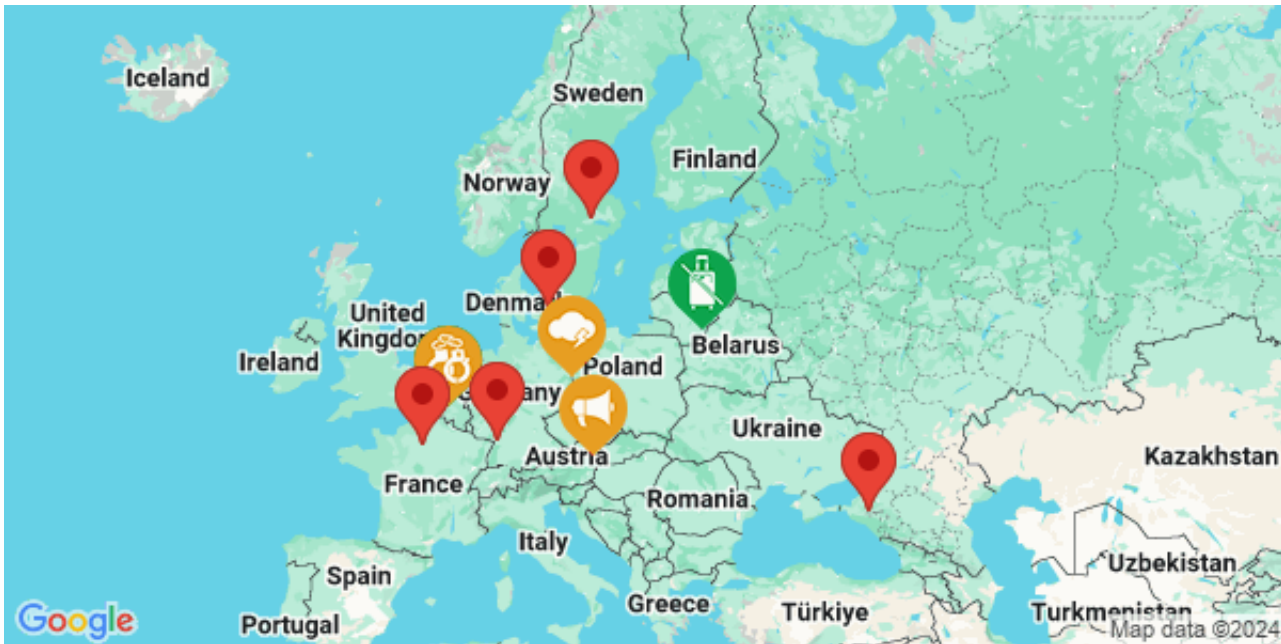




Daily



22
SEP
14:01 UTC

MAX - Europe Region Daily Summary - September 22, 2024

Highlights of the Day

- **Austria:** Left-wing protest slated at Platz der Menschenrechte, Vienna at 18:00 (local time) on September 23; maintain heightened vigilance
- **Denmark:** CFCS annual assessment denotes Russia as primary cyber threat actor on September 20; aligned with Nordic threat landscape
- **France:** Barnier presents new right-leaning government on September 21; to appeal to RN amid left-wing calls for confidence motion
- **Russia & Ukraine:** Kyiv targets weapons depots, Moscow targets energy facilities on September 21; airstrikes to intensify ahead of winter

Actionable Items

Austria: Left-wing protest slated at Platz der Menschenrechte, Vienna at 18:00 (local time) on September 23; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation - On September 23, left-wing activists associated with multiple groups, including Antifa West Vienna, will stage a protest at Platz der Menschenrechte in Vienna from 18:00 (local time). This protest has been organized to denounce right-wing extremism and demand the protection of all migrants.

Assessments & Forecast - Based on the mobilizational capabilities of the organizing groups the protest is expected to witness a turnout in the low-mid-hundreds. Considering the protest issue, the potential for right-wing counterprotests cannot be ruled out. Given this, coupled with the participation of far-left actors, the protest carries a heightened risk of unrest in the form of clashes between protesters, potential counter-protesters, and security forces. As a precautionary measure, a bolstered security presence is expected to be deployed near Platz der Menschenrechte to monitor proceedings. In the event of escalating unrest, authorities are likely to deploy crowd dispersal measures, including tear gas, baton charges, and conducting arrests. Travel disruptions are anticipated in the vicinity of Platz der Menschenrechte during the evening hours.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Vienna on September 23 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of Platz der Menschenrechte due to the heightened potential for unrest at the protest. Allot for disruptions to travel during the evening hours.

