

New Year's Eve terrorist attack on Cologne Cathedral foiled by German police

We knew there were threats of attack, and [not just in Cologne](#), which the authorities are continuing to take seriously. There was some substance to the intelligence.

[German police have arrested three people](#) suspected of planning a New Year's Eve terrorist attack on Cologne Cathedral, which was reportedly to be carried out in a car loaded with explosives.



Officers had deployed sniffer dogs to search for explosives | CREDIT: INA FASSBENDER/AFP

Officers had first been informed of an attack planned for Christmas Eve and patrolled the cathedral with machine guns until New Year's Eve, when they intercepted the group.

The detainees, who are all Tajik, had planned to use a car as their means of attack but "in which way is not known", said Cologne police. The suspects were detained in the cities of Duisburg, Herne and Dueren in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, and their apartments in these areas were also searched.

The three suspects are believed to be linked to another Tajik

national, aged 30, who was arrested on Christmas Eve, according to Cologne police.

Bild Daily reported in December that the group had allegedly wanted to carry out attacks for Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K), an Isis offshoot in Afghanistan. . . Peter Neumann, a terrorism expert at King's College London, said that the network is "probably the only Isis offshoot that would currently be capable of carrying out a large, coordinated attack in the West".

The 30-year-old was also detained by German police on the same day that Austria announced the arrests of another three suspects in Vienna.

Security measures have been increased in Cologne with about 1,000 police officers deployed on Sunday.