From Refuge to Risk: Terrorism, Securitization, and the Transformation of Migration Politics in Europe

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ABSTRACT

The intersection of terrorism and migration has profoundly influenced European politics, particularly since the early 2000s, amid rising terrorist attacks and large-scale migration flows. This study examines how the threat of terrorism has reshaped migration policy frameworks in key European countries, focusing on securitization trends that link migrants to security risks. Using a qualitative document analysis approach, the research explores four dimensions: the shaping of migration policies by terrorism threats, the political and social consequences for migrant communities, the balance between national security and human rights in counter-terrorism strategies, and the role of public perception in influencing legislation. Findings indicate that terrorist events, such as the 2015 Paris attacks, have led to stricter border controls and asylum restrictions, often exacerbating xenophobia and marginalizing migrant groups. Comparative analysis with historical patterns reveals that while these policies aim to enhance security, they frequently infringe on human rights and foster social division. The study concludes that without balanced frameworks prioritizing integration and rights, terrorism-related migration policies risk deepening societal fractures and undermining European values of inclusivity.

Keywords: Terrorism, Migration, Europe, Securitization, Policy Frameworks, Human Rights, Public Perception, Counter-Terrorism.

Introduction

Terrorism and migration have become a key driver of modern European politics that has radically changed the national and supranational policy reaction in a globalized environment. The meeting of unprecedented flows of migration, which are now the refugee crisis of 2015-2016, and transnational terrorist groups (such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (ISIS)) has raised the debate on the question of security, identity and sovereignty. The governments of Europe have grown more articulate about migration along the security prism. The securitization of migration, as a form of destabilizing society, according to the early scholarship, dates back to the general fears of cultural thinning and economic strain, but terrorism has made this discussion levels-tenfold (Bigo, 2002) (Huysmans, 2000) (Lazaridis & Wadia, 2015).

Although there was domestic terrorism in Europe before the 21st century (like IRA, ETA), the events of September 11, 2001, triggered a global change, where Europe has enhanced anti-terrorist efforts that include raising migration restrictions indirectly (Bakker, 2015) (Coolsaet, 2010). The attacks in Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005 raised alarm regarding the concept of a homegrown terrorism in relation to the second generation of migrants or radicalized

immigrants. This triggered such policies as the Prevent strategy (2006) in the UK that attempted to combat radicalization but caused the concern of profiling Muslims (Argomaniz, 2015). In 2015, the Paris attacks, when ISIS attackers, who were migratory, were involved, served as another step by which asylum seekers started to be confused with the threat of a terrorist on the side of the population and politics (Baele, 2019). This influx of 1.3 million migrants into Europe over the period, most of whom were escaping the violence of ISIS, got mixed up with security concerns even though there was no empirical evidence that refugees were terrorists (Dreher, Gassebner, & Schaudt, 2020).

EU has been on the forefront in response coordination. The creation of Frontex (since it became the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in 2002) was also an indication of a shift towards hardened borders, which was partly explained by the necessity to combat terrorism (Léonard, 2010) (Neal, 2009). Later decisions, including the 2016 EU-Turkey agreement and the establishment of so-called hotspots in Greece and Italy, shifted the migration management to non-EU governments and increased the barriers to irregular migration as a perceived security threat (Ripoll Servent, 2018). The same changes were observed in major countries: Germany initially accepted significant refugees but tightened the policies on deportation after the attack in Berlin in 2016 (Bove & Böhmelt, 2016). France raised the states of emergency that increased surveillance and reduced the rights of migrants due to the attack in Berlin in 2015 and 2016 (Kaunert, 2010) ,the United Kingdom introduced migration controls into a counter-terrorist strategy through legislation such as the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 .

This theoretically fits the Copenhagen School model which entails the elites presenting issues to legitimate extraordinary action as existential threats (Schinkel, 2009). Terrorism has been employed in Europe to justify policies in favor of securities over humanitarian demands as per the 1951 Refugee Convention. According to critics, this creates Islamophobia and weakens multiculturalism. Studies point to a 10-15 point rise in the support of restrictive immigration policies in response to terrorist attacks (Finseraas & Listhaug, 2013) (Finseraas et al , 2011), which the populist party of France (National Rally) and Germany (AfD) capitalize on to secure electoral success (De Vries, 2018).

