TERRORISM AND TOURISM IN EUROPE, NEW "PARTNERS"?

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Abstract

This paper examines the effects of terrorist attacks on tourism in Europe. The paper will first discuss general implications of the effects of terrorism on tourism and show that tourist´s decision is largely based on the destinations country´s safety. Safety is a very subjectable issue and therefore difficult to argue about with statistical numbers. The dangers on trips are very different depending on their destination. In Middle Eastern resorts, western tourists for example often stay in separated resorts with extra security, while in European countries; they are more present in the public spaces and are less distinguishable from locals than in middle eastern countries for example. Turkey and France are used in this paper because they both have high tourism levels and frequent terroristic attacks. However, Turkey suffers much more from terroristic attacks in regards to tourism compared to France. In both case studies, the arrival numbers of tourist regions far away from the terror spots were examined and while in Turkey the numbers of the arrivals dropped significantly, in France the arrivals actually experienced an increase.

Keywords: Terrorism, tourism, safety perception, global-local.

1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism in Europe has existed for a long period of time, but its context and its dimension is changing rapidly. The relentless effort of the ETA in Spain to form an independent Basque State, the case of IRA in Ireland or the Red Army faction in Europe, and the wars in the Balkan have dominated Terrorism in Europe since the end of World War 2. Internal forces within a country generally generated these terror attacks and therefore their range of fear did often not exceed national borders, nevertheless, they did not have any international reactions. For many countries, terrorism was still very far in the heads of many European citizens. This is a very interesting paradox, considering that the numbers of death by terroristic attacks dropped significantly in Europe for the last decades after it reached its peak in the 1980s (Statista 2015).

Since the turn of the century, the number of terroristic attacks has significantly dropped, but the number of deaths is still on a high level, as for example the attacks in Madrid in 2004 or in Paris in 2015. For the last two or three decades, Terrorism was often seen as something, which will never affect Europeans and the only time citizens in Europe had fear was when they visited countries in the Middle East or parts of Asia. Terrorist attacks such as 9/11 made European citizens realize that Terrorism has arrived in the Western world. Not only did terrorism arrive in the western world, but also a new form of terrorism, labeled as "Islamic" terrorism was now apparent to be the new threat to western societies. This new threat, namely ISIS is a global threat, which is very hard to control and to estimate. Terrorism in Europe has become a latent anxiety among citizens, as the last attacks in Brussels and Paris have shown, that the terrorists

were often born and grew up in Europe, but were often not integrated into the respective cultures, like in France or Belgium. This is again a paradox, as this new terroristic attacks are seen as a global threat, but the terrorists mostly come from within the European Union (Nitschke 2008: 7).

In this paper, I aim to show the effects of the terroristic attacks and the perception of terrorism in Europe on Tourism. A crucial case is Turkey, which is a popular tourist destination and a target for frequent terrorist attacks. The recent terrorist attacks in Europe happened in cities, which tourist frequently visit. Compared with other regions, many European countries are still on the list of the safest places to visit in Europe.

It is difficult to conclude long lasting effects of the current terrorist attacks in Europe, as it is too early to state effects of it. We can already see short-term effects, as for example, hotel occupancy rates in Brussels after the attack decreased to around 25 % (Chow & Kostov 2016). Hotel occupancy rates have not only decreased in Brussels, but the attacks in Brussels seemed to have affected many occupancy rates in major European capitals, like Paris and London (Chow & Kostov 2016).

