

## Travel



# 26

DEC

13:26 UTC

## Europe Analysis: Risk of petty crime, violence, unrest during New Year's Eve celebratory gatherings remains despite bolstered security measures in multiple cities

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### Executive Summary

- Authorities across major European cities have implemented extensive traffic restrictions, fireworks ban, and enhanced policing measures ahead of New Year's Eve celebrations on December 31-January 1 to mitigate public safety risks associated with large-scale gatherings.
- Despite these measures, the risk of violent disorder, including arson, vandalism, fireworks-related incidents, and clashes with police, remains elevated, based on recurring New Year-related unrest in recent years. This risk is assessed to be particularly pronounced in Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Paris, London, Milan, and Rotterdam.
- High footfall and crowd congestion will sustain an elevated risk of opportunistic crime, including pickpocketing, theft of high-value items, retail crime, and sexual harassment, particularly in

nightlife districts, transport hubs, and major event locations.

- Amid a heightened baseline jihadist threat during the holiday period, New Year's Eve celebratory events remain vulnerable targets due to large crowds, predictable schedules, symbolic value, and high visibility, despite robust counterterrorism postures.
- **Overall, individuals residing in or traveling to major European cities between December 31 and January 1 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance due to the elevated risk of unrest, criminal activity, and potential violent attacks in the vicinity of New Year's Eve celebrations.**

## Current Situation

- On December 31 and January 1, New Year's Eve celebrations are slated in multiple cities across Europe. Associated traffic restrictions and security measures will be in place. Details are as follows:
- In Vienna, **Austria**, the annual 'New Year's Eve Trail' festival, which includes multiple open-air events such as concerts, live pop-up shows, and exhibits, will take place on December 31. Events will be held at Riesenradplatz, Rathausplatz, Freyung, Am Hof, Stephansplatz, Karntner Strasse, Ringstrasse, Graben, Neuer Markt, and Prater.
- Associated security measures will be deployed at the event locations across the city, including identity and baggage checks, and bans on pyrotechnic articles and hazardous substances.

Source: [Wiener Silvesterpfad](#)

- Multiple travel restrictions will also be in place. Authorities have issued a general ban on all vehicles and sports equipment in the event areas, including trucks and two-wheelers. Additionally, the Stephansplatz metro station will be closed from 21:00 (local time).
- However, all metro, tram, and bus lines will be operational throughout the day as well as during overnight hours. Details can be found [here](#) (in German).

Source: [Wiener Linien](#)

- Also on December 31, a New Year's running event will take place during the morning hours, starting from the University of Vienna near Rathausplatz, and proceed through the Stadtpark, Parliament building, and conclude at the City Hall.
- The Ringstrasse will be closed to traffic during the event. A detailed map of the event can be found [here](#) (in English).

Source: [Vienna Wien](#)

- In Brussels, **Belgium**, a fireworks display will take place at the Heysel Plateau in Laeken from 21:00.
- Authorities have announced free public transport across the Societe des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (STIB) network from 00:00 until 05:30 on January 1. However, closures will be implemented on several roads near the fireworks location during evening hours of December 31, including Avenue Imperatrice Charlotte, Belgium Square, and Miramar Avenue.
- Authorities have also imposed a ban on the sale and use of fireworks in public places until March 2, 2026.

Source: [City of Brussels](#)

- Additionally, a ban on private and shared scooters will be in place throughout the Brussels-Capital Region from 12:00 on December 31 until 09:00 on January 1.

Source: [Rudi Vervoot](#)

- In Prague, **Czech Republic**, a ban on pyrotechnic articles will be in place on December 31 and January 1, near sensitive zones like central squares, historical monuments, and hospitals. Additionally, sky-lanterns will be prohibited throughout the city.

Source: [Travel and Tour World](#)

- In Helsinki, **Finland**, New Year's celebrations, including concerts, will take place at the Kansalaistori Square from 17:00 on December 31.
- Traffic restrictions will also be in place, including road closures near Toolonlahdenkatu, Eero Erkon katu, Arkadiankatu, and Mannerheimintie. Additionally, diversions to tram and bus routes will also take place throughout the city. Detailed traffic information can be found [here](#) (in Finnish).

