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The Relationship Between Refugees, Radicalization, and NGOs: Why Criminalizing NGOs Jeopardizes Human Rights and European Security

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Introduction

Whether or not policy realistically can be utilized to meet the goals it was designed for is debate that has plagued governments since states first began publicizing their actions for public digestion. In the current geopolitical landscape of Europe and the titular "West," perhaps no such example is currently more thought-provoking than the official international response to what is in recent years being referred to as "the migrant crisis" – the current influx of irregular migrants towards/into Europe due to the violent and chaotic circumstances afflicting significant portions of the Middle East and Northern- and Sub-Saharan-Africa. There are complaints being circulated about the economic impacts of such migrants, but no complaint has been as well-publicized as that of security and the rampant belief that allowing refugees to settle would make host countries vulnerable to the violent

effects of radicalization.[1] And although this paper will take a very different approach and do not subscribe to the idea that refugees represent a threat, it is first important to note that I am not dismissing these fears – there are indeed reports of violent attacks being committed by or associated with refugees and migrants in Europe, and in fact very recently the conviction of one such attacker has brought the discussion about refugee violence back to the forefront of conversations about migrants and security.[2] It is understandable that this would generate fear, but that does not necessarily mean that the specific fears being generated or the EU responses to those events at the policy level are justified or productive. Examining the actual relationship between refugees, radicalization, and security requires looking past sensational headlines and politically-angled statements from government officials.

There has already been significant research into whether or not radicalization is a legitimate risk of refugee acceptance, and depending on the definition being used and motivation of the research, there is a lot of disagreement over the circumstances of this risk. With that in mind, I will

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[1] Richard Wike, Bruce Stoke, and Katie Simons, "Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs," July 11, 2016, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/.; Daryl Grisgraber and Sasha Ghosh-Siminoff, "One Syrian Passport," Refugees International, November 25, 2015, https://www.newsweek.com/migrants-europe-violence-crime-germany-study-770105.

[2] Derek Scally, "Germans Shaken by Series of Violent Immigrant Attacks," *The Irish Times*, July 10, 2019, https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/germans-shaken-by-series-of-violent-immigrant-attacks-1.3952832.

spend a portion of this paper addressing the studies and perspectives currently in circulation and addressing overarching themes (or missed connections). Where there is a significant gap, however, is literature addressing whether or not the EU responses to this perceived threat are, or have the potential to be, effective. The EU has taken questionable and often highly-criticized measures in recent years to deal with the crisis and the security threat that it may pose – but are they the right measures, strictly considering the fear of radicalization?

In 2017, I briefly volunteered at a refugee camp in Thessaloniki, Greece called Elpida. It was being run at the time by an NGO called Emergency Response Centre International (ERCI) and it housed specifically "high risk" refugees – women with children, single parents, refugees who had been victimized by assault, etc. As a building in which each family got their own room and shared other community spaces, it was, from my perspective, well-run, and it afforded a sense of dignity to its inhabitants that that most tent-style refugee camps fail to provide. Shortly after I left, the Greek government moved the last of the camp's residents into their own apartments and closed the camp; funding for refugee camps was in the process of being taken away from many NGOs and instead redirected explicitly to the Greek government.[3] This was the last I heard, and I did not

[3] Michael Leonetti, "The Closing of Elpida and Moving to Athens," July 25, 2017, NYU Gallatin Global Fellowship in Human Rights Blogs. Michael Leonetti worked at Elpida up until its defunding and closure.

think of it again until the December of 2018, when I discovered that earlier that year, several members of ERCI – including the famous refugee Sarah Mardini who, along with her Olympian sister Yusra Mardini, gained notoriety in the press after getting into the water and swimming their sinking raft full of refugees to shore after its engine faltered during their crossing – had been arrested and accused of people trafficking.[4]

What happened? The facts aren't explicitly clear. Greek police allege that ERCI was running a for-profit crime ring off of trafficking migrants, but thus far have not released any evidence or publicly commented aside from identifying the charges; all those arrested have denied them[5]. Up until that point, ERCI had been running search and rescue operations out of Lesvos to retrieve migrants arriving by boat from the water.

A brief background is necessary here: since the start of the crisis, EU governments have struggled to keep up with the need for search and rescue operations to recover migrants at sea. This arguably came to a head – but not an end – with the infamous October 3, 2013 tragedy at Lampedusa when nearly 400 migrants drowned about off the coast of the Italian island

[4] Eric Reidy, "Refugee, Volunteer, Prisoner: Sarah Mardini and Europe's Hardening Line on Migration," *The New Humanitarian*, May 3, 2019, http://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2019/05/02/refugee-volunteer-prisoner-sarah-mardini-and-europe-s-hardening-line-migration; Helena Smith, "Syrian Aid Worker Who Swam Refugees to Safety Freed from Greek Jail," *The Guardian*, December 5, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/05/syrian-aid-worker-sarah-mardini-refugees-freed-greece.

[5] Ibid.

after their boat caught fire only a quarter mile from the shore.[6] The response seemed promising, but the Italian operation designed to prevent a similar tragedy, operation *Mare Nostrum*, ended only a year later due to funding issues and disputes; its Frontex replacements, operations *Triton* and later *Poseidon*, were launched with far more limited capacity and an emphasis on border control rather than humanitarian aid for those in peril at sea.[7] NGOs, including ERCI, stepped in to fill the gap and at one point accounted for 26% of sea rescues − more than both the Italian Navy and Coast Guard − therefore relieving significant pressure from EU governments and greatly increasing the chances of rescue for migrants in need.[8] This lasted about 3 years until, in 2017, Frontex − the organization responsible for Operation Triton − declared that these NGOs were compromising the security of Europe because their presence made migrants more likely to attempt the journey (a journey that, per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, they have the legal right to undertake).[9] Studies and statistics, however, suggest that this

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[6] Galaski, Jascha, "Why NGOs Have Stopped Search and Rescue Operations," Liberties, November 15, 2018, https://www.liberties.eu/en/news/why-ngos-have-stopped-their-search-and-rescue-operations/16294.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Médecins Sans Frontières, *Issue Brief: Humanitarian NGOs Conducting Search and Rescue Operations at Sea: A 'Pull Factor'?*, August 2017, 3, http://searchandrescue.msf.org/assets/uploads/files/170831_Analysis_SAR_Issue_Brief_Final.pdf.

[9] Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency), *Risk Analysis for 2017* (Warsaw, 2017), 32, https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2017.pdf; United Nations, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,* (New York). The Universal Declaration, which was ratified by all current member-states of the European Union, specifically references in Article 14: "(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution."

accusation was false, as average fluctuations in migration have regularly ranged from 9 to 17% since the beginning of the mass migrations, and the increase in crossing attempts during the period of NGO participation in search and rescue operations was only 1.6%.[10] Nevertheless, the official reaction was swift and firm, and shortly after the report's release, it became a criminal offense for an NGO to rescue migrants at sea, regardless of their circumstances or whether or not they were in danger.[11] According to UNHCR, in 2017 – while NGOs were still legally performing rescues – the death rate for Mediterranean crossings was 1 in 42 (that is, 1 out of every 42 migrants died during the trip); in 2018, after NGOs had been banned from participating, that number was 1 in 8.[12]

In light of this, some crew members of search and rescue operations and organizations have ignored these legal bans – and many, such as ERCI,

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[10] Jovana Arsenijevic, Marcel Manzi, and Rony Zachariah, "Are Dedicated and Proactive Search and Rescue Operations at Sea a 'Pull Factor' for Migration and Do They Deteriorate Maritime Safety in the Central Mediterranean?", Médecins sans Frontières and Luxembourg Operation Research (LuxOR), August 2017, 11, http://searchandrescue.msf.org/assets/uploads/files/170831-Report_Analysis_SAR_Final.pdf.

[11] European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights (FRA), "Fundamental Rights Considerations: NGO Ships Involved in Search and Rescue in the Mediterranean and Criminal Investigations – 2018," October 2018, https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/ngos-sar-activities.

[12] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "2,000 Lives and Counting: Mediterranean Death Toll in 2018," November 6, 2018, https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2018/11/5be15cf34/2000-lives-counting-mediterranean-death-toll-2018.html. Published months after NGOs were banned from participating in search and rescue (SAR) operations, UNHCR noted, "In September, one life was lost for every eight people who crossed. This was in large part due to substantially reduced search and rescue capacity. In light of this, UNHCR continues to be very concerned about the legal and logistical restrictions that have been placed on a number of NGOs wishing to conduct search and rescue (SAR) operations, including the Aquarius."

have been arrested on charges of human smuggling and trafficking for failing to adhere to EU restrictions, even as deaths at sea increase by the thousands.[13] Under immense pressure from EU governments, ports began revoking the rights of NGO ships – such as *Aquarius*, a famous and hotly disputed example of a criminalized NGO search and rescue ship – to dock.[14]

What's more: Lesvos (also known as Lesbos), where ERCI operated out of, and particularly the Moria refugee camp (arguably the camp with the worst conditions in Europe) have been overrun and unable to cope with the continuous influx of refugees that has continued for years now. Mere weeks ago, on August 31 of 2019, the mass arrival of 16 ships carrying more than 600 migrants arrived in a single day for the first time in years, reminding the world that the number of people desperate to cross the Mediterranean in search of their basic human rights is far from dwindling.[15] Tightening border security policies – such as the "policy of containment," designed to keep refugees that arrived to islands from accessing mainland Europe while the EU determines who they can send back to Turkey – have understandably drawn ire and criticism from the UN, international NGOs, and humanitarian aid advocates who claim that the actions taken, such as the EU-Turkey deal, abuse the rights of migrants in exchange for a false semblance of border

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[13] EU Agency for Fundamental Human Rights, "Fundamental Rights Considerations."
[14] Galaski, "Why NGOs Have Stopped."; UNHCR, "2,000 Lives and Counting."
[15] Karolina Targaris, "Greece Sees First Mass Arrival of Migrant Boats in Three Years," *Reuters*, August 30, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-greece/greece-sees-first-mass-arrival-of-migrant-boats-in-three-years-idUSKCN1VK1VB.

security.[16] The persistently poor conditions of refugee camps, growing populism in some European countries, and often hostile reception by native European citizens and media all indicate that Europe is not coping well with the constant arrival of refugees, but NGOs that fail to play by EU rules on the basis of humanitarian interests are being forbidden to play any role at all, worsening the crisis.

The EU's concern over border security has many roots. There are certainly the expected sources like racism, populism, and ethnocentrism that make migrants from the Middle East and Africa extremely unappealing. But the cause that has been by far the most-publicized, cited, and debated, is the extreme fear of radicalization and the possibility that these migrants may pose a violent risk to EU citizens, especially in the form of terrorism; to say it more bluntly, the fear of radicalization is so great that many EU member-states are prioritizing the funding of border security over the funding of humane treatment and conditions for the refugees that arrive. But as I researched, I began to wonder: is that not counter-intuitive? Are those actually separable focuses? Is placing emphasis on protecting a country from those considered to be a threat, and not on stabilizing what is perceived as

[16] Reidy, "Refugee, Volunteer, Prisoner."; Kondylia Gogou, "The EU-Turkey Deal: Europe's Year of Shame," Amnesty International, March 20, 2017, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/03/the-eu-turkey-deal-europes-year-of-shame/.; Timothy Baster and Isabelle Merminod, "Why is Greece still 'containing' refugees in camps?" New Internationalist, April 5, 2019, https://newint.org/features/2019/05/01/why-greece-still-containing-refugees-camps

the threat itself, actually productive or helpful? Does it genuinely reduce the risk of radicalization and refugee-related terrorism? For decades, research has demonstrated links between desperation and radicalization – surely there are few situations more desperate than being left to die at sea or rotting for years in a tent with no running water. I do not say this to be emotionally manipulative, although it is undoubtedly an emotional picture; rather, I think it's far past time that scholars and public officials alike began to universally acknowledge that the conditions refugees are forced to endure for years or decades are likely to have an extreme effect on them that may well be connected to any sort of security risk that they may pose.

This paper will therefore explore the concept in detail and attempt to answer that specific question: considering the obsession with security and radicalization persistent throughout Europe (and in the context of the migrant crisis), is it counter-intuitive for the EU governments to ban NGOs that seek to alleviate refugee suffering and provide services? I will immediately acknowledge the obvious skew in such a question – I am beginning this paper with a recognized hypothesis that I will attempt to prove or disprove: I believe that by criminalizing NGOs (such as those that manage refugee camps and/or perform search and rescue operations) rather than including them in conversations and decisions and/or utilizing their resources, EU governments are in fact reducing security by creating (or at

least failing to relieve) conditions that encourage radicalization among stranded and maltreated refugees.

Respective of that, I will begin by investigating the radicalization of refugees, particularly in a camp setting, as a phenomenon – what research has been done, what the conclusions are, identifiable trends and patterns, and other information that would be relevant to trying to prevent it. This information will be represented in Chapter 1, preceded by working definitions of key terms that will be used in my analysis to ensure cohesiveness. Chapter 2 will use this information and focus on specifically the role of NGOs – what kind of impact (if any) they have on conditions that may encourage radicalization, whether or not there is any correlation between rates of radicalization and the presence of NGOs, and what anti-radicalization measures have to do with NGO actions. Chapter 3 will serve as the synthesis and combine all of the above information together, surmising what it means at a policy level, answering the research question, and explaining why it is a valid illation. Finally, the conclusion will serve to highlight key components of the research findings, discuss the limitations of a study of this nature, and examine what steps can or should be taken – both in terms of research and policy – in the future.

Methodology

This research will rely on both quantitative and qualitative analysis for several reasons. The first is that quantitative analysis serves as a necessary numerical representation to highlight that findings are not case-specific; moreover, statistical evidence is often used to support and incite policy change at the governmental level. To have a truly well-rounded and established piece of research on the topic of radicalization, it will be necessary to support certain claims with actual data about the people and circumstances I will be discussing.

However, while quantitative data is important, in this particular instance it also falls short. As I will discuss shortly, radicalization itself is extremely difficult to track because it can be an extended process, and it often is never discovered until or unless that process culminates in public action (such as a terrorist attack). There are no numbers that can accurately

capture the *inner* mechanisms of migrants, and therefore I will also utilize information and assessments from sources such as government policies and official statements, independent researchers, reporters, "neutral" organizations such as the United Nations, experts in the field of both refugees and European security, and statements made by NGO representatives that address relevant topics.

A review of the literature will be present throughout the paper as different sources are relevant to different aspects that will be brought into the fold as my research progresses, however it will be featured most heavily in Chapter 1 because this chapter will focus on painting a more holistic picture of the current situation regarding refugee circumstances and radicalization. Because this paper's research question itself directly challenges "official" governmental conceptions and policies, I will be reviewing literature from an extremely wide variety of sources (as opposed to only those which would be palatable to current EU government opinions, which have thus far fallen short). Although the purpose of this paper is to be productive and provide insight into the current components of the refugee experience in relation to European security, focusing exclusively on EU-approved sources would massively skew the perspective in favor of the same system that has created the situation I am attempting to analyze. Such a bias would be a fatal flaw in a paper meant to critically examine the effectiveness and rationale of decisions at the executive level, so although I

will vet my sources carefully, I will intentionally examine very different perspectives driving different literary pieces and conclusions.

Although interviews with criminalized members of NGOs would undoubtedly be an asset to this paper, I made the conscious decision to avoid the ethical dilemma that would come with interviewing people formerly or currently being prosecuted about the activities they are being indicted for. This would go directly against the nature and purpose of this research, and I am confident that other available sources, such as public statements from NGOs and articles written about them, will also be effective at presenting that perspective. Likewise, I will not be interviewing refugees as they are members of a vulnerable population that may fear retaliation for speaking about their experiences. Instead, I will use pre-existing trustworthy sources that utilize refugee voices to fill in the gaps.

Finally, I will utilize miniature case studies of individual acts of terrorism, refugee camps, and specific countries throughout the paper to highlight how different conditions can impact outcomes both in the experiences of refugees in Europe and actual border security. This is important because of the breadth of this study, which would not lend itself well to only one or two major case studies; the nature of radicalization and the limited number of terrorist attacks involved in such a limited number of examples would not be reliable or persuasive enough to make an argument. A more complete picture of circumstances must include similar and contrary

examples through every facet of the study – camp conditions, NGO roles/criminalization/support, country policies, et cetera – to ensure that the information and conclusions being presented have actual basis and are wide-spread enough to be relevant.

Chapter 1

It is not difficult to find information – both studies and opinion pieces – centered around the concept of radicalization in refugee camps; as of 2019, it has been nearly 8 years since the start of the Syrian Civil War that sent millions of refugees fleeing for Europe, and much of the literature revolves around what is now referred to as the "migrant crisis". Even before that, refugees fleeing conflict across the world for decades and centuries have drawn attention from scholars. What *is* challenging to find, however, is any type of consensus between authors, even among the ones focusing exclusively about this crisis, about how much of a risk the presence of refugees pose to Europe in terms of radicalization. The overall idea that refugees radicalize in camps and then commit terrorist attacks is taken almost overwhelmingly for granted in everything from government policies to the most basic political news articles – but is it true? Is there actually a

correlation? I will be utilizing a range of studies to identify whether there is any merit to claims that it happens and what circumstances are involved.

