

Refugee Crisis and Security Challenges in Europe: Evaluating Germany's Responses and Security Control Strategies

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Abstract: *The escalation of Europe Refugee crisis that affected most member States of the European Union especially Germany attracted responses and control strategies to reduce the influx of migrants and to check the increasing rate of security challenges. To ascertain the responses and the strategies, the paper adopted system theory, extracted data from secondary sources and applied content analysis. The study reveals that Germany responses and strategies were focused on two approaches. The first was the approach to reduce influx of migrants to Germany while the second approach was to control the rising security concern. It was also discovered that the strategies have relative success in reducing the rate of influx and the security challenges. The paper recommended among others that global instrument of conflict resolution and peace building is necessary to nip in the bud conflict in less developed countries that may result to wars and displacement of people. Also, a comprehensive data of the refugees should be kept. Refugees should be monitored to detect criminals among them so that their cases can be isolated and treated in line with the law.*

Keywords: Refugee Crisis, Security Challenges, Security Control Strategies, Germany, Europe

I. INTRODUCTION

The responses of the government of Germany to the global migration as recorded by authorities and agencies placed Germany at the top lather in the struggle to manage the 2015 refugee crisis that nearly brought Europe to its knee. Germany promptly responded to the challenges by taking the giant stride in accommodating the refugees and putting up measures to reduce the tension within the European region. Although, the influx of migrants to Europe has been on the rise years preceding 2015, but in April 2015, Europe witnessed the biggest tragedy in which 800 people died in sinking boat in an attempt to reach its lands (IOM 2015b). On the basis of this tragedy, the Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel stated, "We will do everything to prevent further victims from perishing in the most agonizing way on our doorstep" (Mackenzie & Emmott, 2015). At the point of making this statement, the German government did not envisage refugees' crisis situation and its adverse effect on the security situation in Germany; instead, Merkel insisted on the tragedy perspective (Holmes and Castañeda, 2016). Merkel was touched by the number of human casualty of more than 3,370 that died crossing the Mediterranean in 2015 (IOM 2015b). The increase in immigrants' flow to Europe in 2015 was seen as the greatest in Germany due to its open-arms policy. According to Stelzenmüller (2015), Merkel came up with positive policy statement when she said, "we can do it!" in reaction to whether Germany could handle the amount of people arriving. She went further to say that to accommodate the number of migrants is a herculean task that now deeply moves us and demands from us a national effort.

Despite Germany liberal policy toward the refugees, the government did not compromise its national interest. It is on record that by mid-September Angela Merkel's Government ordered temporary restrictions that included border checks and cancellations of rail connections from Austria, measures that have remained along 2016 (Alderman & Kanter, 2016). The Interior Minister, Maizière, accordingly declared: This step has become necessary; the readiness to help which Germany has shown in recent weeks must not be overstretched (Burrows & Tonkin, 2015). The Minister emphatically stated that the aim of the measure was "to limit the current influx to Germany and to return to orderly entry procedures" (BBC, 2015d). He added that asylum seekers had to understand that they cannot choose the States where they are seeking protection. With more than one million refugees in 2015, integration remains difficult in Germany as it does throughout Europe (Hess & Green, 2016). It has been difficult for Germany to achieve in education, poverty, and employment. Concern about security has also remain a burning issue due to the increase in terrorist attacks within the period of the refugee crisis. The protests against the humanitarian welcoming approach of Merkel by the anti-migration groups have penetrated all part of the German society (Lehr, 2015). The PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West) was very prominent in anti-Islamic movement. The right-populist carried out demonstrations, violent and racist attacks on the asylum seekers coming to Germany in 2015. Over thirty arson attacks on refugee's shelters were recorded from January to March (Balhorn, 2015). Other opposing voices to the open policy of Merkel have stressed that terrorists or followers of the Islamic State (ISIS) might infiltrate among the new comers (Browne, 2016). The candidate for the Mayor post of Cologne, who was the former Social Secretary responsible for the accommodation and integration of refugees, was stabbed by a man who declared that the refugee policy of Chancellor Merkel and her supporters was wrong, that he had to free the society from

