Apr 12th, 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Bridges and Bandits on the Road to the New Jerusalem: A Study of the Correlation Between Immigration and Terrorism

Amy C. Searl
Cedarville University, amysearl@cedarville.edu

Stanley G. Schwartz
Cedarville University, sschwartz292@cedarville.edu

Ethan Beck
Cedarville University, ethandavidbeck@cedarville.edu

Unix Diza
Cedarville University, udiza@cedarville.edu

Jana M. Minich
Cedarville University, jminich@cedarville.edu

Bridges and Bandits on the Road to the New Jerusalem

A Study of the Correlation Between Immigration and Terrorism

Ethan Beck, Unix Diza, Jana Minich, and Amy Searl

In Fulfillment of Requirements for Quantitative Methods
Dr. David Rich

Introduction

In late January of 2017, President Trump signed an executive order banning non-American citizens travelling into the United States from seven different countries. The title of the order was, "*Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States.*" As implied, the stated purpose was to limit the number of immigrants in order to avoid future attacks. Since the order took effect, people have argued against it, making claims about religious discrimination, ethnic discrimination, and Islamophobia. Beyond the religious and ethnic issues, though, remains the question of efficacy. President Trump claims that the executive order is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the United States' immigrant vetting procedures and thus, protect the nation from terrorist incursion. In this way, he seeks to advance nationalist interests; his critics, meanwhile, assert that his actions are unfounded. Many in opposition to the executive order argue that immigration does not play a role in the spread of terrorism, claiming that no immigrants from these particular countries have carried out successful terror attack on the United States. For the order to serve a purpose, immigration must play a role in terrorism. Thus, the essential point of disagreement is whether a connection exists between the influx of migrants—especially those from terror-prone nations—and the occurrence of terrorist activity in the receiving nation. While there are a great deal of speculations and unfounded assertions on the possible link between immigration and terrorism, there have been few reliable, quantitative studies researching this question. The purpose of this study is to ameliorate the confusion caused by the dearth of research on this topic. In this study, we attempt to discover if a link exists between immigration from terror-prone nations and terrorism by examining the current literature and using data to analyze the levels of immigration as well as the incidents of terrorism in six countries.

Literature Review

As the world grapples with the refugee crisis stemming from Syria and other war-torn nations and destitute regions, one of the most contentious immigration policy issues is whether increasing immigration will lead to increased terrorist activity. The rise of Islamic terrorism with Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria over the last several years and the recent terror attacks in Europe have brought concerns of importing terrorism through immigration into the minds of many policy leaders of western nations, especially those nations that receive many migrants from the Middle East and other traditionally Islamic regions.[1]

While there are many opinions on whether immigration causes terrorism and frequent debates on the subject in the news and halls of government, most of these opinions are supported by little more than anecdotal evidence.[2] Until recently, little research existed on the topic and what did exist could not make strong claims on the politically polarized relationship between these two phenomena.

Some experts claim that any connection between immigration and terrorism is illusory or fabricated.[3] Authors of this opinion point to the lack of data showing a connection and the fact that immigration has been a significant issue long before the rise of terrorism in the last several decades.[4] One author even surmises that a connection between the two phenomena has been promulgated with the intent of restricting immigration as an end, rather than as a means to

[1] Colette G. Mazzucelli, "Secular States in a "Security Community": The Migration-Terrorism Nexus?" *Journal of Strategic Security* 9, no. 3, (2016): 21.
[2] Vincenzo Bove and Tobias Bohmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 2 (2016): 572.
[3] For example, see: Maria S. Saux, "Immigration and Terrorism: A Constructed Connection," *European Journal on Criminal Policy & Research* 13, no. 1/2 (2007): 57-72; Mary De Ming Fan, "The Immigration-Terrorism Illusory Correlation and Heuristic Mistake." *Harvard Latino Law Review* 10, (2007): 33-52; Mazzucelli, "Secular States in a "Security Community": 16-27.
[4] Saux, "Immigration and Terrorism: A Constructed Connection," 71.

prevent terrorism.[5] Another theory is that political leaders naturally transform complex, divisive questions into simple policy positions. [6] Essentially, the author argues that humans naturally substitute the "readiness with which [terrorism] comes to mind as a proxy for the probability" of it occurring.[7] In the case of immigration, politicians and political pundits substitute the complex issues of immigration for simple questions of national security by promoting a fictitious connection between immigration—especially illegal immigration—and terrorism.[8] However, psychological arguments that individuals are inclined to substitute simple issues or complex issues by creating illusory connections or that humans naturally treat immigration and terrorism as if they are correlated without any justifying research is only significant if terrorism and immigration are actually unconnected. This is not the case.

In fact, these views focus on how individuals make connections between immigration and terrorism without even considering the possibility that a connection exists. These authors silently discount several important research theories and studies that point to the opposite conclusion. Namely, that migration is a means through which terrorism is spread to previously unaffected nations and regions.[9] However, not all migration is equally likely to lead to increased terrorism. A 2016 study showed that immigration in general was positively correlated with a decrease in terrorist activity in the receiving nation.[10] The study also quantitatively demonstrated that, over 30 years in 175 countries, an increase in immigration from a nation with high levels of terrorist activity was positively correlated with increased terrorist activity in the receiving nation.[11]

---

[5] Ibid.
[6]. Mary De Ming Fan, "The Immigration-Terrorism Illusory Correlation and Heuristic Mistake," *Harvard Latino Law Review* 10, (2007): 34.
[7] Ibid, 35.
[8] Ibid, 33.
[9] Bove and Bohmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" 572-588.
[10] Ibid, 572.
[11] Ibid.

Therefore, there is an empirical connection between immigration from terrorist-prone nations and the spread of terrorism to the country receiving the migrants.

However, some qualitative studies suggest that this finding cannot be true because refugees and migrants are unlikely to harbor terrorist sympathies as they are often attempting to flee conflicts created by terrorist or other violent groups.[12] While the conclusion—that migration from terror-prone nations does not facilitate the spread of terrorism—is empirically false, it is worth considering the relevance of the claim that refugees and migrants would oppose, rather than support terrorism.

First of all, even assuming that the mass majority of migrants have no intention of bringing terrorism into other nations, it is still possible that some do intend to do so. Given the damage even one such individual is able to inflict, the potential that a handful among thousands of migrants may harbor terrorist sentiments is a significant concern.

Second, even assuming that most migrants are simply seeking a better life in a new nation, it is still possible that their movement facilitates the spread of terrorism. Bove and Bohmelt argue that the movement of migrants constitutes a physical link through which terrorism can spread from the terror-prone nation to the receiving nation.[13] International diffusion and spatial dependency theories posit that regardless of the positive intentions of migrant groups, they can become a vehicle through which terrorism spreads from terrorist-prone nations to previously unaffected nations.[14] Working in concert, international diffusion and social dependency theories suggest that migrants form strong social networks and diaspora communities that carry on the ideological, cultural, and ethnic heritage of their native countries.

[12] De Ming Fan, "The Immigration-Terrorism Illusory Correlation and Heuristic Mistake," 33-52.
[13] Bove and Bohmelt, “Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?” 575.
[14] Ibid, 575.

In the case of Muslim migrants, for example, even if the views migrants carry to their new countries are not in themselves radical or violent, the basic cultural and religious heritage they transport is still the foundation upon which radical Islamic terrorism is built. In essence, if the migrants are from a terrorist-prone nation, these networks and communities transplant the intellectual and cultural factors that contribute to the existence of terrorism in their native countries to their new country of residence. Additionally, research shows that these tight-knit expatriate groups are easily exploited for radicalization and recruitment by terrorists from their home country or culture.[15] Terrorists can use communities of first and second generation migrants as hubs through which to expand their reach into other nations and regions by radicalizing and recruiting recent migrants, by using migrant communities to hide their presence in a foreign nation, or by using social capital build by the migrant communities to make ideological inroads into the native population.

