

REGIONAL THREAT WATCH: EUROPE

MAJOR TERRORIST GROUPS

IHS Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre analyses the European threat from non-Islamic terrorist groups

Continuity IRA (CIRA)

The Continuity IRA (CIRA) is an Irish republican paramilitary group formed in early 1995 as a reaction to the ceasefire declared by the Provisional IRA (PIRA) in August 1994. The group's primary objective is the ending of UK rule in Northern Ireland and its reunion with the Republic of Ireland in a 32-county republic. CIRA has proven itself capable of carrying out lethal, if sporadic, attacks on civilian and security force targets in Northern Ireland, and has been intermittently active since its founding.

A notable high-profile attack by the group came in March 2009 when CIRA militants shot dead a Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) officer in County Armagh. The May 2010 Independent Monitoring Commission

(IMC) report concluded that the group "was in a state of heightened activity, was ruthless, violent and prepared to kill, and was committed to undermining the peace process". Similarly, police in Northern Ireland stated in early 2015 that there had been "an upsurge" in the capabilities of dissident republican groups, including CIRA, through increased sharing of training and learning techniques online, again underlining the low-level, yet ongoing threat posed by the group, particularly against security forces in Northern Ireland.

CIRA has proven itself capable of carrying out lethal attacks over a number of years on civilian and security force targets in Northern Ireland. There have been no public signs that

CIRA remains anything but committed to a concerted and sustained campaign of violence, and as such security forces on both sides of the Irish border regard the group as a key threat to security, although it is not currently judged to have the capability to significantly disrupt the peace process. But what CIRA lacks in manpower and resources, it makes up for with a radical ideology which fills the vacuum left in the tradition of violent republicanism since the PIRA's commitment to the peace process. It may currently be secondary by comparison to more active dissident republican groups such as the Real IRA (RIRA) – currently operating within the New IRA coalition – but CIRA remains a considerable threat to the stability of Northern Ireland.



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Epanastatikos Agonas

Epanastatikos Agonas (EA) is a left-wing urban guerrilla group operating on the Greek mainland, primarily in Athens. It aims to instigate a revolution and overthrow the existing economic and political order in Greece, replacing it with the EA's own vision of a more equitable society. The group is virulently opposed to the influence of globalisation and international capitalism on Greek society, and the role played by

transnational governance bodies such as the European Union in particular. The EA also seeks to force Greece to disengage from the US-led "war on terror", which it regards as a tool of US imperialism intended to suppress the world's working classes on behalf of a global elite. To date, the targeting of the group's operations has been highly consistent with the ideology it espouses, with attacks typically focusing on individuals and institutions

associated either with Greece's participation in the global economic system, or with its strategic alliance with the US. The group has so far avoided mass-casualty attacks. Although the group currently poses little or no threat to the Greek state, it remains a credible threat to individuals, government institutions and multinational companies that might conceivably be seen as symbols of the global capitalist order, or of perceived US hegemony.

Front de la Libération Nationale de la Corse (FLNC)

The Front de la Libération Nationale de la Corse (FLNC) is a separatist militant organisation operating on the French island of Corsica. The group was established in May 1976 following the merger of two other Corsican separatist groups, the Front Paysan Corse de Libération and the Ghjustizia Paolina. The FLNC has traditionally had a loose affiliation with left-wing ideology, proclaiming in its founding statement that it was working towards a “society according to socialist ideals”, but its primary objective is the independence of Corsica from France. The FLNC is also heavily involved in criminality across the island, which is used to fund the organisation’s activities and weapons procurement. While the FLNC’s various splinters have claimed attacks across the island against perceived “colonisation” by mainlanders and property developers, the group has not conducted attacks on the French mainland since the 1990s when a series of explosions against government targets in France were attributed to the group. In 2009,



several undisclosed FLNC factions re-united to form a supposedly unified FLNC, which has carried out periodic low-level attacks over the following years. No attacks were claimed by, or attributed to, the FLNC throughout 2013 or early 2014, and on 26 June 2015 the group

issued a statement announcing its intention to disarm. The group stated: “Without prior notification and without ambiguity, our organisation has unilaterally decided to start a demilitarisation process and a progressive exit from clandestine activities”.

Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA)

Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) is a Basque separatist group that aims to establish an independent socialist state for the Basque peoples of northern Spain and southwestern France. Once considered the most sophisticated and dangerous terrorist organisation in Europe, ETA has been severely weakened by concerted and increasingly co-ordinated counter-terrorism actions by French and Spanish security forces. Ongoing counter-terrorism successes over recent years, including the consecutive arrests of a number of the group’s military leaders, dealt a serious blow to ETA’s military structure, and while there were sporadic attacks and violent occurrences linked to the group in 2009 and 2010, there have been no attacks by the group since May 2011.

The ETA leadership announced a unilateral declaration of a permanent ceasefire in January 2011, which was followed by a November 2012 announcement by the group that it was ready to disband, give up its weapons, and enter talks with the French and Spanish governments. With ETA having broken several ceasefire agreements in the past, the Spanish government has remained uneasy over the peace initiative and continued to reiterate that permanent resolution of the conflict could only be achieved through ETA’s full disarmament and dissolution. Counter-terrorism operations against the group have continued, with the periodic arrest of suspected members of the group through 2013 and 2014.



