and economic conditions faced by immigrants and their children could make them more susceptible to radicalization. For instance, Milton and colleagues argue that “grim conditions in refugee camps and the treatment of refugees by host states can contribute to the radicalization of refugees” (Milton et al. 2013, 629). Additionally, Piazza found that countries where minority groups face economic discrimination, such as unequal access to healthcare, jobs, and education, were at greater risk of domestic terrorism (Piazza 2011, 343). Finally, a review of the literature on jihadist terrorism suggests that “socio-political alienation is a key driver of the radicalization of immigrants and their children” (Wilner and Dubouloz 2020, 35). Since undocumented immigrants and their descendants face pronounced social disdain and limited access to economic and social resources, this can lead to the formation of a “new underclass” (Massey 2008), which may result in a circumstance where unauthorized migrants are at increased risk of radicalization. Regarding the radicalization of already-arrived immigrants, some researchers have noted the ability of terrorist groups to exploit dense immigrant networks in host countries to spread radicalization. As previously mentioned, Bove and Böhmelt argue that “terrorist organizations can potentially exploit links between group members, which then encourage the radicalization of migrants, ultimately leading to a higher level of terrorism in the host country” (Bove and Böhmelt 2016, 579). Considering the views of these authors, there is sufficient reason to suggest that irregular immigration will increase the risk of terrorism.

On the other hand, the study of the links between migration and terrorism includes a perspective that suggests that undocumented immigration and terrorism are largely orthogonal. Regarding the terrorist consequences of immigration flows, Forrester and colleagues examined 170 countries over two and a half decades (1990-2015), focusing on immigration from countries amid armed conflicts and countries with majority Muslim populations, and found almost no relationship between immigration and terrorism for host countries (Forrester et al. 2019, 537).

This zero relationship may be especially relevant in the case of the United States, as the vast majority of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. do not come from countries that represent a significant “reservoir” of

terrorist ideas and actions. Indeed, 71 percent of unauthorized immigrants in the United States come from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, or El Salvador, none of which ranks among the top 50 countries in the world for terrorist activities (Rosenblum and Ruiz Soto 2015). Therefore, in line with the findings of Bove and Böhmelt, who established that only immigration from countries prone to terrorism is associated with increased terrorist activity, we can expect that undocumented migration flows will have little impact on terrorism in the U.S. (Bove and Böhmelt 2016, 581).

Moreover, while Leiken and Brooke previously discovered that most global jihadist terrorists are immigrants, they also noted that only a small percentage of terrorists entered illegally. Only 6 percent of terrorists who carried out attacks in Europe and North America entered illegally, and no terrorists entered the U.S. from Mexico. The authors conclude that “the Mexican border poses a less serious threat to national security than the Canadian border or, in that case, the air and sea borders of the United States” (Leiken and Brooke 2006, 513). A more recent biographical analysis of nearly 500 jihadist terrorists in the United States supports this point, revealing that only one percent were irregular immigrants (Bergen et al. 2019). It is also worth noting that an exclusive focus on Islamism-based terrorism distracts from the growing number of terrorist attacks motivated by far-right ideology, which primarily does not draw its sources of “inspiration” from Islam (Zapotosky 2019).

This “lack” of terrorist activity along the U.S.-Mexico border explains the trivially low mortality risk posed by terrorists from the body of irregular immigrants to the U.S. in recent decades. A 2019 CATO Institute report calculated the risk of an American being killed by a foreign-born terrorist between 1975 and 2017, including deaths during the September 11 attacks. It was determined that the annual murder rate among foreign-born terrorists was 0.026 per 100,000 (Nowrasteh 2019). In other words, the annual chance of an American being killed in a “typical” criminal homicide was 264 times higher during the same period. Regarding undocumented immigrants, the report found that the annual chance of an American being killed or injured by an undocumented immigrant terrorist was essentially zero. Taken together, these findings dismiss the thesis that undocumented immigration has been linked to an increase in terrorism in the United States.

As for the latest data, in terms of the number of deaths in terrorist attacks worldwide, the past year witnessed a rise in the danger of terrorism. In 2023, the number of deaths from terrorism increased by 22 percent

(8,352 deaths), marking the highest level since 2017. Even excluding the most intense Hamas terrorist attack of October 7, 2023, fatalities would still have increased by five percent (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024).

Although Israel endured the most significant terrorist attack of 2023, it was not the country most affected by terrorism. Burkina Faso is now ranked first on the global list of countries most affected by terrorism, marking the first time that a country other than Afghanistan or Iraq has topped the index. Nearly 2,000 people were killed in terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso in 258 incidents, accounting for almost a quarter of all global deaths from terrorism (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024). Regional data shows that “the Sahel remains the most vulnerable region, accounting for 43 percent of global terrorism deaths” (Đorić 2024, 41).

