

December 2020 Terror Attacks

In December 2020 one terror attack was registered in Europe

December 9th, Bollene, France: at around 9:15 am two municipal police officers were targeted while intervening in an attempted assault. The local police station had received a call from a resident denouncing that a young individual had entered his garden and was trying to break down the front door using a planter. When the agents reached the scene, the attacker confronted them with two knives shouting “Death to all cops, Allahu Akbar”. Despite the bulletproof vests, one of the officers was slightly injured. The attacker, who was subdued with a taser and placed under arrest, was identified as 20-year-old Youssouf el Hannouni, who was already known to French authorities as a radicalized profile and listed as “Fiche S”.^{1 2 3}

His older brother, Mohammed Taha el Hannouni (26), had been sentenced in July 2017 to seven years of prison on terrorism-related charges after a trip to Syria to join jihadists back in 2014. In June 2020, he attacked two prison guards with a metal bar in Le Havre’s penitentiary, where he is being held.^{4 5}

Summary Table

Location	Site	Year, month	Day	Target	Attacker(s)	Sex	Weapon(s)	Nationality	Age	Mental ill.	Motivation	Dec. attackers	Dec. vict.	Inj. vict.	Previous Conviction
Bollene (France)	Urban	2020, 12	9	Police officers	1	M	knives	French	20	n/a	Islamism	0\1	0	1	n/a

Comments

It is interesting to notice how, despite the fact that December is usually classified as a “hot month” for terror attacks due to the holiday season, as previous years have shown especially in the timeline that goes from before Christmas to the new year, in December 2020 things have gone differently, with only one attack perpetrated by a lone individual.

The Covid-19 epidemic is very likely one of the causes for this, but it is worth pondering on other motives that might have kept terrorists from perpetrating attacks.

¹ <https://www.lejdd.fr/Societe/deux-policiers-municipaux-ont-ete-agresses-au-couteau-dans-le-vaucluse-4011134>

² <https://www.laprovence.com/actu/en-direct/6204455/attaque-des-trois-policiers-a-bollene-une-information-judiciaire-ouverte-demain-pour-tentatives-dhomicide>

³ <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/faits-divers-justice/deux-policiers-municipaux-de-bollene-attaques-au-couteau-1607529658>

⁴ <https://www.lejdd.fr/Societe/Faits-divers/info-jdd-policiers-attaques-a-bollene-le-frere-de-lassailant-a-sejourne-en-syrie-4011428>

⁵ <https://fr.news.yahoo.com/info-jdd-policiers-attaqu%C3%A9s-%C3%A0-170121859.html>