

## Travel



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## Europe Analysis: Risk of football hooliganism, associated unrest to remain high in Budapest, Paris, London during UEFA Champions League Final Match on May 30

### Executive Summary

- The UEFA Champions League Final between PSG and Arsenal on May 30 is expected to generate a heightened security and disruption environment across Budapest, Paris, and London.
- Associated events and gatherings are likely to carry a high risk of football hooliganism, public disorder, opportunistic crime, and localized violence, particularly before and after the match.
- Paris is expected to face the highest overall public order risk among the three cities.
- In addition to hooliganism-related unrest, the associated events remain vulnerable to violent incidents, including reckless driving, vehicle intrusions, assaults, crowd-control failures, and lone-actor or ideologically motivated attacks.
- Large crowds at the match and public viewings are expected to cause significant travel disruptions in Budapest, Paris, and London. Resulting congestion is likely to disrupt road traffic, public transport services, airport operations, and pedestrian movement near stadiums, fan zones, transport hubs, and nightlife districts.
- **Those operating and residing in Budapest, Paris, and London are advised to avoid nonessential travel near supporter gatherings, fan marches, fan zones, and spontaneous celebrations due to the heightened risk of unrest, disorderly behavior, overcrowding, and violent incidents, including terror attacks and reckless driving**

incidents.

## Current Situation

### Budapest

- On May 30, the UEFA Champions League Final between football teams Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Arsenal will be held at Puskas Arena stadium in Budapest, Hungary, at 21:30 (local time).
- Budapest's Ferenc Liszt International Airport (BUD) is expecting approximately 800 flights per day on May 29-31, with flight traffic reportedly expected to double compared to normal levels, driven by a surge in charter flights and private aircraft from London and Paris.
- Varosliget (City Park) in Budapest will serve as Arsenal's official fan meeting point from 08:00 on May 30. A large fan procession from Varosliget to Puskas Arena via Olof Palme Promenade will begin at 15:00. After the match, fans will walk back to Varosliget, along the same route.
- PSG's official fan zone will be located at MTK Sportpark, a 15-minute walk from Puskas Arena, open from 08:00 to 03:00, and expecting up to 14,000 supporters. Further details on the same can be found [here](#).



### Paris

- In Paris, France, multiple public viewing events related to the UEFA Champions League Final are expected to be held across the city on May 30. PSG confirmed that the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris will open before kick-off at 18:00 for fan entertainment and giant-screen broadcasting of the match.
- Tens of thousands of PSG supporters are expected to gather at the Parc des Princes fan zone and in bars across the capital to watch the match. Authorities estimate that between 150,000 and

200,000 people could be present in central Paris throughout the evening due to football-related gatherings, concerts, and other events.

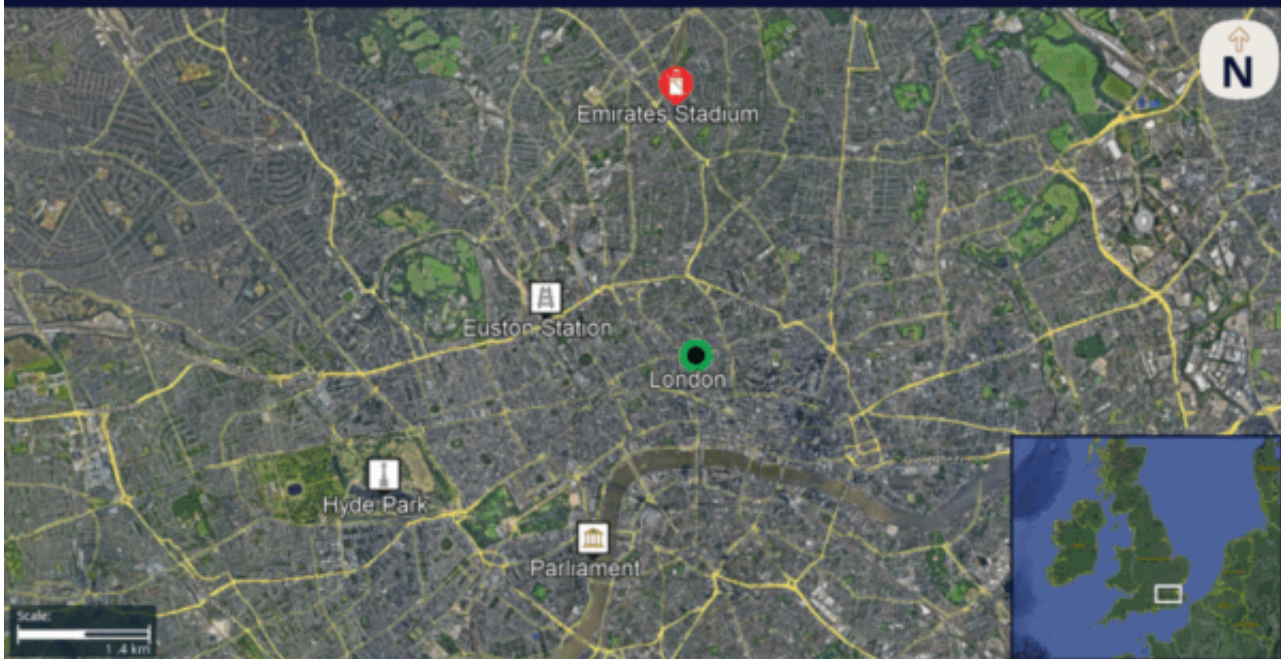
- On May 16, French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez warned of potential unrest in Paris surrounding the Champions League Final on May 30 and announced an “exceptional” security deployment and restrictions across the capital ahead of the match due to the expected mass gatherings, particularly around major viewing areas and transport hubs. Details of the restrictions can be found [here. \(In French\)](#)



