ISS GLOBAL / INSIGHT REPORT

Before the Kraków shooting

Firearms oversight, online threats and the evidence needed to identify an actionable warning

REPORTING / REVIEW WINDOW

Selected Polish developments, May–7 November 2026, with 2020–2025 data. Evidence reviewed through 08:10 CET (07:10 GMT), 8 November.

ISSUE DATE

2026-11-08

Poland had documented gaps in firearms oversight and recent experience acting on specific threats. This review asks what was visible before 7 November, who could have seen it and what would establish a connection to the Kraków shooting.

This is a follow-up to the Kraków Incident Investigation. It uses original Polish audit, police, prosecution and government records alongside attributable reporting. August and October cases are selected for what they reveal about the visibility of threats and the handling of referrals. [1] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [10]

01 / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What happened and its threat significance

COUNTRY	WHERE	WHEN
Poland	Kraków, Małopolskie. National firearms data and selected Polish comparators. [2] [4] [5] [6] [7] [10]	Shooting on 7 November 2026. Main review period May to November 2026. [1] [10]

What happened

Six people were killed in the shooting. Police shot and detained the suspect. Earlier in 2026, NIK published an audit documenting weaknesses in continuing firearms oversight. Other Polish cases show how specific threats were brought to official attention. [1] [4] [7] [10]

Threat significance

A reported firearms licence gives investigators a specific record to trace. The documented August and October interventions illustrate why original communications, attribution and time of receipt matter when assessing the opportunity to act. [4] [7] [11]

> EXECUTIVE JUDGEMENT
>
> Prioritise a dated audit of firearms access and any suspect-specific referrals. Assess what was knowable before the attack and who had a lawful opportunity to act. Treat the broader trends as context for that inquiry.

02 / TIMELINE

What was known, and when

This review begins with documents already available before 7 November: administrative records, a public audit and selected cases that show how concrete threats came to official attention. The final two entries explain what officials disclosed only once the shooting had occurred.

DATE IN 2026	WHAT ENTERED THE RECORD	MEANING AT THE TIME
29 May	NIK publishes its firearms oversight findings.	A documented weakness in oversight. No person-specific alert. [1]
6–21 August	A post dated 6 August leads to identification and detention on 12 August. Prosecutors report the case on 21 August.	A specific threat could be attributed to an individual before any reported attack. [4]
7–8 October	Ostrołęka and Leszczydół attacks. Sierpc police act on a teacher's report of an alleged threat.	Separate incidents and investigative records. [5–7]
9–12 October	Nationwide school checks and reviews of online threats. The Resilience Council addresses imitation and disinformation.	An operational warning for schools and platforms, with no evidenced Kraków link. [8–9]
7 November, around 15:00 CET	Gunfire in central Kraków. Police report first notification at 15:00:15 CET.	First known notification of the shooting in the public record. [10]
7–8 November	Officials discuss a possible ideological influence and disclose three deaths at a separate location.	Leads made public after the shooting. Their underlying timing remains to be established. [10–11]

[1] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11]

03 / THE PUBLIC RECORD

What the official briefing established



Photograph 1. Post-attack briefing at the Małopolskie Voivodeship Office in Kraków. The photograph documents the official response and the setting in which the police chronology was reported. Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów, published 7 November 2026. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. [10]

The police chief told the briefing that the first notification was received at 15:00:15 CET and that officers exchanged fire at about 15:03 CET. These times describe reaction after gunfire was reported. They establish no earlier notification of a planned attack. [10]

The casualty figures remain source-specific. The government briefing page recorded six dead and 16 wounded including the suspect. Reuters' updated account recorded six dead and 17 wounded including the suspect and two officers. The government figure also includes the suspect, so the difference cannot be explained solely by whether he was counted. [10] [11]

> RECORD THE CLOCKS SEPARATELY
>
> Distinguish the time of the underlying act, first observation, first report to an authority, assessment and publication. A briefing timestamp alone cannot show what authorities knew beforehand.