2. SAFETY PERCEPTIONS AND ASSESSMENTS OF TOURISTS

Measuring safety perception is a difficult task, as people have different fears and perception of tourism. According to the travel destination, fears might vary and tourists might fear robberies more than terroristic attacks. Usually, the perception and fears of tourist display most clearly in outcomes, like occupancy rates in airplanes or hotels. Humans have all kinds of fear in them, which is not only restricted to tourism (Guasti & Mansfeldova 2013:2). Tourists fear dangers in destinations, which they are not very familiar with since they do not know the detailed security standards in different cities. One additional factor is the creation of an atmosphere of fear around the globe, which results in very few places considered as safe. To demonstrate this more precisely, statistics show that the number of people drowned in bathtubs was about equal to the number of people dying because of terrorist acts (Baker 2014:62). According to an online article of German television channel N-tv, the statistical chance of becoming a victim of a terror attack is 0.002 percent (Ehrich 2015) The chance of getting bit by a wasp is ten times higher (Ehrich 2015) Therefore, one can say, that the fear of people regarding terrorism cannot be statistically confirmed. Terrorists are already "successful" in their plans when tourists arrive scared and anxious at a tourist destination. While tourism promotes peace and tranquility, terrorism promotes chaos and destruction of stability (Mansfield & Pizam 2011: 45).

This psychological pressure can be enormous in certain tourist destinations in the Middle East or parts of Africa. Media has played a big role in this, as people are used to hearing horrible news from that region on a daily basis. Tourist's fears at tourist destinations can be two described in two ways. It can be the fear that one will be hit as a result of being a tourist in a tourist hostile environment. Alternatively, it can be the fear that one will be at the wrong place at the wrong time and be the victim of an attack, which had no connection to tourism. This distinction is important, because it often determines tourist's destination of visiting a country or not. There are countries, which are often the subject of terrorism directly aimed at tourists or tourism report, like Egypt, Tunisia and to a lesser extent Turkey. Terrorists are attacking tourism spots because an attack on tourism will harm the economy and will get broad media attention on a national and international level (Apostopoulos et al 1999:14). The question of responsibility is an important issue to discuss. Are tourists fully responsible themselves for their tourism vacation or are they right in expecting a certain protection from the government? (Graefe & Soenmez 1998: 118). The government has the duty of protecting all citizens on their respective government's soil, but from a moral perspective, it can be problematic to provide

more security to tourists than to the local people, as this leads to the question, if tourists are more valued than the local people, which can of course not be confirmed.

This paper will focus on terrorism in Europe and its impact on Tourism. I propose to make a difference here between the countries in central/western Europe and Turkey. The reason for this lies in the difference of the political situation in Turkey and the western/central European countries. Terrorism in Turkey has been happening much more frequently than in western/central Europe, as the government is at war with minorities in the country, whereas terrorism in the western parts of Europe is not common and therefore it often has a surprising effect on the country's population.

If the major terroristic attacks in the last 10 years in Europe are analyzed, it becomes clear that the major terroristic attacks are limited to three or four countries, namely Belgium, France, Spain, and the UK. The attacks in Europe do not aim to harm necessarily only tourists, but rather towards the population of the country because the recent attacks in Europe have been targeted at public places, which are not exclusively tourist destinations, but rather areas, which are heavily frequented by the local population, like subways, theaters or streets. This becomes clearer in the attacks of Brussels, which is not a primary tourist destination but Europe's political heart. Nevertheless, tourism numbers in Europe have dropped after the attacks of Paris and Brussels. The numbers of Airplane bookings to Brussels after the attack fell by 36 % (CNBC 2016). Considering the fact, that many of Brussels visitors are politicians or businesspersons, it becomes clear that not only tourists fear to go to big European cities, but other groups as well, although business travelers are usually more inflexible than leisure tourists are (Soenmez 1998: 428).

2.2 Differences of safety perceptions according to travel destinations

The US. Department of State has issued a travel warning for Europe following the attacks in Brussels: "The State Department alerts U.S. citizens to potential risks of travel to and throughout Europe following several terrorist attacks, including the March 22 attacks in Brussels claimed by ISIL. Terrorist groups continue to plan near-term attacks throughout Europe, targeting sporting events, tourist sites, restaurants, and transportation. This Travel Alert expires on June 20, 2016". (U.S Department of State. Bureau of Consular Affairs). What is particularly interesting about this travel warning is the expiry date. The expiry date posted is actually an indication, that this travel warning only has a formal character, since a decrease in traveling between the US and Europe would have major economic and political disadvantages.

