



7 Recent Migrants and Crime

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7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a synthesis of academic and grey literature on the topic of recent migrants and crime, covering the timeframe 2011 to 2021. More particularly, it intends to summarise recent literature investigating crime-related topics relevant to the integration of post-2014 immigrants in a European context. Furthermore, various crime-related topics, where migrants are viewed as both, perpetrators and victims of crime are reviewed. Whereas in general the focus of this chapter is on newly arrived migrants, literature on some topics (i.e. youth crime, ethnicity and crime, and (religious/political) radicalization or extremism) is broadly discussed in reference to people “with migrant background” and migrants of 2nd or 3rd generation migrants. Since the aim of this synthesis is to give an overview on the topics of crime and integration, research focusing not exclusively on first generation migrants is still considered of relevance for this chapter and is thus incorporated.

Migration research is not just interested in the forms and causes of migration phenomena, but also in associated questions of the social inclusion and incorporation of migrants in host societies. The

latter, at least in Europe, is commonly referred to as the integration of immigrants. The subject of crime in this context gained more attention throughout recent years. Following the high influx of refugees in Europe in 2015, “securitization of migration” and other migration-related policies mirroring security concerns have gained more and more focus. In political debates and public discourses, the stereotype of criminal migrants as “male, young and delinquent” is widely discussed. Narratives concentrate on the relationship between immigrants and crime rates with integration as intermediate factor.

Data on “criminal migrants” cannot be compared one to one with actual crime trends. When interpreting data on the delinquency of national and non-nationals, numerous aspects must be considered and differentiated. Moreover, the victimization of migrants is an important field in the context of crime and integration. Migrants face an increased risk to become victims of crime, both on their journey to their host country as well as after arrival in the receiving society.

This review is structured as follows: Chapter one maps the research landscape with regard to crime and integration and thereby introduces how crime and integration is discussed within research. Subsequently, chapter two goes more in depth on the wider topics discovered and gives an overview on how exactly those topics are discussed. Chapter three looks more closely on framing interventions and policy objectives in relation to crime and integration. Chapter four then deals with the instruments and tools policy makers have used and use to implement different kind of objectives. Last, chapter five addresses the effectiveness of implemented policies and measures. The review concludes with a summary in chapter six.

7.2 Research on migrants and crime

Issues of crime and deviance in the context of migration and immigrant integration have long been subject to research. Over the past years several disciplines looked at the intersection of the two topics. First and foremost, the topic of immigrant integration is mostly discussed by criminologist scholars. Especially in the criminologist discipline the topic has been researched since several decades. In fact, a significant part of research was done prior to 2011. From a migration research perspective, comparatively, the intersection between the two topics has gained attention rather recently. Particularly well-researched fields to mention here are trafficking in human beings (THB), terrorism and radicalization, as well as research on (perceived) changes and implication in society.

A lot of research is centred around the relationship between immigration and crime rates. The precise research design and specifications vary across the studies. Many research papers use national criminal statistics as a benchmark to gauge the criminality among non-natives. Much research about crime and integration and related topics is done on a national and local level. Generally, a lot of studies often confirm that the “first generation” of immigrants or newly arrived migrants are less often involved in criminal activities in the host country. Research suggests that recently arrived migrants are more eager to integrate and in fact are very consumed by the

integration process and its different challenges itself. It appears that the topic in general and criminal behaviour in any kind of form is more a concern of children of immigrants due to a variety of reasons. Hence, not all research presented in this chapter covers exclusively post-2014 migrants. Since topics and results appeared to be of relevance for the integration of recent migrants they are still considered.

Nonetheless, when looking at the connection of the topics crime and integration research can be broadly structured at looking at it from two different perspectives: migrants as perpetrators and migrants as victims of crime. The topic around victims of crime respectively puts a strong emphasize on victims of trafficking, exploitation and forced labour. Other relevant topics that have emerged in this regard include hate crime and violence towards and among refugees and asylum seekers in reception centres. When looking at migrants as perpetrators topics such as the potential “import” of crime in general together with inflows of migration waves is questioned and analysed in depth. Furthermore, youth delinquency and the likelihood of youth becoming engaged in criminal activities is quite widely discussed in many research papers. This is frequently seen in the relation to a possible radicalisation of youth to extremist ideologies. The question if radicalisation is a question of “import” or rather developed nationally after arrival in Europe is one that is particularly misperceived by the wider public. Lastly, the fear of migrants and general safety and security concerns arise when talking about crime and integration.

7.3 Integration situation in relation to crime

(1) Migrants as perpetrators

As previously mentioned one of the most frequently researched question of the immigration-crime nexus is: **are immigration and crime related** (Atanisev, Haverkamp, and Kunkel 2019; Boateng, Pryce, and Chenane 2021; Baier 2015; Bannenberg 2003; Chavez 2017; Feltes, List, and Bertamini 2018; Grafl 2018; Owens et al. 2019; Solivetti 2013; Walburg 2021)? The scientific debate on the linkages and relationship is complicated by the lack of systematic data on specific immigrant variables and violence or criminality, both nationally and internationally. On the EU level data on criminal offenders or detained people records at most the citizenship (UNODC 2022; “Database - Crime and Criminal Justice - Eurostat” n.d.). The disaggregation of national police crime statistics varies across countries: In Sweden, for example, the police did not collect information on ethnicity, religion or race (of either perpetrator and victims of crime) for a long time and only after years of pressure included this kind of data in 2015. Nonetheless, it does record the involvement of asylum seekers in criminal activities –independent of the immigrant’s role in these activities (e.g. perpetrator or witness or victim). For a three months’ period, between November 2015 and January 2016, the Swedish police endeavoured to estimate the scope of newly arrived refugees engagement in crime and concluded that only 1% of all filed reports were recorded with asylum seekers being involved as victims, perpetrators or witnesses (Fariss and Eck 2017). In Germany, the recording of

police statistics is a federal matter and thus statistical differences may even arise within the country and different levels of data are not always comparable (Groß 2019). In the UK, data is observed on foreign-born nationals (Bell and Machin 2013). In addition, whenever statistics on the nationality, ethnicity, or foreign-born people are recorded, conclusions on newly arrived migrants cannot be drawn. Rather, analyses are conducted on second or third generation immigrants or people with migrant backgrounds and even comparisons between native and non-native populations can be misleading for various reasons. Because of this limitation in data, figures have to be interpreted more cautiously.

