

## Belgium attacks: Mohamed Abrini 'admits being man in the hat'

9 April 2016 | [Europe](#)

**Belgian prosecutors say a man arrested on Friday has admitted being the "man in the hat" seen with the bombers who attacked a Brussels airport.**

They say Mohamed Abrini told investigators he was at the scene of the 22 March suicide bombings.

Abrini is also wanted in connection with the attacks in Paris that killed 130 people in November.

He is one of six men arrested in Brussels on Friday. Four have been charged with terror offences.

The attacks at Zaventem airport and a metro station in Brussels left 32 people dead.

Officials believe those who carried out the Brussels and Paris attacks were part of the same network backed by so-called Islamic State.

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Abrini, a 31-year-old Belgian of Moroccan origin, confessed to being the "man in the hat" after being confronted with the evidence, the federal prosecutor said.

"He said that he threw away his jacket in a rubbish bin and sold his hat after the attack," the statement added.

There is no word from the suspect himself or his lawyer.

Abrini's fingerprints and DNA were found in two "safe houses" in Brussels, as well as in a car used during the Paris attacks, investigators said earlier.

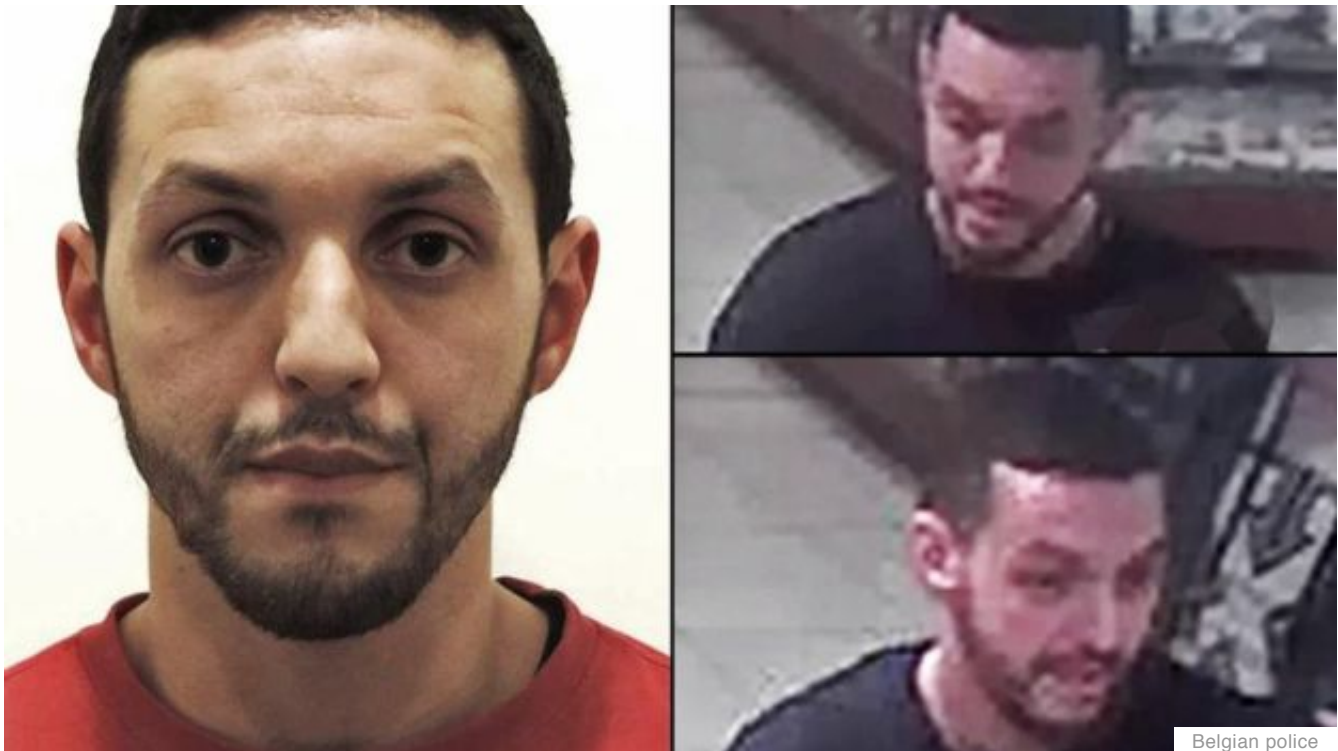
The BBC's Damian Grammaticas, in Brussels, says the apparent confirmation that Abrini is the man seen in the airport footage is a "huge" development for Belgian authorities, whose response to terrorism has come in for criticism.

