

Beliefs on Refugees as a Terrorist Threat. The Social Determinants of Refugee-related Stereotypes

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This article performs a cross-national analysis of the causes of refugee-related threat perception. We examine the hypotheses that the number of terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists should negatively coincide with positive attitudes toward refugees in a country. Secondly, we assess the relationship between the number of suspects arrested in relation to Muslim terrorist attacks and prejudicial attitudes toward refugees in a host country. In order to answer these hypotheses, we adopted a quantitative approach. Using data from the Pew Research Center Survey of 2016 we analyze the relationship between the number of terrorist attacks and arrests of Muslim extremists and their impact on the perception of the population in ten European countries. The findings suggest that there is no correlation between the number of terrorist attacks, arrests of Muslim extremists and prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. Among countries which experienced most fundamentalist Muslims attacks, the portrait of people sharing the stereotype is more nuanced. Political convictions were found to be the strongest and most common significant predictor, while age, gender and religiosity were significant in some countries only.

Keywords: Refugee Crisis, Refugee-Related Threat Perception, Prejudicial Attitudes, Terrorist attacks, Terrorist Arrests

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Introduction

The main goal of this article is a cross-national analysis of the causes of refugee-related threat perception. We start with the examination of two hypotheses. Firstly, the number of terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists² should negatively coincide with positive attitudes toward refugees in a host country. Meaning, as the number of attacks increases the society should express more prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. And secondly, the number of suspects arrested in relation to Muslim terrorist attacks should also negatively coincide with prejudicial attitudes toward refugees in a host country. To shed some light on this hypothesis, we adopted a quantitative approach. Using our own computation of data from the Pew Research Center Survey of 2016 (Wike, Stokes, and Simmons 2016), we analyzed the relationship between the number of terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists, arrests of jihadists and the perceptions within ten European societies covered by the PEW survey (Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Greece, UK, France, and Spain) regarding the threat of refugee flows. This analysis should let us see to which extent the refugee-related threat is a social construct. Assuming that none of these societies are homogenous, we decided to look for the factors that differentiate attitudes toward the refugees *inside* them. Therefore, in the second part we build logistic regression models for each country in the study to find out which factors are significant predictors of the refugee-related threat stereotype and estimate their hierarchy. Based on the study by Cowling, Anderson and Ferguson (2019) we use predictors such as gender, age, religiosity and political convictions which are associated with prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. This two-stage approach not only lets us compare cross-national differences in correlation between the socially constructed threat and objective experiences, but also to compare the differences and similarities in the way the basic variables shape the perception of the alleged threat.

This study contributes to the existing literature of refugee studies and prejudicial attitudes in two ways. Firstly, it analyzes the relationship between the number of terrorist attacks and or arrests in European countries and prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. Following the refugee crisis of 2015, several studies have dealt with the issue of the relationship between acts of terrorism and immigration. A study by Cruz, D'Alessio and Stolzenberg (2019) argues that terrorism has little effect on ingroup migration. Another study by Bohmelt, Bove, and Nussio (2019) finds that terrorism both home and abroad significantly increase concerns over migration. We extend the existing literature by testing the relationship between terrorist attacks and terrorists' arrests as a cause for the creation of prejudicial attitudes toward refugees in host countries.

Secondly, this study builds on the existing literature by adopting a bottom-up approach. Instead of focusing on the perception of the elites, it adopts an alternative

² Please note that for the entire article any mention of terrorist attacks and arrests refers to terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists and arrests of suspected Muslim extremists.

theoretical approach which argues that refugee-related threat perception is a grassroots phenomenon, which involves the government at a later stage. It is to be understood as a process: we assume that prejudicial attitudes do not appear out of thin air but are embedded in a long-term collective imaginarium (Leder 2014). They can be strengthened by political propaganda, thus coming a handy tool for political manipulation (Gusfield 1989). A study by Robert Mandel asserted that “refugee-related threat perception appears at the grassroots level, as both the departure and arrival of refugees seem to largely shake the affected society through affected societies, with national governments often ending up bearing the brunt of widespread popular fears” (Mandel 1997, 80). This phenomenon represents a challenge to the traditional, top-down project of the security agenda and creates significant delays in the application of policies in order to address the concerns of the society. Thirdly, this study adopts a comparative approach. Comparative approaches are rarely used in the literature. Most studies tend to focus on single case studies such as Greece (Karyotis 2012, Lazaridis and Skleparis 2016, Skleparis 2017), Italy (Colombo 2018), Lithuania (Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė, Agoh, and Žičkutė 2017), United States (Orrenius and Zavodny) and Poland (Krzyżanowski 2018, Jaskulowski 2019, Goździak and Márton 2018, Hansen and Kropinski 2016, Bieńkowski and Świdarska 2017, Wysieńska-Di Carlo 2018), with some notable exceptions (for example Goździak and Márton 2018, Roth and Kim 2013)

