



Security: the EU is driving work to share information, combat terrorist financing and protect Europeans online

Brussels, 27 July 2017

The 9th Security Union progress report, published today, highlights the recent steps taken to prevent terrorist financing through trafficking in cultural goods and improve the interoperability of EU information systems.

Based on a comprehensive assessment of EU security policy since 2001, the report also highlights the remaining gaps and challenges to be addressed. Incomplete implementation of existing policies remains a challenge, as do evolving threats such as radicalisation and cybercrime – which may require changes to existing instruments.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"In this rapidly changing security environment, we must intensify our efforts to deliver on all essential elements and work swiftly to achieve a genuine and effective Security Union. Fragmentation makes us all vulnerable. Unity and trust by enhancing cooperation and facilitating information exchange between our Member States is the only way for the EU to bring concrete added value and ensure the security and safety of European citizens."*

Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** said: *"The Comprehensive Assessment fulfils a commitment I gave to the European Parliament to carry out a thorough review of the EU's security policy – the first in 16 years. There are some important lessons, including the need for greater agility to respond to the evolving threat landscape. There will be an opportunity to discuss with Parliament in September."*

Steady progress on key files

Steady progress has been made in recent months, notably with new rules on trafficking in **cultural goods** proposed in July 2017, and agreement reached on a new **Entry/Exit system** to register entry and exit data of non-EU nationals crossing the EU's external borders.

Work on **countering radicalisation** on the internet has been stepped up with an action plan of new measures set out to detect and remove illegal terrorist content online.

A renewed focus on **soft target protection** also saw Belgian and Dutch Special Forces simulate synchronised terrorist attacks on public schools. Supported by the Commission, the drill exercise provided valuable lessons on preparedness.

Addressing challenges and gaps in security policy

Today's report looks back at 15 years of EU security policy and whilst the assessment is positive and confirms the relevance of the main instruments of EU security policy, it also identifies challenges and gaps. This includes the need to adjust existing policies and tools to respond to the evolving threat posed by terrorism, as also highlighted by the European Council conclusions of 22-23 June 2017 and the G20 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism of 7 July 2017.

To address the challenges and gaps, the Commission will continue to take action by:

- **Supporting the full implementation of EU measures:** The Commission will continue to support Member States in implementing EU legislation, such as the EU Passenger Name Record (PNR) Directive that needs to be completed by 25 May 2018 and the Prüm framework for the exchange of DNA, fingerprint and vehicle registration data;
- **Reducing the complexity of EU instruments and strengthening interoperability:** Agreement on the Entry/Exit System is an important step towards achieving full interoperability of EU information systems by 2020 and the Commission will engage with the European Parliament and Council to accelerate work on related proposals to strengthen the Schengen Information System and EURODAC and ECRIS databases;
- **Building up capacity by pooling resources:** Building on the success of the network approach already deployed in fields like drug trafficking and transport security, the Commission will work on further pooling security expertise at EU level, notably where individual Member States lack specific

expertise or resources in areas such as cybersecurity, chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials;

- **Addressing evolving threats:** While the overall EU legislative framework has proven its usefulness, the Commission is continuously analysing the need for adaptations, for example with a newly established High-Level Expert Group on Radicalisation. A key area of activity in the coming months will be the review of the EU's Cybersecurity Strategy to provide an up to date and effective response to the growing threat of cybercrime. The new European Parliament special committee on terrorism will provide an additional opportunity to discuss how EU counter-terrorism measures can be adapted to constantly evolving threats.

Background

Security has been a political priority since the beginning of the Juncker Commission's mandate – from President Juncker's [Political Guidelines](#) of July 2014 to the latest [State of the Union address](#) on 14 September 2016.

The [European Agenda on Security](#) guides the Commission's work in this area, setting out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats, including countering radicalisation, boosting cybersecurity, cutting terrorist financing as well as improving information exchange. Since the adoption of the Agenda, significant progress has been made in its implementation, paving the way towards an effective and genuine [Security Union](#). This progress is reflected in the Commission's [reports published](#) on a regular basis.

The comprehensive assessment, annexed to today's report, is based on in-house analysis by the Commission services, surveys carried out with Member States' authorities and EU agencies, and an inclusive dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders including the European Parliament, national parliaments, civil society, think tanks, academia and industry representatives.

The Commission will present its comprehensive assessment to the European Parliament and the Council, and it encourages the two institutions to engage in a dialogue to examine its findings.

For More Information

[Communication](#): 9th Progress Report on Security Union

[Annex 1](#): Commission Staff Working Document – Comprehensive Assessment of EU Security Policy

[Annex 2](#): Commission Staff Working Document – Comprehensive Assessment of EU Security Policy

[Communication](#): European Agenda on Security

[Factsheet](#): A Europe that protects

[Factsheet](#): A European Agenda on Security – state of play

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