Key Terms and Definitions

One key aspect in both comparing this literature *and* working with the study as a whole is establishing definitions. As of right now, there is no working definition for "**terrorism**" across the board, so comparing studies that use the word can be misleading if they're using the same word for different things. For the purpose of this paper, I will be using the definition put forth by the Global Terrorism Index and Global Terrorism Database (GTI and GTD, respectively): "the intentional threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation".[17] As far as being included in the database, for a given act to be identified as an act of terrorism, it must meet three criteria:

> "1. The incident must be intentional – the result of a conscious calculation on the part of a perpetrator.

[17] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database, 2018, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/using-gtd/.

2. The incident must entail some level of violence or threat of violence — including property damage, as well as violence against people.

3. The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors."[18]

And two of the following criteria must also be met:

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

2. 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; and

3. The violent act was outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law."[19]

There are several reasons that I consider this to be the best working definition for the purpose of this paper. Firstly, the GTD (and GTI which analyzes it) is the single most comprehensive database of terrorist acts between 1970 (commonly identified as the start of modern terrorism) and 2017 – it has logged more than 180,000 attacks and is directly or indirectly

[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

used in almost every reference to global trends in terrorism.[20] Second, these criteria appear relatively often in governmental policy,[21] international forum discussions and resolutions,[22] and organizations dedicated to the research of terrorism,[23] which means that this definition is arguably the most relevant at an international level despite the heavy disagreement and variety of meanings for the term that are utilized. In terms of accuracy and logistics, its specificity means that while it can be applied to "terrorist acts" and by "terrorist groups" as we commonly identify them today – 9/11, ISIS, Al Qaeda, the 2019 shooting in El Paso, Texas – it cannot be used across the board to describe *any* act of violence against a group of people. This is extremely important for many reasons, but perhaps the most important is that violence has happened throughout documented human history and happens frequently in any type of conflict; the use or threat of violence against civilians by non-state actors to convey a political message to states, however, has only been common and possible on a wide-scale more

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[20] Ibid.; Brian Michael, "The 1970s and the Birth of Contemporary Terrorism," RAND Corporation, July 30, 2015, https://www.rand.org/blog/2015/07/the-1970s-and-the-birth-of-contemporary-terrorism.html. Funding for the database stopped in 2018, so data beyond 2017 is not available.

[21] United States, "Title 22, Chapter 38, Section 2656f(d)(2)," United States, 1991. The definition is listed as: "premeditated; perpetrated by a sub-national or clandestine agent; politically motivated, potentially including religious, philosophical, or culturally symbolic motivations; violent; and perpetrated against a non-combatant target." This definition is also used by the United States National Counterterrorism Center.

[22] European Union, "Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combatting terrorism," Official Journal of the European Communities, 164/4, June 22, 2002, http://www.statewatch.org/news/2002/jul/frameterr622en00030007.pdf.

[23] Global Terrorism Indexes 2014-2018, Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), November 2014 – December 2018.

recently, and as it grows in popularity and knowledge alongside the media coverage that enables it, it is becoming much more necessary to start understanding why it's happening.[24] This is one small part of why it poses such a threat, why governments and civilians alike are so terrified of it, and why identifying its "triggers" – like researching possible correlations to refugees, for example – is such a massive priority for affected or frightened governments, even if they ignore the data that the research reveals. To summarize, even having a definition is crucial to understanding, discussing, analyzing, and countering terrorism, and this working definition is extremely valuable for a research paper studying international terrorism and refugee radicalization processes because it has been used by most major international bodies, provides a clear and measurable set of criteria for identification, and has a massive network of identifiable data that adhere to it and are easily accessible to both a researcher and a policy-maker.

Having established a definition to be used for terrorism, it is subsequently important to do the same for "**radicalization**," as this paper intends to identify some of the conditions that may trigger that process. It is worth noting that the term "radicalization" is *not* exclusive to terrorism, but one of the focuses of this paper will be radicalization into terrorism, so I will be using a definition specific to that. Most definitions of radicalization involve the process by which someone adopts (or becomes more willing to

[24] Michael, "Birth of Contemporary Terrorism."

adopt) extremist beliefs and aspirations. This is extremely difficult to measure, because the vast majority of people who "radicalize" do it somewhat privately until they are ready to act, which is part of why acts of terrorism or other types of violent extremism are so unpredictable.[25] The number of people who have committed terroristic acts, then, can be reasonably assumed to be considerably less than the number of people who have actually radicalized or are radicalizing (but who have not [yet] committed such an act that would make their radicalization detectable).

This poses a very specific conundrum for anyone, myself included, attempting to determine the conditions for radicalization: should we base the study only on acts that have been committed, acknowledging that that is a very small percentage of radicalized individuals and that of those, only an even smaller percentage of these acts would be traceable back to a refugee camp to begin with? Or do we use available qualitative data that relies on both acts committed and insight via interviews and expert opinions on how likely radicalization is to occur for a given individual? It is most beneficial for *thi*s study to utilize the latter. Radicalization is a process, and therefore it would be neither helpful nor appropriate to use only identifiable acts (resulting from radicalization) that have occurred at the end of that process; moreover, assuming that all radicalization that led only to specific attacks

[25] Delphine Michel and Camille Schyns, "EIP Explainer: Understanding Radicalisation," European Institute of Peace (EIP), http://www.eip.org/en/news-events/eip-explainer-understanding-radicalisation.

occurred within such refugee camps and not after leaving it (or due to influences outside of it), especially considering that many people are refugees for 20 years or longer, would start this study off on extremely shaky ground.[26] With all of that considered, the definition of "radicalization" that will be used in this paper is one of the definitions identified by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (and attributed to Peter Romaniuk): "the process by which individuals adopt violent extremist ideologies that *may* lead them to commit terrorist acts, or which are likely to render them more vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organizations".[27]

Finally, the definitions of "refugee camp" and "refugee" are pertinent to determine largely because there is disagreement among scholars about what "counts" – whether the camp or person has to be government-acknowledged, for example. In this paper, a **"refugee camp**" refers simply to "a group of accommodations for at least 30 people, regardless of relationship to each other, set up to temporarily shelter refugees". This definition is my own but taken partially from UNHCR's only known definition; it includes any and all accommodations set up for this purpose, regardless of whether or not the camp is registered; it can be created organically by

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[26] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "What Is a Refugee Camp?" https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/camps/.

[27] Peter Romaniuk, "Does CVE Work? Lessons Learned from the Global Effort to Counter Violent Extremism," Global Center on Cooperative Security, September 2015., *as quoted in* United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), "Radicalization and Violent Extremism," The Doha Declaration: Promoting a Culture of Lawfulness, UNODC, https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-2/key-issues/radicalization-violent-extremism.html

refugees themselves, created by a government or international body like the UN, created by an organization, et cetera.[28] A refugee camp may look like a genuine "camp" and utilize tents for shelter, or it may exist in a building or compound used for its purpose. However, I added the number clause to ensure that *private* accommodations for a specific family would not be counted. It could be argued that the point of the size is moot, as the smallest refugee camp I was able to confirm that is currently in operation is a camp of 42 people in Lebanon, but for this study it is relevant because I am specifically investigating camp conditions, not the conditions inside a refugee's private accommodation that may be separate from a camp; there may very well be similar circumstances between the two, but there is little information available and it is not the focus of this paper.[29]

Finally, the definition of "**refugee**" that should be assumed for the entirety of this paper is the one by UNHCR (and shared by many other organizations): "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Sorin Furcoi and Farah Najjar, "Meet One of Lebanon's Smallest Syrian Refugee Communities," *Al Jazeera*, February 4, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/meet-lebanon-smallest-syrian-refugee-communities-190129101310466.html.

home or are afraid to do so".[30] The difference between a refugee and an "asylum-seeker" is that an asylum-seeker has not yet been granted refugee status, but for the purpose of this study, asylum-seekers are considered included in the term "refugees" for two reasons: first, this paper does not concern itself with distinguishing refugees with a "well-founded fear" from those who are eventually determined to be unfounded; and second, asylum-seekers also live in refugee camps and are included in almost every study about radicalization, because radicalization can occur regardless of whether or not someone is "officially" a refugee, and conditions/opportunities even after acquiring refugee status are often similar to pre-refugee status (the same accommodations in a camp, community, et cetera).[31] Since the conditions within most camps at a given moment are the same for both populations that live there, I will include all those living in a refugee camp who have fled their home country or region due to violence, war, or persecution when I refer to "refugees".

[30] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "What Is a Refugee?" https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/.; World Relief, "Who Is a Refugee and What Do They Go through to Get to the U.S.?" December 3, 2015, https://worldrelief.org/blog/who-is-a-refugee-and-what-do-they-go-through-to-get-to-the-u-s?.

[31] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Asylum-Seekers," 2019, https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/asylum-seekers.html

What Does the Research Say About Radicalization?

Although the discussion of radicalization in refugee camps is somewhat commonplace among academic discussions of the current migrant crisis, there is surprisingly little consensus in academia about whether or not it occurs, if it is a "legitimate" threat, what counts as radicalization, and what conditions prompt radicalization. In this section, I will try to incorporate as many sides as possible that have been represented in the ongoing discussions while also trying to determine which perspectives have merit – in terms of well-supported claims *and* in terms of relevance to the security concerns that migrants have become heavily associated with. I will primarily deal with research that addresses radicalization in or pertaining to refugee camps, but even research about refugee radicalization that does not specifically refer to camps is useful because (a) the vast majority of refugees are in refugee camps (and have been or will be for decades), so research about refugee radicalization is primarily about refugee camps anyway unless otherwise specified or concluded, and (b) since conclusions about radicalization of refugees include those in camps, they are applicable to and capable of informing decision-making processes across the board, which makes those studies relevant for this research into conditions that may contribute to or inhibit radicalization (which will later be compared to NGO

presence/action).[32] (As mentioned earlier, I will not utilize sources or information that specifically exclude refugees in camps because private accommodations are not included in the factors I will consider.)

I want to start with two examples of relevant data with poor delivery; these are not papers that necessarily disagree with conclusions made by others that I will rely heavily on later, but the manipulation of the data within them – and the statements/suggestions that they make, which in some cases have very little to do with the data they've actually collected – makes them good examples of (a) why radicalization in refugee camps is cited so often as a danger, and (b) how people can become convinced that refugees themselves are significantly more dangerous than members of less vulnerable populations, even if they are looking at and basing their opinions on data that does *not* necessarily support such an assessment.

One of the prominent narratives that exists among discussions is the idea that refugees *are* victims and *are* in danger but that the risk that comes with harboring them would also put their host countries – in this context, European states – in unjustified danger of terrorist attacks. A consistent voice of this perspective is Seung-Whan Choi, who has written repeatedly on the dangers that refugees pose. One article, co-written with Idean Salehyan, hypothesizes that "as the number of refugees increases in a country, the

[32] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Figures at a Glance," United Nations, June 19, 2019. https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html; UNHCR, "What is a Refugee Camp?"

number of terrorist attacks will also increase".[33] Their mathematically dense determination of refugee effects on host countries is initially controlled for by 6 variables, and very thorough. However, in exploring their data, the argument almost spins itself too deep to be reliable; the more controls the study adds, the less likely it is to apply to wide-scale examples, and it becomes a manipulation of extremely specific data. Moreover, the original hypothesis is given in the context of a host country ("Why Hosting More Refugees Provokes Terrorist Incidents"), but most of the models that they produce appear to disregard the presence of a host-country completely, deviating instead to show that aid workers are frequently the targets of terrorist attacks – in countries where terrorism already exists, and refugees are often displaced within their own state.[34]

To be clear, the authors acknowledge in their conclusion that providing better conditions and security *for* refugees as opposed to blocking them is the better choice, but even this rings vaguely hollow considering that the whole of their study – and conclusion – appear to have completely disregarded their hypothesis[35]. It would also be fair to note that they did state at the beginning of their article that their hypothesis should apply to both international and domestic terrorism, but following their abstract, their

[33] Seung-Whan Choi and Idean Salehyan, "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished: Refugees, Humanitarian Aid, and Terrorism," Conflict Management and Peace Studies 30, no. 1 (2013): 58.
[34] Choi and Salehyan, "No Good Deed," 54.
[35] Choi and Salehyan, "No Good Deed," 68.

initial definition of refugee – later used in their models – very specifically refers to a person who is outside of their country of nationality, and the entire article is set up in the context of the threat that refugees pose to their host (not home) countries[36]. Including domestic terrorism in their models is to blatantly skew the results; of course domestic terrorism is likely to occur in the country where the terrorist organizations are native, but that has nothing to do with whether or not radicalization and terrorism are a threat to a host country due to refugees. This is extremely important. The authors' initial proposition, that refugees' existence in a host country proportionally increases that country's risk of terror attacks, is followed by complicated formulas, well-detailed models, and a confident conclusion that could reasonably lead someone to believe that they had proven their hypothesis right, or at least given evidence to support it, but neither of these is correct. Engaging in this kind of data and narrative manipulation has long been an accusation of academics who argue that refugees do not come with an increased risk, as it can be (and has been) used as legitimate evidence by policy-makers who may not realize that the study they are utilizing is not necessarily relevant to the perspective they are pushing.

Similar tactics can be found in more recent article by Robin Simcox, who opens his article by emphasizing that the Paris attacks were caused by an ISIS cell that used "migrant routes" to travel back and forth; he uses this

[36] Choi and Salehyan, "No Good Deed," 53–57.

to immediately highlight the "security risk that bogus asylum seekers pose […] It proved disturbingly simple for these ISIS members to conceal themselves among genuine refugees as, at the time, European borders were under great strain".[37] From a research perspective, this immediately raises red flags. First and foremost, "migrant routes" are used for all travel – travel by plane, via visa processes and passport control, counts as a migrant route. And although it is true that two of the terrorists are suspected to have entered with Syrian asylum-seekers, the majority of the attackers responsible for the Paris attacks were European nationals, and thus the argument that asylum seekers should be identified as a security risk gets somewhat lost; they were less dangerous, by number of attackers, attacks, and fatalities, than the Europeans who were able to travel regularly back and forth from Syria as they radicalized. That is not to say that there is no risk of terrorists posing as asylum-seekers, or that the ill-treatment of this data suggests this, but it is worth pointing out that they carried passports mistaken as legitimate at the time of their entry; they could perhaps as easily have flown to Europe, as the others did, and banning asylum-seekers would not have stopped them to begin with. The risks he highlights are certainly radicalization and terrorism, but not necessarily related to the presence of refugees or asylum seekers. This instance, which was

[37] Robin Simcox, "The Asylum-Terror Nexus: How Europe Should Respond," The Heritage Foundation, no. 3314 (June 18, 2018): 1.

unsurprisingly unaddressed by the author, had more to do with "home-grown" terrorism in Europe than it did the migration process.

With that said, Simcox goes on to make a very interesting and detailed observation that the majority of the terrorists and attempted terrorists who *were* refugees/asylum-seekers carried out their plot within two years of arrival.[38] Simcox notes that earlier in the crisis, most of the forced-migrant-posing terrorists had been radicalized while abroad and then sent to do their work while in Europe, but more recently, the attackers were radicalized after arrival in Europe.[39] His extremely thorough data collection and reviews of various media sources are a convincing and necessary contribution to the conversation about the risks of radicalization, but disappointingly, his conclusion calls only for more resources and vetting – which would prevent more pre-established terrorists from disguising themselves as asylum seekers and arriving in Europe. This completely fails to act on his acknowledged reality that recently, more refugee-related terror incidents have occurred due to post-migration radicalization. The blaring absence of advisement on policies relating to refugees (or even research into the causes of post-migration radicalization) in his conclusion are frustrating; instead, he focuses on limiting migration as the measure to prevent terrorism, even despite providing his own statistics that show the majority of terrorist

[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

attacks – 84%, in fact – that have occurred have not been affiliated with refugees or asylum-seekers.[40] This oversight, combined with the manipulative tones he opens with, make his work an excellent source of quantitative data but with little reliability in terms of interpretation.