The mainstream security discourses have relegated counter-narratives, which emphasize the economic and cultural benefits of migration. This picture was further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, since border closures, approved based on health considerations, were reminiscent of the logic of security. The threats such as far-right extremism and the re-integration of foreign fighters have remained a part of policy and the Pact on Migration and Asylum adopted by the EU in 2020 has been criticized as lacking human right protections (Edwards & Meyer, 2008) (Brouwer, 2008).

This research will fill the gap in the literature in the sense that it will focus on the two-way interaction between terrorism and migration politics in relation to event-driven analysis. Although the Western responses to counter-terrorism are often elaborated on, not much has been recorded about their consequences on migrant integration and European social cohesion. The paper will follow the policy development, social consequences, and the conflict between the security imperatives and the ethical commitments through case studies of France, Germany, and the UK.

Historical Context

The experience of terrorism and migration in Europe is not a new phenomenon but accelerated after the Cold War, especially since the beginning of the 2000s, and has transformed the politics and mass life in Continental Europe (Jakobsen, 2018) .Prior to 9/11, organizations such as the IRA and ETA had been acting in particular national settings, which were motivated by political, territorial or ideological reasons but not transnational religious networks. The migration policy at this time was mostly considered as a separate sphere, which concerned labor, incorporation, and asylum. Although there were also relationships between migration and security, there was no systematic parallelism. This division failed and the 9/11 attacks fundamentally changed the thinking of European security policy (Eckstein & Tsiddon, 2004).

Terrorism was introduced to the European soil in 2004 (Madrid train bombings 191 fatalities) and 2005 (London attacks 52 fatalities) focusing on ordinary infrastructure. The character of perpetrators mostly immigrants of the second generation or people with a migrant history triggered a new fear of internal danger (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020). EUMC counter-terrorism Strategy of 2005 officially incorporated migration controls, strengthening visa policies and information sharing in spite of the weak empirical evidence to consider migration a pathway to terrorism (Coolsaet, 2010).

The Syrian war, the emergence of ISIS, and the 2015-2016 refugee crisis characterized post 2010 dynamics. ISIS recruited foreigners in Europe and displaced millions of people and left the radicalization and forced migration in a precarious intersection. In 2015, when ISIS launched significant attacks in Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016) and over one million migrants arrived in Europe, the newcomers are once again intertwined with a security threat in the discourse, thus further confusing the terms refugees and security threats (Baele, 2019) (Helbling & Meierrieks, 2022). Policy reactions became stronger: increase of visa checks, strengthening of databases (Schengen Information System), biometric monitoring, and virtual bordering were the new norm (Brouwer, 2008). In this securitization, there was a mutual radicalization, as perceived threats created far-right extremism, which strengthened fear in society (Bove & Böhmelt, 2016).

Although the 2019 Christchurch attack was not in Europe, the incident emphasized the transnational and multi-ideological character of terrorism. Nevertheless, the European policy reactions were biased toward the migration-related menace, and they demonstrated selective focus, indicating the effects of security governance uniformity and prejudice (Baele, 2019). European responses have been more divided compared to the U.S post 9/11 as they balance national interests, EU law and human rights norms. This historical background proves that modern European migration policy is not motivated so much by objective threat evaluation as by the accrued political apprehension.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze how the threat of terrorism has shaped migration policy frameworks in key European countries.

2. To investigate the political and social consequences of terrorism-related migration policies on migrant communities in Europe.

3. To examine how European governments balance national security and human rights in their migration and counter-terrorism strategies.

4. To assess the extent to which public perception of terrorism influences migration legislation and policy-making in Europe.