This concept is similar to the way any group might expand into a new area. The first step is to identify a promising new location for expansion; the second step is to identify current members of the group that already live in the area to help establish a foothold. However, instead of trying to spread a particular store or social club to a new region, terrorists are seeking to export their radical agendas to other nations. In this way, migrants are a vehicle through which terrorism is transplanted to regions in which it is not native.

An example of this phenomena is Rinkeby, Sweden. Rinkeby is a neighborhood outside of Stockholm that contains a large quantity of migrants from Muslim Africa and the Middle East.[16] Swedish police forces have identified the area as a primary recruiting ground for Somalia-

[15] Ibid, 575.
[16] Robert Nicholson, "Swedish Open Immigration Policies - Correlation with Terrorism," *The Homeland Security Review* 4, no. 3 (2010): 194.

based Islamic terrorist groups, such as *Shebab*.[17] While the Swedish Security Forces consider the likelihood of an attack on Swedish soil as improbable, they are aware that radicalized Swedish nationals and Sweden-based migrants are traveling abroad to attend terrorist training camps and participate in acts of terror in foreign locales.[18] This example demonstrates that terrorist groups are willing and able to infiltrate migrant, non-native populations and exploit their communities for radical ends—even if the migrants themselves were not originally radical. *Shebab* has used this tactic so effectively that it has been able to turn Sweden into an exporter of terrorism.

There are two additional considerations that make the potential for terrorist exploitation of migrant communities especially concerning in the case of Muslim and Arab diaspora communities. The first is that these groups are generally perceived as different from the peoples of the western nations to which they migrate. Therefore, Muslim migrants are commonly ostracized or perceive themselves as being ostracized from mainstream western society and have limited opportunity for assimilation, especially in Europe.[19] The second aspect is related to the significant flood of immigrants that entered Europe as a result of the migrant crisis in 2016. Western Europe, for example, has largely failed to assimilate non-Caucasian migrants.[20] Research shows that terrorists view unassimilated peoples as being especially susceptible to radicalization due to the feelings of discontent and alienation fostered by their situation.[21] Both of these considerations increase the possibility that, in spite of the good intentions of the majority of migrants, terrorist organizations will successfully manipulate the social networks migrants create to further their radical agendas.

---

[17] Ibid, 194.
[18] Ibid, 194-195.
[19] Ibid, 194.
[20] Ibid, 193.
[21] Jozsef Kis-Benedek, "Illegal Immigration and Terrorism," *Journal of Security and Sustainability Issues* 5, no. 4 (2016): 457.

Given that migrant communities are easily infiltrated by terrorist operatives and exploited for radicalization and recruitment, the question, as posed by Jozsef Kis-Benedek, is this: are terrorist groups willing and able to send their operatives into western nations?[22] Kis-Benedek posits that while terrorist groups are able to send operatives into western nations, they are not inclined to do so. He argues that sending operatives to Europe or the United States is a risky and expensive procedure that,[23] especially in the case of the Islamic State, limits the group's ability to accomplish its primary objective, which is to control Iraq and Syria.[24] He also argues that ISIS does not need to export fighters to Europe, because it actually imports converts from Europe to fight in Syria and Iraq.[25] For example, over a two-year period, the French government was tracking nearly a thousand French citizens who traveled to Syria to fight with ISIS.[26] Other European nations are seeing similar numbers of their citizens fighting with ISIS in the Middle East.[27] Additionally, there is no shortage of lone-wolf style European nationals who are willing to target their own countries either on behalf of or at the direction of the Islamic state.[28] For example, the attackers in the Paris attacks in 2015 were Belgian and French nationals.[29]

However, the author does point out that while it might usually be prohibitively risky to send operatives into Europe from the Middle East, a situation like the migrant crisis in 2015 would change the incentives for terrorist groups.[30] During the height of the migrant crisis, 60 million people were forced from their homes, many thousands of these migrants and refugees

[22] Kis-Benedek, "Illegal Immigration and Terrorism," 455.
[23] Ibid 456.
[24] Ibid, 460.
[25] Ibid, 461.
[26] Ibid, 461.
[27] Ibid, 461.
[28] Ibid, 456.
[29] Ibid, 456.
[30] Ibid, 463.

streamed into Europe without undergoing any significant security checks or registration.[31] In this type of situation the risks of sending in terrorist operatives decreases significantly. If the Islamic State is intent on attacking Europe, as the group has proclaimed and adequately demonstrated,[32] this would have been an ideal opportunity to send in operatives.

An additional consideration is whether the modern terrorist groups' use of social media limits their need to physically enter foreign nations for recruitment and radicalization purposes. The Islamic State's extensive use of social media as a propaganda tool may limit their need to use existing social networks among migrant communities as a stepping stone into new regions. In fact, ISIS recruits many followers from western nations who have little connection to ISIS other than through ISIS propaganda on the internet.[33] Therefore, ISIS—and similar terrorist groups—may not be inclined to send operatives into foreign nations and use the internet instead.

While terrorist groups may use social media effectively, it seems unlikely that groups engaging in an activity—terrorism—that requires high levels of trust and reliability between its operatives would induct members through internet transactions, sight unseen. Research shows that social bonds between members play the most important role in radicalization and recruitment.[34] Given the potential for government monitoring and the uncertain nature of online communications, it appears unlikely that terrorist groups would recruit in foreign nations entirely through social media. However, if terrorist groups are recruiting primarily among migrant groups of similar religious, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds that would still constitute a link between migration from terror-prone nations and terrorism even if the interactions were mediated through social media.

---

[31] Ibid, 463.
[32] Ibid, 461.
[33] Ibid, 456.
[34] Bove and Bohmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" 575.

As the non-European migrant "siege" of Europe continues,[35] and the terrorist threat to Europe appears to loom larger every year,[36] the question of immigration policy and the existence of a link to terrorism has become an increasingly important issue for the United States and European nations. Empirical research from 1970 to 2000 clearly shows that immigration from terror-prone nations leads to an increase in terrorism in previously unaffected nations.[37] This finding is likely due to terrorists slipping in among refugee population and terrorist groups exploiting migrant communities as footholds for new operations and recruitment. Migrant radicalization is likely increased by poor economic and social opportunities in the receiving countries and by a lack of assimilation in general.[38] However, in spite of the research to the contrary, debate on the relationship between terrorism and immigration has continued. One of the arguments that prompts this study is that Bove and Bohmelt's findings only considered 1970-2000 and do not apply to the modern, post 9/11 world. A similar argument is that changing world circumstances, including migration policies and social media, have fundamentally changed how terrorists recruit and decreases their need and willingness to physically enter foreign nations. If this claim is true it might be reflected in a changed relationship between immigration and terrorism since the time of Bove and Bohmelt's research. While it is true that Bove and Bohmelt's study ended before the rise of ISIS and the 2015 migrant crisis in Europe, this study intends to prove that, in spite of changing world circumstances, migration is still a vehicle through which terrorism is transplanted from terror-prone nations to other regions and nations.

Hypothesis

[35] Ana-Maria Bolborici, "The Immigration Crisis – Reflections Concerning the Crisis of European Identity," *Social Sciences Law* 9, no. 1 (January 2016): 39.
[36] Nicholson, "Swedish Open Immigration Policies - Correlation with Terrorism," 199.
[37] Bove and Bohmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" 572-588.
[38] Nicholson, "Swedish Open Immigration Policies - Correlation with Terrorism," 193.