Source: [Helsingin Uusivuosi](#)

- In Paris, **France**, the New Year's Eve concert at the Champs-Élysées has been cancelled due to security reasons. However, fireworks displays will take place at the Arc de Triomphe on December 31.
- A protective perimeter will be set up around the Place Charles-de-Gaulle from 15:00. Another perimeter will be set up covering the entire Avenue des Champs-Élysées and its surroundings from 16:00 on December 31 until 04:00 on January 1.
- Additionally, a ban on alcohol consumption on public roads inside the perimeter will be in place.

Source: [Le Parisien](#)

- Additionally, traffic restrictions will be in place. Multiple areas in the 8th, 16th, and 17th arrondissements will be closed to vehicular traffic from 14:00 on December 31 until 04:00 on January 1. Details can be found [here](#) (in French).

Source: [Sortira Paris](#)

- Metro services will operate on modified routes and schedules, including station closures. Details can be found [here](#) (in French).

Source: [RATP](#)

- In **Germany**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place across major cities, with bans on fireworks also in place.
- In **Berlin**, celebrations will take place at the Brandenburg Gate, including firework displays and musical concerts. Authorities will implement special ban zones where fireworks and weapons will be prohibited, from 18:00 on December 31 until 06:00 on January 1. The areas include Alexanderplatz, Steinmetzkiez, parts of Neukölln, Brandenburg Gate, and Tiergarten.

Source: [Welt](#)

- In **Munich**, fireworks will be banned within the Mittlerer Ring, and near the Hellabrunn zoo, Marienplatz, Karlsplatz, and Viktualienmarkt from 21:00 on December 31 until 02:00 on January 1.

Source: [TZ](#)

- In **Stuttgart**, a ban on fireworks will be in place within the city ring, including areas near Stuttgart Hauptbahnhof, Hauptstatter Strasse, Stadtbibliothek Stuttgart, Wurttemberg, and Solitude Palace from 18:00 on December 31 until 06:00 on January 1. Detailed information on the ban can be found [here](#) (in German).

Source: [City of Stuttgart](#)

- In **Hanover**, a ban on fireworks will be in place across multiple central street axes of the city center, from Opernplatz to Kropcke to Steintor, including Bahnhofstrasse, Raschplatz, and parts of Karmarschstrasse. The ban will be in place from 20:00 on December 31 until 03:00 on January 1.

Source: [T-Online](#)

- In **Cologne**, traffic restrictions will be in place across several bridges, including Deutzer Brücke, Hohenzollernbrücke, and Severinsbrücke.
- Additionally, a protection zone will be set up near the Cologne Cathedral from 18:30, which will include road closures and no parking zones. A fireworks ban will also be in place around the cathedral. Detailed information on the closures can be found [here](#) (in German).
- A ban on loud fireworks will be in place in the area between the Rhine and the city ring roads. However, firecrackers for visual displays will be exempt.
- Public transportation will run on modified schedules to ease congestion on roads. Meanwhile, several road closures and traffic restrictions will be in place throughout the city, for which a detailed map can be found [here](#) (in German).

Source: [Koeln.de](#)

- In **Frankfurt**, fireworks will be prohibited at Eiserner Steg and Zeil, as well as in the vicinity of sensitive buildings such as churches and hospitals.
- Additionally, traffic closures will also be in place in areas north and south of the Main River.

Source: [City of Frankfurt](#)

- In Athens, **Greece**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place at Syntagma Square from 22:00.

Source: [This is Athens](#)

- Additionally, public transport will operate on modified schedules. Details can be found [here](#).

Source: [News Beast](#)

- In Dublin, **Ireland**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place at Dublin Castle and Meeting House Square, along with firework displays at the Howth and Dun Laoghaire harbors.

Source: [Fingal](#)

- Multiple traffic restrictions will be in place across the city. Castle Street will be closed from 16:00 on December 31 until 02:00 on January 1. Additionally, diversions will be in place, including traffic on Dame Street diverted via Werburgh Street, and traffic from Werburgh directed onto Lord Edward Street. Detailed traffic information can be found [here](#).