Source: [Twitter/X](#)

Belgium: De Lijn workers to hold one-day strike across Flanders region, including Brussels, on September 23; allot for disruptions

Current Situation - Unionized transport workers employed with the Vlaamse Vervoersmaatschappij De Lijn, also known as De Lijn, the public transport operator in the Flemish region, will hold a one-day strike across the Flanders region, including Brussels, on September 23. The slated labor action will impact the bus and tram services operated by De Lijn across the region. Further details regarding the strike, including associated disruptions, can be found [here](#). This strike is being held to demand better working conditions for the workers.

Assessments & Forecast - Based on precedent, this strike is likely to be widely adhered to unless averted. Significant disruptions to public transportation services, including cancellations of scheduled routes and delays, are expected during the slated strike timings. Increased demand for alternative modes of transport can also be expected. Traffic will likely be heavier than usual as an increased number of commuters resort to using personal vehicles. While no protests have been announced, given the heightened sentiments surrounding the issue, protests are likely to be held near major transportation hubs in Brussels and the Flanders region. Based on precedent, such protests are liable to transpire peacefully.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in the Flanders region, including Brussels, on September 23 are advised to allot for disruptions to public transportation services due to the slated labor action at De Lijn.

Source: [De Lijn](#)

Germany & Poland: Bridge between Slubice, Frankfurt Oder closed due to flooding on September 22; remain cognizant of updates

Current Situation - On September 22, Polish authorities closed the bridge connecting Slubice in Poland, with Frankfurt Oder, in Germany, due to rising water levels in the river. Access is limited to Slubice residents and individuals employed in Slubice. Individuals have been advised to carry documentation proving their employment. Police also advised the use of other border crossings, including Swiecko. Police patrols will be stationed throughout Slubice to verify residency and work status. Moreover, in Frankfurt Oder, a Level 1 flood alert is in effect, with authorities warning that a Level 3 flood alert will likely be imposed on September 23, and Level 4 alert on September 25. Authorities have warned that flooding of properties, streets, and cellars is likely. Two polling stations for the Brandenburg State election scheduled on September 22 were moved to the town hall. Authorities also warned of potential public transport disruptions in Frankfurt Oder on September 22, particularly in areas near the riverbank. Tram lines 2 and 3, heading towards the European University Viadrina, and bus lines 983 and 984 are expected to be affected, per reports.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Slubice in Poland and Frankfurt Oder in Germany on September 22 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding flooding. Allot for associated disruptions to travel and services.

Source: [Tagesschau](#)

Lithuania: Vycio Skliautas emergency exercise to take place nationwide, including in Vilnius, on September 23-26; allot for disruptions

Current Situation - On September 23-26, "Vycio Skliautas 2024," an exercise aimed at evaluating how Lithuanian institutions would respond to a potential threat, will be held nationwide - including in Vilnius. The exercise will involve a range of simulated scenarios; including firefighting operations, medical rescues, setting up checkpoints, and civilian evacuations. Military forces will also be deployed. Part of the exercise will take place at train stations in Vilnius and Lentvaris, where emergency services volunteers will coordinate the evacuation of residents, the sick, and people with disabilities. The exercise is limited to state institutions within the mobilization system and will not affect residents' daily activities.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Lithuania, including in Vilnius. on September 23-26 are advised to allot for disruptions related to the planned exercise. Remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding possible restrictions due to the exercises in the coming days.

Source: [klaipedos rajono savivaldybe](#)

Notable Events

Belgium: Stabbing, shooting recorded Bruxelles-Midi train station in Brussels on September 18-20; calls for increased security likely

Current Situation - On September 20, an individual was stabbed in the neck around 02:30 (local time) near the Gare du Bruxelles-Midi train station in the Saint-Gilles municipality of Brussels. This followed a shooting incident on September 18 around 23:30 near in a cafe on Rue Borgniez near the same train station. Neither attack was fatal, with investigations ongoing.