these people who were responsible for Germany's self-destruction and endangered the country's security (Lakotta, 2016). This attack marked the most violent reaction to the refugee policy so far. In response to the attack, the German Chancellor declared that, her will is to significantly stem the number of migrants arriving in both the country and the EU countries so that Germany will not be overwhelmed in the long run, saying "We want to, and we will, noticeably reduce the number of refugees", using the slogan: "we can do this (Carrel & Barkin, 2015). In another situation Merkel said, it is very important to me that we achieve both a noticeable reduction in the flow of refugees and at the same time, preserve the free movement of people within the European Union (Gómez, 2015).

On the basis of this background, the paper attends to answer the following questions: What are the strategies adopted by Germany in response to the refugee crisis and the resultant security challenges? How effective are the strategies in reducing the rate of refugee influx and the attendant security challenges?

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Decision Making Theory forms the theoretical framework upon which this research work was carried out. This theory was developed by R.C. Synder and his associates in the 1950s (Synder, 1963). The theory explained that international events are functions of the wishes and demands of the State-men who act on behalf of the States. According to Akpoto (2011), the theory assumes that the decisions of these groups are products of their conscious effort based on adequate knowledge and guided by skill and training. The environment and the perceptions of the State-men play major role in defining the policy options to be adopted.

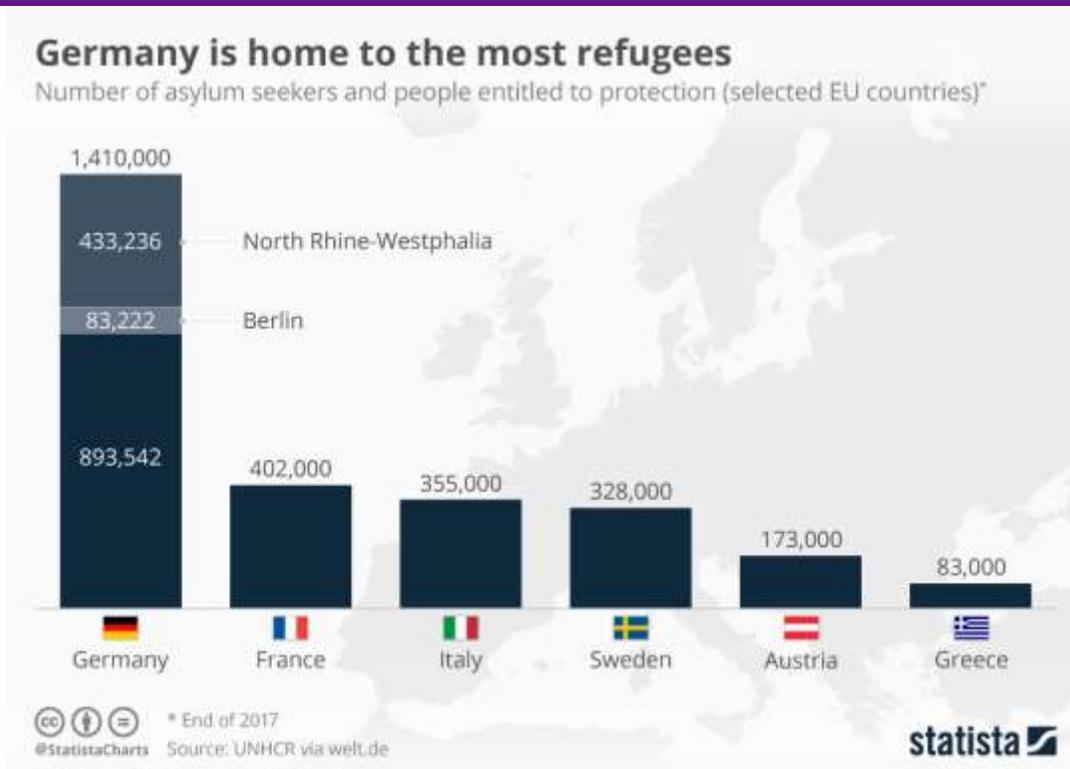
The policy actions adopted by Germany were the handiwork of the political actors, based on their perception and knowledge of the refugee crisis. They transfer individual proposed meaning into a collectively held representation.

