# WHY ARE SOME DEMOCRACIES MORE TARGETED BY TERRORISTS THAN OTHER DEMOCRACIES?

# Abstract

Democracy became one of the most common political regimes that governments of many countries use. It is often being considered as peaceful as it encourages freedom and legal means of expression of discontent. Surprisingly, some democracies turn out to have more terrorist attacks than other democratic countries. If democracies encourage terrorism by their nature, then why only some of them struggle with this phenomenon? This research is concerned with the tendency of rising terrorism in some democratic countries and possible factors that determine its steadiness. The missing connection between democracy and terrorism creates an empirical puzzle that is the main question of this paper: why are some democracies more targeted by terrorists while other democratic countries do not have particular problems with it. Thereby, the main goal of this paper is to understand what factors influence the rise of terrorist incidents in some democracies (in the case of the EU countries). The main hypothesis of the paper is that there is a connection between how many migrants a democratic country is ready to accept and its vulnerability to terrorist attacks.

Key words: terrorism, democracy, migration, terrorist incidents, right wing populism.

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owadays it is common knowledge that terrorism is a phenomenon that can spread fast and reach long destinations. Such phenomena may be explained by the fact that now the means of modern technologies have appeared, which spread all over the world, especially in developed democratic countries. As anyone could notice, democracy became one of the most common political regimes that governments of many countries use. It became so truly widespread that many scholars started to do research on it and some of them even spoke about the end of the history when there will be no other regimes but democracy [3]. Although terrorism is always seen as a manifestation of cruelty and massacres and connected with 'cave times' [7], it is a

new phenomenon that exists as a consequence of modernity and post-modernity.

Some researchers argue that democracy should reduce terrorism because 'democracies offer avenues for interest articulation among citizens and endorse nonviolent resolutions of conflicts' [6]. If so, why terrorism spreads in some democracies, while they are often considered as peaceful and encouraging freedom and legal means of expression of discontent. Such contradiction has become a reason why some other researchers hold a different view, according to which terrorism is explained by competitive effects of democracy's different elements [1]. The third group of researchers believe that democracy and terrorism are not interconnected at all. [4]. Although this paper does not consider or test these positions directly, it is necessary to be familiar with the common scholarship opinions about the connection between democracy as a regime and terrorism.

Thereby, it is surprising that some democracies turn out to have more terrorist attacks than other democratic countries. If democracies encourage terrorism by their nature, then why only some democracies struggle with this phenomenon? Thus, this research is concerned with the tendency of rising terrorism in some democratic countries and possible factors that may cause the duration of it. In other words. the missing connection between democracy and terrorism creates an empirical puzzle that is the main question of this paper: why are some democracies more targeted by terrorists while other democratic countries do not have particular problems with it.

Thereby, the main goal of this paper is to determine the factors that can cause the rise of terrorist incidents in some democracies if there is no connection of this phenomenon with the regime type.

In the beginning, it is important to emphasize important definitions. The word "terrorism" can have many different meanings and there is a debate about how to define this term. The need for a universal scientific and legal definition of international terrorism has emerged a long time ago, but became particularly acute only in the 21st century. The international community attempted to develop an agreement on the elimination of the phenomenon of terrorism and its suppression in the UN, but failed to achieve its goal due to the difficulty of reaching consensus among member states. The disagreement of some countries is still one of the main problems and obstacles to the establishment of universal peace and the elimination of terrorism. The United Nations did not get rid of contradictions and, despite the debate that lasted for more than six decades, and excluded international terrorism from its practice by the International Criminal Court.

The difficulties associated with formulating a generally accepted definition of terrorism are best explained by Alex Schmid, one of the leading scientists in the field of counter-terrorism [5]. The author called terrorism a disputed concept. The well-known phrase represents the author's thought: 'A fighter for the freedom of one person, for another is a terrorist." Since it is rather difficult to distinguish separatism from the national liberation movement, as it is to determine the difference in their goals and permissible means, a situation of 'double standards' appears, which is often used by some political actors. He also noted that not all countries consider it necessary and correct to delegitimize the actions of certain groups and define them as terrorist due to the fact that the ultimate goals of these groups meet the interests of the governments of these states. Thus, terrorism is a multidimensional phenomenon, it includes a huge number of manifestations, which follow from the long history of its existence and transformation. Despite all of what has been said above, it is important to create a united definition for achieving more efficient cooperation between countries in addressing terrorism.

