

Europe's Jihadi Migrants: Mapping Migrant Involvement in Jihadi Terrorism in Europe (2015-2025)

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Image: Dover, Kent, UK, August 2025, Asylum seekers brought to the docks by RNLI Lifeboat



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About the Danube Institute

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About the Author



Dr Simon Cottee is a criminologist and freelance writer who covers terrorism and violent extremism. He is a contributing writer at The Atlantic, a contributing editor at Studies in Conflict & Terrorism and a regular contributor at UnHerd. He is the author of five books, including *The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam* (Hurst) and has written for a variety of newspapers and magazines, including The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Telegraph, The Sunday Times Magazine and Newsweek. He is a member of UK Government's Counter Terrorism Prison and Probation Independent Advisory Group.

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Abstract

Muslim migrants constitute a small fraction of Europe's population, yet they are dramatically overrepresented in jihadist terrorism. This report, based on a dataset covering the past decade, documents this development. Between May 2015 and May 2025, 45% of all jihadi terror plots in Europe featured a migrant. During this period there were 100 migrant-related plots in total, involving 137 migrant plotters. These plots, where they were launched, killed 279 people and injured 1192 others. The vast majority (79%) were carried out by “self-starters” inspired by Islamic State (ISIS), though some (9%) were carried out by ISIS operatives who travelled to Europe from the Middle East for the sole purpose of committing an attack there. Plots were organised in 12 countries, with Germany the most frequent target, followed by France and the United Kingdom. Plotters originated from over 20 countries, most notably Syria, Iraq, Morocco and Tunisia. While the rejection of an asylum application seemed to trigger violence in some cases, almost half of the plotters held some form of protected status in Europe at the time of the plot. Plots spiked in 2017, declined thereafter and then peaked again in 2024.

The dominant academic and media narrative characterises European jihadism as a “homegrown” phenomenon rooted in Western pathologies (lack of integration, alienation, Islamophobia, regime-change wars etc). But this obscures the involvement of foreign-born migrants in jihadist violence in Europe. Indeed, the data reveal a distinct fourth wave of jihadist terrorism that is inextricably linked to mass migration from Muslim-majority countries. While policy discourse tends to focus on the benefits of migration, migrant-related jihadism is assuredly one of its costs and should be explicitly addressed in discussions of migration. Unfortunately, political sensitivity surrounding migration — and the fear of being tarnished as a “far-right” sympathiser or “Islamophobe” — has seriously distorted analysis and hampered effective policymaking. A more honest recognition of this migrant-driven wave would enable policymakers to address the threat more effectively and help contain the populist anger it engenders.

Acknowledgments¹

This was a challenging project to research and complete. Within a month of starting work on it I suffered a subarachnoid haemorrhage, which resulted in a three-month stay in hospital, tethered to an IV drip and a cylindrical jar containing my cerebrospinal fluids. Perhaps researching the terrorism-migration nexus isn't good for one's brain health or perhaps it was the cumulative impact of watching all those ISIS execution videos for an earlier project. Anyway, I would like to extend my thanks to my family for their superb support during this difficult time and to the Danube Institute's Calum Nicholson for his understanding and encouragement throughout. I would also like to thank Robin Simcox and Daniel Allington for their helpful feedback on an earlier draft of this report.

Introduction

On a warm summer evening in late August 2024, a 26-year-old Syrian national named Issa al-Hasan carried out a mass stabbing at the “Festival of Diversity” in Solingen, Germany, killing three people and injuring eight others.² The attack took place in front of the main stage during a live performance by DJ Topic, who later revealed that security personnel had urged him to continue his set to prevent mass panic among the crowd. He kept playing for another 10–15 minutes, until the music was finally stopped.³ Eye witnesses reported that al-Hasan, who had been in contact with an ISIS handler on Telegram the day before the attack, had shouted “Allahu Akbar” during the assault.⁴ One of his victims, Ines Wallusch, a 56-year-old pharmacist, bled to death in the arms of her husband after suffering a fatal stabbing wound to her carotid artery.⁵

ISIS soon claimed responsibility for the attack, describing al-Hasan as their “soldier” who had targeted “Christians” and “non-believers” to avenge Muslims in Palestine and elsewhere.⁶ Al-Hasan, who fled the scene and was later captured and convicted of murder and terrorism offences, should never have been in Germany: his asylum application was rejected in 2023,⁷ yet the authorities failed to remove him and he remained in the country. It is a cruel irony that he chose to unleash his murderous rage at an event explicitly promoting multiculturalism and diversity. At his trial, al-Hasan explained that he couldn’t bear to see people dancing in Germany while children were being killed in Gaza,⁸ although he was unable to clarify how murdering German party-goers would help Gazan children.

The Solingen attack was not an isolated one. Indeed, it followed a grimly familiar script where a migrant had embraced jihadi ideology and sought to murder their hosts. There was a spate of such attacks in 2016, culminating in a horrific ramming attack on a Christmas market in Berlin, when Tunisian Anis Amri killed 12 and injured many more.⁹

Just months before the Solingen attack, a 25-year-old Afghan national launched an assault on anti-Islam activists in Mannheim, stabbing to death a police officer in the process. He, too, should never have been in Germany: his asylum application was rejected in 2014, but he contrived to obtain a residence permit on account of his marriage to a Turkish-German woman, with whom he had two children.¹⁰

It is unfortunate that anyone who notices this pattern or expresses outrage at those who have enabled it runs the risk of being tarnished as a racist or “Islamophobe” – not necessarily on account of their substantive views but because they sustain racist or neo-colonialist “tropes” about “minoritized”, non-western others (i.e. that they are naturally violent and predatory). But this report is more animated by curiosity than unexamined bigotry towards outsiders. What do we know about migrant jihadis and just how numerous are they in Europe?

There is very little hard data on this matter, and, in my own academic specialism of terrorism and security studies, the nexus between migration and terrorism is much neglected or, where it is studied, marked by a sentimental bias towards migrants as well as a scepticism, if not hostility, towards anyone who seeks to unapologetically defend borders.¹¹ This report is intended to remedy this by offering a more neutral and comprehensive account. Whatever the benefits of migration, it is surely important to take account also of the costs.

Of course, and it should go without saying, the vast majority of migrants are entirely decent and law-abiding people. Indeed, some have even tried thwarting the murderous actions of the violent few among them.¹² But you can’t write about everything and this report isn’t about the good migrants.



