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TERRORISM IN YEARS 2015-2022. SELECTED GLOBAL AND REGIONAL TRENDS

ABSTRACT: In 2021, terrorism-related deaths decreased for the seventh consecutive year (a third of what they were at their peak in 2015). However, the decline in the number of victims does not mean that there are no new, disturbing trends. Though, it is not easy to grasp the phenomenon of terrorism in the regions where asymmetric security threats coexist. Often, local armed conflicts and violence interlock terrorist actions. The following article has the form of a comparative study. The research goal is to identify trends taking place in the international and regional space related to the phenomenon of terrorism in years 2015-2022. The objects of research are the states most impacted by terrorism and selected states of the regional security complexes perceived as systems. Research has shown that the phenomenon of terrorism in the years 2015-2022 was associated with instability and conflict.

KEYWORDS: far-right terrorism, global trends, jihadism, security complexes, terrorism

ZJAWISKO TERRORYZMU W LATACH 2015-2022. WYBRANE TRENDY GLOBALNE I REGIONALNE

ABSTRAKT: W 2021 r. liczba ofiar śmiertelnych spowodowanych atakami terrorystycznymi spadła siódmy rok z rzędu (osiągając jedną trzecią liczby ofiar z 2015 r.). Jednak spadek liczby ofiar nie oznacza, że nie ma nowych, niepokojących trendów w przestrzeni międzynarodowej. Nie łatwo bowiem badać zjawiska terroryzmu w regionach, w których współistnieją inne, asymetryczne zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa. Często lokalne konflikty zbrojne i przemoc przeplatają się z działaniami terrorystycznymi. Niniejszy artykuł ma formę studium porównawczego. Celem jest identyfikacja trendów zachodzących w przestrzeni międzynarodowej i regionalnej, związanych ze zjawiskiem terroryzmu w latach 2015-2022. Artykuł koncentruje się na państwach najbardziej dotkniętych terroryzmem oraz wybranych regionalnych kompleksach bezpieczeństwa postrzeganych jako systemy (wraz z państwami, które te systemy tworzą). Badania wykazały, że zjawisko terroryzmu w latach 2015-2022 wiązało się z niestabilnością i konfliktami.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: dżihadyzm, kompleksy bezpieczeństwa, światowe trendy, terroryzm, terroryzm skrajnie prawicowy

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, new terrorism threats have continued to arise, while the ‘old’ ones are constantly changing¹. For instance, politically related and far-right terrorism is growing in the West, while Salafi-jihadist terrorism has shifted from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia². It is not easy to grasp the phenomenon of terrorism in the regions where asymmetric security threats exist. Often, local conflicts and violence that constitute security threats may interlock terrorist actions. It seems that the high degree of destabilization of some regions is related to horizontal inequalities (cultural, economic, political, social) defined as the degree of disproportionality between the size of a group and its respective share of certain resources or assets³.

This research aims to answer the following research problem: What are the main trends in terrorism in 2015-2022? Research has shown that the phenomenon of terrorism in the years 2015-2022 was associated with instability and conflict. Security complexes with a more stable situation were less vulnerable to terrorism. The primary impellent of terrorism are conflicts. This is confirmed by data showing that more than 96% of terrorism-related deaths occurred in countries already in conflict. The Global Terrorism Index’s (GTI) top ten countries are all engaged in at least one armed conflict. Syria is a definite example here. This country, before it was included in the top 5 countries most impacted by terrorism, was even on the 107th and 105th place; a lower rank than many European countries. This clearly shows that terrorism is linked to conflicts⁴. Another example is Somalia, which was not close to the top ten in the early 2000s. Another country is Burkina Faso, which in 2011 and 2012 was in the 113th position, and a few years later, in 2019, it entered the top 10 in the 7th position; in the following year, moving up one place, and in 2021, to the 5th position⁵.

METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS

The dynamics of changes that occur in the international environment requires a constant enrichment of research on terrorism. Researchers who study this issue know very well that we can find many holistic publications on terrorism. Only between 2018-2020 such monographs were

¹ International law provides a number of instruments to counter terrorism, however, the definition issues have caused complications in the formulation of international legal standards. Despite numerous studies on this phenomenon, the creation of a universal definition poses problems not only at the state level. The United Nations (UN) also has not reached a consensus in this matter.

² J. Warner, *Sub-Saharan Africa’s Three “New” Islamic State Affiliates*, “CTC Sentinel” 2017, 10(1), pp. 28-32. https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CTC-Sentinel_Vol9Iss1119.pdf.

