"**How important is violent extremism as a driver for displacement worldwide?**

Professor Feargal Cochrane
Conflict Analysis Research Centre (CARC)
University of Kent
(*With apologies for my absence and thanks to Khalid and Amy for introducing this ppt on my behalf*)

Structure of Full Paper

- Boundaries & aims –thematic focus/key research questions/methodology & conceptual framing.

- Lit review on drivers of displacement, its changing nature/scale and salience for radical forms of behaviour, violence and security.

- Assessment of connections between violent behaviour and displacement with a critical analysis of the notion of 'violent extremism' as a term of analysis.

- section that provides a new theoretical framing for understanding roles of migrant communities in violence and security & provides a more fine-grained analysis through which to view displacement and violence.

- Section that maps the constructive contributions of displaced groups in reducing radical behaviour/violence and strengthening peacebuilding

- section posing some policy ideas for further discussion.

Key Themes of presentation

- Rather than go over all the above areas in 15 mins –more useful to focus on , some of the key questions, themes and issues that will underpin the analysis.

- This includes some starting points that might benefit from being challenged and unpacked, as well as areas where the current discourse and debate over the violent extremism-migration nexus, could be usefully recalibrated.

- This presentation also seeks to foreground an approach that assesses questions of causality, context, structure and agency in discussions concerning connections between violent behaviour and migrant groups.

- It will seek to reflect the capacity for migrant groups to contribute to sustainable security policies as well as their potential for radical violence.

- It will conclude by identifying some issues/questions for further consideration

Note on Methodology

- The paper will focus on desk-based research techniques. These will bring together and synthesise scholarly work at the intersection of radicalism/ violent behaviour and migrant group dynamics (e.g. regional context/ political and cultural character etc.) This will also examine work that explores the migrant experience in receiving countries and its relevance to behaviour, It will be thematically based, infused with comparative empirical data –rather than using a small number of case studies.

- The methodology will be consciously inter-disciplinary/will connect quantitative and econometric assessments of migrant behaviour across international relations, economics, anthropology and human geography, along with qualitative analysis.

- This will be supplemented with reports from international NGOs e.g. IOM/Amnesty International/ Human Rights Watch and international inter-agency bodies e.g. Global Migration Group; international bodies e.g. OHCHR, UNDP/UNICEF/ World Bank. Policy documents from national governments/ security agencies will also be examined.

- The report will provide new & accessible statistical summaries/tables/charts generated by this data across the various thematic areas covered in the paper.
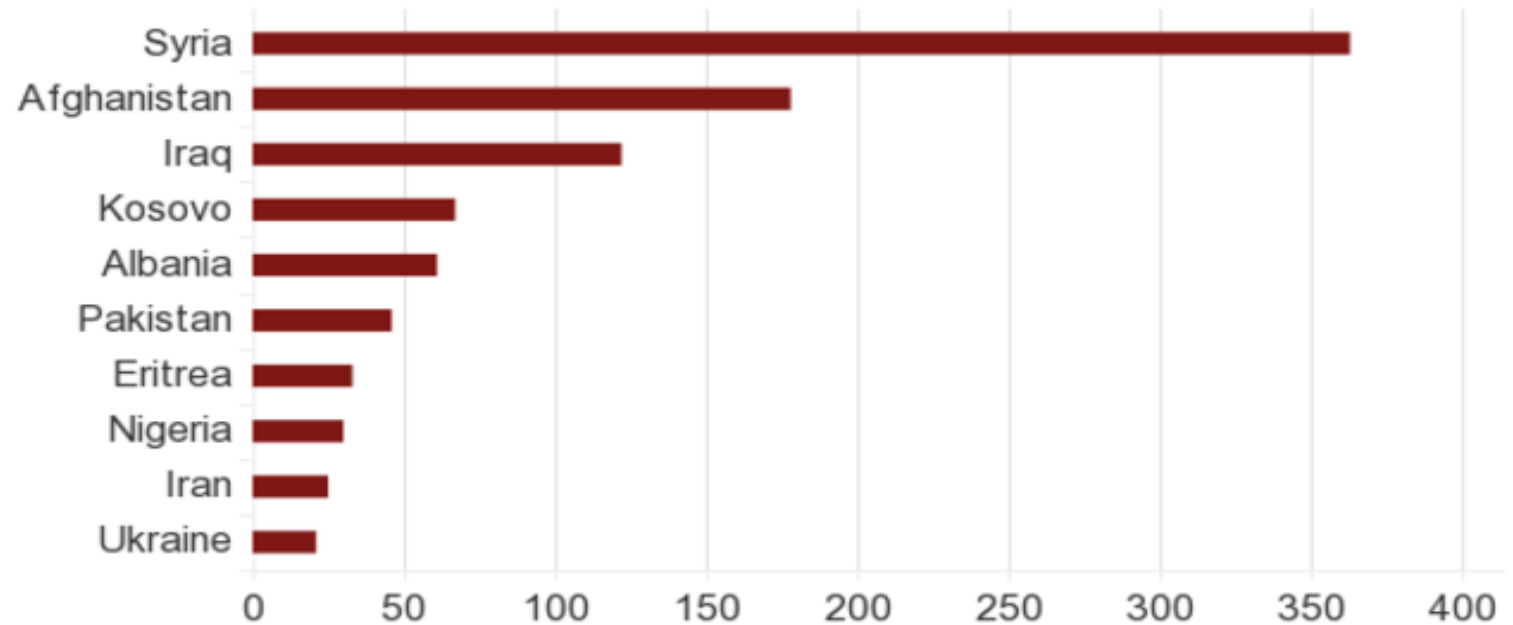
Adopting Clear Language

