

**Question for oral answer O-000161/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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Subject: Measures to enhance railway security in Europe

Lately, Europe has had to face several terrorist attacks or attack attempts in various Member States. On 29 August 2015, ministers from Germany, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands, the UK and Switzerland, the European Commissioners for Transport and Home Affairs and the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator met to discuss possible initiatives to tighten and boost rail security: multinational police teams to ensure security on board, visual inspection and baggage control, generalising named tickets for international trains, systematic use of video-surveillance, etc. So far, this has not led to any concrete measures at European level.

In the meantime, the French authorities have decided to enforce several measures to respond to the urgent need for more security on Thalys trains, proving, therefore, that such measures can be put in place: installation of security archways, strengthening of the powers of SNCF security agents (SUGE) and random identity checks. These measures are only a starting point, and cannot be fully effective unless set up at transnational level.

For the moment, when it comes to railway security, the Commission takes into account vandalism and ordinary crime. When will the Commission introduce a comprehensive package of security measures to also address terrorist threats?

It is clear that transport is international by nature, so it is crucial to ensure a coordinated EU approach to security standards. It is also important to make full use of the potential of existing tools, such as the European Network of Railway Police Forces (RAILPOL), which is a very useful network. How could RAILPOL's work be the basis for a common European security approach? It seems that the land transport security expert group (LANDSEC) is not as efficient as it could be: is the Commission willing to take appropriate measures in order for this expert group to meet more regularly and focus on railway security? How does the Commission intend to establish and enforce harmonised railway security standards in the EU? In this light, is the Commission considering the creation of a dedicated agency?

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