Source: [The Sun](#)

- In **Italy**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place across major cities on December 31.
- In Rome, a musical concert will take place at the Circus Maximus from 21:00.

Source: [Roma Today](#)

- Public transport services will operate on modified schedules throughout the city. Details can be found [here](#) (in Italian).

Source: [Roma Today](#)

- In **Milan**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place at Piazza Duomo. Access to the square will be limited to a maximum capacity of 4,500 individuals.
- Authorities will also implement a ban on the sale and consumption of alcohol, as well as fireworks at the event site and surrounding areas.

Source: [TG24](#)

- Additionally, public transport services will operate on modified schedules. Details can be found [here](#) (in Italian).

Source: [Milano Today](#)

- In Luxembourg City, **Luxembourg**, a ban on fireworks will be in place throughout the city, with the exception of Bech, Erpeldange-sur-Sure, Reisdorf, Weiswampach, Putscheid, and Goesdorf.

Source: [Luxembourg Times](#)

- Additionally, public transport will run on modified schedules on December 31 and January 1. Details can be found [here](#).

Source: [City of Luxembourg](#)

- In **Monaco**, the government has imposed a blanket ban on the transfer, possession, transport, and use of fireworks and pyrotechnic devices from 12:00 on December 31 to 12:00 on January 1, 2026. Per reports, only firework displays authorized by ministerial decree will be permitted during this period.
- Additionally, authorities have authorized bars, restaurants, and leisure establishments to implement access controls from 18:00 on December 31 until 08:00 on January 1. These measures include checks of personal belongings to prevent the entry of individuals or items posing a threat to public order or safety.

Source: [News.MC](#)

- In the **Netherlands**, no nationwide ban on fireworks will be in place this year, consistent with previous years, as the Dutch government has continued to defer such restrictions to municipal authorities. Meanwhile, 20 municipalities have independently placed a ban on fireworks for New Year's Eve including Alkmaar, Amersfoort, Amsterdam, Apeldoorn, Arnhem, Bloemendaal, Eindhoven, Haarlem, Heemstede, Heumen, Lochem, Mook and Middelaar, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Schiedam, Soest, Tilburg, Utrecht, Utrechtse Heuvelrug, and Zwolle.

Source: [NL](#)

- Additionally, parts of **Amsterdam** will be designated a safety risk area for New Year's Eve to let police carry out preventative searches to detect heavy and illegal fireworks.
- A safety risk area will be in place in Amsterdam's city center around the Dam and Central Station, and in neighborhoods across West, Nieuw-West, and Oost from 16:00 on December 31 until 04:00 on January 1. Another safety risk area will be in place in Weesp in the Amsterdam municipality near the Hogewei shopping center and the Meidoornflat from 20:00 on December 31 to 04:00 on January 1.

Source: [NL](#)

- In **Valkenburg aan de Geul** Municipality in Limburg Province, security measures will be stepped up around Christmas markets due to a threat of terror attacks. The measures will primarily focus on areas surrounding the underground Christmas markets hosted inside the Valkenburg cave systems, including the Gemeentegrot and Fluweelengrot, which attract large visitor volumes during the holiday season. As part of the security measures, concrete blocks and vehicle barriers will be installed to mitigate vehicle-ramming risks, while bag checks and surveillance cameras will be deployed at the entrances to the caves and nearby pedestrian access points.

Source: [Metronieuws](#)

- In Oslo, **Norway**, private individuals may set off consumer fireworks without applying for a special permit only during the New Year's Eve period, specifically between 18:00 on December 31 and 02:00 on January 1. This exemption applies solely to New Year's Eve, while at all other times, prior authorization is required. These fireworks will be permitted outside Ring 2, which stretches from Skoyen to Lodalen and encompasses central locations including



Frogner, Majorstuen, Lindern, Sagene, Carl Berners plass, Toyen, and Galgeberg.