04 / SUSPECT-SPECIFIC LEADS

Which signs might have been visible?

Police accounts relayed by Reuters and Polish reporting describe a firearms licence and weapons and ammunition in the car. The police spokesperson separately said the suspect had no previous criminal record or police listing of the kind described in his briefing. That is narrower than a search of every tip, licensing contact, platform referral and local incident. The reported licence also leaves the ownership and registration of each firearm to be established. [11] [12]

LEAD	BASIS IN THE PUBLIC RECORD	WHAT WOULD CHANGE THE ASSESSMENT
Access and preparation	Licence and reported recoveries support an inquiry into access and preparation. Public disclosures were made after the attack.	Permit file, dates, ownership, seizure inventory and forensic comparison. Establish when each fact became visible and to whom.
Communication of intent	The reviewed material contains no authenticated pre-attack threat, identified recipient or recorded referral tied to this suspect.	Original message, account attribution, independent timestamp and a traceable receipt or report.
Ideological influence	Interior minister raised possible far-right influence after the event. The public statement gives neither an authenticated prior communication nor an operational link.	Dated material tied to the suspect, with context showing how it informed intent or choice of victims.

[10] [11] [12]

> ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR VISIBILITY
>
> Access is the strongest case-specific line to trace. It becomes a prevention lead only if records show that someone could have recognised a relevant risk in time to act.

05 / COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

Ostrowiec, motive and imitation

Donald Tusk said two women and a man were found dead at the suspect's home and that they were likely close relatives. At the cutoff, the public official account did not establish the times or causes of death or who was responsible. Discovery time cannot substitute for death time. No combined fatality count is used. [10] [11]

HYPOTHESIS TO TEST	WHAT WOULD SUPPORT IT	WHAT WOULD NARROW OR WEAKEN IT
Ideology influenced the Kraków attack.	Authenticated communications that tie a stated motive to the act or victim selection.	Attribution failure, material taken out of context or a better-supported explanation of intent.
The two events formed one sequence.	Medico-legal timing, verified movements and independently supported evidence linking the scenes.	A conflicting timeline or findings that distinguish the actors or causes.
Earlier violence influenced or inspired the act.	Authenticated evidence of exposure before the attack plus evidence connecting that exposure to intent or behaviour.	No attributable contact in adequately covered records, or a demonstrated alternative source.

These hypotheses can coexist. A family event might be chronologically connected while ideology remains relevant, irrelevant or secondary. Neither timing alone nor repeated coverage of the same ministerial statement can establish a causal link.

