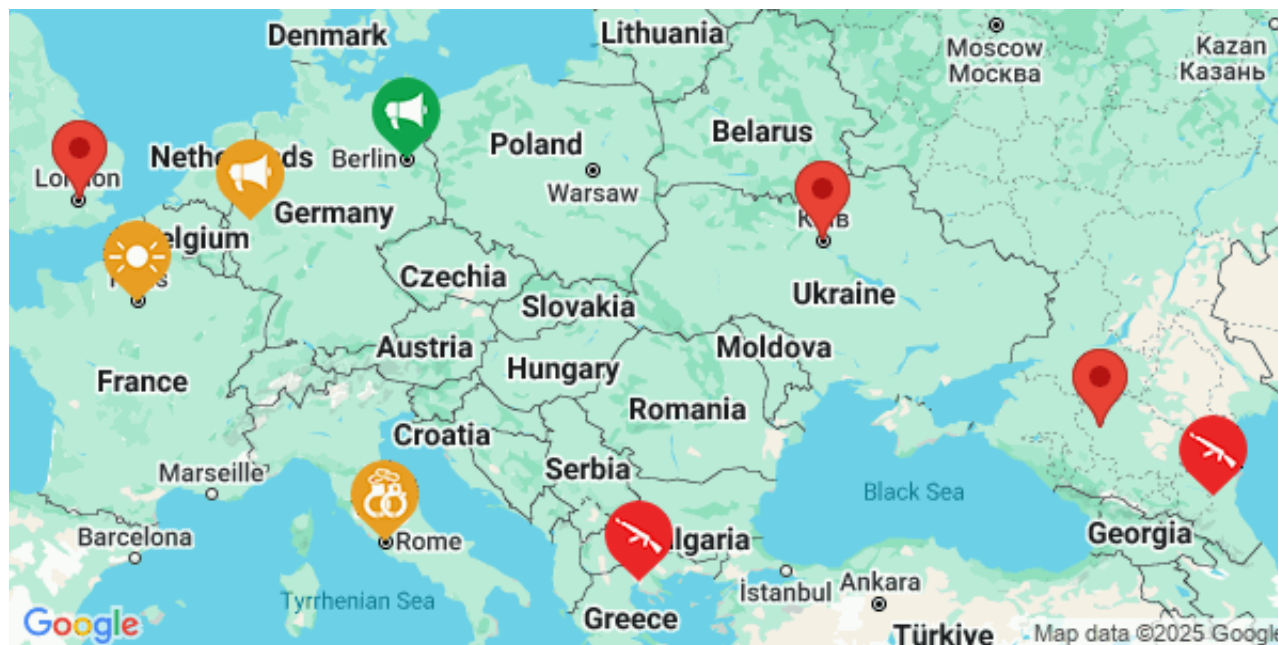


## Daily



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## MAX - Europe Region Daily Summary - May 4, 2025

## Highlights of the Day

- **Germany:** Anti-right-wing protest to be held at Gulichplatz 1-3 in Cologne at 17:00 (local time) on May 4; maintain heightened vigilance
- **Greece:** Woman carrying IED killed after explosive detonated early outside bank in Thessaloniki on May 3; linked to far-left extremist group
- **Russia & Ukraine:** UAV attacks reported on military infrastructure on April 30, May 2; illustrates elevated threat to strategic facilities
- **Ukraine:** Russia launches UAV strikes on multiple regions amid proposed Victory Day ceasefire on May 4; hostilities to persist

## Actionable Items

**Germany: Anti-right-wing protest to be held at Gulichplatz 1-3 in Cologne at 17:00 (local time) on May 4; maintain heightened vigilance**

**Current Situation** - On May 4, a protest organized by the anti-right-wing group Omas Gegen Rechts will take place at 17:00 (local time) in front of the Civil Registration Office at Gulichplatz 1-3 in Cologne. Other left-wing organizations also support the protest. It is being held to urge the Office for the Protection of the Constitution to ban the AfD following the party's designation as a "right-wing extremist group" by German intelligence services on May 3.