About the IHS Jane’s Terrorism and Insurgency Centre (JTIC):

The JTIC database includes almost 200,000 events since 2009 and more than 250 group profiles. It uses open source intelligence to enable users to identify tactics, analyse trends, examine areas of operation and monitor developments globally.

REGIONAL THREAT WATCH: EUROPE

CIVIL UNREST HOTSPOTS

IHS Country Risk examines the Western European states facing the largest threat of civil unrest in the coming months

Italy

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's contentious Jobs Act, in conjunction with other reforms demanded by the European Union, resulted in several strikes and protests between October and December 2014, in some cases attracting up to a million participants. The Jobs Act, which makes it easier for employers to fire staff compared to previous legislation, was ultimately approved by the cabinet on 20 February 2015. But the perception among the country's largest

trade unions and student organisations that they have been disregarded in the process of formulating this legislation makes it likely that 2015 will see further protests and strikes, concentrated in Rome as well as larger industrial cities, notably Turin and Milan. Protest-related violence in Italy is most likely to be perpetrated by anarchists piggybacking on larger, peaceful protests by unions or student groups. Such violence is most likely to erupt when the police confront protesters,

particularly where masked activists have deployed so-called "black-bloc" tactics.

Another source of potential unrest is the continuous inflow of immigrants, which has resulted in the increased popularity of far-right parties such as Lega Nord (LN). Protests by anti-EU and anti-immigrant activists are likely to be triggered by adverse economic conditions as well as continued intransigence at the EU level to find a common solution to the immigration crisis.

Spain

Anti-austerity protests are likely in the run-up to the next Spanish general election which is due in late 2015 or early 2016, as unemployment remains high despite the country's recent return to sustainable growth. Large anti-austerity and anti-government rallies can be expected in Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia, with smaller demonstrations also likely in other urban centres. The model for such protests was demonstrated in January 2015, when anti-austerity party Podemos (We Can) organised a demonstration in Madrid attended by up to 150,000 people. Similar peaceful rallies will recur within the next six months as Podemos and other parties position themselves in the electoral race.

Spain's traditional two-party system is currently transforming into a political landscape with four major players: a centre-right, centre-left, centrist-liberal and anti-austerity party. This significant democratic change also adds to the already heightened risk of peaceful civil unrest.

We also anticipate a continuation of sporadic rallies in Spanish regions with strong separatist movements, such as Catalonia, where support for a separation from Spain peaked in November 2014 when a non-binding regional referendum on independence was declared to be illegal by the central government in

Madrid. While relations between the regional administration in Barcelona and the centre-right national government in Madrid remain strained, public support for a separation of Catalonia from Spain is currently in decline.

The question of independence is, however, likely to refuel long-standing disputes on areas such as taxes and public spending around the Catalan regional elections in September 2015 and the general election.



France

President François Hollande's government came to power in May 2012 on the back of promises to improve the lives of the socially and financially disadvantaged. But the reality has instead consisted in public spending cuts, weak economic growth and record-high unemployment rates of over ten per cent. Regeneration efforts in France's underprivileged city suburbs, or "banlieues", have been minimal and living standards have deteriorated over recent years. Confrontations between police and youths, or between ethnic groups, are likely to result in rioting, arson attacks and acts of vandalism.

In early June 2015, for instance, riots broke out in the north-eastern town of Tourcoing following the death of a young man who was killed in a car accident as he fled a police-control checkpoint. Four days of violent clashes ensued, resulting in 23 arrests.

Compounding the pre-existing social problems in the banlieues, the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks in Paris in January 2015 exacerbated anti-Islamic sentiment among far-right nationalists. In the days following the attack,



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26 mosques across France were targeted with gunfire, firebombs and grenades.

Discontent at illegal migration constitutes another trigger for violent unrest. In the port city of Calais the migrant population has swelled to around 3,000 individuals, and is

expected to increase significantly over the coming months, with milder weather easing travel conditions. On 1 June, a fight broke out between Sudanese and Eritrean asylum seekers which left 24 people injured. It is likely that similar incidents will recur over the next year.

Germany

The political movement Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West (PEGIDA), which launched in October 2014, is likely to continue staging anti-Islam and anti-immigration protests in cities across Germany over the next six months. Among the areas particularly affected are urban parts of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Hamburg, Hannover, Frankfurt, Munich, Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin. When the movement first started to gather in the eastern city of Dresden, protests attracted only smaller crowds of several hundred participants. The support base grew rapidly until February 2015, and rallies have since fluctuated in size from under 100 to several thousand protestors. The PEGIDA rallies have in turn triggered counter-demonstrations against xenophobia which are often of much larger scale.

Despite occasional scuffles having broken out, leading to injury and causing damage to buildings and cars, most PEGIDA and anti-PEGIDA gatherings are likely to remain peaceful. Overall, the likelihood of large-

scale unrest resulting in violence is low in Germany in the coming year. The country usually only sees severe and disruptive unrest on predictable dates such as May Day, when labour demonstrations are held in major

cities across Germany with a focus on Berlin and Hamburg. These protests are often joined by anarchists, leading to skirmishes between leftist demonstrators, the police, and right-wing extremists.



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IHS Country Risk leverages the company's detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis of 204 countries, covering political, economic, legal, tax and security risks.