

Travel



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Europe Tactical: Carnival celebrations to be held in multiple countries from February 27 to March 9; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation

- Carnival events are scheduled to be held in multiple countries from February 27. Details are as follows:
 - In Cologne, **Germany**, carnival events will take place between February 27 to March 5. Carnival events in Cologne are among the largest in Europe, with an annual one million visitors. Details regarding the dates and exact locations of the events are available [here](#) (in German).
 - The main event, the Weiberfastnacht, will be held at Alter Markt, starting at 11:11 (local time) on February 27.
 - Furthermore, Cologne city authorities have announced road closures for vehicular movement, including in the Old Town and Zulpicher Strasse area from February 27 to March 4. Further details can be found [here](#).
 - Disruptions to public transportation services have also been announced, with details regarding the possible cancelation and delays to be found [here](#).

- Moreover, more than 300 public security officers and approximately 1,200 employees of private security companies will be deployed to monitor the proceedings in Latang Kwartier, Cologne.
- The possession, use, and sale of glass and glass bottles within the Old Town and Zulpicher Viertel areas will be prohibited throughout the duration of the Carnival celebrations in Cologne.

Source: [Stadt Koln](#)

- In Frankfurt, **Germany**, events will take place at Romer on March 1-2.

Source: [Walk-Frankfurt](#)

- In Hanover, **Germany**, on March 1, a procession is slated to start at Neuen Rathaus, located at 1 Platz der Menschenrechte, at 11:11. The procession will follow through Am Markte, Platz der Weltausstellung, and will finish at terminus Brauhaus Ernst-August, where celebrations will take place.

Source: [Hanover.de](#)

- In Stuttgart, **Germany**, events will take place from February 28 to March 4. The main event will be held on March 4 in the city center.

Source: [Stuttgart.de](#)

- Meanwhile, the open-air events in Munich, **Germany**, have been canceled due to security concerns following the [February 13 car ramming in Munich](#).

Source: [Muenchen.de](#)

- Additionally, Carnival events will also take place in Aachen, Dusseldorf, Mainz, Marne, Nuremberg, and Wurzburg.

Source: [Germany Travel](#)

- In **Austria**, events are slated to take place across the states of Burgenland, Carinthia, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Upper Austria, and Vorarlberg, with the biggest events to take place on March 4-5.

Source: [Rove](#)

- In **Belgium**, Carnival will be celebrated in Binche, Hainaut province on March 2-4.

Source: [Kanoa](#)

- In the **Netherlands**, events will take place across North Brabant and Limburg provinces on March 2-4.

Source: [Vakantiedagennederland](#)

- Carnival events in **Switzerland** are slated to be held across the country, with details available [here](#).
- In Zurich, Carnival events will take place at Munsterhof between March 7-9. Details are available [here](#).

Source: [My Switzerland](#)

- As per reports from February 24, media outlets linked to the Islamic State (IS) have released propaganda materials urging attacks in Europe. These materials include a list of potential targets, which specifically mentions the Weiberfastnacht and GreenKomm celebrations in Cologne, as well as events in Nuremberg on March 3.

Assessments & Forecast

1. Given the precedent, the events will likely witness turnouts ranging from low to high tens of thousands attending each event. The Cologne events are anticipated to attract the largest crowd, with total attendance likely exceeding one million.
2. With the announcement of increased security measures and multiple road closures, additional roadblocks around the celebration locations are anticipated. These measures, along with the travel restrictions in place, are expected to lead to significant traffic congestion near the event sites throughout the duration of the Carnival in Cologne and other cities in Germany.
3. **FORECAST:** Considering IS calls for attacks, coupled with the recent stabbing attacks in [Villach, Austria](#), [Berlin, Germany](#), and [Mulhouse, France](#), and the vehicle ramming in Munich, the risk of terrorism is elevated across Europe. As such, bolstered security measures are likely to be enacted in other countries regionwide. Additionally, authorities are liable to implement evacuation orders and even localized lockdown measures if faced with an associated security alert, possibly with a low threshold. In addition, potential carnival cancellations by authorities are also expected.
4. In addition to the threat of attacks, the risk of pickpocketing and petty crime will be elevated in crowded public spaces during festive events.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Europe between February 27 and March 9 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance during the Carnival events considering the heightened threat of Islamist terrorist attacks and opportunistic crime.
2. Travelers are advised to remain cognizant of their surroundings, including any suspicious behavior of individuals, which may include a person wearing winter clothing during warm weather and/or seemingly wandering around, as well as items that look out of place, such as bags or containers.
3. Alert authorities immediately upon witnessing suspicious items or behavior.
4. If a potential stabbing, shooting, explosion, or vehicle ramming manifests, leave the area immediately if possible, or take shelter at a secure location.
5. Move away from large groups to mitigate the risks of a stampede and of presenting a bigger target for a possible secondary attack.
6. Remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding evolving security protocols at public events.
7. Allot for travel-related disruptions in cities and towns celebrating Carnival.
8. For further questions, please contact intel@max-security.com