Source: [Oslo Kommune](#)

- In **Poland**, traffic bans for trucks over 12 tons will be in place from 08:00-22:00 across the country on December 26 and January 1, while exemptions will be made for trucks transporting medicines and medical supplies, perishable goods, fuel, and live animals. Further details on the same can be found [here](#). (in Polish)

Source: [Polish Government](#)

- In **Warsaw**, authorities have increased security measures near Christmas markets following the arrest of a 19-year-old student suspected of planning a mass-casualty attack involving explosives on November 30.
- Organizers of Christmas markets have introduced permanent monitoring measures and additional patrols. Meanwhile, organizers of an event held near the Palace of Culture and Science have secured the location using concrete barriers to prevent unauthorized vehicles from entering the grounds.

Source: [Polskiego Radio](#)

- Further, changes in public transportation will be introduced in the city until January 6. Details on the changes can be found [here](#). (in Polish)

Source: [WTP](#)

- In **Portugal**, two operations by the Public Security Police (PSP) and the National Republican Guard (GNR) are in place for the holiday period from December 18 to January 4. Police operations will be carried out in two phases, with the GNR reinforcing patrols on main highways towards northern regions and southern regions, while the PSP will reinforce police presence to prevent road accidents.
- In Lisbon's Chiado area, road traffic will be restricted to vehicles on December 27 and 28 to ensure more safety for pedestrians. Further details can be found [here](#). (in Portuguese)
- Public transportation will run on altered schedules, with details available [here](#) and [here](#). (in Portuguese)

Source: [The Portugal News](#)

- In Bucharest, **Romania**, multiple Christmas markets will be organized during the holiday period, including on Piata Constitutiei, Piata Universitatii, Esplanada Operei Nationale, Piata Alba Iulia din Capitala, and Drumul Taberei until December 28.
- Additionally, Christmas fairs will also be organized in other cities, including Arad, Brasov, Craiova, Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, Sibiu, and Timisoara, among others.

Source: [Digi 24](#)

- Public transport services in various cities will be changed during the holiday season. In Bucharest, buses, trolleybuses, and trams will operate according to a special schedule until January 7. Further details on changes to metro services can be found [here](#). (in Romanian)

Source: [Fanatik](#)

- In Belgrade, **Serbia**, the Mayor of Belgrade, Aleksandar Sapic, reportedly stated that the city will not be organizing the New Year's Eve celebration or the Serbian New Year's celebration due to security reasons.
- The mayor added that, regardless, multiple events will take place at Republic Square, around the Temple of Saint Sava, and in Tasmajdan Park throughout the holiday season.

Source: [Serbian Times](#)

- In Madrid, **Spain**, traffic and parking regulation measures are in place for Christmas, New Year's Eve, and Three Kings Day until January 6. Per authorities, roads that will likely be closed or have traffic restrictions due to increased pedestrian saturation or traffic congestion include Gran Via from Plaza de Espana to Calle Alcalá, Atocha Street, Calle Mayor, Calle Segovia, Calle Princesa, and Plaza de la Independencia. Further details on the same can be found [here](#). (in Spanish)
- Additionally, public transportation is operating on changed schedules during the holiday season, with the Madrid Regional Transport Consortium increasing metro services on lines that experience increased passenger demand until January 6. Meanwhile, on December 31 and January 1, 5 and 6, special arrangements will be made.
- Madrid Metro will modify its opening and closing times on New Year's Day. Sol station will remain closed to ensure safety due to the high volume of passengers, from 18:00 to 21:00 on December 26, 27, January 2, and 3.
- Presence of station and security staff will be increased due to increase in travel demand, in

stations near shopping and leisure areas, especially near Opera, Sol, Callao, Gran Vía, Sevilla, Tirso de Molina, Principe Pio, Banco de Espana, Santo Domingo, Serrano, Goya, Plaza de Espana, Lavapies, Chueca, Nuevos Ministerios, Tribunal and Barrio del Pilar. Further details on public transportation can be found [here](#). (in Spanish)

Source: [Madrid City Council](#)