Looking at recent events, it is obvious that terrorism is a problem. Since terror attacks, much like any form of attack, are genuine threats to a nation's security, correct identification of the source of terror becomes crucial to the protection of national interest. Politicians and political leaders are quick to blame terrorism on one cause or another, with foreign immigration a popular target. However, such reflexive decisions may be unhelpful if the cause of terrorism is misidentified. Therefore, wise policy decisions require an answer to the question of whether increases in immigration lead to increases in terrorism. The hypothesis of this research project is that as countries receive increased levels of asylum seekers from terror-prone nations they will experience a corresponding increase in the numbers of terror attacks within the nation. Our basic premise is that immigrant flows form a social bridge, transplanting cultures, ideologies, as well as individuals between the sending and receiving nations. Usually this process is benign; however, when the migrants originate from a terror-producing nation, they facilitate the transfer of latent conflicts, extremism, as well as mask the travel of terrorists, who like bandits, hide among the lawful population seeking asylum in the nation or city of refuge. Thus, we are seeking to find out if there is a strong correlation between immigration and terrorism. The null hypothesis, then, is that there is no correlation between immigration from terror-prone nations and the occurrence of terror attacks within a particular nation.

Methodology

Six countries were selected (Germany, Turkey, Greece, United States, Canada, and Australia) based on a consideration of their immigration policies, proximity to terror prone countries, and their popularity as the country of destination for immigrants. For example, Germany was chosen due to its open immigration policy and its popularity as a destination for immigrants in 2015. Countries like Australia and the United States were selected due to recent

actions taken and policies enacted to restrict or constrain immigration. Turkey and Greece were selected due to their very close proximity to those fleeing the Syrian crisis, while Canada was selected for their very tolerant stance on immigration.

In order to examine the relationship between immigration and terrorism, it was necessary to locate databases with appropriate statistics. The database used to find out the Inflows of Asylum Seekers into each country from 2000-2015 was the International Migration Database of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The database used to find out the number of Terrorism Incidents in each country from 2000-2015 was the Global Terrorism Database.

After collecting the appropriate data for each country, numerous statistical tests could finally be run for each of the six countries. The first step was to examine whether or not there was a positive trend in inflows of asylum seekers from 2000-2015. The second step was to examine whether or not there was a positive trend in terrorism incidents from 2000-2015. After establishing the nature of the trend of each variable individually, a scatterplot was created for both variables together to examine the potential for a positive correlation. Since the number of inflows of asylum seekers were in the hundreds of thousands, it was necessary to scale the number down in order to align more with the number of terrorism incidents, which were in the tens and hundreds.

Then a set of descriptive statistics were run that examined the mean and median for the inflows of asylum seekers (by thousands). Another set of descriptive statistics were run examining the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers (by thousands). A table is also included with the Pearson's Correlation number and significance between the Inflows of Asylum Seekers and Terrorism Incidents. A description of

the *p* value, degrees of freedom, critical value for a one-tailed test, *r*, and coefficient of determination are included in order to help highlight key facts that would be needed in order to draw conclusions from the statistics run.

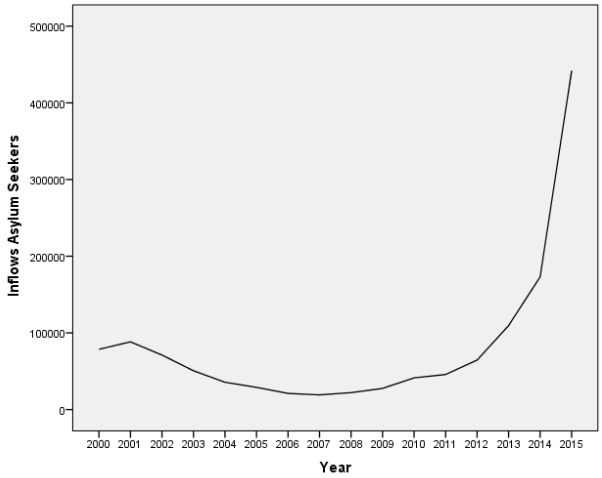
The last set of statistics run for countries was a linear regression for those countries where there was a very strong linear correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents. Appropriate tables are included below in the "Results" section of our study. For example, the ANOVA test was run and an examination of the F-test was done in order to see if the null hypothesis would need to be rejected. Included also are the predicted number of terrorism incidents for countries if the number of asylum inflows were to increase markedly. There is also an indication of the mean number of terrorism incidents within a 95% confidence and prediction interval.

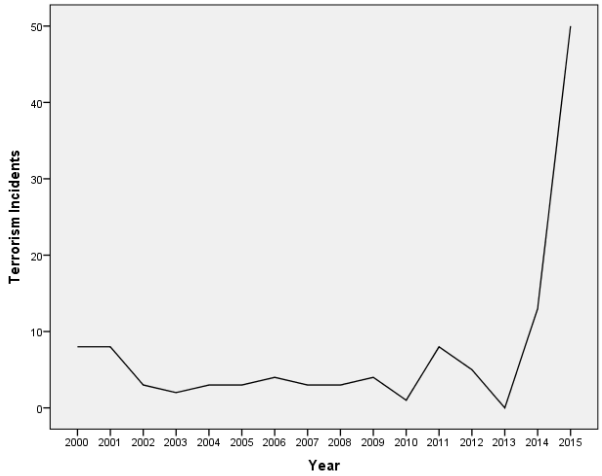
Lastly, an examination of the percent of asylum seekers in each of our six countries that were coming from terror-prone countries was made. There was a tool in the International Migration Database that allows for one to control the statistics for the country of birth/nationality of asylum seekers. Based on the Global Terrorism Index, the number of asylum seekers from the top 5 countries with the highest impact of terrorism (Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Syria) were examined in regard to their proportion of the total asylum seekers in each of our six selected countries. The results from this in-depth study of a certain variable is visually displayed in line graphs.

Results

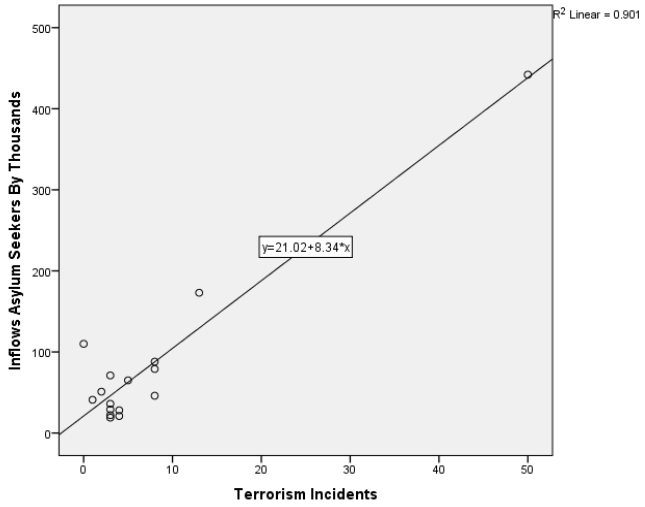
Germany

The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in Germany. The general trend of both lines show an increase after 2013, which indicates a potential correlation between both variables.





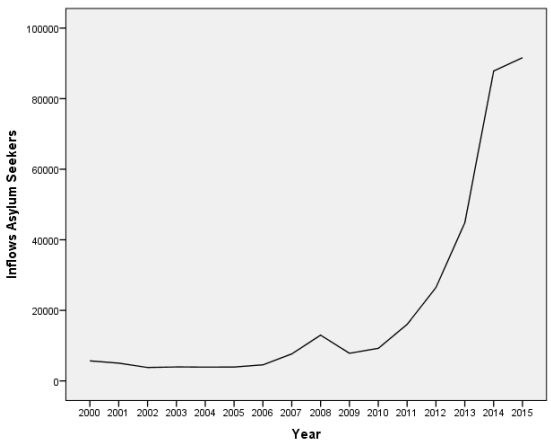
The scatterplot below demonstrates a very strong correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.901.