The other suspects charged on Saturday were named as Osama K, Herve BN, and **Bilal** EM.

They are all accused of "participating in terrorist acts" linked to the Brussels bombings. Two other people arrested on Friday have been released.

Osama K, identified in media reports as Swedish national Osama Krayem, was the man seen with the suicide bomber at Maelbeek metro station just before the attack on 22 March, investigators say.

They also say that he bought bags used by the two bombers who struck at Zaventem airport on the same day.



Osama K is believed to have entered Greece from Syria with migrants last year, using a fake Syrian passport. Prosecutors believe he was driven from Germany to Belgium by Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdeslam in October.

Herve BM, described as a Rwandan national, and **Bilal** EM are both suspected of having offered assistance to Abrini and Osama K.

Abrini is thought to have been filmed at a petrol station with Abdeslam two days before the attacks in Paris in November.

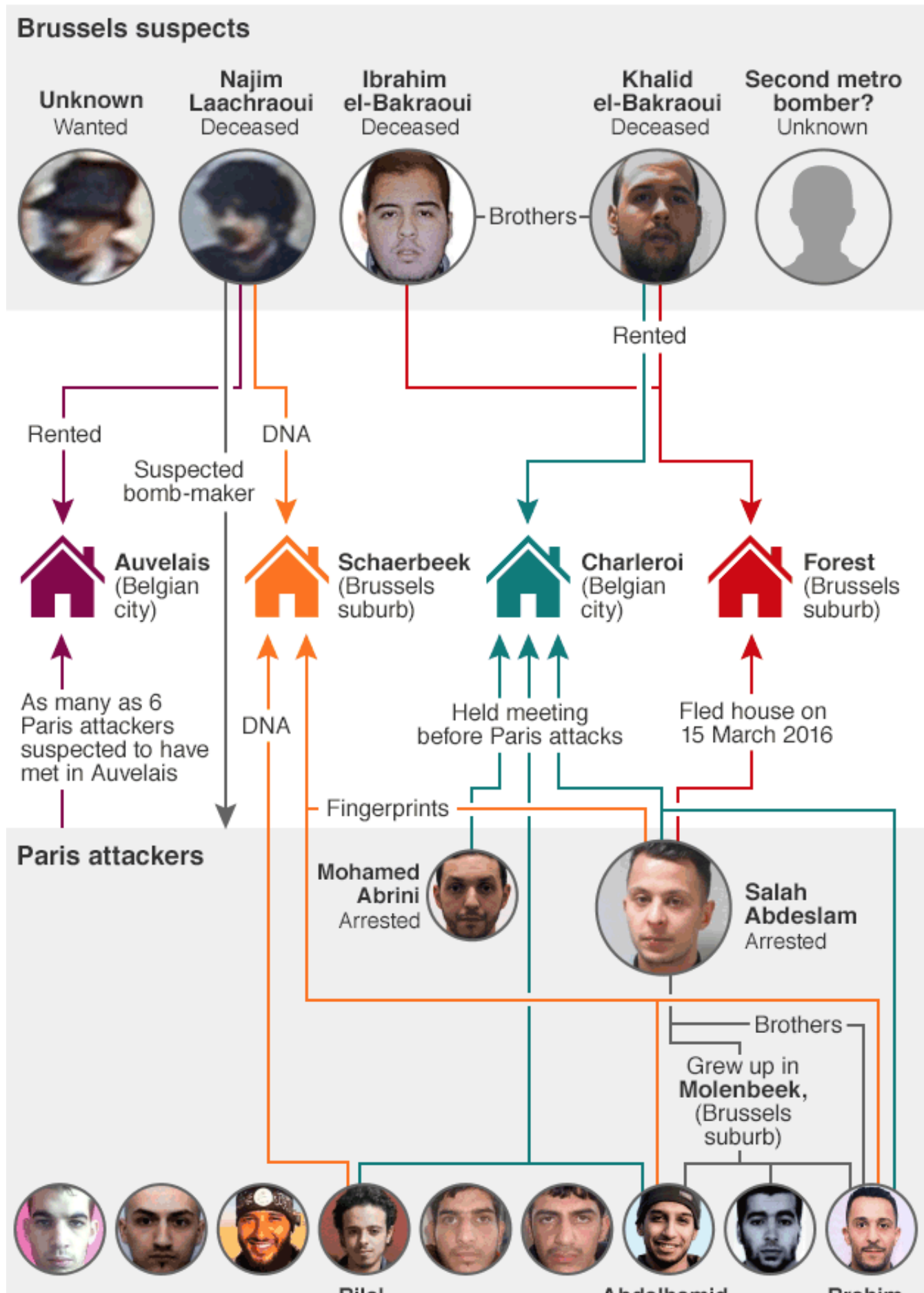
Abdeslam, a Belgian-born French national of Moroccan descent, was detained in Brussels in