- The utility of the term 'violent extremism' as a variable for analysis will be briefly explored and suggestions made about why this might be problematic.

- Firstly 'violent extremism' is not especially a migrant phenomenon, but emerges as a consequence of other drivers. In addition 'extremism' is a highly subjective and fluid term of analysis that will vary across ideological contexts and could usefully be clarified through more precise discourse and terminology.

- The starting point of the paper would seek to emphasise that while displaced people may (do) become violent –there is no innate linkage between violence/ radicalism within migrant communities anymore than there is across non-migrant groups.

- The key is to ask *what conditions produce such behaviour* and to focus on these causes and triggers, rather than on the migrant condition itself.

Structure and Agency

- One of the key issues that will run through the analysis relates to the intersection of structure and agency in judgements over violent behaviour

- The paper will examine how scholarly and policy discussions frame notions of radicalisation and violence in the context of the innate agency of migrant groups viz, religious/cultural/political/social characteristics, and the wider structural context where this is formed/expressed and received. (war/famine/repression etc)

  –the conditions of displacement/ scale/longevity/trauma/conditions of arrival
  -The nature of conflict cycle in country of origin/ levels of intensity/longevity etc.
  -Experiences of displaced groups in country of residence:/political/cultural/social.

- The paper will aim to explore the causal drivers of radical violent thought/behaviour rather than at its symptoms/outcomes. This will require connecting the agency of displaced groups with structural drivers (war/famine/repression/homelessness/ State policies towards/within country of origin and country of residence)

Top 10 origins of people applying for asylum in the EU

First-time applications in 2015, in thousands

Source: Eurostat

Question to ask: How important is violent extremism as a driver of displacement in the above countries compared to structural factors relating to violent armed conflict?

Assessing Cause and Effect

- The paper will examine the complexities of demonstrating causal links between violence and displacement and the difficulty of decoupling the various drivers that underpin large migrant flows, the specific political contexts within sending and receiving countries and the particular political/cultural/economic & cultural context of these displaced communities.

- The analysis is likely to stress caution over extrapolation of trends across different contexts, and also assumptions about one set of conditions acting as a driver for particular behaviours.

Migrants Power and Capacity

- The paper will examine how migrants are viewed through a particular framing of power that focuses on their coercive capability, either in their homeland or via radicalism, militancy/resistance to integration in host society.

- The paper will look at how displaced communities exhibit wider forms of power that operate in more complex ways –potentially in unique ways due to their 'intermestic' nature. Such groups possess in Nye's terms, a 'soft power' capacity that complicates how issues linked to violence, extremism and security can be assessed.

- The paper will locate the displaced condition within the globalised reality that migrants may function as de-territorialised actors (neither wholly contained within the state nor completely beyond it) and are thus *intermestically situated*, simultaneously, within and beyond the state.

Migrants as 'Intermestic' Actors

- While initially coined by Bayless Manning in 1977 to discuss internal US government relations, the portmanteau term *intermestic,* has since been applied to economic and foreign policy, as well as to issues relating to the EU, migration, trade, security, human rights and the environment etc. (Manning '*Foreign Affairs*, 55 No.2 (1977)

- Migrants straddle both of these contexts and potentially create a third space that is a hybrid of the two. They occupy a unique position within the violence/security context within and beyond the State and they have the capacity to function as a transnational component of civil society, an intermestic connector between the domestic state and the international context beyond it.