06 / ACCESS AND SCALE

Firearms registrations and permits

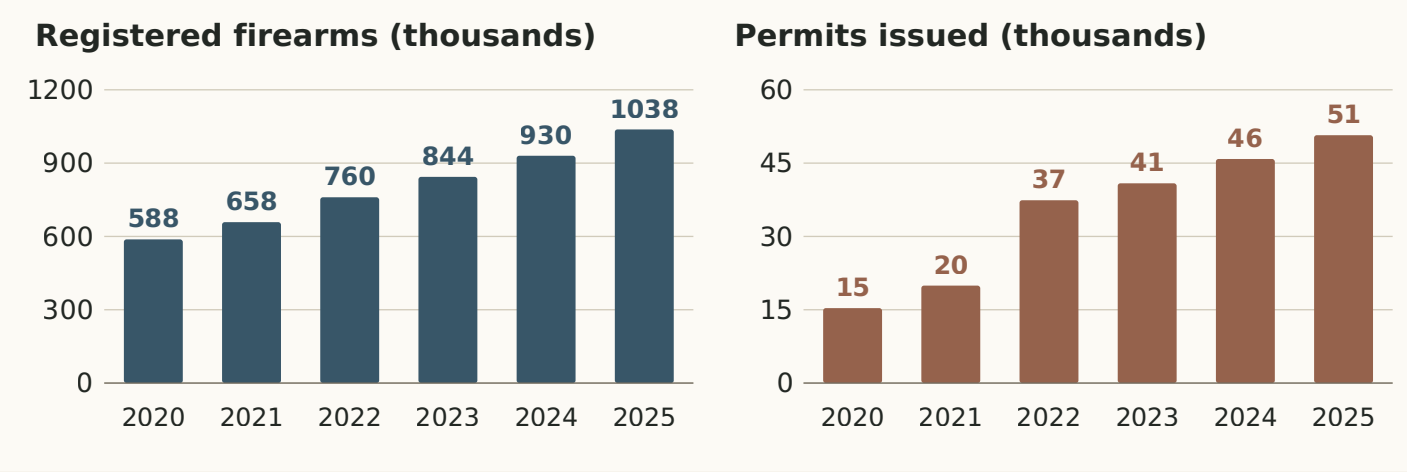


Figure 1. KGP registers and decisions, 2020–2025. Left: year-end registrations, excluding deregistered firearms. Right: permits issued in the year. Bar labels rounded to the nearest thousand. [2]

Registered firearms increased from 587,853 at the end of 2020 to 1,037,778 at the end of 2025, up 76.5%. Annual permit decisions rose from 15,330 to 50,709 over the same endpoints, about 3.3 times the 2020 total. The first series is a stock and the second is a flow. Both reflect the police reporting perimeter and its exclusions. [1] [2]

In 2025 the sports and collecting categories accounted for 38,672 of 50,709 permits issued, or 76.3%. A person can hold permits for multiple purposes. The annual sheet excludes specified amendments and repeat same-purpose decisions. These figures describe administrative workload and recorded access. They cannot identify distinct owners, the prevalence of misuse or the circumstances of any one licence. [1] [2]

> WHY THE TREND MATTERS
>
> A larger register increases the volume of records to maintain and match. The question raised by Kraków is whether a specific warning, if one existed, could have been linked to an identifiable licence and acted on.

07 / THE OUTCOME MEASURE

What offence statistics can show

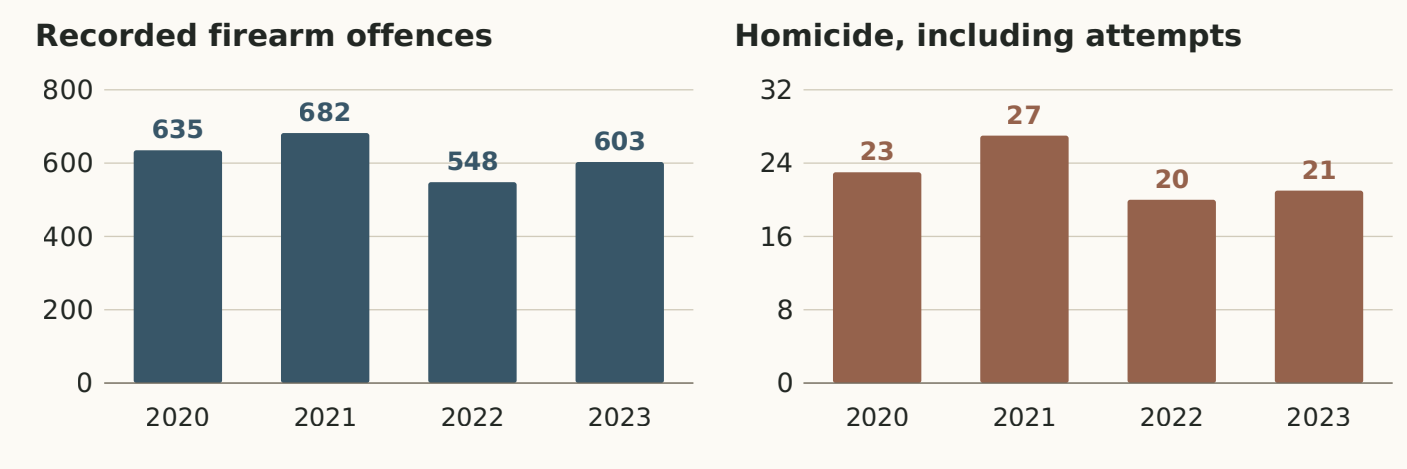


Figure 2. Police-recorded offences in the firearm column of the published workbook. Homicide including attempts is a subset of the all-offence series. Each panel has its own zero-based count scale. [3]