³ F. Stewart, *Horizontal inequalities*, [in:] J. Drydyk & L. Keleher (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Development Ethics*, New York 2019, pp. 148-155.

⁴ *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2022. Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace, <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/GTI-2022-web-04112022.pdf>, p. 19.

⁵ *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2020 Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace, <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GTI-2020-web-1.pdf>; *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2022*, op. cit., p. 19.

published: D. Lowe, *Terrorism: Law and Policy* (2018), I.D. Onwudiwe, *The Globalization of Terrorism* (2018), C. Townshend, *Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction* (2018), E. Chenoweth, R. English, A. Gofas, S.N. Kalyvas, *The Oxford Handbook of Terrorism* (2019), J.M. Lutz, B.J. Lutz, *Global Terrorism* (2019), R.M. Frost, *Nuclear Terrorism After 9/11* (2020), D.K. Gupta, *Understanding Terrorism and Political Violence: The Life Cycle of Birth, Growth, Transformation, and Demise* (2020), M. Stohl, *The Politics of Terrorism* (2020); not to mention scientific articles, reports from regional and international organizations, as well as publications in languages other than English. The rich literature on terrorism indicates the need for research on this phenomenon. However, less research refers to the perspective related to the change of trends on a regional and global scale.

The following article has the form of a comparative study. The research goal is to identify trends that take place in the international and regional space related to the terrorism phenomenon in the years 2015–2022 (in some cases, the analysis covers the years 2015–2021, because at the time of writing the article, data for 2022 was not available). The author has not found any analysis concerning exactly this indicated period. The objects of research are the states most impacted by terrorism and selected states of the regional security complexes perceived as systems. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) presented by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever (2003) showed that security is concentrated in geographic regions⁶. Accordingly, security threats do not transfer dynamically over longer distances, which makes their development more likely on a regional scale. Considering that the security of each regional entity ‘penetrates’ the security of other entities. Moreover, the flow of threats within a given complex is much stronger, which indicates that the region is an area that brings together countries connected not only by geographical proximity, but also by strong interdependencies and a common perception of threats. It should be pointed out that ideological and religious differences, the proliferation of extremist ideologies and separatism, and the lack of social dialogue deepen the destabilization. This instability is used by terrorists to expand their sphere of influence. No country is immune to terrorism, assuming that there are growing number of dependencies in international relations.

This research aims to answer the following research problem: What were the main trends in terrorism in 2015–2022? To answer this problem, the following questions were also asked: Which countries and regions were the most threatened by terrorism? Where, when, and who carried out the deadliest terrorist attacks in the period studied? Was the threat of jihadist terrorism the greatest? Is the phenomenon of far-right terrorism increasing or decreasing? Research methods include theoretical and empirical methods: comparative data analysis, scientific literature analysis, statistical data analysis, classification, generalization, and systemic analysis, in order to determine the principal trends of changes in the terrorism threat. For quantitative data, the author used primarily the findings of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), which have allowed for the formulation of the key theoretical and practical approaches presented in this research.

⁶ Vide B. Buzan, O. Weaver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge 2003.

FIVE COUNTRIES MOST IMPACTED BY TERRORISM

Another theory also indicates that the geopolitical space of the world is not uniform, but divided into separate areas and regions of different nature. Saul B. Cohen stated that due to internal divisions and interference by external entities, certain unstable regions are so-called belts of geopolitical rupture, areas of conflict, and shifting alliances. S.B. Cohen (2003) distinguished two types of regions: geostrategic and geopolitical. Geostrategic regions are divided into geopolitical regions, each of which has its own specificity. There are so-called shatterbelts, regions characterized by a high degree of ethnic, cultural, and/or religious diversity, hostility between groups, and political fragmentation⁷.

The term has been applied by political geographers to a number of places, such as: East Central Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa (MENA). Since the Second World War, with the rise of the Iron Curtain, it was especially used in relation to East Central Europe. In the XX century, the classic example of shatterbelt was southeastern Europe, especially the Balkans. This region was geographically squeezed in between the powerful states that attempted to control it. In the latter XX century, due to the collapse of colonialism and imperialism, the MENA shatterbelt emerged. In 1986, P.L. Kelly (1986) suggested that the shatterbelt is “a geographic region over whose control great powers seriously compete;” and it “originates when rival great powers have footholds in a single area”⁸. On this basis the author indicated six world regions that met the criteria of shatterbelts: the Middle East, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle America, and South Asia. Nowadays, the Global Terrorism Index points out that the terrorist threat is at the highest level in the following regions: South Asia, the Middle East and West Africa. In 2015-2018, Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria, and Pakistan were among the five states with the highest impact of terrorism⁹. In 2019, Somalia replaced Pakistan in this ranking. In 2021, there was another change, with Nigeria dropping to 6th place, and Burkina Faso entering 4th place (Table 1).