Refugee Crisis in Europe

A study of the present migration order shows that the recent European Migrant Crisis or European Refugee Crisis arose through the rising number of refugees and migrants coming to the European Union across the Mediterranean Sea or through Southeast Europe and applying for asylum. The rate of influx became unprecedented in the history of migration governance in the European Union. The overcrowding of the major cities in some European Countries was better identified as Migration Surge. According to Matthias Ruete, Director General of the Directorate of Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission, the EU is facing an unprecedented crisis with unprecedented flows of refugees and migrants for which the current system was not designed (EMN 2015).

From 2010 to 2011 there was a rise in detections of irregular border-crossing at the EU's external borders of 35 per cent, from 104,000 to 141,000. This increase was mainly felt in the Central Mediterranean area with 5,000 detections in 2010 to 64,000 in 2011 (FRONTEX, 2012b). Available data shows that most migrants detected crossing EU's irregular borders were Tunisians 20 per cent, Afghans 16 per cent and Pakistanis 11 per cent (FRONTEX (2012a). Although, in 2012, there was a reduction in irregular flows in general, but from 2013 on, begins a period of rapid increase in flows, which has its peak in 2015, with more than 1.82 million detections of irregular entries in the EU (FRONTEX, 2016b). According to Papadopoulos (2016), the phrase "European Migrant Crisis" and "European Refugee Crisis" became widely used in April 2015, when five boats carrying almost two thousand migrants to Europe sank in the Mediterranean Sea with a combine death toll estimated at more than 1,200 people.

With refugees reaching Europe at unprecedented and unsustainable numbers every day, the European Union was pressed to implement policies that could address the staggering numbers. The European Union agreed to a relocation program that would resettle 160,000 refugees. In addition to this decision, other member states also set their own policies for the number of refugees they would accept from the Middle East and other fractured countries. These policies ranged depending on the ability of individual countries to house and provide for. Germany for instance, provided asylum to a half of all refugees coming to Europe. According to Amnesty International (2016), if we exclude Germany and Sweden, the rest of the EU member countries offered asylum to 0.7% of all Syrian refugees. As at January 2016, the German government announced that approximately 1.1 million people entered the country in search of asylum (Thomas, 2016). Data published by the UNHCR in 2018 reveals that Germany is home to 1.4 million refugees making it the highest receiver of refugees in the European Union by individual country while France and Sweden have 402,000 and 328,000 respectively.



According to the Minister of Interior (MOI) de Maiziere, the number was too high, that an organized procedure was not possible any more (Spiegel 2015a). Welt (2015), reported further that the Bavarian Premier and the CSU Chairman, Horst Seehofer argued that Germany has mass migration and that the belief that the situation will be managed will not work with the number of refugees and the rate at which they come.

Security Challenges in Europe

The high number of migrants in European Union (EU) attracts the attention of European leaders to the issue of security of the region. The Report from the European Commission (2011), shows that securitization of migration is currently a major issue in the EU member States' political agenda. Specifically, establishing a relationship between Migration and Security has seriously occupied the discourse of the leaders and policy makers in the European Union. Vaughan (2015) stated that the concern about the link between increased security challenges and migration in the European Union is very high. Issues of criminality, social instability, terrorism and economic sabotage of the host countries are given special attention in Europe, particularly Germany

Coincidentally, the security challenges in Europe especially Germany within the period of Refugee crisis increased tremendously with crime rates assuming high proportion and more people killed in terrorist attacks and attack plots than all previous years combined (Petter et al, 2014). Available statistics show that in November 2015, the Paris attack led to the death of 10 persons, the June 2016 Ataturk Airport attack in Turkey claimed 45, the July 2016 Nice truck attack in France claimed 80 persons, the March 2016 Brussels bombing in Belgium led to the death of 32 while May 2017 Manchester Arena bombing in England led to the death of 22 persons (EUROPOL, 2017). Germany experienced series of criminal and terrorist attacks especially in 2015 and 2016. The December 2015 New Year Eve celebrated Mass Sexual Assault and the Berlin Truck attack in 2016 are two events among many attacks in Germany recorded by the German Police (BKA, 2016).