View of flowers placed in memory of those who died in the Westminster terrorist attack (Shutterstock)

Literature Review

Existing data on migrant involvement in terrorism is sparse or partial. Robin Simcox's report is incisive and illuminating, but its scope is limited to a four year period between January 2014 and December 2017.¹³ Simcox identified 44 asylum seekers, linking them to 32 Islamist plots (both successful and foiled) that resulted in 182 deaths and 814 injuries. Plots were disproportionately organised in Germany and most plotters were radicalised prior to their entry to Europe, where nearly three-quarters carried out their plots or were foiled within two years of arrival on the continent. Simcox found that 16% of Islamist plots in Europe featured asylum seekers. ISIS, he warned, was exploiting migrant routes to travel back and forth between Syria and Europe, noting that it had "proved disturbingly simple" for its commandos to conceal themselves among genuine refugees. His conclusion was stark: "Europe's response to migration flows has been inadequate and inadvertently increased the terrorist threat dramatically".¹⁴

A more recent study by Thomas Renard and Méryl Demuynck covers a longer time span (2014-2024), but focuses exclusively on completed attacks and ignores the UK.¹⁵ Renard and Demuynck identified 55 individuals, linking them to 43 jihadist attacks in the European Union involving non-EU nationals and returning ISIS foreign fighters who exploited migration routes to travel back to Europe. Just over half the perpetrators (53%) were either born in Europe or had resided there for over five years prior to committing an attack. A quarter were EU citizens, while 13 individuals were irregular migrants, of whom 11 were under expulsion orders at the time of their attack. Renard and Demuynck observe that attack activity peaked in 2015-2016, but declined after, "suggesting that the link between migration and terrorism has not grown as a threat over time".¹⁶

The data I present below suggests that this is dangerously misleading. Elsewhere in their report Renard and Demuynck approvingly quote Alex Schmid - "fears about refugee terrorists are largely unfounded"¹⁷ - and earnestly claim that "if anything, research shows that migrants are much more likely to be victims of terrorism than perpetrators".¹⁸ Indeed, in a shorter piece summarising their report, Renard and Demuynck devote an entire section to the question of how migrants are victims of terrorism.¹⁹ They conclude that "terrorism is primarily a homegrown problem".²⁰

Several other research findings ought to be mentioned before proceeding to the next section. According to Petter Nesser's exhaustive study of jihadi plots in Europe (1994-2024),²¹ asylum seekers were involved in 40 plots (both successful and foiled).²²

Nesser's research unfortunately doesn't go into detail about the asylum seeker/refugee dimension, but he told me, via email, that it's "interesting and worrying, and even more pronounced in updated data". Erik Hacker's research on (completed) jihadi attacks in Europe (2014-2022) similarly touches on the question of refugees.²³ Hacker identifies 133 perpetrators, linking them to 105 attacks. He found that 31 (23.31%) were asylum-seekers;²⁴ this rises to 60% for Germany, which took in around a million migrants following the 2015 refugee crisis.²⁵

Hacker is reluctant to discuss the issue of immigration in any detail and doesn't address it at all in his conclusion, preferring instead to highlight the "continuing prevalence of the crime-terror nexus" and the poor mental health of jihadi lone attackers.²⁶



Hungarian Counter-terrorism unit, TEK
(Shutterstock)

Method

This report is based on a dataset on jihadi terrorist plots in Europe between May 2015 and May 2025. It was created by using open source material: primarily news articles and terrorism-related reports by scholars and experts. I worked with three detailed spreadsheets: one on jihadi plots involving at least one migrant; a second on jihadi migrant plotters; and a third on all jihadi plots. In creating these documents, I drew on Petter Nesser's data, which he shared with me. This dataset, which was developed over nearly two decades at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, records not only attacks that were launched, but also plots that were foiled by the authorities, giving us a fuller picture of the threat. It includes 273 well-documented jihadi terror plots from 1994 until 2024. For the period 1994-2018, 58% (118 of 204 cases) are foiled plots; between January 2019 and June 2024, 65% (45 of 69 cases) were foiled plots.²⁷

Nesser documents the date and location of plots, the number of people killed and injured, as well as information about perpetrators, their ideological affiliation, tactics, weapons and targets. For every plot that involves at least one asylum seeker, he ticks the "refugee in plot" column, but he doesn't collect any other information on these individuals. I used this as starting point for building up my own data, cross-checking it with Simcox's list of jihadi refugees²⁸ and an extensive table of attacks and convictions involving refugees that the migration scholar Christopher McDowell shared with me. I also made extensive use of *CTC Sentinel's* back catalogue and Europol's annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report.

For the database on jihadi migrant plotters, I included information on the plotter's name, age at the time of the plot's completion/foiling, country of origin, time of arrival in Europe, whether or not they had been sent to Europe by a terrorist group for the purposes of carrying out an attack, whether they had a criminal record and if they had any mental health problems. From time-to-time I used an AI programme to cross-check plotters names, but I couldn't rely on it because it sometimes got key details wrong or muddled; in fairness, it did admit to these errors when challenged. For each plot, I used multiple news sources, prioritising traditional outlets where possible.

Like Nesser, I define a 'jihadi' as an individual or group linked to al-Qaeda or ISIS or motivated by their ideology. A migrant plotter is a jihadi who was born outside of Europe and had their formative experiences (i.e. childhood) in a non-European country. This is a broad category, which includes, at one end, recent arrivals who sought asylum and, at the other, long-term residents such as the 2016 Bastille Day truck attacker Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, who came to France from Tunisia in 2005 when he was 20.²⁹ I also included the 2022 Oslo pride shooter Zaniar Matapour, who came to Norway with his family at aged 12 and was given asylum.³⁰

However, I did not include the Moroccan-born perpetrators of the 2017 attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils, who came to Spain when they were infants.³¹ I similarly excluded the case of Mahdi Mohamud, who in 2018 stabbed a couple and then attacked a police officer at Manchester Victoria station on New Year's Eve, shouting "Allahu Akbar" and "Long live the caliphate" as he did so. Mohamud, a Dutch national from a Somali family, arrived in the UK when he was nine.³²

In any dataset the analyst faces the perennial risk of either over-reporting or under-reporting cases. I erred on the side of caution and excluded activity that, though jihadi-related, couldn't be tied to an actual attack or plot in Europe. For example, there are many migrants in Europe who have been convicted of terrorism offences related to the glorification or encouragement of terrorism³³ or to membership of a terrorist organisation. I ignored these cases.

