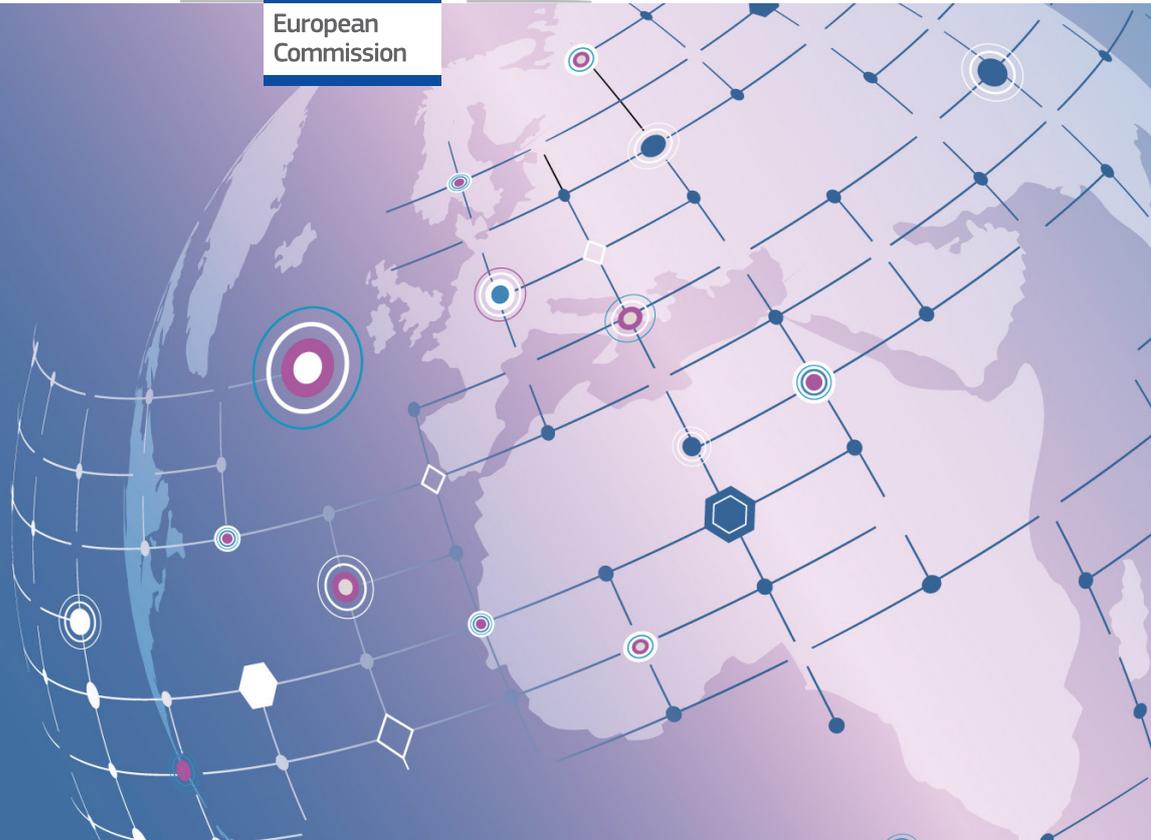European Commission

SECURITY UNION

A EUROPE
THAT PROTECTS

OCTOBER 2017

It is the most basic and universal of rights to feel safe and secure in your own home. Europeans rightly expect their Union to provide that for them. The Juncker Commission made security a top priority from day one. We have taken decisive action to **deny terrorists the means** to carry out attacks, **share intelligence** between Member States, **protect Europeans online** and **manage our borders** better.

> *"The time for action has come. In the area of security, as in many other areas in Europe, fragmentation is what makes us vulnerable. Europe needs a genuine Security Union."* (European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, European Parliament, 12 April 2016)

DENYING TERRORISTS THE MEANS

In the past two years, the Commission has taken a series of landmark decisions to tighten security law across the EU and cut terrorists off from the money, firearms and substances they use to carry out attacks.

A new **law on combating terrorism**, proposed immediately after the Paris attacks in 2015 and adopted in March 2017, ensures effective preventive measures are in place across the EU. Thanks to this law, terrorism-related offences — such as travelling abroad to commit a terrorist offence, returning or travelling within the EU for such activities, training for terrorist purposes and the financing of terrorism — are now **criminalised** and **heavily sanctioned** everywhere in Europe.

