

# Commission Progress Report on Security Strategy Focuses on Threats from Russia's War



## News

Thomas Wahl

On 25 May 2022, the Commission presented its [fourth progress report on the implementation of the EU Security Union Strategy](#). The Strategy for the years 2020-25 was adopted on 24 July 2020 and lays out the tools and measures to be developed over the next five years to ensure security in both the physical and the digital environment within the EU (→ [eucrim 2/2020, 71-72](#)).

The [regular progress reports](#) analyse the emerging threats to the EU's security in a certain period of time, give an overview of what the EU has done and of what should be done in the near future. The fourth implementation report is the first one that takes into account the threats to EU internal safety and security resulting from the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. On the one hand, threats stem from potential attacks or accidents resulting from biological, radiological or chemical agents in the war zone. On the other hand, organised crime is influencing the threat scenarios by exploiting vulnerabilities of millions of people who have fled the war, e.g. through trafficking of women and children.

The report also reacts to the [Versailles Declaration](#) of 10/11 March 2022, in which the EU leaders stressed the need to prepare for fast-emerging challenges, including by “protecting ourselves against ever-growing hybrid warfare, strengthening our cyber-resilience, protecting our infrastructure – particularly our critical infrastructure – and fighting disinformation”. In this context, the report points out that the four strategic priorities set out in the Security Union Strategy remain directly relevant to this current geopolitical situation:

- A future proof security environment;
- Tackling evolving threats;
- Protecting Europeans from terrorism and organised crime;
- A strong European security ecosystem.

In order to cope with the new emerging risk, the report highlights the need for the EU and its Member States to make full use of legislative and policy instruments already available under the Security Union Strategy, “which underpin coordinated EU support to Member States on issues from organised crime and terrorism, to cybersecurity and hybrid threats”. Other important factors are the activities of the EU agencies in the field of Justice and Home Affairs and the strengthening of the Schengen area's operational practice and governance. In the following areas, the report analyses vigilance and coordination as well as preparedness needs following Russia's war:

- Cybersecurity and critical infrastructure;
- Organised crime and terrorism;

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- Weapons, dangerous material and critical incidents;
- Foreign information manipulation and interference.

Looking ahead, the Commission stressed that the EU must be prepared and build up resilience to all eventualities. Some uncertainties remain, such as:

- Impact of displacement of Ukrainian criminal networks. This can have influence on the routes of drugs trade;
- Potential risks at the end or during pauses of the war. This could have effects on the circulation of firearms and on risks linked to foreign fighters who may have come into contact with extremist groups.

In conclusion, the report stresses that a determined implementation of the EU Security Union Strategy and other specific strategies/plans, such as the EU Cybersecurity Strategy, the Strategy to tackle Organised Crime, the Counter-Terrorism Agenda for the EU, the EU action plan on firearms trafficking, the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings, and the EU Drug strategy (2021-2025), are more important than ever.

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