It is unfortunately very difficult to prevent these terroristic attacks. Terrorism was often believed to be a result of psychopathic individuals who acted because of their mental instability. Recent research has shown that the perpetrators are normal in a sense, that they are aware of their actions and consequences and usually plan their actions very carefully and thoroughly (Cronin 2003:5).

This makes terrorism prevention particularly difficult, as it is more difficult to distinguish terrorists and this makes every citizen a potential terrorist. This is another reason why I believe this travel warning is not to be taken very seriously, because this underlying threat will continue longer than June 20. Regarding the recent terrorist attacks in Europe, most of the terrorists were internal threats; they were born and raised in Belgium, France or other western/central European countries. Terrorism is in every way horrible and brutal, for example in the sense that it can hit anybody at any place and therefore innocent people, who are at the wrong place at the wrong moment (Bennet 2007:2). Considering this, it is very difficult for Western European Countries to provide 100 % security. One disadvantage of European tourism is that tourists in Northern/Western European countries usually do not stay in separate tourism resorts with secured gates and extra security like in Beach Resorts in Egypt or Turkey. I am not

implying that these security resorts automatically lead to more security, but it might lead to the increase of subjective security. Therefore, tourists in Europe are somewhat exposed to general terror threats. Terror attacks have reduced drastically in numbers, but the number of victims is still on a relatively high level (Statista 2015).

The source of possible fears of tourists towards visiting Europe during this period is also somewhat stimulated, as Weimann and Winn state: "*The mass media willingly or unwittingly are the spokesmen of the terrorists, the transmitters of the terroristic message, the instrument through which terroristic deeds with all their excitement, drama and significance become known to a world audience*" (quoted in Weimann and Winn 1994:3). This argument is valid, considering that without the consumption of TV, the population would probably not know that much about terrorist attacks in other parts of the world, and therefore one of the main goals of the terrorists, which is to spread fear, accomplished. From a moral perspective, though, arguments can suggest, that tourists should have the rights to acquire information about the situation of the tourist destination. Another interesting question regarding tourist's perception of their respective destination is the question of severity or frequency. Which of these two have a greater influence on tourist's decision to travel? (Pizam and Fleischer 2002:3). There is limited literature on this question. However, Pizam and Fleischer have conducted a study asking this question in the context of Israel. Their conclusion is that frequency plays a little higher role in influencing tourist's decision to travel to certain destinations. This makes sense considering the fact, that frequent attacks can label a destination very easily, leading to a negative stigma of that place.

3. THE ROLE OF ISIS IN TERROR ATTACKS IN EUROPE

The first issue that comes across when discussing recent terrorist activities in Europe is the ISIS. Figure 1 displays the number of foreign fighters from Europe in ISIS and the attacks by ISIS in Europe. I completed a correlation analysis, in which I wanted to find out if there is a correlation between the numbers of IS fighters of European countries and attacks in those countries (successful and thwarted). For my correlation analysis, I used Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Turkey, UK, and Sweden and looked at the foreign ISIS fighters from the respective countries. My aim was to see if a high number of the foreign fighters in a country leads to more attacks in that country. Indeed, the analysis resulted in a very strong positive correlation (.079), which is significant at a 95 % confidence level.
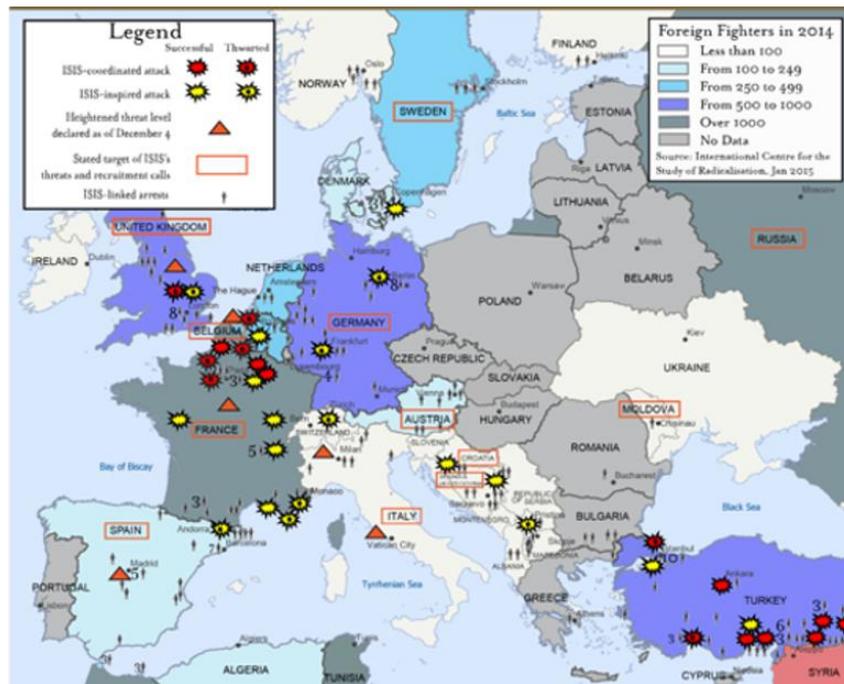
Figure 1. Number of foreign ISIS fighters and terror attacks in Europe.