Likewise, I excluded Europeans with a migrant background who travelled to join ISIS in Syria or Iraq, as well as non-Europeans who fled to Europe after fighting in jihadi conflict zones,³⁴ since this had to do with foreign fighting and not plot activity inside Europe. I excluded the alarmingly large group of migrants who committed rampage violence that resembled jihadi terrorism but had to be categorised otherwise because the perpetrator was motivated by non-ideological reasons or was severely mentally ill. Thus I excluded the 21-year-old Syrian asylum seeker in Germany who stabbed to death a pregnant woman in a kebab shop and injured two others,³⁵ because his motive was sexual jealousy.³⁶

I also excluded the case of Salih Khater, a Sudanese-born man who rammed his car into a group of civilians and the police outside the House of Commons in London, injuring three,³⁷ because his actions owed more to motiveless malignancy³⁸ than to any ideological imperative.³⁹ And I excluded the 37-year-old Algerian street vendor and former ISIS foreign fighter who tried to stab a police officer on the Milan subway, since his primary motive was to resist arrest rather than to launch a jihadi plot.⁴⁰ Finally I excluded hate crimes and cases where information on plots was vague⁴¹ or involved mere fantasies as opposed to concrete plans.⁴² However, I did include plots – 17 in total – where the perpetrator was both seemingly radicalised and in poor mental health. I did so not out of any desire to inflate the overall number of plotters, but rather because it seems intuitive that a plotter can be both committed to jihadist ideology and mentally compromised in some way or another. As Nesser puts it, “sociological–psychological challenges are commonplace among extremists, and do not rule out rational behaviour”.⁴³

For example, in December 2015, ex-Uber driver Muhiddin Mire launched a frenzied knife attack at Leytonstone Tube station in London, attempting to behead one of his victims before he was restrained by police. He was suffering from paranoid schizophrenia, which was taken into consideration at his trial. But he was also found to have been motivated by events in Syria.⁴⁴ As Mire was being taken into custody by the police, a bystander inanely shouted “You ain’t no Muslim bruv”,⁴⁵ which served as an unexamined meme in much of the reporting on the rampage and was even approvingly invoked in parliament by the then British Prime Minister David Cameron.⁴⁶ But, as was amply demonstrated at his trial, Mire was indeed a Muslim, had immersed himself in ISIS propaganda and had come to the UK from Somalia when he was 12.⁴⁷



*Belgium army parolling on a street after terrorist attack in Brussels
(Shutterstock)*

Overview

The dataset that this report is based on covers a ten-year period, beginning in May 2015, when ISIS was at its peak in Syria and Iraq and was directly engaged in international terrorism against its enemies.⁴⁸ This period also encompasses the migration crisis, in which hundreds of thousands fled the civil war in Syria and Iraq, seeking refuge in Europe. At the peak of the crisis in September 2015, when thousands of migrants were stranded in Greece and Hungary, the then German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened Germany's borders.⁴⁹ "We can do this," she famously declared, referring to Germany's capacity to handle the influx.⁵⁰ In 2015, around 1.26 million first-time asylum applications were recorded across the European Union,⁵¹ with Germany registering nearly 1 million new asylum seekers by year's end.⁵²

Migrant-related Plots

In this decade-long period there were 221 jihadi plots in Europe, of which 100 (45%) involved a migrant. There were 137 migrant plotters in total. Of the 100 plots involving one or more migrant, 51% were launched, while 49% were foiled (see Table 1). For the other 121 plots that didn't feature a migrant, 36% were launched, while 64% were foiled, suggesting that when migrants are involved in plots those plots are more likely to succeed.

Table 1: Launched and foiled plots

Plots	Migrant related plots	Other plots
Foiled	49 (49%)	77 (64%)
Launched	51 (51%)	44 (36%)
Total	100	121

Migrant-related plots killed 279 people and injured 1192 others (see Table 2), while plots that didn't involve a migrant resulted in 107 deaths and 1449 injuries, which would suggest that when a migrant is involved in a plot it is markedly more deadly, although two migrant-related plots – the November 2015 Paris attacks and the Nice truck ramming attack in 2016 - account for 216 deaths combined.

Table 2: Deaths and Injuries

Victims of launched plots	Migrant related plots	Other plots
Killed	279	107
Injured	1192	1449

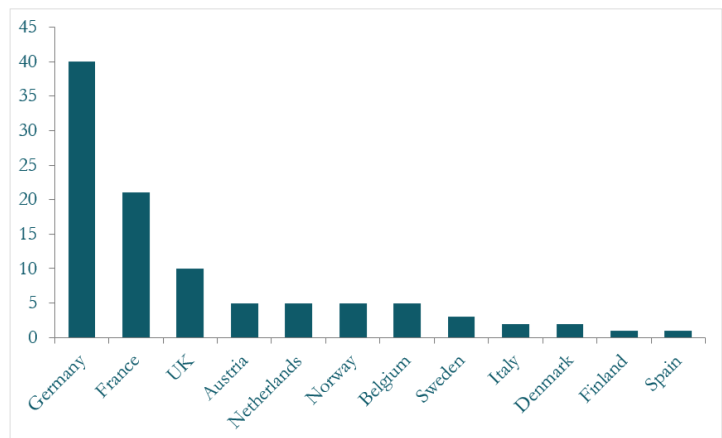
80% of migrant-related plots were ISIS affiliated, while 76% were organised by a lone individual. Of the 51 migrant-related plots that were launched, 96% were committed by a lone individual (see Table 3), which supports Nesser's finding that jihadi attacks are more likely to succeed if they are carried out by one person.⁵³

Table 3: Launched Plots by Group and Single Actor

Launched Plots	Migrant related plots	Other plots
Single Actor	49 (96%)	38 (86%)
Group	2 (4%)	6 (14%)
Total	51	44

Across 12 countries, Germany was the most frequent incubator and target of the 100 migrant-related plots, accounting for nearly half, followed by France (21 plots) and the UK (10 plots) (see Figure 1). Because global jihadism appears to harbour no special animus towards Germany, the latter's position in this league table can more reasonably be attributed to the sheer number of migrants that it took in during the refugee crisis than to any particular desire to launch attacks there. Hungary, by contrast, closed its borders to refugees fleeing the civil war in the Middle East and has experienced almost zero jihadi attack activity.⁵⁴ (It did, however, incur the wrath of the European Union Court of Justice, which imposed a €200 million lump sum fine and a penalty of €1 million per day until it complies with EU asylum rules.⁵⁵

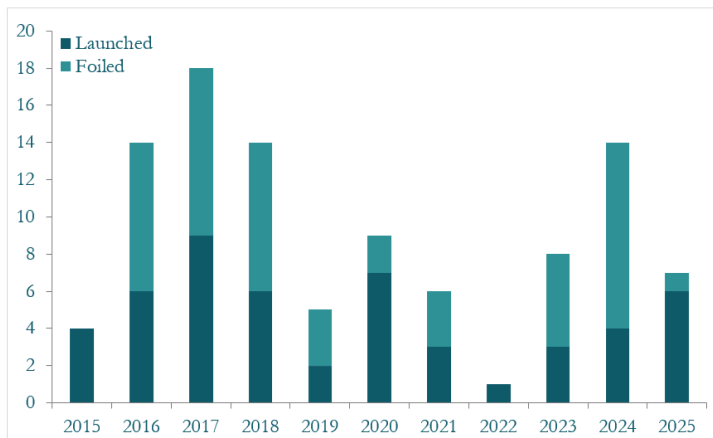
Figure 1: Number of Plots by Country



Numbers of migrant-related plots fluctuate over time. Attack activity was subdued in 2015, with the notable exception of the devastating Paris attacks in November, which killed 130 and injured many more.