Moving on from those examples, I want to examine a different direction that one scholar has taken in yet another perspective on the increase of terrorism in relation to migration. But this time, he contends that while terrorism increases with higher proportions of immigrants, it is only right-wing terrorism.[41] Utilizing two separate sets of data for terrorist attacks, Richard J. McAlexander was able to defend the somewhat startling conclusion that in fact the influx of refugees is related to an increase in radicalization and terrorist attacks, but not directly related to the migrants' actions – rather, European hatred and fear of migrants leads them to attack migrants instead. While this may, at first glance, sound irrelevant to the topic of radicalization in refugee camps, in fact it should be heavily considered; these findings would indicate that migrants in refugee camps do not pose a particular security threat, but rather that negative attitudes towards them – attitudes that may well be fueled by the belief that they *are* a threat – are the actual security risk. Despite his determination that right-

[40] Simcox, "The Asylum-Terror Nexus," 12.
[41] Richard J. Alexander, "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/.

wing terrorism is the only kind that *increases* with migrant flows, these findings still likely run parallel, not contrary, to the findings of Simcox, and it therefore wouldn't be appropriate use this study to conclude that radicalization doesn't occur among migrants or that refugees cannot hurt native Europeans. But these findings could and should inform the decisions of policy-makers and, perhaps more importantly, the tone with which public officials and media sources choose to use when discussing refugees – and it corroborates what human rights advocates and migrant-focused NGOs have been saying since the crisis began. We will revisit this idea later.

Mary Bossis and Nikolaos Lampas have co-authored one of the strongest pieces of literature yet on the idea of radicalization among refugees. Its conclusion – that both poor living conditions in refugee camps and negative public opinion of immigrants by native citizens contribute to higher rates of refugee radicalization – is part of what is slowly growing into a strong and wide-spread narrative that I will explore: that there is a potent connection between the way a refugee is treated and the possibility that they will radicalize against their host country.[42] Notably, this is the first article I have come across that outright acknowledges that refugees in refugee camps have on multiple occasions been the victims of terrorist attacks themselves – not by each other or by pre-radicalized terrorists

[42] Mary Bossis and Nikolaos Lampas, "Is Refugee Radicalization a Threat to Greece?", *Mediterranean Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (January 2018): 37.

hiding among them, but by right-wing domestic terrorists in their host countries (which fits perfectly with McAlexander's contention that right-wing terrorism is a threat). In keeping with the theory that lack of public acceptance increases the tendency to radicalize, it may in fact be *essential* to note that groups of refugees have been physically brutalized by the populations that surround them. Bossis and Lampas note that the radicalization of refugees is, indeed, an undeniable threat to Europe, but they have determined that it is at least in part because of the threat that Europe did or does pose to them in the form of horrific living conditions, social isolation, and refugee-directed hatred/violence that lead to marginalization and desperation.[43]

These findings are supported by those of Francisco Martin-Rayo, whose conclusions fit well with earlier elucidated discoveries about the impact of refugee relations with host countries. For example, Martin-Rayo finds that discrimination against refugees – in one study, it was discrimination against Somalian refugee students by Yemeni teachers, for example – can create an attitude of hostility towards the host government or authorities, who are seen as punishing or undervaluing them; many students described a "sense of desperation" and explained that they did not believe they had a future.[44] Some major studies have suggested a link between lack of economic

[43] Bossis and Lampas, "Is Refugee Radicalization a Threat?", 44–46.
[44] Francisco Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization in Refugee Camps: How Education Can Help Defeat AQAP," *The Dubai Initiative*, June 2011: 6.

prospects or economic desperation and tendency to radicalize,[45] but this study did *not* identify a correlation between low employment and radicalization, and in its absence, instead a correlation between education and radicalization: even a little bit of education made students significantly less likely to radicalize or join organizations like al-Shabaab who were attempting to recruit them.[46]

Ultimately, he determined that after "basic needs" have been met, the biggest factor in radicalization within refugee camps is a lack of education, and the biggest deterrent is to provide access to education.[47] However, I will note that his study is limited and concerning for several reasons: first, it examines a very narrow range of refugee camps and situations, so the conclusion that education is *the* number one factor in deterring radicalization is a bit premature, and in fact the studies that suggest there is an economic factor have wider sets of data than his own research; second, its tone comes off as quite elitist at various points, such as when it describes how "woefully uneducated" members of the Taliban were and drew connections between a formal education and "acquiring the ability to […] think more independently";[48] and third, its suggestion that the "quality" of the education didn't matter as long as there was "accessibility" falls rather tone-deaf,

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[45] World Bank Middle East and North Africa Region(MENA), MENA Economic Monitor, 2016, 11.
[46] Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization," 7.
[47] Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization," 7-9.
[48] Ibid.

particularly when considering that terrorist recruitment can involve educational programs specifically designed to alter youths' perception against a host country or in favor of an ideology, the same way he is suggesting a typical school education can alter their perception against radicalization.[49]

But even with those limitations identified, other sources, such as a report on anti-radicalization measures in refugee camps that was released by Council of Europe in 2017, have also noted the correlation between educational opportunity and radicalization prevention, as well as echoing earlier sources that discussed the role of the media in helping (or hindering) efforts to avoid isolation and marginalization.[50]

Since desperation in refugee camps has been identified by several scholars and journalists as a potential trigger of radicalization, I want to briefly address why that is so relevant to Europe by highlighting several examples of incredible desperation occurring in refugee camps specifically

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Council of Europe, "Education and Social Inclusion to Combat the Radicalisation of Migrants," Parliamentary Assembly, September 21, 2018, http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/News/News-View-EN.asp?newsid=7201&lang=2. This report in particular noted that, "Whereas it is evident that the overwhelming majority of refugees arriving in Europe are fleeing violence and extremism in their countries of origin and are hoping for a peaceful and secure life, there is a real danger of radicalisation on the way, including in refugee camps and detention centres. Other migrants may be victims of radicalisation when they are marginalised or fail to integrate into their new society and environment, or when they suffer different forms of discrimination and violence on arrival." However, in its long list of recommended actions for EU member-states, it failed to mention the physical conditions of refugee camps even once, despite the obvious difference in the living standards of refugee in refugee camps and those of the average European civilian in their native country.

within the EU. Moria camp on the island of Lesvos, the largest camp and castigated as the most appalling of them all, has drawn intense criticism from virtually every human rights advocate, NGO, and charity across the board; its conditions, which include tents that house 4 families at a time, an average of about 70 people per toilet, and extreme ethnic/religious violence, have actually led some organizations to leave in protest (although at least one, Médecins Sans Frontières, returned because they were never replaced, leaving many refugees with no access to doctors who could treat the illnesses directly caused by the unsanitary conditions/respiratory difficulties due to the liberal use of tear gas in breaking up fights).[51] Doctors have reported multiple cases of children as young as 10 years old attempting suicide at Moria.[52] It is therefore unsurprising, based on the research I have reviewed so far, that reports about Moria surfaced throughout 2018 of groups of refugees attacking Kurdish refugees in the name of ISIS, which culminated in hundreds of Kurdish people fleeing in May of that year.[53] The correlation is there: Moria is nothing if not desperate, and extreme radicalization has already occurred. Conditions remain heinous. On August

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[51] Catrin Nye, "Children 'Attempting Suicide' at Greek Refugee Camp," *BBC News*, August 28, 2018, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-45271194.;
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.; Anthee Carassava, "Greece expels Isis recruiters from refugee camp," *The Sunday Times*, October 3, 2018, https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/greece-expels-isis-recruiters-from-refugee-camp-hh773rwnk.; Anna Lekas Miller and and Salem Rizk. "Attacks on Kurds in a Greek Camp Raise Fears that Conflict in Syria has Followed Refugees Abroad," *The Intercept*, July 25, 2018, https://theintercept.com/2018/07/25/lesbos-moria-kurdish-refugees-isis/.

24, 2019, for example, one child was killed and two others injured in a typical outbreak of violence.[54] Other camps do not fair particularly better. Suicides and attempted suicides are rampant across Greek refugee camps, with at least one refugee self-immolating only a week and a half after arriving to the horrible conditions of a camp on the island of Chios.[55] Italian camps are not better.[56] Self-harm and mental illness are commonplace, and the IRC has reported that at Moria, up to 60% of their mental health clients have considered suicide.[57]

A widely cited study by Daniel Milton, Mega Spencer, and Michael Findley found that "*within* refugee flows," there is "compelling statistical and anecdotal evidence that acts of terrorism can emerge from within the refugee population," which supports other statements suggesting that the

[54] Refugees International,"Greek Government Should Immediately Alleviate Conditions in Migrant Camps," Refugees International, September 5, 2019, https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/2019/9/5/greek-government-should-immediately-alleviate-conditions-in-migrant-camps.
[55] Teo Kermeliotis, "Chios: Syrian Refugee Critical after 'Self-Immolation,'" *Al Jazeera*, March 30, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/syrian-refugee-critical-immolation-chios-170330142455924.html.
[56] Lorenzo Tondo and Sean Smith, "Shattered dreams: life in Italy's migrant camps - a photo essay," *The Guardian*, October 10, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/10/life-in-italy-migrant-camps-a-photo-essay.
[57] Ibid.; Nye, "Children Attempting Suicide." ; International Rescue Committee. "Mental health needs at Moria are immense. IRC psychologists merely "chipping away at an iceberg." September 25, 2018. https://www.rescue.org/press-release/mental-health-needs-moria-are-immense-irc-psychologists-merely-chipping-away-iceberg

phenomenon occurs – but notably, that does not mean that the refugees themselves are the threat.[58] The authors go on to explain:

> "Refugee camps are likely to present fertile ground for radicalization […] Martin-Rayo (2011)[59] notes that a number of different factors can lead to radicalization, including religious education, lack of employment, lack of movement ability, and lack of access to a well-rounded education. Many of these conditions arise from the situations found in the average refugee experience, which are a combination of two key factors: the apparently hopeless conditions in which refugees find themselves upon fleeing, and the poor treatment of refugees by host countries."[60]

They further conclude that "dismal experiences" both increase the probability that a population of refugees will radicalize and indicate to outside recruiters that the population may be more vulnerable to their ideology; in other words, heinous camp conditions have the dually damning

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[58] Daniel Milton, Megan Spencer, and Michael Findley, "Radicalism of the Hopeless: Refugee Flows and Transnational Terrorism." *International Interactions* 39, no. 5 (October 28, 2013): 623.

[59] Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization." The studied that they have cited is the same as the one I reviewed prior to this one, which had excellent observations but a seemingly premature conclusion that the largest factor in preventing refugee radicalization was education; moreover, although this quotation of that study suggests that Martin-Rayo found a correlation between lack of employment and radicalization, it was not quite that simple; he actually stated that radicalization risk was *not* impacted by poverty or lack of economic opportunity as long as education was present.

[60] Milton, Spencer, and Findley, "Radicalism of the Hopeless," 626.

effect of making radicalization more attractive to a refugee *and* making a refugee more attractive to recruiters.[61] Also echoing the thoughts of other scholars, Milton et. al. note that integration with the host country and reception by its people – friendly versus hostile and ostracizing – can also play a role: poor integration, feelings of hopelessness over the future, and a sense of deprivation can all lead to hatred for a host country, which then has the potential to spark radicalization. Similarly, lack of socialization opportunities (or forced removal of access to pre-existing social relationships) and the isolation that results can create a social void that radical ideology or recruiters themselves may try (or be able) to fill.[62]

Marc Sageman, who himself has been cited by many of the works I have referenced up until now for his exceptionally dense work in the field of radicalization, agrees. He notes that "joining global Islamic terrorism [is] a collective process, based on friendship or kinship."[63] Perhaps most importantly, Sageman acknowledges that many more people are exposed to jihadism than those who actually consider it or join it, and notes that the information put out by terrorist organizations and recruiters becomes much more appealing if the person exposed is able to connect to it based on their own experience.[64] Specifically, he adds that "like most people, [they]

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[61] Ibid.
[62] Milton, Spencer, and Findley, "Radicalism of the Hopeless," 628.
[63] Marc Sageman, "Radicalization in the Diaspora," *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, 2008, *84.*
[64] Sageman, "Radicalization in the Diaspora," 83.

compare themselves to their peers. If they fall short, they become resentful and are willing to accept interpretations for their situation that make sense to them."[65] Particularly, his argument seems slightly at odds with that of Martin-Rayo; in the example Sageman gives of Egypt in the 1970s, he claims that education without subsequent economic opportunities is a "recipe for disaster" and that the inability to find work in their fields made the highly educated refugee population more vulnerable to the Salafist narrative of a more "fair and just" society.[66] This argument holds strong with the popular Relative Deprivation Theory that explains the nature of some conflicts.[67]

Alex P. Schmid, in a sweeping study published in 2016, delves into the relationship between migration and terrorism as a whole, and a portion of his study focuses on post-migration radicalization risks. He reports two very important findings relating forced migration to radicalization and terrorism:

> "[1] Refugee camps are sometimes used by terrorists for radicalisation and recruitment and as bases from which to

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[65] Ibid. Sageman actually used the words "Muslim children" where I input the word "they"; it is my academic choice to avoid associating terrorism or radicalization with the name of a given group, such as Muslims, especially in a context where I am discussing potential for threat. Although most of these refugees are Muslim, the context provided is specifically designed to note that they are just like everyone else, and so I felt it was unnecessary to specify their religious identity and also would not detract from his point to remove it.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Walter Garrison Runciman, *Relative deprivation and social justice : a study of attitudes to social inequality in twentieth-century England*, 1966: University of California Press. There are actually several scholars associated with this theory, but Runciman's is one of the most popular and most closely aligns with Sageman's argument; Runciman notes four specific criteria: a person does not have something, knows that other people do have it, wants it, and believes that it is possible to attain.

> launch attacks. […] [2] Some children of immigrants to Western diasporas, insufficiently integrated into the host society and being caught between two cultures, have, in a search for identity and meaning, looked at jihadists as role models and thousands of them have migrated to Syria to become foreign fighters."[68]

These both appear to keep in kind with other major studies of the subject, and the impressive breadth of his study paired with its date in the midst of the migration crisis make it an important source of information.

Another study, this one by Amanda Ekey, cites a study of terrorism in Chechnya and emphasizes that human rights violations that happen during "counter-terrorism" can have the effect of radicalizing the victims to terrorist ideologies in their immediate vicinity that share similar hostile feelings for the host country/perpetrator.[69] Her work also highlighted the extremely high rates of mental illness in refugee camps that some have linked to being more vulnerable to radicalization, particularly when a terrorist organization is

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[68] Alex P. Schmid, "Links between Terrorism and Migration – An Exploration," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague*, 4, May 2016, https://www.icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Alex-P.-Schmid-Links-between-Terrorism-and-Migration-1.pdf. His work focuses primarily on the causes and sources of migration as it relates to violence and terrorism, but parts of his study are also very relevant to the conversation about whether or not radicalization of refugees after migration. He astutely notes in his first finding that one of the problems with this field is that studies of migration and terrorism have typically been seen as separate, and therefore there is no thorough source that investigates the two as a singular phenomenon.

[69] Amanda Ekey, "The Effect of the Refugee Experience on Terrorist Activity," Journal of Politics and International Affairs 4 (2008): 20.

able to manipulate their feelings and understanding of their experience as being the fault of another group or, in this case, government.[70]

Some major organizations are beginning to take note of these correlations. Nearly three years ago, in 2016, Ben Emmerson (the United Nations Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights) referred to his report on "the impact of counter-terrorism measures on the human rights of migrants and refugees" when he stated:

> "While there is no evidence that migration leads to increased terrorist activity, migration policies that are restrictive or that violate human rights may in fact create conditions conducive to terrorism. In the prevailing politicking around migration, we have seen a trend of anti-terror measures being linked to the management of cross-border flows. This trend is based on the perception that terrorists take advantage of refugee flows to carry out acts of terrorism, or that refugees are somehow more prone to radicalization than others. This perception is analytically and statistically unfounded, and must change."[71]

Emmerson's report notes that policies that criminalize migration and deprive refugees of human rights in the form of safety and security

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[70] Ekey, "The Effect," 22–24.
[71] United Nations, "Refugees and Terrorism: 'No Evidence of Risk' – New Report by UN Expert on Counter-Terrorism," OHCHR, October 21, 2016, https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20734.

themselves open the doors to increased terrorist activity, including the possibility of people trafficking, which is congruent with Simcox's earlier argument about the security risk of refugee camps – but seems to place the blame squarely on the governments that allow conditions that lead to this risk.[72] This distinction is vital moving forward – the idea presented a UN Special Rapporteur that refugees are *not* more of a threat than an average person but are, in dire circumstances forced on them by fearful governments, vulnerable to becoming one gives major credit to other advocates, scholars, and organizations who have claimed that radicalization occurs in such horrible conditions.

Finally, the Global Terrorism Indexes were an excellent source of both literature and statistical reports utilizing the Global Terrorism Database.[73] Global Terrorism Index 2018, for example, illustrates via a map[74] the impact of terrorism on countries around the world. There are some truly fascinating findings: Jordan, for example, has consistently ranked in the top 10 countries with the highest number of refugees since the beginning of the migrant crisis, and yet it ranks at number 60 for impact of terrorism; the

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[72] Ibid.

[73] START, Global Terrorism Database (GTD). As of 2018, the GTD is no longer receiving funding from the United States Department of State despite being the largest and most thorough source of data related to terrorist attacks dating back to 1970. Its initiative is therefore currently inactive, though all data up to the point it was de-funded it still available online and reports are still available. Because of this, there is no information for 2018-19; the future of the Global Terrorism Index, which bases its reports off the data of the GTD, has not been announced to the best of my knowledge.