Significance of Study

The paper theorizes the unsolved conflict in Europe between the ideals of liberal democracy and the concept of security in which protection is becoming a form of exclusion and risk-based categorization of migrants. The debates directly influence legislation, electoral politics, and experiences. The current academic literature tends to view terrorism and migration on the national level of individual cases or the U.S.-based models without considering the cross-national policy diffusion on the EU level. A comparative emphasis on France, Germany, and UK shows trends in the changes of the security pressures that transform the governance of migration. Emergency measures have become the new normal: since 2015, surveillance, accelerated deportations and outside the borders challenge the principles of proportionality, accountability, and civil liberties. Such policies have a disproportionate effect on migrant communities, which builds stigmatization, exclusion, and lost trust, which ultimately contributes to social cohesion and security in the long term.

Problem Statement

Since the early 2000s, terrorism has become a powerful force reshaping migration politics across Europe. What began as short-term security measures has slowly transformed into a deeply embedded counter-terrorism system that treats human mobility with suspicion and frames migrants as potential threats rather than individuals with rights and dignity. This shift has pushed migration governance toward fear-driven decision-making, sidelining humanitarian responsibilities and legal commitments. Tighter border regimes, widespread surveillance, and increasingly restrictive asylum policies have intensified the marginalization and stigmatization of migrant communities. Ironically, instead of delivering greater security, these securitized approaches risk weakening social cohesion, damaging democratic values, and creating long-term instability—turning migration control into a problem that burdens societies rather than protecting them.

Research Questions

1. How has the threat of terrorism shaped migration policy frameworks in key European countries?

2. What are the political and social consequences of terrorism-related migration policies on migrant communities in Europe?

3. How do European governments balance national security and human rights in their migration and counter-terrorism strategies?

4. To what extent does public perception of terrorism influence migration legislation and policy-making in Europe?

Literature Review

Over the last 20 years, the academic study of terrorism and migration in Europe has expanded significantly in the two broad directions: securitization and policy change, normative critiques of rights and ethics and social impact.

The original article by Didier Bigo (2002) concerning the integration of migration, crime and terrorism into one security system in European policy discourse is the article about the continuum of security. Migration was increasingly being redefinanced as a humanitarian or rather an economic problem, as a national security threat or threat to cultural stability.

Huysmans (2000) contends that securitization of migration in EU dates back to the era before the major jihadist attacks, but was highly accelerated by the latter. Since 9/11, it seemed security logic has taken over policy-making at the expense of the sound empirical rationale (Kaunert, 2010).

The 2015-2016 refugee crisis and ISIS-inspired attacks triggered empirical efforts on attitudes of the population. According to research, there is anti-immigration feelings that terrorist attacks can provoke at home, which is more influenced by fear and amplification of media rather than by the danger (Helbling & Meierrieks, 2022) (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020). Theorists observe that there is a spiral of securitization in which the emergency responses are institutionalized into governance (Bello, 2020). The increasing use of externalization the concept of handing over the migration control to third countries by the EU has also become a critical legal subject of scrutiny due to the potential erosion of the principles of non-refoulement and accountability (Moreno-Lax, 2018) (Cusumano, 2019) (Brouwer, 2008) (Ripoll Servent, 2018).

There is an extensive research on the social implications of securitized policies. According to the reports of Muslim communities in Europe, there has been greater surveillance, discrimination, and political mistrust after the attacks (Alves, 2018; Nussio, 2020). Securitization is associated with hate crimes spikes and decreased institutional trust, which undermine the long-term social cohesion (Finseraas, Jakobsson, & Kotsadam, Did the murder of Theo van Gogh change Europeans' immigration policy preferences?, 2011). The security versus human rights conflict is a familiar motif, and critics have argued that EU anti-terrorism measures have tended to put security ahead of basic rights, although this has been challenged by the courts (Monar, 2015) (Mitsilegas, 2012).

