EUROPOL



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EUROPEAN UNION
TERRORISM SITUATION
AND TREND REPORT **2023**

The TE-SAT 2023 is a situational overview, presenting figures, major developments and trends in the terrorism landscape in the EU in 2022, based on qualitative and quantitative data provided by Member States on terrorist attacks, arrests and court decisions issued for terrorist offences.

Europol's partners also provide valuable qualitative information and assessments that enrich the findings of the report, in order to reflect on developments beyond the EU that affect the security of the EU and its citizens. Information on convictions and acquittals for terrorist offences, as well as on amendments to national legislation on terrorism provided by Eurojust and based on data shared by Member States, complements the report.

Although the primary scope of the TE-SAT is terrorism, where relevant and available, the report presents specific violent extremist incidents, acts and activities as reported by Member States.

KEY POINTS



Terrorism continued to pose a serious threat to EU Member States in 2022. 28 completed, failed or foiled attacks were recorded in the EU. 16 attacks were completed, of which the majority were attributed to left-wing and anarchist terrorism (13), two to jihadist terrorism, and one to right-wing terrorism.

Four fatalities were recorded in 2022, two resulting from jihadist terrorist attacks and two from a right-wing terrorist attack. The total number of attacks increased compared to 2021 (18), but remained lower than in 2020 (56), potentially due to the varying categorisation of left-wing terrorist attacks by reporting countries over the past few years.



380 individuals were arrested by EU Member States' law enforcement authorities in 2022 for terrorism-related offences.

Most of the arrests were carried out following investigations into jihadist terrorism, in France (93), Spain (46), Germany (30) and Belgium (22).



Court proceedings in 2022 resulted in 427 convictions and acquittals for terrorist offences.

All court proceedings concerning right-wing and left-wing terrorism resulted in convictions, while the conviction rate for jihadist terrorism was 84 % and for separatist terrorism 68 %.



Most left-wing terrorist attacks were perpetrated utilising improvised incendiary devices (IIDs), fire accelerators and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The three fatal attacks reported in 2022 were carried out using a bladed weapon and strangulation by jihadist terrorists, and a firearm by a right-wing terrorist.



In the EU, affiliation to particular groups, such as IS and al-Qaeda, is becoming less prominent among supporters of jihadism.

In 2022, several Member States reported that jihadist suspects were collecting and disseminating propaganda material originating from both IS and al-Qaeda, including some pre-dating the separation between the two terrorist organisations.



Right-wing terrorists and extremists propagate a plethora of narratives, mainly online.

There is little consensus on themes and ideologies, which are always mixed and often contradictory. Contemporary offline developments that resonate with their own grievances drive the online discourse.



Police personnel were a key target of violent attacks by left-wing and anarchist extremist actors in 2022.

Violence amounted to premeditated and targeted attacks against law enforcement, both during service and off-duty, including attacks on private vehicles and homes.



The internet and technology remained pivotal enablers of propaganda, as well as radicalisation and recruitment of vulnerable individuals into terrorism and violent extremism.

In addition to social media platforms, openly available messaging applications, online forums and video gaming platforms, decentralised platforms appear to have gained popularity in terrorist and violent extremist circles, significantly undermining law enforcement monitoring and investigations.



Although rooted in different ideologies and backgrounds, terrorists and violent extremists have common interests and practices.

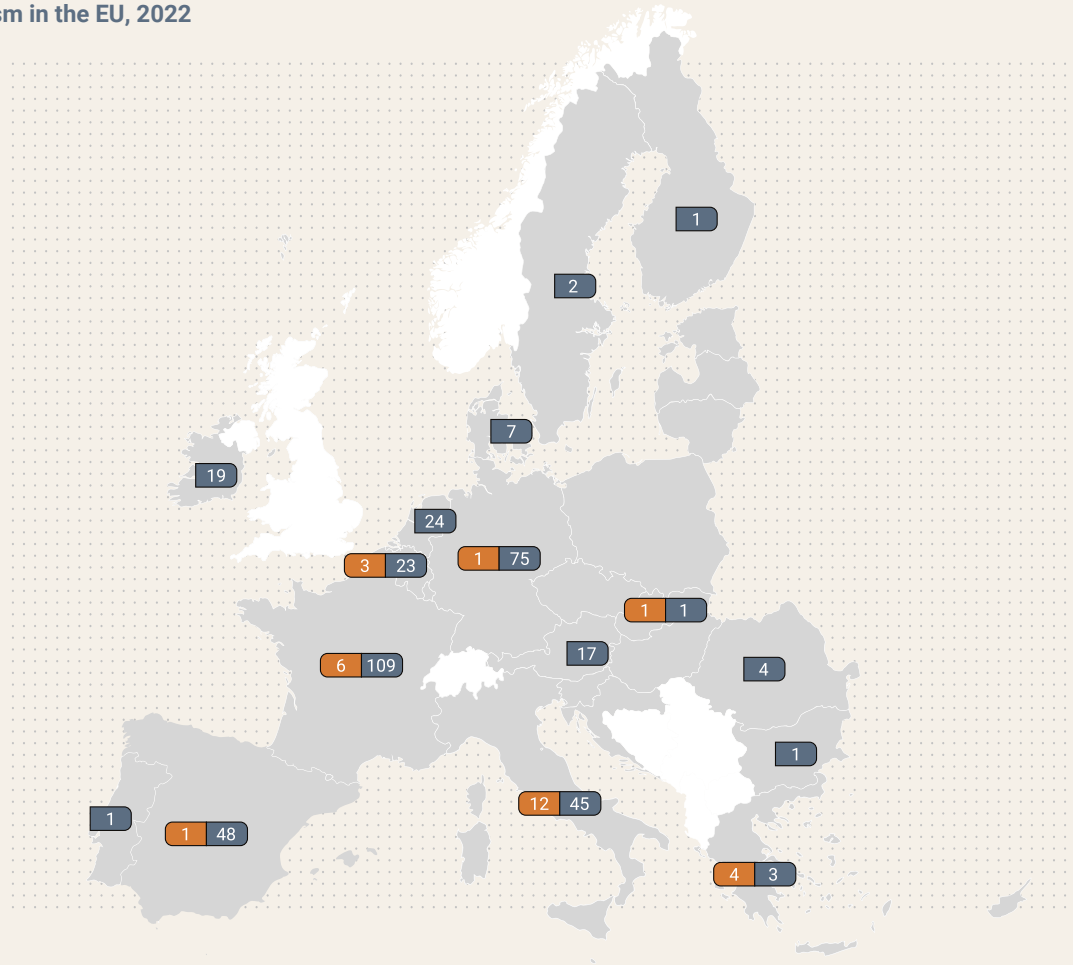
Examples include exploiting the same topics, using the same digital environments and adopting similar techniques for content dissemination.



