



Stronger EU action to better tackle violent radicalisation leading to terrorism

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Delivering on its European Agenda on Security, the European Commission is today presenting further steps to support Member States in preventing and countering violent radicalisation leading to terrorism.

Responsibility for addressing violent radicalisation leading to terrorism lies primarily with Member States and actors at local, regional and national level. However radicalisation, like terrorism, knows no borders. This was evident in the events leading up to the attacks in Paris and Brussels. That is why the European Commission is setting out a number of initiatives to support Member States in their efforts across several policy areas, from promoting inclusive education and common values, to tackling extremist propaganda online and radicalisation in prisons.

Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"Recent terrorist attacks have shown how some young Europeans have fallen prey to an ideology of death and destruction, breaking away from their own families and friends and turning against their own societies. This calls for a determined response by society as a whole, to prevent radicalisation and strengthen the ties that bind us together. The EU should help wherever it can."*

The Commission is today outlining actions in **seven specific areas** where cooperation at EU level can bring added value:

- **Countering terrorist propaganda and illegal hate speech online:** Work with the IT industry to stop the spread of illegal content inciting to violence, support the development of positive alternative narratives by civil society, and develop media literacy so that young people assess information critically.
- **Addressing radicalisation in prisons:** Exchange experience between Member States to develop guidelines on mechanisms and programmes to prevent and counter radicalisation in prison and help rehabilitation and reintegration.
- **Promoting inclusive education and EU common values:** Use funding from the Erasmus+ programme to support projects promoting social inclusion, our shared values and intercultural understanding.
- **Promoting an inclusive, open and resilient society and reaching out to young people:** For example, the Commission will develop a toolkit to help those working most closely with young people to detect and tackle violent radicalisation.
- **Strengthening the international cooperation:** The EU will assist third countries facing similar challenges in addressing radicalisation through law enforcement and human rights compliant responses.
- **Boosting research, evidence building, monitoring and networks:** Produce concrete tools and policy analysis to better understand the process of radicalisation to be directly usable by Member States' security practitioners and policy-makers, building also on the framework of the RAN Centre of Excellence.
- **Focusing on the security dimension:** prevention of radicalisation also requires a core security approach through measures to counter immediate and longer-term threats, such as travel prohibitions, and the criminalisation of travelling to third countries for terrorist purposes, as the Commission has already proposed. Member States should increase information sharing, make full use of security cooperation frameworks and information tools and reinforce the interconnection of information systems.

Background

To date, some 4,000 EU nationals are estimated to have joined terrorist organisations in countries experiencing conflict such as Syria and Iraq. The majority of the terrorist suspects implicated in the recent terrorist atrocities in the EU were European citizens, born and raised in our societies. The EU is reinforcing its security approach to this problem, with enhanced information sharing in security, border

and migration databases and a strengthening of Europol and its European Counter-Terrorism centre. The EU has been supporting Member States' work in countering radicalisation for over a decade. The European Union has been working to help Member States provide a robust response to violent extremism, by strengthening cooperation in areas such as education and building up the resilience of our societies. Since 2005, efforts against radicalisation have been guided by the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment. The [European Agenda on Security](#), adopted by the Commission on 28 April 2015, set out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats in the EU over 2015-2020. The Commission also built on the [EU Radicalisation Awareness Network](#) (RAN) by launching on 1 October 2015, the Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence. The Commission organised a High-Level meeting including Justice Ministers in October 2015 to discuss the criminal justice response to radicalisation, which resulted in [Council Conclusions](#) calling for the exchange of best practices on de-radicalisation in prisons and rehabilitation programmes, training and funding. After the Paris and Copenhagen attacks, on 17 March 2015, the Commission and Education Ministers signed the "[Paris Declaration](#)" on promoting citizenship and common values.

For more information :

[Communication on anti-radicalisation](#)

[MEMO/16/2179](#)

#PreventExtremism

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