There is also a good documentation of political feedback loops and what is perceived by the public. Attitude towards immigrants may change in the non-affected areas because of terrorist activities (Legewie, 2013). Support of far-right parties and restrictive legislation is linked to high-profile attacks, and framing by media is a critical factor in this regard. There is still a lack of literature on the post-pandemic developments, the emergence of far right extremism and the long-term effects of securitized migration governance, which are the focus of this paper and can be analyzed comparatively.

Research Methodology

The research practice is a qualitative study design because it uses the study to explore how terrorism has transformed migration politics in Europe. Such method is suitable as the emphasis is made not on the quantitative variables, but on the policy narratives, political decision-making process, and social implications. The study is deductive in its reasoning that builds on the securitization and governance concept to describe how terrorism has transformed the migration policy structures   . Instead of the creation of a new theory, the already existing frameworks are imposed on new cases in Europe so as to facilitate further understanding of the contexts. The information is gathered using secondary sources such as European Union policy documents, national legislations, academic sources and reports of international organizations. Content analysis will be employed to conduct a theme analysis on the repetitive themes, especially how migration is framed as security threat. The analysis is backed by the support of archival sources regarding the development of the policies after key terrorist events so that patterns observed over a long term can be identified and short-

term responses can be differentiated. On the whole, such a design will allow one to examine security issues, political discourse in a more subtle way.

Research Design

Comparative case study design is taken with the center of interest in France, Germany and the United Kingdom. These instances can be characterized as diverse reactions to terrorism, migration, and they have had severe attacks and massive migrations (Helbling & Meierrieks, 2022). It is a descriptive and explanatory design. The descriptive analysis describes the policy development and social discourse; the explanatory one researches the causal impact of the terrorism, the political pressure, and the framing of the media (Legewie, 2013). The secondary sources used in data collection include policy texts, legislation, public opinion surveys, scholarly work and reports of NGOs. Important techniques are archival investigation on the policy responses, directives and media content analysis, and cross-national analysis (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020).

Impacts on Migration Policies and Public Perception

The risk of terrorism has substantially altered the migration policy frameworks in Europe by turning migration into a key security issue as opposed to a humanitarian or economic challenge. These changes are evident in the tightening of border control, augmented policing as well as risk-based governance strategies that focus on the entrapment of what is seen as risks rather than the safeguarding of rights and freedoms (Huysmans, 2000) (Léonard, 2010). By securitizing migration, the European states have not only modified legislative frameworks but also made the exceptional measures designed as temporary crisis response mechanisms a part of normal governance.

This is the case of securitization in France. After the November 2015 Paris attacks, the government quickly declared a state of emergency, tightened surveillance on the border and increased deportations. In 2016, the changes in immigration legislation continued to give more priority to the issue of security rather than individual rights, which has practically institutionalized risk-based migration policies (Baele et al., 2019). Likewise, the initially openness of the German policy in the 2015-2016 refugee crisis was recalibrated in a short period following the December 2016 Berlin truck attack. In order to promote expedited expulsion of asylum seekers who are considered threats to national security, the government made amendments to the Residence Act to prioritize preventive surveillance and control towards asylum seekers. These reforms represent the conflict between the humanitarian responsibilities and the perceived responsibility of the state to preserve internal security (Bove & Böhmelt, 2016).

Another example of the combination of the migration control logic and counter-terrorism logic is given in the United Kingdom. In 2014, the Immigration Act tied visa regimes to security screening, and formalized the nexus between mobility and security. The further developments of the Post-Brexit policy also allow the UK to introduce more restricting migration policies that limit the EU regulations, which resulted in more flexible and security-based toolkit to regulate both citizens and non-citizens (Argomaniz, 2015). In these national cases, the trend is unbroken: significant terrorist acts trigger legislative efforts to restrict migration regimes in a systematic way that usually have long-term effects on rights and civil liberties.

On a European Union level, the pre-travel screening of non-EU visitors is institutionalised through efforts like the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS), which was launched in 2017, and contributes to establishing the perception of mobility as something suspicious (Brouwer, 2008) (Kaunert, 2010). These actions are typical examples of securitization in action, which is trying to position migration as the means of possible terrorism even though there is little empirical evidence to back this up. The EU-level policies are added to the national ones, which provides a multi-layered security architecture to give greater preference to the control, monitoring, and preemptive intervention in preference to the traditional humanitarian or labor-based migration goals.

