



Security Union: Commission delivers on 2017 security priorities

Brussels, 7 September 2017

The European Commission reported today on actions taken since President Juncker's 2016 State of the Union address to enhance security at the EU external border, improve information exchange between Member States, close down the space in which terrorists operate and prevent radicalisation.

A year later, the Commission has delivered on all security related priorities set out by President Juncker. This 10th Security Union Progress Report also takes stock of the progress made on other security files and looks ahead to continued work in the next 12 months and beyond.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"In the past year, great strides have been taken to build a genuine Security Union. But the attacks of the past month alone show that we still need to do a lot to ensure the security of our citizens. All the measures set out in President Juncker's 2016 State of the Union address and the 2017 Commission Work Programme have been implemented. This should be seen as the strong basis for further joint action in the years ahead. With trust, we all need to work together, EU institutions and Agencies with Member States, to put in place a genuine and effective Security Union."*

Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** said: *"The EU is reducing the space where terrorists can operate: making it harder for them to travel, to train, to get money, weapons and explosives. We have made our external borders more secure, improved our exchange of information about terrorists and other criminals, and stepped up our work with internet companies and local communities to tackle radicalisation. But there remains more to do, as recent attacks have again tragically underlined. Our citizens look to us to protect and strengthen their security; working together we need to deliver on the commitments we've made."*

The Commission has supported Member States in their efforts over the past year under two main pillars: tackling terrorism and organised crime and the means that support them; and strengthening our defences and building resilience against those threats.

Enhancing security at the external border

- **Systematic checks** against security databases of all travellers, including EU citizens, crossing the external borders are now in place.
- A political agreement has been reached on the **EU Entry/Exit System**, which will register entry and exit data of non-EU nationals crossing the EU's external borders.
- Work is on-going to establish a **European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)** to carry out security checks on those travelling visa-free to Europe before they arrive at our borders.

Improving information exchange

- The Commission proposed legislation to strengthen **the Schengen Information System (SIS)** as the most successful EU law enforcement tool.
- To address gaps in EU data management, the Commission presented proposals to exchange criminal records of third-country nationals through the **European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS)**.
- The Commission presented a new approach to achieve **interoperability** of EU information systems for borders and security.
- The new **Europol Regulation** entered into force in May, providing the agency with the tools to become more effective, efficient and accountable. The Agency was also reinforced with more resources.

Closing down the space in which terrorists operate

- The Directive on **combatting terrorism** criminalises acts such as the financing of terrorism, undertaking training or travelling for terrorist purposes, in addition to strengthening the rights of

victims of terrorism.

- The revised **Firearms Directive** has been adopted to better control the acquisition and possession of weapons and prevent criminals and terrorists from accessing the most dangerous military-grade weapons. The Commission has stepped up the fight against illicit firearms trafficking, notably in the Western Balkans.
- The Commission has launched the revision of the **EU Regulation on explosives precursors**, to strengthen restrictions and controls of substances which can be used to make home-made explosives.
- The new **Soft Target Policy Group** provides a platform for sharing guidelines and exchanging best practice on how to protect public spaces.
- To tackle **terrorist financing**, the Commission tabled 3 proposals to complete the legal framework on money laundering, illicit cash flows and freezing and confiscation of assets.

Preventing radicalisation

- The Commission has continued to work with internet platforms through the **EU Internet Forum** to reduce access to terrorist content and launched the **Civil Society Empowerment Programme** to promote alternative narratives online. The **Internet Referral Unit** at Europol flagged 35,000 items of terrorist content online in the past 2 years, and 80-90% have been removed.
- The Commission has continued to support prevention and counter-radicalisation at national and local level, notably through the **Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)** and through the creation of a High-Level Expert Group on Radicalisation.

As well as setting out details of how work in these fields will continue in the year ahead, today's Report also gives a preliminary assessment of the way forward following the Court of Justice's opinion on the **EU-Canada passenger name record (PNR)** agreement. The report also reviews the progress made in the fight against cyber-crime and on transport security.

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 next Security Union progress report will be presented in October 2017.

For More Information

[Communication](#): 10th Progress Report on Security Union

[Communication](#): European Agenda on Security

[Factsheet: A Europe that protects](#)

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

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