March, days before the attacks in the Belgian capital.

The latest charges follow days of arrests and raids in Brussels.

On Saturday, heavily armed police carried out a search in the Etterbeek area of Brussels. The target was a flat which police believe may have been used as a safe house by the militants.

## Links between the Brussels and Paris attacks



Bilal  
HadfiAbdelhamid  
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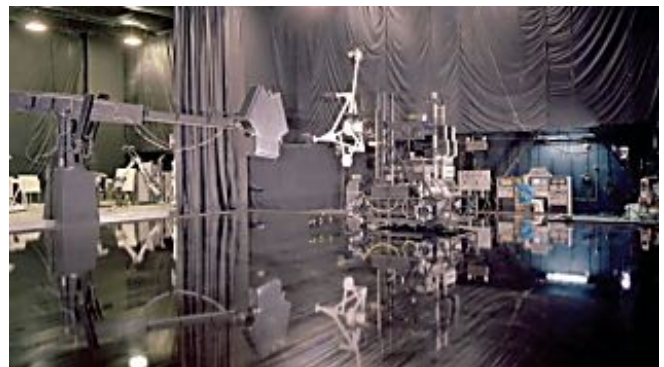
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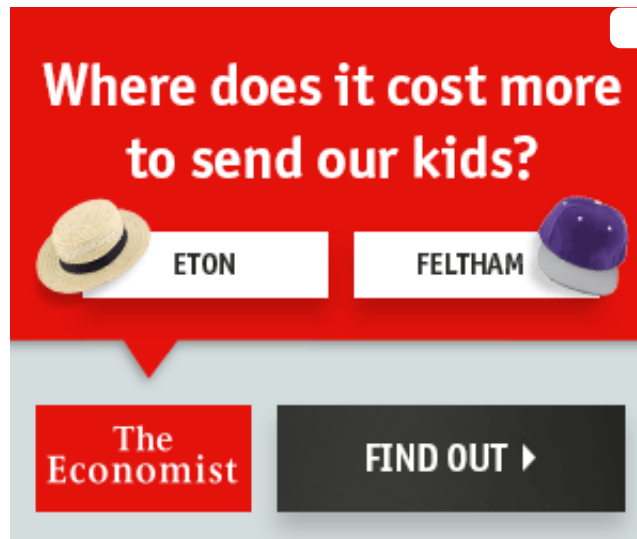
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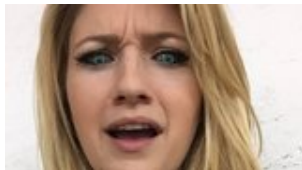
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