



European Agenda on Security: Paving the way towards a Security Union

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The Commission is today setting out the way forward towards the achievement of an effective and genuine EU Security Union – building on the [European Agenda on Security](#) presented on 28 April 2015. Whilst responsibility for security lies primarily with Member States, transnational threats such as terrorism cannot be addressed effectively without a common European approach. The necessary tools, infrastructure and environment are being built at European level for national authorities to work effectively together to meet the shared challenge. But the full added value of a Security Union depends crucially on the use that is made of this framework, to close operational loopholes and plug information gaps. This requires a step change at the level of Member States and their law enforcement authorities, working closely with EU Agencies.

First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** said: *"Terrorism knows no borders. National authorities are responsible for internal security. But they need to be able to cooperate seamlessly to prevent terrorism and track down the perpetrators. The EU can and must provide the right framework and tools for this, but what will make the difference is how the Member States use them. Law enforcement authorities in all our Member States should both 'think European' and 'act European', as internal security is a shared responsibility."*

Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Commissioner **Dimitris Avramopoulos** added: *"The European Union is designed to deliver an area of freedom, security and justice, without internal borders for its citizens. The internal security of one Member State is the internal security of all Member States. Fragmentation makes us vulnerable. It is exploited to the full by terrorists and criminals, as the recent attacks in several of our Member States have shown. We need to overcome this and turn our commitments into action to achieve a true EU Security Union."*

In a Security Union, police forces in one Member State should have an automatic reflex to share relevant information with colleagues in other Member States. The Communication adopted by the Commission today takes stock of progress made on the actions under the European Agenda on Security, identifies implementation gaps in the fight against terrorism and sets out the actions that need to be taken to address these gaps. It provides a roadmap identifying a number of priority areas in the fight against terrorism where the adoption and implementation of measures proposed by the Commission, and some further action, is needed. These measures, aimed at increasing the collective capacity to tackle the terrorist threat, include:

- **Addressing the threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters:** national authorities need to be fully informed of movements of foreign terrorist fighters, both outgoing and incoming and to share such information with each other and with EU agencies through the Schengen Information System and Europol's European Counter Terrorism Centre;
- **Preventing and fighting radicalisation:** priority must be given to the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations. Member States need to ensure that those already radicalised enter de-radicalisation programmes and are prevented from spreading terrorist propaganda and hate speech and that information on those presenting a high risk of radicalisation is proactively exchanged;
- **Sanctioning terrorists and their backers:** the European Parliament and the Council should swiftly reach an agreement on [the Commission's proposal for a Directive on Combatting Terrorism](#) to strengthen the criminalisation of terrorist related offences such as terrorist travel and providing financing, housing, transport or material support to terrorists;
- **Improving information exchange:** the European Parliament and the Council should swiftly finalise the revised Europol regulation and adopt the legislative proposals presented by the Commission to improve information exchange and interoperability of databases and information systems, such as the extension of the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) to non-EU citizens;
- **Strengthening the European Counter Terrorism Centre:** the European Counter Terrorism

Centre should be strengthened to become the law enforcement intelligence hub for threat analysis and to support the development of counter-terrorism operational plans. The Commission will bring forward initiatives to develop the Centre into a stronger structure, with the capacity for joint operational planning, threat assessments and law enforcement intelligence coordination. Joint threat assessments on terrorism and radicalisation should start being developed already now as a matter of urgency.

- **Cutting the access of terrorists to firearms and explosives:** Member States should implement as a matter of priority the [Action Plan on firearms and explosives](#) and the Parliament and Council should adopt the proposal for the revision of the [Directive on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons](#) presented by the Commission on 18 November 2015;
- **Cutting access of terrorists to funds:** the Commission will deliver on [the Action Plan on fighting terrorist financing](#) to help Member States strengthen the detection and prevention of movement of funds and other assets and to disrupt the sources of revenue of terrorist organisations;
- **Protecting citizens and critical infrastructures:** law enforcement and other key authorities need to be better prepared for security risk related to the vulnerability of critical infrastructure, ensure efficient exchange of relevant information, design preventive measures in a coordinated manner across borders and support research on future technological and capability needs;
- **The external dimension:** greater coherence between internal and external actions in the field of security needs to be ensured. Drawing on the work of the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator, the Commission and the EEAS, the EU should initiate anti-terrorism partnerships with countries around the Mediterranean.

Background

The European Commission adopted the [European Agenda on Security](#) on 28 April 2015, setting out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats in the European Union over the period 2015-2020. The Agenda fulfilled a commitment made in the [Political Guidelines](#) of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and is a major building block of the renewed Internal Security Strategy that was adopted by the Council on 16 June 2015.

Since the adoption of the Agenda, significant progress has been made in its implementation. Key areas of attention have been reinforced by Action Plans adopted in December 2015 on [firearms and explosives](#), in February 2016 on [strengthening the fight against terrorist financing](#), as well as in the Communication of 6 April 2016 on [Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and Security](#).

Recent incidents have shown the need to step-up action, and speed up the implementation of the concrete measures set out in the Agenda. Following the attacks in Brussels, the European Parliament, the EU Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs and the Commission underlined their determination to press ahead with the measures foreseen and to deepen the fight against terrorism. The Communication adopted today, one year on from the presentation of the Agenda, takes stock of the progress that has been made in its implementation as concerns the EU contribution to national counter-terrorism efforts.

For more information

[MEMO: Implementation of the European Agenda on Security: Questions & Answers](#)

[Communication: Delivering on the European Agenda on Security to fight against terrorism and pave the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union](#)

[Annex](#)

[European Agenda on Security](#)

Press release: [European Agenda on Security](#) - Commission takes action to combat terrorism and illegal trafficking of firearms and explosives

[Proposal](#) for a Directive on Terrorism

[EU Action Plan](#) against illicit trafficking in and use of firearms and explosives

Press release: European Commission [Action Plan](#) to strengthen the fight against terrorist financing

[FACTSHEET: Fighting Terrorist Financing](#)

Press release: [Stronger and Smarter Borders in the EU](#): Commission proposes to establish an Entry-Exit System

Press release: [Commission launches discussion](#) on future framework for stronger and smarter information systems for border management and internal security

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