The peak of the migrant crisis was directly followed by a sharp spike in attack activity in 2016 (14 plots) and 2017 (18 plots), followed by a downturn in activity before a new spike in 2024, with 14 plots (see Figure 2). The latter spike is especially striking given that the ISIS caliphate ignominiously collapsed in March 2019,⁵⁶ when the group lost its last sliver of territory in Baghouz and thousands of ISIS fighters and their families surrendered to the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. This would suggest that ISIS, for some, retains its potency not as an aspirational, forward-looking project with a territorial sanctuary to be defended or sacralised, but rather as a wholly negativistic rebellion against western multiculturalism. Ironically, this rebellion is expressed by the very people championed by western multiculturalists, whom it can be reasonably interpreted as meant to hurt and confound.

Figure 2: Plots per Year



Relatedly, some jihadi migrants specifically directed their plots against places and symbols that are venerated among western progressives, but which the jihadis themselves see as wholly decadent and permissive. Thus Zaniar Matapour’s shooting spree in June 2022, where he murdered two and wounded over 20 more, was deliberately targetted at Oslo’s annual LGBT pride event, while two years earlier the Egyptian-born Khairi Saadallah fatally stabbed to death three gay men in a park in Reading in the UK. In remarks to the police after the attack, Saadallah boasted that he was “going to paradise for the jihad” he had performed, describing his victims as “wrong-uns” who “deserved it”.⁵⁷ Other plotters seemed to target their rage against women, like the Algerian Khaled Babbouri who in 2016 attacked two female police officers with a machete in Charleroi, Belgium.⁵⁸ The Moroccan Abderrahman Bouanane similarly targetted women in his knife rampage in Turku, Finland, killing two and injuring 6 others.⁵⁹

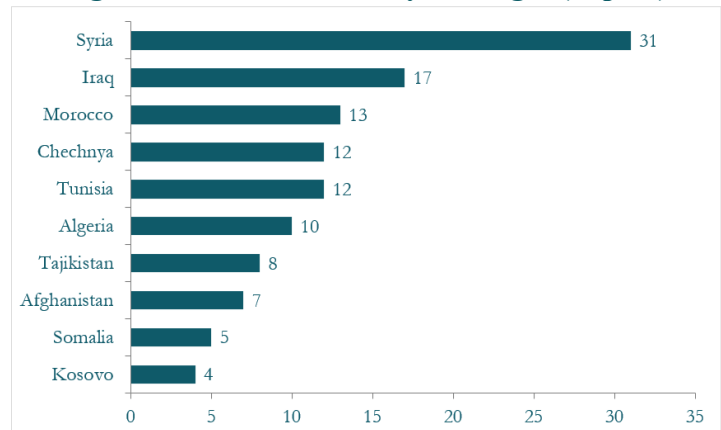
At his trial, Bouanane, an ISIS supporter, told the court that he was “in a war against women”.⁶⁰ In more recent plots, particularly in Germany, the preferred target seems to be Jewish- or Israeli-related, which is likely a response to the intensification of the conflict between Israel and Hamas after 7 October, 2023.⁶¹

More broadly, civilians are the preferred target of jihadi migrant plots: some 68% were aimed at non-combatants, while just 9% are aimed at security personnel (including both the police and the military). Armed assault (with hand-held weapons such as guns or knives) is the most common tactic in plots (45%), followed by bombing (30%) and vehicle ramming (10%).⁶²

Migrant Plotters

There were 137 migrant plotters in total, linked to 100 plots. There is no single profile of a migrant plotter, but they share some features: the vast majority (97%) are male and in their 20s and 30s. The youngest was 14,⁶³ while the oldest was 62.⁶⁴ Plotters originated from over 20 countries, but the majority came from Syria (23%), Iraq (12%) and Morocco (9%).

Figure 3: Plotters' Country of Origin (Top 10)



Of the 137 plotters, 12% had a mental health condition, ranging from the generic “psychologically unstable” to paranoid schizophrenia. (This may well be an underestimate, given that sources on plots often lack details about plotters.⁶⁵) While some researchers would have excluded these cases, I chose to include them, since extremist beliefs and mental illness are not necessarily mutually exclusive and can intersect in complex ways. Some 23% of plotters had a criminal record (for non-jihadi crimes), while a few had convictions for previous involvement in jihadist activity, ranging from the glorification of terrorism⁶⁶ to an assassination attempt.⁶⁷



A huge floral tribute in St Ann's Square to the Manchester bombing victims (Shutterstock)

A small number of plotters (9%) came to Europe for the sole purpose of conducting an attack there. For example, two of the commandos who carried out suicide bombings in the Paris attacks of 2015 - Ammar Ramadan Mansour Mohamad al-Sabaawi and Mohamad al-Mahmod - were from Iraq and posed as Syrian refugees on their route to Europe, using forged passports.⁶⁸

The seeming ease with which they (and other returning European ISIS foreign fighters) were able to do so is unsettling and it's surprising that ISIS didn't exploit this weakness in European security with greater stridency. However, the majority of migrant-related plots (79%) were carried out by "self-starters" who had developed an ideological affiliation with ISIS only after their arrival in Europe.

A further 10% of plotters were categorised as "hybrid", in that, while they were not sent to Europe by ISIS for the purpose of a plot, instead mobilising towards violence at a later point, they were nevertheless affiliates of the group.

For example, Mohamad Darwish, who was born in Syria and fought for ISIS in 2014, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for his role in a plot to commit a massacre in Brest, France, in early 2020;⁶⁹ he had arrived in France in the autumn of 2015 as part of a refugee resettlement program.

The time span between plotters' arrival in Europe and their mobilisation towards violence varied markedly between plotters: at one end of the spectrum there is the Egyptian, UAE-based, Abdullah Hamamy, who was in France for a week – legally, on a tourist visa - before launching a knife attack on soldiers at the Louvre,⁷⁰ while at the other there is the Nice truck attacker Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, who lived in France for at least 11 years before carrying out his atrocity.⁷¹

Just over half of the plotters (51%) mobilised towards violence within five years of coming to Europe, with 36 plotters (28%) mobilising within two years of their arrival in Europe (see Figure 4). Some 48% of plotters arrived in Europe in the period between 2014 and 2016. For 15% of plotters, this information wasn't available.⁷²

Figure 4: Period between plotters' arrival in Europe and plot resolution



According to Renard and Demuynck, the fact that most migrant plotters seemingly radicalise only after reaching Europe suggests that terrorism is a home-grown phenomenon⁷³ rather than "an external threat imported through immigration".⁷⁴ But that argument itself rests on the assumption that migrants are blank slates when they enter Europe and that if they radicalise in Europe it must be purely because of European failures and not at all because of any pre-existing ways of thinking on the part of the migrants themselves. In truth, we know very little about how migrants radicalise, because there are so few in-depth accounts of what this process is like.⁷⁵ However, it seems reasonable to suppose that radicalisation needs to work on a responsive or desiring self and that such a self will have been profoundly shaped by the migrant's formative experiences in their country of origin. In other words, in thinking about migrant radicalisation we need to understand the interaction between Muslim immigrants and their host country, capturing both aspects of the interaction instead of focusing exclusively on one side of the equation or the other. Migrants rarely come to Europe as fully-formed terrorists, but nor can they be assumed to be made in Europe out of whole cloth, so to speak.