Existing research on the impact of refugee flows on terrorism in host countries is very limited and appears inconclusive. A study by Milton, Spencer and Findley found that the combination of poor living conditions in refugee camps and the hostility with which they are treated by the host country’s government increases the prospect of radicalization of refugees (Milton, Spencer, and Findley 2013). A study by Choi and Salehyan adds one more variable which has the effect of increasing terrorist attacks by refugees in host countries. According to the findings of the study, humanitarian aid to refugees, in times of crisis, can have a positive effect on terrorist attacks (Choi and Salehyan 2013). Humanitarian aid can provide resources to violent groups which in turn allows them to engage in terrorist attacks. Moreover, the abduction of humanitarian workers for ransom by the same militant groups provides a steady cash flow to finance their activities. By contrast, a study by Randahl challenges the assumption that refugee hosting countries are in danger of experiencing an increase in terrorist attacks. According to the findings of his study, there is no correlation between the number of refugees in host countries and the number of terrorist attacks (Randahl Spring 2016), therefore we focus on the analysis of threat perception by host countries in order to assess the puzzle of the variation of refugee related threat perception.

Regarding the causes of perceived refugee-related threat, the dominant theoretical approach is that of group threat theory. Group threat theory posits that negative attitudes are a result of the innate competition between minority and majority groups in host countries for the exploitation of resources and influence (Blumer 1958, Blalock 2014). According to this approach, negative attitudes appear as a result of the actual or

assumed threat that minor groups pose to majority groups. Hence, the larger the number of the minority group the more significant the threat for the majority group (Quillian 1995, McLaren 2003, Gisjberts, Scheepers, and Coenders 2017, Kunovich 2004, Semyonov, Rajzman, and Gorodzeisky 2006, 2008, Wilkes, Guppy, and Farris 2007, Rink, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2009). However, empirical evidence on the hypothesis that group size impacts negative views on immigrants is largely inconclusive. Though some studies show a positive relationship (Quillian 1995, Gisjberts, Scheepers, and Coenders 2017, Kunovich 2004), others show a negative relationship (Fox 2004, Wagner et al. 2006, Hjerm 2007) or little relationship at all (McLaren 2003, Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004, Dixon 2006, Strabac 2011, Wilkes, Guppy, and Farris 2007). A more recent study by Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes performed a meta-analysis on existing studies in order to explain the variation of the results. According to their findings, different measures of group size and negative attitudes explain the variation across studies (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2017).

Refugee-related threat perception stems from three mutually reinforcing factors (Weiner 1995). Firstly, the fear that the sudden influx of refugees will increase the burden on the hosting country's economy. When dealing with a refugee crisis, the hosting country needs to take appropriate measures to provide shelter and ensure the survival of the refugee population. This will undoubtedly increase the economic burden. Secondly, refugee flows increase the political risk for the hosting country. We define political risk according to the Political Instability Index of the World Bank, as the possibility of toppling the existing government through non-constitutional or violent means, which include politically motivated violence and terrorism (The Global Economy.com 2018). Thirdly, refugee flows disrupt the national and cultural identity of the hosting country. According to this view, the demographic change in the hosting country might disrupt its national and cultural identity and maximize national, racial, religious, linguistic and ideological differences. Furthermore, one factor which impacts on the perception of hosting countries relates to the level of development. Developed countries are more likely to express concerns related to the economic impact of the refugee flows, while under-developed countries are more likely to focus on the political risk (Mandel 1997). Finally, the structure of the security apparatus plays an important role in the threat perception. In cases where hosting countries value national homogeneity, they tend to perceive the integration of refugees representing a different culture as a threat.

What do we know about the causes of refugee related threat perception in Europe?