Assessments & Forecast - The stabbing and shooting incidents reiterate trends of heightened rates of violent crime near Gare du Bruxelles-Midi in Brussels. Indeed, the Saint-Gilles area is known as a crime hotspot in Brussels due to its high rates of drug trafficking and violent crime. This has led to a deterioration in safety at the station, with an average of 3,500 crimes committed at the station annually between 2018 and 2022. About 10 percent of crimes were drug-related, while others were linked to gang territorial conflicts. As heightened crime levels at the station have received criticism from residents and workers of Belgium's national railway company, the incidents are liable to amplify calls to further increase security measures in Saint-Gilles and surrounding the train station.

Source: [RTL](#)

Denmark: CFCS annual assessment denotes Russia as primary cyber threat actor on September 20; aligned with Nordic threat landscape

Current Situation - On September 20, the Center for Cybersikkerhed (CFCS), Denmark's national IT security authority, published its annual threat assessment for 2024. The CFCS determined that the threat of cyber espionage is "very high," marking China and Russia as the primary actors. Cyber activism was assessed as "high," and stems primarily from pro-Russia actors. The CFCS also assessed cybercrime as "very high," with 35,254 attacks recorded in 2023 - a 20 percent increase from 2022. Moreover, the CFCS raised threat of destructive cyberattacks from "low" to "medium" as of June 2024, due to threat of Russian state-sponsored hackers

Assessments & Forecast - The report is aligned with the regional threat landscape, with the Nordic countries all warning of increased cyber espionage and cyberattacks by foreign states, state-backed actors, and criminals. This is exemplified by the Swedish government proposing a record allocation of 196 million SEK from the annual budget to national cyber security on September 18. While the decision to raise the threat level for destructive cyberattacks indicates a credible threat of Russia using hybrid warfare attacks

against Denmark, the likelihood of major attacks on critical infrastructure remains limited.

Source: [Center for Cyber Security](#)

France: Barnier presents new right-leaning government on September 21; to appeal to RN amid left-wing calls for confidence motion

Current Situation - On September 21, Prime Minister Michel Barnier of the center-right Les Republicains (LR) party unveiled the new government - 11 weeks since the snap parliamentary elections called in June. The government primarily comprises right-wing and centrist party members, with only one center-left minister; Didier Migaud, a socialdemocrat, who was appointed Justice Minister. Notably, Barnier appointed Bruno Retailleau, an LR member with a strong anti-immigration stance, as the new Interior Minister. Opposition politicians from the left-wing Nouveau Front Populaire (NFP) alliance announced they will challenge the government with a confidence motion.

Assessments & Forecast - The calls for a confidence motion from NFP politicians was highly anticipated, considering that Ensemble and LR do not have a parliamentary majority - making the government vulnerable to such motions. As such, Barnier is likely to offer concessions to the far-right Rassemblement National (RN) party to ensure it does not support a NFP confidence motion. RN is likely to agree to such concessions, as it will provide the party with influence over the government. Left-wing protests against the government are likely in the coming weeks, including against Retailleau given his hardline stance on immigration.

Source: [Reuters](#)

Germany: Police close Yorckstrasse Station in Berlin following unrest on September 21; underlines risk of spillover violence after protests

Current Situation - On September 21, police shut down the Yorckstrasse subway station in Berlin's Schöneberg district after riots broke out around 22:35 (local time) on the U7 train. Participants were linked to a pro-Palestinian protest at Breitscheidplatz earlier in the evening. Protesters reportedly shouted anti-police slogans. Authorities have not commented on whether injuries or property damage occurred. Around 70 individuals were detained for identification. Clashes between police and protesters were also recorded at the Breitscheidplatz protest, including the detention of a 10-year-old.

Assessments & Forecast - Given the scale of the police operation and the closure of the Yorckstrasse station, as well as the number of detained protesters, the likelihood that injuries or property damage occurred in the train is raised. As such, the incident reiterates the risk of unrest in public locations in the immediate aftermath of pro-Palestinian protests in Berlin. Indeed, pro-Palestinian protests have repeatedly recorded unrest, including targeted attacks against police and journalists, in Berlin. Moreover, the police

operation and detention of a 10-year-old is likely to trigger backlash towards the police, with calls for protests denouncing perceived police violence already announced on social media.