- In Barcelona, the New Year's Eve celebration is slated to take place on Avinguda de la Reina Maria Cristina on December 31. Traffic restrictions for the facilitation of the event will be in place with parking bans from 00:00 on December 31 to 02:00 on January 1 near the event.
- From 19:00 on December 31, Avinguda de la Reina Maria Cristina, Avinguda de Rius i Taulet, and Avinguda de Francesc Ferrer i Guardia will be closed to traffic. Meanwhile, between 21:00 to 22:00, a third area around Placa Espanya will also be completely closed to traffic. Further details on the affected roads are available [here](#). (in Spanish)

Source: [Barcelona Mobility and Transport](#)

- In Stockholm, **Sweden**, the New Year's Eve celebration, including firework displays, will take place at Djurgardsslatten from 20:00 on December 31.
- Traffic restrictions will be in place, including road closures around Slussen, and central streets like Skeppsbron, Norrbro, Strombron, and Slottskajen.

Source: [Skansen](#)

- In Geneva, **Switzerland**, the 'Ensemble on brille!' New Year's Eve celebration event will take place at the Quai Gustave-Ador, along with firework displays over Lake Geneva.
- The Quai Gustave-Ador will be completely closed to traffic, along with closures on Pont du Mont-Blanc, Quai du Mont-Blanc, and Quai Wilson from 22:00 until 01:00 on January 1, 2026.

Source: [Ville De Geneve](#)

- In **Zurich**, New Year's Eve celebrations will take place around Lake Zurich, including firework displays. Traffic restrictions will be in place, including closures on parts of the city centre and the lakeside
- Additionally, tram and bus routes around Central, Bellevue, Bahnhof Stadelhofen, Paradeplatz, Burkliplatz, Bellerivestrasse, and Mythenquai will be impacted by the closures. Detailed traffic

information can be found [here](#) (in German).

Source: [Zuri Linie](#)

- In London, **UK**, increased security measures will be deployed during the holiday season to prevent crime and antisocial behavior. Additional police officers will be deployed after dark to safeguard communities, local businesses, and retail workers. High footfall areas will also be policed by plain clothes officers along with high-visibility patrols to prevent shoplifters and violence against women.
- To prevent knife crime, the police will use live facial recognition, traffic interceptors, and e-bike teams in specific locations with high crime rates, including Westminster, Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark, and Haringey.

Source: [BBC](#)

- In **London**, the Mayor of London's New Year's Eve Fireworks event is slated to take place in Westminster near the London Eye and Big Ben from 20:00 on December 31 to 00:30 on January 1.
- Vehicular restrictions will be in place near the event and surrounding areas from 14:00 on December 31 to 06:00 on January 1. Further details on the event can be found [here](#).
- Additional road closures will be in place on January 1 for the London Parade 2026 near Piccadilly, Regent Street, St James's, Pall Mall, Trafalgar Square, and Whitehall, slated from 13:00. Details on the parade can be found [here](#).

Source: [Mayor of London](#)

- Transport for London (TfL) has announced multiple travel advisories for the period leading up to January 1. There will be no Night Tube or Night Overground services operating on Boxing Day, December 26. On New Year's Eve, TfL services will run throughout the night; however, services in central London are expected to be extremely busy, and some stations may close at short notice or during peak times to prevent overcrowding. In addition, several bus services in central London will operate on diversion from approximately midday due to planned road closures.
- Separately, rail disruptions are expected due to engineering works until January 6. These works will affect services operating from London Waterloo and the Cambridge area, as well as rail services between Leeds and York and along the West Coast Main Line. Travelers are advised to check the latest travel updates and plan journeys in advance with details available [here](#).

Source: [Independent](#)

- In Edinburgh, **Scotland**, the Hogmanay Festival is slated to take place from December 29 to January 1.
- Additionally, ScotRail has revised its Christmas and New Year timetable across Scotland. Further details on the same can be found [here](#).

Source: [Sun](#)

- In **Northern Ireland**, the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) has launched Operation Season's Greetings, the annual safety drive for public safety, road safety, preventing thefts, and anti-social behavior in busy shopping and nightlife areas. Under the scheme, increased presence of officers will be deployed throughout towns and cities in Northern Ireland during the festive period.

