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Globalization of Terrorism and the Impact on Europe Economy

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Abstract: It is close to impossible to predict a terrorist activity. However, there are specific indicators that can hint as a probable temporal span in advance. Europe as a whole are faced with the threat emanating from returning foreign terrorist fighters. The threat is exacerbated particularly by the fact that there is a major problem with radicalization in the region. This increases the need to enhance cooperation in the field of countering terrorism and radicalization. As the war against war against ISIS started in Iraq, Syria and other crisis hotspots in their surroundings, the same communities became fertile ground for recruitment and mobilization of the mercenaries and ideologically oriented combatants once more. Terrorist organization have intention to infiltrate its adepts into European space in order to plan and produce direct attacks against democratic institution. Also, terrorists intend to gain followers from European citizens and have enough financial resources available for this purpose. This will have effects also in policy planning and mainly will lead to more counter-terrorism measures and to the deployment of special teams. A major contribution factor to the risk of terrorism is the issues that are signs of radicalization especially among ethnic community. Globalization of terrorism is the most dangerous phenomenon against the European economy and affect all population, including from the point of view of developing businesses. One of the most affected sector is represented by services provided to population, especially tourism industry.

Keywords: *terrorism; radicalization; foreign terrorist fighters; ethnic community.*

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1. Introduction

Europe as a whole, but specifically the Balkans, are faced with the threat emanating from returning foreign terrorist fighters. The threat is exacerbated particularly by the fact that there is a major problem with radicalization in the region. This increases the need to enhance cooperation in the fields of countering terrorism and radicalization.
In that regard we realize an analysis on the impact on terrorism at some countries from the Balkans in order to anticipate appropriate measures to reduce specific risks.

2. Theoretical Background

Nowadays, terrorism represented probably the most persistent risk at international level. Taking into account the asymmetrical characteristic of the terrorist phenomenon, the fight against this risk has success only at international level.

This paper provide a new approach to the general risk of terrorism, linking this phenomenon by the European economy, taking into account 3 examples from countries belonging to the Western Balkans, respectively Bulgaria, Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The added value of this article is represented by the presentation of 3 different cases within the Western Balkans, with different cultural and economic background, but finally the conclusion is that terrorist activities affects all countries almost the same and the fight against this phenomenon could have success only if it is treated at international level.

3. Argument of the paper

The key idea of this article is to create 3 scenarios regarding development of terrorist activities within 3 countries belonging to the Western Balkan Region using theory of black swans, regarding events with very low probability of production and high impact on security issues.

These 3 scenarios could be used as starting point for development strategies in order to diminish the risk of producing terrorism attacks with the impact for security of the Region under analysis.

4. Arguments to support the thesis

The theory of the black swans was created by Nicholas Taleb, but wasn't really implemented and developed by other authors. In this regard, this article presents 3 possible scenarios based on this theory, and possible solutions to resolve these complicated situations generated by terrorism risks.

5. Arguments to argue the thesis

At international level does not exist a theoretical methodology regarding black swans. In this regard, this article could be a start point in order to create a methodology in this regard. Most of the analysts could beneficiate from such a methodology to detect almost undetectable events, such as terrorism.

Bulgaria

According to experts and authorities the risk of terrorism in Bulgaria remains low. "Moreover, there is no information about Bulgarian citizens who have fought for Daesh and returned successfully to the country" [1]. However, there is a risk of foreign fighters who are returning to other parts of Europe to find 'fertile ground' Bulgaria. This 'fertile ground' is the prospect for spreading extremist ideology and radicalizing persons or groups of people. To address this issue Bulgaria adopted a Strategy for the prevention of radicalization and terrorism in 2015. However, implementation is lacking. For example, while the strategy foresees the training of first-line practitioners, such as teachers, social worker and police officers, few actions in this direction have been undertaken.

A major contributing factor to the risk of terrorism is the issue that there are signs of radicalization especially among the Roma minority. Experts have coalesced around the conclusion that they are particularly susceptible to extremist ideology due many factors such as economic factors and isolation – both from state and society, and self-isolation. Moreover, there are reports identifying that there is a spread of radical Islam, which is not typical for Bulgaria, among the Roma. Research has also documented that in more rural villages in Southern Bulgaria, men are openly expressing violent ideas against Christians and hostility towards traditional and Christian holidays; something which has not happened prior. They are also hostile towards female teachers and directors. Young women have begun

wearing burqas and are increasingly self-isolating themselves from peers and society.