The hypothesis that is analyzed in this paper is:

# H: The more a democratic country is ready to accept migrants from other countries, the more it becomes targeted by terrorists.

As for the time period, the paper studies recent tendencies regarding terrorism in democratic countries, which is why I will do my research from 2008 until 2018 (10 years). For my research, I am going to use primary as well as secondary literature.

My main method is a comparative case study with two cases for each independent variable. These are extreme cases for each IV (Independent Variable) — the lowest and the highest average. The cases are selected from the countries of the European Union (EU) because, according to the EIU Democracy Index, most of countries who have 'full' of 'flawed' democracy are European [9]. The contrast of cases is believed present valuable findings. It also involves both qualitative and quantitative analyses.

The hypothesis is connected to migration because of the previous tendency settled by:

1) media, when, for instance, two of the suicide bombers in the November 2015 Paris attack were found to have traveled into Europe among refugees [14];

2) right wing populists, which consider it one of the main factors of increased number of terrorist attacks in the country (for example, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán noted that 'all the terrorists are migrants' and Marine Le Pen stated that 'behind mass immigration, there is terrorism', etc. [13]);

3) stories, spread in different resources (such as BuzzFeed report that mentioned a Turkish people smuggler who claimed to have sent at least ten Islamic State<sup>1</sup> fighters to Greece [12]).

The link between terrorist organizations and migration has now become the focus of attention due to the likelihood that violent extremists have infiltrated refugee routes in order to cross into Europe. Moreover, migration flows are the target for right wing parties that undermine ideas of established institutions and democratic procedures, especially those connected to parties, parliament, and state itself.

**Dependent variable (DV)** is *terrorism in democratic countries* (a democratic country is determined in this research paper by its appropriateness to criterions<sup>2</sup> in accordance with the 2018 EIU Democracy Index [9]). An indicator of PV is the number of terrorist acts (incidents) in a democratic country. A measurement is the number of terrorist acts measured by Global Terrorism Database [11]. **IV or the Independent Variable** is migration. An indicator of this IV is total amount of migrants in a democratic country. A measurement is the number of migrants measured by Eurostat [10].

To analyze this, I take data from Eurostat to calculate the highest and the lowest average to define extreme cases for this IV (the results are given in Attachment 1).

Calculation showed that Germany has always had a significant number of migrants and Liechtenstein has had the lowest average of migrant population throughout the whole period of 10 years. Thus, Germany and Liechtenstein have to be the extreme cases for the IV.

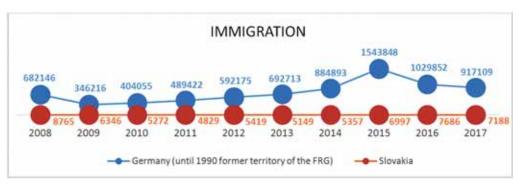
Unfortunately, it was impossible to find any data about terrorist incidents in Liechtenstein. It is excluded from terrorist databases (such as GTD, Global Terrorism Index, and others), thus, it is necessary to exclude it from the case selection and it cannot be used as the extreme case for the IV. Thereby, the extreme lowest case is Slovakia. The amount of immigrants in Slovakia for each year is given in the table form in Attachment 1. Slovakia's immigration situation is similar with Liechtenstein's- from 8765 immigrants in 2008 to 7188 thousand in 2017. Although, the lowest point was reached in 2011 (4829) and afterwards the amount remained almost the same. In the next line graph, the results of both countries are showed. The numbers are also given for better understanding as a difference in the quantity makes the tendency between both cases less visible.

