

## Terrorism declines in EU

Report by Europol highlights improvement in 2009

Robert Wainwright, Director of Europol

**Europol is the European law enforcement agency. Its job is to make Europe safer by assisting the member states of the European Union in their fight against serious international crime and terrorism. This is a big task. Large-scale criminal and terrorist networks pose a significant threat to the internal security of the EU and to the safety and livelihood of its people. The biggest security threats come from terrorism, international drug trafficking and money laundering, organized fraud, counterfeiting of the euro and human smuggling. But new dangers are also accumulating in the form of cybercrime, human trafficking and other modern-day threats. This is a multibillion-euro business, quick to adapt to new opportunities and resilient in the face of traditional law enforcement measures.**



**Robert Wainwright**  
*Director of Europol  
since April 2009*

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Terrorism continues to impact the lives of member states' citizens both inside and outside the EU. In 2009, seven people (five police officers and two Soldiers) were killed and scores of individuals injured as a result of terrorist attacks in Greece, Northern Ireland and Spain.

The European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, or TE-SAT, contains basic facts and figures regarding terrorist attacks, arrests and activities in the EU. The TE-SAT is based mainly on information

contributed by EU member states from criminal investigations into terrorist offenses. Terrorism and related phenomena in the EU are summarized in terms of quantity and quality, and trends are identified for the period of 2007 to 2009. The report aims to provide law enforcement officials, policy-makers and the public with facts and figures regarding terrorism in the EU while also seeking to identify trends in the development of this phenomenon. It is a public document produced annually on the basis

Special police escort suspected members of the Greek terrorist group Epanastatikos Agonas, or Revolutionary Struggle, to the prosecutor's office in Athens in April 2010.

of information provided and verified by law enforcement authorities in the EU.

In 2009, the number of terrorist attacks and terrorism-related arrests in the EU continued to decrease. This welcome development, however, must not be understood as an invitation to lower the guard. The overall number of terrorist attacks in all member states in 2009, excluding the United Kingdom, decreased by 33 percent compared with 2008 and is almost half of the number of attacks reported in 2007. For 2009, six member states reported a total of 294 failed, foiled or successfully perpetrated terrorist attacks, while an additional 124 attacks in Northern Ireland were reported by the U.K. Thirteen member states, excluding the U.K., arrested a total of 587 individuals on suspicion of offenses related to terrorism, a figure that marks a decrease of 22 percent compared with 2008 and about 30 percent compared with 2007. The majority of arrests were carried out on people suspected of membership in terrorist organizations. Other arrests were made for attack-related offenses that included the preparation of attacks, propaganda, financing of terrorism and facilitation.

Islamist terrorism is still perceived as the biggest threat to most member states, despite the fact that only one Islamist terrorist attack — a bombing in Italy — took place in the EU in 2009. Islamist terrorists have threatened EU member states with attacks aimed at inflicting indiscriminate mass casualties. The threat emanating from Islamist terrorism inside the EU is influenced, to a certain extent, by developments in conflict zones around the world.

Separatist terrorism continues to affect the EU the most in terms of the number of attacks carried out. This type includes Basque separatist terrorism in Spain and France and Corsican separatist terrorism in France. In 2009, there were six fatalities in the EU from 237 separatist terrorist attacks. The Basque separatist terrorist organisation Euskadi ta Askatasuna, or ETA, killed three police officers. In the U.K., Irish Republican and Loyalist groups in Northern Ireland — principally the Real Irish Republican Army and the Continuity Irish Republican Army — killed two Soldiers and one police officer.

In 2009, the total number of left-wing and anarchist terrorist attacks in the EU increased by 43 percent compared with



2008; they were responsible for 40 attacks. In Greece, Epanastatikos Agonas continued its violent actions and claimed responsibility for an attack on police officers, causing serious injuries to one officer. Sekta Epanastaton, a newly active organization in Greece, claimed another attack that killed a police officer.

Hungary reported four right-wing terrorist attacks in 2009. All other member states reported extremism in the form of right-wing criminal activities. Individuals motivated by extreme right-wing views who act alone continue to pose a threat.

Two single-issue terrorist attacks were reported in 2009. The illegal activities of single-issue extremism continue to be dominated by animal rights extremism, with some violent ARE attacks using mod operandi similar to those used by terrorists, such as improvised explosive devices and improvised incendiary devices.

In some cases, it is difficult to differentiate between criminality and acts of terrorism or extremism. Terrorism is not an ideology but a set of criminal tactics that ignore fundamental principles of democratic societies. EU member states have agreed to regard terrorist acts as those that aim to intimidate populations, compel states to comply with the perpetrators' demands, and/or destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization. The TE-SAT respects the classifications made by EU member states. □

Police in Bordeaux, France, move one of four suspected Basque separatist rebels arrested in a joint French and Spanish raid in May 2008.

The complete TE-SAT 2010 report is available for download from the publications section of Europol's website: [www.europol.europa.eu](http://www.europol.europa.eu)