It is hard to know the exact circumstances in which plotters radicalised and what led them to violently turn against their hosts. In a few cases, the rejection of an asylum application seemed to have spurred them on towards violence, as in the case of the Ansbach suicide bomber Mohammed Daleel, who ten days before his attack in July 2016 had received notice from the German authorities that he was to be deported to Bulgaria.⁷⁶ But almost half (47%) of the 137 jihadi migrants had been given asylum or had residency, which suggests that formal recognition of refugee status isn't a firewall against violent extremism.



*Counter-terror police combat team in training, Poland
(Shutterstock)*

Conclusion

First-generation Muslim migrants have played a pivotal role in jihadist terrorism in Europe, and this needs to be better recognised. Despite making up only a very small share of the European population,⁷⁷ such migrants were involved in 45% of all jihadi plots in Europe over the last decade. This is additionally noteworthy when we consider that 68% of all jihadi plots between May 2015 and May 2025 were the work of lone plotters. Indeed, we might say that jihadi migrants constitute a fourth wave of jihadism, so pivotal are they. Marc Sageman, back in 2008, described three distinct phases or “waves” of jihad, beginning with the so-called “Afghan Arabs” who came to Pakistan and Afghanistan to fight the Soviets in the 1980s.⁷⁸ These were followed by elite expatriates from the Middle East who went to study in the West and whose social and cultural displacement led them to seek out al Qaeda, from which they received training and guidance. The Egyptian Mohamed Atta, for example, who studied urban planning at university in Hamburg and who led the 9/11 hijackers, personified this generation. The third wave, by contrast, consists of westernised Muslims who have no material connection to al Qaeda but are inspired by its ideology and who participate in a “leaderless” jihad. These are “homegrown” terrorists:⁷⁹ the “jihadists next door” who are born and raised in the West.⁸⁰ Mohammed Bouyeri, who murdered the film-maker Theo Van Gogh in 2004, typifies this wave: he was born in Amsterdam to Moroccan parents and came to reject their moderate Islam with as much vehemence as he rejected western secularism.⁸¹

The fourth wave is that of rootless, nomadic individuals who leave their homes in the Middle East and North Africa to live in Europe, but whose isolation and abasement there, whether real or imagined, hardens into the seeds of their radicalisation. Issa al-Hasan, the Solingen attacker, exemplifies this generation of jihadists. This is the jihad of the resentful stranger who is culturally displaced and confined to low-wage employment,⁸² yet simultaneously immersed in the intense demands and allure of European capitalist society, which they have come to violently reject.

There is a certain mode of masochistic thinking that holds that if only Western societies treated the migrants better and listened to them with greater sensitivity, they would love them more and not want to unleash all this violence and nastiness on their distrustful hosts.

But that is naive and fails to capture the implacability of a certain kind of resentful, self-destructive loser whom no amount of accommodation can mollify.⁸³ It also misses something fundamental about the appeal of jihadi ideology, which is that it loathes the West more for what it is than for what it does. Indeed, ISIS was so sensitive to this line of misinterpretation that it felt obligated to publicly rebut it in its glossy English-language magazine *Dabiq*, spelling out, in an article titled “Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You,” that “we hate you, first and foremost, because you are disbelievers... [and] because your secular, liberal societies permit the very things that Allah has prohibited while banning many of the things He has permitted.”⁸⁴

This report is not intended as an argument against mass immigration, much less as a polemic against the ethic of humanitarian assistance to strangers in jeopardy.⁸⁵ But it does bring into focus one of the very real costs of the mass movement of Muslim migrants into Europe. That cost is an objective erosion of national security in the countries where such migrants settle. No doubt there are many benefits attached to the mass movement of people from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe: the migrants, their advocates insist, bring diversity and drive innovation and economic growth.⁸⁶ But let’s not be in denial about the costs, which are lessened security and more jihadist terrorism, as well as a corresponding rise in populist sentiment against new arrivals and the liberal elites who lobby for them.

There is a minor cottage industry of liberal advocacy on migrants that seeks to deny that there is relationship between migration and terrorism,⁸⁷ and suggests that any attempt to link the two is a “far-right trope” with no empirical basis. One researcher even wrote, in *The Washington Post*, that “Immigrants aren’t committing terrorism in Western Europe. Rather, native citizens appear to be committing terrorism because of their hostility to immigrants”.⁸⁸ But, as the data conclusively show in this report, Muslim migrants are disproportionately represented in jihadi terrorism. This implies that former Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was fundamentally correct in anticipating that the 2015 migration crisis would jeopardise European security.⁸⁹ Such an implication may be inconvenient for the defenders of open borders, who would prefer to talk about the menace of the far right, but it is nonetheless true.

The other liberal impulse when confronted with the reality of jihadi migrants is to change the subject or wax lyrical about how most migrants are in fact good people. Thus in its “analysis” of the Solingen rampage, *The Guardian* focused on how the attack had come amid a “steep rise in knife crime in Germany”. The article quoted a criminologist called Dirk Baier, who warned that stricter laws were unlikely to stop knife crime and called instead for youth education to address the problem. What the *Guardian* article studiously avoided to mention was the immigrant background of the Solingen attacker and his jihadi motives.⁹⁰

I speak with some authority on this impulse because, for a while, I myself succumbed to it. In the summer of 2015 I visited the so-called “jungle” migrant camp in Calais and opened my heart to the scores of Syrian migrants I met and interviewed in the town.⁹¹ I was sympathetic to their plight, listening intently to them as they told me how they dreamed of a better life in the UK, which was their preferred final destination.

But that sympathy blunted my appreciation of the possible dangers some of them unquestionably posed, and I was all too eager to dismiss this as a “moral panic”.⁹² One of the denizens of the camp, who would have been there around the time I visited, was the Iraqi teenager Ahmed Hassan, who planted a bomb on a subway train in London in 2017, leaving scores of people with burn injuries after it partially exploded.⁹³ Of course one shouldn’t exaggerate the threat of jihadi migrants, but to deny the reality of that threat would be perverse.

It is hard to know how long the fourth jihadi wave will last and how it will evolve over the next decade, but the continued mass movement of migrants into Europe from the Middle East and North Africa would suggest that it will have considerable staying power. This latest wave of terrorism will not be easy to contain, but the first step in combating any problem is to acknowledge it and assess its nature.

Endnotes

¹Please refer to the Acknowledgment below the Abstract.

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³Ibid.

