Suspected gunman arrested after two killed in livestreamed attack near German synagogue

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<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/09/europe/attack-halle-germany-grm-intl/index.html>

A gunman in an eastern German town has killed two people and injured several others in a suspected antisemitic rampage on the holiest day of the Jewish calendar.

One woman was killed close to a synagogue in the town of Halle around midday on Wednesday, and another man was fatally shot outside a kebab shop around 600 meters (1,968 feet) away.

A 35-minute video posted on [online platform Twitch](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/09/tech/twitch-halle-germany-shooting/index.html) -- which is commonly used to livestream video games -- appeared to have been filmed by a camera mounted on the helmet of the attacker.

That video bore a striking resemblance to a Facebook livestream of the New Zealand terrorist attack in March, which showed the suspected gunman shooting people at two [Christchurch mosques](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/03/15/asia/christchurch-mosque-shooting-intl/index.html).

German authorities have arrested a 27-year-old man identified only as Stephan B over the attack.

The German Federal Prosecutors office told CNN that the attack appeared to have been motivated by "extreme far-right and antisemitic" views. In the 35-minute video, believed to have been filmed by the suspected gunman, a man is heard launching into an anti-Semitic rant and claiming that the Holocaust never happened.

Local authorities in Halle described the attack as a "rampage." Wednesday was Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement and the religion's most solemn day.

In the video of the apparent attack, the suspected gunman is shown trying to break down the synagogue doors, cursing in frustration before driving away. It is estimated that between 70 to 80 people were inside at the time, Max Privorozki, the head of Halle's Jewish community, told the German news magazine Der Spiegel.

After failing to enter the synagogue, the gunman drove to a kebab shop less than a half-mile away, and started shooting, killing one person, police said.

### Video of the attack

Both of Wednesday's killings appeared to have been livestreamed on Twitch.

Following the attack, a spokesperson for Twitch confirmed to CNN that the apparent video of the attack was livestreamed on its platform.

"We are shocked and saddened by the tragedy that took place in Germany today, and our deepest condolences go out to all those affected," Twitch said in a statement.

"Twitch has a zero-tolerance policy against hateful conduct, and any act of violence is taken extremely seriously. We are working with urgency to remove this content and permanently suspend any accounts found to be posting or reposting content of this abhorrent act."

Police are investigating the video, according to Annette Hechler, a spokeswoman for the federal prosecutor in Germany.

She declined to comment on the identity of the suspect who is in police custody or on the weapon that was used in the attack.

The car used by the suspect in video obtained by CNN is registered to the town of Euskirchen, North Rhine--Westfalia, roughly 424 kilometers (263 miles) from Halle.

Two months after the Christchurch shootings, Facebook [introduced new rules](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/14/tech/facebook-livestream-changes/index.html) to prevent people who violate its "most serious policies" from livestreaming on the platform. A group of tech companies -- including Facebook and Twitter -- pledged to work more with governments and each other to combat the threat of [violent extremism](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/15/tech/tech-companies-christchurch-call/index.html) on the internet.

### How the attack unfolded

A witness driving past the synagogue on Wednesday said he saw a man dressed in army clothing and a steel helmet.

The man was holding what appeared to be a machine gun and throwing something over the synagogue wall, bakery owner Rene Friedrich told CNN.

Another witness, who did not want to be named, told CNN they also saw a gray car driving away from the synagogue at high speed. The witness, who is an employee at a business near the synagogue, said they heard several shots.

Eyewitness, Conrad Rossler, told CNN affiliate NTV that he saw a man wearing a helmet and carrying an assault rifle throw what "looked like a hand grenade with gaffer tape" into the kebab store, but it "bounced back from the door frame and did not land inside the shop and did not explode."

Rossler said the man then opened fire at "least once" into the shop where there were between five and six customers.

"I hid in the toilet," he said. "The others looked for a back exit. I was not sure that there is one so I silently locked myself up in the toilet, wrote to my family that 'I love them' and waited (to see) what might happen."

Rossler said he heard another loud bang outside the shop and more screaming before the police arrived. A person was lying on the ground beside him.

### Condemnation of antisemitism

Following the attack, Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel -- and other world leaders -- condemned the attack and spoke out against antisemitism.

On Wednesday, Merkel attended a vigil in Berlin in a "sign of solidarity," according to government spokesman Stephen Siebert. "We must fight against any form of antisemitism," he said in a tweet.

The attack had hit Germans "in the heart," Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Twitter. He added: "We all have to fight against antisemitism in our country."

Around the world, other leaders spoke out against the killings.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the terror attack -- on Judaism's holiest day -- was the manifestation of anti-Semitism in Europe, while Israeli President Reuven Rivlin said called on Germany to bring the full force of the law against antisemitism.

"Houses of worship around the world must be safe havens for reflection and peace, not sites of bloodshed and terror," said Farhan Haq, the Deputy Spokesman for the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, meanwhile, said the attack was a "despicable and unacceptable act of hatred."

The European Commission held a minute of silence at the European Commission in Brussels. The EU's Brexit Coordinator Guy Verhofstadt said: "Let's stop the hate. Let's fight anti-Semitism. Let's build an open and tolerant Europe."