

Commission Presents ProtectEU: the New EU Internal Security Strategy



News

Thomas Wahl

On 1 April 2025, the European Commission [presented](#) a Communication entitled "[ProtectEU: a European Internal Security Strategy](#)". The Strategy outlines a comprehensive set of measures that are planned to be initiated and implemented in the current term of the Commission in order to strengthen the EU's internal security. The Strategy reacts to the changing security threat landscape, such as the blurring lines between hybrid threats and open warfare, more and more powerful organised crime networks spilling into EU's economy, the continuous looming terrorist threat level in Europe, and the increasingly prevalent exploitation of new technologies for crimes. The Strategy aims at upgrading the Union's capacity to anticipate, prevent and respond to the security threats.

It is guided by the following three principles:

- Changing the culture on security: a whole-of-society approach involving all citizens and stakeholders, including civil society, research, academia and private entities is envisaged;
- Integrating security considerations: all EU legislation, policies and programmes will be prepared, reviewed and implemented with a security perspective in mind;
- Doing serious investments: the EU, the Member States and the private sector must ensure that sufficient human and financial resources exist, public spending for security is increased and security research is promoted, so that the EU's strategic autonomy is enhanced.

The Commission also outlines a new European internal security governance, which will include:

- Consistently identifying potential security and preparedness implications of new and revised Commission initiatives from the start and throughout the negotiation process;
- Regular meetings of the Commission Project Group on European Internal Security, supported by strategic cross-sectoral collaboration across the Commission;
- Presentations of the threat analyses related to internal security to support the work of the Security College;
- Discussions with Member States in the Council on the evolving internal security challenges based on the threat analysis and exchange on key policy priorities;
- Regular reporting to the European Parliament and the Council to track and support systematic implementation of key security initiatives.

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The Strategy lists several subject matters in which the Commission sees the need for action in the future, such as stronger JHA agencies, critical communication, lawful access to data, strengthened border security, critical infrastructure and cybersecurity. Measures will be guided by the following basic objectives:

- Equipping the EU with new ways of sharing and combining information and providing a regular EU internal security threat analysis, which contributes to a comprehensive risks and threats assessment;
- Developing new tools for law enforcement, such as a revamped Europol, and better means of coordinating and ensuring secure data exchange and lawful access to data;
- Building resilience against hybrid threats by enhancing the protection of critical infrastructure, reinforcing cybersecurity, securing transport hubs and ports and combatting online threats;
- Fighting organised crime by proposing stronger rules to tackle organised crime networks, including on investigations, making youth in the EU less vulnerable to recruitment into crime, and stepping up measures to cut off access to criminal tools and assets;
- Introducing a comprehensive counter-terrorism agenda to prevent radicalisation, secure online and public spaces, throttle financing channels and respond to attacks when they occur;
- Making the EU a stronger global player on security, e.g. by boosting operational cooperation with key regions such as neighbourhood countries and Latin America.

Background: The Commission's Communication on the European Internal Security Strategy is one component that sets out a vision for safe, secure and resilient EU, together with the Preparedness Union Strategy, the White Paper on European Defence – Readiness 2030, and the (upcoming) European Democracy Shield. The [Preparedness Strategy](#) presented on 26 March 2025 focused on strengthening civilian and military crisis readiness. The [White Paper on European Defence](#) presented on 18 March 2025 sets out a strategic vision for European defence cooperation, investments, and industrial capabilities. The [European Democracy Shield](#) will promote and strengthen democratic resilience in the EU.

Update: On 5 May 2025, civil society organisations, scientists, researchers and other experts with expertise in human rights and technology reacted to the Commission new Internal Security Strategy. In a [letter to Henna Virkkunen](#), Executive Vice-President of the Commission for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy, they particularly voiced concerns over the Commission's plans to enable law enforcement authorities access to encrypted data. They stressed that encryption is a vitally important tool for people's rights and freedoms and called on the Commission to allow them a meaningful participation in the discussions to come.

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