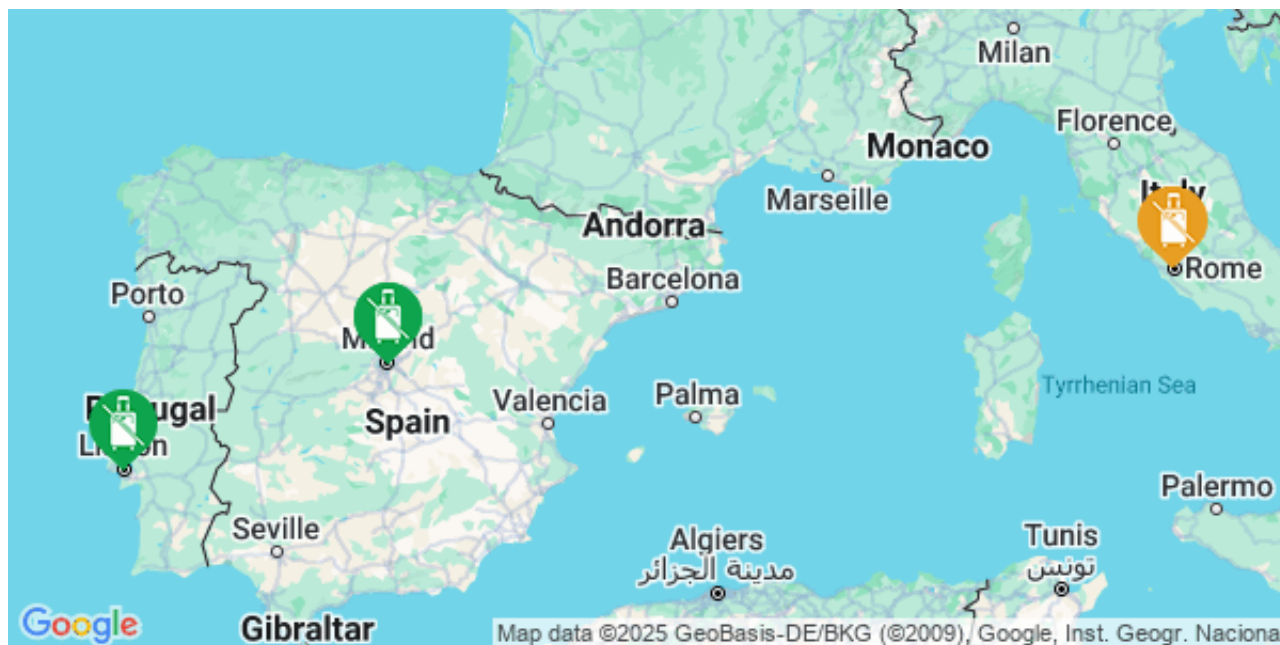


## Travel



# 21

APR  
13:46 UTC

## Europe Tactical (UPDATE): Heightened security measures enacted in Rome, Vatican City, mourning periods announced in Portugal, Spain for Pope Francis on April 21; remain cognizant of updates

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## Current Situation

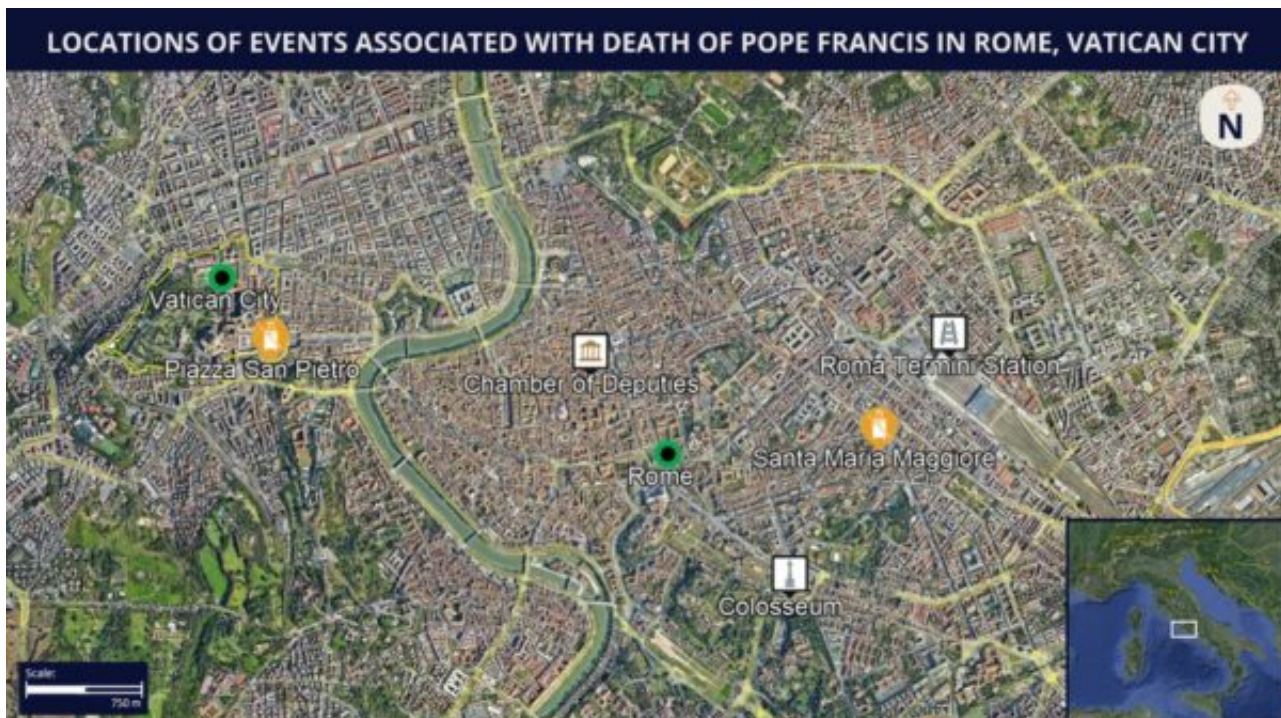
- Authorities in Vatican City and Rome, Italy, have announced multiple security measures following the death of Pope Francis on April 21.
- As per an announcement by the Municipality of Rome, all public events scheduled for April 21-22 in the city have been cancelled. This includes events associated with the Natale di Roma festival slated for April 21, suspension of Jubilee 2025 events, as well as scheduled Lega Serie A football matches and other religious events.
- Moreover, enhanced security measures have been implemented in public areas of central Rome and Vatican City. As of writing, police contingents have been deployed to Piazza San Pietro, Borgo, Via della Conciliazione, and near popular tourist destinations such as the Cappella Sistina.