Table 1. Countries most affected by terrorism, ranked by GTI score in 2015-2021

State	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 ¹⁰	2021
Afghanistan	2	2	2	1	1	n/a	1
Iraq	1	1	1	2	2	n/a	2
Somalia	7	7	6	6	5	n/a	3
Burkina Faso	63	43	37	27	12	n/a	4
Syria	5	4	4	4	4	n/a	5
Nigeria	3	3	3	3	3	n/a	6
Pakistan	4	5	5	5	7	n/a	10

Source: Own study based on GTIs 2016-2022.

⁷ Vide S.B. Cohen, *Geopolitics of the World System*, Lanham – Maryland 2003.

⁸ P.L. Kelly, *Escalation of regional conflict: testing the shatterbelt concept*, “Political Geography Quarterly” 1986, 5(2), pp. 161-180.

⁹ GTI 2020; F. Gaub, *Trends in terrorism*, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) 2017, https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/EUISS-Alert_4_Terrorism_in_Europe.pdf.

¹⁰ In 2021, the GTI was not released.

Since 2018, Afghanistan remains the state most impacted by terrorism; however, with 5,953 fewer deaths from terrorism than in 2018 (7,379). The highest number of incidents occurred in 2015 (1,715), although the number of victims was lower than at the peak of 2018¹¹. In 2021, the number of attacks decreased significantly, with the death rate dropping to 1,245. Taliban were responsible for most of the attacks¹². In Iraq, the number of incidents (9,765) and fatalities (2,965) in the period analyzed, the number of victims was highest in 2016. Iraq noted a significant decrease in terrorist-related deaths for the fourth consecutive year (from 9765 in 2016 to 524 in 2021, 94,6%). In 2019, there were less than a thousand deaths related to terrorism for the first time since the US invasion in 2003. The Islamic State (IS) was responsible for most of the attacks¹³. In Somalia, the third country in the ranking, the death toll was the highest in 2017 (1,470). In the remaining years of the analyzed period, it did not exceed 1,000, most often oscillating around 600. In 2019, terrorist-related deaths in Somalia decreased to the lowest level since 2013. Compared to the previous year, deaths declined by 11.9% to 569. In 2021, the death toll increased slightly. Ash-Shabaab was responsible for the most of the attacks¹⁴.

