

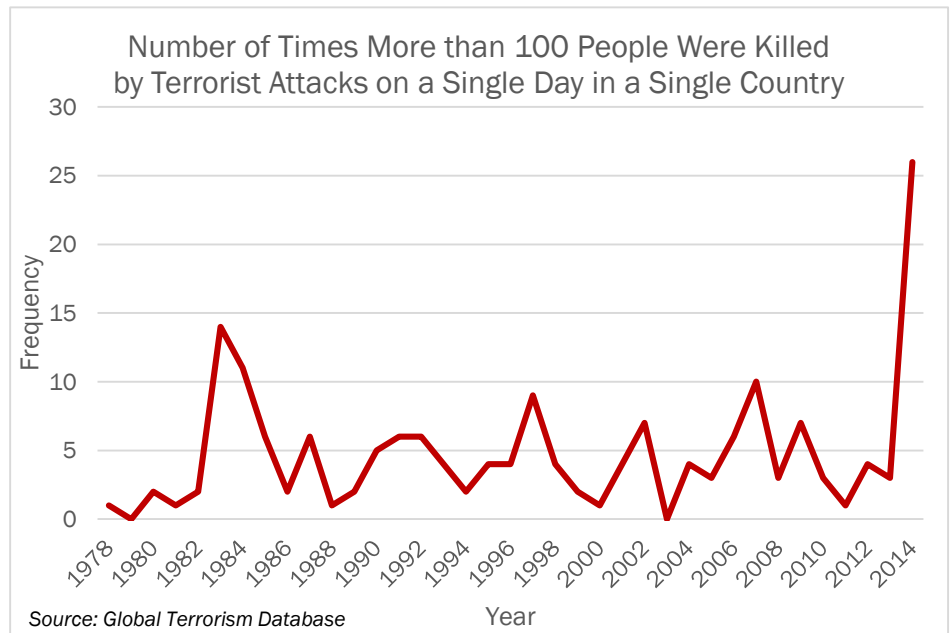
## Mass-Fatality, Coordinated Attacks Worldwide, and Terrorism in France

On November 13, 2015 assailants carried out a series of coordinated attacks at locations in Paris, France, including a theater where a concert was being held, several restaurants, and a sporting event. These attacks reportedly killed more than 120 people and wounded more than 350 others. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>1</sup> To provide contextual information on coordinated, mass-fatality attacks, as well as terrorism in France and the attack patterns of ISIL, START has compiled the following information from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD).<sup>2</sup>

### MASS-FATALITY TERRORIST ATTACKS

Between 1970 and 2014, there have been 176 occasions on which terrorist attacks killed more than 100 people (excluding perpetrators), in a particular country on a particular day. This includes both isolated attacks, multiple attacks, and multi-part, coordinated attacks. The first such event took place in 1978, when an arson attack targeting the Cinema Rex Theater in Abadan, Iran killed more than 400 people.

Since the Cinema Rex attack, and until 2013, 4.2 such mass-fatality terrorist events happened per year, on average. In 2014, the number increased dramatically when 26 mass-fatality terrorist events took place in eight different countries: Afghanistan (1), Central African Republic (1), Iraq (9), Nigeria (9), Pakistan (1), South Sudan (1), Syria (3), and Ukraine (1).



The occurrence of a series of attacks on a particular day that result in large numbers of casualties may or may not be indicative of explicit coordination among perpetrators. Nearly half (11) of the 26 days in 2014 in which more than 100 victims were killed by terrorists in a single country involved the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as perpetrators. In Nigeria, all nine of the highly lethal days involved the perpetrator group Boko Haram. Other perpetrator groups responsible for attacks on these high-lethality days include the Taliban in Afghanistan, militia groups in the Central African Republic, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO), al-Nusrah Front, and the Luhansk People's Republic and the Donetsk People's Republic, both in Ukraine.

Between 2000 and 2014, there were 83 days on which more than 100 people were killed by terrorist attacks in a single country. These attacks took place in 25 countries in North and South America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia; however, they were especially concentrated in Iraq and Nigeria.

Although Western Europe has historically experienced thousands of terrorist attacks, highly lethal attacks like the recent events in Paris are extremely unusual. The deadliest terrorist attacks in Western Europe between 2000 and 2014 took place in Madrid, Spain, on March 11, 2004 when assailants attacked six different transportation targets with explosives. Four of the devices detonated, killing 191 people and wounding more than 1,800.

