MIGRANTS, LOCAL FUNDAMENTALISTS AND RETURNEES ALONG THE WESTERN BALKANS ROUTE

Želimir Kešetović, Vladimir Ninković

Faculty of Security Studies, University of Belgrade, Gospodara Vučića 50, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Abstract

Alongside with the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia is located on the Western Balkans route of migrants and as such has faced a large influx of refugees and economic migrants from the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan since 2011, and especially since 2015. Western Balkans is not their final destination but rather a transit point on the way to Western Europe. Despite this fact, Serbia, like other countries on the Western Balkans route, faces a whole series of security risks caused by the refugee crisis. One of the most prominent threats is the potential for synergy of extremists going to the West as bogus migrants and local Islamic fundamentalists. This is exacerbated with the growing number of returnee volunteers from the war in Syria, many of whom had been previously radicalized, both in the local mosques but also via Internet. They are suspected to maintain a close contact with their "brothers in arms" and serve as role models to other young people. As most of the returnees come from the province of Sandžak in the southwestern part of Serbia, a problem may arise as two large camps for asylum seekers are located in that region (Tutin and Sjenica).

Keywords: migrants, migrant crisis, returnees, fundamentalism.

Adress for correspondence: Želimir Kešetović, Faculty of Security Studies, University of Belgrade, Gospodara Vučića 50, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, e-mail: kzelimir@yahoo.com.

1. INTRODUCTION

The ex-SFRY states have been under the increased pressure of illegal migrants since 2009, i.e. the onset of the second migration wave from the territory of the Republic of Greece. The largest percentage of the refugees and migrants represent the citizens of the Afro-Asian countries that use the Western Balkans as a transit route to the European Union. An important factor that increased the "attractiveness" of the Republic of Serbia for migrants is the incorporation of Hungary within the Schengen agreement framework, which makes the Serbian-Hungarian border the last obstacle towards the rich countries of the West. The main routes from which irregular migrants come to Serbia lead from Greece and Macedonia, where by using various modes of illegal crossing of state borders (on foot, between two official border crossings, hiding in cargo departments of vehicles and trains, avoiding the border control, using fake documents etc.) refugees and migrants enter the territory of the Republic of Serbia, after which they, again, try to illegally leave the country. Since 2013, another route – from Bulgaria - was activated [1].

In addition, the volunteers from the wars in Syria and Iraq represent a significant security problem [2]. Namely, from 2013 until March 2016 the returnees have been protagonists in seventeen terrorist attacks or unsuccessful plots in Europe. Two of those events were recorded at the territory of Kosovo* [3].

The particularity of Serbia in comparison with the other "Balkan Route" countries is that migrants pass through the areas in which the activities of the radical and extremist Islamist groups have been recorded – i.e. the region of Sandžak/Raška and the southern municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac. Moreover, on that territory several camps for migrants and asylum seekers were set up - in the towns of Preševo, Bujanovac, Sjenica and Tutin. This fact points to the potential of the contacts between local extremists and the returnees from the war in Syria with the migrants, and with the "fake migrants", i.e. the ISIL (DAESH, IDIL) and Al-Qaeda members and associates.

In the first part of the paper, we will present the main security implications of the "migrant wave" that hit the Balkan Peninsula in 2014, as well as some terminological doubts about the use of the terms 'migrant', 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker'. In the second part, the process of radicalization, the presence of the radical groups in Serbia, the recruitment for the war in Syria and Iraq, as well as the framing of returnees as a security problem will be discussed. Finally, the authors will assess the possibility of the contacts between refugees and migrants accommodated in the camps and the returnees and local extremists, security implications of that scenario and the risk reduction measures.

2. MIGRANTS OR REFUGEES? – SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

There is an ongoing debate how to call the people who move into Europe due to the wars and crises in the Middle East, Near East and North Africa. According to a Council of Foreign Relations report, Europe is currently witnessing a mixed-migration phenomenon, in which economic migrants and asylum seekers travel together and these groups overlap. This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the inconsistent methods with which asylum applications are often processed across the EU [4].