## London

- Meanwhile, in London, Arsenal has confirmed that a live screening of the final will be held at Emirates Stadium in Holloway, with the venue scheduled to open from 15:00.
- Entry regulations will include enhanced identity verification procedures, mandatory adult accompaniment for attendees under the age of 18, and restrictions on ticket transfers, resale, and certain recording or broadcasting devices. UEFA and Arsenal will also retain oversight of ticket purchasing compliance and attendance monitoring measures.

## LOCATION OF EVENT IN LONDON



## Assessments & Forecast

### Large crowds at the match and public viewings to cause significant travel disruptions in Budapest, Paris, London

1. With the Puskas Arena having a capacity of approximately 67,000 spectators and the high-profile nature of the football event, the match is likely to draw attendance in the mid-to-high tens of thousands inside the venue. Additionally, mid to high tens of thousands more supporters are expected to gather at official fan zones, public screening events, nightlife districts, bars, and entertainment areas across Budapest throughout May 30 and the early hours of May 31.
2. **FORECAST:** With large numbers of supporters expected to arrive in Budapest from across Europe via commercial flights, charter aircraft, trains, buses, and private vehicles, significant strain is likely on the city's transport, accommodation, and public order infrastructure. Elevated congestion is particularly likely near BUD, central railway stations, metro interchanges, and major arterial roads leading toward Puskas Arena and official fan zones.
3. **FORECAST:** Given expectations of approximately 800 flights per day between May 29-31, substantial disruptions to arrivals, departures, baggage handling, and ground transportation are likely at BUD, with extended queuing times, localized overcrowding, and delays expected throughout the event period. Hotel occupancy rates are also likely to remain near maximum capacity, increasing the likelihood of elevated accommodation prices and localized logistical disruptions.
4. Meanwhile, in central Paris, official estimates indicate that low to mid hundreds of thousands of people could participate in football-related gatherings, concerts, public viewing events, and other entertainment activities throughout the evening, particularly around Parc des Princes, the Champs-Elysees, and major nightlife districts, such as Bastille, Chatelet-Les Halles, Pigalle, Oberkampf, and Le Marais. **FORECAST:** The scale of anticipated gatherings is likely to cause substantial disruptions to travel, including road closures, diversions to public transport services, temporary metro or rail station closures, heightened security screening measures, restrictions on vehicle

access, and significant pedestrian congestion around major gathering points. Elevated passenger volumes are also likely to place pressure on the Paris Metro, RER commuter rail network, and taxi services throughout the evening and overnight period, particularly following the conclusion of the match when large crowds begin dispersing simultaneously across the city.

5. In London, mid to high tens of thousands of supporters are expected to attend the live screening event at Emirates Stadium, while comparable numbers are likely to participate in other football-related gatherings, screenings, nightlife activities, and entertainment events across the city, particularly in Islington, Holloway, Finsbury Park, and central London pub districts. **FORECAST:** Elevated passenger volumes, overcrowding, and localized transport disruptions are therefore likely around key rail and Underground stations serving major supporter gathering areas, including Arsenal, Holloway Road, Finsbury Park, King's Cross St Pancras, and Highbury & Islington stations. Congestion-related delays, temporary crowd-control measures, restricted station access, and increased queuing times for public transport and taxi services are also likely before and after the match.