During the four overlapping years, registrations rose each year while recorded firearm offences moved from 635 to 682, then 548 and 603. The workbook's firearm homicide category, including attempts, ranged from 20 to 27. These movements do not show a matching annual rise in the recorded offence series. [2] [3]

The workbook ends in 2023 and does not identify mass public shootings as a distinct category or separate registered firearms from other firearms. Dividing these offences by registered stock would mix coverage and produce a misleading rate. Nor can the published figures establish a national trend through November 2026. A defensible series would need consistent event definitions, complete periods and documented inclusion rules. [2] [3]

08 / OVERSIGHT

Where a preventive decision could sit

NIK's May report covers an audit period ending in August 2025. It describes incomplete follow-up on continued eligibility, historical records still being entered into the firearms register and uneven enforcement of reporting by relevant associations in the sampled police commands. The audit documents control weaknesses during the period reviewed. It does not establish how this suspect's permit was administered. [1]

Directive (EU) 2021/555 requires a system to monitor continuing eligibility and assess relevant medical and psychological information. The provisions on possession authorisations in Articles 9 and 10 set review intervals of no more than five years. It does not establish that a particular medical examination would have identified a risk in this case. [13]

CONTROL POINT	QUESTION FOR THE KRAKÓW CASE
Grant and registration	What were the permit purpose, decision date and registered items? Which recovered exhibit, if any, matches an item recorded to the suspect?
Change in circumstances	Did a competent body receive a material change or a verifiable threat before the incident? Could it connect that information to the right record?
Action and counterfactual	Which authority had a lawful option and enough time to act? Would that action probably have affected access to the firearm actually used?

[1] [10] [11] [13]

> TEST BEFORE ASSIGNING FAILURE
>
> A missed intervention requires a dated signal, a plausible receiving authority, a lawful intervention and enough time for it to matter. The public case record has yet to establish that chain.

09 / THE OCTOBER SCHOOL CASES

Real threats amid a surge in reports



Photograph 2. MSWiA briefing on the school security response, published 9 October 2026. The image records the public mobilisation announcement and is separate from the Kraków investigation. Ministry of the Interior and Administration. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. [8]

Prosecutors documented attacks in Ostrołęka on 7 October and Leszczydół on 8 October. In a separate Sierpc case, pupils relayed concerning remarks to a teacher, who notified police. Police reported a detention on 7 October and later described material relevant to the threat. The Sierpc sequence shows how an observable warning can reach a person able to act. [5] [6] [7]

On 9 October MSWiA reported over 300 reports since the previous day, more than 15,000 schools checked and 19 people detained at that briefing. These measure workload, coverage and enforcement at a particular snapshot. They have different units and do not form a conversion funnel or an estimate of actual attack plans. The ministry said the supposed online challenge had not been substantiated. [8]

10 / ONLINE SIGNALS

From exposure to a credible warning

In August, Kraków prosecutors described a separate alleged plot against politicians. The reported online post could be dated, attributed to an individual and assessed against its stated intent. Authorities detained the suspect on 12 August and disclosed the case on 21 August. The prosecutorial account reports allegations and procedural steps. It establishes a useful comparator for how a specific threat becomes actionable. [4]

The Polish Resilience Council's 12 October statement described concerns about violent imitation, online nihilistic extremism and the amplification of fear. It also cited police findings against a coordinated school challenge. Europol's Project COMPASS names Poland among its partners in responding to a specific online network. These are strategic and operational context. The reviewed material gives no account or membership link between that network and the Kraków suspect. [9] [14]