Under the UN Refugee Convention on the Status of Refugees from 1951, an asylum seeker is a person fleeing persecution or conflict, and therefore seeking international protection. Strictly speaking, a refugee is an asylum seeker whose claim has been approved. However, the same convention defines a refugee as any person who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such

fear, is unwilling to return to it" [5]. Therefore, in the eyes of the UN Syrian nationals enjoy prima facie refugee status. According to the Guardian report around 50% of all refugees come from Syria, 13% from Afghanistan, 8% from Eritrea, 4% from Nigeria, 3% from Somalia, Pakistan and Iraq, and 2% from Sudan. Refugee crisis: apart from Syrians, who else is travelling to Europe? They are so recognized as it is too dangerous for them to return to their own country, and for them denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences [5].

An economic migrant is, on the contrary, a person whose primary motivation for leaving is economic gain. Lately, the term 'migrant' is seen as an umbrella term for all three groups [4], although according to the UNHCR this is not justifiable [6].

According to the UNHCR "So, at UNHCR we say 'refugees and migrants' when referring to movements of people by sea or in other circumstances where we think both groups may be present – boat movements in Southeast Asia are another example. We say 'refugees' when we mean people fleeing war or persecution across an international border. And we say 'migrants' when we mean people moving for reasons not included in the legal definition of a refugee" [6].

This is not just a linguistic question, as according to the international law, refugees and migrants can be treated differently. Namely, countries are free to deport migrants who arrive without legal papers, which they cannot do with refugees under the 1951 UN Convention [7]. Therefore, for many EU politicians there is an incentive to qualify everyone fleeing to Europe as migrants instead of refugees.

Uncontrolled migrations may have serious security repercussions. Politicians can articulate and securitize them in such a manner that certain groups within the general public will start considering them to be a fundamental threat to the political, societal, economic and cultural security.

Politicians can articulate illegal migration as a threat to the political, societal, economic and

cultural security of the state and society, with the acceptance of certain parts of the general public. It is believed that illegal migrations impair the security of state borders and thus represent a threat to the national sovereignty of a state (political security). Also, they can exert negative influence over the structure of society and its economic well-being by impacting the social order and causing increased political turmoil and a higher criminal rate (social security). In addition, refugees and migrants have often been portrayed as a threat to the lifestyle and culture of the receiving country. Apart from getting the blame for soaring crime rates and other social problems, illegal migrants are occasionally represented as economic migrants seeking the asylum in order to abuse the social security system of a state, or to take jobs from the local population (economic security). Finally, the arrival of ethnically or religiously homogenous migrants may be regarded as a cause of change in the racial/ethnical/religious structure of the state and society and the weakening of its cultural identity. Therefore, through the process of securitization, illegal migrations may be separately or cumulatively articulated as a fundamental threat to the referent object (the state, society or an individual), either separately or as a part of a group [8].

Among the most prominent risks is the possibility of infiltration of terrorists as bogus migrants and their connection with local extremists along the migrant routes. Connected with this is the risk of radicalization of the population in the countries that are the final destinations of migrants, as well as in those through which they pass on their way.

In a personal interview we conducted with a Serbian security expert he stated that there are substantiated suspicions that the Islamic State is exploiting the tidal wave of migrants into Europe in order to bolster its ranks. Furthermore, it is documented that radical Islamist entities affiliated with Al-Qaeda and ISIS are behind some smugglers' networks with 'headquarters' in Libya and Syria, where large areas are controlled by the extremists. It is difficult to estimate the number of un-dercover terrorists among the migrants, and although there are some estimates that the number could actually be rather high, this still has not been corroborated by any trustworthy publicly available source. (Personal interview, 25th February 2016) On the other hand, there is a hypothesis that the jihadists use the migrant crisis for fearmongering, whilst the number of infiltrated terrorists is negligible. It should be stressed that fear is a concept that represents the very core of terrorism.

3. WAHHABISM AND VOLUNTEERING IN THE WAR IN SYRIA

Probably the most complete definition of radicalization is given by Alex Schmid: „ Radicalization is an individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarisation, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favour of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict-waging. These can include either (i) the use of (non-violent) pressure and coercion, (ii) various forms of political violence other than terrorism or (iii) acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes. The process is, on the side of rebel factions, generally accompanied by an ideological socialization away from mainstream or status quo-oriented positions towards more radical or extremist positions involving a dichotomous world view and the acceptance of an alternative focal point of political mobilization outside the dominant political order as the existing system is no longer recognized as appropriate or legitimate "[9].