Armed conflicts continue to be the primary driver of terrorism, with over 90 percent of attacks and 98 percent of terrorism deaths in 2023 occurring in conflict countries, which somewhat relativizes the often-used phrase that “a terrorist act can be characterized as the peacetime equivalent of a war crime” (van Zijldewijn 2015, 213). The increasingly evident discourse correlating the number of terrorist attacks with countries directly involved in conflicts is further confirmed by the fact that all ten countries most affected by terrorism in 2022 were also involved in armed conflict. The intensity of terrorism in conflicts is also much higher than in non-conflict countries, with an average of 2.7 deaths per attack compared to 0.48 fatalities (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024).

At the same time, and most importantly for this research, terrorist activity in the West has reached its lowest level in the past 15 years. In Western countries, 20 attacks were recorded in 2023, a 55 percent decrease compared to the previous year, and this can be seen as a trend since 2017. What is even more striking, considering that this study attempts to establish a correlation between the surge in the number of irregular migrants in Europe and a possible increase in terrorist acts, is that 16 of these attacks occurred in the United States. Therefore, only “4 attacks” occurred in Europe, with one fatality in Belgium (Institute for Economics and Peace 2024).

Moreover, the total number of terrorism-related deaths in the West has been declining for the third consecutive year. As for data from 2023, this decrease amounts to 22 percent compared to the previous year (a total of 21 deaths in 2023). The number of politically and religiously motivated attacks has also fallen in the West. Of the seven attacks

recorded in the U.S. in 2023, five were related to individuals with far-right sympathies or connections.

Let's compare the number of terrorist attacks (and the victims they caused) in Europe over the past three years with the number of irregular entries into Europe. We can conclude that the increased migratory pressure on EU countries does not follow an equivalent spike in "terrorist achievement" in this region – in fact, the opposite is true. Data on irregular entries into Europe has shown a steady increase since 2020, with the highest result in 2023, when 380,000 people entered EU countries irregularly (Frontex 2024). Of course, these indicators from the analyzed years cannot guarantee that this trend will continue. Still, they demonstrate the importance of a delicate approach to these phenomena, which are not exclusive – "an increase in migration leads to an increase in terrorism" or "an increase in migration reduces the danger of terrorism."

## CONCLUSION

Themes such as terrorism and uncontrolled migration have been at the forefront of media coverage for decades, filling news articles and increasing viewership on websites and social media platforms. At the same time, their media portrayal is often marked by elements of catastrophe and spectacle, leading some of the academic community to adopt superficial and undocumented analyses of these phenomena and the processes related to them. This paper is a modest contribution, not so much to a definitive truth, but rather to the direction in which these current and, according to the media, highly complementary phenomena should be analyzed.

How do terrorist attacks influence attitudes towards migrants? The impact of attacks depends on where the news about terrorism is received, indicating spatial conditioning. If terrorist attacks influence citizens' attitudes toward migration through a sense of immediate danger and fear, then the proximity of the terrorist attack would be the main conditioning factor. On the other hand, the local migration context of the news recipient may also have a significant effect. In homogeneous societies with little immigration experience, citizens are more inclined to discourses that link migration with terrorism and are, therefore, more susceptible to adopting a negative stance. Beyond this spatial variable, which is documented in research, the fact that

the perpetrator of a terrorist act is Muslim significantly amplifies the news about the event itself, generating further prejudices against followers of the youngest monotheistic religion. This wave has led to right-wing populist opposition to European migration processes, often linked to the protection against the Islamization of Europe (Subotić and Mitrović 2023, 123).

When we discuss the beginning of the migrant wave toward Europe (which certainly correlated with numerous terrorist actions on European soil) and the last few years (when increased migrant influx coincided with a significant reduction in the number of terrorist actions and the consequences they produce), we must be aware of statistical risks. More extensive migration routes certainly imply greater chances that terrorists can hide among them or join jihadist terrorism at a later stage. However, despite this correlation, there is no apparent causal link. The choice for someone to become a terrorist is not primarily determined by belonging to the migrant population. Still, it is influenced by various factors such as individual experiences, living conditions at arrival, and voluntary or involuntary contacts with broader criminal or Islamist networks.

There is no clearly expressed or at least documented analysis indicating a systematic connection between the hypothesis that “terrorism causes migration” and the one stating “migration causes terrorism.” In the first case, the correlational element is somewhat transparent and emphasized. Numerous actions by the terrorist organization that was at its peak – the Islamic State, undoubtedly contributed to the extent and intensity of the intense migration pressure toward Europe. Also, the intensity of terrorist activities and the number of deaths from terrorism in Europe (mainly in France) during the most migration-expansive year, 2015, show high numbers. Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that the increase in irregular entries by as much as 80% compared to the average of the period from 2010 to 2014 increased the number of attacks and/or deaths from terrorism in Europe by such a high percentage. The most recent cross-referenced data, from the fourth consecutive year, with increased migration pressure towards Europe and executed or prevented terrorist acts, speaks to the opposite. The average annual increase in the number of irregular migrants in Europe since 2021 is close to 33%, while at the same time, the number of terrorist activities has decreased by almost 35%.