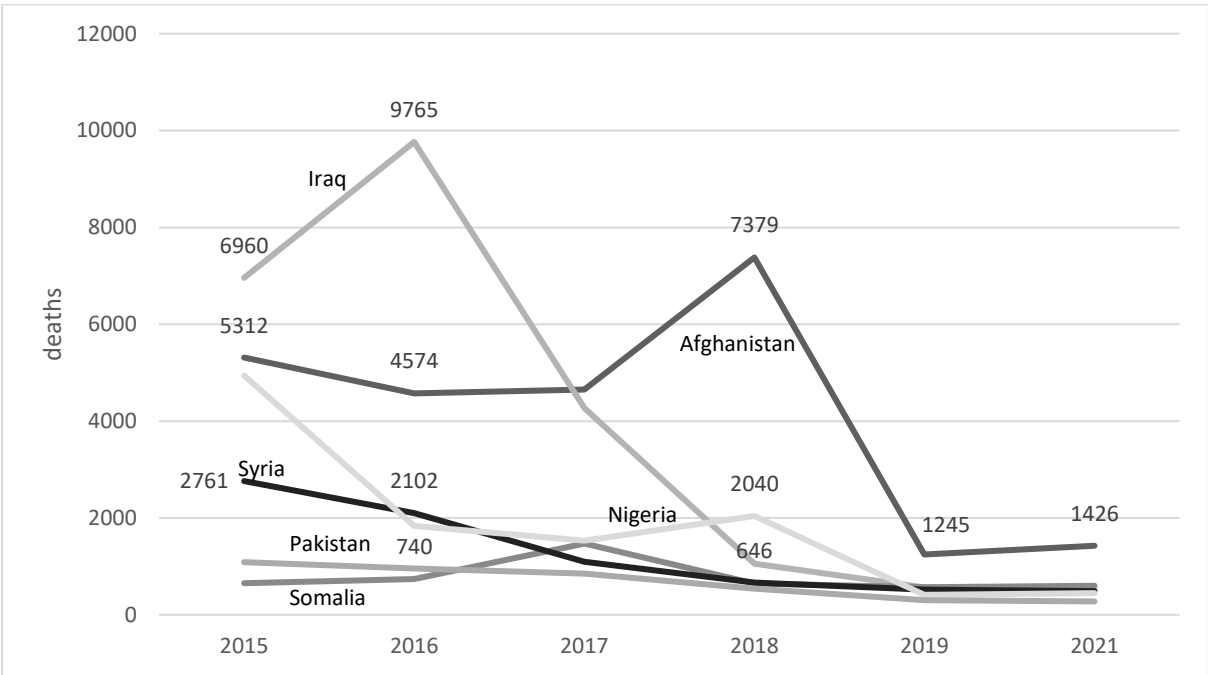


Diagram 1. Number of terrorism-related deaths in selected countries of GTI top 10
Source: Own study based on GTIs 2016-2022.

¹¹ *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2016, measuring and understanding the impact of terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace. <http://economicsandpeace.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf>, p. 26; *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2019 Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GTI-2019web.pdf>, p. 19.

¹² GTI 2022, p. 19.

¹³ GTI 2016, p. 25; *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2017, measuring and understanding the impact of terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Global%20Terrorism%20Index%202017%20%284%29.pdf>, p. 22; *Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2018. Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, The Institute for Economics and Peace, <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/12/Global-Terrorism-Index-2018-1.pdf>, p. 19; GTI 2019, p. 20; GTI 2020, p. 20; GTI 2022, p. 21.

¹⁴ GTI 2016, p. 32; GTI 2017, p. 28; GTI 2018, p. 24; GTI 2019, p. 24; GTI 2020, p. 23; GTI 2022, p. 22.

In 2021, another country, Syria, recorded 338 incidents and 488 terrorist-related deaths. Since 2015, Syria has recorded a significant decrease in threat of terrorism (2015 – 2,761; 2021 – 488; 82% decrease). This fall is associated with the de-escalation of conflict. The IS was responsible for most of the victims¹⁵. In Nigeria, in 2016, the number of deaths fell sharply from 4,940 to 1,832. However, in 2018 another increase was recorded. Comparing 2015 and 2021 total number of deaths from terrorism decreased by almost 91%, which is the lowest level of terrorist violence in this state since 2011. Boko Haram (BH) was responsible for the majority of the victims. Although in 2021 Islamic State West Africa (ISWA) came to the fore¹⁶. Since 2015, Pakistan has recorded a decrease in deaths and incidents related to terrorism (from 1086 deaths and 1008 incidents in 2015 to 275 deaths and 186 incidents in 2021). Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was responsible for most of the deaths. Since 2016, the Khorasan Chapter of the Islamic State has also been very active¹⁷.

DEADLIEST TERRORIST ATTACKS IN 2015-2022

Between 2015 and 2022, in the 10 deadliest terrorist attacks, 3,675 people were killed. Most of these attacks were carried out in Iraq (4), Afghanistan (2), and Syria (2). In those years, there was only one attack carried out in a country that was not in the top 5 countries most impacted by terrorism (311 people were killed in the attack in Beir al-Abd in Egypt)¹⁸. The attacks were carried out in the years 2015-2018, which means that the following years, 2019-2022, were safer in terms of the high intensity terrorist threat (Table 2).

The most lethal attack was carried out on 14 October 2017. A truck bomb exploded at an intersection in Mogadishu, killing 588 people and injuring hundreds more¹⁹. In February 2018, a military court convicted 23-year-old Hassan Adan Isak to death penalty for leading Ash-Shabab unit, which was said to have carried out the attack.

During the period considered, the Islamic State was attributed the highest number of attacks. Together with its branch, Sinai Province, this structure was responsible for 7 out of 10 deadliest attacks (Table 2).

¹⁵ GTI 2016, p. 29; GTI 2017, p. 25; GTI 2018, p. 22; GTI 2019, p. 22; GTI 2020, p. 22; GTI 2022, p. 24.

¹⁶ GTI 2016, p. 27; GTI 2017, p. 24; GTI 2018, p. 21; GTI 2019, p. 21; GTI 2020, p. 21; GTI 2022, p. 25.