Before getting into Global Terrorism Database for future analysis, one should

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Supreme court of the Russian Federation in 2014 recognized the organization "Islamic state" as a terrorist organization and banned it on the territory of Russia. Participation in this organization is punishable by law.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Democracy Index is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Based on their scores on 60

indicators within these categories, each country is then itself classified as one of four types of regime: full democracy; flawed democracy; hybrid regime; and authoritarian regime.





understand what were the reasons of such a difference in migration flows of both countries. Why Germany has the biggest number and Liechtenstein — the smallest?

Shortly, Germany's history of hospitality began from the establishing of the DDR (East Germany). It was a kind of 'inner' migration (emigration from East to West Germany); the government of the GDR was even forced to build a border (Innerdeutsche Grenze) because of losing the population (citizens) who were migrating to the FRG where the level of life was guite higher. After the border was built, the number reduced a lot as it was hard to move. After the collapse of the GDR and reunification, the situation changed again. From 2010s, not only the guantity of migrants changed, but also the quality, such as citizenship — while the amount of immigrating citizens from European countries and citizens from other developed countries remained the same, there was an increase of immigrants from the Third World countries. Thus, in many West European countries proportion of West European foreigners has remained stable, while the number of the non-European population has increased a lot due to the rise of conflicts in the Middle East, poor level of life in Africa, and the rise of terrorism [2]. Besides, a new group of immigrants came from new EU member states such as Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia. It was much more difficult

to assimilate for these groups as they were forced to migrate by extraordinary circumstances and were sure about temporality of this situation. A small amount of immigrants returned to their countries or stayed aside from political and social life living in Germany but some others joined criminal groups because they could not find a job as they were lacking either employable skills or knowledge of the language.

The Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic went their separate ways after 1993 (after so-called 'the Velvet Divorce'). Slovakia became a member of NATO and of the European Union in 2004. The population in this country consists mostly from Slovaks, Hungarians, Roma, Czechs, Rusyns, Ukrainians, Germans and Poles that is explained by the geographic factor. It has a low level of migration, especially the amount of migrants from the Third World countries.

After reviewing the migrant's history of both countries, it is necessary to calculate and combine the number of terrorist incidents that happened in them from 2008 till 2018.

GTD shows that Slovakia did not have any incidents at all until 2011. The 2011 McDonald's bombing was a partially successful terrorist attack. The perpetrator, Ladislav Kuc, was convicted on 8 counts of terrorism, 1 count of attempted terrorism and 1 count of unlawful possession of weapons. It was the first time that some-

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	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Germany	3	4	1	8	5	0	13	65	44	27
Slovakia	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0

#### Table 1

				Tuble	-					
Slovakia	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Immigrants	8 765	6 346	5 272	4 829	5 419	5 149	5 357	6 997	7 686	7 188
Terrorist incidents	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0

Table 2

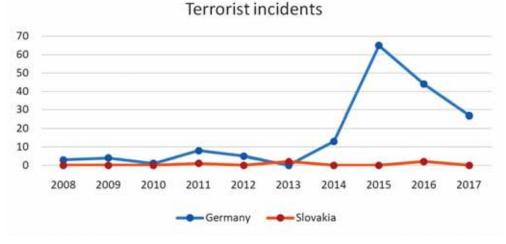
one was convicted on terrorism charges in Slovakia. This case was not connected to migration, he was born in Czechoslovakia and had a history of mental illness. It was directly connected with Kuc's desire to promote animal rights [8]. After this case, two more attacks appeared in 2013 as well as in 2016. Those attacks were performed by right wing extremists.

Germany's situation is different as the number of incidents started dramatically rising since 2013 and falling after 2015. In 2015, the number of migrants was the highest as well as the number of terrorist incidents.

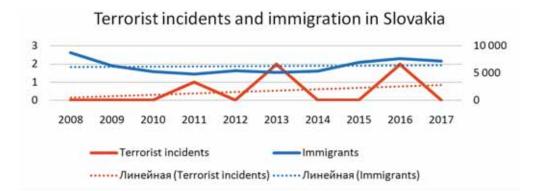
This does not mean that migrants made all of these attacks but it could mean that the procedure of hospitality was not carried out correctly as terrorists were able to enter the country pretending refugees or asylums. To make it more visible, the graph was made. Here is a clear difference — Germany has a bigger number of terrorist incidents with the time, while Slovakia has had only a few that actually were caused by right wing or eco-extremists.