The perception of the general population has become a major motivator of this securitization. The public confidence is undermined by the high profile terrorist attacks, making them more terrifying and making migration a more salient political issue. In the post-2015 case of the Paris attacks, some 20% more Europeans mentioned immigration as a key issue, and this is indicative of the fact that perceived threats can drive the priorities of people more than the objective levels of risk do (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020) (Finseraas & Listhaug, It can happen here: The impact of the Mumbai terror attacks on public opinion in Western Europe, 2013). The amplifying role is played by media, and studies confirm the correlation of extensive coverage of terrorist acts and a rise of anti-Muslim attitudes (Legewie, 2013). This is a dynamic feedback loop where the anxiety of the people leads to policy, policy leads to additional fear, and social cohesion is further put under stress.

Securitization of migration has far reaching social and political implications. The migrants especially the Muslim communities are usually perceived as the security dangers leading to stigmatization, marginalization and surveillance. Such actions may inhibit socialization and political engagement and increase the sense of isolation and helplessness. In addition, the making of normalcy of exceptional measures like fast deportations, border closures, and the increased intensity of intelligence-sharing have made the distinction between emergency actions and regular governance unclear, generating systemic strains of the rule of law and democratic control.

The long term effects of this trend are very profound. Though the securitized policies can provide symbolic comfort, they often focus more on perception than probability and the efficacy of the policy in averting terrorism is debated. The fact that security has taken precedence over rights, would jeopardize the very principles of democracy that are being safeguarded by the European states. Institutionalization of fear through migration as a security threat as Huysmans (2000) and Leonard (2010) contend brings about a cycle of restrictive action, which generates social tension and eventually destabilizes social stability.

To sum up, terrorism has triggered a radical change in European migration politics that has shifted the mobility issue to a central security concern instead of a humanitarian or economic problem. The example of national case studies (France and Germany to the UK) demonstrates a regular wave of legal and institutional reforms aimed at preempting perceived risks at the cost of rights protection. EU-wide plans like ETIAS support this rationale, instilling security concerns into larger systems of governance. The opinion of the people, which is enhanced through media discourses and political discourse becomes a driving force of policy transformation as it influences the law and social attitudes. Taken together, these events highlight the delicate balance between security and rights and perception in European

migration governance and why it is rather pressing to consider the issue of proportionality and accountability and the overall viability of democratic institutions.

Consequences for Migrant Communities and the Security-Rights Balance

Policies related to terrorism have had extensive political and social impacts on migrant populations in Europe, and most of the impacted populations include the Muslim communities that are overrepresented. The construction of terrorism as an internal security challenge has frequently become an increased level of distrust of certain ethnic and religious communities, which supports the construction of narratives that mix migration, Islam, and radicalization. This dynamic has helped to create a policy environment where preventive measures are tackling identity and not behavior, further dividing societies and weakening the integration process.

The most notable one is the Prevent strategy of the United Kingdom that functions to recognize and prevent radicalization at an early stage. Although it has been articulated as a protection of vulnerable people, Prevent has been largely criticized due to the outsize attention it has on Muslim communities. Schools, medical professionals, and local governments must report persons considered at risk leading to massive amounts of Muslim minorities being referred to routine religious or political expressions. This has created an overall air of paranoia, where normal conduct is examined in the prism of security. Instead of establishing trust, these practices may send communities and discourage civic engagement to the detriment of long-term integration (Argomaniz, 2015).

The social consequences of securitization in relation to terrorism go beyond the control of going to the institutional level to the literal rise in hate crimes and social animosity. The increase in anti-Muslim violence has been observed in various European states following the instances of the major terrorist attacks. The anti-Muslim attacks reported in the UK rose by around 30 percent following the 2017 bombing in Manchester, which demonstrates the quick change of security crises into the collective blame and the retaliatory violence. Such incidences add to fear among the migrant communities, as well as reinforce the perception of exclusion, which leads to perpetuities of mistrust between the minority populations and the state.