The threatening security order in Europe especially Germany within the period of the refugee crisis attracted the concern of the leaders and policy makers to the issues of protection of lives and properties of the Germans and Germany's sovereignty and integration. Report from Germany Police Office(BKA) revealed that crimes rate increased rapidly in 2014 and got to its peak in 2015 when the influx of migrants to Germany was at its highest as reported by German Minister of Interior(Spiegel,2016). In response, the German government adopted strategies to reduce the influx and to check the observed security challenges.

III. RESPONSES AND CONTROL STRATEGIES

The responses of the German government come under two sub-headings. The first sub-heading deals with measures to curb the excess influx of migrants to Germany while the second sub-head contain the measures to control the associated Security Challenges.

Strategies to Curb Excess Influx of Migrants

1. **Introduction of Asylum Package 1:** In 2015, German parliament voted for declaring Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey safe countries of origin. This means that refugees from these countries will no longer be accepted or registered in Germany. On the bases of this action by the Parliament and the low popularity rating of the CDU coupled with the crisis within the party, the government adopted the asylum package I which added Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo as safe countries of origin. The implication of this policy is that asylum seekers from these countries have to stay in preliminary center and remain there until the asylum procedure is completed. It also implies that while at the preliminary centers, the asylum seekers will only get non-cash benefit as needed to take care of them while money is only paid one month in advance. Furthermore, asylum seeker who is refused entry but decided not to leave, only get limited support; but, asylum seekers who have good chance to stay in Germany, gets access to integration courses (Deutscher Bunderstag 2015).
2. **Establishment of 17 point plan:** This policy was adopted on 25th October, 2015 by Germany in collaboration with other EU member States and non-EU States to reduce the number of refugees coming to Europe to avert the collapse of the EU According to EU (2015), the 17 point-plan provided for the following:
 - a. 400 additional border guards were stationed in Slovenia to prevent human trafficking.
 - b. The collaborating countries agreed to extend and co-ordinate their own border control
 - c. To end chaotic condition along the affected States borders and the establishment of contact offices for the exchange of information about refugees.
 - d. Refugees must be registered in the countries of their first entrance. According to the President of the EU Commission Jean Claude Juncker, “no registration means no right” and any migrants who do not need international protection through registration shall be deported to their country of origin as fast as possible.
 - e. 100,000 refugees’ accommodation centers were set up along the Balkan route which serves as illegal migration route.
3. **2015 Manama Dialogue:** In collaboration with the US, European Countries and a collection of Arab leaders, Germany participated in the Manama Dialogue held on 31st October 2015 to find solution to the crises in Syrian and Iraq that generated most of the migrants. On the basis of the outcome of the Manama Dialogue, Germany contributed to the stabilization and reconstruction of the conflict affected countries of the Middle East to discourage migrants from leaving their countries of residence. (BMVg 2015a).
4. **Creation of Special Camp for Non-Asylum granted Refugees:** In November 2015, Chancellor Merkel reached an agreement with Vice Chancellor, Gabriel and the CSU Party Chairman, Seehofer to set up special camps for refugees that were denied asylum. According to TRT (2015) Report, the decision frustrates family reunion of the affected refugees for a period of two years. This police were made to frustrate refugee seekers who could not bring their family to Germany as some of them may not want to leave their family behind.
5. **Introduction of the Dublin Agreement for Syrians:** Before the adoption of this policy, the Syrians were not made to go through the individual assessment program of the Government of Germany as applied to refugees from other countries before asylum was granted. The Dublin agreement stopped the skipping for Syrians which makes the individual assessment applied to Syrian asylum seekers to prevent easy entry by terrorist.
6. **Malta Refugee Summit:** This summit was hosted by Germany and other EU member States in collaboration with some African States to develop a means by which the numbers of refugees that go through the Mediterranean Sea could be reduced. The Mediterranean Sea has been the major irregular transit route for African migrants to Europe (Bischoff Muller, 2016). The deliberation led to the following agreements:
 - a. The establishment of transit centre along the Mediterranean route
 - b. To intensify action against human trafficking
 - c. Agreement with the countries of origin on repatriation of irregular migrants.
 - d. The reduction of the root cause of migration through provisions of more development aid and the application of EU trust to the emigrating countries. The aim of this policy is to fight irregular migration from the foundation by looking at the political and economic situations in the emigrating States and developing strategies on how to keep migrants in their State of origin.