It is unclear where this process of radicalization may go if remained unchecked and uncontrolled. Additionally, it is impossible to predict how it may manifest itself – from a terrorist act to a rise in tensions between Roma and Turkish minorities and Bulgarians. If a terrorist activity is conducted by a returning foreign fighter passing through Bulgaria, this will increase anti-migrant rhetoric and place a strain on EU efforts to collectively address the issue. For example, this will further place a strain on the quota system for migrants of the EU.

However, it is more likely that radical ideology continues to spread and fester within the country. Thus, it will fuel division within society. Currently there are political parties that are effectively capitalizing on such 'opportunities.' Far-right political parties are employing anti-Roma and anti-Turkish rhetoric in order to gain more support among Bulgarians. Their rhetoric focuses on blaming minorities for shortcoming in the economy and healthcare and are fueling fears of terrorism among Bulgarian citizens. This in itself is further isolating minority groups in Bulgaria and opening space for violent and extremist ideology.

There have been some escalations of tension between far-right groups and the Roma minority. In 2017 the confrontation manifested in the city of Asenovgrad. Following physical hostilities between Roma and children from a local rowing club, video of the incident became viral on social media. This ultimately led to protests against the Roma minority in general, but also resulted in thousands of people, predominantly football hooligans and bikers, going the Asenovgrad and seeking confrontation with the Roma there. Police officers were dispatched to make a blockade around the Roma neighborhood. According to reports the officers were able to stop 6.000 people who were trying to storm into the neighborhood. If the police had not stopped these protesters the event would have had very serious consequences, as Roma from other parts of the country were preparing to go to Asenovgrad and join the Roma there. This could have led to a major clash in the country with unclear developments and consequences.

It is also important to emphasize that the Balkans are one of the most heterogenic regions in the world. Thus, the destabilization or tensions in one country can have a domino effect in the region. This fact underlines the importance for cooperation on a EU and regional level. "However, it is also vital to stress that leadership in addressing the threats pertaining to radicalization and terrorism should not come from the EU or NATO, but from countries in the region" [2]. Nevertheless, the EU and NATO can have a supporting role especially in the exchange of expertise and good

practices. It is to be noted that almost all countries from the region have adopted policies in countering violent extremism and radicalization. However, as in Bulgaria, implementation is lacking.

Thus, preventive actions must address both Bulgaria and the region. One possible way to address the issues of returning foreign terrorist fighters and radicalization is to develop regional mechanisms for cooperation regarding CVE and CT. This can be an expansion of existing initiatives and bodies or, if necessary, the establishment of new ones. Additionally, the EU bodies as a whole should analyze what are the appropriate mechanisms to assist Balkan countries in CVE and CT, including the providing of appropriate funding. One possible way is to include countries from the Western Balkans in the Radicalization Awareness Network. Here an important role can be played by NATO. While all countries in the region are aspiring for EU-membership, most of them have so far only become part of NATO. The Alliance should identify radicalization as threat of future terrorism. In this manner it can facilitate cooperation between aspiring members and the EU. Moreover, it can also assist in at the least NATO members to become part of the Radicalization Awareness Network.

Croatia

The conflict in the 90s left the region with the limited capacity to tackle security challenges. Not only that the conflict left limited space for the regional co-operation, but also caused a lot of post-conflict challenges that represent heavy burden of the state security apparatus. Many Arab charity organizations that are preaching radical Islam have used this situation, topped by the economic and political backsliding, to get into the region and cement their positions in some parts of it.

After setting in the region, these organization made a lot of efforts to extend their relevance and gain followers. Unconsolidated and relatively underdeveloped societies in a post-conflict period have proved to be a fertile ground to plant the seeds of radicalism 'in the backyard of the European Union'. Their enormous financial resources helped a lot in extending their influence in different, mainly poor, rural and distant areas, difficult to control by the state authorities. A lot of local community members were hence ideologically educated and trained to participate in armed conflict in the Middle East during the last few years. "These returnees are a potential threat to their surrounding and are not likely to give up the idea of spreading the extremist and radical ideology and fighting skills they acquired in the battle-fields of the Middle East" [1].