There are also long-term social costs that are less visible, but equally destructive to restrictive migration policies in defence which can be explained as follows. In Germany, asylum laws that have been stricter and family reunification policies that take longer to implement due to security concerns brought about by the perception of possible security risks have caused extended separation of refugee families. The existence of such separations has been linked to psychological distress, lack of social stability, and low chances of successful integration. Family unity, which is one of the determinants of social cohesion, is usually kept on the periphery as they do not consider its importance, yet they were found to be very important regarding the well-being of refugees and integration outcomes.

The conflict between the security and human rights is one of the core issues which have not yet been resolved on the legal and institutional level. In the European Union, prevention, intelligence sharing, and surveillance have become the main priorities in counterterrorism frameworks. A case in point is the 2005 Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the EU, which focuses on the principles of early detection and risk management and integrates security logic into as many areas of policy as possible, including migration governance (Coolsaet, 2010). Although

such measures are on the right grounds as needed countermeasures to the changing threats, there are severe issues concerning the notion of privacy, proportionality, and responsibility. Of special concern are data retention and information-sharing regimes. The broadened surveillance capabilities enable the law enforcement agencies to gather, keep and process large volumes of personal information with little or no restrictions. Asylum seekers and migrants are often further subject to increased data collection on biometric databases and travel monitoring systems, which can be stored over a long duration. According to critics, the practices cause greater risks of abuse, creeping functions, and discriminative profiling, and provide limited evidence of effectiveness in deterring terrorism.

There has been the judicial checks and balances as a corrective mechanism. Courts such as the European Court of Human Rights have occasionally declared the disproportionate surveillance measures and data retention measures as a violation of human rights and have stated that the fundamental rights must be preserved even in the face of security risks. Nonetheless, such interventions are usually reactive and case-based, and not reflective of an overhaul of policy orientation. The overall trend in Europe since 2020 has been to still lean towards security-first, usually to the exclusion of rights-based considerations in the name of resilience and preparedness (Mitsilegas, 2012).

Such a progressive degradation of the balance between security and rights is very dangerous to democratic governance. Exceptional powers are becoming entrenched in the regular policy frameworks as emergency measures are normalized, and fewer things are transmitted or debated by the people. Stigmatization of the migrant communities does not only disrupt social cohesion, but it goes against the fundamental principles of democracy; equality, inclusion, and rule of law. The policies for security that undermine the basic rights as postulated by Guild (2009) can eventually undermine the validity and sanctity of the democratic institutions (Guild, 2009).

To recap it all, the migration policies pertaining to terrorism have not only transformed the political and social landscape of Europe, but also go well beyond the short-term purpose of securing the area. On the one hand, states have a valid role to play in securing their citizens, but on the other hand, over targeting of migrant communities, especially the Muslims, creates the risk of entrenching a culture of exclusion and creating an atmosphere of resentment and compromising long term security. The long term dependency of surveillance and restriction without having proportional checks on rights and accountability would pose a threat to the very democratic values Europe is trying to uphold. Striking a balance between security and human rights is not a mere legal or ethical requirement, but a strategic requirement of social stability and democratic resilience.

Discussion and Findings

The analysis confirms that terrorism has been a central driver of the securitization of migration policy in Europe, especially since the post-2015 years with the major cases of terror attacks and mass flows of people (Helbling & Meierrieks, 2022). The governments of Europe are increasingly defining migration with a security perspective which includes control, surveillance and management of risk instead of humanitarianism and voluntary rights. This change is more of a structural change and not a transitional policy, making security logic embedded in the governance of mobility.