[74] See Appendix A.

United States, which has taken a comparatively tiny number of refugees since the crisis began, ranks number 20.[75] The United Kingdom, which holds less than 1/5 the number of refugees that Germany has taken in, never-the-less ranks at #28 while Germany is at #39.[76] These numbers appear to directly contradict the earlier claim by Choi and Salehyan that more refugees means more terrorism and increased danger to host countries, and in fact, utilizing the Global Terrorism Database's search function reveals that in Jordan, for example, more people were killed by terrorist attacks in the 6 years prior to the start of the migration flows (2011) than the 6 years during (2011-2017, as the GTD does not have published information for 2018 or 2019) – exactly twice as many people, in fact, to the tune of 62 people immediately preceding the migration crisis and 31 people since it started.[77] This is significant, as the refugee camps in Jordan widely differ from their European counterparts. According to several separate studies of refugee spaces and conditions, Jordanian refugee camps are generally open spaces with social access to external communities; refugees are often awarded work permits (100,000 in the last three years) and take part in the local

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[75] Global Terrorism Index 2018, Institute for Economic and Peace (IEP), December 2018, http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/12/Global-Terrorism-Index-2018.pdf.
[76] Ibid.
[77] START, Global Terrorism Database(GTD). This is especially significant because Choi and Salehyan used the GTD to collect data for their report, which they published before the Global Terrorism Index was first published. Using the search function, I did two separate searches (and then one combined to corroborate findings) using the following selections: WHEN: 2004-2010 and 2011-2017; COUNTRY: Jordan; TERRORISM CRITERION: Yes, require Criterion I be met; Exclude ambiguous cases; Include unsuccessful attacks.

community; refugees are moved out of camps quickly, and therefore more refugees live in towns and cities than in camps; and integration and reception of refugees in Jordan is generally an easier process than in Europe with far less hostility.[78] That is not to say that refugees are comfortable in Jordan, and Jordan as a country is certainly experiencing the economic burden of suddenly having a population of 10% refugees, but the smart allocation of funds to support them has also played a factor in relieving refugee pressures.[79]

The case of Jordan is just one example, but taken in with Choi and Salehyan's work, it highlights the need for discretion when making aggressive sweeping statements that involve multiple countries, populations, and migration in relation to terrorism. Further, it appears to follow in line with other claims about refugee conditions impacting the likelihood of terrorism. In the next and last section of this chapter, I will incorporate all of these findings.

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[78] Sari Hanafi and Taylor Long, "Governance, Governmentalities, and the State of Exception in the Palestinian Refugee Camps of Lebanon," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23, no. 2 (2010): 136.; World Food Program USA (WFP), "10 Facts About The Syrian Refugee Crisis In Jordan," World Food Program USA, December 26, 2018, https://www.wfpusa.org/stories/10-facts-about-the-syrian-refugee-crisis-in-jordan/.
[79] WFP, "10 Facts."

Analysis and Assumptions Moving Forward

One thing that quickly became clear during the course of my literary investigation was that the pool of information on the topic of refugee radicalization, despite all of the fear and narratives surrounding it, is actually quite small – but it some of it is very well-informed, and covers a remarkably wide range of studies, qualitative and quantitative data, and locations. Many studies were citing each other and themselves, and a given article shared at least two (and often *significantly* more) sources with all of the others. This is an important note, because that may indeed be why there is so much contention over the topic at the official level and why narratives about refugee threats continue to be spun. The exception to this was the various news articles that I used, which often produced new information (that is, after all, the point and nature of news), but this is why I tried to incorporate as many real-time sources as possible. An extremely important part of understanding this phenomenon and the media that surrounds it requires acknowledging the portrayal of refugees by people who are fearful versus studies and articles *about* refugees and their experiences, and particularly by experts and locals who are working in the field rather than writing for academia. In a sense, I would argue that that is the number one limit to any literature review on this topic; those who have intimate knowledge of the mechanisms of a given refugee camp are often working there, not writing about them to be published, with the exception, again, of

news sources that interviewed and reported on specific people and experiences.

With that said, even despite the limitations of the studies listed, an extremely clear pattern appears across the board: a consensus that radicalization *does* occur in refugee camps. Every study I found, whether it focused on the reasons for radicalization, the threat to host countries, or just a comparison of multiple cases and camps, acknowledged at some point that there is, at least under some circumstances, a risk of radicalization. There is also plentiful evidence to support the assumption moving forward that radicalization is directly linked to the conditions of a refugee camp that any given refugee is in, and probably has nothing explicitly do to with being a refugee except that they are the ones being forced to live in those camps.

Other factors which are more difficult to detect may also be at play, which is another limitation of this study, but regardless of those factors, there is undeniable and conclusive evidence that there is a tie between extremely poor living standards and vulnerability to radicalization within a camp. Many studies convincingly moved beyond correlation and directly into causation, using theories rooted in psychology and mental illness that were based on findings of refugee responses to attempted recruitment and poor conditions. The conditions observed frequently in the review that impact the risk include: hostility from a host country/community/ government, poor hygiene/sanitation, overcrowding, minimal opportunities for economic or

career growth, lack of access to education, social isolation, and/or lack of integration; specifically, any one or combination of these that leads to what several scholars have aptly referred to as "desperation". Some scholars believe that it must be a combination – for example, according to Martin-Rayo, poverty alone does not appear to increase the chances that a refugee will radicalize, but combined with other conditions (lack of education), it becomes a factor.[80] "Desperation" in particular is a term that I will use going forward to refer to this set of identified criteria. Unfortunately, many European refugee camps have *all* of these conditions, and provided that high-ranking UN officials have publicly acknowledged the link between horrific conditions for refugees and terrorism, it is actually shocking that the European Union as a whole – particularly the governments of Greece and Italy – have refused to acknowledge the increased risk, especially considering how often discussions of security threats by migrants make their way into media statements by politicians who would put forth the impression that their number one concern is the safety of European citizens. These studies conflict with that claim.

Understanding that there is an indisputable juncture between refugee radicalization and dire refugee camp situations provides the grounds to

[80] Barbara Sude, David Stebbins, and Sarah Weilant, *Lessening the Risk of Refugee Radicalization: Lessons for the Middle East from Past Crises*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015, 15.; Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization."

move on to the next chapter, in which I will address the role that NGOs play this equation.

Chapter 2

A wide variety of research has linked a sense of desperation, particularly due to poor physical/social conditions within a refugee camp, with the potential for radicalization of refugees within that camp. Given the extreme concern within the EU about the potential for security risks − terrorism in particular − that are associated with refugees, it is unfortunate and surprising that governments are not doing more to alleviate that risk in the form of providing hospitable conditions for them. Of note is the new and less favorable attitude towards migrant-focused NGOs that the European Union has adopted in recent years, but before trying to identify the impact that *that* may have on radicalization, it is first necessary to establish whether or not the presence NGOs has any effect on it. Following this logic and having identified desperation/poor camp conditions as one such risk factor, the clearest way to do this is to investigate whether the presence of

NGOs impacts the conditions that create desperation among refugees. I am suggesting that a positive impact by NGOs on the outlook and conditions – that is, less desperation/better living conditions – would by default mean lower risk of radicalization among that population, since those are the factors linked to cause heightened risk. To examine this thoroughly, I will break this chapter down into two specific sections: analyzing the positive effects that an NGO can have on a refugee population, and then looking at examples where NGOs' presence is missing or lacking to determine whether or not this is associated with worse conditions. If one or both are true – that is, if NGOs regularly play a role in reducing the factors that are connected with the risk of radicalization, and if the lack of NGO involvement is associated with higher presence of the conditions for increased risk – it would be fair to suggest that permitting more NGO involvement (decriminalizing it) and allowing NGOs to play a more major role (in conversations and decisions about refugees that could improve their situation, for example) would reduce the risk of radicalization.

To start with, it is important to specify what I mean by "**NGO**" to avoid potential confusion over conclusions drawn or recommendations made. In theory, any organization that is not affiliated with a government could be referred to as an NGO, but the term is usually reserved for non-profit organizations engaging in humanitarian services. To that end, I will be using

the definition from Ngo.org, whose definition aligns with most others of this nature and works perfectly for the purpose of this paper:

> "A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, environment or health. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations system differs depending on their goals, their venue and the mandate of a particular institution."[81]

A similar definition is used by ReliefWeb and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: "An organized entity that is functionally independent of, and does not represent, a government or State. It is normally applied to organizations devoted to humanitarian and human

[81] Ngo.org, "Definition of NGOs," http://www.ngo.org/ngoinfo/define.html.

rights causes, a number of which have official consultative status at the United Nations").[82] Some sources refer to this type of NGO as a "humanitarian NGO," but in the interest of clarity, the term "NGO" will be applied in this paper to mean a humanitarian NGO unless otherwise specified. This clear delineation is important because in the past, NGOs who did not meet this criterion have still been given access to refugees; this has been a run-around to grant access to politically-motivated organizations for nearly a century now, with one of the more famous examples being when the Chinese Communist Party was permitted to function as an NGO in the 1930s, resulting in the spreading of propaganda, manipulative party ideology from people in a place of power over vulnerable refugees, and military training.[83] Post-Soviet examples include Pakistan and Lebanon who allowed NGOs associated with militant groups and political parties, respectively, to behave as NGOs.[84]

But despite their occasional participation, this study does not include examples like these, and no data that includes non-humanitarian NGOs will be included for several reasons: first, there is no evidence that NGOs who do *not* meet the definition I am utilizing have any positive effect on refugees at all; second, there is actually plentiful evidence that the liberal use of the

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[82] ReliefWeb, "ReliefWeb Glossary of Humanitarian Terms," August 1, 2008, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4F99A3C28EC37D0EC12574A4002E89B4-reliefweb_aug2008.pdf.
[83] Barbara Sude, David Stebbins, and Sarah Weilant, *Lessening the Risk*, 9.
[84] Ibid.

term "NGO" in these cases actually harmed refugees and their sense of security, and may indeed have increased the potential for radicalization[85]. In other words, it would defeat the purpose of this study to include NGOs who are not humanitarian because the goal is to examine how humanitarian action by non-governmental sources – the likes of which have already been participating in the crisis and, in some cases, been criminalized – can impact refugees with consideration to factors outlined earlier related to radicalization.

Some organizations, including branches of the United Nations, have criticized the term "NGO" and suggested that it be replaced by "CSO" or "CSA"; this study will not do so, but those terms a*re* used in some studies that will be referenced, so it should be understood that at least for the context of this paper and the studies that it utilizes, CSOs/CSAs are considered the same as NGOs.[86] It should therefore be assumed that any mention of an "NGO" in this study refers to an organization that, to the best of my knowledge, meets the aforementioned definition, and any organization that is not considered to meet the criteria will be identified as such or excluded completely.

[85] Ibid.
[86] United Nations Development Programme, "Annex 1: NGOs and CSOs: A Note on Terminology." United Nations.

NGOs as Inhibitors to Radicalization

To start off the study of whether or not NGOs can improve the conditions linked to radicalization, an example by scholar Jessica Rush of the role NGOs can play in helping refugees to integrate is an excellent illustration. Speaking of a specific NGO in London called the Afghanistan and Central Asian Association (ACAA), Rush notes, "The charity's importance comes from providing services that go above and beyond what is provided by the public purse – helping those who come to the UK build a livelihood after the government has granted them a place to live."[87] The case she describes, while deceptively simple, also highlights a major pitfall in many refugees' experience – while the role of the governments of Europe has been to provide funding and policies, it very often ends there, whether due to a lack of resources, knowledge, or motivation. NGOs can fill in the gap between being awarded the right to exist in Europe and actually becoming a member of that society; for example, an NGO can provide English language courses that help refugees integrate, create safe spaces for refugees to meet and work through the psychological and emotional challenges that come with forced migration to a foreign country (and likely other traumas along the

[87] Jessica Rush, "Behind the Numbers: the Role of NGOs in the Refugee Crisis," The London School of Economics and Political Science, October 27, 2016, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/researchingsociology/2016/10/27/behind-the-numbers-the-role-of-ngos-in-the-refugee-crisis/. The organization she refers to focuses on Afghan and Central Asian refugees, though its services are also available to all migrants.

way), translation services, legal assistance and advice, and help with forms and documents required to establish a livelihood.[88] Rush also stresses the empathy and understanding that NGOs can provide, often a stark contrast from the bureaucratic nature of governments.[89] But perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this paper, the ACAA was acknowledged by the government of the UK for the unique function it was able to serve and selected to provide PREVENT "counter-radicalisation services" for migrants because, as an NGO, it was equipped to challenge issues like isolation and alienation that can lead to feelings of hostility and, in some migrants, eventual radicalization.[90]

This isn't surprising; during my research, it became rapidly and unsurprisingly clear that NGOs have a long and documented history of improving conditions for refugees – the same specific conditions that, when poor, can result in radicalization. In fact, in 1994, UNHCR's *Refugees Magazine* Issue 97 was dedicated specifically to NGOs, what UNHCR referred to as its "right arm".[91] The acknowledgement includes:

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[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid. PREVENT refers to the UK initiative for counter-terrorism. This initiative has largely been criticized as ineffective and discriminatory against Muslims, but it is significant that the government of the UK recognized the role that an NGO was able to play in the lives of refugees, even if the movement that it involved the organization in was not effective.
[91] Christiane Berthiaume, "NGOs: our right arm," *Refugees Magazine*, no. 97 (September 1, 1994). This issue also refers to an award given to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) by UNHCR for its work on behalf of refugees; MSF is one of the sources I have cited criticizing the criminalization of NGOs by the EU.

> "In refugee camps, NGOs distribute food, clothing, blankets and tents. They care for the sick, bandage the wounded, set up hospitals and schools, dig latrines and drill wells. In crisis situations, they are often the only channel of information to the rest of the world. Elsewhere, NGOs help refugees to secure the right of asylum, to find jobs and housing, to place their children in schools, to integrate in their new societies. They also help UNHCR to promote asylum standards and fair treatment of refugees. Hundreds of thousands of NGO workers are involved directly or indirectly in alleviating the suffering of refugees."[92]

There are several key pieces of information to be gleaned from that statement. First of all, there should be no doubt that NGOs play a role in improving conditions specifically in refugee camps; UNHCR said so in exactly as many words. Basic necessities, healthcare, education, housing, and even toilets have been attributed to NGO work. In the same breath, UNHCR referred to integration into society, another key factor identified as an increased risk for radicalization if not satisfied. But what I really want to draw attention so is the highlighted role of NGOs as advocates for refugees, an integral function. Refugees are among the most vulnerable people on the planet; having fled their homes, they are exclusively and entirely at the

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[92] Ibid.

mercy of the state they arrive in, who can decide to deport them, imprison them, simply house them, or genuinely accept them. Most governments – in the current European crisis and others – have proven that they are *not* the compassionate champions that refugees need. As I have established, the treatment of refugees makes a massive difference in their experience, feelings towards their host countries, and their vulnerability to terrorist recruiters or independent radicalization. NGOs advocating for the proper treatment of asylum-seekers is incredibly important; although refugee conditions in Europe are quite horrible as it is, they would be significantly worse if not for the NGOs that actively work (often futilely due to government restrictions or lack of funding) to improve their conditions, both physically in the day-to-day lives of those that they help and by trying to influence policies in their favor. Though that article is now 25 years old, it has not changed; these findings were also identified by Raptim in 2019, for example.[93]

Educational opportunities have been strongly linked to both increased opportunities for refugees and, in several of the studies I cited earlier in this paper, decreased risks of radicalization. NGOs play a primary role in making these opportunities a reality. This is especially significant given that some studies express that having a higher education increases likelihood and

[93] Raptim, "Helping Refugees as a Volunteer with In-Camp Activities," Raptim.org, 2019, https://www.raptim.org/helping-refugees-volunteer-camp-activities/.

opportunity for integration by allowing refugees to play an "active role in their own integration".[94] Additionally, we should consider that educational opportunities provide *hope* – an under-recognized commodity – to those who may otherwise believe that (a) there is no future for them in their host country but (b) going back to their home country will never happen. (That in and of itself is another interesting factor: many refugees, particularly Syrian refugees of the current crisis, wish to repatriate, even though most of them believe that it will not be possible.[95]) In some cases, that is true, but in others, eventual repatriation to some degree may be possible for refugees – and an absolutely integral part of rebuilding a country involves skilled participants with higher education in fields like engineering, medicine, and even politics (though, as noted by Martin-Rayo, it is essential that there is opportunity for that education to be put to use in the more likely event that repatriation does occur).[96] Whether a refugee has accepted (or resigned themselves to) a future in a host country or maintains the desire to go back home, access to education is plays a major role in their opportunities for integration, perception of their own circumstances, and ultimately, the

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[94] Laura-Ashley Wright and Robyn Plasterer, "Beyond Basic Education: Exploring Opportunities for Higher Learning in Kenyan Refugee Camps," *Refuge* 27, no. 2 (2010): 44.
[95] Arie Kruglanski, Katarzyna Jaśko, Erica Molinario, and David Webber, "Potential for radicalization amongst Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon: Risks, factors, and implications," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), July 2018, https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_CSTAB_PotentialforRadicalizationAmongstSyrianRefugeesJordanLebanon_July2018.pdf.
[96] Martin-Rayo, "Countering Radicalization."

reduced risk of radicalization – and NGOs are generally the bodies that facilitate this education, particularly when refugee housing is separated from access to public schools in their host country.[97]

To reinforce the purpose and effectiveness of NGOs in bettering conditions for refugees – particularly conditions that happen to also be linked to radicalization – is a brief case study of refugee camps in Lebanon and Turkey, the latter of which I will address in the next section of this chapter as it pertains more to the absence of NGOs than the case of Lebanon, which describes the presence of NGOs.

