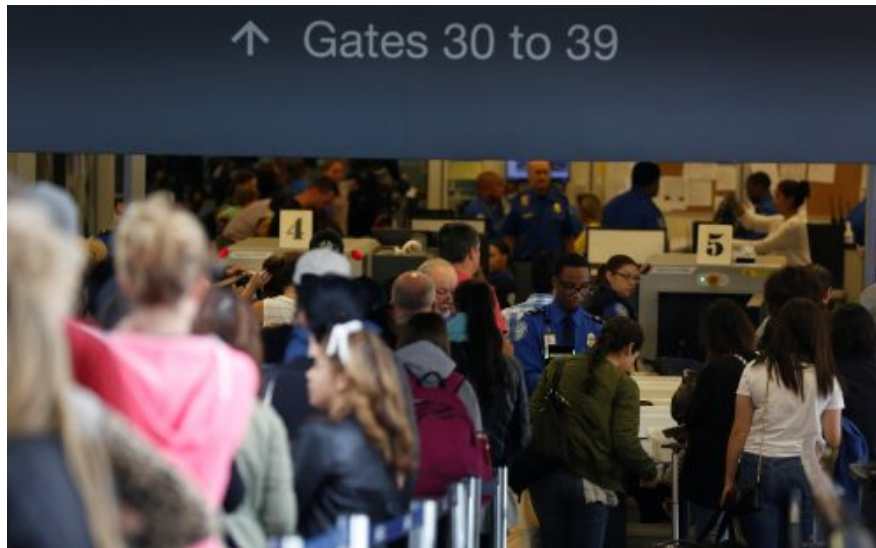




As summer travel begins, ISIS calls for attacks in Europe and the US

Matt A. Mayer

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(http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/RTX2F1V7_airport_security-e1465248161164.jpg)

Travelers at Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, May 31, 2016. REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni.

For Americans, vigilance — on the part of the US government, allied governments, and ourselves — is essential to dealing with threat of terrorist attacks.

With refugee flows expected to increase over the summer and fall, knowing who is coming, where they've been, and where they are is more important than ever. It only takes a handful of bad people to sow destruction on the streets. And as travelers, there are actions we should take to ensure our own safety while abroad.

With colleges and high schools largely out for the summer, Americans by the millions will travel abroad over the next twelve weeks. At the same time, Islam's month-long Ramadan began on June 5, accompanied by ISIS's call for a "month of conquest and jihad." As [reported](http://freebeacon.com/national-security/islamic-state-threatens-terror-attacks-u-s-europe/) (<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/islamic-state-threatens-terror-attacks-u-s-europe/>), "ISIS spokesman Abu Mohammad al-Adnani called on jihadists to 'get prepared, be ready ... to make it a month of calamity everywhere for nonbelievers...especially

for the fighters and supporters of the caliphate in Europe and America.” The US State Department noted that “[a]ccording to Islamic practice, sacrifice during Ramadan can be considered more valuable than that made at other times,” which increases the appeal of terror attacks.

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A few days before the beginning of Ramadan, the State Department [issued a travel warning to Europe](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/europe-travel-alert.html) (<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/europe-travel-alert.html>), set to expire August 31, stating that “large number of tourists visiting Europe in the summer months will present greater targets for terrorists planning attacks in public locations, especially at large events.” In particular, the alert highlighted the European Soccer Championship and the Catholic Church’s World Youth Day events where millions of people will gather in large crowds.

These announcements come on the [heels of arrests in Germany of potential terrorists](http://www.wsj.com/articles/germany-arrests-3-syrians-over-terror-attack-plot-on-busy-dusseldorf-street-1464872522) (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/germany-arrests-3-syrians-over-terror-attack-plot-on-busy-dusseldorf-street-1464872522>) who were preparing an attack in Dusseldorf. Not surprising, one of the attackers entered Germany as a refugee. As detailed by the Wall Street Journal:

[O]fficials initially played down the risk of terrorists sneaking into the country as part of last year’s influx of refugees and migrants. Roughly a million people from Syria and elsewhere arrived seeking asylum last year, at a rate of as many as 10,000 a day, many of them entering the country without the background checks typical for people applying for a visa.

“It’s possible that terrorists are coming among the refugees,” domestic intelligence chief Hans-Georg Maassen told a consortium of regional newspapers last fall, “but we don’t think it is very likely.”

Mr. Maassen and other German officials have since [increasingly sounded alarm about the security risks of the migrant flow](http://www.wsj.com/articles/germany-looking-into-40-possible-cases-of-islamist-extremists-who-posed-as-migrants-1462981879) (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/germany-looking-into-40-possible-cases-of-islamist-extremists-who-posed-as-migrants-1462981879>) and have raced to improve methods of identifying the migrants and keeping track of them after they arrive.

The massive flow of migrants into Europe provides terrorists ample opportunity to blend in. European security services need to better understand who is entering Europe, and more [fully cooperate in sharing intelligence](http://www.aei.org/publication/what-we-do-and-still-dont-know-about-the-paris-attack/) (<http://www.aei.org/publication/what-we-do-and-still-dont-know-about-the-paris-attack/>) about potential terrorists.

It has been nearly three months since the last terrorist attack in Europe. With ISIS’s call for attacks over the next month in Europe and America, the likelihood of an ISIS directed, enabled, or inspired attack is high. But as I previously [noted in USA Today](http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2016/05/20/why-you-should-still-go-to-europe-column/84586930/) (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2016/05/20/why-you-should-still-go-to-europe-column/84586930/>), if you have plans to travel to Europe, you should still go as the odds of being the victim of a terrorist attack are still very low. Here are a few actions you can take to minimize fear and maximize your enjoyment:

- Educate yourself before arriving in Europe on dos (keep your passport with you in a secure place) and don’ts (put your wallet in a loose pocket);

- Check the US Department of State on travel [alerts and warnings](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html) (<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>) for current news;
- Know exactly where you are going when touring cities by using updated maps, including the locations of US embassies and consulates;
- Don't gather in large crowds in public places; and,
- Be constantly aware of your surroundings and take precautionary measures if something doesn't feel right.

It is one thing to stand in a crowd to look at the Mona Lisa at the Louvre once you've passed through security; it is another to just stand around at the base of the Eiffel Tower. Vigilance is paramount in the latter setting, but not as important in the former setting. ISIS's call for attacks makes vigilance a required travel companion this year.

Learn more: [Why you should still go to Europe](http://www.aei.org/publication/why-you-should-still-go-to-europe/)

(<http://www.aei.org/publication/why-you-should-still-go-to-europe/>) | ['Crucial loopholes' in visa programs must be closed](http://www.aei.org/publication/crucial-loopholes-in-visa-programs-must-be-closed/)

(<http://www.aei.org/publication/crucial-loopholes-in-visa-programs-must-be-closed/>) |

[Brussels attacks demonstrate Paris was just the beginning](http://www.aei.org/publication/brussels-attacks-demonstrate-paris-was-just-the-beginning/)

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