Although some authors suggest an overrepresentation of immigrant groups in crime statistics (Baier 2020; Brå 2021; Klement 2020; Pilgram, Fuchs, and Leonhardmair 2012), it is important to look at the wider context of how this overrepresentation could be explained. In this regard, several factors have been identified: Some types of crimes can by definition only be committed by immigrants, i.e. offences against national alien- and asylum acts, or are quite particular foreigner-specific offences, such as the forgery of documents, which is frequently related to the irregular entry and residence status (Bannenberg 2003). In addition, the ratio of crimes committed by men compared to the ratio of crimes committed by women is 4:1; looking at violent crimes the ratio is even 7:1. Conclusively, research found that it is adolescents and young men, who are most exposed to crime. With regards to sociodemographic characteristics and composition of post-2014 migrants in Europe, more migrants are young men and hence, appear significantly more often in crime statistics than women. Thus, the increased proportion of crime engagement of young migrants can be explained criminologically (Bannenberg 2003; Feltes, List, and Bertamini 2018). Moreover, the general social structure in which migrants find themselves is often more vulnerable compared to local populations. Factors that are associated with criminality are often a prevailing feature in the social structure of migrants. They live more often in large cities, where crime rates are generally higher, belong more often to lower income and lower educational classes, and are more often affected by unemployment, thus increasing the overall criminal risk (Bannenberg 2003; Beckley, Kardell, and Sarnecki 2017). Further, research suggests that the “migrant group” is too heterogeneous to draw general conclusions. This is particularly striking among adolescence, where, for example, unaccompanied minors are considerably different to young adults or young migrants of second or third generation (Dessecker and Rettenberger 2021).

Many migrants also find themselves in a more vulnerable position and a higher likelihood to engage in criminal activities. First of all, research finds that the age – especially the age one had on the migratory journey – is a crucial factor in the likelihood of criminal engagement. Criminal involvement at a more mature age is rather rare (Dessecker and Rettenberger 2021). The lack of future perspectives and missing or precarious everyday structures in the life of (young) migrants foster the development of ethnically defined subcultures and crime-affiliated environments (Kuschej 2021). Moreover, high unemployment rates, low or no educational qualifications and low income rates are pivotal predictors in explaining the increased likelihood of migrants’ engagement in criminal activities or of having ever been suspected of criminal offences (Bovenkerk and Fokkema

2016; Kuschej 2021; Solivetti 2013). Particularly asylum-seekers are vulnerable to petty crime or small-scaled crime due to long waiting periods until claims are processed and the inability to pursue any employment during this time (Grafl 2018; Haverkamp 2016). Next to educational attainment and economic (in)activity plays social capital another crucial role in migrants’ chances of integration and therefore their likelihood of their (potential) engagement in criminal activities (Solivetti 2013). Even more, integration was mentioned as central factor in crime prevention (Grafl 2018) and a failed integration (system), the feeling of exclusion and discrimination creates a stress response which can manifest itself in criminal behaviour (Beckley, Kardell, and Sarnecki 2017; Chavez 2017).

The public discourse experienced in the past repeatedly a shift of interest towards **youth crime and juvenile delinquency**. However, discussion as well as literature on first generation immigrant youth in relation to crime is rather scarce. It is suggested, that youth criminality is more frequently a phenomenon that is observed for children of immigrants or even 3rd generation immigrants (i.e. “not-the-foreign-born-but-their-children“-perspective (Walburg 2014)). However, it appears that arguments from the literature are still relevant in the wider context of integration. Evidence from Sweden revealed that discussions are less about who is more inclined to criminal behaviour but rather about the engagement in different types of crime and how this is reflected by the different phases of migrant’s life cycles (Kardell and Martens 2013). Different researchers pointed out the role of parents and the family system in adolescence being involved or becoming involved in crime (Bannenberg 2003; Uysal, Stemmler, and Weiss 2019; Pfeiffer, Baier, and Kliem 2018; Salmi, Kivivuori, and Aaltonen 2015; Walburg 2014). Experiences in the family home influence the attitude that children and adolescents form towards social norms. In addition to the parental home, other areas of the social environment are relevant for the formation of their own social norms. From a criminological point of view, a lack of parental authority can lead youth to steering increasingly towards delinquent peer groups, where they adapt delinquent behaviour and the respective norms. Also experiences of violence in childhood and adolescence increase the likelihood of young people becoming delinquent (Pfeiffer, Baier, and Kliem 2018; Walburg 2014). As a consequence, research concludes that from a crime prevention perspective polices should be shifted to support immigrant families to prevent deviant behaviour (Salmi, Kivivuori, and Aaltonen 2015).

Delinquent behaviour of migrant youth is often portrayed as consequence of an inner cultural conflict, between two what is assumed to be contrary but static and homogeneous cultures, that arises during the integration process. It is said that this conflict leads migrant youth to a loss and search of identity and thus a lack of norms and values. Research expands this thought on the circumstances of youth delinquency by arguing that there is also an outer cultural conflict in which delinquency is primarily a consequence of the lack of integrative processes of the youth. According to the view point of the outer cultural conflict, delinquency among migrant adolescence is the result of insufficient cultural adaptation to their host society. This argument is commonly quite accepted in the wider public, as it allows to “outsource” the topic to something that is part of migrants’ characteristic and that has been “brought” with them to their respective host society. However, criminal involvement is something which is not primarily or solely related to ethnic-cultural

diversity. In all of this, experiences of social disadvantage and discrimination must also be taken into account. Various research have shown that the acceptance of norms that legitimise violence and violent delinquency is closely linked to (perceived) experiences of discrimination and the socio-economic situation (Uysal, Stemmler, and Weiss 2019; Walburg 2014). Lastly, it should not be neglected that the group of young refugees is exposed to higher stress factors, which can lead to delinquent behaviour (Fischer et al. 2017).