⁴Kate Connolly, “Syrian man gets life imprisonment for stabbings in German city of Solingen,” *The Guardian*, 10 September, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/sep/10/syrian-man-gets-life-imprisonment-for-stabbings-in-german-city-of-solingen>.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Daniel Niemann and Stephanie Liechtenstein, “Islamic State group claims responsibility for knife attack that killed 3 at German festival,” PBS News, 24 August, 2024, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/police-search-for-knife-attacker-who-killed-3-at-german-festival-cannot-rule-out-terrorism>.

⁷See “Germany: Solingen attack suspect named, remanded in custody,” *DW*, 25 August, 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-detains-solingen-attack-suspect-over-triple-murder-is-links/a-70042662>.

⁸Ralf Bosen and Marcel Fürstenau, “Germany: Life sentence for Solingen knife attack suspect,” *DW*, 10 September 10, 2025, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-life-sentence-for-solingen-knife-attack-suspect/a-72668039>.

⁹See Georg Heil, “The Berlin Attack and the ‘Abu Walaa’ Islamic State Recruitment Network,” *CTC Sentinel*, February 2017, Volume 10, Issue 2, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-berlin-attack-and-the-abu-walaa-islamic-state-recruitment-network/>.

¹⁰See “Germany considers Afghan deportations after police stabbing,” *DW*, June 4, 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-considers-afghan-deportations-after-police-stabbing/a-69268100>.

¹¹See Frank Furedi, *Why Borders Matter Why Humanity Must Relearn the Art of Drawing Boundaries*, London: Routledge, 2020.

¹²See “Germany Bomb Threat: Jaber al-Bakr ‘Caught by Three Syrians,’” BBC News, October 10, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37606947>.

¹³Robin Simcox, “The Asylum–Terror Nexus: How Europe Should Respond,” The Heritage Foundation, No. 3314, June 18, 2018, <https://www.heritage.org/terrorism/report/the-asylum-terror-nexus-how-europe-should-respond>.

¹⁴Ibid., 1.

¹⁵“For the sake of consistency of our data, the UK was excluded from our dataset as a result of Brexit”: Thomas Renard and Méryl Demuynck, “Migration-related Terrorism: Trends, Challenges, and Policy Implications,” ICCT Report June 2025, <https://icct.nl/sites/default/files/2025-07/Migration%20and%20Terrorism%20short%20June.pdf>, 9.

¹⁶Ibid., 10.

¹⁷Ibid., 5. See Alex P. Schmid, “Links between Terrorism and Migration: An Exploration,” ICCT Research Paper, May 2016, 44, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep29396.pdf>.

¹⁸Renard and Demuynck, “Migration-related Terrorism,” 5.

¹⁹Thomas Renard and Méryl Demuynck, “The Problem Is Terrorism, Not Migration,” *Lawfare*, June 9, 2025, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/the-problem-is-terrorism—not-migration>.

²⁰Ibid. See also Renard and Demuynck, “Migration-related Terrorism,” 34: “terrorism remains predominantly a homegrown problem”.

²¹Petter Nesser, “Introducing the Jihadi Plots in Europe Dataset (JPED),” *Journal of Peace Research*, 61(2) (2024), 317-329, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00223433221123360>.

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²³Erik Hacker, “Jihadi Attacks in Europe: Trends and Features 2014-2022”, Scenor, April 2023.

²⁴Ibid., 10.

²⁵Ibid., 11. Hacker notes that Germany has “one of the largest refugee population per capita in Europe”.

²⁶Ibid., 12.

²⁷Petter Nesser and Wassim Nasr, “The Threat Matrix Facing the Paris Olympics,” *CTC Sentinel*, June 2024, Volume 17 (6), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-threat-matrix-facing-the-paris-olympics/>.

²⁸Simcox, “The Asylum–Terror Nexus,” 10.

²⁹Alissa J. Rubin and Aurelien Breeden, “ISIS Claims Truck Attacker in France Was Its ‘Soldier’”, *The New York Times*, July 16, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/17/world/europe/isis-nice-france-attack.html>.

³⁰See “Man sentenced to 30 years for 2022 Oslo 2SLGBTQ+ festival shooting,” *CBC*, July 4, 2024, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/iran-norway-1.7254018>; “A trial begins in Norway of a man accused of a deadly shooting at a LGBTQ+ festival in Oslo,” *AP News*, 12 March, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/norway-shooting-iran-lgbtq-islamic-state-739597475ca4667d00c4f0d6-cacee904>.

³¹See Fernando Reinares and Carola García-Calvo, “‘Spaniards, You Are Going to Suffer:’ The Inside Story of the August 2017 Attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils,” *CTC Sentinel*, January 2018, Vol 11 (1), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/spaniards-going-suffer-inside-story-august-2017-attacks-barcelona-cambrils/>.

³²See “Manchester Victoria station stabbings: Man detained for attempted murder,” *BBC News*, 27 November, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-manchester-50571279>.

³³See Jamie Bullen, “ISIS-supporting Afghanistan refugee who posted personal details of US soldiers on Facebook to encourage terror attacks is jailed,” *The Mirror*, 22 September, 2017, <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/isis-supporting-afghanistan-refugee-who-11221513>. Hussain Yousef, 21, used six social media profiles to post jihadi propaganda and execution videos, for which he was given a six-and-a-half year jail sentence. Yousef arrived in Britain from Afghanistan in 2010 and had his asylum claim rejected in 2015.

³⁴See “Dutch court: Syrian brothers guilty of Jabhat al-Nusra roles, *AP*, 20 September, 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/europe-middle-east-syria-netherlands-bashar-assad-e430cafe107a4ac09719aa6dc6eccd4d>.

³⁵See “Man with machete kills woman in southern Germany,” *The Guardian*, 24 July, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/24/man-with-machete-kills-woman-in-southern-germany>.

³⁶See “German court sentences ‘kebab shop murderer’ to life,” *DW*, 7 April, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/german-court-sentences-kebab-shop-murderer-to-life/a-38347519>.

³⁷See “Westminster car crash driver Salih Khater jailed for life 14,” BBC, 14 October 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-50044250>. See also: <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Sentencing-Remarks-Khater-14.10.19-002-1.pdf>: “There is no evidence of any link between you and any group or individual connected to any extremist views. There is no evidence that you have expressed any such views. There is no clear evidence as to what triggered this behaviour. There is some evidence that you had been behaving oddly but you do not currently have any recognised mental illness.”

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³⁹I also discounted the case of the Iraqi failed asylum seeker Emad Al Swealmeen, whose grievances seemed more personal than political: see “Liverpool Women's Hospital bomber had asylum grievance, police say,” *BBC News*, 2 October 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-merseyside-66986590>.

⁴⁰See “Italy arrests Algerian wanted for alleged ISIS ties on Milan subway,” *Al Arabiya*, 9 November, 2023, <https://english.al-aramiya.net/News/world/2023/11/09/Italy-arrests-Algerian-wanted-for-alleged-ISIS-ties-on-Milan-subway->.

⁴¹See, for example, “Detained imam ‘planned terror attack at Rome’s main station’”, *The Local Italy*, 10 March, 2016, <https://www.thelocal.it/20160310/italy-detains-imam-on-suspicion-of-hatching-rome-terror-attack>.