¹⁷ GTI 2016, p. 28; GTI 2017, p. 26; GTI 2018, p. 23; GTI 2019, p. 22; GTI 2020, p. 25; GTI 2022, p. 25.

¹⁸ N. Youssef, *Pondering Motives in Egypt's Deadliest Terrorist Attack*, "The New York Times", December 2, 2017, p. 4.

¹⁹ D. Dudley, *The Deadliest Terrorist Groups In The World Today*, "Forbes" 2018, December 5, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dominicdudley/2018/12/05/deadliest-terrorist-groups-in-the-world/?sh=3afaeefa2b3e> (12.10.2022).

Table 2. Ten deadliest terrorist attacks in 2015-2021

Rank	Fatalities	Date	Place	Organization	Attack Type
1.	588	14/10/2017	Somalia/ Mogadishu	Ash-Shabaab	bombing/explosion
2.	466	10/8/2018	Afghanistan/ Ghazni	Taliban	bombing/explosion
3.	433	10/12/2016	Syria/ Palmyra	Islamic State	hostage taking (kidnaping)
4.	383	3/7/2016	Iraq/ Baghdad	Islamic State	bombing/explosion
5.	330	15/5/2018	Afghanistan/ Farah	Taliban	bombing/explosion
6.	311	24/11/2017	Egypt/ Beir al-Abd	Sinai Province of the Islamic State	bombing/explosion
7.	300	7/2/2016	Iraq/ Mosul	Islamic State	hostage taking (kidnaping)
8.	300	9/4/2015	Iraq/ QAIM	Islamic State	Unknown
9.	284	21/10/2016	Iraq/ Mosul	Islamic State	hostage taking (kidnaping)
10.	280	21/5/2015	Syria/ Palmyra	Islamic State	Firearms

* Bold font highlights the most lethal terrorist group.

Source: Own study based on Global Terrorism Indexes 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022

FAR-RIGHT TERRORISM RISING?

No country’s security can be delinked from the security of its security complex. In recent years, the trend has been related to increased civil unrest and political violence. It is worth considering whether it is also related to the rise of far-right terrorism. The intensification of far-right attacks has led to debate about the extent of this threat. Some researchers ask the question whether far-right terrorism is a greater threat in some regions than Jihadist terrorism. In this section, the author compares far-right terrorism to other types of this phenomenon, trying to determine if the far-right ideology in association with terrorism may pose a threat in the future.

Historically, the majority of politically-motivated terrorism in the West has been conducted by far-left individuals and groups. In North America, Oceania, and Western Europe far-right terrorists related-deaths increased by 709 % since 2014. There was only one recorded far-right terrorist attack recorded in 2010 and 49 in 2019²⁰.

In this subsection, an example will be the countries that in the GTI Report from 2020 were indicated as those most exposed to the phenomenon of far-right terrorism in the years 2002-2021 (however, to illustrate the scale of the problem, the author will also try to outline the specificity of the growth of far-right tendencies in other regions). Since 2002, there have been far-right terrorist attacks across fifteen Western states; eight countries with at least one fatality

²⁰ GTI 2020, p. 3, 5, 40.

(Table 3). Most of these attacks and deaths occurred in the United States²¹. Interestingly, despite the global improvement, 6 out of 8 countries shown in the table below recorded a deterioration.

Table 3. Countries vulnerable to far-right terrorism ranked by GTI score in 2015-2021

State	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Canada	66	66	57	54	56	n/a	48
France	29	23	30	36	38	n/a	35
Germany	41	38	39	44	48	n/a	33
New Zealand	112	104	114	122	42	n/a	41
Norway	75	130	123	128	87	n/a	77
Sweden	46	52	51	56	61	n/a	69
United Kingdom	34	35	28	28	30	n/a	31
United States of America	36	32	20	22	29	n/a	28

*Lighter color indicates the decrease.

Source: Own study based on GTI 2020.

In the years 2015-2022, in 19 of the most lethal attacks in Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, 313 people were killed. In both Canada and New Zealand, there were only two such attacks. In New Zealand, 51 people died, while in Canada 16²². Out of these three countries, the largest number of this type of attacks occurred in the United States; 246 people died (Table 4)²³.