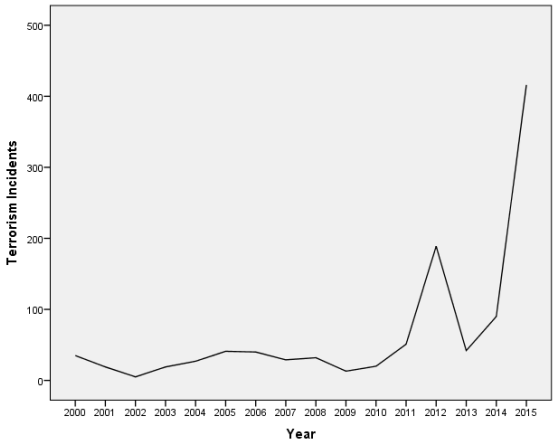


Turkey

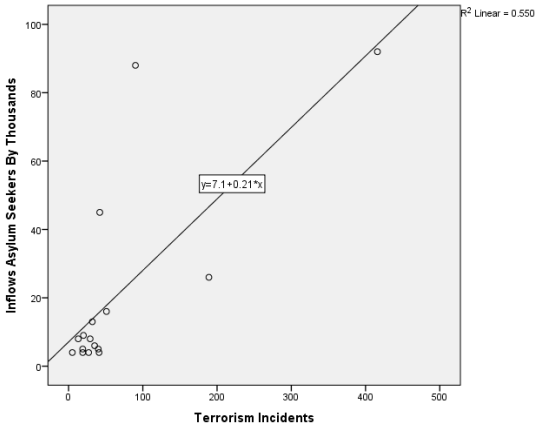
The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in Turkey. The general trend of both lines show an increase

after 2013, which indicates a potential correlation between both variables. However, there was a marked decrease in terrorism incidents between 2012 and 2013, while there was a steady increase of asylum seekers into the country during that time.





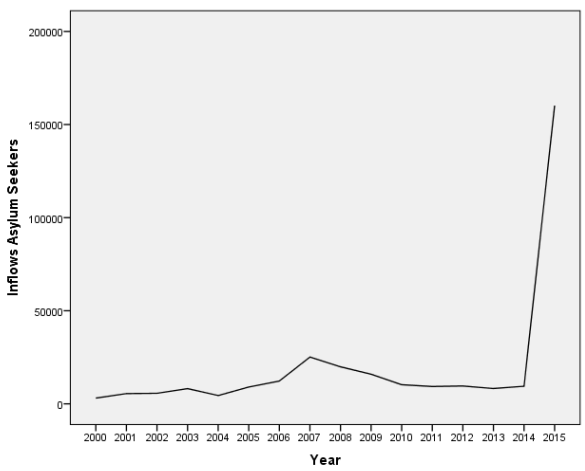
The scatterplot below demonstrates a strong correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.550.

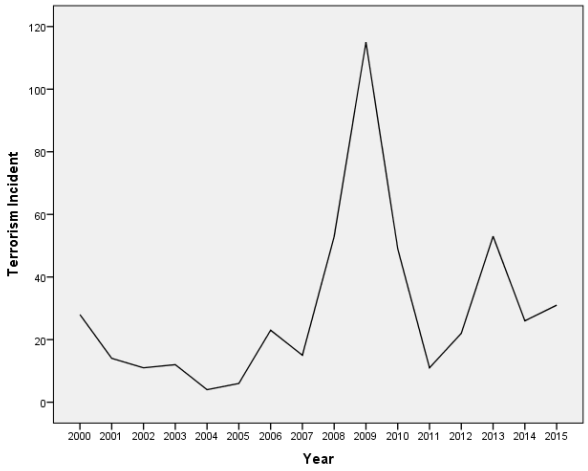


Greece

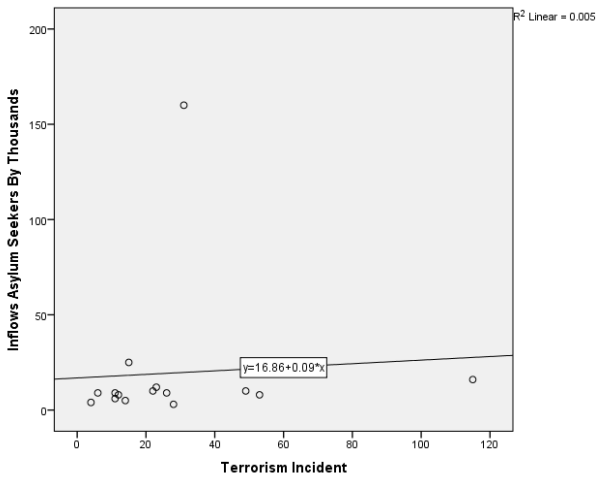
The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in Greece. The general trend of both are quite different,

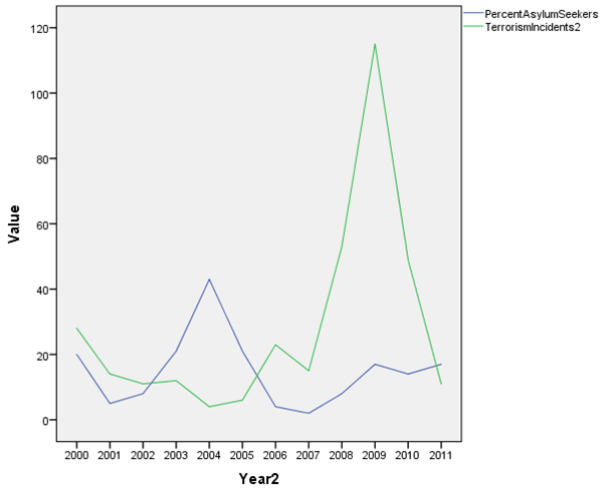
which indicates that the potential correlation between both variables is unlikely. The inflows of asylum seekers only spiked in number between 2014 and 2015. However, there has been a steady increase in terrorism incidents since 2010 - four years earlier.





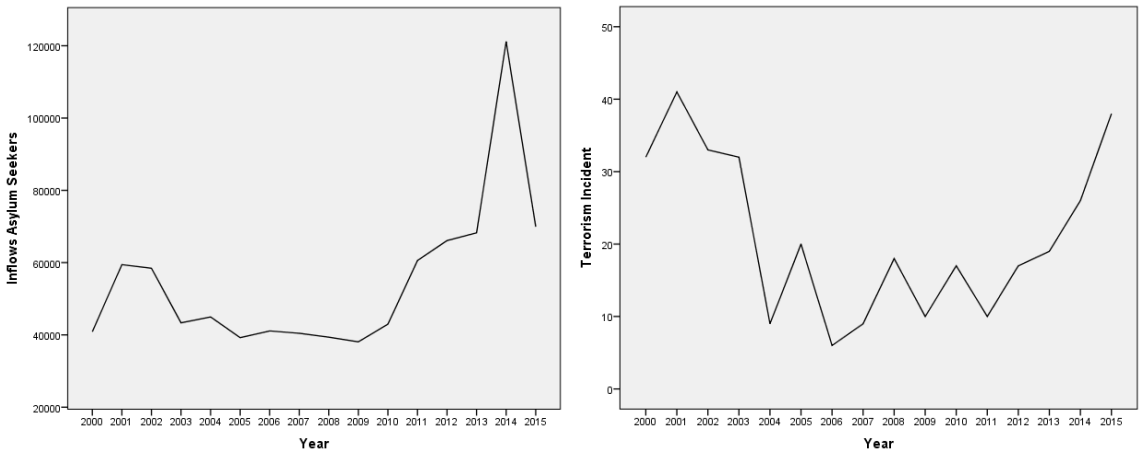
The scatterplot below demonstrates a weak correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.005.