> "While state actors may be tasked with providing security, NGOs typically take responsibility for emergency aid and service provision. The two actors also have different mandates: whereas state agencies are often concerned with limiting the effects of refugee inflows on host populations, humanitarian organizations are motivated by a desire to alleviate the suffering of all individuals, regardless of nationality, class, or ethnic background. These two players generally work together to manage refugee crises, although the nature of their collaboration and their relative levels of responsibility may differ markedly across countries." [98]

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[97] Wright and Plasterer, "Beyond Basic Education."
[98] Killian Clarke, "The Politics of Refugee Relief," Dissent, 2016, https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/politics-refugee-relief-zaatari-camp-humanitarian-crisis.

Recognizing that NGOs are driven to relieve suffering, author Killian Clarke also acknowledges both the impartiality of NGOs – extremely important when considering the toxic role that discrimination in host countries against refugees can play in building mutual resentment between the foreign and host populations – and the collaboration that generally occurs between NGOs and host governments to coordinate care. However, Clarke's study also appears to pair NGO action *with* this government cooperation as a condition for success:

> "In Lebanon they suffer from a lack of governance. The Lebanese government is bitterly divided between competing political factions, which has prevented it from devising a coherent policy framework for managing the refugee crisis. This lack of strategy—what one NGO has called "the policy of no policy"—has left a vacuum in aid provision that has been filled by a host of diverse humanitarian actors, such as the UN and other international and local NGOs. However, with so many players involved and no central authority to coordinate, support to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, particularly those who live in isolated rural camps or in dense urban slums, has been inconsistent and haphazard. Syrians in Lebanon therefore live

in precarious conditions."[99]

The implication that NGOs rely heavily on governments to do their part in security and policy-making may seem obvious to some, but Clarke is actually the first of the authors I have read to mention this interdependence or imply in any way that not NGO success could be contingent on governments – which are so often adversarial in their goals for the camps and refugees themselves – playing a major role as well, whereas other studies have focused more on the fact that NGOs can be obstructed specifically by negative government action. Because of the correlation between bad conditions and radicalization, the acknowledgment that this lack of government support (by negligence, this time, not by direct contradiction) contributes to poor living situations in refugee camps is, in the context of this study, akin to identifying that it, too, contributes to the threat of radicalization within refugee camps. This could in theory also mean that the failure of the government to involve itself in refugee camp affairs, regardless of the degree of NGO presence, may negate the improvements to the radicalization risk factor that we have seen thus far the presence of NGOs provides. It definitely opens the door to further research into the relationship between the two.

[99] Ibid.

My last comment on the role of NGOs contributes to the lack of existing studies or literature on the relationship between media and refugee camps. Just for just a moment, shelve the idea of NGOs. One very important and bizarrely overlooked aspect is the role that the media plays, not for a host country's citizens (though it certainly plays a role there as well) but for refugees themselves. First of all, let's acknowledge that the media released in Europe – headliners, newspaper articles, online articles, official statements being made by officials, research done into the opinions of Europeans, etc. – is *all* physically accessible to refugees. Many refugees may not speak the languages that bits of media are published in, but there are virtually unlimited online translation options for refugees who have even occasional access to a smart phone, computer, or other device that gives access to the Internet. YouTube videos of press conferences by callous European politicians can be found with Arabic translation at the bottom. And even if only a couple of people are able to access translations of newspapers, for example, it doesn't take very long for word to travel when people are literally living in homes with shared tarps for walls and spend hours waiting in line for toilets and food supplies. Pew Research reports, while extremely valuable for their insights into the European mindset (and which do indeed show a promising trend of positive European attitudes towards refugees), never-the-less also highlight the pitfalls and disapproval, and they are available with virtually any Google search that includes the

words "refugee/migrant", "support/like/want/welcome," and "Europe"/the name of almost any European country.

Some countries, like Hungary, have actual billboards accusing refugees of terrorism, harassment of women, and more (part of a propaganda campaign that cost the government $18 million USD, or the equivalent of more than $13,000 per refugee that Hungary was asked to take).[100] The role of refugees in Great Britain's decision to initiate Brexit circulates in main news sources constantly, and along with it are plenty of European citizens who are blaming refugees for what they think is the impending break-up of the European Union. Let there be no mistake: refugees, even in refugee camps, have access to the information being disseminated about them, and in Europe, much of that information is incredibly hostile.

If we indeed pretended for a moment that NGOs didn't exist, media narratives would be the *only* knowledge that refugees had of Europe's reaction to them. And yes, there are counter-narratives and articles being released in defense of refugees, but (a) if we legitimately removed the role of NGOS then those narratives probably would not exist to begin with, since NGOs have been at the forefront of the decades-long campaign by human rights advocates that have served as necessary counter-measures to conservative perspectives of irregular migrants; and (b) even despite all of

[100] Lydia Gall, "Hungary's War on Refugees," Human Rights Watch, September 16, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/09/16/hungarys-war-refugees.

the work being done, media tends to sensationalize negative news more than positive news, and this is no exception; in a given search, there are often at least as many news articles that depict the negatives of/for refugees as the positives (for example, a search about refugee integration will pull up a Pew Research article showing that 82% of Germans approve of welcoming refugees, and it will also pull up an article about the 600 attacks on refugees that have occurred in 2019), and those are the ones that refugees are more likely to focus on.[101]

Remembering that hostility from host countries is a major factor in radicalization – one that was almost universally referenced in studies discussing potential causes – this is a massive and unjustifiably under-considered component of refugee experiences. Re-enter NGOs, however, and the situation starts to seem less dire. As people who are working with refugees daily – supplying them with food, clothes, and toiletries, treating their wounds, translating for them, literally *pulling them out of the water* on arrival if they're fortunate enough to be found by a search-and-rescue organization that hasn't been arrested yet – NGOs can serve as essential

[101] Richard Wike, Bruce Stokes, and Katie Simmons, "Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs," Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, Pew Research Center, July 11, 2016, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/.; Álvaro Sánchez, "Spain Is the Most Welcoming EU Country for Refugees, Survey Finds," *El País*, September 24, 2018. https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/09/21/inenglish/1537530658_492695.html.;
; Kristy Siegfried, "The Refugee Brief – 6 September 2019," UNHCR: The Refugee Brief, September 6, 2019, https://www.unhcr.org/refugeebrief/the-refugee-brief-6-september-2019/.

counter-narratives just by existing. As identified by Rush and others, the role of simple human compassion absolutely cannot be ignored as we discuss people who were violently forced to flee their home, knowing that they could die en route, and were then shepherded into inhumane camps that may well be worse than the conditions they fled.

Banning NGOs as a Radicalization Risk Factor?

Having established that NGOs do help reduce the conditions that cause higher risks of radicalization, I will now investigate the inverse: whether or not a *lack* of NGO involvement is, in actual practice, associated with worse conditions in refugee camps, and if the risk of radicalization is correspondingly higher.

It should go without saying that the governments of the world alone, even with the aid of UNHCR, cannot handle humanitarian crises. It would not prove particularly useful to speculate on what would happen if NGOs collectively withdrew, but we can assume – based on the governmental responses even *with* NGOs – that it would not bode well for human rights, refugees, or security, at least as related to radicalization. UNHCR agrees:

> "Without [NGOs], UNHCR would be totally impotent. […] 'UNHCR itself does not have the hundreds of doctors needed to care for refugees from places like Somalia, Rwanda or Liberia,

> who flee in droves and end up wounded, sick and starving in poor neighbouring countries,' said Santiago Romero-Perez, UNHCR's NGO Coordinator. 'And we don't have the fleets of trucks required to transport food and aid to refugee camps in remote areas. We don't have sufficient staff to distribute the food either, and we've never planned to do it ourselves. We have to rely on specialized humanitarian aid organizations.'"[102]

That could, in theory, start and finish the investigation into whether or not NGOs improve the conditions of refugees, but it doesn't need to. NGOs were actually indirectly responsible for the inception of UNHCR to begin with, but even since then, they have continued to fill roles that UNHCR *cannot* fill – that is, they do not only supplement the work of others but in many cases take on exclusive responsibilities for refugees' well-being, including resource provisions, manpower, access to people and camps that others are barred from, and as I've mentioned, advocating both to UNHCR and governments on behalf of refugees whose voices would otherwise go unheard.[103]

One of the last examples I gave in the previous section was about refugee camps in Lebanon, but the study itself is actually a case study comparing Lebanon (with high rates of NGO involvement and low levels of

[102] Berthiaume, "NGOs: our right arm".
[103] Ibid.

government involvement) and Turkey (with high rates of government involvement and exceptionally low rates of NGO involvement).[104] This study provides an excellent opportunity to examine conditions related to radicalization in the absence of meaningful NGO participation, but with limitations that I will address soon. Regardless, it is a valuable tool that can be used to at least identify further evidence. On the topic of Syrian refugee camps in Turkey, it was described that:

> "Although these camps have been lauded by some for their cleanliness and efficient service provision, they are also highly controlled spaces where even small displays of autonomy or resistance may be met with harsh punishment. Camp residents are monitored by twenty-four-hour surveillance cameras, which help AFAD identify "troublemakers," as one former camp administrator put it. Such troublemakers, he explained, are typically "exiled" from the camp or sent back to Syria—in violation of the international legal principle of *non-refoulement*, which forbids governments from repatriating individuals who may still be at risk in their countries."[105]

[104] Clarke, "The Politics."
[105] Ibid.

There is more, but for now I want to stop here and read between the lines a little bit. First of all, there are the immediate implications of human rights abuses. What Clarke refers to – returning an established refugee to their country of origin, known as "refoulement" – is against international law.[106] This example is from 2013, but there have been more recent reports of the same.[107] Although the report does not specify what the word "troublemaker" even means, there are no circumstances under which refoulement is permitted, though it's worth acknowledging and historically supported that there is little any other country can do (or at least is willing to do, including the UN) to force Turkey to adhere to this law.[108] This is especially true because of the EU-Turkey deal, which is another reason that this portion of the report raises red flags: according to the arrangement between the European Union and Turkey, refugees are meant to eventually be relocated into Europe when the initial migration crisis ebbs, and Turkey receives money to house them.[109] Returning refugees to Syria breaks both of these agreements. It would seem, based exclusively on these findings, that refugees in Turkey have reason to fear for their future if they are found

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[106] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "The 1951 Refugee Convention," United Nations, https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/1951-refugee-convention.html. Turkey ratified both the Convention and the Protocol.

[107] Shawn Carrié and Asmaa Al-Omar. "'It's not legal': UN stands by as Turkey deports vulnerable Syrians." *The Guardian*, August 23, 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/aug/23/its-not-legal-un-stands-by-as-turkey-deports-vulnerable-syrians

[108] Ibid.

[109] Gogou, "The EU-Turkey Deal."

to be one of these so-called "trouble makers," and the existence of 24/7 surveillance by nature decries poor living conditions and mental health strains, particularly considering the studies listed in the first chapter of this paper which noted that a lack of freedom was a potential trigger for radicalization.

It also appears that without NGOs to advocate on their behalf, they are given no choice and no vent for self-defense; refugees in that same camp have attempted to advocate for themselves on at least one occasion – and after surveillance footage was used to identify participators, reports and witnesses say as many as 600 were deported back to Syria.[110] Thus, although this camp certainly has not had the *same* issues with living conditions as the camps on the Greek and Italian islands, for example, it appears to manage to provide poor conditions just the same. But does this different type of condition have a similar effect on radicalization? That is extremely difficult to detect even for a country with average impact from radicalization, but with Turkey, there are no possible control variables. The country has itself been involved in the war in Syria, so an increase in radicalization could never be proven to be the direct result of poor treatment of refugees. Unsurprisingly, the Global Terrorism Database does show an increase in terrorism and radicalization since 2010, which only anecdotally

[110] Clarke, "The Politics."; Hamdi Istanbullu and Jonathon Burch, "Turkey denies mass deportation of Syrian refugees," Reuters, March 28, 2013. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis-turkey-idUSBRE92R0BE20130328.

supports a link between them (if there were lower rates of refugee radicalization, that *could* imply that these conditions do not fall under the same paradigm that cause radicalization to increase for others, whereas higher rates would imply that it is an impact – but as an actual actor in the war, Turkey can't be measured the same way).[111]

There are numerous other reports that Turkish citizens overwhelmingly want refugees to leave.[112] Hostile feelings towards Syrian refugees have erupted as the Turkish economy has slowed. In several cases, nearby villages and cities have protested the erection of new refugee camps, and others campaign for existing ones to be removed or relocated.[113] Turkey has steadily been moving some refugees out of camps and into society, but without any sort of integration, and did not start issuing work permits until 2017. These have all been identified as radicalization risk factors, and even researchers in Turkey acknowledge it:

> "One reason why Mr. Erdogan's government has yet to acknowledge that, after six years of war, the Syrians are in Turkey to stay, is the risk of a domestic backlash. Another is the fear that calls to integrate them are a ploy. 'The government sees this as a trick by the Western countries, to

[111] START, Global Terrorism Database.
[112] Alan Markovsky, "Turkey's Refugee Dilemma," Center for American Progress, March 13, 2019,https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2019/03/13/467183/turkeys-refugee-dilemma/.
[113] Kahmanmaras, "Turkey is taking care of refugees."

> force these refugees to remain in Turkey instead of going to Europe,' says Murat Erdogan (no relation [to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan]), a migration expert at Hacettepe University. Even if that were true, a better integration policy would be in Turkey's own interest. The longer it kicks the can down the road, says Mr Erdogan, the bigger the risk that the refugees will become a permanent, stateless underclass, susceptible to radicalisation."[114]

The recognition of that risk is important, but the problem with the creation of a better integration policy – particularly one created with avoiding radicalization in mind – is a lack of people to carry it out. Counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization measures in refugee camps should rely on NGOs for good reason: as mentioned earlier, NGOs are the usually the ones with the emotional, physical, and psychological access to people who are suffering in ways that can influence them to turn to radicalization. A lack of NGOs would therefore mean that that avenue wasn't being pursued, and it would be unproductive to assume that the Turkish government was capable of effective counter-radicalization measures on its own: first of all, as we have have just seen, Turkey has been sending "troublemaking"

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[114] Kahrmanmaras, "Turkey is taking care of refugees, but failing to integrate them," *The Economist*, June 29, 2017, https://www.economist.com/europe/2017/06/29/turkey-is-taking-care-of-refugees-but-failing-to-integrate-them.

refugees back to Syria, which is in fact the precise opposite of an effective counter-measure because it relocates potentially radicalized or vulnerable people; and second, also aforementioned, Turkey has already been dealing with its own radicalization crisis throughout this entire period.

I would like to take a moment here to note that it is wrong to suggest that this is evidence that refugees play a dangerous role in Turkey or anywhere else. With regards to a piece by Madeline-Sophie Abbas on the conflation of terror suspects and refugees, this seems like a key point to remind anyone reading this that the purpose of this paper is to identify triggers of radicalization in the world's most vulnerable population – refugees – and determine whether or not NGOs have the ability to mitigate that risk.[115] Although sources are available for comparison, I will not use incomplete representations and maps of refugee density or terrorist activities because they are very likely to be related to geographic factors (because refugee camps are largely along the border with Syria, for example) and population density (Ankara and Istanbul are major cities, so it makes sense that they would have more terrorists and be attacked by them, which does not say anything about refugee populations that live there). In other words, this argument should not be skewed or interpreted to suggest that refugees are in any way responsible for the terrorism in Turkey, and

[115] Madeline-Sophie Abbas, "Conflating the Muslim Refugee and the Terror Suspect: Responses to the Syrian Refugee 'Crisis' in Brexit Britain," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, April 30, 2019.

certainly I do not support the argument that refugees pose a risk to Turkey or anywhere else. Refugees are people, and poor living conditions that can result in desperate radicalization should be considered the fault of the host government, particularly if that host government refuses to allow NGO assistance that would humanize their experience beyond surveillance cameras and food rations. Turkey's decision to allow Syrians to move back and forth across the Syrian-Turkish border as fighters likely also had an impact, and recruiters for ISIS near the border of Turkey and Syria are dangerous and successful at recruiting not only Syrians but also Turkish nationals.[116] The reason I am using this example is because there is a possibility that elevated levels of radicalization in Turkey could be linked to the restrictive conditions of refugee camps which, without NGOs presence, have virtually no way to enforce or verify respect for human rights.