For the RAND corporation, Islamist radicalization comprehends the acceptance of belief that, for the purpose of the re-establishment of the global Muslim state – Caliphate, Muslims not only have to accept the strict Salafist (ultraconservative) interpretation of Islam, but also to lead the Holy War – Jihad, defined as an armed struggle against the enemies of the Islam. Enemies include non-Muslim states, but also current governments

of the Muslim countries who put their own leadership ahead of God's. De-radicalization, in that context, represents the process of rejection of this belief, in particular in the belief in legitimacy of violence over civilians, excommunication of those Muslims who do not share extremist views and the opposition to the concepts of democracy, civic liberties and human rights [10].

Similar to other Western Balkan countries, Serbia has also experienced the trend of the increasing radicalization of the local Muslims. One of the manifestations of that phenomenon is a relatively high number of the volunteers from the Balkans in the war in Syria, fighting on the rebel side of the conflict, mainly in those units considered to be close to the extremist and terrorist groups. Several Serbian citizens, from Novi Pazar, Sjenica and Tutin, were killed in the conflict.

Al-Qaeda members and associates in the Western Balkans are often called the "White Al-Qaeda" [11]. Al-Qaeda members and ISIL volunteers are recruited from the ultra-conservative Salafist or Wahhabi Muslims. Estimated percentage of adherents to this subvariant of Sunni Islam in the Western Balkan region is varied: from 3% in Kosovo, 5% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to almost 18% in the Sandžak region. The activities of Wahhabists receive tacit approval, and even protection, of some religious and political leaders of Balkan Muslims, which has a positive impact on their numbers. As a fundamentalist movement within the Sunni Islam, Wahhabism preaches the return to the primaeval Islam, which, in their opinion, existed during the time of Muhammad and his first adherents, simultaneously considering all later forms and law schools of Islam as renegades. Wahhabis show open animosity towards the Hanafi school of Islam (prevalent in the Balkan Peninsula) as well as towards Sufi orders (Alevi, Bektashi etc), Shia Muslims, liberal Muslim thinkers and all non-muslims [12].

Certainly, Wahhabis should not be equalized with terrorists, however, in the Balkan region

Wahhabism is the main catalyst for the radicalization of local Muslim population. Wahhabism appeared in the Western Balkans during the eighties, when the first students returned from the religious educational institutions of the Arabian Peninsula. Their number significantly increased during and after the war in Bosnia, due to the ever more present foreign volunteers and missionaries whose activities were mostly funded by the state and non-governmental organizations of the Gulf countries, located in Bosnia, Sandžak and Kosovo.

Islamic theologian from Sandžak, Sami Džeko, in his polemic work "Wahhabism – the most dangerous novelty" points to the dimensions of this problem in the region: „Since the first day when the Ottoman foot stepped on the Sandžak and Bosnian soil we followed the Hanafi Madhhab and Maturidi aqida. (…) However, several years ago a new movement arrived to our region. Wahhabis came and started preaching something opposite from what we believed in for centuries. (…) Their ideas were steadily disseminated among our people. Their call to the rejection of science, of traditional and well-known Hanafi scholars and everything else that is not Wahhabi soon bore fruit. (…) Whoever polemicized with that sort of people had an opportunity to be ignored before he said anything, before he explained any proposition or before he tried to prove anything. The reason to such behavior lays in the psychology of adherents of any movement, especially religious sects, who always claim that everyone but them is wrong. Therefore, as soon as he disagrees with their attitude, their interlocutor will be characterized as a sinner or a kafir. (…) Brutality and violence are commonplace in their missionary work. Such cases often occur worldwide, in particular in places where they have just arrived" [13].

According to the media reports, the recruitment of the Bosniaks for the war in Syria is organized by the leader of the Wahhabi community in the village of Gornja Maoča in the northern Bosnia, Nusret Imamović, as well as by Dževad Gološ, the owner of the Daru-l-Qur'an foundati-

on for the Kur'an studies from Mostar. Wahhabis have also established a foothold in Sandžak, the region straddling the Serbia-Montenegro border. Furthermore, the division within the Muslim community in Serbia, and the rivalry between the Islamic Community of Serbia, with the seat in Belgrade, and the Islamic Community in Serbia, with the seat in Novi Pazar, additionally contributed to the popularity of the radical Islam. The radical groups are present in the financial (for instance, BBI Bank), educational (e.g. Elche Madrasa in Travnik), and non-profit sector (charity organizations – Insan Haq Huriyyet, BIF, Furqan-e-Taibah International) [16]. Various Al-Qaeda associated organizations are active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia (Sandžak region), Macedonia and Kosovo*, whilst the presence of Al-Qaeda-connected individuals was documented even in Croatia and Slovenia. Several incidents and prevented terrorist plots confirm that the terrorist threat is not purely theoretical.