There is no doubt that immigration “contributes” to the spread of terrorism from one country to another. Still, it is unlikely that immigration alone would be the direct cause of terrorism. Also, there is currently no empirical evidence suggesting that irregular (first-generation immigrants) are more likely to become terrorists, with the caveat that migration flows from countries where terrorism is a more frequent occurrence certainly have a more significant impact on attacks in destination countries.

Ultimately, all the mentioned results suggest that despite extensive political and media suggestions to the contrary, unauthorized immigration has not been the central driver of terrorist activities in recent decades.

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## **МЕДИЈИ, МИГРАЦИЈЕ И ТЕРОРИЗАМ – НЕКЕ КОРЕЛАЦИЈЕ\*\*\***

### **Резиме**

Теме попут тероризма и неконтролисаних миграција деценијама заузимају истакнуто место у јавном дискурсу, често испуњавајући новинске ступце и повећавајући гледаност на интернет платформама и друштвеним мрежама. Истовремено, медијско извештавање о овим феноменима често је прожето елементима катастрофе и спектакла, што доводи до тога да и део академске заједнице усваја површне и слабо аргументоване анализе ових појава и пратећих процеса. Овај рад представља скроман допринос – не даје дефинитивну истину, већ представља усмерницу за анализу ових савремених и, према медијском представљању, међусобно тесно повезаних феномена. Како терористички напади утичу на ставове према мигрантима? Утицај оваквих напада зависи од географског положаја примаоца вести, што указује на просторну условљеност. Уколико терористички напади обликују ставове грађана о миграцији кроз осећај непосредне опасности и страха, онда би просторна близина напада представљала примарни фактор условљавања. С друге стране, локални миграциони контекст у коме се налази прималац вести такође може значајно утицати на ефекте. У хомогеним друштвима са минималним искуством са имиграцијом, грађани су склонији усвајању дискурса који миграцију повезују са тероризмом, што их чини подложнијим формирању негативних ставова. Поред ове просторне варијабле, истраживања показују да чињеница да је

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извршилац терористичког акта муслиман значајно појачава медијски ефекат самог догађаја, што додатно подстиче предрасуде према следбеницима најмлађе монотеистичке религије. Штавише, овај талас противљења миграционим процесима, који предводе популистичке десничарске снаге у Европи, често се повезује са наративом о заштити од „исламизације Европе”. Када говоримо о почетку миграционог таласа према Европи (који се заиста поклопио са бројним терористичким акцијама на тлу Европе) и последњих неколико година, током којих је примећен повећан прилив миграната уз истовремено значајно смањење броја терористичких напада и њихових последица, морамо узети у обзир статистички ризик. Учесталије миграционе руте неизбежно повећавају вероватноћу да терористи могу инфилтрирати те групе или им се касније придружити. Ипак, упркос овој нашироко имплицираној корелацији, не постоји јасна узрочна веза. Конкретније, нема јасно артикулисане, нити довољно документоване анализе која би доследно повезивала хипотезу да „тероризам узрокује миграцију“ са оном која тврди да „миграција узрокује тероризам”. У првом случају, корелативни елемент је извесно присутан и снажно наглашен. Бројне акције терористичке организације која је у то време била на врхунцу моћи – ИСИС-а – несумњиво су допринеле обиму и интензитету миграционог притиска ка Европи. Поред тога, интензитет терористичких активности и број жртава услед тероризма на европском тлу (пре свега у Француској) током године са најинтензивнијим миграционим токовима (2015) били су посебно високи. Ипак, не може се извести закључак да је повећање броја нерегуларних улазака за чак 80% у односу на просек из периода 2010–2014. довело до пропорционалног пораста терористичких напада и/или жртава у Европи. Најновији упоредни подаци из четврте узастопне године повећаног миграционог притиска ка Европи, у комбинацији са појавом или претњом терористичких аката, указују на супротно. Просечно годишње повећање броја нерегуларних миграната у Европу од 2021. износи приближно 33%, док је број терористичких активности у истом периоду опао за скоро 35%. Нема сумње да имиграција „доприноси” ширењу тероризма из једне земље у другу, али је мало вероватно да би сама имиграција била директан узрок терористичких аката. Штавише, тренутно не постоје емпиријски подаци који указују на то да су нерегуларни мигранти (прва генерација имиграната) склонији да постану терористи. Међутим, мора се нагласити да миграциони токови из земаља у

којима је тероризам учестилији имају значајнији утицај на нападе у земљама одредишта. У коначном, сви налази указују на то да, упркос бројним политичким и медијским тврдњама супротног карактера, нерегуларна имиграција није представљала централни покретач терористичких активности у последњим деценијама.

**Кључне речи:** тероризам, миграције, медији, извештавање, радикализација, корелација

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