Croatia, as the EU and NATO member state that is bordering the region of Western Balkans, hence being the EU's external border to it, has a

particular concern over the stability of its south-eastern neighborhood. Only taking into account the shape of the state and it's more than 1000 km long border with Bosnia and Herzegovina clarifies why this is so and why the country is really sensitive towards potential threats of radical Islamism. Namely, very often we get to hear the news about the micro-community of Wahhabis less than 50 km from Croatian, and hence the EU's, border. Taking into consideration the length of the border between the two states and the fact that, while being the EU member, Croatia is still not the member of Schengen Area (in other words expected to show capability for extensive border-management duties but deprived of lucrative Schengen funds regularly used for that), one can easily comprehend the burden that Croatia is dealing with today.

In addition to that, there is a fundamental reason for Croatia's concern over the stability of its closest neighborhoods. As it is widely known, Croatia is the one of the most prominent European touristic destinations not only for European tourists, but for vast number of them coming from all around the world. Since the industry suffered a lot in the conflict in the early 90s and actually never managed to reconfigure and reach the numbers from the pre-war period, the economy of the country depends significantly from the income of tourism. The so-called invisible export of services is actually an excellent tool for covering relatively high current account deficit and ensuring relative stability of the state budget and entire economy. In addition to that, a significant share of food and wine production is actually linked to the tourism industry. Instead of being exported, these goods are being sold to the foreign consumers as a part of the overall touristic offer. Therefore, the well-being of these industries is directly related to the success in the field of tourism.

It is also widely known that sustainable tourism requires a stable environment and is depending significantly on trends. The examples of Greece and Northern African states in recent years show how income from tourism can dramatically decline in case of instability and inability to guarantee safety of tourists.

Additionally, the number of travelers to and from Croatia increase many times during the summer season period. For the sake of easier commuting and avoidance of huge traffic jams in the period of very high temperature, temporary liberalization of travel regulations apply for citizens of some countries in the region, as well as other countries. In practical terms, those who travel regularly to Croatia with passports can cross the border during the summer season with their IDs and those who normally need visas to enter Croatia can travel without them during the summer or have dramatically simplified procedure for acquiring one.

Hence, the travel to Croatia during the summer season multiplies many times and measures taken to ensure the easy flow of traffic and avoid jams actually dramatically complicate efforts of security services to exercise control and oversight. Not only that number of flights multiply, but also ground and naval transport reach their maximum capacity which makes the job of security services very difficult. This leaves a potential for extremists to infiltrate the country and cause different kinds of fatalities, causing an immeasurable immediate damage to Croatia's tourism, economy in total, as well as to the long-built image of stabile and peaceful tourist destination.

So, there are at least two types of risks identified in this regard for Croatia. The first one is the direct threat to the security of the country and safety of its citizens and foreign tourists. Terrorist attacks or diversions on strategic infrastructure would do a massive damage to the security environment in Croatia.

The second one, of economic nature, is linked to all numerous consequences for tourism and related industries, fiscal stability of the country and its economic viability, as well as to long-term losses related to shaken image of a stable and desirable touristic destination cleansed of security threats regularly seen in major European capitals. This can have a potential spill-over effect to bordering EU, as well as non-EU, states and a serious negative effect on the overall European security.

Therefore, concrete measures have to be taken beyond only the national policy level. First of all, it has to be clear that the safety of Croatian borders is also the safety of EU ones and therefore complexity of issues has to be communicated at the EU level and the information-sharing and burden of border-management dealt with at the supranational community level.

The process of Croatian accession to the Schengen Area has therefore to be accelerated and cleansed of political requirements, allowing the country to join once it meets all technical requirements. This would represent a short/medium term measure. The long term measure would be to foster the Europeanization process in all remaining candidate and potential candidate states for EU membership. Only through persistent consolidation efforts will the transatlantic community be able to downgrade, if not to clear, the number of potential extremist threats coming from the Western Balkans states. Therefore, the process of constant education, wider regional co-operation and infrastructure development remains crucial for tackling such a complicated challenge. This is the only long-term viable method of spreading the security community of the transatlantic community to the south-east that should help building the resilience of societies and

states in the Western Balkans capable of neutralizing terrorist threats by using the cooperative security methods and frameworks in the wider region.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Many foreign Muslim organizations, mainly Arab-based, intended to gain influence in some European states as FYROM in order to send its adepts into the European Union states.