- This provides displaced communities with a potential role as a security asset rather than threat, via sustained strategic engagement –that is worthy of examination.

- Some –but not all policy communities have recognised this.

Hard Power & Violence

- The linkage between displaced communities radicalisation and violence is viewed through the lens of having the capacity to raise funds for weapons, or lobby in support of the political objectives of militant liberation struggles in their countries of origin or travel abroad to engage in such violence. E.G. US Albanians going to fight in Kosovo in the KLA in 1990s (Bekaj, 2010, Koinova, 2013)

- Migrant communities do present real security challenges both to their former homelands and within their countries of residence and a number of scholars from different conceptual starting points have highlighted the way in which 21st Century transnational migrant flows have presented new security challenges (Collier & Hoeffler 2000/2004) the identification of complex emergencies, liberal interventionism and transnational war. (Duffield 2001) Vertovec has pointed out that migrant groups have had such hard power impacts in a range of recent conflict zones including Ethiopia, Kosovo, Nagorno-Karabahk, Kashmir, Israel and Palestine. (Vertovec, 2005, 5**)**

- Thus –migrants can behave as, *transnational civil society spoilers*, who play the role of 'long distance nationalists' (Anderson 1991) and hinder the search for political stability and non-violence.

Beyond a Normative Threat?

- The paper will seek to unpack the connections between displaced groups being seen as a normative threat, due to their size/ proximity, e.g. to political/social cohesion, economic position of host society -and their being an existential threat to shared values, national identity, sense of collective security etc.

- This framing of migration as an existential threat, reflects a securitization process that has been identified across European countries and beyond for many years **(**Amoore, 2006; Balzacq,2005; Bigo, 2014; Buonfino, 2004; Mavelli, 2013; McDonald, 2008; Waever, 1995 Some scholars have cautioned against simplistic binary notions of securitization without methodological or conceptual complexity (Baele & Sterck, 2015, 1120; Boswell, 2007, 606)

- But it remains important to examine the way that radicalisation issues are framed in the context of displaced groups beyond individualised actions of migrants themselves (e.g. wearing of the Burqa/Hijab, what it signifies, and how it is interpreted/understood.

Soft Power of the Displaced

- Hard power is characterised by the capacity to force, threaten and compel, -soft power rests on the ability to influence, persuade and frame contexts in which issues are discussed and decisions made. Soft power is based therefore on issues such as trust, loyalty and the perception of shared values, which are built up over time.

- There are a number of problems with the concept of soft power, e.g. its inherent neo-liberal bias. Soft power presumes there is a shared set of values/interests 'out there' to be found and operationalised. (Dryzek, 2006)

- Despite its conceptual clunkiness, migrant groups can at times have this soft power potential by virtue of being removed from the conflict zone but still being defined by and sensitive to it. They may have kinship ties, business contacts. esteem/ credibility with others in both sending and receiving countries –thus they may have some capacity to exert influence.

- An obvious example would be Muslim clerics working to dissuade people from supporting IS, from travelling to Syria and elsewhere to fight on its behalf –or to engage in violent acts in Europe or beyond in support of its aims.

Migrants, Extremism and Sustainable Security

- The research Q posed in the 1st slide: 'Is Violent Extremism a Driver of Displacement' – could be more usefully inverted to –*Is Displacement a driver of Violent Extremism?.*

- This might be more useful –and the answer would be highly dependent on factors that owe as much to the wider structural context and experiences of migrants than to any innate characteristics of such displaced groups.

- A key question to be examined in terms of preventing displacement being a driver of violent behaviour among displaced groups, relates to the capacity for the development of long term, proactive, strategic engagements, that move beyond reactive symptom orientated relationships.

- These are key to utilising the potential of migrant groups in countering risks of radicalisation and the violent behaviour that may result and allowing displaced groups to be seen as an asset in the development of a sustainable security strategy –rather than as representing a threat to it.

5 Issues for further consideration

- How can policy communities get behind the symptoms of migration flows to causal dynamics in a way that provides implementable options and realistic timeframes?

- How can we engage in discourses surrounding radicalisation and de-radicalisation in ways that do not appear to be reifying the agency of migrants and their behaviour, above the structures that contributes to that behaviour?

- How can we provide useful remedial short term policy correctives for long term ingrained perceptions and attitudes towards migrant communities?

- How can we disentangle the violent activities of migrant groups and grievances based on structural disadvantage, from non-violent disillusionment and vulnerability without it looking like an oppressive and catch all security response?

- How can external policy communities identify which displaced groups to engage with; when they should do so and by what means?