<sup>1</sup> Reuters. (2015, November 14). Timeline of Paris attacks according to public prosecutor. Retrieved on November 14, 2015 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/11/14/us-france-shooting-timeline-idUSKCN0T31BS20151114>

<sup>2</sup> For additional information on the inclusion criteria and data collection methodology for the Global Terrorism Database, please see the [GTD Codebook](#).

### Number of Times more than 100 People were Killed by Terrorist Attacks on a Single Day in a Single Country, 2000-2014

Iraq	29
Nigeria	13
Pakistan	6
India	4
Syria	4
Nepal	3
Afghanistan	2
Angola	2
Russia	2
Sudan	2
Yemen	2
Central African Republic	1
Chad	1
China	1
Colombia	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1
Indonesia	1
Philippines	1
Somalia	1
South Sudan	1
Spain	1
Sri Lanka	1
Uganda	1
Ukraine	1
United States	1

Source: Global Terrorism Database

On July 22, 2011, Anders Breivik killed 77 people and wounded 75 in terrorist attacks involving explosives and firearms in Oslo and Utøya, Norway.

Preliminary data from 2015 suggest that the unusual frequency of mass casualty terrorist attacks in 2014 has continued. Between January and June 2015 there were 11 occasions in which terrorist attacks killed more than 100 people in a single country on a single day. Of these events, which took place in Iraq (2), Kenya (1), Nigeria (3), Syria (4), and Yemen (1), seven involved ISIL or Islamic State provinces

### COORDINATED TERRORIST ATTACKS, 2000-2014

Like the recent attacks in Paris, some of the highly lethal terrorist attacks described above were carried out as part of coordinated events in which perpetrators execute multiple attacks simultaneously, or nearly simultaneously, typically in a single country or city. Between 2000 and 2014, 14 percent of all terrorist attacks that occurred worldwide were conducted in coordination with other attacks.

On average, individual attacks that were carried out as part of a coordinated event were slightly more deadly, causing 2.84 total fatalities on average, compared to isolated attacks, which caused 2.35 total fatalities on average. The average number of perpetrator fatalities among attacks that were part of a coordinated event were slightly higher as well—0.39 perpetrator deaths per attack, compared to 0.33 for isolated attacks.

### LOCATIONS

More than 10,000 coordinated terrorist attacks took place in 104 countries between 2000 and 2014. Much like terrorism in general, these attacks were concentrated among a small number of countries. More than half of all coordinated attacks (54%) took place in Iraq, Pakistan, India, Nigeria, and Afghanistan.

Among countries that experienced more than 50 attacks between 2000 and 2014, France had the highest proportion of attacks that were carried out as part of multi-part, coordinated events, with 40 percent. The majority of these (87%) were carried out in Corsica by separatists including the Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC), causing property damage but no deaths and few injuries.

### Lethality of Coordinated Terrorist Attacks among Countries with the Highest Percentage of Coordinated Terrorist Attacks, 2000-2014

Country	Total Attacks	% Coordinated Attacks	Total Fatalities	Perpetrator Fatalities	Victim Fatalities
France	331	40%	0	0	0
South Sudan	57	35%	763	293	470
Bangladesh	480	35%	27	5	22
Nigeria	2170	33%	4592	776	3816
Myanmar	123	32%	26	0	26
Spain	412	29%	198	5	193
Indonesia	472	29%	318	17	301
Chile	63	29%	0	0	0
China	111	28%	196	118	78
Greece	442	27%	0	0	0

Macedonia	101	27%	1	0	1
Cameroon	79	27%	56	43	13
South Africa	69	26%	2	0	2
United States	289	25%	3009	20	2989
Burundi	159	24%	108	34	74
Ukraine	918	24%	104	33	71
Syria	834	22%	1240	233	1007
Egypt	743	22%	105	8	97
Italy	97	22%	0	0	0
Ethiopia	53	21%	16	0	16

Source: Global Terrorism Database

## PERPETRATORS

The perpetrator of the attack was unidentified for 40 percent of all coordinated terrorist attacks that took place worldwide between 2000 and 2014. The remaining 60 percent were disproportionately carried out by a relatively small number of perpetrator groups. While the recent attack in Paris shares similarities with the November 2008 attack in Mumbai, India, the perpetrator group in that attack, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), is not among the most frequent perpetrators of coordinated attacks.