They found situated the communities where there is a lack of state's sovereignty due to increased inter-ethnic tensions. It was a fertile ground for radical-oriented organizations to spread extremist ideas within the local and religious environment, mainly based on radical extremism and ideology.

As the war against ISIS started in Iraq, Syria and other crisis hotspots in their surroundings, the same communities became fertile ground for recruitment and mobilization of the mercenaries and ideologically oriented combatants once more.

There are still some citizens from Macedonia and the Balkans who are fighting in the Middle East. "These fighters lead to fear among citizens and believe that state institutions fail to prevent violent extremism and it's a push factor for other violent extremist to continue with indoctrination processes even harder" [1]. Such a situation is likely to have negative impact not only for Macedonia but for the region as well, even more when it's known that they often cooperate with groups from Kosovo.

We identified two potential risks toward convicted individuals. First, it is their contact with other prisoners while in prison, respective there is no active program for the reintegration of the foreign fighters that have returned. The main actors who may change this situation are prison staffs and legal authorities with special activities and rehabilitation programs towards convicted violent extremist while they are in prison.

Other risk factor for Macedonia and the region is that convicted individuals will be released (after serving the sentence) in the period between 2018 and 2023. The state pursues a policy of reducing the penalties, and in that direction, the new Amnesty Law was passed in January 2018, but due to the gravity of the crime, foreign fighters and other convicts for crimes against the state are not subject to amnesty. They may try to repeat the crime, or to work on recruitment on new, mostly young people. Society as a whole must pay attention on them. Especially Intelligence Agency and security (police) services must monitor them and their behavior when they will be released. Social services will also have very important role in re-socialization as part of the anti-recidivism and prevention programs.

If nothing changes in this field, international community will probably notify that there are lacks of effective actions from state

institutions toward prevention of violent extremism, and there are no significant efforts to create counter-terrorism and violent extremis-narratives and raising awareness. Some pressure from international organizations would probably result in other short-term actions against violent extremist groups and self-imposed imam who keep preaching but are not recognized by Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia. "Political influence and presence of the radical structures within the Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia for gaining the political goals through stimulation of radical-oriented activities in the country will continue to be the subject for testing the statehood and capacity of the security services"[3].

6. Conclusions

Security institutions must increase the level of cooperation with the security institutions from the region and work on timely information sharing; counter-terrorism strategy and thematic action plans should integrate countering violent extremism measures and they should be tailored to the local context of ethnically, culturally, religiously and politically divided society; security services should finally implement the professionalism oriented HR and reallocation policy, using the skills of the staff gained through attendance of international CT training; frequent real-time drills based on scenarios for interagency cooperation and in this way all relevant stakeholders should define their role and competences in the joint activities; State services in education and social welfare and CSO should be focused on developing appropriate and efficient re-socialization, prevention and anti-propaganda programs based on "local ownership" concept, taking into consideration of expertise of the local experts and international best practices.

What NATO and the EU could do?

Fighting terrorism and radicalization is all about the prevention. Thus, it is important to increase the state's and other stakeholder's capacity in Counter Terrorism (CT) and Counter Violent Extremism (CVE). This include and is not limited to the technical assistant, capacity trainings, experience sharing, supporting the elaboration the action plans and strategies.

If attack occurs, NATO and the EU should immediately put in the ground, in terms of investigation, public support and international assistance. It will stop the process of detachment process and will counter the populist groups and enemy's intelligence service propaganda.

NATO and ally countries should more actively conduct the CT trainings in order to increase the readiness and capability of Armed and Special Forces.

The EU should more actively engage in delivering the soft, CVE elements in the vulnerable regions of Europe. Economic and development projects, as well as education one will decrease the violent ideology in the field. It is harder to manipulate informed young people with distorted, radical and propaganda messages.

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