Strategies to Control the Security Challenges

1. **Asylum package II:** This policy came into operation on 1st December, 2015 with more strict measures. The policy was an update of Asylum Package 1 to accommodate and implement more security measures in line with the happenings of the time. According to Deutscher Bundestag (2016), the asylum package II provides for the following:
 - a. Refugees have to take part in paying the cost for integration and language courses.
 - b. Family reunion was suspended for refugees with subsidiary protection status for two years.
 - c. On the deportation of sick and traumatised refugees, Doctors' examinations will in practice be ignored, unless they indicate a life-threatening illness.
 - d. Rapid decisions on asylum applications by refugees coming from so-called safe countries of origin which includes the Balkan countries and some African States such as Ghana and Senegal. Currently, the list of "safe" nations is being expanded to include Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Follow-up applications will also be treated in this way, as well as those from people who do not cooperate. As the law states, "This will apply, for example, if they falsify their identity or refuse to provide fingerprints".
 - e. Accommodation of refugees in three to five large internment camps (reception centres or registration centres) and a strict residency rule. Those migrants without the perspective of staying will be interned and their application reviewed on site. In practice, this means the application will be rejected, and deportations will then be carried out directly from the reception centre. The entire asylum procedure will be completed within a week. If a refugee violates the residency requirement, he or she will receive no welfare payments and the asylum procedure will be suspended immediately
 - f. Welfare payment will be cut. Single refugees will have benefits cut across the board by €10 per month for language courses. In the future, asylum seekers will only be fully entitled to claim State Welfare when they have registered in the local area and hold a refugee pass.
 - g. In conjunction with all this, there is the easing of equal treatment regulation under current law, thus enabling the deportation of foreigners convicted of crimes, and not just refugees. In the future, a criminal without a German passport, convicted of a violent crime (grievous bodily harm, rape) carrying more than a one-year suspended sentence, will, in addition to the punishment for those holding a German passport, be deported. People of second- or third-generation immigrant families will thereby be stigmatised.

Before the adoption of asylum package 11, the German Government encouraged the refugees to take integration courses without paying the bills. The government took it as a responsibility to take the registered refugee through the process free of charge to enable them fit properly into the system so as to contribute efficiently to the economic development of Germany. Unfortunately, the good intention of the German government through the policy of asylum package 1 could not reform the criminal attribute of some refugees especially the Islamists, who continue to exhibit criminal tendencies and terrorist attacks in Germany.