Cutting off the sources of **terrorist financing** is one of the most effective ways to stop potential terrorist attacks. The Commission has put new legislation on the table to criminalise **money laundering** alongside tighter **controls on large cash flows** and stronger rules on **freezing terrorists' financial resources and confiscation of their assets**. The European Parliament and the Council now need to find an agreement on these files.

The Commission has also reinforced the control of legally held **firearms** in the EU. New rules make it harder to legally acquire high capacity weapons and restricted access to **chemical substances** that could be used to make home-made explosives.

SHARING INFORMATION

Effective information sharing is a key element in the fight against terrorism. Thanks to the Commission's efforts to raise awareness and provide practical solutions, information exchange has increased significantly and Member States use databases, such as the Schengen Information System, much more often.

THE SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM – THE MOST WIDELY USED INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM FOR BORDER MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY IN EUROPE

Contains almost **75 million alerts** as of 30 August 2017

It was consulted almost **4 billion times** in 2016 (100% increase from 2014)

New rules on **Passenger Name Record data** were adopted in 2016, essential for identifying high risk travellers previously unknown to law enforcement authorities. By collecting, sharing and analysing passenger data, law enforcement will be able to **better trace criminal networks** and travel patterns. All EU Member States need to meet the May 2018 deadline for full implementation of these rules and the Commission is supportng this with funding and technical expertise.

In May 2017, the Commission proposed a new approach to **interoperability** — the way our information systems interact. All centralised EU information systems for security, border and migration management should become interoperable. We will achieve this by creating a single search portal for police and customs officers to search all databases in parallel and a common identity repository for all systems, meaning that name, date of birth or gender would only be stored once. The Commission has already made proposals to this effect.

PROTECTING EUROPEANS ONLINE

The cyber-attacks that recently targeted key infrastructure across the world show that we are going to need to invest more heavily in information security. In the past two years the Commission has driven action to counter radicalisation, including online.

With a new law **on security of network and information systems** adopted in July 2016, the Commission has laid the groundwork for improved EU level cooperation and cyber-resilience.
In September 2017, the Commission scaled up EU's response to cyber-attacks proposing an EU Cybersecurity Agency, a new European certification scheme for cyber secure products and services and a Blueprint on how to respond to a large scale attack.

EU initiatives to **counter terrorist propaganda and radicalisation online** are showing results. The **Radicalisation Awareness Network** brings together practitioners from all Member States to develop best practices, and equip them with the skills and confidence they need to address violent extremism. In 2015, the Commission launched the **EU Internet Forum** which brings together governments, Europol and the biggest technology and social media companies to ensure that illegal content, including terrorist propaganda, is taken down as quickly as possible.

CLEANING UP THE WEB:

The EU Internet Referral Unit at Europol scans the web for online terrorist material. It has referred tens of thousands of posts to internet companies. On average, almost 90% of these posts are then removed.

The EU Internet Referral Unit at Europol → **Tens of thousands** of posts referred to internet companies → Take-down rate of almost **90%**

PROTECTING OUR BORDERS

In an area of free movement without internal borders, managing Europe's external borders must be a shared responsibility. We need to know who is crossing our borders and we need to be able to effectively secure our common borders.

Since October 2016, the new **European Border and Coast Guard** is operational with a pool of 1,500 border guards that can intervene without delay whenever support is needed at one of our external borders. This allows us not only to ensure that the same high security standards apply at all external borders but also to react more swiftly if necessary.

Since 7 April 2017, new EU rules ensure that all travellers crossing the EU's external borders are **systematically checked** against relevant databases, such as the Schengen Information System. This significantly reduces the chances that people who pose a security threat — including EU nationals who have travelled abroad for terrorist purposes — pass the borders unnoticed.

The Commission has also proposed a **European Travel Information and Authorisation System** to ensure that advance security checks can be carried out for all people travelling visa-free to the European Union. The system will help identify persons who may pose a security risk before they reach our borders. The Commission proposal now needs to be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. By 2020, a **new entry/exit system** should also modernise external border management and record the name, type of travel document, biometrics and the date and place of every foreigner crossing our borders.

European Border and Coast Guard deployments

148 officers **in Bulgaria**

144 officers **in Spain**

342 officers **in Italy**

874 officers **in Greece**

128 officers **in the Western Balkans**