⁴²See, for example, “Terror suspects discussed attacks on Swiss nightclubs and trains,” *swissinfo.ch*, 17 February, 2018, <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/november-arrest-terror-suspects-discussed-attacks-on-swiss-nightclubs-and-trains/43907806>.

⁴³Nesser, “Introducing the Jihadi Plots in Europe Dataset,” 319. Nesser adds that “plots confirmed to involve severe mental illness which overshadows political motives should not be counted”.

⁴⁴See “Leytonstone Tube attacker Muhiddin Mire jailed for life,” BBC News, 1 August, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-36942245>.

⁴⁵See “#YouAintNoMuslimBruv: How Twitter responded to Leytonstone attack,” BBC News, 6 December, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-35020427>.

⁴⁶“PM Speech: This is a government that delivers,” 7 December, 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-this-is-a-government-that-delivers>. Here is what Cameron said: “Let me also pay credit to the person, you can’t quite see who it is from the film, who made that brilliant statement about, ‘You ain’t no Muslim’. I think, some of us have dedicated speeches and media appearances and sound bites and everything to this subject, but, ‘You ain’t no Muslim, bruv’, said it all, much better than I ever could, and thank you because that will be applauded around the country.” Whether Cameron knew it or not, he was engaging in a form of “takfir”, declaring Mire to be outside the bounds of the Muslim faith. Perhaps his heart was in the right place, but he probably ought to have kept his views to himself.

⁴⁷Tom Morgan, Camilla Turner and Tom Whitehead, “Family of Tube terror accused called in police three weeks before Leytonstone attack,” *The Telegraph*, 7 December, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/12036774/Leytonstone-Tube-attack-Muhaydin-Mire-appears-in-court.html>.

⁴⁸See Richard Barrett, “The Islamic State Goes Global,” *CTC Sentinel*, November/December 2015, Volume 8 (11), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-islamic-state-goes-global/>.

⁴⁹In late August 2015 Germany suspended the Dublin Regulation for Syrian refugees, which meant that they would not be sent back to the first EU country they entered (usually Greece or Hungary). Then, in early September, Germany and Austria agreed to allow thousands of refugees stranded in Hungary to enter Germany by train and bus (see Adam LeBor, “From Keleti Station to Kilburn High Road and Back,” *The Danube Institute*, 9 January, 2026, 7: <https://danubeinstitute.hu/en/research/from-keleti-station-to-kilburn-high-road-and-back-personal-reflections-on-europe-s-migration-crisis>).

⁵⁰See Peter Hille, “‘We can do this!’ — Merkel’s words five years on,” *DW*, 25 August, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/merkel-germany-refugees/a-54769229>.

⁵¹“Record number of over 1.2 million first time asylum seekers registered in 2015,” *Eurostat*, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-euro-indicators/-/3-04032016-ap>.

⁵²See “Migrant crisis: Germany heads for 1m asylum-seekers in 2015,” *BBC News*, 7 December, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35027951>; “Germany records nearly a million new refugees in 2015,” *DW*, 7 December, 2015, <https://www.dw.com/en/almost-a-million-refugees-recorded-as-new-arrivals-in-germany-in-2015/a-18899244>.

⁵³Nesser, “Introducing the Jihadi Plots in Europe Dataset (JPED).”

⁵⁴The only case I am aware of is a 22-year-old convert and ISIS supporter who was charged with plotting an attack in 2021: see “Hungarian, 22, charged with plotting Islamist attack, prosecutors say,” *Reuters*, November 17, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hungarian-22-charged-with-plotting-islamist-attack-prosecutors-say-2021-11-17/>.

⁵⁵See “Hungary fined €200 million by ECJ for breaking asylum rules,” *DW*, 13 June, 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/hungary-fined-200-million-by-ecj-for-breaking-asylum-rules/a-69348630>.

⁵⁶Rukmini Callimachi, “ISIS Caliphate Crumbles as Last Village in Syria Falls,” *The New York Times*, March 23, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/23/world/middleeast/isis-syria-caliphate.html>.

⁵⁷Duncan Gardham and Tom Pyman, “Moment Reading knifeman bought weapon he used to kill three - as photo emerges of him holding Kalashnikov and video shows police visiting him day before the attack,” *MAIL ONLINE*, 5 January, 2021, <https://www.dailymail.com/news/article-9114295/Terrorist-yelled-Allahu-Akhbar-stabbed-three-death-injured-three-more.html>. For a similar case in Germany, see “Jihadist gets life for deadly attack on German gay couple,” *France 24*, 21 May, 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210521-jihadist-gets-life-for-deadly-attack-on-german-gay-couple>.

⁵⁸See “Attaque à la machette à Charleroi: l’agresseur s’appelle Khaled Babbouri,” *Le Soir*, 8 August, 2016, <https://www.lesoir.be/art/1285471/article/actualite/monde/2016-08-08/attaque-machette-charleroi-l-agresseur-s-appelle-khaled-babbouri>. See also <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/diplomacy-and-international-relations/charleroi-machete-attack-2016>.

⁵⁹Jussi Rosendahl, “Knife attacker sentenced to life by a Finnish court,” *Reuters*, 15 June, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/knife-attacker-sentenced-to-life-by-a-finnish-court-idUSKBN1JB14M/>.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹See, for example, Shannon McGuigan, “Syrian man, 19, accused of stabbing Spanish tourist at Berlin Holocaust Memorial ‘planned to kill Jewish people’, police fear,” 22 February, 2025, <https://www.dailymail.com/news/article-14424541/Syrian-man-19-accused-stabbing-Spanish-tourist-Berlin-Holocaust-Memorial-planned-kill-Jewish-people-police-fear.html>. See also Lauren Hirst and Yunus Mulla, “Two jailed over plot to attack Jewish community,” BBC News, 13 February, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cq8gv2327y7o>; and “Berlin: Man stabbed at Holocaust memorial, hours after arrest over planned attack on Israeli embassy,” Euro News, 21 February, 2025, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/02/21/berlin-man-stabbed-at-holocaust-memorial-hours-after-arrest-over-planned-attack-on-israeli>.

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⁶³See Amy Walker, “Teen avoids jail over plot to attack Taylor Swift Vienna concert,” BBC News, 26 August, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crlz72l66pro>.

⁶⁴This is the Moroccan Abdesselam Tazi: see Nuno Tiago Pinto, “The Portugal Connection in the Strasbourg-Marseille Islamic State Terrorist Network,” *CTC Sentinel*, November 2018, Volume 11 (10), <https://etc.westpoint.edu/portugal-connection-strasbourg-marseille-islamic-state-terrorist-network/>.

⁶⁵Hacker, in his study of jihadi attackers, found that 29% of 133 perpetrators had a diagnosed mental health issue (Hacker, “Jihadi Attacks in Europe,” 9).