Overall, it has not yet been adequately researched which effects migration-specific factors have on the development of delinquent norms (Walburg 2014). According to research findings, promoting the participation of young immigrants and adolescence from migrant families in education, as well as the access to and incorporation of immigrant youth into structured leisure time activities is an essential key factor in reducing delinquency risks. The better their integration into the education system succeeds and the better they are integrated into daytime activities, the more violent behaviour loses its attractiveness (Salmi, Kivivuori, and Aaltonen 2015; Walburg 2014).

The perspective of increased marginalisation brings several aspects into focus: the acceptance (and potential adaptation) of violence is primarily the result of socially underprivileged migrants. The lack of opportunities to earn money, which are due to various conditions, pushes them into some grey zones- such as the distribution of illegal substances. The so-called “**street culture**”, for example, is a response to this marginalisation process. Research suggests that **drug dealing**, as part of practical rationality of the street life culture, allows migrants to feel increasingly as actors of their own life, rather than victims of a marginalisation process. However, the engagement in street life and drug dealing further accelerate this exact marginalisation process and reinforces economic and social exclusion (Sandberg 2008).

Of great relevance when examining the topic of crime and migrant’s integration is also **clan- and family-based crime**. Practitioners active in the crime (prevention) field often face a two-sided problem where the first relates to preventing active members from committing (more) crime, and the second relates to keeping criminal families from “acting as incubators for new criminals” (Hochschule für Polizei und öffentliche Verwaltung NRW 2018). Research even suggests, that each new generation in families with members with delinquent behaviour is at risk of “inheriting” the previous generation’s criminal behaviour”(EUCPN 2020). Still, clan- and family-based crime is primarily focused on migrants with a longer migration history or children of migrant descendants rather than newly arrived migrants. The concept of clan is primarily understood in ethnic terms, translating into clans who are, for example, of Arabic-, Turkish-, or Chechen-descended or groupings from the Western Balkans. In recent years, persons of Turkish-Arab origin, who belonged to the Mhallamiye ethnic group, have especially come to the centre of attention (Generalstaatsanwaltschaft Celle and Landeskriminalamt Niedersachsen 2021). There, the distribution can be traced back to civil war refugees from Lebanon with a chain of temporary suspensions of deportation, as well as the family reunification associated with that time. Research

shows a more current development of family based crime by some refugees from Syria. However, there is yet no (academic) literature on this phenomenon (Deutsche Welle (DW) 2019).

Especially since 2015 has the involvement of immigrants in terrorist attacks sparked concern about (possible) **radicalization among refugees and asylum seekers**. In most of the cases, concerns were associated with violent extremists using migration flows to get into Europe. Research showed that refugees have indeed been involved in extremist attacks. However, despite refugees and asylum seekers in some instances, it is emphasized that the vast majority of terrorist attacks in Europe since 2015 were conducted by domestic cells. Conclusively, a “jihadist infiltration of migration flows” is comparatively small and should not be the principal reference point in approaching this complex topic. Despite limited data available on asylum seekers and refugees potential development of tendencies for radicalisation after their settlement in Europe, concerns were increasingly raised on possible radicalisation after arrival in Europe on the grounds of Syrian refugee diaspora becoming progressively more vulnerable to radicalisation and particularly targeted by Islamic recruiters (Abushi and Nordbruch 2020). There are several factors increasing refugees’ vulnerabilities to radicalisation: as such, living conditions prior and after the migration experience as well as their legal and social status as asylum seekers and refugees in the host country impact their vulnerabilities to radicalisation and violent extremist ideologies greatly. Insecurities about one’s residence status and the inability to develop long-term perspectives might encourage a retreat to radical ideologies.

Further, this is also linked to public perceptions in which all refugees and asylum seekers are frequently equated with “Muslims” as a whole, while even though most asylum seekers who arrived in Europe between 2015 and 2019 are in fact from Muslim countries their personal situation in their home countries, their cases to leave from there, and their religious understanding differ greatly. Social marginalisation might lead to seeking alternative social structures. Equally, experiences of discrimination and hostility in public life leave refugees and asylum seekers more vulnerable to extremist narratives (Abushi and Nordbruch 2020; Rubin 2021). The possibility of refugee radicalisation is different for every refugee (population) (Eleftheriadou 2020).

However, at the same time research found that the probability of newly arrived refugees being radicalized in (Western) Europe is rather low. Schmid (2016) emphasized that rather than recently-arrived migrants, it is the following generation(s) that become more vulnerable to radicalization: “If they are not fully integrated in host societies, they might develop resentment and with some that anger might become so strong that they – or more likely, their children – turn against the host society. That has been one of the reasons why so many of the foreign fighters from Europe were the sons of immigrants” (Schmid 2016, 45). Radicalisation processes can be observed above all in the difficult phases of adolescence. Further research has noted that many of the “classical” radicalisation models are based on second generation economic migrants, which are inherently different to refugees. It is emphasized that thus not only usual radicalisation drivers, such as personal and collective grievance, are important factors to consider, but also issues that were pointed out by other authors (Abushi and Nordbruch 2020), such as circumstances prior and after

the migration experience, the cause of flight or prior political affiliation (Eleftheriadou 2020). In general, the radicalisation process rather happens domestically than beliefs are being “imported” into Western societies (Rubin 2021). In addition, the host state's will and capacity to address refugees' needs also plays an important role and early stage policies predetermine possible future radicalisation to a great amount (Eleftheriadou 2020).