SIGNAL	ANALYTICAL TREATMENT	WHEN TO ELEVATE IT
Repeated rumour or repost	Cluster copies by original source and preserve the earliest verifiable appearance.	A distinct originating threat or independent corroboration is found.
Person-linked communication	Preserve exact wording, author attribution and context. Record who knew and when.	Credible intent, identifiable subject or target, timing or relevant access can be corroborated.
Violent content exposure	Verify exposure and timing separately from endorsement, intent and coordination.	Evidence connects the content to a specific action, credible threat or preparation.

11 / INVESTIGATIVE WORKFLOW

Reconstructing who knew what

The strongest prevention test for Dfuze is a chronology that reconstructs what each organisation could see before the event. Preserve the original message or observation and separate it from identities, weapons, licences, places and later analytical conclusions. Access to sensitive records must follow the competent authority's lawful purpose and permissions.

STAGE	MINIMUM RECORD	WHAT AN AUDITOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER
01 Capture	Original artefact, source family, time zone and first-known timestamp.	Was this information available before 15:00 CET on 7 November?
02 Verify	Attribution basis, source reliability, duplicate cluster and corroborating or contradicting evidence.	Does the record refer to this person, this threat and this period?
03 Refer	Receiving authority, grounds, handover timestamp, acknowledgement and owner.	Who received it, and did that person or body have authority to act?
04 Reassess	Decision, rationale, actions, follow-up due date and later findings kept as separate versions.	What changed, when and on what evidence?

PRIORITY EVIDENCE REQUESTS

Obtain the licence and exhibit reconciliation, original digital records, lawful referral logs and independently timed Ostrowiec scene findings. Keep August and October comparators in separate incident records. Record an association only with its source and a reasoned status.

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 01–05

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

01 Broni coraz więcej, nadzór niekompletny

Najwyższa Izba Kontroli (NIK) · 29 May 2026

Family: Public oversight audit · Polish findings and figure data. Audit period 1 January 2022 to 8 August 2025. The site summary reports institutional findings, with no review of the Kraków permit file. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.nik.gov.pl/aktualnosci/sprawy-spoleczne/bron-palna-w-polsce-pod-nie-specjalnym-nadzorem.html

02 Broń – pozwolenia

Komenda Główna Policji (KGP) · Year-end workbooks 2020–2025

Family: Official administrative series · Downloaded six annual workbooks and extracted the two total rows and 2025 categories. Issuance and registration fields have different definitions. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://statystyka.policja.pl/st/wybrane-statystyki/bron/186394,Bron-pozwolenia.html

03 Przestępstwa przy użyciu broni (2002–2023) – przestępstwa stwierdzone

Komenda Główna Policji (KGP) · Workbook through 2023

Family: Official police offence data · Downloaded official workbook. Extracted the firearm column for total recorded offences and homicides including attempts in the 2020–2023 sheets. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://statystyka.policja.pl/download/20/338166/przestepstwa-przy-uzyciu-broni-2002-2023.xlsx

04 Aresztowanie Mikołaja T. za zbrodnię przygotowania do wyniszczenia części grupy politycznej

Prokuratura Okręgowa w Krakowie · 21 August 2026

Family: Prosecutorial comparator · Polish original. Reports a dated post, identification, detention, allegations and court-ordered remand. An independent case with no demonstrated link to November. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/po-krakow/aresztowanie-mikolaja-t-za-zbrodnie-przygotowania-do-wyniszczenia-czesci-grupy-politycznej

05 Atak na terenie ZSZ Nr 4 w Ostrołęce

Prokuratura Okręgowa w Ostrołęce · 7 October 2026

Family: Prosecutorial incident notice · Polish original. Used for date and occurrence of the attack. Details of physical evidence fall outside this comparison. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/po-ostroleka/atak-na-terenie-zsz-nr-4-w-ostrolece