Europeans are concerned about the potential terrorist threat from refugees. The arrival of close to 2 million refugees since 2015 has raised security concerns in European societies, regarding the likelihood of refugee flows increasing terrorist attacks in

host countries. This is reflected in several surveys in European countries which show the growing concern of citizens regarding the potentially negative impact of refugees. In July 2016, an IPSOS poll on immigration and refugees across 22 countries found that 40% of the respondents are somewhat in agreement with the closing of their borders to refugees (IPSOS 2016). Moreover, 61% of the respondents agreed with the notion that terrorists are likely to disguise as refugees in order to infiltrate host countries and engage in terrorist activities and 51% of the respondents believe that the majority of foreigners who enter their country as refugees are not refugees, but instead are seeking monetary gain through the exploitation of welfare services (IPSOS 2016).

Similarly, a May 2016 a survey conducted in ten European countries (Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Greece, the United Kingdom, France and Spain) showed that a median of 59% of respondents believe that refugee flows are likely to increase terrorism in their countries. (Wike, Stokes, and Simmons 2016). This attitude was corroborated by a similar survey conducted in the same ten European countries in Spring 2018 which showed that a median of 57% believe that immigrants are likely to increase the risk of terrorism (Wike, Fetterolf, and Fagan 2019). Lastly, a Pew Research Center survey showed that attitudes toward Muslims influence perceptions toward refugees. People who have a more negative view of refugees are more likely to feel concerned about the threat from refugees (Wike, Stokes, and Simmons 2016). Similarly, an empirical study in Lithuania also showed that although the participants do not believe, in general, that all terrorists are Muslims, they do believe that refugees can potentially increase the threat of terrorism (Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė, Agoh, and Žičkutė 2017).

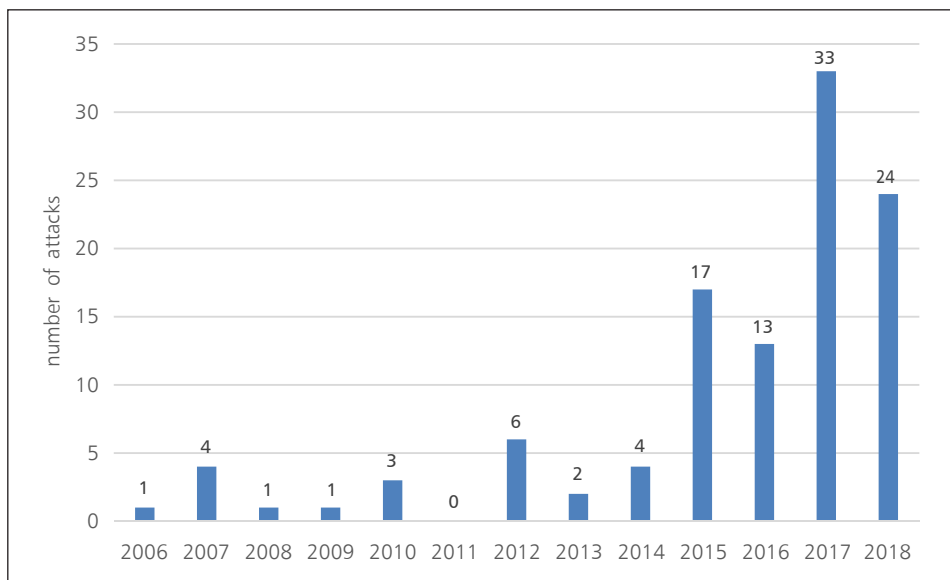
This concern, on behalf of Europeans, can be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, the influx of refugee flows coincided with an increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Europe. Figure 1 shows the number of Islamic terrorist attacks in Europe from 2006 until 2018. As it is evident from the graph, the number of attacks quadrupled from 2014 to 2015 around the time the massive bulk of the refugee flows arrived in Europe. It is worth mentioning that the number of attacks registered in the reports included both successful and foiled attacks and that general increment in the number of terrorist acts (mostly of ethno-nationalist and separatist origins) may be observed.

In addition to the number of attacks, the number of suspects arrested in relation to Muslim terrorist attacks also increased around the time of the refugee crisis. Figure 2 shows the number of suspects arrested in relation to Muslim terrorist attacks. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of arrested nearly doubled.

Secondly, there was a threat that ISIS would send 4000 extremists disguised as refugees to Europe (Brown November 18, 2015). The Paris attacks in November 2015 reinforced these concerns. The French Police uncovered that two of the perpetrators of the attacks had travelled to France from the Greek island of Leros, disguised as refugees (BBC News 27 April 2016). Despite the fact that the allegations of ISIS were

Figure 1

Number of Terrorist Attacks by Muslim extremists in Europe 2006–2018



Source: Eu-Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2006–2018, Europol.