Experts from the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) identified several groups which are at heightened risk for extremist ideologies due to their experiences of their flight and diaspora: (a) rejected asylum seekers, (b) refugees and asylum seekers with mental health issues, (c) unaccompanied minors and (d) unaccompanied minors turning 18+ (Abushi and Nordbruch 2020). Schmid (2016) concludes that the vast majority of migrants are not involved in terrorism in any way.

(2) Migrants as victims

While most studies are perpetrator centred and there is a lot of literature on right-wing radicalism and extremism and xenophobic violence, there is comparatively few empirical findings on victims; in general, the studies pay little attention to the victim perspective. However, looking at the intersection of integration and crime allows to look at migrants as perpetrators (see previous sections), but also as victims of criminal offenses. Overall, it is apparent that refugees themselves are at high risk of becoming victims of crime.

Although there is limited evidence, certain circumstances suggest an increased risk of victimisation for non-natives or persons perceived as non-natives. The consequences of victimisation for socially marginalised victims are particularly burdensome due to their difficult economic and social situation. Research suggests that victims' willingness to report is considerably limited when language insecurities, bad experiences with the police in the home country and insecurity or even fear of the authorities are weighed against reporting (Bannenberg 2003; FRA 2014; Leerkes, Martinez, and Groeneveld 2019; Feltes et al. 2018; Papadakaki et al. 2021; Willems 2020). In the case of an irregular residence status, fear of personal consequences leads to refraining from pressing charges (Bannenberg 2003). This again leads to one of the central problems in the recording and evaluation of registered crime and the associated victimisation: the willingness to report. Since only reported cases are documented in the police crime statistics and those statistics have only limited significance for the actual victimisation of refugees (Feltes et al. 2018; Willems 2020). Hence, it is recommended to delink the two components of prosecutions of violence and immigration control: investigation and prosecution of violence against migrants should take precedence over the proceedings related to the immigration status of victims. Concerning this matter academics, international institutions and NGOs brought forward the concept of the “firewalls”, which aims for a separation between the provision of public services (i.e. health, education etc.) and immigration enforcement activities. Firewalls strive for the provision of effective access to entitlements, rights and protection. In particular, they are designed to warrant the inability of authorities to access information concerning the immigration status of individuals who are in need of assistance or

services (i.e. schooling, medical facilities, social service institutions). By the introduction and implementation of firewalls, institutions are not obliged to inquire or even share information about individual's migration status. Therefore, spheres of social service provisions are protected against the identification, documentation or reporting on immigration status of their respective clients and hence, migrants can feel more safe in accessing, approaching and using services without fear on consequences of their (irregular) migratory status (Crépeau and Hastie 2015; Van Durme 2017).

An increase in immigration may be associated with an increase in the fear of crime, which in turn is positively related to natives' negative sentiment toward migrants. However, a general increase in immigration does not affect crime victimisation (Nunziata 2015) per se, but events in particular, such as terrorist acts, can cause spikes in racially motivated crimes in EU countries (Nwabuzo 2019). Not only extremist acts but also other key happenings can lead to an increase in racially motivated crimes. Piatkowska et al. (2020) showed in their research that before 2014, when there was an average immigration influx, there was no impact of the immigration rate on hate crime rates. According to the authors that, however, changed with the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, which triggered amplified threat perceptions.

A few more detailed topics which emerged to be larger research areas with view to the victimisation of migrants are highlighted in the following.

A topic trafficking in human beings (THB) and forced labour or marriage is no new phenomenon in migration research. In fact, the topic has been well studied during the past few decades. Trafficking of human beings is internationally recognised as serious violation of human rights, as well as a manifestation of social injustice. Research argues that there is a link between migration and criminal forms of exploitation such as human trafficking or forced labour (David, Bryant, and Joudo Larsen 2019). Oftentimes THB is seen in connection with (transnational) organised crime. The recruitment of the victims of trafficking is carried out in the country of origin of the victim. Deception, false promises of employment and good working conditions, sometimes also free housing and good salaries are the most common means through which vulnerable people become victims of trafficking. Once the victims arrive in the country of destination they are forced to prostitution or other hard work with very little or no salary. Through threats very different kind victims are made highly dependent on their traffickers. Research also revealed that THB victims are additionally forced to engage in a range of other criminal activities, such as begging, property crimes, pick pocketing, benefit fraud or drug selling. As a result, victims of trafficking who were exploited for the engagement in additional criminal activities are often convicted for the offences they were conducting under coercion (Europol 2016).

Hate crimes can be understood as so-called "message crimes", in which a criminal offence or violent act is not merely directed against an individual, but is to be understood as a hate message against a specific group (Bannenberg 2003). Measuring hate crime as such is somewhat a challenge, as the crime becomes a "hate crime" only when discrimination was the underlying motive of the

commitment of the crime (Birch et al. 2020). Especially in the wake of the large influx of refugees in 2014 and 2015 the topic of hate crime against migrants became more widely discussed. Research showed that not simply the size of asylum seeker inflows causes an increase of incidents of hate crime, but rather the fast compositional change of the residential native population. Similarly to economically deprived regions, residential areas with previously low numbers of foreign-born population show the strongest rise in hate crime. Quite to the contrary and on a more general note, authors concluded that the higher the number of foreigners already residing in a certain region or district the lower the number of hate crimes. Conclusively, there is no homogeneous link between the number of asylum seekers and hate crime and in fact it is not the number of asylum seekers that translate into a higher number of attacks, but where those asylum seekers are located (Entorf and Lange 2019; Wagner et al. 2020; Willems 2020).