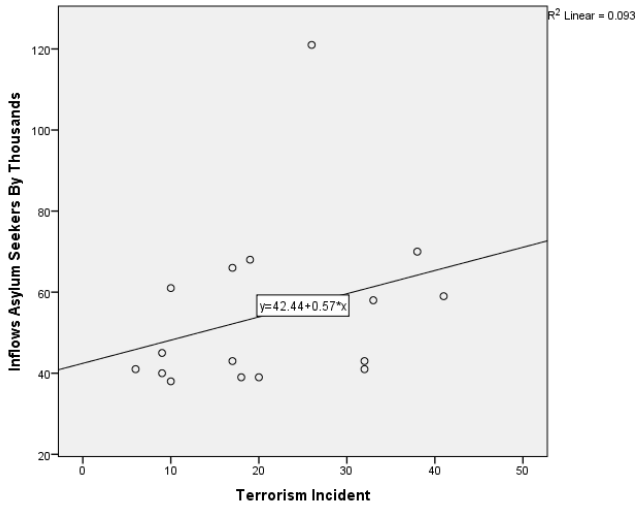


United States of America

The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in the United States of America. The general trend of both are markedly different, which indicates that the potential correlation between both variables is unlikely. The inflows of asylum seekers spiked between 2013 and 2014, but dropped back down between 2014 and 2015. Terrorism incidents post-9/11 decreased significantly in the U.S. and a steady uptick in incidents did not occur again until 2012.

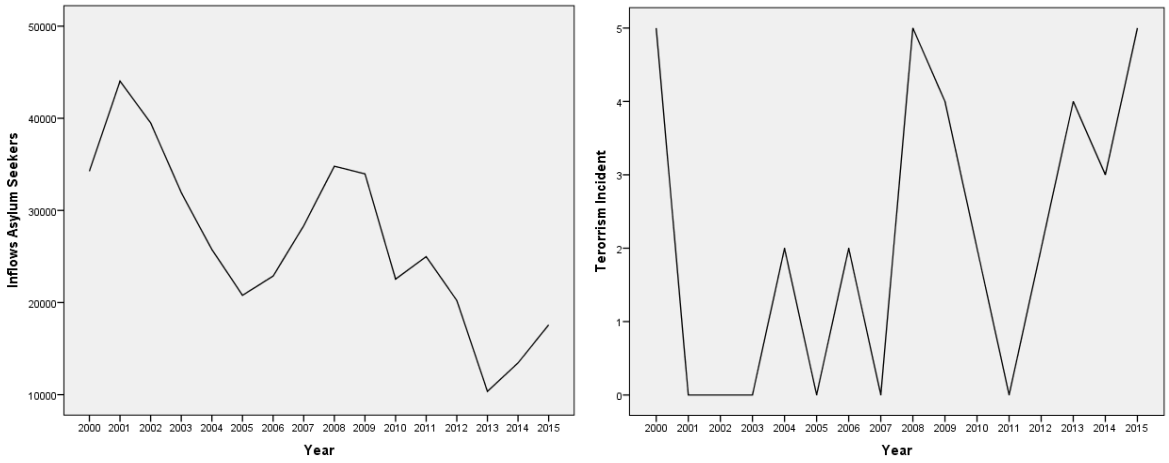


The scatterplot below demonstrates a weak correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.093.

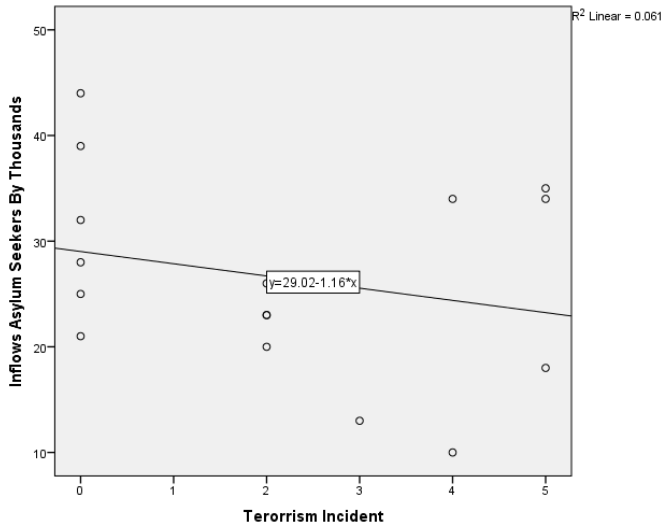


Canada

The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in Canada. The general trend of both are quite different, which indicates that the potential correlation between both variables is unlikely. In fact, the graphs seem to indicate a potential negative correlation between both variables. The inflows of asylum seekers have decreased until experiencing a steady increase between 2013 and 2015. Terrorism activity in Canada has never exceeded five total incidents per year and data is sporadic at best.

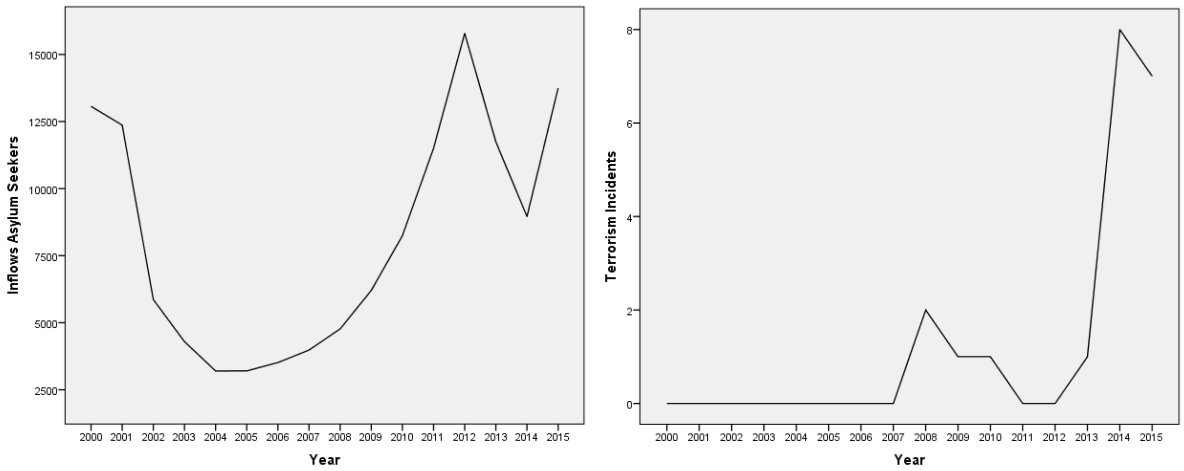


The scatterplot below demonstrates a weak, negative correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.061.

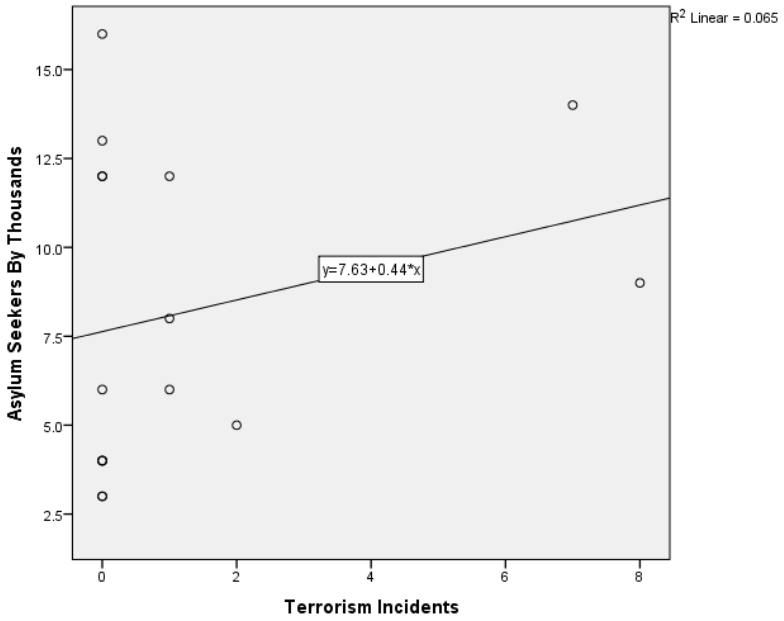


Australia

The following two graphs compare the inflow of asylum seekers (on the left) with incidents of terrorism (on the right) in Australia. The general trend of both are dissimilar which indicates that the potential correlation between both variables is unlikely. The inflows of asylum seekers steadily increased from 2005 to 2012. However, terrorism incidents in Australia have remained relatively low during that time period.