Practically, securitization has led to stricter border controls, stricter asylum practices, increased surveillance systems, and externalization of the migration management to non-EU states. These actions usually superimpose humanitarian requirements of the international law involving the concepts of non-refoulement and refugee protection. These policies re-organize the migration as a social and legal phenomenon into a question of internal security in which migrants increasingly turn into objects of potential danger, and not matters of rights (Bigo, 2002) (Huysmans, 2000). This shift makes extraordinary actions regular and dissolves the distinction between emergency work and ordinary governance.

The implication to the migrant communities has been tremendous. It can be considered that empirical evidence indicates that levels of discrimination, social exclusion, and stigmatization grow more substantially after significant terrorist attacks, and hostile attitudes and discriminatory behaviors have risen by about 15-20 percent of the population (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020) (Legewie, 2013). The Muslim communities especially have been facing increased surveillance, political marginalization as well as lack of trust in the public institutions. These consequences destabilize social cohesion and threaten to strengthen vicious loops of alienation that would eventually make long-term security less, and not stronger.

The unequal approach towards the security goals and the human rights safeguards is one of the crucial issues that the analysis has pointed to. A huge percentage of the policies relating to migration concerning terrorism are not under stringent accountability and oversight procedures, which cast doubt on proportionality and democratic governance (Mitsilegas, 2012). The broadening of data gathering, sharing of information with intelligence, and preventive surveillance can in most cases be conducted with minimal transparency resulting in less chances of legal redress or public scrutiny. This undermines the measures that are meant to secure civil liberties in the democratic systems.

A turning point of this policy development is the public opinion. Political rhetoric and media reports often tend to exaggerate acts of terrorism that are uncommon, and of dramatic nature and this leads to the formation of an atmosphere of fear, which facilitates policymakers to take drastic measures. Studies suggest that about 70 percent of the terrorism related legislative reforms are motivated rather by the general panic than by objective evaluation of risk (Finseraas & Listhaug, It can happen here: The impact of the Mumbai terror attacks on public opinion in Western Europe, 2013). Consequently, it leads to reactive policymaking over reflective policymaking, where symbolic reassurance is considered more effective than evidence-based policymaking.

All in all, the results indicate that the present-day policy of the European response to the nexus of terrorism and migration is prone to developing into practices of exclusion and undermining democracies. Although it is a valid responsibility of states to provide security, securitization-based policies based on fear can produce social and political externality in the long term. A re-calibration among proportional, responsible, and rights-abiding governance is thus the key to help European societies to strike a balance between security and the legal and ethical promises that they are already bound to.

Results highlight the key role of terrorism in securitizing migration. The decision to bag migration as a security concern in the multicultural and liberal-democratic environment of Europe increases social divisions and weaken cohesion (Schinkel, 2009). The cultivated fear among the population by the media and used as a political tool leads to very noticeable

security responses that can ensure a temporary political victory but also deteriorate the long-term integration process and confidence (Böhmelt & Bove, 2020). The danger of this strategy is that there will develop a vicious cycle of mistrust and alienation.

Conclusion

This report shows that the interrelationship between terrorism and migration politics in the 21 st century Europe is complicated and fuelled by fear, policy-making decisions, and political rhetoric. European migration anxieties were not made by terrorism but given impetus, orientation and political legitimacy. Migration has increasingly been reconstructed as a security issue in France, Germany, and the UK. Extraordinary actions have become routine, creating solid borders, increased monitoring, and limited asylum. The implications on the migrant communities are immense, with an effect of enhanced discrimination, loss of trust, and barriers to integration. Such policies as Prevent are not aimed at inclusion, though they are meant to enhance security. The balance between security andrights is still unbalanced and there is lack of checks to the security-motivated migration practices. Media and political rhetoric influence public opinion, which is a determining factor, and the policies are usually based on fear than evidence.

Finally, terrorism and response by Europe has changed politics of migration in such a manner that it influences belonging to the society, identity, and value systems. The whole dilemma is in maintaining security without compromising rights and controlling fear without letting it control them. The long-term costs of fear-based policies are social disintegration and exclusion costs which are already beginning to manifest themselves. To achieve a sustainable approach, security goals need to be redressed with an obligation to integrate, proportionate, and respect human rights.

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