- Reports indicate that security measures will include the deployment of mobile barriers, installation of metal detectors, and the establishment of controlled entry points to manage foot traffic in busy areas. Additional checkpoints are also being set up along access roads in surrounding neighborhoods to enhance overall security. Over 1,000 law enforcement personnel – including police and carabinieri – will be deployed in the lead-up to the funeral.
- Moreover, an expanded no-fly zone will be implemented around Vatican City.
- The exact timing of the funeral of Pope Francis has not been announced as of writing. According to Catholic Church customs, the funeral will be held 4-6 days following the Pope's death.

Source: [La Repubblica](#)

- Emerging reports indicate that large crowds of mourners are already arriving in central areas of Vatican City, particularly at Piazza San Pietro and in the vicinity of Santa Maria Maggiore, where Pope Francis is expected to be buried.
- The Vatican announced that the first public prayer for Pope Francis will take place at 19:30 (local time) at Piazza San Pietro on April 21.

Source: [Ansa.it](#)



- Following the announcement of Pope Francis' passing, the **Spanish** government declared a three-day period of national mourning.

Source: [El Diario](#)

- The government of **Portugal** has also announced a period of national mourning, although the exact dates have yet to be determined.

Source: [Sabado](#)

## Assessments & Forecast

1. Visitors from both Rome and countries worldwide are expected to travel to the Vatican City and Rome en masse in the coming days to participate in mourning proceedings, with crowds liable to reach turnouts between the mid to high hundreds of thousands during the time of the funeral.
2. Separately, although authorities have not reported any specific threats related to the proceedings, given the overall elevated threat of Islamist terrorism in Western Europe, the potential for Islamist terrorist attacks cannot be ruled out. Any such instance is likely to target religious proceedings, nearby public transportation, or public gatherings in Vatican City and Rome. Indeed, the large crowds, extensive media coverage, and symbolism associated with the religious proceedings make it a credible target for attacks.
3. **FORECAST:** In addition to the announced security precautions, further security measures are expected to be implemented in the coming days, particularly given the expected attendance of various world leaders and politicians. This is likely to include additional crowd-control protocols, including road closures and security checkpoints, as well as enhanced security checks in public transportation hubs and popular tourist destinations throughout Rome.
4. In addition to the aforementioned cancelled events, other official events, as well as various public and religious gatherings, including sporting and entertainment, are liable to be postponed or cancelled over the coming days and weeks.
5. Moreover, with mourners expected to travel to participate in mourning proceedings from across Italy and worldwide, authorities are preparing for significant surges in both pedestrian and vehicular traffic in central Rome. As such, local police and transport agencies are expected to implement traffic diversions and crowd management protocols near key gathering points in Rome and Vatican City.
6. Additionally, with increased demand for public transportation, transport services are likely to increase the frequency of lines in the direction of the Vatican and increase staff in main metro hubs. Overcrowding on these lines is expected in the lead-up to the scheduled funeral.
7. As seen in Portugal and Spain, mourning periods will likely be enacted in Catholic countries. Moreover, religious events, including masses, are expected in Catholic-majority countries, as well as in countries with significant Catholic populations, including Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Poland, and Malta. Memorial events and religious services are also expected in urban centers across the country and regionwide. As such, while travel disruptions are liable to be most severe in Rome, they should also be expected across Italy.

## Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Rome and Vatican City on April 21 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' updates due to the death of Pope Francis and associated funeral events. Allot for travel-related disruptions.
2. Those operating or residing in Europe on April 21 and in the coming days are advised to allot for disruptions associated with religious services or mourning periods related to the death of Pope Francis.