2. **Adoption of the Mission of the International Alliance Against the Islamic State (IS) in Syria:** On 4th December, 2015 Germany joined the alliance as a result of its conviction that the 'IS' was not only a problem in the Middle East but had also arrived in Europe. Germany's aim was to enhance its security by joining the alliance to reduce the number of Syrians and Iraqi's refugees through creating stability and safety in their countries of origin (MBVg, 2015a).
3. **2016 EU's Action Plan:** In the EU agreement with Turkey which was based on reciprocity, Turkey agreed to prevent refugees from moving to Europe by enhancing effective coast control. In return, the EU member States agreed to pay 3 billion Euros to improve the refugees living condition in Turkey. In addition to the financial aid, the EU agreed to grant liberalized Visa to Turkish citizens and to speed up EU accession talk (Europäische Kommission, 2016). It was also part of the agreement that irregular migrants entering Europe through the Turkey border will be returned to Turkey.
4. **Integration Laws on the Principle of Support and Demand:** The integration programme was made to absorb the refugees into the German system with the opportunity to be accommodated successfully in Germany's economy and general social life. The programme was also factored to de-radicalize some refugees especially those who may have developed extreme discrimination and hatred against other religion. Integration programme was made to address some basic socio-economic challenges that are critical to Germany's National Security. Emphasis was placed on language programmes, skill acquisition and education especially vocational education. Language barrier was a critical concern to the government of Germany with the understanding that the risk of not understanding one another in a system is dangerous. Half of the refugees who reached Germany in 2015 spoke Arabic which is their native language and an estimated 35 percent of refugees who arrived in Germany from the top sending countries in 2015 did not have work experience prior to fleeing their countries. According to Lily (2018), 69 percent of respondents to the 2016 survey lacked both formal vocational training and the type of professional qualification usually required in the German labour market. Thus the level of educational attainment among the current refugees falls below Germany attainment levels (Stefan, 2017). These laws gave birth to the policy measures to make an offer to refugees in Germany on the condition that they learn German language and obey the rules of the country. The policy as empowered by the law is geared towards integrating the qualified migrants into German culture with the belief that it will internalize them and makes them part of Germany; and be ready to defend

the national security of Germany. Integration Policy is a good security policy with the prospect to turn refugees to real Germans and to change their orientation for a safe society. The laws place emphasis on the important of education to promote integration and enhance peace. Provisions were made for those who agreed to pursue programs on integration while sanctions of less financial support was placed on refugees who were unwilling to go through the process and get integrated (Die Bundesregierung 2016d)

5. **2016 New White Paper on German Security:** The aspect of the white paper that deals on migration and refugees is on how to combat the root cause of terrorism, poverty and hunger in the emigrating States so as to reduce refugee flow to Germany.
6. **Nine Point Plan Against Terrorism:** The nine-point plan against terrorism came into existence particularly in reaction to the terrorist attacks in Würzburg. The nine-point plan is a security strategy that focuses on the following:
 - a. to reduce the criteria for asylum seekers
 - b. to adopt an early warning system for radicalized refugees
 - c. to conduct joint exercises by the police and armed forces
 - d. to establish a central agency to decrypt Internet communications, and;
 - e. Pass a weapons directive to prevent trading weapons online.

The Effectiveness of the Strategies

The Integration programmes developed by German Government that distributed refugees throughout Germany Eighteen States using the calculation of the States’ tax revenue and population (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees,2016), reduced the rate of social disconnect between the refugees and the German societies. Schooling programmes were made for all Syria children, while teenager and adult were made to go through integration courses that focus mainly on German language. Report from the State funded Institute for Employment and Research (IAB) reveals that refugee’s unemployment has fallen to ten percentage points over 2017 and estimated that half of the refugee population that arrived in 2015 would be working in 2020. It also revealed that the number of refugees entering tradecraft apprenticeship have increased by 140 percent over past year (Federal Employment Agency, 2018). Also the increase in refugee enrolment in integration classes shows that government authorities have successfully created good atmosphere for employment opportunity for the refugee, (Lily,2018); with high expectation of reducing crime rate.

The policy of border control as against open border drastically reduced the rate of migrants’ arrival to Germany. In 2016, the number of migrants arriving Germany reduced from 890,000 in 2015 to 280,000 (Stefan, 2017). Irregular migrants were returned to Turkey by Greece in line with the agreement between the EU and Turkey in the Action Plan of 2016. Additionally, it was difficult for migrants from the Middle East to get into Western Europe overland thereby reducing the numbers of migrants to Germany.