Figure 2

Number of Arrested Muslim Terrorism Suspects in Europe 2006–2018

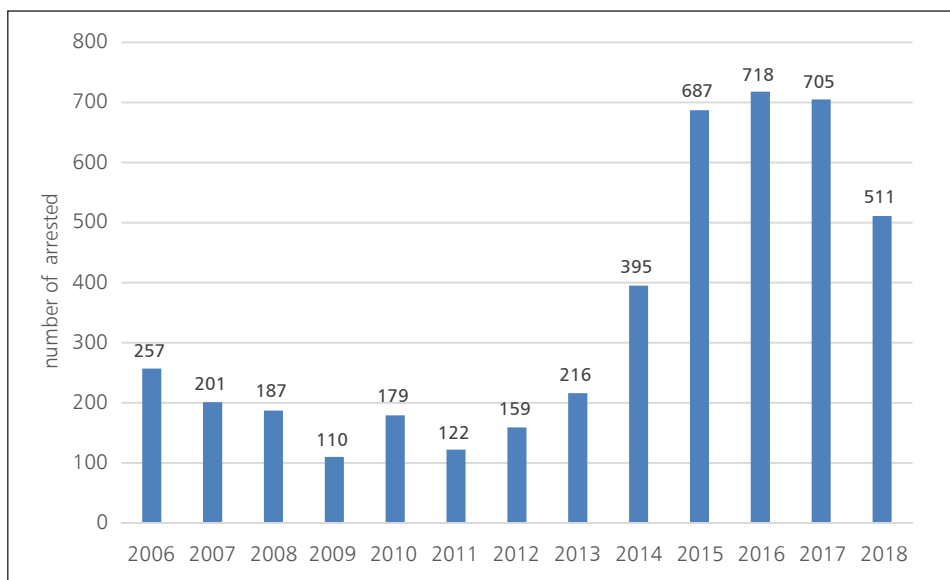
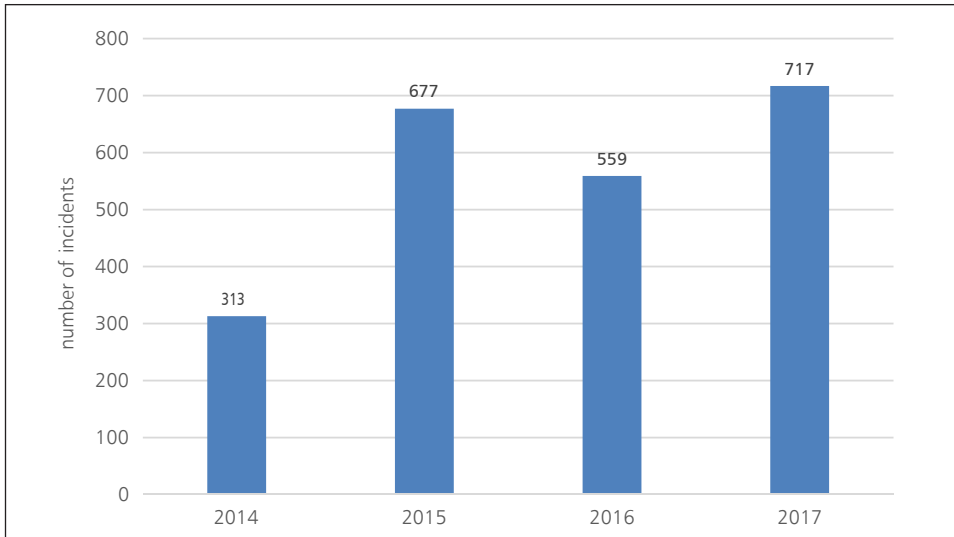


Figure 3

Total Number of Incidents reported by other sources against Muslims in Europe from 2014 to 2017



Source: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

not substantiated by evidence (McDonald-Gibson February 26, 2015) they did have a significant impact on the perception of European societies. The impact of the November 2015 attacks was so strong that it made the issue of migration inseparable from the crisis of terrorism (Nail 2016). Thirdly, the refugee crisis coincided with the rise of Islamophobia in Europe. Figure 3 shows the number of incidents against the Muslim population in Europe from 2014 to 2017. Incidents include violent attacks against people, threats and attacks against property. As it is evident from the data, the number of incidents against Muslims nearly doubled from 2014 to 2015. This corroborates the argument on the impact of the November 2015 attacks. The relationship between anti-Muslim sentiment and attitudes toward refugees has also been noted by other studies. For example, a study by Hellwig and Sinno (2017) argues that, in Britain, attitudes toward Muslim immigrants are affected by security concerns whereas attitudes toward East Europeans are mostly affected by economic concerns.