Table 4. Terrorism incidents in Canada, New Zealand, and the United States (2015-2022) with more than 5 deaths

Date	City/state	Group	Fatalities/ Injuries	Target type
2019-12-10	United States /Jersey City	Anti-Semitic extremists	5/3	Business
2019-08-04	United States /Dayton	Unknown	10/27	Business
2019-08-03	United States /El Paso	White supremacists/ nationalists	23/24	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2019-03-15	New Zealand /Christchurch	Anti-Muslim extremists	8/25	Religious Figures/Institutions
2019-03-15	New Zealand /Christchurch	Anti-Muslim extremists	43/25	Religious Figures/Institutions
2018-10-27	United States /Pittsburgh	Anti-Semitic extremists	11/7	Police, Religious Figures/Institutions
2018-05-18	United States /Santa Fe	Neo-Nazi extremists (suspected)	10/14	Educational Institution
2018-04-23	Canada /Toronto	Incel extremists / unaffiliated individual	10/15	Private Citizens & Property
2018-02-14	United States /Parkland	White supremacists/nationalists	17/17	Educational Institution
2017-10-31	United States /New York City	Jihadi-inspired extremists	8/13	Educational Institution, Private Citizens & Property, Tourists

²¹ United States, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?country=217> (14.12.2022).

²² New Zealand, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?country=144> (16.12.2022); Canada, Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?page=4&search=england&expanded=no&chart-type=line&chart=overtime&ob=GTIDID&od=desc#results-table> (16.12.2022).

²³ United States, Global Terrorism Database (2020) (16.12.2022).

2017-10-01	United States /Las Vegas	Anti-Government extremists (suspected)	60/850	Business, Airports and Aircraft, Private Citizens & Property
2017-01-29	Canada /Quebec City	Right-wing extremists	6/19	Religious Figures/ Institutions
2017-01-06	United States /Fort Lauderdale	Jihadi-inspired extremists	5/6	Airports and Aircraft
2016-07-07	United States /Dallas	Anti-White extremists	6/9	Police
2016-06-12	United States /Orlando	Jihadi-inspired extremists	50/53	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2015-12-02	United States /San Bernardino	Jihadi-inspired extremists	16/17	Government (General)
2015-10-01	United States /Roseburg	Incel extremists	10/7	Educational Institution
2015-07-16	United States /Chattanooga	Muslim extremists	6/2	Military
2015-06-17	United States /Charleston	White supremacists/nationalists	9/0	Religious Figures/ Institutions

*Bold highlights the far-right groups, as well as the top three most lethal attacks.

Source: Own work on the basis of GTD.

The above analysis shows that among the most lethal attacks (those in which at least 5 people were killed), more than 63% were carried out by right-wing terrorists (12/19). In the case of Canada and New Zealand, these were the only perpetrators. In the case of the USA, this percentage was lower – 50% (7/14), and more than 35% of the attacks were carried out by Jihadi-inspired extremists and Muslim extremists (Table 4).

Table 5. All far-right and jihadi/ Muslim extremists' incidents in Canada, New Zealand, and the United States (2015-2020), with at least 1 death

Orientation of the perpetrators/ Terrorist organization	Canada	New Zealand	United States	Jointly
Far-right				
Anti-Abortion extremists			3	
Anti-Muslim extremists	1	51	5	
Anti-Semitic extremists			17 (2)	
Anti-White extremists			11 (1)	
Boogaloo movement			2	
Incel extremists	11		13 (2)	
Neo-Nazi extremists			12 (2)	
Right-wing extremists	6			
White supremacists /nationalists			65 (2)	
Jointly (excluding terrorists)	18	51	119	188
Jihadi				
Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)			4 (1)	
Jihadi-inspired extremists	5 (2)		88 (10)	
Muslim extremists			7 (1)	
Jointly (excluding terrorists)	3	0	87	90
Other			85 (11)	74
Unknown			18 (1)	17
Jointly (excluding terrorists)	21	51	297	369

*in parentheses is the number of dead terrorists

Source: Global Terrorism Database (2020).

The table above shows that in the years 2015-2020 among all far-right and jihadi attacks with at least 1 death, almost 51% were carried out by right-wing terrorists (significant difference

from over 87,6% in case of attacks with more than 5 fatalities). In the case of New Zealand, these were the only perpetrators. In the case of Canada and the United States, this percentage was lower – 85% and 40%. In the United States, more than 29% of this type of attacks were carried out by Jihadi groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists and Muslim extremists (Table 5).

