

Report of the Special Committee on Terrorism

In 2017, the European Parliament established a Special Committee on Terrorism to help answer European citizens' concerns, and in order to focus on the issues related to the fight against terrorism at both EU and national levels. The committee's report of its findings and recommendations, to be debated during the December plenary session, assesses possible legislative and practical actions against terrorism in the EU and provides several recommendations, in particular on cooperation and exchange of information.

Background

Since the 1990s, the EU has faced a considerable number of terrorist attacks. [Fighting terrorism](#) is one of the [major priorities](#) of the Union and an issue at the top of European citizens' [concerns](#). In order to improve the European Union's response to terrorism, the European Parliament [set up](#) a Special Committee on Terrorism (TERR) on 6 July 2017 – constituted on 14 September 2017 – to address the practical and legislative issues related to this fight.

TERR committee's main findings and recommendations

On 13 November 2018, the TERR committee concluded its work by adopting a [report](#) setting out its findings and recommendations. The committee thoroughly assessed the tools and resources set up by the EU and its Member States, underlining implementation issues and a lack of appropriate funding and resources. The report evaluates the institutional framework on counter-terrorism at EU level. Even if national security is the sole responsibility of Member States, the report recalls that they need to assist each other, including on counter-terrorism and intelligence issues. The report underlines the necessity of an appropriate data retention regime. Radicalisation is described as a considerable threat at EU level, as people get radicalised through personal contacts, online or through literature. The report recommends to go beyond the [current](#) EU anti-radicalisation initiatives and to create an EU centre of excellence for preventing radicalisation and improve cooperation. The report emphasises the limits of the current legal framework on radical content online, and calls on the Commission to introduce a legislative proposal to force [online service providers](#) to remove terrorist content within one hour.

The report insists on the necessity of cooperation, under a new approach with information shared by default, through technical solutions allowing automated upload of information from the national to the EU systems. Europol could become the main information-exchange hub in this context. The external borders of the Schengen area must be well secured, and technical improvements, such as on interoperability of databases and biometric checks, need to be implemented. The fight against terrorism also involves addressing financial flows, including the financing of radicalisation. The report thus calls for the establishment of an EU Terrorist Financing Tracking System ([TFTS](#)) capable of following the transactions of suspected terrorists in the euro area, in addition to the existing [EU-US](#) Terrorist Financing Tracking Programme ([TFTP](#)). The report furthermore calls for the designation of European [critical infrastructure](#), with a revision of the current legislation introducing the obligation to report incidents. The report underlines the importance of the use of explosives in terrorist attacks in the EU, welcoming the proposed regulation on [explosive precursors](#) and calling for the loopholes in EU and national firearms legislation to be closed. Member States are urged to transpose the provisions of the 2012 directive on [victims of crime](#) and 2017 directive on combating terrorism related to [victims of terrorism](#). Finally, the respect for EU values and fundamental rights is of paramount importance for the success of the Union's counter-terrorism policies.

Own-initiative report: [2018/2044\(INI\)](#); Committee responsible: TERR; Rapporteurs: Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, Germany) and Helga Stevens (ECR, Belgium).

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