The scatterplot below demonstrates a weak correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents, with the key number being R^2, which is 0.065.



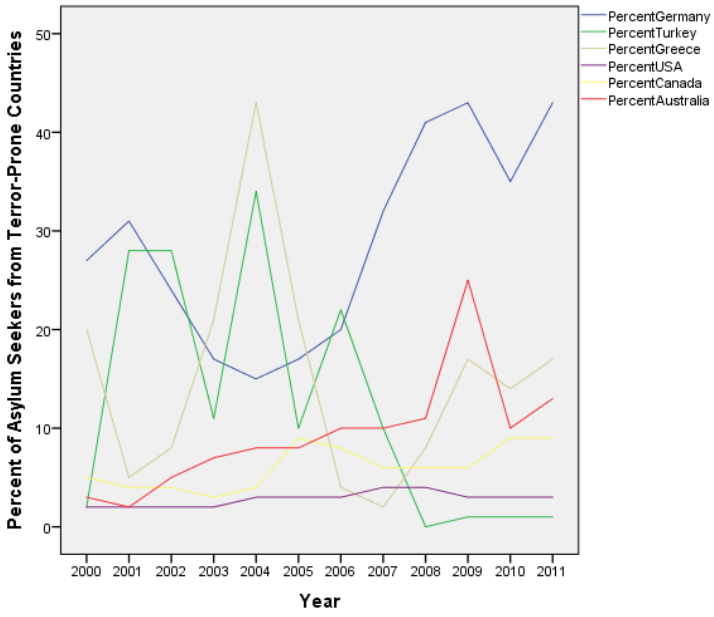
Summary of Data

As is clear from the data sets from Germany and Turkey, the strong linear relationship anticipated between immigration and terrorism can be present in certain conditions. Germany displayed the strongest correlation, such that 90% of the variance in terrorism incidents can be explained by the inflows of asylum seekers. Turkey's correlation was also strong, to the point that 55% of the variance in terrorism incidents can be explained by inflows of asylum seekers.[39] Other than Germany and Turkey, every country shows a weak correlation between asylum seeker inflow and terrorism incidents. Given that the *f* score for Germany and Turkey exceed the critical value, we can say that this correlation is not due to chance.

The question, then, is why Germany and Turkey display these uncharacteristically strong correlations. Some potential variables could be proximity to terror-prone areas, the vetting procedures used, immigration policy, or proportion of asylum seekers from terror-producing

[39] The level of risk for this study was p = .05.

countries allowed in. The most likely variable to be exerting the most influence is the proportion of asylum seekers from terror-prone countries. Looking at this data as a percent (percentage of asylum-seekers coming from Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Syria), it is clear that Germany is far above other countries in terms of accepting migrants from terror-prone areas since 2006. This finding would indicate that the proportion of asylum-seekers from terror-prone countries is a strong predictor of future terrorist activity. However, in spite of its numerous terrorist attacks, Turkey's migration levels from terror prone nations have not been outside the normal range of the other nations considered in the study. A possible explanation for this phenomena is that the terror attacks Turkey has suffered are more closely related to its own internal policies and disputes, such as its ongoing conflict with Kurdish militant groups. It is also possible that its attacks are linked to its close proximity to terror-prone countries.



Analysis of Results

As predicted in our hypothesis, the data demonstrates that increased terrorism is linked to increased migration from terror-prone nations and regions. This connection is most clearly

demonstrated in the data from Germany and Turkey, both of which display a strong positive correlation between asylum-seeker migration and incidents of terrorism. The terrorism-immigration link in Germany is exceptionally strong, likely, because of its open-border policy during the refugee crisis of 2015, its status as a desirability location for migrants due to its financial success, and the its geographical proximity to terror-producing nations.

The data from Turkey, on the other hand, has a weaker correlation between immigration and terrorism and a smaller portion of migrants from terror-prone nations than does Germany. This finding likely indicates that Turkey's terrorism is only partially caused by immigration. The literature on this subject lends credence to the conclusion that terrorism in Turkey is at least partially influenced by its geographic proximity to terror-producing nations through the effects of spatial diffusion,[40] as well as the ongoing conflict in neighboring Iraq and Syria. In fact, our hypothesis that immigration from terror-prone nations leads to terrorism in the receiving country is based on the assumption that migrant flows perform essentially the same function as a spatial link—or bridge—between nations. Where a physical, geographic link already exists, it is fair to conclude that the diffusion of terrorist activity and ideology would be less dependent on migrant flows and thus, less correlated to immigration.

The data from the United States shows a weak correlation between immigration and terrorism. We posit that the United States is a natural outlier to the general pattern of correlation between immigration from terror-prone nations and the occurrence of terrorist activity. Thus, we would expect the data from the United States to neither confirm nor disprove our hypothesis due to its anomalous characteristics. First, we would anticipate the United States to be an outlier because it is intentionally targeted, regardless of immigration, by terrorist groups such as Al-

[40] Ibid, 573.

Qaeda and the Islamic State. Terrorists, especially those of Islamic ideological backgrounds, purposefully target the United States beyond that experienced by almost any other westernized nation—with the notable exception of Israel. Second, the United States has an exceptionally robust migrant vetting process—enabled by its relatively remote geographical position—that effectively constrains the default correlation between terrorism and immigration.[41] Additionally, the strength of American immigration controls and the physical distance between the United States and terrorist hubs in the Middle East likely provide significant disincentive for attempted terrorist infiltration. This situation is almost the exact opposite of the state of European nations during the refugee crisis of 2015. Middle Eastern immigrants traveled a relativity short distance, often over land, into a borderless Europe. The geographical proximity and the almost complete lack of vetting and border control created an excellent opportunity for terrorist infiltration into Europe.[42] The United States was largely immune to the migrant crisis because of its distant location and firm border controls. Given these two significant departures from the global norm, we would expect—precisely as the data shows—that the United States would demonstrate a deviation from the typical relationship between immigration and terrorism.

The data from Australia shows a weak correlation between immigration and terrorism. However, this finding is not unexpected given Australia's appearance as an outlier. It is far removed from terror-producing nations geographically, it has limited inflows of migrants, and it has large areas of undeveloped land upon which migrants could settle, thus, reducing the potential for societal strife between migrants and native populations. Similar to the United States, these significant peculiarities separate Australia from the global norm. Additionally, Australia's

[41] Kis-Benedek, "Illegal Immigration and Terrorism," 457.
[42] Ibid, 457.

extremely low rate of terrorist activity limits the ability to construct meaningful analysis of its migrant inflows.