Table 6. Terrorism incidents in France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (2015-2022), with more than 5 deaths

Date	State / City	Group	Deaths/ injuries	Target type
2020-02-19	Germany / Hanau	Anti-Immigrant extremists	5/3	Business
2019-10-03	France /Paris	Jihadi-inspired extremists	5/2	Police
2018-12-11	France /Strasbourg	Jihadi-inspired extremists	5/11	Private Citizens & Property
2017-06-03	United Kingdom /London	Jihadi-inspired extremists	11/48	Private Citizens & Property
2017-05-22	United Kingdom /Manchester	ISIS	23/119	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2017-04-07	Sweden / Stockholm	Jihadi-inspired extremists	5/14	Private Citizens & Property
2017-03-22	United Kingdom /London	Muslim extremists	6/50	Police, Private Citizens & Property
2016-12-19	Germany /Berlin	Jihadi-inspired extremists	12/48	Private Citizens & Property
2016-07-22	Germany / Munich	Anti-Immigrant extremists	10/27	Private Citizens & Property
2016-07-14	France /Nice	Jihadi-inspired extremists	87/433	Private Citizens & Property
2015-11-13	France /Paris	ISIS	93/217	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2015-11-13	France /Paris	ISIS	19/26	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2015-11-13	France /Paris	ISIS	5/24	Business
2015-11-13	France /Paris	ISIS	15/26	Business, Private Citizens & Property
2015-01-09	France /Paris	Jihadi-inspired extremists	5/3	Business
2015-01-07	France /Paris	Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	12/12	Police, Journalists & Media, Private Citizens & Property

*Bold highlights the far-right groups, as well as the top two most lethal attacks.

Source: Own work on the basis of GTD.

In the years 2015-2022, more than 87,5% of attacks (with more than 5 deaths) in the Western European countries analyzed (France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the UK) were carried out by jihadist groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists, and Muslim extremists. The largest number of terrorist attacks (in which at least 5 people were killed) occurred in France (9/16). 7 out of 9 were made in Paris²⁴. There were three incidents of this type in Great Britain, three in Germany, one in Sweden, and no such incident in Norway²⁵. All distinguished attacks in

²⁴ France, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=france&sa.x=0&sa.y=0> (18.12.2022).

²⁵ United Kingdom, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?page=4&search=england&expanded=no&charttype=line&chart=overtime&ob=GTDDID&od=desc#results-table> (18.12.2022); Germany, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=germany&sa.x=0&sa.y=0> (16.12.2022);

France, Sweden, and the UK were carried out by jihadist groups and Jihadi-inspired extremists. In the case of Germany, two of the three were carried out by anti-immigrant extremists (Table 6).²⁶ This is a significant difference compared to the data from Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, where most of the attacks were carried out by right-wing terrorists (63%) (Table 4). If the data indicated in the tables were combined (35 attacks in total), more than 54% were made by jihadist groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists, and Muslim extremists, and more than 40% by right-wing terrorists (Table 4, Table 6).

Table 7. All far-right and jihadi/ Muslim extremists' incidents in France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (2015-2020), with at least 1 death

Orientation of the perpetrators / Terrorist organization	France	Germany	Norway	Sweden	United Kingdom	Jointly
Far-right						
Anti-Immigrant extremists		21 (2)		4 (1)		
Anti-Muslim extremists					1	
Anti-Semitic extremists		2				
Generation Identity	1 (1)					
Neo-Nazi extremists		1			1	
White supremacists/ nationalists			1			
Jointly (excluding terrorists)	0	22	1	3	2	28
Jihadi						
Jihadi-inspired extremists	129 (13)	17 (2)		5	16 (4)	
Muslim extremists	5 (3)	2 (1)			10 (1)	
Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)	137 (7)				23 (1)	
Al-Mahdi in Southern Tunisia	3					
Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	12 (1)					
Jointly (excluding terrorists)	262	16	0	5	43	326
Other					13 (1)	12
Unknown	5 (2)	4 (1)				6
Jointly	265	41	1	8	57	372

*In parentheses is the number of dead terrorists

Source: Own work on the basis of GTD.

In the years 2015-2020, more than 87,6% of attacks (with more than 1 fatality) in the Western European countries analyzed (France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and UK) were made by jihadist groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists and Muslim extremists. An analysis of all far-right and jihadist attacks in which at least 1 person was killed, also shows that jihadist groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists, and Muslim extremists are a greater threat in France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Although in Germany the number of victims of these groups is lower, the difference is not significant. Far-right terrorists killed 22 people, while jihadist

Sweden, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=sweden&sa.x=0&sa.y=0> (17.12.2022); Norway, Global Terrorism Database (2020). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?country=151> (17.12.2022).