Methodology

PEW Global Attitudes and Trends Survey was undertaken in 40 countries worldwide. For the purposes of this text, all the 10 European countries in the survey were selected. The samples design of all these surveys was identical. The sample was strat-

ified by region (NUTS1) and urbanity. Within the household the Kish method was applied. This sample is representative for the entire adult population with the exception of the least densely populated PSUs with maximum 4,7 p.p. margin of error. All the samples were surveyed using face to face method, in native languages from April 4th to May 12th 2016, before the Brexit referendum and terrorist attacks in Turkey. Weights were calculated on the basis of gender, age, education, region, urbanity and probability of selection of the respondent and applied during the analysis³. The sizes of each sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Size of samples

Country	Sample size
France	999
Germany	1 000
Greece	1 007
Hungary	1 005
Italy	1 016
Netherlands	999
Poland	1 003
Spain	1 002
Sweden	1 000
United Kingdom	1 460
Together	10 491

Source: PEW2016

For further analysis, a PEW variable indicating refugees-related terrorism threat perception (“refugees will increase the likelihood of terrorism in our country”) was used as a dependent variable in logistic regression models built for each country. The predictors tested were age, gender, political convictions and religious attitudes. Before moving towards the analysis of social determinants of the refugee-related threat, we will present a descriptive analysis based on PEW, Interpol and Eurostat databases in order to show the constructivist nature of the attitudes.

³ For further details please refer to <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/international-survey-research/international-methodology/>

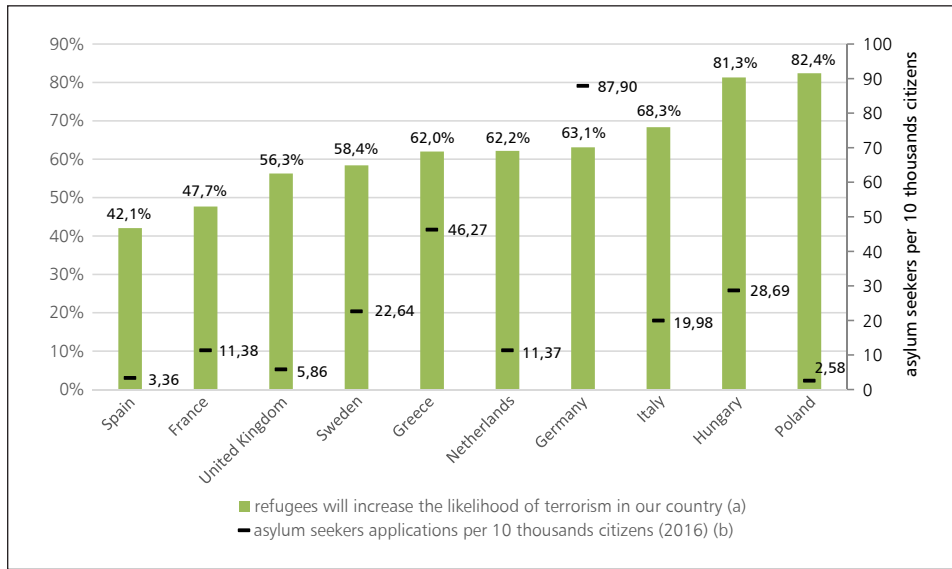
Refugee-related threat perception as a social construct

The duality of so-called “social problems” was emphasized by Fuller and Myers in the early 1940s. They distinguished “objective condition” and “subjective definition” (Fuller, Myers, 1941: 320). The definition imposed by society can alter the way the facts are experienced by people (Fuller and Myers 1941, Kitsuse and Spector 2014). Can the objective condition/subjective definition dualism be seen in the attitudes towards refugees arriving after the Arabic Spring? If we analyze the findings of the Pew Research Center survey, we observe a discrepancy in the perception of European societies regarding the relationship between refugees and terrorism. Most notably, countries which have not experienced terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists, like Hungary, Lithuania, Greece and Poland, had a more negative view of a potential threat of refugee flows than countries like France and the United Kingdom, who have. This represents a puzzle which this article aspires to address. Existing studies appear to be conflicted with regards to the impact of terrorist attacks on attitudes toward migration. A study by Hitlan et al (2007) compared attitudes toward Arab and Mexican immigrants before and after the September 11 attacks. According to the findings of the research, the participants viewed Arab immigrants as a greater threat to American culture and values, whereas they perceived Mexicans as a greater threat to the economy of the United States (Hitlan et al. 2007). Another study by Finseraas and Listhaug (2013) analyzed the impact of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks on Western Europeans. According to their study, the attacks “increased Western Europeans’ fear of terrorism at home, but attitudes toward immigration and illiberal interrogation were not affected” (Finseraas and Listhaug 2013, 476). Other studies examined the impact of the murder of the Dutch film-maker Theo van Gogh in 2004 on attitudes toward migration. According to the results of these studies the attack negatively affected attitudes toward immigration (Boomgaarden and de Vreese 2007) and increased support for restrictive immigration policies in some Western European countries (Finseraas, Jakobsson, and Kotsadam 2011). A study by Jakobsson and Blom on the effect of the 2011 terror attacks in Norway found that the nature of the terror attack affects peoples’ reactions. More specifically, they found that because the perpetrator of the attack was a Christian, ethnic Norwegian attitudes toward immigrants became more positive after the attacks (Jakobsson and Blom 2014).