In contrast, ISIL, under its current incarnation, carried out more than 750 coordinated attacks during this time period—specifically in 2013 and 2014. However, this is a conservative assessment because the Global Terrorism Database records the names of perpetrator organizations at the time of the attack. Thus, it is important to note that al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI), ISIL's

predecessor, carried out at least 400 coordinated attacks as well. Also, 25 coordinated attacks were attributed to the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), another identity previously assumed by ISIL, and several other coordinated attacks were carried out by provinces of the Islamic State, including the Sinai Province and the Tripoli Province.

Other organizations that have carried out more than a hundred coordinated attacks include Boko Haram in Nigeria, the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Communist Party of India-Maoist and unaffiliated Maoists in India, al-Shabaab primarily in Somalia and Kenya, Tehriki-i-Taliban Pakistan, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), the New People's Army (NPA) in the Philippines, Fulani militants in Nigeria and the Central African Republic, and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

### Perpetrator Groups Responsible for the Most Coordinated Terrorist Attacks, 2000-2014

Perpetrator Group	Coordinated Attacks	Percent of Coordinated Attacks
Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)	757	12%
Boko Haram	558	9%
Taliban	444	7%
Al-Qa'ida in Iraq	400	6%
Communist Party of India - Maoist (CPI-Maoist) / Maoists	337	5%
Al-Shabaab	244	4%
Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	175	3%
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	165	3%
New People's Army (NPA)	119	2%
Fulani Militants	104	2%
Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	103	2%
Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC)	86	1%
Donetsk People's Republic	83	1%
Basque Fatherland and Freedom (ETA)	69	1%
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)	64	1%
Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)	63	1%
Jemaah Islamiya (JI)	61	1%
United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)	60	1%
Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM)	55	1%
Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement)	52	1%
Unaffiliated Individual(s)	50	1%

Source: Global Terrorism Database

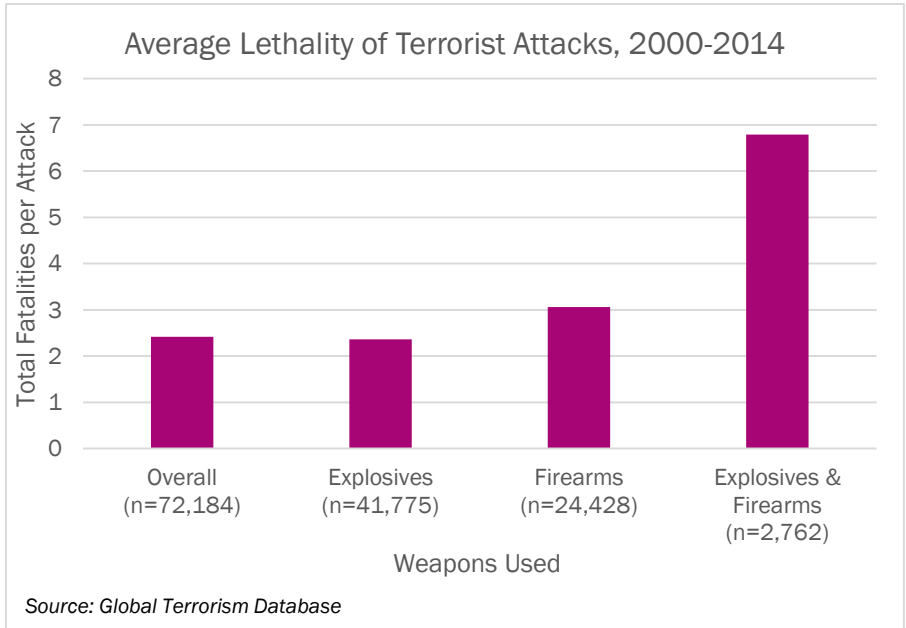
In addition, at least 50 coordinated attacks between 2000 and 2014 were carried out by individuals who reportedly were not affiliated with a particular terrorist organization or group. These attacks took place in 10 countries; however, 30 of them (60%) occurred in the United States and were carried out in pursuit of a wide variety of ideological goals. Eighteen of the attacks were part of a series in which a single perpetrator motivated by anti-government sentiment planted pipe bombs in mailboxes in five U.S. states.