**Assessments & Forecast** - Based on the mobilizing capabilities of the organizers, the protest is likely to garner a turnout ranging in the low-to-mid-hundreds. While previous protests organized by Omas Gegen Rechts have proceeded peacefully, given heightened sentiments and the potential participation of left-wing or student groups in the protest, there remains a latent potential for unrest. As such, a bolstered security presence is expected in the vicinity of Gulichplatz 1-3 during the protest timing. In the event of escalating unrest, police are liable to utilize dispersal measures, including arrests. Localized disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic are anticipated near the protest location from the evening hours onward.

**Recommendations** - Those operating or residing in Cologne on May 4 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of Gulichplatz 1-3 due to the latent risk of unrest at the slated protest. Allot for disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic from the evening hours onward.

Source: [X/Twitter](#)

**Germany: Disability rights protest march slated from Brandenburger Tor in Berlin at 11:00 (local time) on May 5; allot for disruptions**

**Current Situation** - On May 5, activists associated with Sozialverband VdK Berlin-Brandenburg, a social association for the disabled, will hold a protest march beginning from Brandenburger Tor in Berlin at 11:00 (local time), before moving on to Rotes Rathaus. The exact march route is not known as of writing. The protest, held under the banner of "Neustart Inklusion," aims to denounce the alleged stagnation of disability policy measures following the change in government and demand a breakdown of barriers to inclusivity and advance equality.

**Assessments & Forecast** - Based on precedent, the protest march is expected to draw a turnout ranging from low to mid-hundreds. Given the nature of the issue, the protest march is expected to transpire largely peacefully. Regardless, a bolstered security presence is expected in the vicinity of the march route to monitor the proceedings. Disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular movement are anticipated near the march route from the late morning hours onwards.

**Recommendations** - Those operating or residing in Berlin on May 5 are advised to allot for travel-related disruptions near Brandenburger Tor and Rotes Rathaus due to the slated protest march from the morning hours onwards.

Source: [VdK Berlin-Brandenburg](#)

## Notable Events

### **France: Police arrest armed suspect near mosque in Bagneux on May 3; security measures near Muslim places of worship to remain bolstered**

**Current Situation** - On May 3, at 10:30 (local time), [police arrested a suspect carrying a bladed weapon near a mosque on Rue Albert-Petit in Bagneux, Hauts-de-Seine department](#). Witnesses, upon noticing that he was carrying a bladed weapon, alerted the police. Initial reports indicate the suspect is mentally unstable and that the arrest is not related to Islamophobia.

**Assessments & Forecast** - That the suspect was outside the mosque for over an hour and was openly carrying a bladed weapon indicates he posed a credible threat. While authorities are currently not considering an Islamophobic motive, given the incident's proximity to a mosque, this cannot be ruled out. Regardless of motive, the incident will further increase concerns over the safety of Muslim communities in France, considering the April 25 stabbing attack at a mosque in La Grand-Combe, Gard department, and the general uptick in Islamophobia. This is evidenced by reports of at least 173 'anti-Islam' incidents recorded in France in 2024, with 52 percent targeting properties, including mosques, and 48 percent targeting people. As such, security forces are likely to maintain protective measures around places of worship in the near-term.

Source: [LeParisien](#)

### **Greece: Woman carrying IED killed after explosive detonated early outside bank in Thessaloniki on May 3; linked to far-left extremist group**

**Current Situation** - On May 3, [a woman carrying an improvised explosive device \(IED\) was killed after the explosive detonated outside a bank in Thessaloniki](#), which she was reportedly intending to rob. The blast caused significant damage to nearby buildings. Police later raided an apartment linked to the suspect, seizing explosives and detonators. The woman is believed to be connected to "Tziotis Group," a far-left extremist cell.