Are the attitudes toward refugees caused by the experience of contact with them? There is no linear correlation between the number of asylum seekers (relative to the size of the host population) and the conviction that refugees can increase the risk of terrorism. It is visible particularly in Poland, where the number of respondents sharing this attitude is the highest in Europe, while the number of refugees – the lowest.

Figure 5

Attitudes toward refugees and the level of inflow of asylum seekers. Cross-European perspective



Own computation based on ^(a) PEW survey 2016 ^(b) Eurostat

Figure 6

Association of refugees with terrorist acts committed. Cross-European perspective

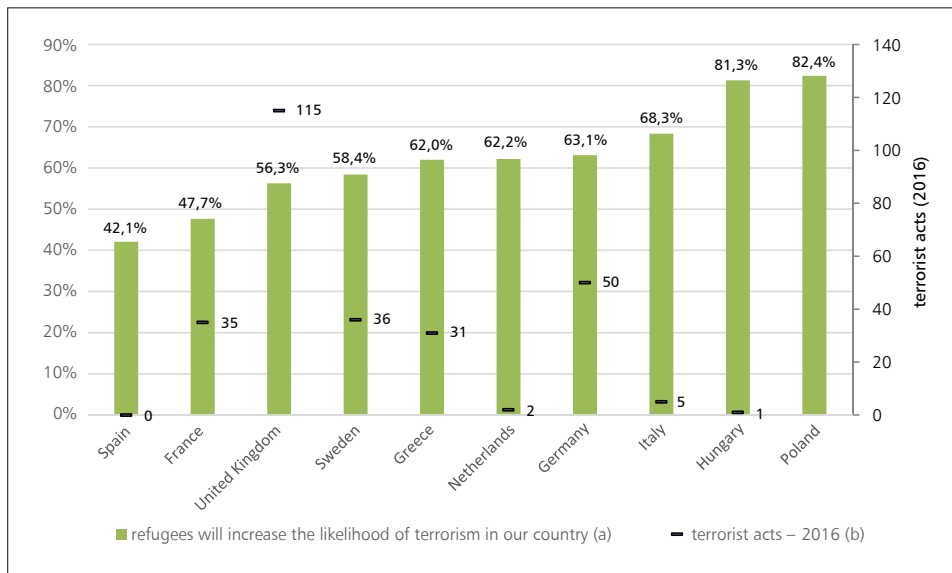
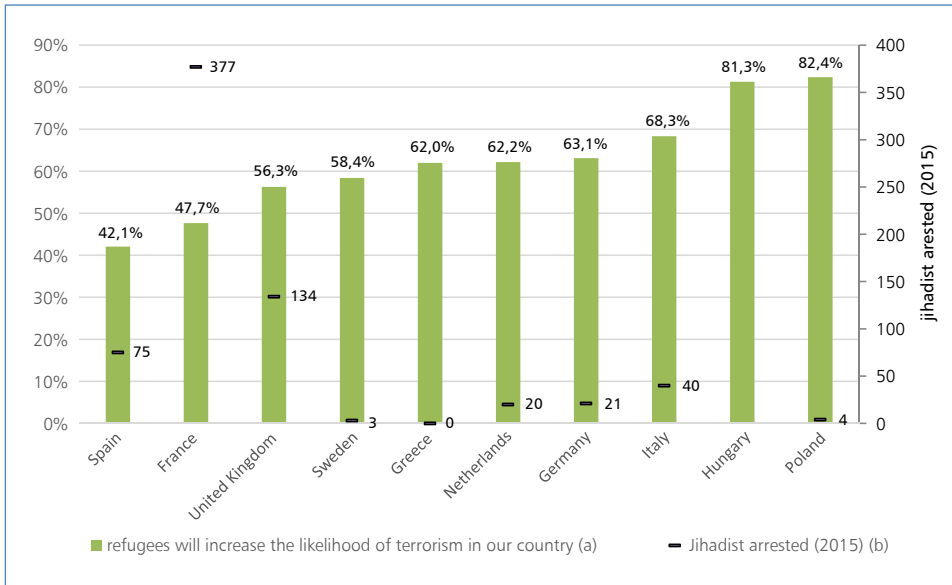