Wahhabis are disproportionately represented amongst foreign volunteers, and according to the media estimates, around three hundred volunteers from the region joined the Syrian rebels, mainly the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda associates. According to Thomas Hegghamer "foreign fighters strengthen transnational terrorist groups as volunteering for war is a stepping-stone for individual involvement in the extreme forms of militancy. Majority of Al-Qaeda operatives started their careers as volunteers in war zones, and the majority of transnational jihadist groups today is a by-product of the mobilization of foreign fighters" [15].

Most volunteers have been recruited through personal networks and contacts [17]. Also, a significant number of persons was radicalized and recruited via Internet and social networks, using the jihadi narrative. Voluntary "draft" to jihad can hardly be considered a novelty, but it reached new heights with the war in Syria. According to Hegghammer, during the last decade of the XX century in Europe only about one thousand volunteers left to participate in the jihad, out of which,

roughly, one half ended up in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whilst in the first decade of the new century that number fell to 500 [15]. In 2012, according to more conservative estimates, the number of foreign volunteers in Syria was around 2000, which represented slightly less than 10% of the rebel forces. Most of the foreign fighters came from the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, but neither the number of the fighters from Europe and the ex-USSR is negligible [18]. The number and the percentage of the foreign fighters in the war in Syria increased in 2014 (12.000) and 2015 (25.000), but stagnated in 2016. It is estimated that around 5000 foreign fighters come from the EU, and between 500 and 1000 from the Western Balkans [19, 20]. An average foreign fighter is 24 years old and about one third of the volunteers were brought up in families in which Wahhabi Islam is practiced. Fighters from the Western Balkans show similar demographic characterics with the difference of being somewhat older (26-39 years) [20].

Although arguably this number is not too high, it is still much higher than the number of the jihadists that decided to practically implement their ideas in their own countries. According to one hypothesis, militant jihadists prefer armed struggle in the war zones abroad, as they deem it to be more legitimate than the attacks in the peaceful surroundings in the West. The reason for it is that in the war zones, the targets are other combatants, whereas the victims in the West would be mainly comprised of civilians. Certainly, there are those clerics who justify even the slaughter of civilians in terrorist attacks, but their number is significantly lower in comparison to those who justify voluntary departure to war.

On the frontlines volunteers undergo deeper radicalization. Therefore, the risk of them committing terrorist acts once they return is increasing. The share of the returnees is around 1/9 of the departed, and the experience of fighting on the Middle Eastern fronts is actually one of the main predictors of terrorist activity. According to some field research data, even though only 26% of all

plotters had foreign fighter experience, around 46% of all plots included at least one veteran. For executed attacks, the rate is 58%, and for executed attacks with fatalities, it is 67% [15]. This is further corroborated by Sageman [20], which leads us to a conclusion that the "foreign fighter effect" needs to be taken very seriously in estimating terrorism risk.

4. A POTENTIAL DYNAMICS BETWEEN MIGRANTS AND RETURNEES

Centers for Asylum Seekers exist in some communities where there has been an increase in the activity of radical Islamists, and from where some volunteers departed to Syria. These are the centers in the Sandžak Region - Sjenica and Tutin, as well as the centers in the southern municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo.

According to the information provided by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations of the Republic of Serbia (KIRS), around 8000 migrants and asylum seekers currently reside in the Serbian centers, of which about one half are under the age of eighteen. Also, a large percentage represents men who travel alone. The curiosity is that over 80% are migrants from Afghanistan and Pakistan, whilst the number of refugees from Syria is significantly lower than during the previous years. According to the information obtained from an interview with a representative of the humanitarian organization dealing with the support of asylum seekers, there are currently about 450 young men aged 16 to 30 in the Preševo center, 120 in Sjenica, 80 in Bujanovac and only about 30 in Tutin.

The additional problem, according to sources from KIRS, is the fact that for migrants it is getting extremely difficult to leave Serbia, taking into account the low quotas and security measures prescribed by the Republic of Hungary, so most of them will remain in Serbia for months and perhaps even years. Such a situation causes dissatisfaction and frustration among asylum seekers, mostly adolescents.