Protests and assaults on refugee homes and asylum seekers have been largely pushed into the background in the public discourse despite the fact that there are quite a number of criminal offences involving insults, (physical) harm, arson and other attacks against refugees or refugee shelters (Haverkamp 2017). Refugees are increasingly becoming victims of right-wing extremist violence. Research in Germany showed, that the violence against refugees remained high even after its sharp increase in 2015 (Fischer et al. 2017). The attitudes and narratives of right-wing extremists become more visible and are more frequently expressed in violent actions (Abushi and Nordbruch 2020). Authors even found that social media does in this relation not only function as a powerful tool to propagate and spread violent messages, but also motivates real-life action(s). Hence, for the case of Germany, it is suggested that there is a link between social media online posts and anti-refugee incidents (Müller and Schwarz 2021).

Next to attacks on refugee homes and shelters violence among refugees is also not uncommon: Christ et al. (2021) identified systemic and structural causes for the emergence of conflicts in shelters and the associated processes of victimisation, such as differences in procedural processes and thus also access to integration opportunities. Due to the different status(es) associated with the perspective of being able to stay in a particular host country, a hierarchy often develops in the accommodation facilities, which the less privileged experience negatively. This hierarchy often corresponds to existing prejudices or racist attitudes towards other nationalities, cultural or religious groups (Feltes, List, and Bertamini 2018). In addition, it can be intensified and discharged in everyday problems of a shared accommodation, such as the distribution of food or other commodities. Another fact that can lead to conflicts and subsequently to violent crime is living together with foreign people from other cultures in a confined space (Feltes et al. 2021). The size of the accommodation, the spatial confinement, the heterogeneous composition of the residents as well as the lack of retreat possibilities for the individuals themselves can contribute significantly to the escalation of conflicts (Fischer et al. 2017; Willems 2020). In addition to the experience of violence during the flight, there may also be psychological stresses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or post-migration stressors such as fears for the future or worries about relatives remaining in the country of origin, which in some cases reduce the ability to deal with conflict.

The protection of particularly vulnerable groups is frequently not sufficiently taken care of in many places. Women and LGBTI people do not experience gender segregation in many German shelters (Willems 2020). Infrastructural deficiencies, such as showers and toilets that cannot be locked, facilitate opportunities to commit crimes, which make single women in particular more frequent targets of sexual harassment. However, refugee women do not only experience psychological, physical and sexual assaults in shelters, but also in public spaces as well as offices or authorities (Feldes et al. 2018).

An increase in immigration is more likely to be associated with an increase in the fear of crime rather than an affecting crime victimisation. Research found that fear of crime and crime perception is (positively) related to natives' negative sentiments towards immigrants. Natives observe that in areas where immigrants are more prevalent crime rates are also higher and jump to the most obvious conclusion – namely that immigrants strongly tend to criminal behaviour – but they are neglecting other factors: evidence from victimisation data (Nunziata 2015). Incisive events, such as the Christmas market attack in Berlin in 2016, affect mostly people with an already right-wing political attitude (negatively) compared to opinions of the general public. Only as time progresses the spill-over effect (in form of) worsening attitudes towards immigrants and refugees in particular can also be observed in the general population (Nägel and Lutter 2020). Furthermore, research shows no significant relationship between fear of crime and the incidents of crime (as in reported crime). Even more so, there is a negative correlation between community diversity and anti-immigrant attitudes (Hooghe and de Vroome 2016).

The uncertainty in the course of migration processes is not an unusual phenomenon, but a normal reaction of natives with and without a migration background to the unknown. The way this subjective uncertainty is dealt with varies, ranging from friendly reception to massive rejection of immigrants. Hereby, among others, the urban design of migrant neighbourhoods plays an important role in how migrants feel (e.g. missing places to gather and limited space to hang out (for the youth)) (Atanisev, Haverkamp, and Kunkel 2021). The settlement of migrant communities promotes a transformation of the community as a whole and restructuring communities as a whole is often seen as problematic (Birch et al. 2020). For the German example, due to discrimination in the search for housing migrants concentrate on housing where socially disadvantaged Germans (have to) take up residence due to their unavailability of financial means, Thus, migrants frequently live in neighbourhoods with comparatively high proportions of unemployed and welfare recipients, resulting in a high correlation of welfare recipients, unemployment rates and migrants (Kutscher 2020). On a more general note, research suggested that people living in more urban areas are more used to a general level of crime and disorder and thus their feeling of safety is not as strongly affected if there is an increase in migration. This is contrary to people living in rather rural areas, where even a small number of criminal acts is possibly perceived as impacting the daily life of and within communities (Hooghe and de Vroome 2016).

7.4 Framing interventions and policy objectives

One of the framing issues problematized in wider public and policy debates is the discussion on the migration and security narrative. Among others, this also includes considerations on fear and concerns among the host society of the “foreigner” and on migrants increasingly “importing” crime and terrorism into host societies. (Media-driven) Moral panic, especially after incidents such as New Year’s Eve in Cologne 2015, the Christmas market attack in Berlin, or the terrorist attacks in Paris or Brussels, lead to concerns not only expressed by the public, but also by policy makers. Throughout Europe migration policies have found to be subject to a criminalization trend. As negative attitudes with regards to migrants became more and more present in the public and political discourse stricter responses to (mostly irregular) migratory matters have been adopted. Scholars came to call such convergences between criminal law or crime control and immigration law or immigration control also “crimmigration”, a term which was first introduced by Juliet Stumpf in 2006. Research suggests that the media plays an important role in the framing of migrants as criminal and deviant. Thereby, it shapes public views and justifies the adoption of criminal justice responses to (mainly undocumented) migration. Crimmigration scholars argue that the construction by the media of certain immigrant groups as criminals serves to legitimize the development of crimmigration legislation. In fact, crimmigration laws are the outcome of (inter-)connected discursive processes in which immigrants are constructed as a social threat and which ultimately rests on reinforcing interactions between the media, public and political discourses.

Mass media is assigned an essential position in these processes due to the labelling and attribution of certain qualities to individuals and groups and inferring causes and meaning. However, despite the common notion that the media discourse fuels policy making, authors discovered that in the Netherlands the framing of migrants appears to be a very discursive process in which the media does not precede or fuel but rather follow politics and policy (Althoff 2020; Jelmer Brouwer, van der Woude, and van der Leun 2017).