Figure 7

Association of refugees with the likelihood of terrorism and number of the jihadists arrested.
Cross-European perspective



Own computation basis on ^(a) PEW survey 2016 ^(b) Europol. Figure for UK includes all the alleged terrorists arrested

The comparison between the terrorist acts committed and the recognition of refugees as a source of terrorism reveals that there is no correlation between these variables. Moreover, exposure to terrorist attacks in the countries with the highest share of negative attitudes (Poland⁴, Hungary, Italy) is the lowest.

The last indicator – the number of jihadist terrorists arrested – does not explain the recognition of refugees as a source of threat. Citizens from the countries with the highest number of arrests – France, UK and Spain, relatively rarely declared that refugees increase the likelihood of terrorism. In fact these three countries have the lowest share of respondents sharing this stereotype. On the other hand, in Poland, where the share of respondents connecting newcomers with terrorism is the highest among surveyed states, the number of arrests of alleged terrorists is one of the lowest in Europe.

⁴ Unfortunately, there are no statistics of terrorist attacks in Poland, but based on media reports, there were three unsuccessful attempts of terrorist attacks in 2016. Their motivations were ideological (radical left-wing) and criminal (blackmail), but not jihadist.

Factors which influence refugee-related threat perception

In order to see the hierarchy of factors influencing attitudes, multinomial logistic regression analysis per each country was conducted (see Table 2). All of them are well adjusted⁵ while their quality was low (with R_N^2 between 0,025 up to 0,119).

It should be noted, however, that while the number of significant predictors and the likelihood ratio values are of course different in each country, the general direction of predictors' influence is coherent. Generally speaking, religious, right-wing oriented males are more likely to blame refugees for the increment in the threat of terrorist attacks. The only exception, which will be discussed later, is age.

What is the strongest factor? The results show it to be self-declared political convictions⁶. People placing themselves on the two extreme left points of a seven point scales are more likely not to share the association of refugee and terrorism. The strongest influence can be observed in the Netherlands (OR=3,246, $p<0,001$) and Italy (OR=2,964, $p<0,001$). Left-wing oriented respondents are about three times more likely not to share the construct mentioned above than others. In Hungary (OR=2,393; $p<0,001$), Sweden (OR=2,064; $p<0,05$), Germany (OR=1,996; $p<0,05$), Poland (OR=1,929; $p<0,05$) and UK (OR=1,796; $p<0,05$) the likelihood is close to two-times, while in France it is close to 1,5 half (OR=1,507; $p=0,05$). The only two countries where declaring a leftist orientation does not influence attitudes toward refugees are Greece and Spain. It should be noted, however, that a right-wing orientation is significant in these two countries, while in Hungary, Poland and Sweden it is not. With regards to right-wing orientation: the highest changes in likelihood were observed in Italy (OR=0,266; $p<0,001$), which – considering the second-highest outcome for respondents identifying themselves with the left – indicates strong polarization. The value of the likelihood ratio on the right is even bigger than on the left: if the coding of the dependent variable was altered, a 73% decrement in probability of rejecting the refugee-terrorism stereotype would be equal to 3,76 times the increment in probability of sharing a negative association. In other countries a 45–65% decrement can be observed. The lowest significant influence of choosing two extreme-right points on the scale was noted in Spain (OR=0,452; $p<0,001$).

Although political attitudes were found to be a significant variable in almost every country, other predictors give a more blurred outcome. Age resulted to be significant in five countries, but while in the United Kingdom (OR=0,981; $p<0,001$), France (OR=0,985; $p<0,001$), the Netherlands (OR=0,989; $p<0,05$) and Sweden (OR=0,99; $p<0,05$), the likelihood ratio is lower than 1, which means that the older

⁵ Based on Hosmer & Lemeshow test and the omnibus tests of model coefficients.