To analyze the causality of DV (dependent variable) and this IV, the numbers of incidents and the quantity of immigrants during all 10 years were combined. The case of Slovakia is easy to analyze there has been a small number of immigrants, which did not change pretty much over time, and the number of terrorist incidents has also been pretty low.

On the line graph 3, the line of trend shows that the quantity of immigrants has not changed significantly, while the number of incidents has risen. However, it is important to notice that in 2016,

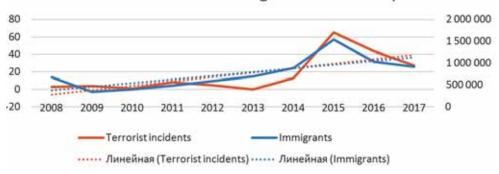


Graph 2





Terrorist incidents and immigration in Germany



Graph 4

the number of immigrants grew again (although in a small proportion) and two terrorist attacks appeared.

To find out if there is any correlation between this data and its quality (positive or negative), it is necessary to calculate the correlation coefficient. To do this, Excel program was used, function correlation where 2 data arrays from the table 3 were put in. The hypothesis will be the same the more immigrants enter the country, the more terrorist incidents appear (IV — immigration, DV-terrorist incidents). The result coefficient value is -0,100175269 or 10% that means that correlation is very weak and negative. We can state that there is no visible connection between these two variables. This analysis proves that attacks are not much connected to immigration. The most attacks actually were made by right wing extremists. Negative value means that the more migrants were in this period, the less attacks happened. **This means that a smaller number of immigrants does not lead to any increase in the number** 

Germany	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Immigrants	682 146	346 216	404 055	489 422	592 175	692 713	884 893	1543848	1029852	917 109
Terrorist incidents	3	4	1	8	5	0	13	65	44	27

#### Table 3

# of terrorist attacks, which proves the hypothesis.

When the data for Germany was taken, it showed that since 2012 the number of immigrants was rising as well as the number of terrorist incidents. The biggest number (65) was in 2016 when about 1,3 million of immigrants crossed the country's border.

These visible graphics show that the number of immigrants in Germany was increasing and the line of trend prove this tendency, while the number of terrorist incidents was growing simultaneously with it and started falling after 2015.

To prove that between this data there is any correlation, it is necessary to calculate the correlation coefficient. To do this, I use Excel program, function correlation where I put 2 data arrays from the table 3. The hypothesis will be the same — the more immigrants enter the country, the more terrorist incidents appear (IV — immigration, DV-terrorist incidents).

The coefficient of correlation is 0,913130967 that means 91% (coefficient value varies from 0 to 1; to 0.2 — very weak correlation, to 0.5 - weak correlation, to 0.7 — average correlation, to 0.9 — high correlation, over 0.9 — very high correlation). Consequently, correlation (91%) in our case is very high and positive.

Thus, there is a definite connection between this data — between ill-conceived friendly immigrant politics and terrorist attacks possibility — as it becomes easier to enter into the country without much notice. Although, this connection should not be mixed with hostility itself and immigrants, the latter are still being victims of the situation and often being rejected to enter with the help of right-wing populist policies.

In conclusion, the hypothesis was partly proved. The hypothesis (H) — the more a democratic country being ready to accept migrants from other (mostly non-democratic) countries, the more it is targeted by terrorists — was proved with the case of Germany which had the highest number of immigrants in this period of time and its correlation coefficient was high and positive.

Migration crisis was one of the reasons why many terrorists went to the country unnoticed. Thus, the migrants themselves did not cause the rise of terrorism, the inability to detect the hypothetic perpetrators among migrants when their number is pretty high did. A common mistake is to believe that migrants are the cause of the problem, which is often used by right-wing populists to strengthen their political position, using people's ignorance or unawareness.