In Europe, the criminalization of the immigration discourse causes the relegation of crime prevention objectives to a secondary position in the management of foreign penal regulations. Mainly the policing field is affected by this shift in perspective towards an instrumentalisation of crimmigration policies. With the Schengen principle of free movement within the EU, states sought other ways to control “unwanted mobility”, primarily carried out by police forces and incorporating various crime-fighting activities. Next to the instrumentalisation of administrative coercion of petty criminals, France engages also in cross national police alliances to identify non-nationals. Nonetheless, police controls are not encountered in the same way by everyone: research from the Netherlands shows that people who are possibly deemed to be a higher risk experience an increased control mechanism and their identities being questioned, which in turn results in a process of “social sorting”. Especially in dealing with petty criminal activities committed by non-nationals, policing agencies are gradually prioritizing the utilization of immigration law measures rather than mobilizing crime prevention procedures.

Following this, expulsion is in the political debate increasingly seen as a crime-fighting option. An example for this development is seen in Germany, when after the events on New Year’s Eve 2015, it was announced that criminal law would be tightened with sexual harassment being a new addition. However, the most noticeable changes in the legislation took place in the Aliens Act: the expulsion of foreigners with a criminal record would be simplified and the grounds on which asylum seekers could be excluded from refugee status would be broadened – thus effectively resulting in an amendment of the right of residence in 2016, which was preceded by the proposal to include sexual assault and harassment as a reason for expulsion under the laws on the right of residence (Althoff 2020; José A Brandariz 2021; José A. Brandariz 2021; J. Brouwer 2020; Vrăbiescu 2021).

Other than policing tactics that mainly focus on petty crime, counter-terrorism strategies evolved to be a significant policy response. Anti-terrorism interventions and pre-crime strategies targeting non-citizens, especially aiming at curbing religiously inspired terrorism, i.e. jihadist movements, have increasingly established to target incidents before they reach any violent phase itself. The field of counter-terrorism in the UK experiences virtually a competition between policies aiming at “preventing” and policies aiming at “countering extremism”. This results in a policy spiral of the two policy approaches and makes the agenda even more challenging to understand and delineate in which two policy approaches go back and forth and thereby produce several unresolved challenges (Brandariz 2021; Walker 2017). Nonetheless, also in relation to counter-terrorism efforts, literature observes a practical and de facto upsurge of deportation practices – at least in the UK (Brandariz 2021).

The criminality of immigrants presents not only an immediate aspect of migrants’ integration, but also a trend reversal: the point at which the hospitality of the host society is transformed into hostility towards the immigrants. An example for this is seen in Germany where the events at Cologne station on New Year’s Eve 2015 reframed the previously announced “welcome culture” to a debate of terror-related concerns and towards anxieties (Solivetti 2013; Wigger, Yendell, and Herbert 2021). This gives rise to a xenophobic and hostile environment in which the picture of migrants as perpetrators can easily be shifted and they become victims of crime – the second, but less prominent, framing issues problematized.

7.5 Overview of commonly used instruments and tools

related to crime and integration

The policy objectives, tools and instruments outlined in the subsequent section are not meant to provide an exhaustive overview of all existing policies across European countries. Rather, the instruments mentioned here display *examples* of measures in different European countries, highlighting the types of measures taken to counter the various issues problematized in wider public and policy debates.

(1) Regulatory: Prosecution

There are national (criminal) laws, national penal codes/penology, by which means the specifics of domestic prosecutions of immigrants, who have engaged in criminal activities, are regulated. However, a general regulatory policy tool that is applied across European countries is the loss of the legal right to stay and associated with this, the expulsion or, in some cases, deportation. Further detailed consequences in this regard are often country-specific: whereas in Belgium the commitment of a crime (and the thereof resulting conviction) causes immigrants to lose the right for residency (UNHCR n.d.; Belgische Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers 2018), the commitment of a crime in Germany can mean for the immigrant not only that the right for a settlement permit does no longer exist, but also that naturalization at any point in time is no longer possible (Deutscher Bundestag 2015). Many European countries do not segregate foreign national inmates in their regular prison system. There might be a detention centre to detain foreign nationals who await deportation or whose application for asylum is yet to be processed. Norway, the UK and the Netherlands form an exception here by being the only Western European countries that run regular prisons entirely reserved for foreign nationals. Yet, in this regard, too, literature arrives at the same conclusion: crimmigration becomes a key site in Western European prisons and imprisonment is often only the precursor to deportation (Di Molfetta and Brouwer 2020; Franko 2020; Mulgrew 2017; Pakes and Holt 2017).

Some migrants are labelled as “undesirable but unreturnable” (UBU). These are migrants who, because of allegedly involving in (serious) criminal activities, are unwanted but due to legal or practical reasons (i.e. among others the principle of non-refoulement, because of non-cooperation of country of origin or because of a lack of travel documents) are unreturnable. Germany, Norway, the UK and Denmark, for example, respond to this by temporarily granting the “undesirable but unreturnable” migrant a right to stay: either by existing schemes (*toleration status* [Duldung] in Germany) or by providing tailored schemes (e.g. Denmark, the UK and Norway). Other states may provide some form of a right to stay but with serious restrictions attached, such as the possibilities of home detention or electronic monitoring (e.g. France). The Netherlands and Belgium, for example, do not provide any temporary residence permit or leave to remain. This means that UBUs are regarded as irregular (undocumented) migrants and thus, are not allowed to work, do not have health insurance and are not able to rent accommodation. Indefinite detention is not allowed in European states and therefore no legal option (Cantor et al. 2016).