The data from Greece is intriguing because they have experienced high levels of terrorist activity over the last several years, but, at first glance it does not appear correlated to immigration. It is possible that the spike in the percentage of immigrants from terror-prone nations in the early 2000s is an influence on the large increase in terrorist activity that occurs during the late 2000s, specifically beginning in 2007. However, drawing conclusions from Greece's data is questionable because, though it is considered part of the westernized, civilized world, the nation itself has essentially been terror-prone since the 1970s. Beginning in the mid-1970s, Greece has experienced enduring, systemic terrorist activity against their civic institutions.[43] Most of this activity is perpetrated by revolutionary guerrilla terrorist groups seeking to achieve various, though uniformly leftist, political ends.[44] The activity of Greece's homegrown terrorist groups masks the effects of immigration and makes it difficult to discern how much of its 2007-2011 spike in terrorism was caused by pre-existing Greek extremism and how much by immigration from terror-prone nations. That being said, the peaks in terror-prone immigration and terrorist activity—though separated by time—are similar enough to lend support to the idea that immigration played a role in the increased terrorist activity. Additionally, the notion of a delay between the influx of migrants and increased terrorist activity is not unsupported. Research suggests that radicalization of migrants is related to the discontentment fostered by a lack of assimilation into the host nation.[45] Thus, it is reasonable to assume that migrant radicalization would not occur right away. The percolation of sufficient levels of

[43] George Kassimeris, "Greece: The Persistence of Political Terrorism," *International Affairs* 89, no. 1 (2013): 132.
[44] Ibid, 138.
[45] Nicholson, "Swedish Open Immigration Policies - Correlation with Terrorism," 199.

economic and social distress would take some amount of time. This concept lends weight to the position that increased terrorism in Greece could be related to a delayed, rather than immediate response to immigration from terror-prone nations.

Meanwhile, Canada's negative correlation between immigration and terrorism further reinforces our overall conclusion that it is immigration from terror-prone nations that leads to the spread of terrorism to new regions and not simply immigration in general that accomplishes this end. Existing research suggests that immigration itself is naturally negatively related to terrorism unless the migrants originate from a terror-prone nation or region.[46] Therefore, Canada's negative correlation between immigration and terrorism is exactly what one would expect if our hypothesis was correct given its relatively low levels of migrants from terror-prone nations.

Conclusion

Conflict, poverty, and adverse political environments over the last several decades have prompted a significant rise in international immigration. Recent reports estimate that the number of international migrants reaches well over 232 million.[47] During roughly this same period of increased migration, terrorism has become an increasingly prominent and deadly phenomena. Whether these two factors are related is a matter of intense debate wherever individuals meet to discuss issues of national and international concern.

Our research shows that, as predicted in our hypothesis, increased terrorism is linked to increased migration from terror-prone nations and regions. The data from Germany and Turkey display a strong positive correlation between asylum-seeker migration and incidents of terrorism. It is worth noting that immigration alone is not enough to predict a rise in terrorist attacks. The data from Germany, the nation with the strongest correlation between immigration and terrorism,

[46] Bove and Bohmelt, "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" 584.
[47] Ibid, 572.

simply indicates that migration from terror-producing areas is a strong indicator of a rise in terrorist incidents. This is not to say that immigration from terror-prone regions is the *only* factor giving rise to terrorism in receiving countries. Rather, immigration is only one of many factors that may lead to increased terrorism. However, *it is* our contention that immigration from terror-producing regions is a significant predictor of increased terrorist activity.

The conclusion that immigration from terror-prone nations is related to increased terrorism in the receiving country is not surprising. In fact, these results are exactly what one would expect given the existing research on this topic. Thus, immigration is indeed a physical link similar to a bridge that allows for the travel of the ideology, culture, and bandit-like terrorist individuals necessary for the transfer of extremism from terror-producing nations to previously unaffected regions. The value of this study is that it confirms and supports earlier research, especially that conducted by Bove and Bohmelt, and demonstrates that the correlation between immigration and terrorism holds notwithstanding changing world circumstances, including the recent immigration crisis. Additionally, this research highlights the need for discerning immigration policies. In terms of the potential for increased terrorist activity, immigration from terror-prone nation is not synonymous with immigration as a whole. A policy that misses this essential differentiation risks incorrectly assessing a substantial threat of additional terrorist activity.

Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics

Germany

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for Germany. The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is .949. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		72.25	26.25	34.25	197.50
Median		75.00	25.00	34.50	141.50

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	51	88	72.25	15.777
2004-2007	4	19	36	26.25	7.805
2008-2011	4	22	46	34.25	11.147
2012-2015	4	65	442	197.50	168.911
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terrorism Incidents
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	.949**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incidents	Pearson Correlation	.949**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

$p < .05$

$df = 14$

Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259

r = .949
Coefficient of Determination = .901
90% of variance accounted for

Turkey

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for Turkey. The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is .742. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		4.75	5.25	11.50	62.75
Median		4.50	4.50	11.00	66.50

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	4	6	4.75	.957
2004-2007	4	4	8	5.25	1.893
2008-2011	4	8	16	11.50	3.697
2012-2015	4	26	92	62.75	32.449
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terrorism Incidents
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	.742**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incidents	Pearson Correlation	.742**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259
r = .742
Coefficient of Determination = .551
55% of variance accounted for

Greece

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for Greece The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is .067. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		5.50	12.50	13.75	46.75
Median		5.50	10.50	13.00	9.50

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	3	8	5.50	2.082
2004-2007	4	4	25	12.50	8.963
2008-2011	4	9	20	13.75	5.188
2012-2015	4	8	160	46.75	75.504
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terrorism Incident
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	.067
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.403
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incident	Pearson Correlation	.067	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.403	
	N	16	16

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259
r = .067
Coefficient of Determination = .004
.45 % of variance accounted for

United States of America

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for the United States of America. The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is .307. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		50.25	41.25	45.25	81.25
Median		50.50	40.50	41.00	69.00

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	41	59	50.25	9.570
2004-2007	4	39	45	41.25	2.630
2008-2011	4	38	61	45.25	10.720
2012-2015	4	66	121	81.25	26.550
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terrorism Incident
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	.307
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.123
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incident	Pearson Correlation	.307	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.123	
	N	16	16

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259
r = .307
Coefficient of Determination = .094
9 % of variance accounted for

Canada

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for Canada. The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is -.252. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		37.25	24.50	29.25	15.25
Median		36.50	24.50	29.50	15.50

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	32	44	37.25	5.377
2004-2007	4	21	28	24.50	3.109
2008-2011	4	23	35	29.25	6.131
2012-2015	4	10	20	15.25	4.573
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terorrism Incident
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	-.252
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.174
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incident	Pearson Correlation	-.252	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.174	
	N	16	16

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259
r = -.252
Coefficient of Determination = .064
6 % of variance accounted for

Australia

The following descriptive statistics demonstrate the mean, median, and standard deviation for the inflows of asylum seekers for Australia. The data was divided up into quartiles to help streamline the process of analyzing data. Also included are the results from the Pearson Correlation test that was run. The key variable to note is the *r*, which is .249. Further information critical to interpreting the results is included below the appropriate table.