## WEAPONS: EXPLOSIVES AND FIREARMS

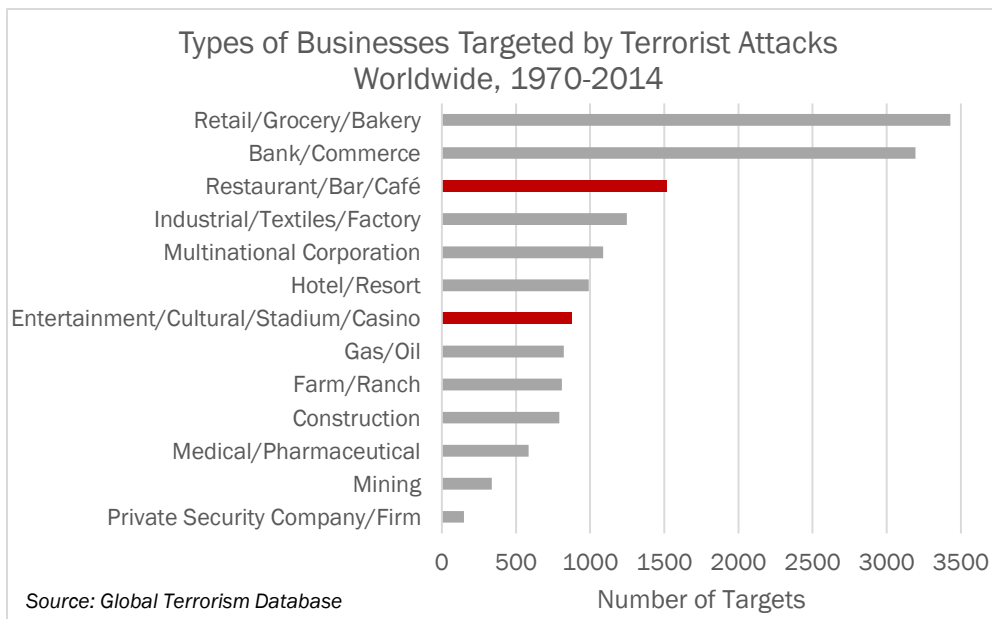
The recent attacks in Paris reportedly involved both explosives and firearms. These two types of weapons are those most commonly used in terrorist attacks worldwide. Between 2000 and 2014, explosives were used in 58 percent of all terrorist attacks, and firearms were used in 34 percent of all terrorist attacks. However *both* firearms and explosives were used much more rarely—in less than 4 percent of all attacks.

Attacks that involved firearms were somewhat more deadly than those involving explosives, causing 3.1 fatalities on average (including perpetrator deaths), compared to 2.4. Despite the potential for explosives to cause mass casualties in certain cases, they were also more frequently used in attacks that are non-lethal (57%), either because they targeted only property or were unsuccessful at causing human casualties. In comparison, 24 percent of all attacks involving only firearms worldwide between 2000 and 2014 were non-lethal.

Attacks that involved both explosives and firearms caused, on average, 6.8 deaths per attack. This rate of lethality is 2.8 times that of all attacks overall, and attacks involving explosives. It is 2.2 times the average lethality of attacks involving firearms.



## TARGETS: THEATERS, RESTAURANTS, SPORTING EVENTS



The attacks in Paris reportedly targeted several “soft” targets where large numbers of civilians gather without extraordinary security measures in place. The targets included several restaurants, a theater where a concert was being held, and a sports arena where a soccer match was being held.

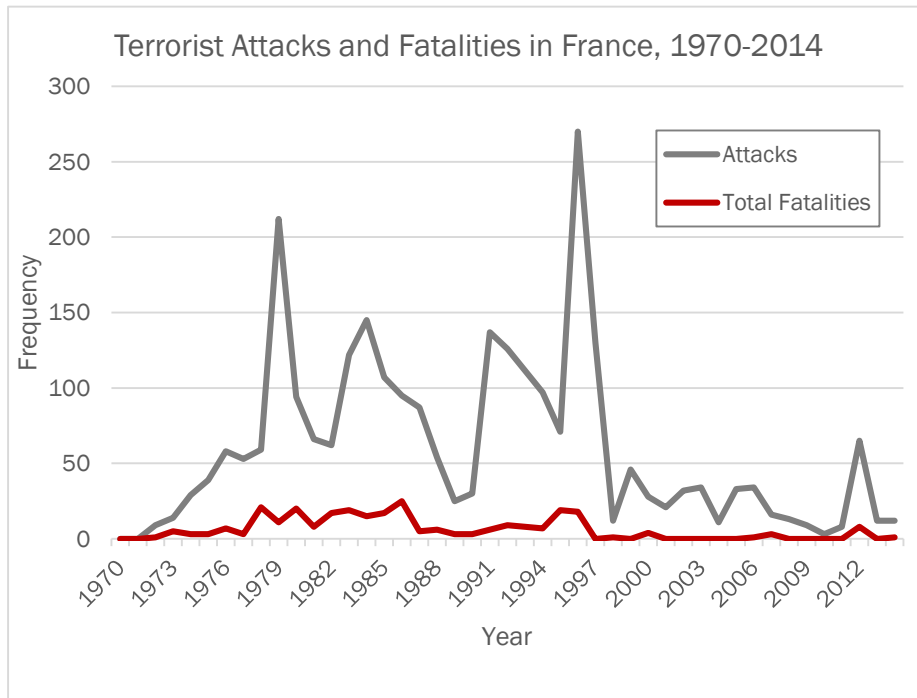
The Global Terrorism Database classifies these particular types of targets as businesses, subcategorized as “restaurants/bars/cafés” and entertainment/cultural/stadiums/casinos.” Between 1970 and 2014, more than 2,300 of these types of targets were attacked by terrorists.