What does all of this mean? Well, to begin with, the conditions in Turkish refugee camps are (or, in some cases, were) bad in different ways than others we've looked at, but bad just the same. Strictly in terms of organization, Turkey was able to handle its refugee influx much more gracefully, but refugees there do not even have the possibility of NGOs advocating to improve conditions – and the extreme restriction and lack of humanity in the process are *definitely* linked to refugee desperation,

[116] Starr, Stephen, "A Deeper Look at Syria-Related Jihadist Activity in Turkey," *Combatting Terrorism Centre (CTC) Sentinel* 7, no. 8 (August 2014).

isolation, and failure to integrate, all of which impact the potential for radicalization.[117] This is especially important to note because refugee camps along the border with Syria are already predisposed to radicalization, and there is no evidence that Turkish refugee camps, for all their cleanliness and accessibility, are able to mitigate that risk. Would NGOs be able to? Again, that is speculation, but there is ample evidence to support the idea that NGOs are able to connect on a personal level with individuals in ways that counter radicalization.[118] Since Turkey does not allow most of them to participate, the point is moot for now, but if the government has any intention of heading off radicalization among ostracized and disenfranchised communities of refugees, it will need to expand its resources in the form of NGOs who are both better prepared and better equipped to engage meaningfully. The International Crisis Group identified the radicalization risks associated with refugee youth in Turkey and created a sort of "game plan" for turning the situation around, and many of the items listed – increasing registration and school enrollment, the creation of safe havens, and access

[117] United Nations, "Refugees and Terrorism".; Schmid, "Links between Terrorism".; Milton, Spencer, and Findley, "Radicalism of the Hopeless".
[118] Brian Nelder, "A critical difference: an NGO perspective on the role of NGOs as partners in providing assistance to refugees," *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, July 4, 1997, https://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/107.

to law enforcement, for example – are ones that, as we have seen so far in this study, are often carried out or at least supported by NGOs.[119]

There are not very many examples of NGOs being banned from refugee camps by host governments. I was able to find one other, however, in the case of the Rohingya population, hundreds of thousands of which are living in refugee camps in Bangladesh. Studies have already indicated that they are at risk of radicalization for precisely the same reasons outlined in Chapter 1 – terrible living conditions, no access to education or work, ostracization, and more have led ambassadors from Norway, Malaysia, and more to note that the camps are a "breeding ground for radicalisation".[120]

In August 2012, the government of Bangladesh banned three major NGOs - Médecins Sans Frontières, Action Contre La Faim and Muslim Aid UK – from continuing to provide aid to the 40,000 undocumented Rohingya living in refugee camps in the southeast region of the country.[121] Since

[119] International Crisis Group, "Mitigating Risks for Syrian Refugee Youth in Turkey's Şanlıurfa," February 11, 2019, https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/253-mitigating-risks-syrian-refugee-youth-turkeys-sanliurfa.
[120]The Daily Star. "Rohingya camps turned breeding ground for radicalisation: Norway envoy." *The Daily Star*, July 5, 2018. https://www.thedailystar.net/rohingya-crisis/bangladesh-coxs-bazar-rohingya-camps-turned-breeding-ground-for-radicalisation-says-norway-envoy-1600534.; Channel News Asia, "Rohingya crisis a breeding ground for extremism: Malaysia foreign minister," CNA: International Edition, September 20, 2017, https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/rohingya-crisis-a-breeding-ground-for-extremism-malaysia-foreign-9234292.
[121] The New Humanitarian, "NGO ban hurting undocumented Rohingya," The New Humanitarian, December 17, 2012, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2012/12/17/ngo-ban-hurting-undocumented-rohingya.; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "UNHCR urges Bangladesh

1992, new Rohingya have not been allowed to register, but only those who are documented are allowed to receive benefits from UNHCR; the rest rely on NGOs to keep them alive.[122] Unsurprisingly, Physicians for Human Rights at the time described those camps as "among the worst they had ever seen."[123]

But beyond this, there is an informational roadblock. Hours of searching have not turned up any acknowledgment of these people at any point after December of the same year that the ban was instituted, and there are no official statements from any of the NGOs who were banned, probably because they did not want to compromise their ability to help the remaining Rohingya. The four-month update in December noted that no further surveys had been conducted since the ban, but local aid workers commented that it was horrific, and prior to the ban MSF had found that acute malnutrition in one of the camps was around 27%.[124] Though the fate of those refugees remains obscure 7 years later, I was able to utilize the Global Terrorism Index just for a precursory glance at whether or not there might have been a spike in radicalization or terrorist activities. In the 8 months immediately preceding that decision on August 2, 2012, the entire country of Bangladesh experienced 11 terrorist incidents; in the 8 months

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to lift NGO ban in southeast." United Nations, August 7, 2012. https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2012/8/50211c506/unhcr-urges-bangladesh-lift-ngo-ban-southeast.html.

[122] The New Humanitarian, "NGO ban."

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

immediately after, there were 83.[125] As always, this isn't proof – but the correlation is there. As of 2019, there are 1 million Rohingya refugees in southeastern Bangladesh, and only about 30,000 of them are documented.[126] The government has policies specifically to prevent integration, education, or work for undocumented migrants.[127] NGOs are now permitted to "visit" some camps during the day time, but are banned from staying at night – presumably because that would imply active presence and assistance. It should come as no surprise, then, that while days at the camps are peaceful, nights are violently controlled by men who claim to represent the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, or ARSA, a known militant organization whose members have been credited with terrorist attacks.[128] Although ARSA has pushed refugees to cease the violence in their name, it has not stopped, and the ties between ARSA and the in-camp militants are unclear.[129] Another group, Hefazat-e-Islam – a radical

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[125] START, Global Terrorism Database. I used the search function for the dates January 1, 2012 – August 1, 2012, and then August 2, 2012 – April 2, 2013. I input Bangladesh and included both ambiguous cases and unsuccessful attacks.

[126] Feliz Solomon, "'We're Not Allowed to Dream.' Rohingya Muslims Exiled to Bangladesh Are Stuck in Limbo Without an End In Sight," *TIME*, May 23, 2019, https://time.com/longform/rohingya-muslims-exile-bangladesh/.; The New Humanitarian, "NGO ban."

[127] The New Humanitarian, "NGO ban."

[128] Solomon, "'We're Not Allowed.'" According to the article, UN officials and security analysts believe that they are actually gang members only invoking the name of ARSA to establish control.

[129] Reuters, "Rohingya militants condemn violence in refugee camps amid reports of killings," *Reuters*, March 13, 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-arsa/rohingya-militants-condemn-violence-in-refugee-camps-amid-reports-of-killings-idUSKBN1QU0RX.

movement that has in the past publicly called for jihad as a tactic in Myanmar − has spread its roots throughout Rohingya refugee camps by filling the funding end educational vacuums left by the absence of NGOs, a phenomenon described by Bossis and Lampas, among others.[130]

Regardless of whether individuals do or do not belong to any specific group, in this case, it would seem that a direct result of the physical absence of NGOs *is* radicalization. The implications of this are enormous, and EU governments should take note: this is happening 7 years after the government of Bangladesh began selectively banning NGOs from aiding refugees in camps that are not so different from the island camps of the Mediterranean. The EU began doing so in 2016.

Although, as stated, there are historically few examples of refugee camps with inhibited NGO involvement due to government interference, the overwhelming culmination from the comparison of the ones with involvement to the ones I was able to locate without NGOs, as well as the testimony from organizations like UNHCR who track NGO involvement, is that NGOs play a massive role in providing more stable conditions for refugees − in some instances, arguably more massive than any other entity − that directly impede radicalization. With that said, even with NGOs present, low government commitment/funding and a lack of humane policies

[130] The Daily Star, "Rohingya youths at risk of radicalization," *The Daily Star,* April 26, 2019, https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/rohingya-youths-risk-radicalisation-1735009.; Bossis and Lampas, "Is Refugee Radicalization".

undermine the efforts of NGOs to rectify human rights abuses, and therefore can still result in the type of suffering that leads some refugees to turn to radicalization; NGOs existing by themselves clearly do not represent a universal solution. But what is clear is that without NGOs, the situation would be – and for some refugees, is – even worse, and that poses a security risk for everyone inside *and* outside of the camps.

Even ignoring the tangibles that NGOs bring to the table to relieve refugees, hostility is a factor in potential radicalization, and the first half of this chapter drove home that the compassion that NGO workers show may in some cases be the only evidence for a given refugee that the entire country they've landed in doesn't hate them, especially in places like Croatia where citizens overwhelmingly disapprove of refugees and have been prone to violence against them, and European governments have done little to stop it.[131] And although that certainly isn't enough, nor should it be expected to suffice, there is no denying that NGOs provide a natural counter for

[131] Amnesty International, "Croatia: EU complicit in violence and abuse by police against refugees and migrants," Amnesty International, March 13, 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/03/croatia-eu-complicit-in-violence-and-abuse-by-police-against-refugees-and-migrants/.; Neli Esipova, John Fleming, and Julie Ray, "New Index Shows Least-, Most-Accepting Countries for Migrants," Gallup, August 23, 2017, https://news.gallup.com/poll/216377/new-index-shows-least-accepting-countries-migrants.aspx. Refugees in Croatia have been victims of "push-back," including violent beatings; many live in refugee camps without sufficient access to food, and NGOs are often the only help they receive.

radicalization just by acknowledging that refugees are human beings and advocating loudly for them to be treated as such.

Conversely, it is difficult to imagine how a refugee at Moria would have felt upon learning that the people who saved their lives had been arrested by the Greek government for doing so, or how a Rohingya refugee would have reacted upon discovering that the only source of food that they had physical access to had been banned by the Bangladeshi government.

If this all sounds a bit dramatic, good. It is. Some people are so desperate that they're radicalizing.

Chapter 3

I have established that terrible conditions for refugees create a higher risk of radicalization among them; I have also established that NGOs – specifically humanitarian NGOs – play a major role in improving those same conditions for refugees in terms of physical goods/services, advocacy, and compassion, all of which directly lessen the conditions that encourage radicalization. Now, I want to further discuss the criminalization of NGOs in Europe, delve a bit deeper into the relationship between NGOs and governments, and talk about the potential expansion of a role that NGOs already play but *could* play much more significantly in the so-called crisis.

I have referred many times to the banning of SAR operations by NGOs in this paper, but that is not by any means where the EU has drawn the line; in fact, EU countries are criminalizing NGOs for far less. In 2018, Hungary

passed a law allowing officials to charge and imprison NGO workers who were determined to be assisting asylum-seekers, and similarly banned asylum-seekers from entering Hungary.[132] Poland has passed similar legislation.[133] As of 2018, France, Belgium, Greece, and Italy have also been found to have engaged in "humanitarian policing" – engaging humanitarian aid individuals or entire organizations in criminal justice charges/procedures, harassment, intimidation, discipline, or suspicion.[134] (To be clear, these countries were not implicated as the *only* ones to engage in such behavior, but rather were the only ones investigated as part of the study.)

The willingness to criminalize NGOs and aid workers is not yet extremely widespread, but it is growing despite international outcry and recommendations from organizations like UNHCR to stop such behavior[135]. This is exceptionally alarming considering both the context of this paper and the basic, moral need to protect the general welfare of refugees and NGO workers who must not be encouraged to stop helping. Moreover, the arrests

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[132] Daniel McLaughlin, "Hungary passes 'draconian' law targeting migrants and NGOs," *The Irish Times*, June 20, 2018, https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/hungary-passes-draconian-law-targeting-migrants-and-ngos-1.3537829.

[133] Lina Vosyliūtė and Carmine Conte, "Crackdown on NGOs and volunteers helping refugees and other migrants." Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum (ReSOMA), June, 2019. http://www.resoma.eu/sites/resoma/resoma/files/policy_brief/pdf/Final%20Synthetic%20Report%20-%20Crackdown%20on%20NGOs%20and%20volunteers%20helping%20refugees%20and%20other%20migrants_1.pdf.

[134] Ibid.

[135] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "UNHCR concerned at new measures impacting rescue at sea in the Central Mediterranean," United Nations, August 6, 2019, https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2019/8/5d49370e4/unhcr-concerned-new-measures-impacting-rescue-sea-central-mediterranean.html.

of aid workers on bogus charges like human smuggling are not particularly different from the non-violent kidnapping or harassment and intimidation of aid workers in conflict zones, except that the European countries bringing forth the charges recognize themselves as legitimate. The effects – reduced NGO work, tarnished reputations that lead to less funding even if an organization is able to survive the criminal proceedings, and the diminished basic well-being of both the people who are baselessly held against their will and the refugees that lose access to them – are the same.[136] And although most charges against NGOs are eventually dropped at the judiciary level, some haven't been – and the fact that they continue to be brought is proof enough that the behavior isn't disappearing.[137] The strained relationship between NGOs trying to help refugees and the governments hosting them cannot bode well for any of the three parties involved.

It may be necessary to explore why this is the case to begin with, although in my opinion, it isn't particularly complex. When short-term government goals and humanitarian goals do not appear to align – protecting Europe and protecting refugees, for example – the result has very often been that an uncomfortable tug of war is initiated. Governments have

[136] Sergio Carrera, Lina Vosyliute, Stephanie Smialowski, Jennifer Allsopp, and Gabriella Sanchez, "Fit for purpose? The Facilitation Directive and the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance to irregular migrants: 2018 Update," Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, December, 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/608838/IPOL_STU(2018)608838_EN.pdf.; Vosyliūtė and Conte, "Crackdown on NGOs".

[137] Reidy, "Refugee, Volunteer, Prisoner."

the authority to make decisions but are sometimes hesitant to do so due to fear of backlash; NGOs tend to have the moral high ground, but this can be tossed aside when governments are able to convince a population (or parts of it) that there is physical risk to their safety. International law, particularly in the European Union, plays a major role that can favor NGOs when a government tries to impede on critical actions, but as we are seeing with stats like Hungary, Poland, and the UK, even that is not possible to enforce fully, and the threat of punishment for failure to adhere to international laws can nudge a union towards fracture (Brexit, for example) if one party feels so strongly that they would rather leave than compromise. Ultimately, it is key to look at two levels of relations: the relationship between NGOs and the EU, whose law favors them and their mission (though this does not mean that the EU will act on those laws), and the relationship between NGOs and individual states, which vary greatly depending on domestic laws and attitudes towards a crisis/organization. Through this frame, it becomes easier to understand why the work of NGOs, which is lauded as critical and necessary by UNHCR and depended upon heavily by the EU, is never-the-less being persecuted at the state level by specific countries who want to limit and control their activities.

But the irony of all of this is that, in reality, the goals are not so different. If anything has become clear over the source of this study, it is that it's time to stop treating domestic security risks and refugee camp

conditions as separate topics. They are not separate, and in fact, to some degree, they are inherently linked. European officials making funding excuses to justify not rectifying the squalor that is the series of island camps are instead bearing witness as the EU funnels money into "security" measures and research into terrorism and radicalization.[138] Because there is so much focus on European citizens, and what seems to be an incredibly deliberate lack of focus on human rights, there is a massive vacuum in what some scholars have referred to as protection. This is a gap that NGOs have been filling more recently.

NGOs as Protectors

An article by Eve Lester notes that "there is not a single government that gets refugee protection right all the time. So, at whatever level of governance, whether it be in the delivery of grassroots protection and assistance or in the formulation of policies, standards and norms and in monitoring their implementation, NGOs are engaged."[139] Her paper provides a critical and much-needed look at the protective roles that NGOs play and are expected to play, their relationships with governments, and the

[138] Gogou, "The EU-Turkey Deal".
[139]Eve Lester, "A Place at the Table: The Role of NGOS in Refugee Protection: International Advocacy and Policy-Making," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 126.

challenges they face. All of these things are important, and of particular note to this paper is the key argument about whether or not NGOs play a role in influencing governmental decisions and processes:

> "NGOs are an integral and legitimate part of the refugee protection system in its implementation as well as in setting and maintaining protection standards. Assisting, negotiating, monitoring, reporting, analysing, lobbying or advocating, NGOs are constantly striving to achieve adequate and effective standards of law, policy and practice. Diverse in mandate, interests, structures, resources, dependencies, strengths, weaknesses, capacity and skills, it is almost impossible to quantify or indeed to articulate in general terms the contribution that NGOs make. A shared characteristic, however, is that NGOs generally work very closely with refugees, asylum-seekers, the internally displaced and, increasingly, migrants. So, while some government officials argue that NGOs are out of touch with the *Realpolitik* of government policy-and decision-making, many civil servants are arguably out of touch with the "*Real-protection-void*" of the refugee's experience."[140]

[140] Lester, "A Place at the Table," 127.