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 06–10

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

06 Atak na terenie Szkoły Podstawowej w miejscowości Leszczydół, powiat wyszkowski

Prokuratura Okręgowa w Ostrołęce · 8 October 2026

Family: Prosecutorial incident notice · Polish original. Separate school attack in the Wyszków district. Initial account describes one death and two other injured people. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/po-ostroleka/atak-na-terenie-szkoly-podstawowej-w-miejscowosci-leszczydol-powiat-wyszkowski

07 17-latek, który groził atakiem w szkole aresztowany – AKTUALIZACJA

Policja Mazowiecka · 8 October 2026

Family: Police threat referral and intervention · Polish original. Records a teacher's report, a detention on 7 October and follow-up. The charge is a procedural status. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://mazowiecka.policja.gov.pl/ra/aktualnosci/aktualnosci/139469,Sierpeccy-policjanci-zatrzymali-17-latka-ktory-grozil-atakiem-w-szkole.html

08 Ponad 24 tys. policjantów zaangażowanych w zapewnienie bezpieczeństwa w szkołach. Zatrzymano 19 osób.

Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji (MSWiA) · 9 October 2026

Family: Government briefing and photo · Polish original. A point-in-time account of school checks, threats and detentions. Also supplies the published image of the briefing. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/mswia/ponad-24-tys-policjantow-zaangazowanych-w-zapewnienie-bezpieczenstwa-w-szkolach-zatrzymano-19-osob

09 Oświadczenie Rady Odporności dot. tragicznych wydarzeń w polskich szkołach

Rada Odporności / **Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych** · 12 October 2026

Family: Strategic advisory statement · Polish original and official English edition reviewed. Council's strategic assessment. Police findings cited in the statement retain their original source family. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/oswiadczenie-rady-odpornosci-dot-tragicznych-wydarzen-w-polskich-szkolach

10 Premier: W obliczu tragedii w Krakowie zobaczyliśmy to, co w ludziach najlepsze

Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów · 7 November 2026

Family: Official Kraków briefing and photo · Polish original. First-notification and exchange-of-fire times attributed to the police chief. Casualty scope and the separate deaths are given as reported. Image depicts the briefing. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/premier-w-obliczu-tragedii-w-krakowie-zobaczylismy-to-co-w-ludziach-najlepsze--odwage-policjantow-poswiecenie-ratownikow-i-bezinteresowna-pomoc-ludzi

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 11–14

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

11 Poland in shock after six die in Krakow mass shooting

Reuters · 7 November dispatch with overnight updates

Family: Wire account of official statements · English text through web retrieval. Attributes the ideology lead, reported licence, firearm details and casualties to official sources. The injury count differs from the government page. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/two-kiled-least-10-injured-shooting-polish-city-krakow-tvn24-reports-2026-11-07/

12 Strzelanina w Krakowie. Co wiadomo o sprawcy, który otworzył ogień na Rynku Głównym?

Gazeta.pl · 7 November 2026, 20:46 displayed

Family: Polish reporting of police account · Used for the named police spokesperson's remarks on prior police history and recoveries. Unofficial identity and biographical detail were not adopted. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/polska/7,198073,33121995,strzelanina-w-krakowie-co-wiadomo-o-sprawcy-ktory-otworzyl.html

13 Directive (EU) 2021/555 on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons

EUR-Lex · 24 March 2021

Family: Official EU legal text · Article 6(2) governs continuing monitoring. Articles 9(7) and 10(4) set review intervals for the relevant authorisations. National implementation issues are described as NIK findings. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2021/555/oj

14 Project COMPASS – A project dedicated to fighting against The Com

Europol · Updated 14 August 2026

Family: Official cross-border programme · Europol programme page identifies Poland as a partner. Used for scope and participation only. Reviewed 8 November 2026.

https://www.europol.europa.eu/how-we-work/operations/project-compass