This means, that there is a significant relationship between the number of foreign Fighters in 2014 and terrorist attacks (with a 5 % of error): the higher the number of foreign fighters in a country, the higher number of attacks. This is particularly important in the context of terrorism as a global threat. As already mentioned before, this terror threat is often seen as something "global". Even though terrorism has been global in its form of appearance, the perpetrators (especially in the attacks in Europe) are mostly born and raised in Europe.

4. THE CASE OF TURKEY

Turkey is a very interesting case regarding terrorism and tourism, because there is a large tourism sector and unfortunately a high number of terrorism attacks. Terrorism in its form of appearance in Turkey has taken two forms: The ongoing war in the southeastern parts of the country's between government forces and the PKK (militant Turkish separatist groups), and the attacks in big cities and the western parts of Turkey (which are heavily frequented by tourists), which are also done by PKK, but not exclusively. The following table (Table 1) displays terrorist bombings from 1992 to 2003 in Turkey (Arnold et.al 2003:154). The majority of these attacks did not target directly tourists. Many of the listed bombings happened in the southeastern part of Turkey and in bigger cities like Istanbul or Ankara.

Table 1. Terror Attacks between 1992 and 2001 in Turkey.

Date	City/village	Site	Number injured**	Number dead	Type of bombing	Terrorist group attributed to
Nov 1992	Hani	Houses	16	14	Rockets***	PKK
June 1993	Antalya	Tourist hotel	28	0	-	PKK
July 1993	Kudadasi	Trash can on street	18	0	-	-
Aug 1993	Istanbul	Hungarian tour bus	11	0	Hand grenade	-
Oct 1993	Midyat-Kayapinar	Village road	30	26	Landmine	PKK
Feb 1994	Istanbul	Trash can at Tuzla Train Station	55	5	-	PKK
April 1994	Istanbul	Inside Covered Bazaar	19	2	-	PKK
June 1994	Fethiye	Tourist site	10	0	-	PKK
June 1994	Marmaris	Tourist beach and park	21	1	2 bombs	PKK
Aug 1995	Istanbul	Trash cans in central city	32	2	2 bombs	-
Sep 1995	Izmir	Outside café/grocery store	34	5	-	PKK
June 1996	Tunceli	Military parade	44	9	Suicide bombing	PKK
Nov 1996	Cigli	Minibus on road	26	17	Rockets	PKK
Sep 1997	Gaziantep	Book fair	25	1	Hand grenade	-
Oct 1997	Hakkari	Transportation vehicle	16	1		PKK
Dec 1997	Dargecit	Minibus on road	16	10	Landmine	PKK
Dec 1997	Temelli	Minibus on road	24	12	Landmine	PKK
May 1998	Hatay	Military vehicle	10	0	Landmine	-
May 1998	-	Police van	20	20	-	ARAK
June 1998	Istanbul	Train	15	1	-	PKK
June 1998	Istanbul	Brothel	12	0	-	IBDA/C
Nov 1998	Kirikkale	Bus	21	4	-	PKK
Dec 1998	Lice	Grocery store	24	16	Suicide bombing, hand grenades	PKK
Dec 1998	East Turkey	Outside army barracks	24	2	Suicide bombing	PKK
Feb 1999	Esenler	Coffeehouse	17	0	Hand grenade	-
Mar 1999	Cankiri	Governor's car on street	16	3	Car bomb	TIKKO
Mar 1999	Istanbul	Police van at Taksim Square	12	1	Suicide bombing	PKK
April 1999	Yuksekova	Governor's car on street	11	2	Suicide bombing	-
July 1999	Istanbul	Trash can in park	26	1	Metal additive	PKK
July 1999	Adana	Outside police headquarters	15	1	Suicide bombing	-
Sep 1999	Istanbul	Elevator in Treasury building	20	0		-
Jan 2001	Istanbul	Street near Taksim Square	10	0	Pipe bomb	DHKP/C
Sep 2001	Istanbul	Outside police post at Taksim Square	24	3	Suicide bombing	DHKP/C
Total			**1,497**	**211**		