Among the most deadly attacks on these restaurant/entertainment targets were two coordinated attacks targeting tourists at Paddy’s Bar and the Sari Club in Kuta, Indonesia in October 2002. These attacks, which were claimed by al-Qa’ida and also attributed to members of Jemaah Islamiyah, killed more than 200 people and wounded more than 300 others. Later that same month, Chechen rebels attacked Dubrovka Theater in Moscow, holding more than 900 people hostage. After a three-day standoff, Russian special forces filled the building with an unidentified gas intended to subdue the perpetrators. The gas killed all 40 perpetrators as well as 125 hostages. Five additional hostages were killed by the attackers during a shoot-out.

Over this entire 45-year time period, the most terrorist attacks against restaurant/entertainment targets took place in Iraq (342), the United Kingdom (167), Spain (131), Colombia (122), and France (118). However, nearly all of the attacks in Iraq took place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and were carried out by ISIL and its predecessors. In contrast, attacks in Western Europe and Latin America were somewhat more concentrated in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, and were most commonly attributed to perpetrator organizations like Basque Fatherland and Freedom (ETA), the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and the Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC).

## TERRORIST ATTACKS IN FRANCE, 1970-2014

Between 1970 and 2014, 2,580 terrorist attacks took place in France, killing 269 people, including 15 perpetrators. Terrorism in France has evolved considerably since the 1980s and 1990s when the majority of attacks took place, most frequently carried out by the Corsican separatist group, the FLNC.



In stark contrast to the recent attacks in Paris, most of the attacks in France between 1970 and 2014 (86%) were non-lethal, and the deadliest single terrorist attack in France during this time period took place in 1978 when nine people were killed in Marseille.

In the first six months of 2015, 17 terrorist attacks took place in France, five of which were lethal. In particular, in January 2015, assailants affiliated with al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) killed 12 in a shooting at the *Charlie Hebdo* newspaper offices.

The perpetrators of terrorist attacks in France were unidentified in slightly more than one-third (36%) of all attacks between 1970 and 2014. The remaining attacks were carried out by a variety of perpetrator organizations and groups, four of which caused 10 or more total fatalities over the course of 45 years.

These include a Spanish "death squad" known as the Anti-terrorist Liberation Group; the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), which carried out a high-profile attack at Orly airport in 1983, killing eight people and wounding more than 50; the FLNC, a Corsican nationalist/separatist group; the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) from Algeria; and the Palestinian Abu Nidal Organization (ANO). In addition, at least 13 terrorist attacks causing 15 deaths were carried out by individuals who were reportedly not affiliated with a particular group or organization.

### Deadliest Perpetrators of Terrorism in France, 1970-2014

Perpetrator Group	Total Fatalities	Terrorist Attacks
Anti-terrorist Liberation Group (GAL)	17	15
Unaffiliated Individual(s)	15	13
Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia	14	50
Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC)	13	637
Armed Islamic Group (GIA)	10	9
Abu Nidal Organization (ANO)	10	4

Source: Global Terrorism Database

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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Erin Miller is the primary author of this report. Questions should be directed to [eemiller@umd.edu](mailto:eemiller@umd.edu).

The data presented here are drawn from START's Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and reports from news media. The GTD contains information on more than 140,000 terrorist incidents that have occurred around the world since 1970. For more information about the GTD, visit [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd).



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