⁶ Original question: "Some people talk about politics in terms of left, center and right. On a left-right scale from 0 to 6, with 0 indicating extreme left and 6 indicating extreme right, where would you place yourself?". It was recoded into a dummy variable, with two extreme points on the left and two on the right used to identify respondents with clear left/right-wing convictions.

Table 2

Factors influencing attitudes toward refugees

	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Nether-lands	Poland	Spain	Sweden	United Kingdom
	OR									
Gender (male – 1)	0,701*	0,924	1,106	1,399	1,091	0,822	1,237	0,429**	0,549**	0,478**
Age (years)	0,985**	1,006	1	0,991	1,001	0,989*	1,013*	1,008	0,99*	0,981**
Importance of religion (1 – important)	1,084	0,837	0,313**	1	0,485**	0,957	0,539*	0,408**	0,834	0,814
Politics (1-left)	1,507*	1,996*	1,378	2,393*	2,964**	3,246**	1,929*	1,402	2,064*	1,796*
Politics (1-right)	0,344**	0,496*	0,378**	1,112	0,266**	0,456**	0,808	0,61*	0,675	0,452**
constant	2,967	0,514	1,784	0,248	0,875	1,284	0,192		1,693	3,303
R ² _N	0,086	0,03	0,108	0,025	0,115	0,057	0,041	0,119	0,052	0,11

* p<0,05 ** p<0,001

Dependent variable: (0) Refugees will increase the likelihood of terrorism in our country (1) Refugees will not increase the likelihood of terrorism in our country

Source: PEW 2016

the respondent, the higher the probability of associating refugees with terrorism, in Poland this relationship is altered – older cohorts are more open than younger ones. The likelihood ratio values indicate that change in probability is small, equal to about 1% per year.

Gender was found to be a significant predictor in four countries: Spain (OR=0,4,29, $p<0,001$), the UK (OR=0,478; $p<0,001$), Sweden (OR=0,549; $p<0,001$) and France (OR=0,701; $p<0,05$). The likelihood ratio values indicate that being a male decreases the probability of rejection of the stereotype from 57% (Spain) to 30% (France).

Self-declaration on the importance of religion⁷ was significant in four countries. The highest impact of religiosity was noted in Greece (OR=0,313; $p<0,001$), then Spain (OR=0,408; $p<0,001$), Italy (OR=0,485; $p<0,001$) and Poland (OR=0,539; $p<0,05$). Religious respondents are from 69% (Greece) to 46% (Poland) less likely to reject the association between refugees and terrorism.

It can be noted that almost all the predictors (with the exception of religiosity) are significant in France and the UK, two countries where the number of jihadists arrested was the highest. As there were no Muslim terrorist attack statistics for each country available for 2016, this variable is the best indicator of the real threat (Fuller and Myers “objective condition”). This means that although these two societies experienced terror, stereotyping is not common but characteristic for the specified groups – in particular young, right-oriented males. As it was noted above, the share of respondents who share a negative attitude toward refugees is relatively low both in France (48%), as well as in the UK (56%), especially when compared with countries that never experienced Muslim extremism like Poland (82%) or Hungary (81%).

Summary

Political attitudes were found to be the most common and strongest predictor of the fear of alleged terrorism brought by refugees. In some countries a right-left polarization has emerged, while in Poland, Hungary and Sweden – a gap between people self-declaring as left-wing well-wishers and others. It is clear, however, that as expected, left-wingers are less vulnerable to share refugee-related threat perceptions. Age was found to be a significant factor in half of the countries, with younger people being more critical toward the stereotype. There is one exception, however. In Poland the older age groups are more open, which parallels studies showing a right-wing turn among Polish youth (Messyasz 2015). Gender was a significant predictor in four countries, all of them with a high level of asylum seekers

⁷ Original question: „How important is religion in your life – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?” was recoded into dichotomous variable.

(albeit without Germany). In all the cases males were found to be more likely to share the stereotype.

It seems that the perception of the refugee related threat of terrorism is a perfect example of a constructed social problem as it has been stated in the classic works of Fuller and Myers. There is no correlation with real experiences, moreover, in the most experienced countries the majority of respondents reject the stereotype (Finseraas and Listhaug 2013), while the portrait of those who share it is more nuanced. The highest share of negative attitudes was observed in countries that did in fact not experience jihadist attacks, which, to some extent, can be explained by the dominant political rhetoric (Goździak, Marton, 2018) or shared ethnic prejudices (Wysieńska-Di Carlo, 2018).

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