Source: [BBC](#)

## Assessments & Forecast

### **The risk of localized disorder, rioting remains elevated despite bolstered security enforcement, issue-based protests to also coincide celebratory events**

- 1. FORECAST:** Despite the deployment of heightened security measures, the risk of localized disorder and violence, including arson, vandalism, and police confrontation, remains elevated during the night hours of December 31 and the early hours of January 1, based on recurring New Year-related disorder in recent years. The risk of such disorder remains comparatively higher in cities such as Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Paris, Rotterdam, and The Hague.
2. For instance, during the January 1 in 2024-2025 unrest in the Netherlands, fireworks-related violence and rioting were recorded in Haarlem, Zaandam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Amsterdam, Breda, and Groningen, resulting in more than 200 arrests. In Belgium, January 2 reports confirmed arson targeting Christmas trees and public bins, with 159 arrests made in Brussels. In Germany, authorities reported approximately 400 arrests in Berlin following New Year's Eve-related riots and clashes with police on January 1. During December 2024, New Year's Eve, 984 vehicles were on fire nationwide in France.
- 3. FORECAST:** There is a likelihood of protests also coinciding with New Year's Eve celebrations, as activist groups frequently seek to exploit the heightened visibility and footfall associated with the period. Notably, pro-Palestinian groups have announced mobilizations starting from late afternoon and evening hours on December 31, including calls for demonstrations at Ha'penny Bridge in Dublin, Stockholm's Sergels Torg, and near HM Prison Brixton in London. These protests are expected to see turnout in the high hundreds to low thousands and carry an elevated risk of unrest owing to heightened sentiments over the protest issues and potential participation of radical left-wing activists.
- 4. FORECAST:** Beyond pro-Palestinian activism, the persistence of heightened sensitivities surrounding the Russia-Ukraine conflict, climate policies, immigration pressures, farmers' grievances, and ongoing cost-of-living concerns is likely to sustain the risk of short-notice or

spontaneous mobilizations. Such gatherings are most likely to occur near major public squares and New Year's Eve event locations in Western European cities, typically involving banner displays, chanting, and symbolic actions. Based on precedent from previous New Year's Eve periods, these gatherings are likely to remain largely peaceful. However, the presence of dense crowds and the potential proximity of individuals from rival ideological camps increase the latent risk of localized confrontations and police intervention.

5. Furthermore, heavy alcohol consumption during New Year's Eve celebrations is likely to increase the incidence of altercations, brawls, and verbal abuse, particularly in nightlife districts, transport hubs, and other crowded public spaces, contributing to localized disorder and increased demands on emergency services.

### **High footfall and dense crowds increase the risk of petty criminal activities, sexual harassment, and fireworks-related incidents near celebratory events**

1. **FORECAST:** High footfall and dense crowd gatherings associated with New Year's Eve celebrations carry a heightened risk of opportunistic crime, including pickpocketing, bag snatching, and the targeted theft of high-value personal items such as luxury watches. In parallel, the risk of shoplifting and robberies targeting retail premises, particularly stores selling high-value goods such as jewellery, watches, and electronic items, will also remain elevated, as offenders exploit increased crowd density and reduced situational awareness to conceal their activities.
2. This elevated risk environment is reflected in the deployment of reinforced plain-clothes policing in major cities, including London. This is supported by precedent from 2024, when authorities in Germany reported approximately 2,000 registered offenses in Berlin during New Year celebrations, while police in the Netherlands arrested more than 200 individuals for offenses including theft, property damage, and violations of weapons laws.
3. **FORECAST:** Beyond petty crime, the criminal misuse of fireworks remains an elevated threat during New Year's Eve celebrations. Fireworks are frequently employed not only for celebratory purposes but also as weapons against individuals, emergency responders, and property, contributing to arson, assaults, and public disorder. During the 2024–2025 New Year period in Berlin, multiple fireworks-related criminal incidents resulted in five fatalities and injuries to dozens of emergency responders. This threat remains particularly pronounced in countries with a recurring pattern of fireworks-linked criminal activity, notably Germany and the Netherlands.
4. **FORECAST:** Meanwhile, the risk of sexual harassment and sexual assault is elevated during New Year's Eve celebrations, particularly in areas characterized by dense crowds, nightlife activity, and heavy alcohol consumption. Incidents are more likely to occur in nightlife districts, crowded public celebrations, transport hubs, and during late-night travel, when situational awareness is reduced, and victims are more vulnerable.