⁶⁶The Algerian Brahim Abdessemed, who carried out a stabbing rampage in Mulhouse, France, in 2025, was convicted of glorifying terrorism in December 2023 (he had posted a 15-minute video in which he recited verses from the Quran and urged Muslims to “take up arms and fight the infidels”). French authorities had attempted to expel Abdessemed, but each attempt – 10 in total - was thwarted by Algeria’s non-cooperation (“Macron condemns ‘Islamist terror’ after deadly Mulhouse knife attack,” Rfi, 23 February, 2025, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20250223-macron-condemns-islamist-terror-after-deadly-mulhouse-knife-attack>).

⁶⁷Iraqi-born Rafik Yousef, for example, had previously been imprisoned for involvement in a plot to kill Iraq’s former prime minister Iyad Allawi in Berlin in 2004 (“Germany police shoot Berlin Islamist after knife attack,” BBC News, 17 September, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34284044>).

⁶⁸Anthony Faiola and Souad Mekhennet, “Tracing the path of four terrorists sent to Europe by the Islamic State,” *The Washington Post*, 22 April, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/how-europes-migrant-crisis-became-an-opportunity-for-isis/2016/04/21/ec8a7231-062d-4185-bb27-cc7295d35415_story.html. See also Quentin Ariès, “ISIL paid Paris attacker’s family \$5,000, flock of sheep,” *Politico*, 18 January, 2017, <https://www.politico.eu/article/isil-paid-paris-terror-attackers-family-5000-flock-of-sheep-ammam-ramadan-mansour-mohamad-al-sabaawi/>; “Paris attacks: BBC names Stade de France bomber as M al-Mahmod,” BBC News, 22 November, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34896521>.

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⁷⁰See “Louvre attack: Suspect ‘confirms’ he is Egyptian Abdullah Hamamy,” BBC News, 7 February, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38895546>.

⁷¹Alissa J. Rubin and Aurelien Breeden, “ISIS Claims Truck Attacker in France Was Its ‘Soldier’”, *The New York Times*, July 16, 2016.

⁷²Retrieving exact information on the date of a plotter’s arrival was sometimes tricky: for example, reports might describe a plotter as arriving “early” or “late” in a given year, which I defined, respectively, as January and December. In some cases, the month of arrival was missing entirely, so I set this as January. For “fall”, I selected September and “spring” April.

⁷³Thomas Renard and Méryl Demuynck, “Migration-related Terrorism,” 9.

⁷⁴Renard and Demuynck, “The Problem Is Terrorism, Not Migration.”

⁷⁵This is a broader problem in radicalisation research: see Simon Cottee, “Radicalization Discourse: Consensus Points, Evidence Base and Blind Spots,” Report for the UK Commission for Countering Extremism, December 2023, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6579aaf9095987000d95dfcb/Radicalisation+Discourse+2.pdf>.

⁷⁶See Gabriel Gatehouse, “Germany ‘was warned about Ansbach suicide bomber’”, BBC News, 12 August, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37059100>.

⁷⁷In 2024, 6.4% of the people living in EU countries were citizens of a non-EU country: see “Migration and asylum in Europe,” Eurostat, 2025 edition, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/migration-2025>.

⁷⁸Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

⁷⁹See also Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat,” NYPD Intelligence Division, 2007, <https://info.publicintelligence.net/NYPDradicalization.pdf>.

⁸⁰See Andrea Elliott, “The Jihadist Next Door,” *The New York Times Magazine*, January 27, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/31/magazine/31Jihadist-t.html>.

⁸¹See Simon Cottee, “We Need To Talk About Mohammad: Criminology, Theistic Violence and the Murder of Theo Van Gogh,” *British Journal of Criminology*, 54 (6)(2014), 981-1001.

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⁸³See Magnus Enzensberger, “The radical loser,” *Sight & Sound*, 1 December, 2005, <http://www.signandsight.com/features/493.html>.

⁸⁴See Simon Cottee, “No, the Travel Ban Isn’t Being Used as ISIS Propaganda,” *Politico Magazine*, 26 March, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/03/travel-ban-isis-propaganda-214953/>. “What’s important to understand here,” the article continued, “is that although some might argue that your foreign policies are the extent of what drives our hatred, this particular reason for hating you is secondary...The fact is, even if you were to stop bombing us, imprisoning us, torturing us, vilifying us, and usurping our lands, we would continue to hate you because our primary reason for hating you will not cease to exist until you embrace Islam.”

⁸⁵See Norman Geras, *The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political philosophy after the Holocaust*. London: Verso, 1999.

⁸⁶See “New Data: Immigrants Keep Economy Strong, As Congress Considers Wasting Billions on Mass Deportation,” American Immigration Council, February 25, 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/press-release/immigrants-keep-economy-strong-as-congress-debates-mass-deportation/>. See also “Immigrants are unsung heroes of global trade and value creation,” *The Conversation*, 19 September, 2024, <https://theconversation.com/immigrants-are-unsung-heroes-of-global-trade-and-value-creation-239171>.

⁸⁷As Julian Lanchès puts it, “contextualising” the 2024 knife rampage in Mannheim, “research has produced little evidence that increased migration (flows) are related to an increased risk of (Islamist) terrorist attacks” (Julian Lanchès, “Radicalisation and Repercussions: Contextualising the Mannheim Knife,” ICCT, 6 June, 2024, <https://icct.nl/publication/radicalisation-and-repercussions-contextualising-mannheim-knife-attack>). He thus cautions against “a more restrictive asylum policy based on an unproven nexus between extremist violence and migration”, suggesting instead that a priority should be “strengthening the media literacy of younger people” (Ibid).

⁸⁸Richard J. McAlexander, “Terrorism does increase with immigration — but only homegrown, right-wing terrorism,” *The Washington Post*, July 19, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/07/19/immigration-does-lead-more-terrorism-by-far-right-killers-who-oppose-immigration/>.

⁸⁹See “Orbán blames immigration for rise in antisemitism, homophobia in EU Speech,” *The Jerusalem Post*, 10 October, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-824092>.

⁹⁰Deborah Cole, “Analysis: Solingen stabbing comes amid steep rise in knife crime in Germany,” *The Guardian*, 24 August, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/aug/24/solingen-stabbing-comes-amid-steep-rise-in-knife-in-germany>.

⁹¹Simon Cottee, “‘I Am Strange Here’: Conversations With the Syrians in Calais,” *The Atlantic*, 17 August, 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/08/calais-migrant-camp-uk-syria/401459/>.

⁹²Simon Cottee, “Europe’s moral panic about the migrant Muslim ‘other’,” *The LA Times*, 13 October, 2015, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-cottee-fear-of-refugees-20151013-story.html>.

⁹³See “THE QUEEN -v AHMED HASSAN: SENTENCING REMARKS OF THE HON. MR JUSTICE HADDON-CAVE,” 23 March, 2018, <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/r-vhassan-sentencing.pdf>, 4.



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