

GREECE

Overview: In 2016, the Greek government remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner. Senior Greek government leaders have emphasized that counterterrorism is one of their top priorities. In 2016, Greece experienced intermittent small-scale attacks such as improvised explosive device detonations by domestic terrorist groups, although slightly fewer than in the past two years. Generally, these attacks did not appear aimed to inflict bodily harm, but rather sought to make a political statement. The MFA quickly condemned foreign acts of terrorism such as the Brussels attack in March 2016 and has strongly condemned the actions of ISIS. Greece is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and is implementing UN Security Council resolutions 2178, 2199, and the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime.

2016 Terrorist Incidents: Greece's two largest cities, Athens and Thessaloniki, experienced a few small-scale attacks conducted primarily by domestic terrorist organizations, which targeted government officials as well as a European Embassy.

- On October 11, a bomb was planted on the car of a Korydallos Prison guard parked outside his home overnight. The explosion destroyed the car, although nobody was injured in the blast. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On October 12, a bomb exploded on the sidewalk near the apartment building where Appeals Court Prosecutor Georgia Tsatani resides. The terrorist group Conspiracy of Nuclei Fire claimed responsibility on October 13 and stated that the Prosecutor was the target. Advance warning was given and police evacuated the area; there were no injuries.
- On November 10, two individuals threw a grenade at the French Embassy, injuring a Hellenic Police officer guarding the embassy. A little-known group, the "Organization Revolutionary Self-Defense," claimed responsibility for the attack four days later. Hellenic Police, however, are exploring whether various other domestic terrorist groups may have been involved.
- On December 12, an individual provided advance warning that a bomb had been placed at the Ministry of Labor in downtown Athens. Hellenic Police conducted a controlled detonation of the device in the early hours of the morning. Nobody has claimed responsibility for planting the bomb and no one was injured.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Article 187A of the Greek penal code codifies the terrorism statute. In addition, Article 28 (1) of the Greek Constitution subjects Greek citizens to applicable international laws, to include those related to terrorism. Article 28 (2) and (3) subjects Greek citizens to applicable European Union (EU) Laws, including the EU law against terrorism. The Police Directorate for Countering Special Violent Crimes (DAEEV) is responsible for counterterrorism in Greece. DAEEV attracts highly motivated and educated young police officers. This unit has demonstrated a high capacity to collect information, but it lacks capacity to use the volume of data it collects and to share with other services within the Greek police and Coast Guard.

Greece's national ID card is extremely vulnerable to alteration and photo substitution, and it has not incorporated security features, such as a digitized photo and biometrics. To mitigate this vulnerability, police authorities instituted a system in 2015 for conducting electronic checks of civil registry databases to confirm documents submitted as part of the application for ID issuance and checks of national ID databases for passport issuance. The government has further committed to address this vulnerability through the introduction of a biometric national ID.

The porous nature of Greece's borders remained of serious concern, particularly as Greece continued to be challenged by the refugee and migration crisis. Six of the attackers involved in the Paris and Brussels attacks were subsequently identified as having passed through Greece. Greece came under intense scrutiny from EU member states, with some Schengen members reinstating border controls until Greece corrects deficiencies in its external border management. To help address vulnerabilities, in May and June, DHS and its component agencies provided a series of trainings to bolster Greek border security efforts. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration provided Insider Threat awareness training and U.S. Customs Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) provided traveler screening trainings to more than 100 airport employees, airline officials, and police. ICE also provided training on advanced Fraudulent Document Analysis for investigations to more than 25 Hellenic Police, Hellenic Coast Guard, and Customs officials.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Greece is a member of the Financial Action Task Force, and its financial intelligence unit – the Hellenic Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorist financing Commission (HAMLC) – is a member of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units. The Foreign Ministry's Sanctions Monitoring Unit is tasked with ensuring that Greece meets its commitments to enforce international sanctions, including terrorism-related sanctions. The HAMLC, which is essentially an autonomous institution, although nominally under the oversight of the Ministry of Finance, inspected more than 2,530 suspicious transactions through November 20, 2016, but did not report evidence of terrorist financing in Greece.

In Greece, terrorist assets remain frozen until the completion of judicial proceedings when a court decision is rendered. Non-profit organizations are not obliged to file suspicious transaction reports; however, all banks – through which these organizations conduct transactions – are legally obliged to report suspicious transactions of any kind, regardless of the type of entity (for- or not-for-profit), and the government may directly monitor such entities if necessary.

FBI trainers provided a terrorism finance training seminar in March 2016 for approximately 20 officers from the Hellenic Police, Hellenic Coast Guard, and Financial Intelligence Unit.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2017 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>.

Countering Violent Extremism: Greek Foreign Minister Kotzias has steadily and publicly voiced support for countering ISIS and condemned its actions. Greece is sensitive to the dangers of radicalization to violence and engages regional partners on the matter. This summer the Hellenic Police through the Center for Security Studies, and with 75 percent EU funding support, organized training on radicalization to violence for police, prison wardens

and guards, and customs officers and immigration officials. The training program involved a total of 130 officials from Alexandropoli, Athens, and Thessaloniki, and from the islands of Chios and Lesbos, which have seen the majority of arriving migrants and refugees over the last year.

International and Regional Cooperation: Greece engaged constructively on counterterrorism initiatives in international fora and regularly participated in regional information exchange and seminars through such bodies as the United Nations, the EU, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center for Combating Trans-Border Crime, and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. Greece participated in international and regional trainings geared to bolster criminal justice efforts to prevent and respond to terrorism.