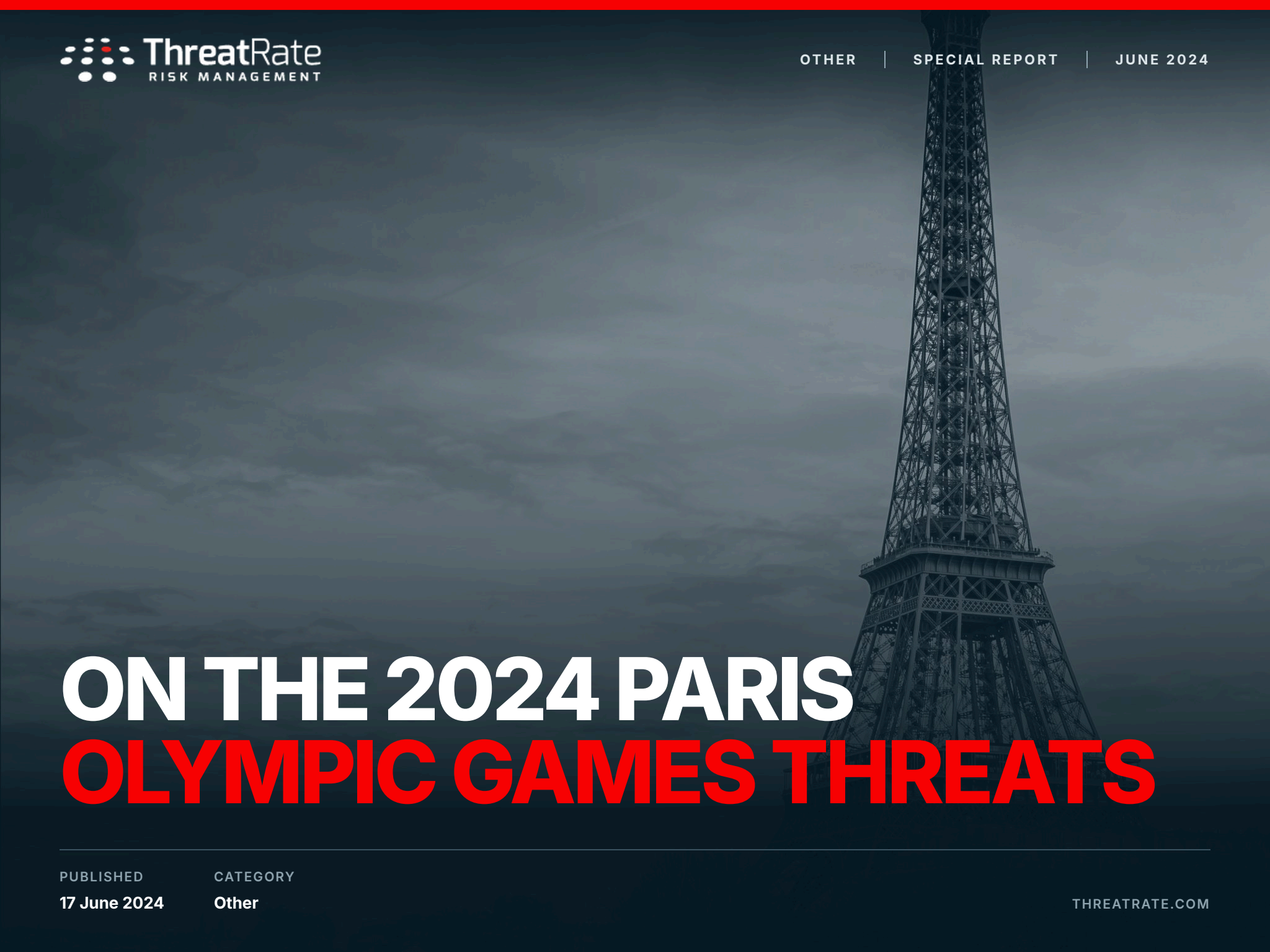
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# ON THE 2024 PARIS OLYMPIC GAMES THREATS

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# On the 2024 Paris Olympic Games Threats

## Introduction

The France 2024 Olympic Games, set to be held in Paris from July 26 to August 11, promise to be a significant global event, attracting millions of spectators, thousands of athletes and media from around the world. As with any high-profile international event, there are numerous security concerns that must be addressed to ensure the safety and success of the Games. These concerns range from potential protests and strikes to terrorism threats and for the first-time risks from Russian sabotage and cyber operations. A major factor in the Paris Olympic Games will be the broader implications of ongoing conflicts such as those in Gaza and Ukraine.

## Strike, Riots, Civil Commotion

France has a history of protests and strikes, often driven by social, economic, and political issues. In recent years, movements such as the "Yellow Vest" protests and strikes against pension reforms have demonstrated the country's robust culture of public demonstration.

The Olympic Games, with their international spotlight, are likely to attract similar activities. Protests and activism during the Olympics could arise from various sectors. Social and economic issues, such as labor rights and economic inequality, are perennial motivators for demonstrations.

Additionally, environmental activists are likely to seize the opportunity to highlight climate change and advocate for sustainable practices, leveraging the global attention on the Games. Political activism, including movements advocating for human rights and other causes, may also be prominent.