A special feature during the years of the European migration crisis was the outbreak of terrorist attacks on individuals, property and business. The crisis influenced the emergence of terrorist and extremist organizations trying to draw attention to their dissatisfaction with the migration crisis. For example, anti-Muslim extremists opening fire on a Muslim woman in a Stefans bakery, Chemnitz Revolution attack on foreign migrants [14]. While the vast majority of right-wing extremist groups in the EU did not resort to violence, they created an atmosphere of fear and hostility towards minorities. Such actions clearly have a negative impact on the field of human rights protection in Germany. Xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-emigration sentiments, violence against people are what Germany seeks to avoid, especially after a tragic historical experience. Ultra-radical terrorism examples are bombing in Düsseldorf (June 2000) and attack on foreign migrants by activists of the Chemnitz Revolution (September 2018).

Speaking of Germany's counterterrorism policy, one should mention Grid Search (Rasterfahndung) as **the main method for identifying terrorism suspects**. It was reintroduced into German law after 9/11. It includes the collection of bulk data from public and private databases (registration of residents, police and customer data from public and private companies). This dataset is determined by criteria (age, membership of political groups, rental situation, etc.), and vague data is refined by investigators (for example, an unknown terrorist or group). By using such "grids" in search, they hope to get enough people in the database and make identification easier. After 9/11 in Germany, this method was widely used to identify al-Qaeda agents [11]. The Merkel government also approved legislation to reduce the number of Islamist attacks, making it a criminal offense to travel abroad for military training. Many civil rights advocates opposed such a measure [15].

However, measures above did not stop an attack on the Christmas market in Berlin (2016) from happening, which shocked both the country as a whole and the EU [8, 10]. These attacks showed an increase in the number of single attacks (the lone wolf) and weapons. Lone terrorists are far from a new phenomenon, but with the advancement of internet technology, it has become much easier to distribute extremist materials. Counterterrorism policy faces the problem of isolating such individuals due to the difficulty of finding them. Statistically, such attacks are more deadly due to unlimited access to weapons and independence from the network providing the weapon (from kitchen utensils to a rental car or car sharing).

In Germany, similarly, traveling abroad for military training has become a criminal offense since 2015, but this has only doubled the controversy, damaged the rule of law, and expanded the scope of monitoring with a restrictive impact on fundamental rights. In this case, the response to the radicalization process and the threat of terrorism could be **to improve the qualifications of security personnel, increase equipment, international cooperation and preventive measures**.

Some of the directions of counter-terrorism in Germany may obviously contradict the values of the established political regime, because with insufficient control over the activities of the security services and the judiciary, violations of rights such as confidentiality of information, legal protection, justice, respect for the dignity of the human person (especially if the condition the presence of a criminal act as a precondition for intervention).

In this regard, author suggest some recommendations for democracies that are having big migration flows and want to counter terrorism successfully without any controversy their political regime (liberal democratic values):

1) to increase in qualified security personnel, equipment and international cooperation;

2) to comply the constitutional principle of a clear distinction between punitive and legal behavior;

 to ensure legitimacy, consistency and efficiency: operational cooperation and exchange of legal and judicial information;

4) to comply with liberal democratic principles in the very process of making decisions;

5) to limit the abuse of human rights principles in counterterrorism initiatives, the need for a serious attitude to the expertise of the committees or bodies associated with these areas.

Democracies can effectively respond to the threat of terrorism and reduce its destructive effects. This requires an understanding of what terrorism is, the development of a counter-terrorism policy in accordance with the goals of a democratic state and a well-thought-out sustainable strategy for the implementation of this policy.

Undoubtedly, big migration flows are not the only possible factor that can cause the vulnerability of a democratic country to becoming a target of terrorism. Thereby, the more detailed research is needed to consider, for example, how the engagement in armed or political conflicts (towards non-democracies) can influence on becoming more targeted by terrorists.