On the other hand, according to a research report by the BIRN (Balkan Investigative Report Network) of January 2016, a total of 50 citizens of Serbia participated in the war in Syria and Iraq between 2012 and 2016. Eight people died in combat, while seven returned to Serbia [22]. So, while the number of returnees is small, they can serve as role models for the disgruntled and disappointed young men from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and other countries that find themselves in the limbo of Serbian collective centers, with less and less hope they will soon reach their final destination in Western Europe.

We should not forget the fact that one of the main causes for fleeing the Middle Eastern countries is the experience of life in a society that ISIL, Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and other Islamist groups advocate for. The vast majority of refugees and migrants are bitterly opposed to fundamentalist trends in religion and politics in their countries of origin. Still, in their hopelessness, it is not difficult to imagine that vulnerable young people could turn to humanitarian organizations based in the Gulf States and visit the so-called "para mosques" (informal mosques without minarets and neither under the jurisdiction of the Islamic Community of Serbia, nor the Islamic Community in Serbia). Also, the theory of "sleepers" and "false migrants" inserted into migrant columns and centers, although still without strong evidence, is not completely refuted [22].

Also, according to Daniel Byman, "the potential threat is huge, but the real threat is far lower, taking into account the actions of the counter-terrorism and intelligence apparatus and other factors" [23]. Namely, many volunteers were killed in fighting or in suicide bombings in Syria / Iraq; many of them never return, but switch to another battlefield they consider to be of significance for the jihad; a certain number is disappointed with the real situation on the battlefield and goes through a kind of "deradicalization", and many returnees are likewise subject to the security measures of the security services [24].

5. CONCLUSION

The migrant crisis caused by the situation in the countries of the Middle East, particularly by the civil war in Syria, together with the activities of ISIS and other radical groups, and exacerbated by the opposing interests of the great powers, has become a serious security problem for Europe and a test of the fundamental principles underlying the European Union.

The Western Balkans countries, the scene of the currently allegedly closed "Balkan Route", have found themselves in a difficult situation for purely geographical reasons. They certainly cannot influence the causes of the problem, but they must live with its consequences as well as trying to manage them. In addition to numerous technical, humanitarian, social, sanitary and other issues, the refugee wave carries a number of security threats and problems, among which it is especially worth emphasizing the presence of radicalized returnees from the Syrian conflict in the Middle East.

If we are to believe in the estimates, there are not many of them, so in this sense the problem is not very serious. What can have more serious effects is their influence in the Muslim communities in the Western Balkans countries, and the potential for promoting extreme and radical ideas primarily among the younger population. This is especially in the context of the latest complications of the security and political situation in the former Yugoslavia.

The final conclusion is that the security threat of the returnees should not be blown out of proportion, but neither should it be taken lightly. In any case, an increased vigilance of the security services, intensified cooperation and information exchange between the security services in the region and with the EUROPOL, as well as the media, educational and other activities on the prevention and promotion of the authentic and traditional interpretation of Islam is a must for all countries in the region.

6. REFERENCES

1. Kešetović, Ž, and Ninković, V. (2016). Migrants and Local Extremists in South-Eastern Europe, in Čaleta, D & Shemella, P (eds.) Comprehensive Approach to Counter-Radicalism and Extremism – Future Challenges for Counter Terrorism Process. Ljubljana, pp.101-114.

2. Jenkins, B.M. (2014). When Jihadis Come Marching Home. Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 41pp.

3. Zammit, A. (2014). "List of Alleged Violent Plots in Europe Involving Syria Returnees" accessed 23 February 2017, URL: https://andrewzammit.org/2014/06/29/list-of-alleged-violent-plots-in-europe-involving-syria-returnees/.

4. Park, J. (2015). "Europe's migration crisis". CFR Backgrounders. Council of Foreign Relations, accessed 28 February 2017, URL: http://www.cfr.org/migration/europes-migration-crisis/p32874.

5. UNHCR (2011). Convention and Protocol relating to the status of the refugees.

6. Edwards, A. (2015). "UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?", accessed 5 February 2016, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/55df0e556.html.