**Assessments & Forecast** - The suspect's ties to far-left militants indicate she was motivated by far-left extremist ideologies. The fact that the suspect intended to rob the ATM also reiterates the continued threat of attacks by far-left actors aimed at financial gain. The use of an IED aligns with the continued reliance on explosive devices by far-left groups, as seen in the April 11 blast outside a railway company office in Athens. While most far-left attacks are predominantly aimed at intimidation, rather than inflicting casualties, the use of explosives raises the threat posed to the public. Additionally, that the IED detonated early, killing the suspect, suggests that some far-left actors are using unstable or poorly assembled IEDs, further increasing this threat.

Source: [CNN](#)

**Italy: Woman sexually assaulted by foreign students in Rome, as per May 3 reports; likely to prompt public backlash**

**Current Situation** - On May 3, Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi reported that an Italian woman was sexually assaulted by three foreign students during the May Day Concert in Rome. The suspects were arrested by plainclothes police. Piantedosi also announced he had requested judicial approval for their expulsion.

**Assessments & Forecast** - The incident highlights the risk of physical and sexual assaults during large gatherings, particularly in crowded areas where law enforcement resources may be strained. With the most recent statistics showing that 465 rapes were recorded in Rome in 2023, a 25 percent increase from 2022, coupled with nationwide backlash over gender violence in Italy, the incident also underscores the rise of sexual violence. Furthermore, the involvement of foreign nationals is expected to intensify already elevated anti-immigrant sentiment in Italy, increasing calls for the deportation of foreigners. This is especially so, considering that sexual assault cases are more likely to evoke an emotional response, increasing public backlash - as seen after the August 2023 gang rape of a 13-year-old girl by Egyptian nationals. With that, protests related to immigration and women's safety are likely in the near term.

Source: [X/Twitter](#)

**Russia: FSB arrests female suspect plotting terrorist attack on law enforcement on Victory Day in Dagestan, on May 2; jihadist motive likely**

**Current Situation** - On May 2, the Federal Security Service (FSB) arrested a woman plotting a terrorist attack on a law enforcement building in Khasavyurt, Dagestan, on May 9. Per the FSB, she was instructed by a man named "Abdullah" via Telegram to photograph government facilities in the area and acquire explosive materials, which she was told to plant or use to blow herself up. Authorities seized components for improvised explosive devices (IED). The suspect reportedly swore allegiance to an unnamed banned international terrorist organization.

**Assessments & Forecast** - That the suspect had a date, target, and explosives indicates she was in the latter stages of planning an attack and posed a highly credible threat. Furthermore, the suspect's communication with a figure named "Abdullah" and her pledge of allegiance to an international terrorist organization, and law enforcement target strongly suggest a jihadist motive. This is also supported by multiple thwarted jihadist plots in the North Caucasus, which are known to target law enforcement. Moreover, the timing of the foiled plot is notable, as it would have coincided with Victory Day, reiterating the risk of attacks on symbolic dates.

Source: [Gazeta.ru](https://gazeta.ru)

### **Russia & Ukraine: UAV attacks reported on military infrastructure on April 30, May 2; illustrates elevated threat to strategic facilities**

**Current Situation** – On May 2, Ukrainian officials stated that “unknown unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)” targeted a Russian military intelligence facility in Russia’s Stavropol region, allegedly responsible for spying on foreign satellites and electronic signals. Authorities stated that UAV fragments were found in Moskovskoe village with no casualties or infrastructure damage. Ukrainian officials claimed that the facility was part of a network of satellite surveillance stations called Zvezda. Separately, Ukraine launched a UAV attack targeting a defense manufacturing facility in the Vladimir region on April 30.

**Assessments & Forecast** – Given the target of the attack, the May 2 incident was highly likely perpetrated by Ukraine, with a similar attack also having taken place in July 2024. As such, the attacks highlight the sustained threat of UAV attacks targeting Russian infrastructure, particularly energy and military facilities, that aid Russian hostilities in Ukraine. The attacks, especially the April 30 incident, further illustrate Ukraine’s capabilities to carry out long-range attacks into mainland Russia. With Kyiv anticipating a major Russian offensive in the coming months, similar attacks targeting critical Russian military facilities are expected to continue.