# Attachment 1

GEO/TIME	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average
Germany	682 146	346 216	404 055	489 422	592 175	692 713	884 893	1 543 848	1 029 852	917 109	758 243
United Kingdom	590 242	566 514	590 950	566 044	498 040	526 046	631 991	631 452	588 993	644 209	583 448
Spain	599 075	392 962	360 705	371 331	304 053	280 772	305 454	342 114	414 746	532 132	390 334
France	296 608	296 970	307 111	319 816	327 431	338 752	340 383	364 221	378 115	369 964	333 937
Italy	534 712	442 940	458 856	385 793	350 772	307 454	277 631	280 078	300 823	343 440	368 250
Poland	15 275	189 166	155 131	157 059	217 546	220 311	222 275	218 147	208 302	209 353	181 257
Netherlands	143 516	122 917	126 776	130 118	124 566	129 428	145 323	166 872	189 232	189 646	146 839
Romania	138 929	135 844	149 885	147 685	167 266	153 646	136 035	132 795	137 455	177 435	147 698
Sweden	101 171	102 280	98 801	96 467	103 059	115 845	126 966	134 240	163 005	144 489	118 632
Switzerland	184 297	160 623	161 778	148 799	149 051	160 157	156 282	153 627	149 305	143 377	156 730
Belgium			135 281	147 377	129 477	120 078	123 158	146 626	123 702	126 703	131550,3
Greece	66 529	58 613	60 462	60 089	58 200	57 946	59 013	64 446	116 867	112 247	71 441
Austria	73 772	69 295	70 978	82 230	91 557	101 866	116 262	166 323	129 509	111 801	101 359
Ireland	82 592	50 604	52 339	57 292	61 324	65 539	73 519	80 792	85 185	78 499	68 769
Denmark	57 357	51 800	52 236	52 833	54 409	60 312	68 388	78 492	74 383	68 579	61 879
Hungary	37 652	27 894	25 519	28 018	33 702	38 968	54 581	58 344	53 618	68 070	42 637
Norway	58 123	55 953	69 214	70 337	69 908	68 313	66 903	60 816	61 460	53 351	63 438
Czechia	108 267	75 620	48 317	27 114	34 337	30 124	29 897	29 602	64 083	51 847	49 921
Portugal	29 718	32 307	27 575	19 667	14 606	17 554	19 516	29 896	29 925	36 639	25 740
Finland	29 114	26 699	25 636	29 481	31 278	31 941	31 507	28 746	34 905	31 797	30 110
Bulgaria					14 103	18 570	26 615	25 223	21 241	25 597	21891,5
Luxem- bourg	17 758	15 751	16 962	20 268	20 478	21 098	22 332	23 803	22 888	24 379	20 572
Malta	6 043	6 161	4 275	5 465	8 256	10 897	14 454	16 936	17 051	21 676	11 121
Cyprus	21 060	22 581	20 206	23 037	17 476	13 149	9 212	15 183	17 391	21 306	18 060
Lithuania	9 297	6 487	5 213	15 685	19 843	22 011	24 294	22 130	20 162	20 368	16 549
Slovenia	30 693	30 296	15 416	14 083	15 022	13 871	13 846	15 420	16 623	18 808	18 408
Estonia	3 671	3 884	2 810	3 709	2 639	4 109	3 904	15 413	14 822	17 616	7 258
Croatia	16 883	13 213	8 846	8 534	8 959	10 378	10 638	11 706	13 985	15 553	11 870
Iceland	10 288	3 921	3 948	4 073	4 960	6 406	5 368	5 635	8 710	12 116	6 543
Latvia	4 678	3 731	4 011	10 234	13 303	8 299	10 365	9 479	8 345	9 916	8 236
Slovakia	8 765	6 346	5 272	4 829	5 419	5 149	5 357	6 997	7 686	7 188	6 301
Liechten- stein	578	584	591	650	671	696	615	657	607	645	629

Source of data — Eurostat (CITIZEN — Total, AGEDEF — Age reached during the year, AGE — Total, UNIT-Number, SEX — Total).

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