The strategies adopted to check security challenges in Germany show relative improvement in the war against criminality and terrorism. The report from Global Terrorist Data Base shows a progressive decreased in the number of terrorist incidents in Germany. As at 2015, the incidents of terrorist attacks were 66 but progressively reduced yearly to 12 in 2019 as shows below:

Number of Terrorist Incidents and Victims in Germany by Year

Year	Incidents	Deaths	Injuries
2019	12	3	14
2018	22	0	8
2017	27	1	10
2016	44	27	117
2015	66	1	38
2014	13	0	0
2013	0	0	0
2012	5	0	0
2011	8	2	2
2010	1	0	0
2009	4	0	0
2008	3	0	2
2007	3	1	1

Source: [Global Terrorism Database](#) (2019).

The German Police Statistics published by the *Welt am Sonntag* newspaper shows a downward crime rate with few categories in which rates increased. THE Report reveals the following:

1 There were 5.76 million crimes reported in 2017, 9.6 percent fewer than in 2016.

- i. About one-third of all crimes were theft offenses, dropping by 11.8 percent.
- ii. Shoplifting decreased by 6.6 percent, to 353,384 cases, and pick pocketing by 22.7 percent, to 127,376.
- iii. 33,263 cars and 300,006 bicycles were stolen which shows a reduction of 8.6 and 9.8 percent, respectively.
- iv. Burglaries fell 23 percent to 116,540 cases, although 80 percent of burglaries are still not solved.
- v. Violent crime declined by 2.4 percent, to 188,946 cases, of which 137,058 involved serious bodily injuries.
- vi. Murders increased by 3.2 percent, to 785 cases.
- vii. Drug offenses rose 9.2 percent, to 330,580 cases.
- viii. Child pornography cases rose 14.5 percent, to 6,512 cases.
- ix. The number of non-German suspects fell 22.8 percent, to 736,265.

The review of the policy of skipping assessment for Syrians was a welcome development and has actually put a check on free entry of terrorists to Germany. Germany's Interior Ministry reported that Islamist terrorist risk decrease relatively and very few Islamist post a terrorist risk in German. The Interior Ministry Report published by German weekly Die Zelt shows that in 2018, a total of 774 Islamist extremist posed risk to Germany but reduced to 679 in 2019 (Die Zelt, 2019). Though Islamist terrorism has dropped, local extremism keeps increasing. Report from tagesspiegel newspaper revealed that Right-wing terrorist activities in German rises sharply to 32,200 in 2019 (Tegessieges, 2019). The security strategies put in place by Germany was relatively successful in controlling Islamist terrorists' activities but has not recorded appreciable successes against Local Extremist groups in Germany.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper carried out an indebt study of the refugee crisis and the security challenges in Europe so as to ascertain the responses and strategies of control adopted by the EU member States particularly Germany. A review of the refugee crisis and the security challenges in Germany was done to determine the level of refugee escalation and the security challenges.

On the basis of the observed increase in the influx of migrants to Germany and the high rate of security challenges, the paper went into ascertaining the responses and the security strategies adopted by Germany to check the situation. The effectiveness of the strategies and measures were x-rayed and discovered to have relatively reduced the influx of migrants to Germany to the barest minimum. More so, the associated security challenges have reduced as less criminality and terrorist attacks were recorded in Germany after 2015 and 2016. The paper also found out that though the activities of the Islamic terrorist groups have reduced, the local terrorist groups still maintain high proportion of attacks which shows that the security strategies have not impacted positively in reducing the violent activities of the local extremist groups in Germany

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the paper recommended the following:

1. There should be global effort in bridging the economic gap between the Global Economic North and South to discourage influx of economic migrants to Europe
2. Global instrument of conflict resolution and peace building should be deplored proactively to nip in the board the escalation of conflict in the less developed regions of the world to prevent wars and the displacement of people.
3. Comprehensive data of the refuges should be kept and refugees monitored to discover criminals among them so as to isolate and treated their cases according to the German's laws
4. Re-orientation programmes should be organised for the anti-migrant groups in Germany to reduce their level of radicalism and to appreciate the benefit of migrants' labour in an aged Germany economy
5. More effort should be made to enhance the potency of the integration programmes in Germany.

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