²⁶ D. Koehler, *Recent trends in German right-wing violence and terrorism: what are the contextual factors behind 'hive terrorism'?*, "Perspectives on Terrorism" 2012, 12(6), pp. 72-88.

groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists and Muslim extremists 16. In Norway, this difference is even smaller, because in 2019, there was only one terrorist attack. An assailant killed his step sister, who was an immigrant from China, in Baerum, Akershus, Norway. This was the only attack in years 2015-2020.

The results show that the far-right terrorism is a complex and not a territorially uniform problem. This issue varies regionally, although the above analysis shows that it is possible to distinguish states and regions more exposed to this phenomenon and those in which it may occur in the future. Western non-European countries are exposed to this type of phenomenon much more than Western European countries²⁷. For comparison, in Central Europe, for example, V4 states right-wing extremism, although evidently present, is not a major threat in the context of terrorism²⁸. Furthermore, these countries are not involved in open armed conflicts and their position in the GTI is low.

CONCLUSIONS

Research has shown that the phenomenon of terrorism in the years 2015-2022 was associated with instability and conflict. States and security complexes with a more stable situation were less vulnerable to terrorism. It is common for certain terrorist groups to use the absence of the state in conflict-prone areas. The GTI top five countries are all engaged in at least one armed conflict. This clearly shows that terrorism is linked to conflict.

The above analysis indicated the following trends:

- In 2015-2019, the top three countries most impacted by terrorism have always been Afghanistan, Iraq, and Nigeria; the next two positions, 4th and 5th, were taken by Syria, Somalia, and Pakistan; these are the countries of the three regions: South Asia, the Middle East, and West Africa. In 2021, Afghanistan and Iraq held their positions.
- 4 of 10 deadliest terrorist attacks between 2015 and 2022 occurred in Iraq, and the Islamic State was attributed to the highest number of attacks: 7 out of 10; cases of large-scale attacks are a minority outside of the 10 countries most impacted by terrorism.
- In the years 2015-2022, more than 87,5% of attacks (with more than 5 deaths) in the Western European countries analyzed (France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the UK) were carried out by jihadist groups, Jihadi-inspired extremists, and Muslim extremists. The largest number of terrorist attacks (in which at least 5 people were killed) occurred

²⁷ J. Gruenewald, S. Chermak, J.D. Freilich, *Far-Right Lone Wolf Homicides in the United States*, "Studies in Conflict & Terrorism" 2013, 36(12), pp. 1005-1024; J. Blackburn, *Counterterrorism legislation and far-right terrorism in Australia and the United Kingdom*, "Common Law World Review" 2020; N. Quek, *Bloodbath in Christchurch: The rise of far-right terrorism*, RSIS Commentaries 2019, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CO19047.pdf>.

²⁸ M.S. Stempień, *How Limited Is the Terrorist Threat in the Visegrad Group Member States? Terrorist Activities in the V4 in the Light of the Global Terrorism Database and Its Social Impact*, "The Journal of Slavic Military Studies" 2020, 33(2), pp. 198-213.

in France (9/16). 7 out of 9 were made in Paris; therefore, jihadists focus on attacks on large groups of people and well-known places.

- In the years 2015-2022, more than 63% of attacks (with more than 5 fatalities) in the Western non-European countries analyzed (Canada, New Zealand, and the US) were carried out by right-wing terrorists (12/19). In the case of Canada and New Zealand, these were the only perpetrators. In the case of the United States, this percentage was lower – 50% (7/14), and more than 35% of the attacks were carried out by Jihadi-inspired extremists and Muslim extremists.
- Western, non-European countries are exposed to far-right terrorism much more than Western European countries. In contrast, Western European countries are exposed to jihadi terrorism much more than Western, non-European countries.
- Historically, the majority of politically-motivated terrorism in the West has been conducted by far-left individuals and groups. However, in recent years, the intensity of far-right terrorism in the West has increased steadily.

Conducting scientific research on the phenomenon of terrorism and its trends is not simple. Terrorism, similarly to violent conflict, is a phenomenon that is difficult to predict. However, we can expect that terrorism will not disappear in the coming years. It should be expected that, as in previous years, it will only change its face. The indicated trends only show potential areas where further research can be conducted. The author expresses the hope that the above analysis will contribute to the development and deepening of research and knowledge on terrorism.

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