Source: [rbb24](#)

Russia & Ukraine: Kyiv targets weapons depots, Moscow targets energy facilities on September 21; airstrikes to intensify ahead of winter

Current Situation - On September 21, Russia claimed to have intercepted over 100 Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) during overnight hours (local time). Ukraine claimed it hit two Russian weapons depots in the Krasnodar and Tver regions. Meanwhile, Russia's Ministry of Defense claimed to strike energy facilities supplying electricity to Ukrainian defense companies. Additionally, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha warned Moscow is planning to attack Ukrainian nuclear facilities.

Assessments & Forecast - Ukraine's strikes on Russian weapons depots are likely steps aimed at diminishing Russian aerial capabilities and counteracting Moscow's air superiority, as also seen in previous strikes on Russian airbases. The Russian strikes are in line with previous attacks, as Moscow has targeted energy infrastructure throughout the conflict. Ahead of the winter, strikes on energy facilities are likely to increase as both sides aim to disrupt power supplies. However, despite Sybiha's claims, a deliberate attack on a nuclear facility remains unlikely at this stage, especially considering the risk of nuclear fallout. Nonetheless, Kyiv is likely to use Sybiha's warning to gain Western support, already urging the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to establish permanent monitoring missions.

Source: [Reuters](#)

Sweden: Police suspect involvement of Foxtrot in shooting in Hallstahammar per September 21 reports; reflects threat of spillover violence

Current Situation - On September 21, authorities bolstered police patrols in Hallstahammar, Vastmansland province, following a fatal shooting on September 19. Unidentified individuals fired multiple shots and killed a 25-year-old at 19:24 (local time) outside a pizzeria near a gas station. Police suspect the shooting is linked to the splintering within the Stockholm-based Foxtrot criminal network, which began in 2023 due to a conflict between Foxtrot leader Rawa Majid, alias "Kurdish Fox," and his former associate Ismail Abdo, alias "the Strawberry."

Assessments & Forecast - Considering that shootings are rare in Hallstahammar, coupled with police indicating the shooting is linked to Foxtrot, this was likely an isolated incident. The fact that the victim was only passing through Hallsahammar, having stopped at the gas station, indicates he was not a resident and was likely being trailed by the assailants. Although targeted, the timing and location indicate there was a highly credible

threat to bystanders – as also supported by reports of bullet holes in the pizzeria’s facade. As such, the shooting highlights the growing threat of spillover violence in remote areas linked to gang conflicts in urban centers.

Source: [Police](#) , [SVT](#)

Other Developments

- On September 20, the Council of Europe criticized **Belgium** for not following a 2022 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, which said Belgium broke international law by not providing housing for asylum seekers. The development is liable to increase tension between Belgium and the EU, as Belgium’s strained asylum system comes under domestic criticism.
- On September 20, protests under the banner “Stop Protecting Rapists” were held in 17 towns in **Croatia** to denounce the perceived lenient treatment of sexual and femicide offenders. Similar protests are likely to persist in face of criticism of as activists continue to demand stricter penalties for gender-based offenses.
- According to September 20 reports, 3.48 million refugees live in **Germany**, 60,000 more than at the end of 2023. In the context of recent crackdowns on immigration policy, the report is liable to lead to calls for further tightening of asylum restrictions.
- On September 20, a Vilnius court found **Lithuanian** lawyer Mantas Danielius guilty of spying for **Belarus**, sentencing him to nine years in prison for collecting information on Belarusian organizations and opposition leaders in Lithuania for the Belarusian KGB. Belarusian actors are likely to continue to attempt to undermine or intimidate opposition abroad.

Notable Dates

28 Albania Holiday: Independence Day
NOV

29 Albania Holiday: Liberation Day
NOV

30 Romania Holiday: Feast of St. Andrew
NOV

1 Romania Politics: Parliamentary elections
DEC

1 Portugal Holiday: Independence Restoration Day
DEC

1 Romania Holiday: National Day
DEC
