
SURVEY: EUROPEANS FEAR REFUGEES RAISE TERROR THREAT

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In the minds of Europeans, the "refugee crisis and threat of terrorism are very much related," a survey said. In Germany, 56 percent of pro-AfD respondents held negative views of Muslims already living in Europe.

The Washington-based Pew Research Center published a survey on Monday that found roughly half of Europeans fear the arrival of refugees raises the threat of terrorism in their country.

At least half of the public in eight out of the 10 countries, representing 80 percent of Europe's population, believe that "incoming refugees increase the likelihood of terrorism in their country," said the survey.

Hungary and Poland had the strongest views from respondents, with 76 and 71 percent respectively. In Germany, 61 percent of respondents shared the view, while 52 percent voiced the same fears in the UK.

However, only 46 percent of respondents in France, which was hit by multiple terrorist attacks in 2015, believed refugees

"The refugee crisis and the threat of terrorism are very much related to one another in the minds of many Europeans," the survey noted.

"The recent surge of refugees into Europe has featured prominently in the anti-immigrant rhetoric of right-wing parties across the continent and in the heated debate over the UK's decision to exit the European Union," it added

In 2015, over 1 million irregular migrants entered the EU, many of them asylum seekers fleeing conflict in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

"It is important to note that worries about refugees are not necessarily related to the number of migrants coming to the country," the survey said, referring to the discrepancy between countries larger host countries, such as Germany and Sweden, and those that took fewer refugees, such as Poland and Hungary.

The study also found that perceptions of refugees are influenced in large part by negative attitudes towards Europe's Muslims.

"In Hungary, Italy, Poland and Greece, more than six-in-ten say they have an unfavorable opinion of the Muslims in their country - an opinion shared by at least one-in-four in each nation polled," the survey said.

At least 59 percent of respondents who expressed favorable views to the right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD) held a negative view of Muslims in general.

The survey comprised several EU member states, including Germany, Sweden, the UK, France, Spain, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland and Greece.

<http://www.dw.com/en/survey-europeans-fear-refugees-raise-terror-threat/a-19394384>

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