What Lester enucleates here is a crucial function of NGOs that cannot be replicated elsewhere: involvement at the most "basic" level – not basic as in elementary, but basic as intrinsic and intimate. Governments are biased because the people who run governments, pressure governments, and benefit from governments are biased, whether it is due to a genuine belief, tradition, paranoia, monetary incentives, public pressure, etc. NGOs can be biased, too, of course, but in a refugee situation, an NGO helping refugees is biased towards the protection of them, whereas most European governments have proven themselves to be biased *against* migrants in the current crisis. Understanding that governments are the bodies able to make official decisions that impact refugees, despite having little to no personal contact with them or motivation to ensure their safety aside from humanitarian pressure, is extremely important. To be clear, I do not mean to demonize EU governments; instead, I mean to highlight the gap in logic among current refugee processes: that the groups who know refugees and their situations the best, have the clearest understanding of them, and are therefore the most qualified to influence policies, are NGOs – and yet they are often given the least consideration by politicians who are constantly responding to (or worse, inciting) anti-migrant hostility.

The EU's priority, as it has made abundantly clear since the inception of the crisis, is to protect Europeans, and some governments seem to be of the opinion, at least if we were to judge by the actions taken and policies

enforced, that prioritizing protecting Europeans means that they can't also prioritize protecting refugees. That is an ill-conceived notion to begin with, as a wide majority of Europeans believe that refugees should be welcomed; Spain, for example, is by far the most welcoming of refugees both in policy and in public opinion, according to Pew Research in 2018 (a year *after* the Barcelona terrorist attack at Las Ramblas) that found that 86% of Spaniards supported welcoming refugees.[141] This is also reflected in action and is therefore a somewhat rare example in Europe of when a government and its citizens share sentiments about refugees; for example, when *Aquarius* was famously blocked from docking in Italy, the result was that Spain, France, Portugal, Luxembourg, and Germany agreed to take the 630 migrants, and they were allowed to arrive and be processed in Spain.[142]

But even if it were the case that governments must choose between their prioritizing citizens and refugees, if Europe acknowledges that it cannot take on both roles, it makes more sense to assign the role of prioritizing refugees to someone else. The argument that UNHCR fulfills this role is also moot. UNHCR, for all its importance, is nevertheless bound by its relationship to host countries' governments that prevent it from outright

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[141] Sánchez, "Spain Is the Most Welcoming".

[142] Rose, Michel. "Portugal, Spain, France, Germany agree to take in Aquarius ship migrants." *Reuters.* Reuters, September 25, 2018. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-aquarius/portugal-spain-france-germany-agree-to-take-in-aquarius-ship-migrants-idUSKCN1M50QI. This incident is particularly of note because it was the result of a five-day stand-off among Mediterranean governments; France similarly refused the ship but agreed to take migrants after it was determined that the ship would dock in Spain. *Aquarius'* registration was then revoked.

defying them. Its "recommendations" are often relevant but equally as often ignored by heads of government who still cannot be bothered to focus on refugees as individuals in their own crises. To be fair, NGOs are in a similarly limited capacity – and I will address that soon – but they don't have to be; allowing NGOs to officially influence policy change, rather than forcing them to advocate by way of protest, would be a smarter and more relevant use of resources and time by *letting* them take on the burden of protection – a burden that they are already taking on, but which they are currently forced to fight for.

The narrative that NGOs can, should, and do act as functioning "protectors" is actually a relatively new one. Back in 2003, Henk van Goethem wrote a piece describing the hesitance of most NGOs and Red Cross/Crescent organizations to engage in any type of protection out of fear that it would ostracize them from the governments that they need to work with. He wrote, "In the face of flagrant human rights abuse against refugees, humanitarians can no longer turn a blind eye without comprising their values. Nor is it tenable in operational terms to merely reiterate that the bulk of refugee protection responsibilities lie with states, supported by UNHCR. Field presence necessarily entails a share in seeking to secure the

rights of refugees."[143] His call to action for NGOs to begin to actively "seek to realise and protect" those rights included acknowledging that NGOs already played a massive role by interacting with refugees and, in many cases, establishing and maintaining refugee camps.[144] At the end of his article, van Goethem accurately predicted that monitoring human rights violations would become a major part of NGO work – and, 16 years later, we can say for certain now that he was right. But with that comes acknowledging that precisely the same fear that held NGOs back from playing this role in the first place has indeed come true: they *are* being persecuted and banned from participating by governments.

When I caught up with van Goethem in August of 2019, he was able to bring further perspective to the current challenges faced by NGOs as many of them struggle to do what they can under current government mandates while still advocating against destructive policies and in favor of human rights. He noted that "NGOs have proven time and again how to shield and intercede: however not all NGOs can nor should do so in view of their respective mandates […] NGOs need to carefully weigh their options: I believe more in influencing. There is more need to injects NGO people into FRONTEX than for NGOS to continue their rescue at sea operations against

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[143] Henk van Goethem, "NGOs in refugee protection: an unrecognised resource," *Humanitarian Exchange*, no. 23 (May 2003): 13. van Goethem worked for UNHCR for 11 years and, at the time he wrote this article, was serving as the project manager for "Reach Out," a program that trained humanitarian aid workers in balancing protection and advocacy with humanitarian action.
[144] van Goethem, "NGOs in refugee protection," 14.

all odds."[145] This is actually an incredibly important point to note, but one that may not be easily stomached by NGOs (and understandably so). The idea that an NGO can impact more change by trying to influence within their spheres of possibility, as opposed to acting regardless of mandates and laws, is one that should be considered. As van Goethem noted in our conversation, the EU is not currently willing to change its entire policy on asylum deterrence;[146] the result is that NGOs who choose to defy this policy are more likely to be punished for it than make change, although I would also point out that for some NGOs, they may be more focused on helping refugees than actually changing policies.

The question is a challenging one: do NGOs abandon their advocacy for massive structural change and try to work within the realm of what is more immediately realistic, even if that means compromising morals and the degree to which human rights are recognized? Or do they push forward to fulfill human rights stipulations on their own, regardless of whether or not their actions are recognized as legal by governments that then have the ability to dismantle them completely? Furthermore, what law do NGOs answer to when established international law states that they have an obligation to rescue, but local laws forbid it?[147] The truth is that there is no

[145] Henk van Goethem, online message to author, August 30, 2019.
[146] Ibid.
[147] European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). "Fundamental rights considerations: NGO ships involved in search and rescue in the Mediterranean and criminal investigations – 2018." FRA, October, 2018, https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/ngos-sar-activities. The agency

right answer. Risking the very existence of an NGO for the purpose of defying human rights abuses is noble in its root, but if the result is that the NGO is no longer able to make any impact whatsoever, then the refugees end up worse off. But to abandon the moral grounds of human rights – particularly in search and rescue operations, where the absence of a single search and rescue operation at the right time and place can (and has) meant dozens of deaths – is also difficult to reconcile, and compromising human rights is itself an oxymoron that *also* endangers outside populations by increasing the risk that refugees may radicalize. I do not disagree with van Goethem's assertion that there are other ways for NGOs to better the situation for refugees, such as participating in Frontex operations.[148] But this would require the EU to formally recognize the role of NGOs as protectors, and it is also clear, at least at the moment, that governments are far more willing to detain members of NGOs than they are to listen to them and actively consider amending their policies.

The problem, for absolutely everyone, is that that is not a productive action based on the results of this study and numerous others which unanimously suggest that NGOs are in many cases quite literally the only

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has outlined international maritime laws that require those with a boat to participate in rescue operations for those distressed at sea. An accompanying report lists SAR vessels in the Mediterranean and tracks which ones have been seized by EU governments for violating local laws, which FRA condemns.

[148] Henk van Goethem, online message to author, August 30, 2019.

barrier between refugees and death and, more importantly to EU officials, refugees and radicalization.

It is possible for NGO protection to include counter-radicalization measures as well, despite its lack of use thus far; that the resource hasn't been utilized by EU governments is actually a little bit shocking, but also speaks to the total fragmentation right now between human rights advocates who are decrying European treatment of refugees and government officials who want to see radicalization wiped out but are intensely uninformed about and/or unwilling to entertain the idea that NGOs might be the missing link:

> "The observation that NGOs possess certain advantages over states and international organisations with respect to 'soft' policy tools in general and credible information and expertise in particular (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Stone, 2002; Nye, 2004) is hardly news, but its application to counterterrorism policy has been limited (Parker, 2011). [...] They have access to a set of policy tools that complements those of states and international organisations, and is derived from the credibility and independence that NGOs bring to counterterrorism. As Abdul Haqq Baker (2012) has noted, the relationship between marginalised communities and law enforcement and security officials tends to be tainted by the perception that community

> engagement programmes are ultimately a cover for intelligence gathering. NGOs, in contrast, can build on pre-existing trust-based relationships."[149]

NGOs already bring humanity to their interactions with refugees, and acknowledging the role that they play and exclusive expertise that they can bring to the table would help any counter-terrorism/counter-radicalization procedures. Fortunately, NGOs are historically more than willing to give their recommendations; they have been doing so in vain for years.[150] Recommendations to remove refugees from the inhospitable island camps that they are forced to survive in have been loud and consistent, but the response has been less than satisfactory.[151] Greece just recently initiated a motion to move 1,500 refugees from the camps to the mainland, but that is

149 Nick Sitter and Tom Parker, "Fighting Fire with Water: NGOs and Counterterrorism Policy Tools," Global Policy, October 22, 2013.; Parker, T. (2011) 'Redressing the Balance: How Human Rights Defenders Can Use Victim Narratives to Confront the Violence of Armed Groups', Human Rights Quarterly, 33 (4), pp. 1122–1141.; Keck, M. E. and Sikkink, K. (1998) Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. ; Stone, D. (2002) 'Introduction: Global Knowledge and Advocacy Networks', Global Networks, 2 (1), pp. 1–12.; Nye, J. (2004) Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics. New York: Public Affairs.; Haqq Baker, A. (2012) 'Engagement and Partnership in Communitybased Approaches to Counter-terrorism', in B. Spalek (ed.), Counter-terrorism, Community-based Approaches to Preventing Terror Crime. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 74–99.

150 Kampouris, "19 NGOs".

151 Human Rights Watch, "Greece, EU: Move Asylum Seekers to Safety," Human Rights Watch, December 9, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/12/06/greece-eu-move-asylum-seekers-safety.

not nearly enough, and the government has fallen through on pledges before so it is difficult to trust that they will even fulfill that obligation. An open and trusting dialogue that gave NGOs the opportunity to critically contribute to plans would significantly help, but it is no wonder that governments like Greece don't want to hear it: accepting that the refugee camps they've neglected for the last 7 years are radicalization risks would be difficult, and shelling out significantly more money to help refugees, even if it was also to protect the safety of Europe, has not thus far been an appealing option for any government. But refusal to engage with or listen to NGOs does not make their perspectives or experience less legitimate, and the ones being harmed by EU failure to rectify the way that refugees are being treated are the refugees themselves – along with every European citizen whose security is compromised by future radicalized actions that could have been prevented by a government willing to respect even the most basic human rights.

I cannot in good conscience recommend that NGOs go on breaking laws knowing that the most likely result of this would be arrest and disbandment, but I also will not condemn them for doing what they are designed to do – and this paper was never designed to inform NGOs to begin with. From all standpoints – moral, practical, security – it is the EU and particular European governments that need to change their policies and modify their actions. It is nonsensical to allow the heinous current refugee conditions to continue, and NGOs must be a key part in changing these

policies, particularly because of the overall lack of trust in, if not hatred of, European governments that some disillusioned refugees now hold. The prevention of further desperate, angry, deprived asylum-seekers who may eventually radicalize will be a process that starts with their arrival – whether or not the boat they are on is are refused at multiple EU ports, for example, is something to consider – and continues through their experience in temporary housing in refugee camps, which indeed *needs* to be temporary if necessary at all. NGO-recommended and -delivered programs for socialization, education, healthcare, and housing can pave the way to a more peaceful, productive, and safe experience for refugees that is created with a more thorough understanding of their ordeal and needs.

On this basis, I feel comfortable stating that any EU policy-maker, taking into account the evidence that current conditions pose a direct security risk for Europeans in the form of encouraging radicalization and acknowledging the role that NGOs can play in changing that paradigm if given the resources and permission, should be in favor of dramatically altering the current response to both the refugee crisis and NGOs. If their concern is actually about security and not rooted in xenophobia, the first step to preventing radicalization should be to provide wholly for those in deplorable refugee camps. The potential for radicalization is only going to grow; many of these refugees have been in a camp for years and may very well continue to be for years to come. I will not bother to make a moral

appeal; the governments of Europe have been acutely aware of these conditions since the crisis began and have done nothing, so such words would likely continue to fall on deaf ears. Instead, I will point out that the point in time time when children raised in these intensely hostile environments are old enough to be recruited and radicalized is not so far away that the EU can afford to allow anyone to continue to live like this – and money isn't an excuse; the amount that they spend on border security as it is vastly outnumbers the amount spent on refugee assistance.[152] Whatever the cost of providing reasonable standards of living, it is far less than the cost of a terror attack, which is paid for in lives, limbs, national trauma, and property damage.

If hostility and desperation continue, we are likely to see an increase in radicalization in the next generation; it has nothing to do with the culture, nationality, ethnicity, or existence of refugees, but rather to do with the way that they are being treated. Henk van Goethem noted, "I am convinced to see radicalisation as a result of lack of solutions. You try the extremist alternative when the other options haven fallen out."[153] Ignoring research, statistics, and human rights commitments due to an irrational fear of migrants is, indeed, counter-intuitive to the goal of countering terrorism, preventing radicalization, and mitigating security risks due to refugee flows.

[152] Amnesty International, "Croatia: EU complicit."

[153] Henk van Goethem, online message to author, August 30, 2019.

Ceasing the criminalization of NGOs, engaging them as a major, valued stockholder in the pursuit of European safety, and following their advice to radically improve conditions for refugees across the board would make Europe safer. Current EU policies towards encamped refugees do not.

Conclusions

Though I have used a degree of quantitative data in this study, there are no numbers that can be fairly used for this conclusion. It is impossible to prove and irresponsible to suggest that if refugee camp conditions are improved, radicalization will decrease by a certain percentage, or that a specific amount of money would be sufficient to tackle the problem of poor living conditions, or that reducing the amount of time spent living in camps by so many months or years would have a positive effect on X, Y, or Z. But although firm quantitative results may not be available, this investigation is far from inconclusive.

Throughout this paper, I have become increasingly more critical of EU policy and delivery as it became abundantly clear that the actions and inactions being taken by European governments are not only nonsensical from a European security standpoint but also actively hateful, inhospitable,

and violent towards a massive group of people who are already vulnerable beyond measure. Not all of Europe has reacted as such, nor all governments; a lot of good has been done for refugees alongside a whole lot of bad. But this paper was dedicated to determining whether or not Europe undermines its own security by criminalizing NGOs who could play a role in reducing the probability of radicalization in a refugee camp. It did that, and then moved forward into speculation on what alternative relationships and roles could exist, along with highlighting the precise ways that NGOs are currently being targeted and why that is detrimental. I will briefly identify the conclusions drawn:

First and foremost, it is very clear that radicalization does, in fact, happen in refugee camps. The specific circumstances of a given camp impact whether or not it happens in a given place or the degree to which it occurs, but it is undeniably a potential occurrence. Second, the treatment of refugees in those camps makes a massive difference. Extremely poor camp conditions, including lack of sanitation/hygiene, isolation, hostility from host countries, lack of regular access to food/water/other supplies, lack of education and/or work opportunities, overcrowding, failure or lack of mental health and other medical services, and extreme restriction of movement are *all* tied to increased risks of radicalization; some, such as a lack of education, have been tied to an increased risk even if it is the only factor present, but all combinations of any of these factors pose definite risks.

Studies have shown that in refugee camps where these factors have been deliberately avoided or rectified – such as in Jordan, where refugees (who otherwise share the same traits, origins, etc as refugees in surrounding areas) were made citizens and granted work permits – the risk of radicalization is significantly lower than in regions with worse conditions for refugees.[154] In other words, petty policies towards refugees and refugee camps are directly associated with a higher risk of radicalization.

The same can be said for the policies between governments and NGOs. NGOs in general improve the conditions that are associated with increased radicalization – both the physical conditions, which NGOs are able to counter (only independently to a degree) by providing and distributing needed provisions and medical care as long as their funding allows it, and the psychological conditions, which NGOs are able to improve by forging more personal relationships with refugees as opposed to leaving them ostracized to life and people outside of the camp. The absence of NGOs is associated with increased radicalization and decreased human rights, and therefore government policies that criminalize NGOs working with refugees also directly contribute to an increased risk of radicalization.

[154] Bossis and Lampas, "Is Refugee Radicalization."; Global Terrorism Index 2018, Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).

