

1 Killed, Several Injured in Vienna Attack Near Synagogue, Police Say

An attack by multiple gunmen in Vienna left at least one person dead and several others wounded late Monday, officials said. One attacker was killed in what security officials were calling a "terror attack."

Police in the Austrian capital said several shots were fired shortly after 8 p.m. (1900 GMT) in a lively street in the city center and that there were six different shooting locations. Austria's top security official said authorities believe there were several gunmen involved and that a police operation was still ongoing.

"It appears to have been a terror attack," Interior Minister Karl Nehammer told public broadcaster ORF, adding that the perpetrators were armed with rifles. "I can confirm that there were several injured and that there are probably also deaths among them."

Vienna police tweeted: "One deceased person, several injured (one officer included)." They added that one suspect had been shot and killed by police officers.

The Austria Press Agency earlier quoted ambulance service spokesman Daniel Melcher saying there were several dead and injured, though he was unable to provide a number yet.

Oskar Deutsch, the head of the Jewish community in Vienna, said the shooting took place in the street where the city's main synagogue is located but that it wasn't clear whether the house of worship had been targeted. The synagogue was already closed at the time of the shooting, Deutsch tweeted.

Rabbi Schlomo Hofmeister told The Associated Press that he saw at least one person fire shots at people sitting outside bars in the street below his window.

“They were shooting at least 100 rounds just outside our building,” Hofmeister said.

“All these bars have tables outside. This evening is the last evening before the lockdown,” he added. “As of midnight, all bars and restaurants will be closed in Austria for the next month and a lot of people probably wanted to use that evening to be able to go out.”

French President Emmanuel Macron tweeted that the French “share the shock and grief of the Austrian people hit by an attack tonight.”

“After France, this is a friendly country that has been attacked. This is our Europe ... We will not give in,” he wrote.

France has endured three attacks blamed on Muslim extremists in recent weeks: one by a Pakistani refugee that injured two people outside satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo’s old headquarters, the slaying of a schoolteacher who showed students caricatures of the prophet of Islam and a deadly knife attack last Thursday in a church in the Mediterranean city of Nice. France’s anti-terrorism prosecutor has opened investigations into all three, and France is now at its highest level of alert. {eo}

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