For businesses, the implications of such activities are significant. Operational disruptions are a primary concern, as protests and strikes could impede transportation, logistics, and the movement of goods and personnel. This disruption could affect everything from the timely delivery of supplies to the ability of employees and customers to access facilities.

Security costs are another consideration; businesses may need to invest in additional security measures to protect their assets and personnel from potential unrest. Furthermore, there is a reputational risk for companies perceived as unsympathetic to the protestors' causes or overly aggressive in their security measures. Navigating these challenges will require careful planning and a nuanced approach to stakeholder engagement.

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## Terrorism

As with any major international event, the threat of terrorism for the France 2024 Olympics is elevated. France has experienced several high-profile terrorist attacks in recent years, including the 2015 Paris attacks and the 2016 Nice truck attack. These incidents underscore the country's vulnerability to Islamist extremist violence. Being a high-profile international event, present an attractive target for terrorist groups seeking maximum impact.

The concentration of large crowds in sports venues and public areas increases vulnerability, as does the symbolic value of the Olympics, which represent international unity and peace. These factors heighten the risk of an attack aimed at causing mass casualties and gaining global media attention. The ongoing conflicts in Gaza and to a lesser degree in Ukraine contribute to the tumultuous global scene that has direct implications for the security of the France 2024 Olympics.

These wars heighten the risk of terrorist attacks and other security incidents inspired or directed by parties involved in these conflicts. The Gaza war, which saw an escalation of violence between Israel and Hamas, raises the potential for attacks by Islamist extremists sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

Attacks by “lone wolves” individual operating and planning independently, outside the control of a particular terror network are also likely. Since lone actors are not part of an established network, they are less visible to authorities, making their attacks more difficult to prevent. Many would-be assailants are flagged by security services, but there are often insufficient grounds for continued surveillance and intervention.

Without a procurement network, lone actors rely on available low-tech means to inflict harm, including the use of cold weapons, shooting and vehicles as weapons. The increasing reliance on digital infrastructure for the Olympics creates a new avenue for terrorist activities. Cyberattacks aimed at disrupting the event, stealing data, or spreading propaganda are plausible scenarios that need robust cybersecurity measures.

French authorities, along with international partners, have implemented stringent security protocols, including intelligence sharing, surveillance, and counter-terrorism operations, to safeguard the event from potential terrorist threats. Mitigation measures are critical to countering this threat. Enhanced screening procedures at venues and public spaces, intelligence sharing with international agencies, and the deployment of rapid response teams are essential components of the security strategy.

## Impact of the Gaza and Ukraine Wars

The ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine contribute to the tumultuous global scene that has direct implications for the security of the France 2024 Olympics. These wars heighten the risk of terrorist attacks and other security incidents inspired or directed by parties involved in these conflicts.

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Given the large Muslim community across France, pro-Palestinian groups might use the Olympics as a platform to protest against perceived injustices, potentially leading to security incidents. The conflict in Ukraine has strained Russia’s relations with Western

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countries, leading to heightened tensions. This geopolitical instability increases the risk of state-sponsored or affiliated groups targeting the Olympics.

The Ukraine war, marked by Russia's invasion and the ensuing international response, has exacerbated tensions between Russia and Western countries. This increases the risk of Russian state-sponsored sabotage and cyber operations targeting the Olympics.

Diplomatic strains could also manifest in the form of boycotts or heightened security requirements for delegations from countries involved in the conflicts. This complex geopolitical landscape requires a multifaceted approach to security, with close coordination between local authorities, international bodies, and businesses.

For businesses, the implications of these geopolitical tensions are manifold. Insurance costs are likely to be higher, reflecting the increased perceived risk associated with the event. Companies must also develop robust contingency plans to address various security scenarios, including potential attacks and operational disruptions. Close coordination with local authorities, international bodies, and other stakeholders is essential to ensure a unified and effective security approach.

## Risks from Russian sabotage

The Ukraine war, marked by Russia's invasion and the ensuing international response, has exacerbated tensions between Russia and Western countries. This increases the risk of Russian state-sponsored sabotage and cyber operations targeting the Olympics.

In response to the war, the Olympics committee banned Russia and its close ally Belarus to participate in the France 2024 Olympics but allowed qualifying athletes from these countries to compete in the games as “individual neutral athletes,” prohibited from flying their national flags. The ban and overall volatile geopolitical environment might trigger Russia to carry various forms of hybrid warfare, including cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns, which pose significant risks to the Games.

Cyber-attacks are a major concern, as they could target the IT infrastructure supporting the Olympics, including ticketing systems, broadcasting services, and official websites. Such attacks could disrupt operations, cause financial losses, and damage the reputation of the event. Additionally, disinformation campaigns aimed at spreading false information could create confusion and undermine public confidence in the security and organization of the Games. There is also the potential for physical or cyber sabotage of critical infrastructure, which could have serious consequences for the safety and success of the event.

## Health Concerns

Though France has high level and multiple choice of hospitals and health service providers, large scale events such as the Olympic Games can present a variety of health risks not only for the host country but also the home countries of the many visitors attending.

There is an increased probability of infectious disease spread due to the concentration of large numbers of people in one place. Children, the elderly, pregnant women and others with compromised immune systems are particularly at risk. Visitors to the Games and those traveling to the city for other reasons are advised to ensure they are up to date on routine vaccinations, especially measles and pertussis (whooping cough), and to wash or sanitize their hands frequently.

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