Source: Arnold et.al 2003:154. URL: http://www.sx.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/000749.pdf

The bombings related to tourism are the bombings in 1993 in Kusadasi, Istanbul 1993, Istanbul 1994, Fethiye 1994, Marmaris 1994, and Istanbul 1999 (Arnold et.al 2003:154). The attacks in January and March in 2016 in Istanbul targeted tourists, as the suicide bombings happened in areas, which tourist frequently visit.

Figure 2 shows the number of non- resident tourist arrivals in Turkey between 1999 and 2008. Generally, there was an upward trend, interrupted by short declines due to terror attacks (Komora 2008:38). Figure 3 displays the tourist arrivals in Turkey between 2016. The shape of the curve is very similar throughout the years, with normal declines in the winter seasons. However, the peak has an increased value, reaching a peak in 2015. From a statically standpoint, it is still too early to see effects of the recent bombings on tourism.
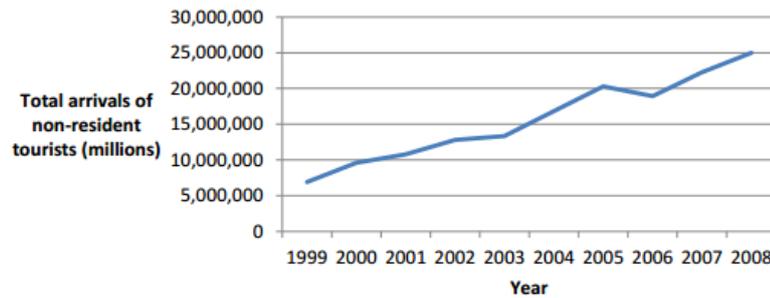
Figure 2. Arrivals of non-resident tourists in Turkey 1999-2008.
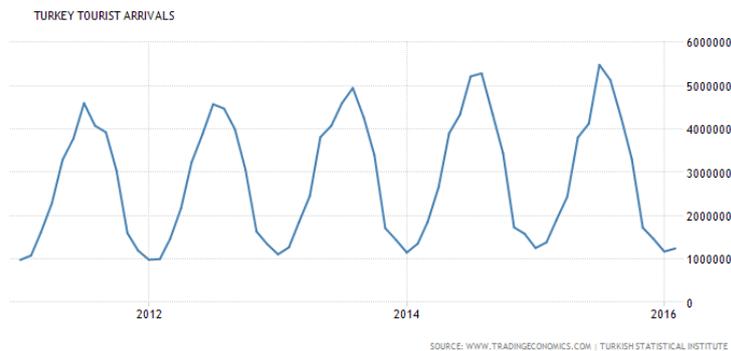
Figure 3. Tourist arrivals in Turkey 2012-2016.