Traditional purposes of punishment have been surpassed by the objective of greater border controls. Many states increasingly use penal power as both, a mechanism for punishment as well as for deterrence to make oneself less attractive to “unwanted migrants”. Subsequently, contemporary penal institutions, in addition to their other tasks, control mobility by three main modalities of penal power: criminalisation, policing, and imprisonment or deportation respectively (Franko 2020).

Usually, these regulatory policy tools do not refer to post-2014 migrants exclusively, but rather to “non-nationals” in general.

(2) Prevention

Research focuses a lot and has emphasized several aspects in relation to crime prevention: the importance of social cohesion and family relations, education and a prospective integration into the labour market (Feldes et al. 2018; Grafl 2018; Haverkamp 2016). Prevention programs are tackling and aiming at different topics and angles. One of the in the literature widely discussed one is the radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism.

Migrants are often more vulnerable to thoughts of (religious) extremism, in particular younger people with a history of poor school performance and a possible criminal record (i.e. ranging from petty crimes to more serious offenses). In addition, prisons and detention centres are often described as “massive incubators for radicalisation”. To counter these threats, the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)²² was set up in 2011 by the European Commission. RAN is an EU-wide network which aims at connection first-line practitioners and local actors working on different topics of (de-)radicalization and prevention of violent extremism in all of its forms. In addition, the RAN Centre of Excellence (CoE) serves as a hub for connecting, developing and disseminating expertise and fosters an inclusive dialogue between practitioners, policy-makers and academics.

On a more national level, multiple European countries – for example, Belgium Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK – have put in place mechanism to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism (Ben Brahim and Rogoz 2020). In Austria, for example, DERAD²³ is a NGO commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Justice to particularly provides support for prisoners in the field of extremism prevention, as well as for the aftercare of persons convicted of extremism. The NGO explicitly deals with religiously based political extremism in all its forms (Hofinger and Schmidinger 2017). In Belgium working groups which specialize on further subtopics (i.e. radicalisation online, on the radio, television, right- and left-wing extremism, including Salafism) have been created. In addition, a control for visa applicants by imams from outside the EU is planned. The 2017 Policy Note points out that only imams officially recognised and working in official mosques will be eligible for a visa (Ben Brahim and Rogoz 2020).

Programs do not only address the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism but also people who want to end their involvement in Islamism and want to leave certain violent groups. In Germany, for example, the Hayat programme²⁴ is an initiative where various projects in the field of interventions against extremist Islamism are developed (Koehler 2013). It particularly aims at

²² https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran_de

²³ <http://derad.at/>

²⁴ <https://www.hayat-deutschland.de/>

facilitating the exit from Islamism. Similarly, the API programme²⁵ (“Aussteiger Programm Islamismus”) supports and guides people who are willing to leave their Islamist environment and enables them to make a safe and sustainable exit from the scene.

Moreover, over preventative measures which are not directly or necessarily related to de-radicalisation, violent extremism and Islamism are for example general crime prevention programs. In Germany, programs such as “Kurve kriegen²⁶”, “Klarkommen!²⁷” “Brothers²⁸” are particularly crime prevention programmes for adolescence.

Informational / communication-based

There are several awareness-raising campaigns on various topics to either prevent someone from *becoming a victim* of crime or further *assist victims* of crime (e.g. campaigns on forced marriage or transnational organised crime (TOR)) or to prevent someone from *committing* a crime. Awareness-raising campaigns exist on national level (France, Germany, Netherlands, UK, Sweden etc. (FRA 2014; West Midlands Police 2021)) as well as from international stakeholders (UNODC 2012) etc.

(3) Protection

Similar to prevention programs, the protection of migrants as victims of crime often requires cooperation with the victim. In spite of that, migrants who became victims of a particular crime are frequently reluctant to engage in forms of jurisdiction out of fear about their status, stigmatization, reprisal or community alienation. Moreover, particular attention should be paid to forms of re-victimization of migrants that may occur in the context of criminal justice systems itself (UNODC 2015).

7.6 Effectiveness and Outcomes of instruments and tools

related to crime and integration

Just like in many other fields, it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of policy instruments and tools in relation to the integration and crime nexus. Yet, attempts to evaluate the effect of certain policies have been made. As such, crimmigration policies and associated policies have been criticized. The German law on expulsion, for example, is criticized to be leading to the exclusion of those who are in particular need of support (e.g. delinquent minors) from integration into society. It is said as yet another example where criminal law is pushed into the role of an instrument of

²⁵ <https://www.api.nrw.de/>

²⁶ <https://www.kurvekriegen.nrw.de/>

²⁷ <https://www.klarkommen.nrw.de/>

²⁸ <http://brothers-bonveno.de/>

control within the wider framework of migratory laws (Hörich and Bergmann 2016). The boundaries of crimmigration practices became increasingly blurred, creating hybrid forms of punishment. Authors argue that current crimmigration practices are imposing and delivering meanings that go well beyond rooted aims of administrative measures. Although traditionally designed with a preventive purpose, administrative measures now lean towards social exclusion and a reaffirmation of the value of citizenship (Di Molfetta and Brouwer 2020).

Foreign national prisoners do not only serve a particular sentence in a “special” penal institution, but they are also waiting to be expelled from their temporary host country (Di Molfetta and Brouwer 2020). With the creation of foreign national prisons deportation has been facilitated and formalised as a state-sanctioned “confinement of differentiation”, i.e. detention that prevents integration with and facilitates exclusion from society. By shifting the focus from usual penal policies and practices on to ensuring efficient returns the concern for reintegration has become inferior to expulsion. Rather than treating immigration and penal processes distinctively, the creating and operation of prisons which focus on removals has enabled a prioritisation of deportation as a politically driven end result over the rehabilitation as regulatory foundation for penal process. However, it is suggested that the view that different circumstances and services are required for a group which “is not going to be re-integrated” is misplaced – also these prisoners have to be re-integrated into a society; even if it is a different one to where they are serving their sentence (Mulgrew 2017). Lastly, empirical research from the past decade proved that harsh punishment like imprisonment is not the best measure to reduce crime (Kury 2018).