Source: [Moscow Times](https://moscowtimes.ru)

### **Ukraine: Russia launches UAV strikes on multiple regions amid proposed Victory Day ceasefire on May 4; hostilities to persist**

**Current Situation** – On May 4, Russia launched unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) strikes on several regions in Ukraine, including Kyiv city, resulting in civilian injuries, including almost 50 injured in the Kharkiv region. This followed Russian President Vladimir Putin’s April 28 proposal of a three-day ceasefire on May 8-10, during Russia’s Victory Day. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky rejected this offer, instead calling for a 30-day ceasefire. Additionally, Moscow threatened large-scale retaliation targeting Kyiv if Ukraine launches an attack during Victory Day.

**Assessments & Forecast** – Russia’s UAV strikes reflect a continued pattern of targeting Ukrainian civilian infrastructure. As such, the proposed ceasefire, amid continued airstrikes, reflects Russia’s attempts to bolster its global and domestic image during Victory Day celebrations, rather than a genuine intent to de-escalate the conflict. Indeed, Moscow’s threat to dissuade Ukrainian strikes during Victory Day is likely due to the slated attendance of high-profile politicians, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, at celebrations in Moscow. That said, with both sides rejecting each other’s ceasefire terms, hostilities are expected to persist through and beyond Victory Day.

Source: [RFERL](#)

### **UK: Iranian nationals arrested in two separate counterterrorism operations on May 3-4; reflects heightened threat of Iran-backed attacks**

**Current Situation** - On May 3, counterterrorism authorities arrested five men, including four Iranian nationals, in multiple cities in the UK. The individuals were arrested on suspicion of preparing a “terrorist act” against a single, as-yet unreleased location. On May 4, as part of a separate investigation, three other Iranian nationals were arrested in London on suspicion of a “national security offense.”

**Assessments & Forecast** - The likelihood that these arrests are linked to Tehran is high, considering the precedent of Iran-backed activity in the UK, particularly against dissidents. This includes the stabbing on a British-Iranian journalist in London in March 2024, and the arrest of a man carrying out “hostile reconnaissance” against a London-based news channel critical of Tehran in February 2023. Further, the MI5 intelligence agency reported that authorities have foiled over 20 “potentially lethal” plots backed by Iran since 2022, at an “unprecedented scale.” Moreover, recent warnings from Israeli and British authorities over the increasing risk of attacks in Europe by Iran and its proxies amid escalating conflicts in the Middle East, further point to the likely involvement of Tehran in the above developments.

Source: [Met Police](#)

## **Other Developments**

- On May 1, **Belgian** and **Dutch** military forces conducted surveillance operations in the Baltic Sea, focusing on the protection of undersea infrastructure. The deployment reiterates concerns over Russian sabotage in the Baltic and North Seas.
- On April 30, the province of East Flanders, **Belgium**, introduced a ban on wearing religious and political symbols in provincial educational institutions, citing the need for “philosophical neutrality.” The ban will take effect on September 1, 2025, with protests denouncing the decision likely in the lead-up to its implementation.
- On May 1, **French** Foreign Trade Minister Jean-Noel Barrot announced that the EU is preparing a new round of sanctions against Russia, in coordination with proposed sanctions from the USA. The development reflects continued economic pressure attempts on Russia amid ceasefire negotiations with Ukraine.
- On May 1, an **Italian** journalist, whose news organization uncovered young fascists within Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni’s far-right party, was targeted by spyware. This will likely raise concerns regarding potential state involvement in the press.

# Notable Dates

<b>1</b> APR 2020	Poland: Warsaw extends border controls with Germany, Lithuania until April
<b>23</b> DEC	Estonia: Shortened Workday
<b>24</b> DEC	Europe Holiday: Christmas Eve
<b>25</b> DEC	Europe Holiday: Christmas Day
<b>26</b> DEC	Europe Holiday: St. Stephen's Day / Boxing Day / Second Day of Christmas
<b>29</b> DEC	Hungary Holiday: Public Sector Holiday