However, there is one data, which can lead to the assumption, that the recent terror attacks in Turkey will have longer lasting negative effects. This February, the number of tourists coming to Turkey was 10% below the number of last years in February (http://www.wsj.com/articles/despite-terrorism-scares-summer-tourists-still-plan-european-trips-1459963152, Ministry of Culture and Tourism). Turkey's geography surely is not a factor reducing people anxiety of visiting the country, considering that it borders Syria and Iraq. Tourists could be bothered by the close proximity to the bordering countries. From Antalya (Turkeys tourism hotspot) and Aleppo (second largest city in Syria), the distance is about the same as from Boston to Washington. Given this close distance to Syria, it is not surprising that potential tourists might avoid Turkey as a tourist destination.

Turkey is one the one hand facing the serious threat of being the neighbor of Syria and is therefore very scared of the war in Syria spilling over to Turkey. An interesting study examining tourists coping with terrorism in Israel, which has been affected by terrorism numerous times, has been conducted by Yori Gidron et. al. This study had the goal of analyzing three coping strategies, namely, emotion-focused coping, and problem-focused coping and denial (Gidron et al. 1999:185). Without describing the details about the studies too deeply, their correlation analyses present some interesting details (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlation between Coping Strategies with Levels of Anxiety from Terrorism.

Variable	Anxiety from Terrorism
Background variables (two-tailed)	
Age	.24
Female gender	.09
Commuting frequency	−.31*
Coping strategies	
Emotion focused	−.12
Problem focused	.39**
Denial	−.18
Problem focused/denial	.44**
Problem focused/emotion focused	.29*

Note. Two-tailed tests were performed for background variables and one-tailed tests were performed for coping variables.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .005$.

Source: Gidron et. al 1999: 188

According to this study, a high commuting frequency reduces anxiety. (Gidron et al. 1999:185). In the context of tourism, one can state, that the frequency of visiting a country reduces the anxiety. Among coping strategies, the only correlation, which was significant, was between Problem focused and anxiety of terrorism. Among the Problem-focused strategies, two questions were asked to the participants of the study: 1. "I make sure there are no suspicious objects beneath the seats on the bus"; 2. "I observe the faces and origin of the different commuters on the bus" (Gidron et al. 1999:187). This means, that the more passengers used this method on their journey, the more anxious they were. This is understandable, as people tend to become more anxious, the more the worry and the more they look for something suspicious (Gidron et al. 1999:189). When it comes to tourism, this coping strategy would not be very useful in my opinion, because tourists generally stay a limited amount of time in at a tourist destination. Dedicating a lot of time to these coping strategies during a stay might ruin your vacation, considering that vacation should be relaxing and peaceful. Research often only points out the fear and anxiety of people visiting certain countries very broadly. However, the specific fear of people has not been analyzed specifically. Fear is a broad concept, and since tourists are a very heterogeneous group, these fears may vary. Fear can vary, in its form of appearance or in its content. What all people with anxiety seem to have in common is a "sense of helplessness and powerlessness" (Sloan 1986:2). It should not be misunderstood, that all tourists visiting a country with a high potential of terrorism are anxious because they fear of being directly hit by an attack. It might be the anxiety of having to worry throughout vacation, which would turn a vacation into something unbearable.