The most visible reactions to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine emerged in the first months of the war, largely in the right-wing extremist milieu, materialising in online posts and a limited number of right-wing extremist affiliates travelling to join the battlefield.

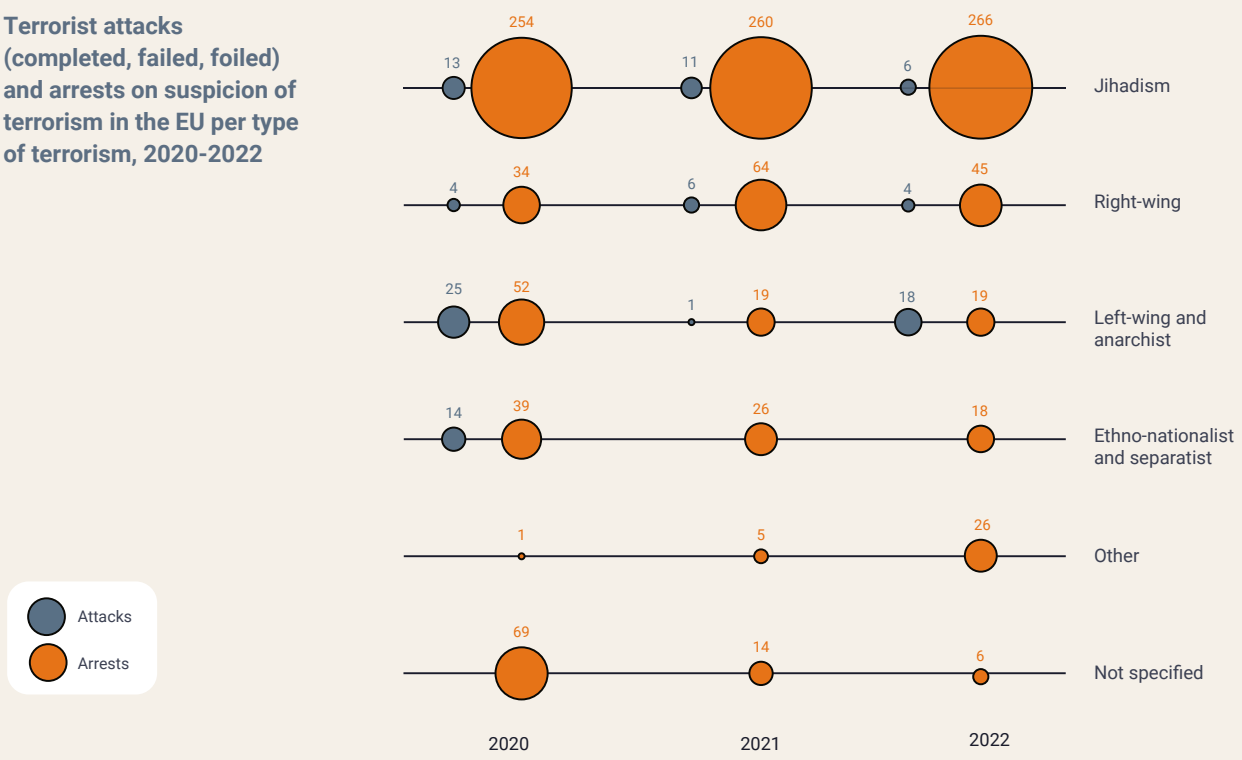
Although the interest in the war in this milieu appears to have gradually dimmed throughout the remainder of 2022, disinformation and distorted narratives related to the conflict might still fuel terrorist and violent extremist narratives, regardless of the ideology propagated.

Terrorist attacks (completed, failed, foiled) and arrests on suspicion of terrorism in the EU, 2022



	attacks	arrests
total	28	380

Terrorist attacks (completed, failed, foiled) and arrests on suspicion of terrorism in the EU per type of terrorism, 2020-2022



ABOUT TE-SAT

The European Union (EU) Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) is a situational overview, presenting key figures and developments within the terrorism landscape in the EU. The TE-SAT report is published on a yearly basis, with the purpose of informing policymakers, law enforcement and the wider public. It includes statistical data on terrorist attacks, arrests, convictions and penalties in Member States. The report distinguishes between and elaborates in-depth on the following types of terrorism, based on ideological preferences: jihadist terrorism, right-wing terrorism, left-wing and anarchist terrorism, ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism and other types of terrorism.

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The full TE-SAT 2023 report can be accessed on the Europol website

www.europol.europa.eu