7. Sengupta, S. (28 Aug. 2015). Migrant of refugee? There is a difference, with legal implications. The New York Times, accessed 5. February 2017, URL: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/28/world/migrants-refugees-europe-syria.html?_r=0

8. Tatalović, S. and Malnar, D. (2015). Sigurnosni aspekti izbjegličke krize. Političke analize, 6 (3): 23-29.

9. Schmid, A. (2011). Glossary and Abbreviations of Terms and Concepts Relating to Terrorism and Counter Terrorism. In Alex P. Schmid (Ed.), The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research. London: Routledge, 678-679.

10. Vidino, L. (2011). Radicalisation, Linkage and Diversity, Current Trends in Terrorism in Europe. Santa Monica: RAND.

11. Trifunović, D. (2009). Al-Qaeda's Global Network and its Infl uence on Western Balkans Nations. Circunstancia. Año VII - Nº 18. Fundacion José Ortega y Gasset.

12. Deliso, C. (2007). The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

13. Džeko, S. (2009). Vehabizam, najopasnija novotarija. Sjenica, 284 pp.

14. Krueger, A.B. (2006). The National Origins of Foreign Fighters in Iraq. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

15. Heghammer, T. (2013). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting. American Political Science Review.

16. Trifunović, D. and Kešetović, Ž. (2014). Terrorism in the Western Balkans: Between Transition and Radicalism.

17. Reynolds, S. and Hafez, M. (2017). Social Network Analysis of German Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq. Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence. Routledge.

18. Lund, A. (2012). "Syrian Jihadism.Swedish Institute of International Affairs", accessed 27 February 2017, URL: http://www.ui.se/upl/files/77409.pdf.

19. Koutsoliakos, V. and Flintisis, A. (2016). Refugees, Smugglers and Terrorists. Per Concordiam – Journal of European Security and Defense Issues, 7:3.

20. Spahiu, E. (2015). Ethnic Albanian Foreign Fighters and the Islamic State. Jamestown Terrorism Monitor. 13:10, accessed 27 February 2017, URL: https://jamestown.org/program/ethnic-albanian-foreign-fighters-and-the-islamic-state/.

21. Sageman, M. (.2008). The Next Generation of Terror. Foreign Policy, accessed 28 February 2017, URL: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2008/02/19/the_next_generation_of_terror.

22. Ristić, M, Maksimović, Z and Dragojlo, S. (2016). Jihadists Target Young, Marginalized Serbian Muslims, in Balkan Jihadists – The Radicalisation and Recruitment of Fighters in Syria and Iraq. Balkan Investigative Reporting Network.

23. Byman, D. (2016). The Jihadist Returnee Threat – Just How Dangerous? Political Science Quarterly, 131 (1): 69-99.

24. Byman, D. and Shapiro, J. (2014). Be Afraid. Be a Little Afraid – The Threat of Terrorism from Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq. Brookings Institution.

POVRATNICI NA BALKANSKOJ RUTI - MIGRANTI I LOKALNI FUNDAMENTALISTI U REPUBLICI SRBIJI

Sažetak

Zajedno sa Republikom Makedonijom i Republikom Hrvatskom, Republika Srbija je locirana na Zapadnobalkanskoj migrantskoj ruti te se stoga suočava sa velikim priljevom izbjeglica i ekonomskih migranata s Bliskog Istoka, Pakistana i Afganistana od 2011. godine, a posebice od 2015. godine. Zapadni Balkan nije njihova destinacija, već tranzitna točka na putu prema Zapadnoj Europi. Unatoč tome, Srbija se,kao i druge zemlje na Zapadno Balkanskoj ruti, suočava sa čitavim nizom sigurnosnih rizika uzrokovanih izbjegličkom krizom. Jedna od najznačajnijih prijetnji je potencijal za sinergiju ekstremista koji kao lažni migranti idu na Zapad i lokalnih islamskih fundamentalista. Situaciju pogoršava sve veći broj povratnika dragovoljaca koji se vraćaju iz rata u Siriji, od kojih su mnogi ranije bili radikalizirani u lokalnim džamijama ili putem interneta. Sumnja se da oni održavaju vezu sa svojom „braćom po oružju" i predstavljaju uzor/model za mlade ljude. Kako je najveći broj povratnika iz Sandžaka u jugozapadnom dijelu Srbije, problem može nastati u dva velika kampa za azilante koji se nalaze u toj regiji (Tutin i Sjenica).

Ključne riječi: migranti, migrantska kriza, povratnici, fundamentalizam.