### **Risk of hooliganism-related unrest to remain heightened in all three cities, with Paris to face an especially elevated risk of rioting and public disorder**



1. Overall, the UEFA Champions League Final is expected to generate a heightened security environment in Budapest, Paris, and London due to the convergence of large international supporter groups, high alcohol consumption, heavy transport congestion, and the symbolic significance of the fixture. **FORECAST:** While authorities are set to deploy extensive policing operations, crowd-control measures, and surveillance resources, there still remains an elevated risk of disorder, spontaneous confrontations, vandalism, and opportunistic criminal activity, particularly before and after the match. This is due to the large concentration of rival supporters, elevated alcohol consumption, heightened emotions linked to the fixture, and the presence of ultra supporter groups, hooligan elements, and opportunistic criminal actors.
2. Given the proximity of rival supporters during the match and associated screening events in Budapest, there remains a heightened risk of disorderly behaviour. This includes clashes between opposing fans and other forms of football hooliganism, including alcohol-fueled altercations, pyrotechnic use, vandalism, projectile throwing, aggressive crowd behavior, pitch invasion attempts, and confrontations involving supporters and police. Such incidents are most likely near official fan zones, outside the stadium perimeter, along organized supporter march routes, at metro and rail interchanges, and in nightlife districts during late evening and overnight hours in all three cities.
3. **FORECAST:** Risks will likely increase after the match, particularly if crowd separation measures weaken; transport systems become overcrowded, or supporters gather spontaneously outside designated areas. Confrontations with police or security personnel are also likely if authorities attempt to disperse crowds, enforce movement restrictions, or respond to disorder incidents near fan gathering points.
4. **FORECAST:** Paris and other French cities are expected to face the most elevated public order risk

environment among the three locations, based on the precedent of widespread unrest during previous high-profile PSG fixtures and celebrations. The primary risks include large-scale disorder, vandalism, looting, pyrotechnic use, vehicle arson, assaults, clashes with police, and disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular movement during evening and overnight hours. This was evidenced by the nationwide [unrest following PSG's UEFA Champions League victory celebrations in June 2025, during which at least 559 individuals were arrested, while 192 supporters and 22 law enforcement personnel were injured in clashes](#). Authorities also recorded 692 fire-related incidents linked to football hooliganism, including arson targeting private vehicles and public infrastructure. In response, riot police deployed tear gas, water cannons, and other crowd-control measures, with nearly 500 arrests reported in Paris alone. The scale of these incidents underscores the capability of radical supporter networks, opportunistic rioters, and anti-police elements to exploit major football celebrations as a catalyst for broader unrest and criminal activity.

- 5. FORECAST:** Meanwhile, although the risk of unrest in London is unlikely to reach the scale anticipated in Paris, there remains an elevated risk of substance-induced disturbances, assaults, vandalism, pyrotechnic use, and sporadic clashes involving supporters and police, particularly in nightlife districts during late evening and overnight hours. Opportunistic criminal activity, including theft, pickpocketing, phone snatching, and assaults targeting intoxicated individuals, is also likely to increase around crowded pubs, transport hubs, screening venues, and entertainment areas across north and central London.



**Associated events to remain vulnerable to non-hooliganism-related violent incidents, including terrorism, reckless driving, and accidental vehicle intrusions**

1. In addition to the risk of unrest due to hooliganism, the final match-related events also remain vulnerable to other violent and accidental incidents due to the presence of large, dense, and emotionally charged crowds around football-related gatherings, fan zones, screening events,

nightlife districts, and transport hubs. Potential intentional threats include terror-related attacks, vehicle intrusions, knife assaults, and acts carried out by individuals motivated by personal grievances or mental instability. Meanwhile, accidental and disorder-related risks include reckless driving incidents, intoxication-related violence, crowd surges, and crowd-control failures near densely populated gathering areas.