The political situation in the Turkey is a mess on a multidimensional level. The ongoing war with the PKK (Kurdish Rebels) poses a constant terror threat, and although mostly apparent in the southeastern parts of the country, it puts the whole country in an atmosphere of terror. In addition, the ISIS has not only remained as a foreign threat to Turkey but has been active in Turkey as well, as the last terrorist attacks in Turkey have shown. Since the beginning of the conflicts in Syria, there are about 2 million refugees in Turkey (Icduygu 2015:1), which adds more to the feeling of uncertainty in Turkey's politics. Finally yet importantly, corruption scandals and arrested journalists dominate the current political agenda in Turkey. I argue, that in Turkey, the fear of terrorism might not arise from one fear alone; it might arise from the factors described above. This would be similar to Mansfeld and Pizam's (Mansfeld & Pizam 2011: 45) research, who concluded, that people's fear of terrorism rather stem from the frequency of attacks rather than the severity. One example, which illustrates very clearly, that

the fear of tourists visiting Turkey is a general fear and not a specific terroristic fear, are the passenger statistics of Antalya Airport, which serves the city of Antalya and its surroundings, the center of tourism in Turkey. If the passenger statistics of Antalya International Airport until April in the last 4 years are compared, it becomes clear, that this year, the passenger statistics in the first 4 months have been much below of these last year (Antalya Airport 2015). One reason for this decrease is the decline of incoming Russian tourists, who are avoiding Turkey since the fragile political relationship between Turkey and Russia.

Although there has been no terrorist incidents in Antalya or the surrounding areas directly, it seems to have affected the incoming tourist arrivals enormously. Turkey's tourist destinations seem to be very vulnerable to the country's general political situation or incidents like terroristic bombings.

5. THE CASE OF FRANCE

In France for example, statistics shows clearly, that the arrivals number in 2015 at Nice Cote D' Azur Airport did not drop following the Charlie Hebdo Attacks in Paris, they actually increased from around 11 Million to roughly 12 ½ million (Nice Cote D'Azur Airport Monthly Statistical Report 2014/2015). Here we can see, that the effects of the Paris attacks did not seem to have any influence on the southern part of France, which is a very heavily tourist frequented area. These patterns can lead to the assumption, that potential visitors of a country have certain perceptions about a country, which is not very easily changeable. It also shows us, that tourists might not only consider terrorism as the only factor when searching for a tourist destination but also rather look at the complete political situation in the respective country. The process of tourist destination can be also a sort of weighting the dangers in different countries, and then the country with the least "problems" or possibility of terrorism and other crime acts is chosen to be the tourist destination.

Until now, the focus lied on the demand side, namely the tourists. The demand side of this issue would analyze what tourism destinations can do to stimulate tourist arrivals and to lose that negative stigma. The problem here is that it is questionable, how convincing tourism advertisements by the Turkish government can be, given the very problematic human rights situation in the country now. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism has announced tax incentives and an increased amount of financial support for hotels in tourist areas in Turkey (Touristik Aktuell 2015). It is highly doubtable, that these actions can be satisfying long term. The Turkish economy has taken a major economic hit from the decreasing tourist arrivals. Turkey has a deficit generated by low demand for a vacation of around 45 Billion $ (Asia Times 2015). For an economy like Turkey, which is heavily relying on tourism as a major contributor, it can lead to serious crisis, which might eventually develop into a vicious circle, which can potentially lead to less tourism.

6. CONCLUSION

Concluding, it is difficult to anticipate the mid- and long-term effects of the terror attacks in Europe on Tourism. It has been shown in this paper that countries tourism industry react differently to political instability and terror, as it was shown in this paper by the example of France and Turkey. Security is becoming more apparent in order to provide a feeling of safety for locals and tourists. The patterns of attacks in Europe have shown that these attacks do not target tourists only, which makes it difficult for tourists to predict and assess safety, as terrorist attacks could happen in any frequented area like squares or subways. It is important to note, that Europe is still a very safe tourist destination. It will be interesting to observe, how tourist arrivals will develop within the next 20 years. Tourist arrival numbers in Europe will also

depend on the development of tourism and political situation in other regions in the world, as Europe's tourism numbers might drop if the political stability in some countries increases. Terrorism alone cannot alone lead to the collapse of the tourism, as this paper has shown. However, if the European Union continuingly refuses to find a human and morally acceptable solution how to take care of the refugees entering Europe, a serious political and social crisis might emerge in Europe, which can eventually harm the tourism industry in a very drastic way.

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