

SECURITY UNION

Denying terrorists the means to act

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It is a basic and universal right to feel safe and secure in your own home. Europeans rightly expect their Union to help provide that for them. The Juncker Commission made security a top priority from day one, and in the past three years, the Commission has taken a series of landmark initiatives to tighten security laws across the EU and cut terrorists off from the money, firearms, substances and fake documents they use to carry out attacks.

With the current security threat, the Commission has today proposed to take additional measures to further squeeze the space in which terrorists operate and make it more difficult for them to acquire the means necessary to carry out attacks. These actions include strengthening the rules on explosives precursors that are used to make **home-made explosives**, enhancing the security of **ID cards and residence documents**, improving the security of the import and export of **firearms**, facilitating the use of **financial data and establishing new tools for gathering electronic evidence across borders**.

DOCUMENT FRAUD AND IDENTITY THEFT

There are currently varying levels of security of national **ID cards**, some of which are paper-based and easy to falsify and which can also be used to enter the EU from non-EU countries. According to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, national identity cards with weak security features are the most fraudulently used travel documents within the EU. It is estimated that 80 million Europeans are currently having non-machine readable ID cards without biometric identifiers. This makes it challenging for border guards and law enforcement to verify the authenticity of such documents and the identity of its holder. This in turn weakens EU external border management and creates a potential security gap that can be exploited by criminals and terrorists who seek access to the EU area of free movement. To close this gap and remove the «weakest links», the Commission has proposed to **improve the security features of ID cards of EU citizens and residence documents of their non-EU citizen family members**.

The proposed minimum common security measures for ID cards and residence documents **INCLUDE**:

- ✓ Adding mandatory biometrics (two fingerprints and facial image) for ID cards and residence documents, to be used only for checking the authenticity of the document and the identity of its holder
- ✓ The phasing out of non-compliant cards at expiry or within a maximum period of five years or two years for less secure (i.e. non-machine readable) cards
- ✓ A maximum validity for ID cards of 10 years



The proposed measures **DO NOT**:

- ✗ Create an obligation for Member States to introduce ID cards
- ✗ Introduce a uniform European ID card

TERRORIST FINANCING

Criminal groups and terrorists are increasingly operating across borders with their assets located both within and beyond EU territory. With modern technology, they are able to transfer money between banks in a matter of hours to prepare terrorist or criminal acts or launder the proceeds of crime. With the current procedures, access to and exchange of **financial information** is too slow and the information often incomplete, leading criminal investigations to dead ends. It is imperative that law enforcement authorities have access to the most crucial pieces of financial information to complete their investigations and crack down on the financing of terrorism and serious crime. This is why the Commission is proposing new rules to **facilitate the use of financial information in criminal cases**.

The proposed measures **INCLUDE**:

- ✓ Direct access for law enforcement authorities and Asset Recovery Offices, on a case-by-case basis, to national centralised bank account registries
- ✓ A list of competent authorities that can access the registries or systems, including Asset Recovery Offices, certain tax and anti-corruption authorities and Europol
- ✓ Clear rules on the type of information that can be shared between law enforcement and Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) and between FIUs across borders
- ✓ Fundamental rights and data protection guarantees



According to Europol, financial crime and money laundering in Europe amounted to almost **€180 billion** in 2014.

Terrorist financing is still a small percentage of this sum but many transactions go unnoticed and are not reported by FIUs – allowing terrorists to plot their attacks.

Currently, in most cases, law enforcement authorities have to send a request to all banks in a Member State to obtain financial information. This process is extremely slow and burdensome – often leading to dead ends in criminal investigations.

HOME-MADE EXPLOSIVES

Since 2013, rules have been in place at EU level to restrict access to explosives precursors that are used to make **home-made explosives**. Unfortunately, the security threat has evolved since then with terrorists using new tactics, developing new recipes and finding new sources from which to purchase explosives precursors. In many attacks in recent years, home-made explosives were used by terrorists and criminals. To respond to this new security environment and further restrict access to dangerous substances, the Commission has proposed to **strengthen the existing rules – for both online and offline sales**.



Who are the economic operators concerned?

An economic operator is anyone who manufactures distributes or sells chemical substances that could, if misused, be used to make home-made explosives.

The proposed measures **INCLUDE**:

- ✓ Addition of two new substances and concentration limits to the list of banned chemicals
- ✓ Inclusion on the list of economic operators of entities operating and selling online
- ✓ Background and criminal-record checks of public buyers
- ✓ Obligation to report a suspicious transaction within 24 hours
- ✓ Greater awareness raising and information sharing along the supply chain

IMPORT AND EXPORT OF FIREARMS

International trafficking of firearms is a concern for the security of European citizens. The Commission has reinforced the control of legally held firearms and put in place new rules to make it harder to legally acquire high capacity weapons. The import and export of firearms for civilian use is also harmonised at EU level. However, the divergent national practices in the application of those import and export rules create a loophole that could be abused by organised crime and terrorist networks. The Commission has put forward a set of clear recommendations for Member States to **improve the security of export and import procedures of firearms.**

The proposed recommendations **INCLUDE:**

- ✓ Systematic background checks on individuals applying for export authorisations
- ✓ Member States are encouraged to mark each imported firearm with the country and year of import
- ✓ Systematic verification of deactivated firearms marking and certificate
- ✓ Member States to provide detailed statistics by 1 July each year