Furthermore, the (evaluation of the) effectiveness of preventive measures²⁹ and de-radicalisation programmes has increasingly come to the centre of attention in recent years. Yet, despite the rapidly growing number of programs, both at regional and international level, there is still limited evidence of comprehensive evaluation on their effectiveness and impact assessment regarding policies is scarce. There is limited evidence on what supports a positive change and therefore it is difficult to determine if an intervention is (likely to be) successful (Aiello, Puigvert, and Schubert 2018; CREST 2019; Davy 2016; Kober 2017). A major challenge in preventive programs and measures is the evaluation of an attitudinal change of participants. However, to date indicators measuring the effectiveness and success of initiatives by means of output analysis, merely looking at attitudinal change (i.e. acts of, for example, violence) rather than behavioural change (i.e. fundamental beliefs leading to, for example, violence). The reason for this is related to methodological complexities of measuring attitudes. Another relevant aspect that research mentioned with reference to scarce literature on policy and programme evaluations are that many measures have not been underway long enough to allow an evaluation of particularly long term effects (O’Halloran 2017). Moreover, given the nature of preventive programmes they do not necessarily have a

²⁹ There are many different crime prevention programmes and measures focussing to prevent delinquency of refugees on all kind of different aspects, e.g. crime prevention in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, radicalisation prevention, violence prevention and many more, which are not particularly highlighted in this section.

definite time period and so conceptual and normative questions arise on where the evaluation of measures should begin and end (Kober 2017).

Yet some assessments have been done which, however, not necessarily yield the desired results: Researchers report that the impact of counter-extremism policies reveals a rather negative effect due to the stigmatization of the Muslim community and minority groups. This undesirable consequence can be observed, for example, in increased “stop and search” measures or discriminatory profiling targeting in particular Muslim or migrant communities. It is suggested that this leads to the emergence of the Muslim community as a suspect community. Arbitrary or random policing can subvert the effectiveness of such policies, since people are less likely to assist police (Aiello, Puigvert, and Schubert 2018). In the UK, for example, an evaluative study on de-radicalisation programmes in 2018, commissioned by the Home Office, “reported that 95% of de-radicalisation programmes were ‘ineffective’” (Brader 2020; Hamilton 2018). A broader assessment that looked at de-radicalization experiences in Europe concluded that de-radicalization policies “failed to deliver the expected outcomes of reducing the appeal of terrorism and dealing effectively with prison radicalization and recruitment” (El-Said 2017).

What research concludes is that it is not only about designing prevention programmes for migrants and their offspring exclusively, but rather developing strategies and opportunities that promote integration for all (Atanisev et al. 2021). Research highlights that the noteworthy challenge in reducing violent extremism is lies in finding the right balance between short-term strategies (i.e. frequently repressive measures) and long-term strategies (e.g., trust-building) (Bjørge 2020). To prevent negative outcomes of the policies and their implementation, policies should include the voices of their end-users. Particularly with view to youth it is recommended to open up debate in a respectful environment that is not judgmental but open to various opinions and thereby establishing trustworthy relationships with the people in these spaces (Aiello, Puigvert, and Schubert 2018).

7.7 Conclusion of the chapter findings

Whereas empirical evidence can perhaps point towards a statistical correlation between deviant behaviour of migrants and problems with integration, further research suggests that it is not the migration experience itself but rather the accumulation of individual and socio-structural problems leading to a higher statistical probability of delinquent behaviour among migrants. At the same time, authors describe that disintegration is favoured by stigmatisation and disadvantages. Particularly male youth with a migration background are said to be exposed to many risk factors of violence due to a lack of prospects, limited social abilities, and perceptions of aggressive aspects rooted in a traditional male role that views violence as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts. For refugees, experiences and traumas caused by war in their country of origin and the flight itself, as well as a lack of trust in the state and its institutions, combined with above mentioned factors result in the

need for specific crime prevention for migrants. This said, it needs to be stressed that migration and crime per se are not causally connected.

Hence, the importance of preventive approaches and practical activities are highlighted repetitively. With regard hereto, authors recommend a holistic approach that applies a comprehensive range of mechanisms and measures. It is underlined that this has a higher probability of reducing the issue than relying on a simplistic and narrow set of measures alone. In addition, information sharing among different stakeholders and multi-agency work is seen as an essential aspect to successfully manage complex problems such as, for example, violent extremism. The need for coordinated strategies in the application of the preventive measures and their controlled implementation in practice is continuously emphasized. Further, trust and trust-building activities, secured through involvement, are seen as another possible key in preventive initiatives and thus ultimately to smooth integration. In this respect it is also strongly recommended to have an open communication and dialogue with the individuals at risk, but also with the general public and other people involved (Bjørøgo 2020).

However, what is lacking, is the systematic evaluation of such crime prevention measures. Most attempts of evaluations are project-based reports only and exploit theoretical concepts; a widely accepted multi-faceted and reliable impact assessment as such does currently not exist. Additionally, universally applicable evaluation criteria to measure and evaluate prevention measures do not exist but are urgently required. Authors criticise that even in cases where evaluations have been conducted – which are also frequently project-based approaches – it is not demanded to measure actual effects in terms of crime reduction. In addition to this, clearly defined objectives and comprehensible criteria of most reviewed projects are oftentimes missing. As far as evaluations exist, they are mostly limited to checking boxes aligning with questions such as: ‘how many persons and institutions requested were reached within the scope of the project?’ or ‘how satisfied the stakeholders were with the project’. In most cases, the designation as a crime prevention measure does not even differentiate between non-specific social prevention and specific crime prevention (Bannenber 2003).

Last, a lot of research with regards to crime and integration is done on national and local level. Thus, it is recommended to include different languages for further research in order to gain a more complete picture on national and/or regional initiatives. After all, integration is seen as the most successful prevention, above any particular and specific measure, approach or programme.

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