### **Amid heightened baseline Jihadist threat during the holiday period, celebratory events remain vulnerable targets due to large crowds and their symbolic value**

1. **FORECAST:** Amid the heightened baseline jihadist threat during the ongoing holiday period, evidenced by foiled plots targeting Christmas markets in [Magdeburg](#) and [Dingolfing-Landau](#) in Germany as well as Lubin in Poland, New Year's Eve celebratory gatherings also remain vulnerable to terrorist attacks. This elevated threat environment is driven by predictable event schedules that simplify target selection, the heightened religious and symbolic significance of the period, and increased online extremist propaganda and incitement.
2. Notably, on December 18, the Islamic State (IS) issued renewed calls for attacks in Western countries, explicitly urging supporters, including Muslim refugees in Belgium, to target Christian and Jewish entities, such as churches and synagogues, during the holiday period. The threat is

assessed to be particularly elevated in Western European countries such as Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK, which together accounted for the majority of both successful attacks and foiled jihadist plots recorded in 2025.

- 3. FORECAST:** The primary terrorism threat in Europe continues to stem from self-radicalized jihadist lone actors employing low-complexity attack methods, primarily stabbings and vehicular ramming, which are easy to access, require minimal training, and are difficult to detect. As per MAX's tracking, all 12 successful jihadist attacks recorded in Europe in 2025 were carried out by lone actors; nine involved stabbings and three involved vehicular ramming, underscoring the preference of these modi operandi.
- 4. FORECAST:** While jihadist actors constitute the dominant terrorism threat across Europe, far-right extremist violence constitutes a latent risk during the holiday period, particularly in Western and Northern Europe. Given their focus on symbolism, visibility, and mass-casualty impact, far-right actors may seek to exploit crowded seasonal venues and high-profile public events. This threat spans a broad ideological spectrum, including neo-Nazi and white-supremacist networks, as well as more diffuse accelerationist, anti-government, and incel-aligned milieus. Based on precedent, this threat largely emanates from lone actors using readily available weapons, rendering attacks highly unpredictable and complicating early detection. In parallel, isolated acts of mass violence driven by mixed ideological or mental-health factors remain a concern, as illustrated by the December 2024 vehicular ramming at the Magdeburg Christmas market in Germany.

## Recommendations

1. Those residing in or traveling across Europe are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of New Year's Eve celebrations, public squares, nightlife districts, transport hubs, and other high-footfall locations due to the risks of unrest, heightened criminal activity, and risk of terror attacks.
2. Avoid partaking in dense crowds near fireworks displays, countdown events, or confined public spaces where crowd surges, disorder, or fireworks-related incidents are more likely to occur. Identify multiple exit routes when attending public events.
3. Plan travel with flexibility, accounting for widespread road closures, last-minute station shutdowns, and modified public transport schedules. Monitor official transport and police channels for real-time updates.
4. Immediately report suspicious behavior or objects to local authorities or on-site security personnel.
5. Remain vigilant to petty crime risks, including pickpocketing, bag snatching, retail theft, and watch theft, especially in crowded areas. Secure valuables discreetly and avoid displaying high-value items.
6. Exercise caution in nightlife districts, where heavy alcohol consumption may increase the likelihood of altercations, sexual harassment, and antisocial behavior. Travel in groups where possible and pre-arrange transport.
7. Avoid protest locations and spontaneous gatherings, particularly where rival ideological groups may converge. If caught near a demonstration, leave the area promptly and follow police instructions.
8. If a security checkpoint is encountered, act respectfully and patiently, while cooperating fully with security personnel. Refrain from photographing security personnel or documenting events.
9. If traveling with a local colleague, it is advisable to allow them to deal directly with security forces and only speak when addressed.
10. Ensure that when traveling, you have sufficient means of identification and can evidence, if required, exactly where you are going.
11. For any questions and risk assessments, please contact [intel@max-security.com](mailto:intel@max-security.com).