Violence against refugees in the context of terroristic attacks in Europe 2013 - 2016

Creating awareness

Since 2015 the number of xenophobic motivated attacks on refugees or their accommodations has increased significantly. The present graphic serves the purpose of creating awareness of the many attempted and succeeded attacks on refugee. For a better understanding the graphic allows to put these attacks into perspective with elsewise motivated terroristic violence and filter the data by date. Furthermore, each event can be looked at in detail including a brief a summary, the weapon used and the amount of people killed.

In the end, the graphic should help finding answers to the following questions:

Are there specific areas that suffer more often from (specific kinds of) attacks than others?

Are there structural differences in the number of fatalities, in the kind of attacks or regarding the affected areas?

Which actors occur? For what kind of attacks are they responsible? Are there changes over the years? Are they active in specific areas?

Data

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is a database including information on terrorist events around the world from 1970 to 2016. It includes data on domestic, transnational and international terrorist incidents and provides relevant information, such as the date, location, weapons, target and the responsible person or group if known. The global terrorism database was introduced in 2001 at the University of Maryland. It is provided by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) which still works in close collaboration with multiple researchers from the University of Maryland. The data is based on publicly available, open-source materials and can be downloaded here on GTD's website. Incidents have been included if they met START's definition of terrorism as an "intentional act of violence or threat of violence by a non-state actor" and at least two of the following criteria:

The violent act was aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal.

The violent act included evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) other than the immediate victims.

The violent act was outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law.

Methodology

Data pre-processing

Selected observations: We restricted the time range to recent years: 01.01.2013 - 01.01.2016 (newer data not available) and chose only countries in Eastern & Western Europe.

Targets: We took a closer look at the summaries of the attacks in the GTD category "Other" which turned out to be mostly refugee related. Therefore, we created a new category "Refugees".

Perpetrators: We reduced the number of terrorist groups by only taking the most active ones. There are still 24 (with more than 5 attacks each) while the remaining ones are grouped in "Other".

Discussion/Conclusion