Statistics (by thousands)

		2000-2003	2004-2007	2008-2011	2012-2015
N	Valid	4	4	4	4
	Missing	12	12	12	12
Mean		8.75	3.50	7.75	12.75
Median		9.00	3.50	7.00	13.00

Descriptive Statistics (by thousands)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2000-2003	4	4	13	8.75	4.425
2004-2007	4	3	4	3.50	.577
2008-2011	4	5	12	7.75	3.096
2012-2015	4	9	16	12.75	2.986
Valid N (listwise)	4				

Correlations

		Inflows Asylum Seekers	Terrorism Incidents
Inflows Asylum Seekers	Pearson Correlation	1	.249
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.176
	N	16	16
Terrorism Incidents	Pearson Correlation	.249	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.176	
	N	16	16

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value for One-Tailed Test = .4259
r = .249
Coefficient of Determination = .062
6 % of variance accounted for

Appendix B: Linear Regression

Germany

Because there was a very strong, positive linear correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents for Germany, a linear regression was run in order to determine whether the correlation would continue into 2016 if numbers increased. In addition, an *f* test was run to determine whether the differences between variables are not due to chance. If the *f* value exceeds the critical value, then we can say that the differences between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents are not due to chance. Relevant information for interpreting results are provided underneath the appropriate table. Lastly, further descriptive statistics are provided to round out the linear regression analysis.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.949[a]	.901	.894	3.857

a. Predictors: (Constant), Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands
b. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1889.502	1	1889.502	127.027	.000[b]
	Residual	208.248	14	14.875		
	Total	2097.750	15			

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents
b. Predictors: (Constant), Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands

$p < .05$
df = 14
Critical Value = 4.60
F = 127

Predicted Number of Terrorism Incidents (if asylum inflows are 500,000) - 52
95% confidence interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 43 and 61
95% prediction interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 40 and 64

Predicted Number of Terrorism Incidents (if asylum inflows are 600,000) – 63

95% confidence interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 52 and 74
95% prediction interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 49 and 76

Coefficients[a]

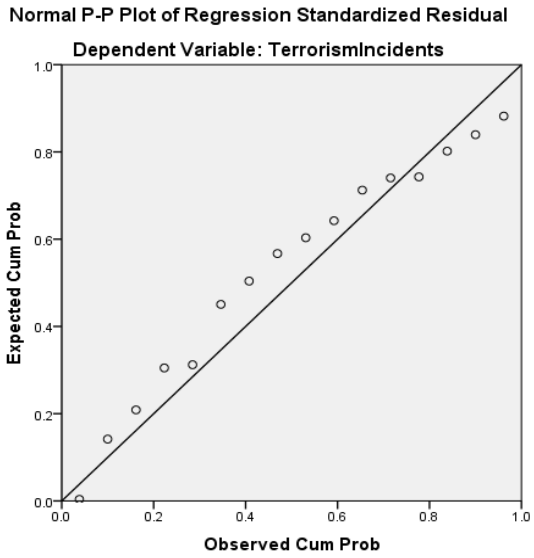
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-1.537	1.247		-1.232	.238	-4.211	1.138
	Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands	.108	.010	.949	11.271	.000	.087	.128

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	.51	46.17	7.38	11.223	16
Std. Predicted Value	-.611	3.457	.000	1.000	16
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.965	3.575	1.217	.635	16
Adjusted Predicted Value	.28	22.83	5.93	6.430	16
Residual	-10.337	4.571	.000	3.726	16
Std. Residual	-2.680	1.185	.000	.966	16
Stud. Residual	-2.775	2.644	.101	1.180	16
Deleted Residual	-11.080	27.171	1.443	7.878	16
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.986	3.602	.084	1.529	16
Mahal. Distance	.001	11.949	.938	2.943	16
Cook's Distance	.000	21.319	1.368	5.321	16
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.797	.063	.196	16

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents



Turkey

Because there was a strong, positive linear correlation between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents for Turkey, a linear regression was run in order to determine whether the correlation would continue into 2016 if numbers increased. In addition, an f test was run to determine whether the differences between variables are not due to chance. If the f value exceeds the critical value, then we can say that the differences between inflows of asylum seekers and terrorism incidents are not due to chance. Relevant information for interpreting results are provided underneath the appropriate table. Lastly, further descriptive statistics are provided to round out the linear regression analysis.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742[a]	.550	.518	71.346

a. Predictors: (Constant), Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands
b. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	87105.112	1	87105.112	17.112	.001[b]
	Residual	71263.888	14	5090.278		
	Total	158369.000	15			

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents
b. Predictors: (Constant), Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands

p <.05
df = 14
Critical Value = 4.60
F = 17

Predicted Number of Terrorism Incidents (if asylum inflows are 100,000) - 274
95% confidence interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 160 and 388
95% prediction interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 83 and 465

Predicted Number of Terrorism Incidents (if asylum inflows are 600,000) – 537
95% confidence interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 290 and 784
95% prediction interval for mean number of Terrorism Incidents – b/w 246 and 827

Coefficients[a]

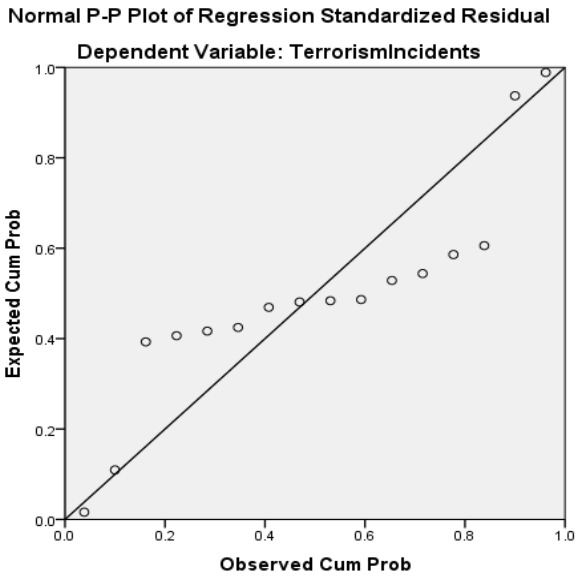
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	11.360	22.303		.509	.618	-36.476	59.195
	Inflows Asylum Seekers By Thousands	2.630	.636	.742	4.137	.001	1.266	3.993

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents

Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	21.88	253.30	66.75	76.204	16
Std. Predicted Value	-.589	2.448	.000	1.000	16
Standard Error of Predicted Value	18.111	48.496	23.531	9.385	16
Adjusted Predicted Value	20.09	352.63	65.21	84.236	16
Residual	-152.783	162.698	.000	68.927	16
Std. Residual	-2.141	2.280	.000	.966	16
Stud. Residual	-2.808	3.109	.008	1.215	16
Deleted Residual	-262.625	302.433	1.536	111.312	16
Stud. Deleted Residual	-4.093	5.385	.075	1.838	16
Mahal. Distance	.029	5.993	.938	1.856	16
Cook's Distance	.000	4.151	.449	1.212	16
Centered Leverage Value	.002	.400	.063	.124	16

a. Dependent Variable: Terrorism Incidents



Works Cited

Bolborici, Ana-Maria. "The Immigration Crisis – Reflections Concerning the Crisis of European Identity." *Social Sciences Law* 9, no. 1 (January 2016): 39-46.

Bove, Vincenzo and Tobias Bohmelt. "Does Immigration Induce Terrorism?" *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 2 (2016): 572-588.

"Database Search." *Global Terrorism Database*. Accessed April 3, 2017. https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/.

De Ming Fan, Mary. "The Immigration-Terrorism Illusory Correlation and Heuristic Mistake." *Harvard Latino Law Review* 10, (2007): 33-52.

"Global Terrorism Index 2015." *Institute for Economics and Peace*. Accessed April 3, 2017. http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf

"International Migration Database." *Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development*. Accessed April 3, 2017. https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=MIG

Kassimeris, George. "Greece: The Persistence of Political Terrorism." *International Affairs* 89, no. 1 (2013): 131–142

Kis-Benedek, Jozsef. "Illegal Immigration and Terrorism" *Journal of Security and Sustainability Issues* 5, no. 4 (2016): 455-465.

Mazzucelli, Colette G. "Secular States in a "Security Community": The Migration-Terrorism Nexus?" *Journal of Strategic Security* 9, no. 3, (2016): 16-27.

Nicholson, Robert. "Swedish Open Immigration Policies - Correlation with Terrorism." *The Homeland Security Review* 4, no. 3 (2010): 193-211.

Saux, María Soledad. "Immigration and Terrorism: A Constructed Connection." *European Journal on Criminal Policy & Research* 13, no. 1/2 (2007): 57-72.