

# **Asylum Inflow Shocks and the Extreme Right Violence in Western Europe**

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Far-right terrorism represents one of the most pressing internal security challenges facing contemporary European democracies. Unlike episodic political unrest, far-right attacks are often premeditated, ideologically motivated, and directed at ethnic minorities, undermining social cohesion and threatening democratic norms (Mudde, 2016; Koopmans & Olzak, 2004). Despite growing concern among policymakers and security agencies, systematic evidence on the conditions that trigger far-right terrorist violence remains limited. At the same time, Europe continues to experience large and often sudden asylum inflows driven by external conflicts. While existing research has extensively examined the effects of asylum and refugee inflows on public attitudes and electoral outcomes, far less is known about how these inflows translate into violent extremist mobilisation (Steinmayr, 2016; Hangartner et al., 2018). Where violence has been studied, the focus has largely been on whether refugees themselves generate insecurity through spillovers or “Trojan Horse” mechanisms, rather than on violence directed against them and ethnic minorities by host-country actors (Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006; Choi & Salehyan, 2013; Helbling & Meierrieks, 2020). A smaller but growing literature instead shows that refugees are more often targets rather than perpetrators of violence, particularly in hostile political or security environments (Savun & Gineste, 2019). This project addresses this critical gap by examining how asylum inflow shocks- sudden and salient increases in arrivals - shape far-right terrorist violence in Western Europe. Crucially, *it provides clear policy-relevant evidence on who is most at risk during asylum shocks: whether such shocks are more likely to escalate violence against ethnic minorities or against political actors and institutions*. By distinguishing between these targets, the study informs whether policy responses should prioritise protecting minority communities, safeguarding political institutions, or both during periods of heightened asylum inflows.