2. **FORECAST:** Based on recent precedent, major supporter gatherings remain at risk of vehicle-related incidents, assaults, crowd-control failures, and stampede-like situations, particularly in densely populated urban areas with heavy pedestrian traffic and limited vehicle separation measures. Risks are likely to increase during post-match dispersal periods when intoxication levels rise; transport networks become overcrowded, and spontaneous gatherings emerge outside designated fan areas. Reckless driving, isolated hit-and-run incidents, and opportunistic violence are credible risks in areas experiencing severe congestion and reduced traffic control capacity.
3. Several vehicle-related incidents linked to football gatherings have recently been recorded across Europe, underscoring the continued vulnerability of such events to both accidental and deliberate vehicle intrusions. In May 2025 alone, multiple incidents involving vehicles driving into football-related crowds were reported across Europe. On May 26, a driver reportedly under the influence of drugs crashed into a football parade in Liverpool, UK. Similarly, a May 15 vehicle collision injured 16 people outside RCDE Stadium near Barcelona, Spain, while earlier on May 8, a hit-and-run incident occurred near the Champs-Élysées in Paris during PSG victory celebrations after a vehicle drove into a crowd of supporters.
4. **FORECAST:** Although no specific terrorism threat linked to the UEFA Champions League Final has been publicly identified, the associated events remain potential targets due to the large crowds, international visibility, and symbolic significance of the fixture. Football matches, fan zones, sports celebrations, and other major sporting events have historically remained attractive targets for jihadist attacks, including those carried out by lone actors seeking mass casualties, media attention, and psychological impact. Recent examples include a foiled suspected Islamic State-linked plot targeting fan zones during the UEFA Euro 2024 Final in Berlin, as well as multiple disrupted attack plots linked to the Paris Olympics in 2024.
5. **FORECAST:** Consequently, authorities in Hungary, France, and the UK are likely to maintain a heightened counterterrorism and public security posture through the event period. Security measures will likely include increased armed police deployments, enhanced surveillance operations, hostile vehicle mitigation barriers, visible patrols at fan zones and transport hubs, stricter security screening procedures, and UAV monitoring. Elevated police presence and rapid-response units are particularly likely near stadiums, public viewing areas, airports, railway stations, metro interchanges, and major nightlife districts before and after the match. Authorities are also likely to maintain a relatively low threshold for intervention in response to suspicious behavior, disorderly conduct, overcrowding, pyrotechnic use, or emerging public security incidents, increasing the likelihood of localized access restrictions, temporary evacuations, transport disruptions, crowd dispersal operations, and precautionary police responses, including in response to minor or unverified incidents.
6. **FORECAST:** Opportunistic criminal activity, including theft, pickpocketing, phone snatching, and assaults targeting intoxicated individuals, is also likely to increase in crowded entertainment districts and along key pedestrian routes connecting screening venues and transport interchanges.

## Recommendations

### General

1. Those operating and residing in Budapest, Paris, and London are advised to avoid nonessential travel near supporter gatherings, fan marches, fan zones, and spontaneous celebration areas due to the heightened risk of unrest, disorderly behavior, overcrowding, and violent incidents,

including terror-related threats and reckless driving incidents.

2. Anticipate significant travel disruptions near stadiums, fan zones, airports, railway stations, and city centers due to expected road closures, crowd-control measures, transport congestion, and enhanced security operations. Allow additional time for all movements.
3. Monitor official announcements from local authorities, police, transport operators, UEFA, and football clubs for updates regarding transport disruptions, restricted access zones, and emergency public safety measures.
4. Avoid driving near major football venues, supporter gathering areas, or celebration sites during match hours and post-match periods, particularly if unfamiliar with the area. Inadvertent entry into dense crowds may result in confrontation, vehicle damage, or physical harm.
5. Motorists operating near stadiums or fan zones should keep vehicle doors locked, windows closed, and avoid engaging with aggressive individuals or responding to provocations.
6. Pedestrians moving through crowded areas should remain alert to unusual vehicle movement, avoid standing near isolated or unattended vehicles, and identify nearby exit routes or protected areas where possible.

### **For Attendees**

1. Those attending the match or associated events should anticipate heightened police and security activity, including stop-and-search procedures, bag checks, drone monitoring, visible armed patrols, and temporary crowd dispersal measures near stadiums, fan zones, transport hubs, and nightlife districts.
2. Avoid confrontational behavior, provocative chanting, political discussions, filming disorder incidents at close range, or engagement with aggressive supporters, as such behavior may increase the risk of altercations or police intervention.
3. Maintain heightened vigilance in crowded public areas, including fan zones, bars, nightlife districts, metro stations, screening venues, and transport hubs, due to increased risks of theft, pickpocketing, phone snatching, scams, and opportunistic assaults targeting intoxicated individuals and tourists.
4. Remain alert to suspicious behavior, unattended items, sudden crowd movements, or signs of panic, particularly in densely crowded gathering areas.
5. Maintain awareness of emergency exits, shelter locations, and alternative transport routes when attending crowded events or public viewing areas. Avoid densely packed crowd formations where movement is restricted.
6. In the event of unrest or a security incident, leave affected areas immediately using secondary routes where possible, avoid gathering near police operations or burning vehicles, and seek secure shelter until authorities restore order.
7. For more information on the security situation and help building security procedures, please contact [intel@max-security.com](mailto:intel@max-security.com).