Limitations

Before moving forward further, I want to acknowledge that despite some clear conclusions, there were also limitations to this study. First of all, there are not many examples of NGO-free/banned refugee camps, which makes a comparison difficult. The examples I was able to provide are extremely relevant, but in the case of Turkey, there are too many other factors to draw a legitimate conclusion, so the only extremely relevant example for the purpose of this study was the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. There is definitely a need for studies that further investigate the results of NGO absence on refugees in camps, but as of right now, there just wasn't enough information that was accessible.

Second, the lack of universal definitions for terms like "terrorism" make this study difficult to apply across the board unless policy-makers are willing to hash out at least basic criteria. There are some that believe any violence from a refugee counts (or should count) as radicalization, and perhaps there is a debate to be had in there, but the majority focus in the media (which is perpetuated by states) is on terrorism, so that's what I focused on – radicalization into what would be considered terrorist acts or support for terrorist groups under the definitions that I provided. As I acknowledged in the beginning, radicalization is not exclusively applicable to terrorism to begin with, and I recommend further and separate studies into the mechanics of non-terroristic violence and discontent by refugees. There

may be further evidence to be gleaned from broader data gathering, although my hunch based on these studies is that the results would probably be somewhat similar, and that the necessary actions to curb such events would also involve relieving suffering that leads to frustration and desperation.

Third, I specifically did not separate refugees from asylum-seekers in my study. As my focus was primarily on the conditions within refugee camps and NGOs who aid both of these groups, this decision made the most sense for this paper, but because there are concerns about asylum-seekers who were radicalized before arrival – a widely panned argument, but one that persists none-the-less – I also think it would be beneficial for a study to investigate whether or not asylum-seekers pose more of a risk than established refugees. Such a study, which according to some of the experts I have cited would prove that asylum-seekers do not arrive pre-radicalized, would go a long way to help support the narrative that refugees are not to be feared; only the conditions they are kept in should be blamed.

Consequences and Calls to Action

In the interest of clarity, further assertions that can be made based on evidence collected during this study will be outlined succinctly below, many of which include recommendations for effective policy changes that would

help to rectify the maltreatment of refugees in Europe and the security risk that some may pose if otherwise left in current conditions.

The two main obstructions to NGOs at refugee camps in Europe are funding and governmental restrictions. Donors who become tired of protracted situations reduce support, and the same has been the case for the current crisis; EU governments have failed to close that gap, and therefore funding is waning despite the fact that thousands of refugees remain in camps, and thousands more arrive yearly. Militant organizations and terrorist recruiters can sometimes fill the vacuum with either resources or psychological temptation by offering desperate refugees the opportunity to fight for a cause that would improve their situation.

EU governments appear to be refusing to move refugees off of the island as a part of their "containment policy" under the contention that these refugees will eventually be moved to Turkey. However, less than 6% of the migrants on the island of Lesvos, for example, are even eligible to be sent to Turkey, so this containment is actually exclusively protracting the horrible conditions. Protraction of conflicts is also associated with a higher likelihood of radicalization, and this is already the 7th year that many of these camps have been running.

The tendency of governments to "punish" refugees for violent outbursts by removing aid, rights/freedom, opportunities for education, and opportunities for employment can also create a vacuum that extremist

groups make seek to fill. It is difficult in many cases to prove or identify whether or not extremist groups or terrorist organizations are even in a camp, but the overcrowding and failure of governments to invest in conditions that would both temper the trauma of the refugee experience and make refugees easier to identify and investigate both contribute to an increased likelihood of radicalized interference. Rumors that refugees have radicalized in camps and are operating as independent ISIS units are being fretted over, but nothing is being done to prevent it from occurring or spreading to other vulnerable refugees.

The criminalization of NGOs, including the arrests of SAR operators, removes important, valued members from the already limited social circle in refugee camps, and it reinforces the idea that EU governments are hostile towards refugees and do not support those who would care for/support them. But there are alternatives. NGOs could be allowed to influence policy-making decisions; their expertise in the matter makes them valuable to the EU, and their connection to the refugees makes them trustworthy enough that counter-radicalization procedures, if paired with humane living conditions (per the demands of NGOs), could be very effective. Allowing NGOs to lead the movement towards better conditions, with support from the European Union, would vastly improve the outlook for refugees. On the other hand, the absence of NGOs – which in this context may be due to criminalization or unfit working conditions, as many workers have been

forced to abandon their posts due to the horrific circumstances with which they were being asked to operate – has been directly correlated to significant radicalization in the examples of Syrian refugee camps in Turkey, and Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.

The EU's current policies towards refugees and refugee camps pose a direct security risk by encouraging radicalization among desperate, vulnerable populations. Re-allocation of some of the massive amounts of money being spent on border security would be extremely beneficial for all parties involved by improving refugee standards of living, work conditions and abilities for NGOs, and security for Europe.

Allowing NGO-led SAR operations to continue would dramatically decrease the number of people dying en route to Europe. It has not been shown to have a significant impact on the number of people who attempt to cross, but even if it did, it goes directly against human rights to try to prevent people from seeking asylum, especially if the method to prevent it is reducing the number of people available to rescue them in the event that they are endangered during the crossing. Giving NGOs a role at Frontex would improve conditions, outcomes, and cooperation among maritime rescuers and rescues.

EU officials need to check their media output. Statements and disbursement of propaganda with anti-refugee sentiments contributes to the refugee feeling of ostracization and resentment but are not effective border-

control measures; refugees do not flee their homes by choice, and so will not go back or stop arriving just because billboards say mean things about them. Instead, these comments and public harassments compromise border security by increasing factors linked to radicalization. EU governments should focus more on pressuring the governments with hostile reactions to refugees to reduce their xenophobic output and focus on integration into European society, as is the wish of the majority of Europeans. To avoid future clashes, countries like Hungary, Poland, and Croatia, with actively hostile and/or violent anti-refugee sentiments, would also benefit from social integration programs and NGO involvement that can help bridge the gap between refugees and the societies that they live in. However, it also is not advisable to inject refugees into populations that may harm them, and until better conditions are created, this should be avoided in general.

The future health and unity of the EU is in danger, but refugees are not the cause; there is space and funding available if states choose to allocate it, but protracted maltreatment of a group of hundreds of thousands of people is very likely to invite future conflict. It should not be a difficult choice.

The fact that an argument for the humane treatment of refugees must be rooted in self-protection for Europe is, itself, very ugly. Europe's treatment of refugees will not be forgotten; forcing people to live among sewage, sexual abuse, violence, isolation, and lack of shelter are akin to

torture and imprisonment, both identified by the EU as crimes against humanity. The fact that it is so widespread or has been the status quo for so long does not make it more acceptable, and Europe is failing in its most basic obligation to respecting human rights.

Recognition and Closure

As a parting thought, I want to point out that no one is under the impression that this is easy for Europe. It is understandably difficult to be forced to absorb millions of people into a fearful population, particularly amidst regional political unrest. But that does not absolve anyone from their responsibilities, and refugees should not be forced to pay the price for these challenges. More specifically, even if we completely disregard the rights of refugees, it goes directly against Europe's best interests to continue business as usual; Europe as a continent will not be able to escape the inevitable ramifications that come with the abuse of so many people such that they are driven to the absolute edges of human desperation. The narrative that refugees are dangerous for Europe is misleading and impotent; right now, Europe is dangerous for refugees, and radicalization in retaliation − though not excusable − should not be surprising under such circumstances. Serious attempts to prevent a security risk to European citizens must start by removing the many constant risks to refugees, particularly in camps. I

cannot guarantee that this will have the immediate and exclusive effect of removing all remnants of terrorism from Europe, but it's a start – and 8 years after the onset of the crisis, Europe still hasn't gotten to the start yet.

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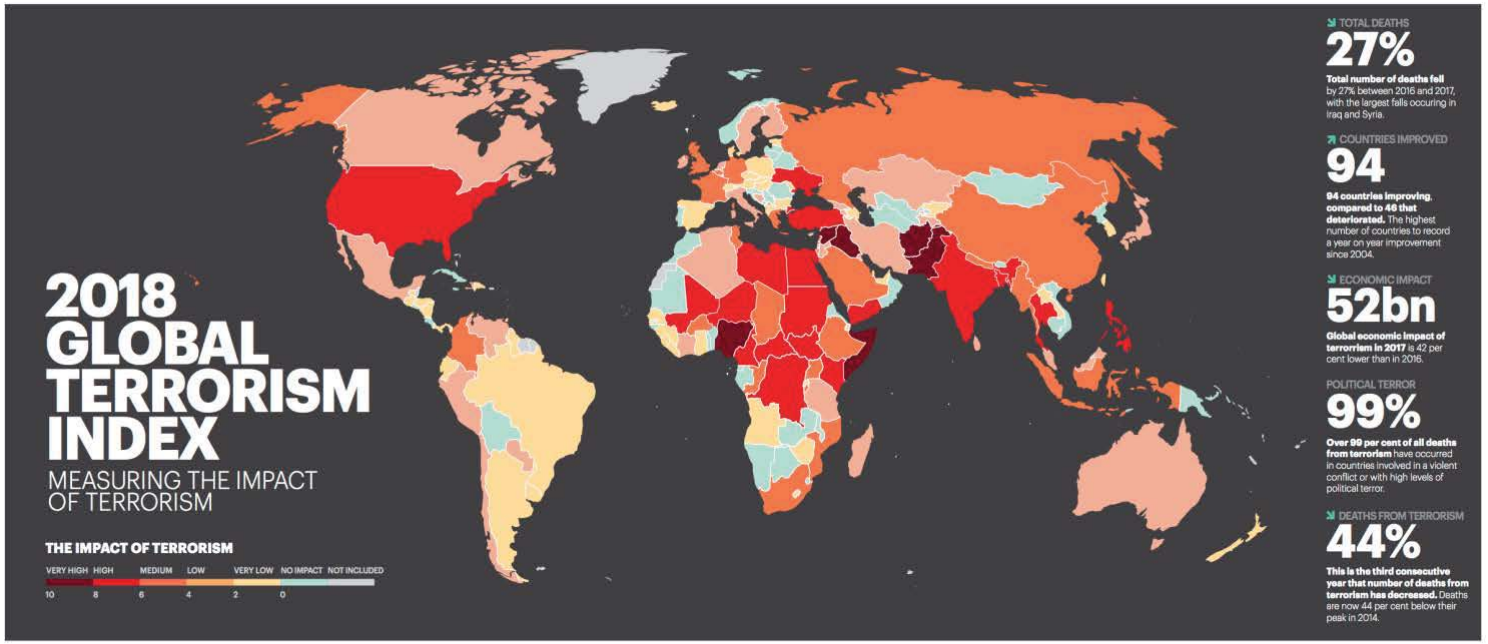
Appendix A.



RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE
1	Iraq	9.746	⟷
2	Afghanistan	9.391	⟷
3	Nigeria	8.660	⟷
4	Syria	8.315	⟷
5	Pakistan	8.181	⟷
6	Somalia	8.020	↑1
7	India	7.568	↑1
8	Yemen	7.534	↓2
9	Egypt	7.345	↑2
10	Philippines	7.181	↑2
11	Dem. Rep Congo	7.055	↑2
12	Turkey	7.036	↓3
13	Libya	6.987	↓3
14	South Sudan	6.756	⟷
15	Central African Rep	6.719	↑4
16	Cameroon	6.615	↓1
17	Thailand	6.252	↓1
18	Sudan	6.178	⟷
19	Kenya	6.114	↑3
20	USA	6.066	↑12
21	Ukraine	6.048	↓4
22	Mali	6.015	↑3
23	Niger	6.004	↓3
24	Myanmar	5.916	↑13
25	Bangladesh	5.697	↓4
26	Ethiopia	5.631	↓2
27	Colombia	5.611	⟷
28	United Kingdom	5.610	↑7
29	Saudi Arabia	5.479	↓3
30	France	5.475	↓7
31	Palestine	5.330	↓1
32	Burundi	5.316	↓4
33	Nepal	5.295	↑11
34	Russia	5.230	↓1
35	Lebanon	5.154	↓6
36	China	5.108	↓5
37	Burkina Faso	4.811	↑6
38	Chad	4.752	↓4
39	Germany	4.601	↓1
40	Mozambique	4.579	↓1
41	Israel	4.578	↓5
42	Indonesia	4.543	⟷
43	Angola	4.473	↑76
44	Iran	4.399	↑8
45	Greece	4.291	↑1
46	South Africa	4.263	↑1
47	Tunisia	4.088	↓6
48	Belgium	4.060	↓8
49	Sri Lanka	4.048	↑19
50	Spain	4.024	↑36
51	Sweden	3.936	↑3
52	Uganda	3.926	↓7
53	Bahrain	3.883	↑2
54	Algeria	3.763	↓5
55	Venezuela	3.665	↑1
56	Mexico	3.533	↑6
57	Canada	3.527	↑9
58	Chile	3.454	↑2
59	Paraguay	3.443	↓2
60	Jordan	3.404	↓9
61	Rep of the Congo	3.368	↓14
61	Tanzania	3.368	↓3
63	Cote d' Ivoire	3.276	↓10
64	Kuwait	3.126	↓14
65	Ireland	3.045	↓1
66	Peru	2.950	↑6
67	Japan	2.926	↓9
68	Australia	2.827	↓3
69	Italy	2.736	⟷
70	Malaysia	2.700	↓9
71	Kosovo	2.694	⟷
72	Madagascar	2.613	↓9
73	Finland	2.501	↑3
74	Tajikistan	2.233	↓4
75	Kazakhstan	2.228	↓8
76	Rwanda	2.177	↑5
77	Papua New Guinea	2.040	↑86
78	Netherlands	1.960	↓5
79	Austria	1.852	↑10
80	Kyrgyz Republic	1.719	↓1
81	Haiti	1.714	↓8
81	Honduras	1.714	↑6
83	Armenia	1.692	↓8
84	Argentina	1.680	↑13
85	Laos	1.675	↓5
86	Zimbabwe	1.569	↑30
87	Czech Republic	1.562	↓3
88	Ecuador	1.471	↓5
89	Georgia	1.422	↓12
90	Brazil	1.388	↓3
91	Bosnia & Herzegovina	1.339	↓12
92	Cyprus	1.206	↓9
93	Gabon	1.198	↑70
94	Jamaica	1.091	↑32
95	Sierra Leone	1.066	↑7
96	Senegal	1.012	↓11
97	Albania	1.008	↓6
98	Azerbaijan	0.957	↓3
99	Taiwan	0.943	↑6
100	Denmark	0.817	↓10
101	Nicaragua	0.747	↓9
102	Poland	0.719	↑8
103	Djibouti	0.705	↓7
104	Vietnam	0.663	↑58
104	Zambia	0.663	↑58
106	Macedonia (FYR)	0.649	↓13
107	Latvia	0.458	↑55
107	Malawi	0.458	↑55
109	Dominican Republic	0.382	↓11
110	Hungary	0.363	↓11
111	Uruguay	0.344	↓11
112	Guinea	0.324	↓11
113	Bulgaria	0.315	↓19
114	New Zealand	0.286	↓11
114	South Korea	0.286	↓11
116	Moldova	0.229	↓11
116	Estonia	0.229	↓10
116	Serbia	0.229	↑9
119	Liberia	0.210	↑2
120	Guatemala	0.205	↓14
121	Lesotho	0.191	↓11
122	Ghana	0.162	↓11
123	Norway	0.153	↑40
124	Switzerland	0.134	↓12
125	Trinidad and Tobago	0.124	↓12
126	Slovakia	0.115	↓12
127	United Arab Emirates	0.105	↓12
128	Guyana	0.076	↓10
128	Panama	0.076	↓10
130	Iceland	0.057	↓10
130	Qatar	0.057	↓9
132	Montenegro	0.038	↓9
132	Morocco	0.038	↓9
132	Uzbekistan	0.038	↓9
135	Bhutan	0.019	↓5
135	Cambodia	0.019	↓5
137	Croatia	0.014	↓5
138	Belarus	0.000	↓32
138	Guinea-Bissau	0.000	↓32
138	Bolivia	0.000	↓30
138	Benin	0.000	⟷
138	Botswana	0.000	⟷
138	Costa Rica	0.000	⟷
138	Cuba	0.000	⟷
138	El Salvador	0.000	⟷
138	Equatorial Guinea	0.000	⟷
138	Eritrea	0.000	⟷
138	Lithuania	0.000	⟷
138	Mauritania	0.000	⟷
138	Mauritius	0.000	⟷
138	Mongolia	0.000	⟷
138	Namibia	0.000	⟷
138	North Korea	0.000	⟷
138	Oman	0.000	⟷
138	Portugal	0.000	⟷
138	Romania	0.000	⟷
138	Singapore	0.000	⟷
138	Slovenia	0.000	⟷
138	Eswatini	0.000	⟷
138	The Gambia	0.000	⟷
138	Timor-Leste	0.000	⟷
138	Togo	0.000	⟷
138	Turkmenistan	0.000	⟷

ABOUT

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